

MARITIME A PANACEA FOR EMPLOYMENT CREATION IN NIGERIA

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Abstract: The focus of this paper is on maritime training on seafarer's employability and economic growth and development in Nigeria. The paper noted with dismay, that seafarer's unemployment in Nigeria is on the rise base on this, stakeholders observed this trend is inimical to peace and security of the nation. To curb this menace, therefore the paper x-rayed the role of maritime training to seafarers as well as its contribution to economic growth and development of a nation. The paper also diagnosed the impact of maritime to employment creation for graduates in the maritime industry and the contributions of maritime transport to the national development. From the study, it was revealed that maritime training has a lot of contribute in providing employment opportunities to youth. Base on this premise, the paper conclude that there is a shortage of manpower in the maritime industry. It therefore recommend among others, that, seminar should be organized for youths by government at all level and agency that are saddled with such responsibilities, particularly Nigerian Maritime Administrative and Safety Agency (NIMASA) should sanitized the public, also government at all level should treat maritime in Nigeria with all seriousness and impunity.

Keywords: Development, Economic, Education, Growth, Maritime, Nigeria, Panacea.

Reference to this paper should be made as follows: Geoffrey Agabi, Onovughe Agabi and Kingsley Agaviezor (2019), Maritime a Panacea for Employment Creation in Nigeria. *J. of Social Sciences and Public Policy*, Vol. 11, Number 3, Pp. 1-15

INTRODUCTION

In economic circle, education is viewed as an investment community (Efangā & Nwokomah, 2013). Every economist therefore interpreted education as skills training or as input into the process of producing other goods and services, so that the human capital is essentially an accumulation of skills of varying types, quantities and qualities (Edame, 2015). Education influence people's minds with ideas and greater capacity to think and improve their lives and the society in general. For any nation to move forward it must promotes and develop the skills of its citizenry either in the maritime industry, engineering, medicines etc. As noted by Pidlisnyuk (2010), "Education is an instrument for training human resources of optimizes productivity by encouraging technical progress and by promoting cultural conditions conducive to social and economic change.

The maritime industry in Nigeria is suffering for change and disequilibrium which has lead to shortage of manpower compare to their counterpart in overseas. According to Babalola (2007) a shortage of educated people might limit economic growth, while over-supply of higher education would lead to unemployment or joblessness in a country. Maritime education has been an integral part of skills acquired of national development strategies in many societies because of its impact to national and international development. Most past leaders in Nigeria did not really understand the dynamic role played by maritime education in the process of national development and emancipation of the nation. If we have such leaders, Nigeria would not have gotten only National Maritime Academy at Oron, Akwalbom State. It is in line with this that this research paper tends to bring much about maritime education in Nigeria.

CONCEPT OF MARITIME STUDIES

Maritime study is a study that prepares skillful seafarers for effective performance on practical tasks on boards the vessel. It involves the

acquisition of skills and competencies that can help individual to function effectively and productivity in industrial, on board and commercial occupation. Maritime, technical and vocational educations are synonymously used to mean education geared towards skilled acquisition for gainful employment on board. Okoro (2016), viewed maritime technical study as an academic preparation of students for jobs involving applied science and modern technology, he further emphasized that it is the understanding and practical application of basic principles of science and mathematics. Maritime study is view as a branch of vocation for sea farers. According to Elaigwu (2002) in Okoro (2016), viewed maritime technical study as the study of technology and related science and acquisition of practical skills, attitudes and knowledge relating to occupation in various compartment of the vessel.

Education in general is an exercise that engages everyone, which build respect for rule of law (Kingibe, 2008). Supporting this assertion, Oni (2017) posits that vocational study is an aspect of education that provides the recipients with basic knowledge and practical skills needed for entry into the world of work as employee at sea. It is generally believed that no country can make any meaningful economic progress without developing the skills, knowledge and capabilities of its citizens to handle available resources (Ajibade, 2013). For a nation like Nigeria to build a good human capital development her youth must be acquired with maritime education knowledge.

