

# EDUCATION MANAGEMENT IN AFRICA

4

Papers in Honour of Professor John Nwabunike Kwanikwa

B. O. Emmanuel  
E. S. Akinwumi

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EDUCATIONAL MANAGEMENT IN AFRICA:  
PAPERS IN HONOUR OF  
PROFESSOR JOHN IHEUKWUMERE NWANKWO

Edited by:

B. O. Emunemu  
F. S. Akinwumi

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## CHAPTER 34



# THE ROLE OF EDUCATION AS A COMPONENT OF HUMAN CAPITAL DEVELOPMENT AND ECONOMIC GROWTH IN NIGERIA

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### Introduction

Economic growth is considered as one of the notable macroeconomic objectives and has been among issues on the front burner in Nigeria for a very long time. Economic growth include expanding productive capacity over time or increase in real GDP over a period of time; or increase in per capita income (Weil, 2012). Jhinghan (2001) notes that economic growth is a quantitative sustained increase in a country's per capita output or income accompanied by expansion in consumption, capital and volume of trade. He further posits that when you develop the people, they will develop their nation. Nevertheless, economic growth still remains an essential tool for improving the standard of living within a country (Todaro and Smith, 2009). He notes that human capital formation remains a fundamental element in the economic progress of nations.

Improvements in global education level across developing economies based on the requirements of the Millennium Development Goals (MDG) 2015 of the United Nations has to some extent led to improvement in the level of school enrolment, thereby improving economic growth. Cooray (2009) posits that increase in education level of an economy leads to increase in economic growth rate hence improving the government's ability to reduce poverty. He further claimed that increase in economic growth means more income, hence, a better living standard and that a better living standard will lead to quest for further education thereby increasing

secondary enrolment, as there is some spare income to afford the cost of education. He however noted that challenge to increased secondary enrolment in sub-Saharan Africa is greatest. The plot below reveals the relationship between increased primary school enrolment and economic growth levels.

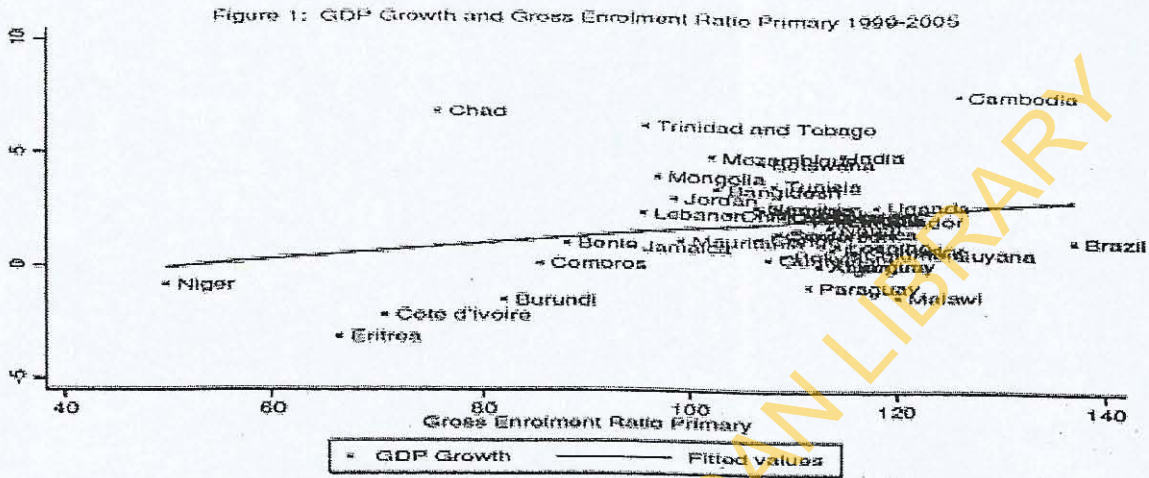


Figure 1.1: GDP growth and school enrolment ratio 1999-2005  
 Source: Cooray (2009, p. 146)

The plot above was used to affirm his claims as countries at the lowest levels are majorly African economies, claiming that secondary enrolment is not possible without first having primary education.

