

Chapter 22

Reshaping Education for the New Labour Market in Sub-Saharan African Countries

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ABSTRACT

This chapter examines the vital role of education and training in the new labour market. It explores the relative importance of technical education and computer literacy for all able working citizens in sub-Saharan African countries. It states that heavy investment in education and training has a great return on productivity and has the potential to change societies for all citizens. The literature on new labour market documents that sub-Saharan African countries that have changed their educational system to reflect technical competency have been able to develop their workforce productivity and national economic development. It asserts that government policies on education and training should be of utmost priority to governance in order to enhance the labour market in the 21st century.

INTRODUCTION

The past four decades has witnessed a renewed focus on the link between education and training for the new labour market, especially in developing countries (Leuven & Oosterbeek, 2004). The new labour market is the collaborative economy which is facilitated by technologically skilled workforce and the prominent use of internet-based services. The new labour market thrives on factors such as the technological investment climate of a country, economic growth and productivity, financial markets, and the

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foreign direct investment (Lindahl, & Krueger, 2001). Similarly, investment by national governments in the areas of primary and secondary education often determines the availability of skilled labour force capable of meeting the needs of the new labour market. The impact of technology in the new labour market is also noted in many developing countries, since the development of a country's human resources and economic productivity are all connected to the introduction of technology in the economy. Since the new global order has intertwined organisations with markets through internet services, developing countries are gradually changing to the new labour market which seeks for a vibrant labour force equipped with technical skills and digital capabilities.

Not surprising, much of the research on the new labour market has focused on the state of educational reforms and its effects on the economic development of the economies in the developing countries (Mingat, 1998; Teal, 2011). The purpose of this chapter therefore seeks to examine the evolving role of both the educational and training development as well as its contributions to the new labour market.

BACKGROUND

The value of education and training is critical in the new labour market in achieving favourable economic outcomes (Autor, Levy, Murnane, 2003). Appropriate education along with training is essential for the new labour market which primarily requires technical expertise. The literature on labour market documents that technical education is important in developing human capital and the economy of a country (Hanushek & Woessmann, 2007). For developing countries in sub-Saharan African, the presence of natural resources such as crude oil, gold, diamond, bauxite, manganese and others imply that much concern should be devoted to the technical training and education of its citizens as a national development strategy. Likewise, the presence of large natural resources indicates that renew emphasis must be geared toward enhancing the skills of the labour force. Research studies on economic growth and development activities has focused on the important role of skilled labour force in attaining sustainable rate of output growth, lowering poverty and improving social development (Kurt, 2015). The study by Boccanfuso, Larouchet and Trandafir (2015) examine how improvement in higher education has impacted the labour market of highly-educated individuals in Senegal. It focuses on the short-term benefits of the country's educational reforms in the first decade of the twenty-first century. The authors also emphasized on likely contributions on the quality of the graduates on the labour market in Senegal.

The objectives of this book chapter seek to explore the background of the new labour market and the changes resulting from technological advancement over the past four decades. Similarly, this chapter will examine the historical contexts of the new labour market and its influence on growth and development of economies in developing countries. In so doing, this chapter will delve into the following educational and technological factors that influence the new labour market; (i) the role of education on the new labour market; (ii) the role of training on the new labour market; (iii) the role of technology on the new labour market; (iv) the impact of globalisation on the new labour market in developing countries and (v) the impact of migration on the new labour market. The chapter offers recommendations for enhancing the skilled workforce to meet the needs of the new labour market in developing countries and concludes with an analysis of the suitable policies necessary to foster the attainment of the required technical skills for the new labour market.

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