Ike (2016) in his view argued that the economic competitiveness a country depends on the skills of its workforce. The skills and competences of the workforce of a nation depend on the quality of the educational training system of that country. Today maritime studies are specialized phase of vocational studies that prepares students to enter the vessels. As it is perceived by Mm (1995), that vocational studies are crucial element in enhancing economic growth and productivity. In the same vein, Labaree (1997) stated that

Maritime industry should therefore prepare and supply future workers with appropriate knowledge and skills to enhance their productivity in the shipping industry.

It has been observed by stakeholders that Maritime has been an integral part of western nations of the world, such as Philippines, Singapore, United States, Britain, Sweden etc due to its impact on human capital development, productivity and economic growth on their country. For a developing nation such as Nigeria, need to invest in her citizens in order to promote growth and development (Efang&Nwokomah, 2013). It has been observed by many scholars with dismay that, Nigerians does not accord maritime industry the attention its deserves, despite its contributions to the nation's economy and international businesses. Adewale (2015), observed that Nigerian domestic shipping sector contributes a meager to the nation's gross Domestic Production (GDP) with no Nigeria seafarer to work in the international carriers, due to the non participation of government. Orakwusi (2012) reported also that Nigeria has lost so much because of her non participation in terms of human capital development in the maritime industry. She observed that between 2008 – 2011, a total of 450.7million import tonnage was recorded. Furthermore an estimate payment rise from 4.1billion USD in 2008, 4.68billion USD in 2009, 6.25billioon USD in 2010 and 7.5billion USD in 2011.

It is also observed that, maritime studies promote international employment rather than seeking for international employment, which provide quality seafarers that could be used to fight war against unemployment and poverty of a nation. Ajakporise et al (2016), contribution that present global economic recession suggests that the whole world is in need of good and qualitative manpower training. Therefore, maritime studies are those part of the total education system that involves the acquisition of skills for sea, ideas and management abilities necessary for job creation (Sule, 2014).

For the sake of clarity, the mission of maritime study in Nigeria is to promote competence, expertise and enterprise in marine science, engineering and technology through instrumentality of high quality training, purposeful research, high profile career driven, capacity building and pragmatic consultancy services for the maritime and allied industries or commerce in particular (DESMATECH, 2012).

Maritime studies programme are tailored towards producing creative and innovative graduates with reputable and self-sustaining scientific technical and technical knowledge, skills and attitude capable of responding to challenging tasks and projects on board the vessel industries, commercial and other endeavour of life within the public and private sector. Umo (1998) stated that training of human personnel is aimed at balancing income distribution and to forge national unity as well as generating new knowledge, increase economic growth of a nation. It is on this premise, the paper x-rayed the importance of maritime as a panacea of employment and economic growth and development in Nigeria.

NIGERIA ECONOMIC GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

According to Abdullahi (2012), opined that Nigeria economy has been judged with a lot of inefficiencies and over reliance on crude oil as the mainstay of the country and major revenue earner which has typically affected the country's economic development. With the dwindling revenue from oil, it is now obvious that the inflow of income to Nigeria is not business as usual (Ofishe, Orogun, Adagha, 2016). It is imperative therefore that, Nigerians and its citizens should looks for alternatives in this economic recession, it was agreed by stakeholders that one such alternative is on maritime which is an international driver for foreign revenue for any nation and Nigeria in particular. Many youths are unemployed today because the government cannot provide employment for them, and also because government cannot provide the enabling platform for private shipping firm to excel. All over the world maritime is a major contributor to economic growth and development, its activities are very fundamental to any meaningful development of an economy.

According to Onofurho (2016) in Iyoha, Oyefusi&Oriakha (1990) describe economic growth as "expansion in capital, labour force output income and consumption". While economic development is the "non quantitative measure of a growing economy".

A nation could be term to develop or developing if its business and its economy is supported by foreign and local investment. Obafemi (2015), stated that development attempted to build a better society that entails among others society characterized by greater materials prosperity and better life chances for people; improvements in the people's capacity to understand and to tap the resources of their own good and the good of humanity. From the above, it is observed that Nigeria is far from being developed as a good number of its citizen are not enjoying the wealth of the nation.