A study conducted by the UNICEF (2010) further substantiates his claims, as it revealed that the most problematic region in terms of secondary school enrolment still remains sub-Saharan Africa. The study revealed Nigeria to still be at the lowest level of improvement in secondary enrolment globally. It also revealed that generally, the global issue on secondary enrolment largely remains a problem of the African continent as they constitute the lowest levels of the chain.

The map below which shows major parts of the developing world was used in explaining their point.



Figure 1.2: Map of secondary school enrolment in various countries  
 Source: UNICEF (2012, p. 12)

## Human Capital Development in Nigeria

The importance of human capital investment cannot be over emphasised in any economy that wishes to attain sustained economic growth. An economy such as Nigeria which is categorised internationally as less developed should put forward economic growth as its major goal.

A major policy enunciated by the federal government which had effect and influenced the course of education in Nigeria since 1960 is the National Policy on Education (NPE). In order to evaluate the educational needs of Nigeria after independence, the Ministry of Education established a commission which was able to come up with a report in September 1960 called the Ashby report. The report recommended investment in education from within and outside the economy.

The proposed expansion of the report included a well-developed agricultural system, developing a multicultural and religious educational system, paving ways for introducing our own literature, a rapid growing technological civilisation, within its own mass communication system as well as research and development institutions. While pursuing these goals, there were challenges such as limited capacity of manpower; therefore, the government contracted on short term basis foreign manpower, at the same time pursued the training of local manpower at home and abroad. After the civil war in 1970, the government felt the need to re-plan the educational system to fit into the national development plan of reconstruction and national rehabilitation.

In the quest for developing the educational sector especially the area of higher education the government established the NPE in 1977, which had the following objectives; to contribute to the nation's development by earning a high level of manpower training; to develop and imbibe the needed values for individual survival and the society at large; physical and intellectual skill acquisition to enable self-reliance among individuals in the society to create usefulness and sense of responsibility to the society at large; to develop the intellectual ability of individuals in the society to be sensitive to their internal and external environment; to promote and motivate community service and scholarships; create and promote national unity and to enhance international as well as national interaction and understanding. These set goals are targeted to be achieved by tertiary institutions through research and development, teaching, creating and dissemination of knowledge and various types of programmes. In 1992, the military government made a decree that every company must contribute two per cent of their pre-tax earnings to the Education Trust Fund (ETF) to fund education in Nigeria. In as much as investment in education as well as human capital have increased in Nigeria over the years with a relatively high rate of population growth in Nigeria, the percentage of government spending on education as at 2010 was less than 2 per cent of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) (CBN,2011). This does not go well for the benchmark set by the United Nations; which is 26 per cent for developing countries. As a matter of fact, this issue constitutes the major reason why the Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU) embark on incessant strike actions consistently every other year since 2009 when the government signed the agreement between ASUU and the government to increase funding of public tertiary institutions. This brings us to the necessity of more human capital investment in Nigeria. Isola and Alani (2012) asserts that government should strive towards meeting the UNESCO benchmark of at least 26 per cent of annual budget dedicated to education. At present, before the 2013 ASUU strike, the federal government's budgetary allocation for education was 8% which is the lowest in the whole of Africa.