IMPACT OF MARITIME TRAINING ON SEAFARERS

The impact maritime training on Nigeria seafarers cannot be overemphasis as this has help to boost the economy as cited by Ndikom (2011). Maritime help to provide self-employed for young men and women who want to be involved in shipping activities and reduce the number of people who depend on government on such as services, freight forwarding, ship (fleet) broker importers/exporters and pilot association boat building, ship agent.

- (a) Maritime training help prepare young men and women to be become professional in the field of maritime activities such as marine insurance officers to maritime lawyers.
- (b) Maritime training assist in promoting development and raise the standard of living of the people, whereby poverty rate will be alleviated in the country.
- (c) Maritime training is linked to human capital development of seafarers it has on the individual a significant growth, that may lead to competition among countries.
- (d) Maritime training help in reducing the inflow of foreign professional from other country, thereby, with development of

our human resource for the maritime industry, foreign reserves will be promoted.

- (e) Maritime training will reduce the importation of items produced locally in Nigeria.
- (f) Maritime training is help to bring about rapid economic development. The socio-economic survival of individuals in a country will ensure the socio-economic survival of the country as a nation.
- (g) Maritime training will help young men and women to have a good intelligent understand of the increasing maritime industry complexity.

JOB OPPORTUNITIES FOR MARITIME GRADUATES

Nigeria cannot develop without a well developed maritime industry, there is an employment opportunities abound for the teeming population of maritime grandaunts in all aspects of human endeavour as cited in, Merchant Navy Academy SHB (2010).

Deck Compartment

In the deck compartment maritime graduate can be employed as

- Navigation officers in foreigner going ship
- Coastal and inland water ways navigator
- Ship manager
- Ship safety administrator
- Consultants on maritime related activities
- Ashore and offshore operators in oil company
- Ship chandler
- Nautical science lecturers
- Fishing vessel skippers

Engine Compartment

The engine compartment is another sensitive compartment that maritime graduates can be gainfully employed as

- Engineer in foreign going ship.
- Coastal and inland waterways engineer

- Fishing vessel engineer
- Ship building and repair engineer
- Marine engineers lecturers
- Superintendent engineer
- Ashore and offshore engineers in oil company

MARITIME/SHIPPING MANAGEMENT

Maritime transport subsector in Nigeria can be fully employed young men and women in the management of the shipping activities. Below are some of the opportunities as Merchant Navy Academy SHB (2010).

- Shipping manager
- Ship superintendent
- Ship inspector
- Shipping or maritime lecturers
- Forwarding and clearing agent
- Maritime safety and security officer
- Boat supervisor
- Cargo supervisor
- Administrative officer on board the vessel in oil company
- Traffic manager
- Maritime bank
- Maritime police
- Ship broker and charterer
- Ship agent
- Maritime journalist
- Custom officer
- Maritime department of insurance company
- Military naval police
- Nigeria shippers council
- Nigerian maritime administrative and safety agency (NIMASA)
- Nigeria port authority
- Officer of various ministries dealing with ship and other maritime related issues

- Consultant on maritime activities

Source: Merchant Navy Academy SHB (2010).

Contribution of Maritime Transport to National Development

The maritime industry is a sub-sector of the transport sector which involves people working for transportation companies, it is the power behind global trade and the driver of economic growth which is responsible for the carriage of 90% of world trades of goods that is referred to as the life of blood of the global economy. It has been pointed out that it worth billion of dollars as it is the second largest industry behind oil and gas industry. Indeed it plays a crucial role in the growth, development and transformation of the people and a nation. (Ndikom 2011). No way any nation could progress and developed without its maritime transport. Base on this, Ndikom (2011) articulate the following as the contributions of maritime transport to the economic development of Nigeria:

- Maritime transport provides employment opportunities for a lot of jobless seafarers and the Nigerian youth, as deck workers, mariners, crew staff, freight, forwarders, ship repairs, yard maintenance, in addition to other jobs.
- It provide business opportunities for Nigeria ship owners by allowing vessel owned by Nigerian to move or lift cargo and crew Nigerian waters thereby boosting indigenous participation in the maritime operation.
- Maritime transport provides Nigerian with a good market in the oil and gas sector by ushering in carriage of cargo passengers in the inland and coastal waters of the off-shore exploration and production activities by the oil and gas companies.
- Maritime transport generate revenue to government both at federal and state level by way of fees for registration, approval, licenses and fines.