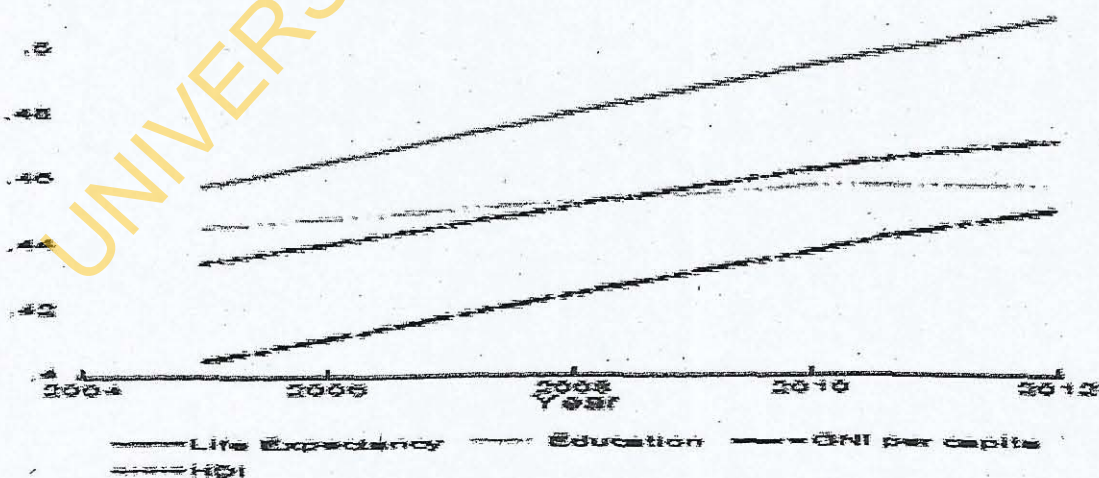
An important factor that has affected human capital development and also economic growth in Nigeria is the flight of human capital (brain drain) in the Nigerian economy. According to Mba and Ekeopara (2012), skills and education are most often cheaper to acquire in developing countries (such as Nigeria), but the institutional framework of the economy deters the growth of this economies as a result of human capital flight. This makes the skilled labour inherent in the economy insufficient for the development of the real sector of the economy to bring about significant effect on growth within the domestic economy.

According to the United Nations Human Development Report-HDR (2013), Nigeria in 2012 in the HDI report ranked 153 out of 187 countries and territories; with its HDI value of 0.471 falling into the low development category. Between 2005 and 2012, Nigeria's HDI value has increased from 0.434 to 0.471.

**Table 1.1: Nigeria's HDI trends based on consistent time series data, new component indicators and new methodology**

Years	life expectancy at birth	Expected years of schooling	Mean years of schooling	GNI per capita (2005 PPP\$)	HDI value
1980	45.5	6.6		1,571	
1985	45.9	8.4		1,202	
1990	45.6	6.5		1,274	
1995	45.1	6.5		1,303	
2000	46.3	7.9		1,285	
2005	49	9	5	1,540	0.434
2010	51.4	9	5.2	1,928	0.462
2011	51.9	9	5.2	2,017	0.467
2012	52.3	9.0	5.2	2,102	0.471

Source: Adopted from Human Development Report (2013, p.2)

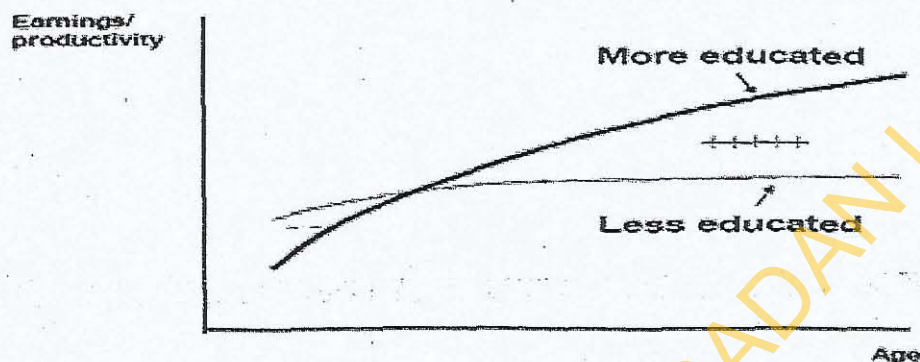


**Figure 1.3: Trends in Nigeria's component indices 2005-2012**

Source: adopted from Human Development report (2013, p.2)

## Literature Review and Theoretical Framework

Psacharopoulos (2006) explains human capital in the context of returns on education. He argues that total factor productivity as described in the Solow model can be accounted for through returns in education. According to him, the more educated an individual is, the higher the productivity and the more productivity in labour, the higher the prospects of earning higher as illustrated in Figure 2.1; the less educated may be actively involved in productive economic activities, but with time, the educated labour force tends to recover its cost of education as they join the active labour force. The training received from education tends to increase productivity, which will guarantee higher earning and also positively impact economic growth in the economy.



**Figure 2.1: Trade off in human capital theory**

Source: Psacharopoulos (2006, p.115)

The Psacharopoulos assumption returns on education has raised quite a number of criticisms. This perspective assumes that the labour markets in economy is so perfect that once schooling has created a certain level of human capital, the labour market allocates to individuals occupation that befits their level of skills. However, the level of feasibility of this assumption is quite questionable. The framework views schooling as a device whereby entry and exit of labour tops up its human capital appropriately.

Human capital theory assumes education is a critical factor in the advancement of the productive capacity of a society. In other words, the central thesis of the human capital theorist is that an educated population is a productive population. Human capital theory underscores the fact that education increases the level of productivity and efficiency of individuals in a given population by increasing their level of productive capabilities through the knowledge they have garnered through the investment.

The Human capital theory is seen here as an appropriate lens to discuss issues involved in this research work because of the role human capital play in relation to economic growth and development. Becker (1993) attributes the growth in per capita income in the US, Japan and many European countries as a function of the expansion of scientific and technical knowledge that raises the productivity of labour. Taking a cue from the data that Becker (1993) referred to as a basis for this submission; it is obvious that countries that have consistently managed persistent growth in income have also had large increases in the education and training of their labour forces.

Several studies have been carried out to underscore the role of human capital in economic growth in Nigeria. Adalakun (2011) researches on the importance of human capital development to the growth of the Nigerian economy. This empirical analysis was based on the modification of Mankiw, Romer and Weil (1992); examining the empirical relationship between economic growth (GDP) of Nigeria and the investments, physical and human capital. The result generates the conclusion that high investment in human capital is the key to the nation's socio-economic development and also the greatest stimulator of economic growth in Nigeria. The result suggests that there is need for an increase in investment in human capital for increased development of human skills and development.

Babatunde and Adefabi (2005) did an empirical research to determine the long run relationship between education and economic growth in Nigeria. This was done using the Johansen cointegration technique and vector error correction methodology; analysing the effect of educated labour force as a factor of productivity and as total factor of productivity. This analysis came up with the need for the government to create policies that will introduce and encourage increase in the level of human capital in Nigeria. This implies that human capital is vital for economic growth. Oluwatoyin's (2012) study was aimed at identifying the role of education and health as components of human capital has on economic growth in Nigeria. From his studies, he concluded that the contribution of human capital to economic growth in Nigeria is below expectation; therefore, the government should create policies that enhance the human capital in Nigeria that will in turn create more growth in the economy.

### **Empirical evidences from developing economies**

In the quest for economic growth by various developing economies, human capital investment have been a key focus; as a major component that needs to be fortified for economic growth and also essential for transition from underdeveloped to a developed economy. Investment in human capital is a relevant tool that enhances productivity and as such a relevant component for sustained economic growth as well as development in any economy. The comparative study of two fast developing economies Singapore and Hong Kong are good cases where productivity has played a major role in their transition process.

Singapore and Hong Kong are two recent fast developing economies referred to as part of the "four tigers" by Easterly (1995). Both countries though similar in every respect had their individual economic differences. Yong's (1995) carries out an analysis of both countries, and from his findings in Hong Kong, economic growth depends on productivity while Singapore's economy depends on factor accumulation.