- Maritime transport also promotes international relationship especially through bilateral and multilateral arrangements with regard to the development of shipping activities.
- Maritime transport provides chandelling business to chandlers who serve as vital link in the maritime sector.
- Maritime transport tourism in the country as a marine recreational facility for a crew numbers visiting a particular port of destination. Cruising in a liner or tugboats is a form of relaxation and leisure activity as a way of cooling off after a long voyage (Ndikom, 2008).
- Maritime transport also promotes international/nation trade and commerce.

CHALLENGES OF MARITIME TRAINING IN NIGERIA

Many maritime institutions in the development countries particularly in Nigeria grapple with numerous and daunting challenges that impose severe constraints on their ability to build successful maritime academy in Africa and Nigeria in particular, thus the maritime institutions are facing various challenges which are:-

- 1) **Inadequate Funding:** Maritime training is very expensive and is capital intensive. Inadequate funding has been the biggest bane of the maritime academy in Nigeria. This has resulted largely from dwindling allocation from NIMASA as well as the maritime academy to improve internally generated revenue (IGR) due to environmental factors. Practical courses that are supposed to bring student to real practical training so as to match the theoretical knowledge in the lecture room has been dash.
- 2) **Weak Infrastructure:** The maritime institution also suffers gross inadequacy of vital infrastructure for teaching, learning and research. It has been reported that equipment for the training of students are obsolete. According to (Ajibade 2013), lecture halls, laboratories, library space books, students hostels, office space are all seriously in adequate. It is on this premise that

many maritime education lectures and instructors resort to theoretical teaching.

- 3) **Low Level of Awareness of Maritime Education.** There is a low level of awareness among Nigerian of maritime. In this regard, patronage of maritime activities and programmes of the academy is very low, except there is a sustained publicity stunt at all a level in other to create the level of awareness among the citizens about the importance of maritime education, this will continue to remain a challenges on the sector.
- 4) **Parental Attitude towards Maritime Studies.** Many parents have soil the seed on their wards by counseling them on the types of profession to be taken due to their educational status.
- 5) **Brain Drain.** The phenomenon of brain drain has drained the maritime institution in Nigeria of his best and most academic staff who have left the country for greener pastures including African countries. Due to this the maritime academy experience shortage of academic staff who are expected to carry out qualitative academic excessive with this gross shortage of academic staff it whittle down the quality of its programmes generally.

CONCLUSION

The paper has examined the circumstances that warrant maritime training as a panacea for employment creation and economic growth and development in Nigeria. Today, the development of the maritime industry depends on the supply of seafarers. The maritime industry in Nigeria no doubt is certainly facing shortage of manpower which could be overcome by articulated workforce from the maritime institution. Therefore, for any country to utilize her population effectively and for gainful employment in the international job, in terms of seafaring, maritime is the way forward.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the prominent role of maritime education to economic growth and development to a nation, the study recommends the following measures:

1. There should be proper awareness programme via various media to enlighten the general public on the importance of maritime education in revamping the nation's economic growth and development.
2. Government should continue with the scholarship program put in place as a way of encouraging and attracting young people who have interest in seafaring job across all state and federal maritime institutions.
3. Government should give maritime education programmes proper attention and good funding so that manpower competencies needed in the maritime industry in Nigeria can be effectively function in other part of the world.
4. Maritime education in the tertiary institution in the country should be furnished with modern educational technologies laboratories so as to enable recipient have practical knowledge.
5. Nigerian Maritime Administration Safety Agency (NIMASA) which is saddled with the responsibilities of maritime activities should equally send and train lecturers and instructors for overseas programmes to update their knowledge.
6. The maritime institutions should collaborate with other institutions and establish a 'Network of Network' in place, so as to utilize and link various disciplines already in place.

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