However, a country that depends on mere factor accumulation may experience rapid growth; but this growth may not sustainable. The government of Singapore, in response to this, invested in special programme and strategies to raise the idea of productivity. This involved the training and orientation to small scale entrepreneurs and traders on the maximisation of output and increased profit. The implication of this is that there is the need for sustainable growth in any economy through investing in productive activities that are crucial in boosting economic growth as well as sustaining it. However every growing economy (such as Nigeria) needs increased productivity and productivity is grossly determined by how much is invested in training and acquisition of skills to boost the efficiency of the labour force.

Evident from the work of Noorbakhsh et al (2001) on human capital and FDI inflows is that FDI flows to limited number of developing countries is a function of the skilfulness and productivity of the labour force. They argued that developing countries could attract FDI by pursuing government policies that improve the domestic skill level of labour and build the human resource abilities of which could be made possible through human capital development. Miyamoto (2003) also argued that boosting the level of human capital of an economy is a major attraction for FDI in a developing economy. Boosting the level of human capital begins by creating robust and enduring institutional framework and policies, creating an enabling environment for human resource development and also developing the management skills and competency in a developing economy.

Haldar and Mallik (2010) research on the investment of physical capital and human capital (education and health) and how they both affect economic growth in an economy using India as a case study. The theoretical model adopted is the endogenous model which emphasizes the need for human capital accumulation led economic growth. They argued that education has an indirect effect on economic growth and that it is most likely captured by improvement in productivity. Therefore efficiency in labour is influenced by human capital investment. The endogenous growth theories have stimulated the need for human resource development through spill over and overflow from the gain of education which is accountable for economic growth in many countries, such as India and other Asian economies.

Kwon (2009) focuses on human capital and measuring human capital; that is measuring approaches that capture both quantitative and qualitative aspect of human capital. This study begins with the concept of human capital, based on the viewpoint of Schultz (1961) and Sheffrin (2003). These scholars deduced human capital as knowledge embodied in all levels of a nation. His research covered a lot on the characteristics of human capital which he argued are mostly quantitative approaches therefore does not capture the qualitative aspect of human capital development. Efficient and accurate measurement is needed by every economy whether developed or developing to know their status in economic growth as well as developing a relevant strategic plan for the growth and development of the economy and also a strong base for creating policies towards economic growth. In order to produce proxies of human capital that are more qualitative, he suggested that more attention should be directed towards the use of Human Development Indicators (HDI) sourced from the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and also Key Indicators of the Labour Market (KILM) used by the International Labour Organisation (ILO).

### **Methodology**

This research study being an empirical analysis will make use of a quantitative research method which involves a descriptive analysis to show the trends and correlations among the major factors that influences human capital and economic growth in the Nigerian economy. This research study will be using microfit 5.0 to show descriptive graphs and statistical tables that shows the relationship between variables used. The data is a time series data that spans from 1980 to 2010, a total of thirty one years. The data is sourced from the World Bank: world development indicators, (2012).

**Gross Domestic Product (GDP) Per Capita:** gross domestic product can be generally defined as the final goods and services produced in a country in a year (Weil, 2012 p.320). The



Gross domestic product per capita is the GDP divided by a country's population. GDP per capita is very important in any growth model because it measures the economic performance; as utilised by various growth models, such as Solow, Romer and Lucas growth models as well as Mankiw et al (1992) and many more. In this study, it is indicated using the proxy (GG) which is GDP per capita at constant prices in the economy.

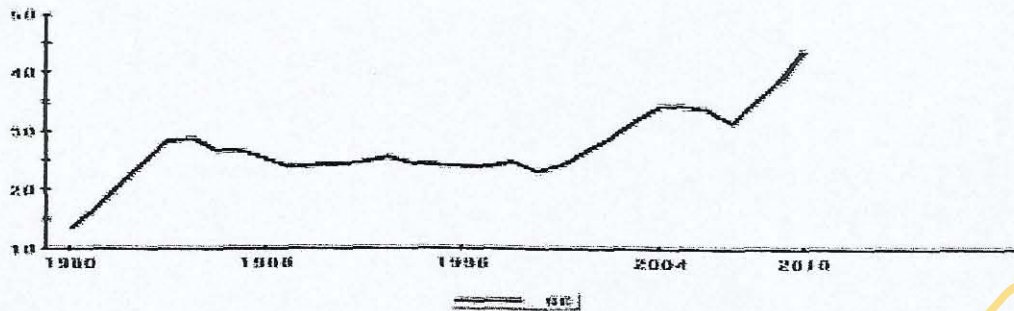
**Human Capital:** Human capital can be described as qualities that comes in form of education and health that enhances the productivity of labour through past investment in them. Though human capital can come in different forms but education is described to be the most important form due to its high positive externalities involved in it (Psacharopoulos and Patrinos, 2004). In capturing human capital in this model, we utilised (SE) secondary enrolment as a per cent of GDP as a proxy for human capital as utilised by endogenous growth models (Mankiw et al, 1992).

### **Figure 3.1: Trend of GDP per capita in Nigeria**

Where: GG is GDP per capita at constant prices, used as a proxy for economic growth.

*Source: Author's computation from data sourced from World Bank WDI (2012)*

Viewing on the average, GDP per capita in the 80s, recorded a downward trend during these years; however towards the end of the 80s the economy experienced a trend of upward movement at the early 90s. The trend maintained a quite stable but rippling level until the mid-2000s which record a rapid upward movement in its trend. The economy faced a steady decrease in growth between 1980 and 1984. This decrease Onoh (1983) claims is due to the fall in growth during that period to the global oil glut of the late 70s. Nigeria also experienced a sharp growth from 1985 that was cut shut in 1987, however, the economy also experience d a sharp upward growth trend from 1988 up through 1993. According to the claim of Adefeso and Mobolaji (2010), these changes came as a result of the introduction of the Structural adjustment programmes (SAP), which was initially rejected by Nigerians at its introduction in 1986, but it later took effect from 1988 and caused the upward growth trend up until 1993 when the SAP period elapsed. Nevertheless, the rate of growth was rather wavy all through 1994 to 2004. In 2004, the National Economic empowerment development strategy (NEEDS) launched the beginning of a new economic agenda in Nigeria. The NEEDS came with four goals which includes generating employment, creation of wealth, value reorientation creation of wealth and poverty reduction. The major objectives of this programme were to enhance non-oil exports, improve productivity in agriculture and increase the capacity utilised in industries, and also to diversify the economy (NPC, 2004).



**Figure 3.2: Trend of secondary school enrolment in Nigeria**

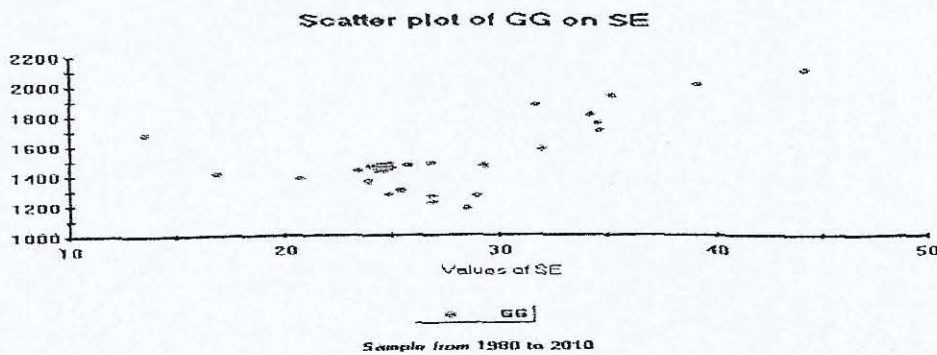
Where: SE is secondary school enrolment as a percentage of GDP per capita is used as a proxy for human capital in Nigeria.

Source: Author's computation from data sourced from World Bank WDI (2012)

Human capital is given as the ratio of secondary school enrolment as percentage of GDP. Human capital growth as a function of economic growth in Nigeria has on the average experienced an upward trend. The country experienced a steady increase in the level human capital from 1980 to 1985. This steady rise has been attributed to a range of policies made shortly before and around that period. Imam (2003), stated that the universal policy on education (UPE) of 1976, made basic education free and universal. He stated that the policy increased school enrolment; thereby stimulating the population that moved on to higher levels of education.

Osili (2005) states that the change in constitution of 1979, made provision for the first revised national policy on education of 1981. This he argued was a crucial factor that in stimulating school enrolment (SE) in the period of 1985 to 1988 experienced sharp drops in school; enrolment levels and maintained a gentle gradual and steady decline through 2000. This according to Okoroma (2006) has a backdrop of successive military governments that little or no cognisance for the importance of education, thereby not stimulating the educational sector. Adesina (2004) argues that the slow level of school enrolment could possibly be as a result of the hardship experienced in their country during this period, with high cost of living and low living standard levels, leading to a situation where education becomes a luxury and parents had to involve their children in child labour to meet the consummation needs of the family.

The period from around 2001-2010 has however experienced increasing levels of school enrolment. This period has experienced continuous democratic rule, coupled with high economic growth rate which has an average above 7.4 percent during this period (World Bank, 2010) and policies such as the MDG 2015 that has basic education for all children across the world has one of its key objective, vision 20:20:20 that aims at putting Nigeria among the 20 largest economies in the globe. Also, other policies include the seven point agenda which was targeted at assisting in achieving the MDG 2015 and the vision 20:20:20. The national economic empowerment development scheme (NEEDS) introduced in the early 2005, also had education crucial to its achievement, making government increase attention paid to the sector. On the average human capital experience upward trend in the early mid-80s, downward trends from mid-80s to early 2005 and since then till 2010 upward trends.



**Figure 3.3: Scatter plot of human capital and economic growth in Nigeria**

Source: Author's computation from data sourced from World Bank WDI (2012)

The scatter plot in figure 3.3 shows the nature of relationship existing between both human capital and economic growth in the Nigerian economy. The scatter plot over the period takes are clustered towards an upward direction. This indicates that a positive relationship exist between economic growth (GG) and human capital (SE) in the Nigerian economy. This implies that human capital has a positive impact on economic growth.

**Table 3.1: Correlation coefficients of variables**

	GG	SE
GG	1.000	0.65939
SE	0.65939	1.000

Source: Author's computation from data sourced from World Bank WDI (2012)

Table 3.1 above shows the correlation among the variables in the model. SE has positive relationship with GG. The coefficient of correlation range from -1 to 1, the closer the coefficient of a variable is to 1, the higher the correlation of the variable. The scatter graph in figure 4.4, already established a positive relationship between human capital and economic growth, therefore the above table shows the coefficient between human capital and economic growth at 0.66. The result therefore further asserts that there is a significant positive relationship between human capital and economic growth in Nigeria.

### Conclusion

In conclusion, from this study it is evident that human capital has a positive relationship with economic growth, as earlier suggested by the literature. Todaro and Smith (2009) claimed that economic growth is not sufficient for development which requires the reflection of economic growth in the living standard of the people as economic growth can be just a numerical phenomenon. This improved living standard includes other components of human capital development such as access to quality health and welfare as well as education which will further increase growth and thereby creating a cycle of some sort and leading to sustainability of growth.

Nigeria in recent times experienced an increasing level of human capital accumulation, if using the secondary school enrolment level as a proxy is anything to go by. There however would be need to ensure that the acquired manpower is relevant and competitive globally by creating a well-planned and structured educational system that is directed towards improving human capital development. Further studies can therefore focus on examining the quality and level of competitiveness of the Nigerian human capital in a global setting.

### Recommendations

The developmental view of social welfare is recommended as it is a process of planned social change designed to promote the well-being of the population as a whole in conjunction with a dynamic process of economic development (Midgley, 1995).

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