Volume 19 Issue 52
Originally issued as D3



Global Journal of human-social science: D
History, Archaeology & Anthropology
Volume 19 Issue 3 Version 1.0 Year 2019
Type: Double Blind Peer Reviewed International Research Journal
Publisher: Global Journals
Online ISSN: 2249-460X & Print ISSN: 0975-587X

Nigerian Tertiary Institutions: Torch Bearers and the Paradox of Illumination

By Oladipo, Folusho Adewumi
Bowen University

Abstract- The Nigerian tertiary institution comprise of universities, polytechnics, mono-technics and colleges of education; public and private. A critical assessment of these institutions would show they have fallen short of the responsibilities of education, and being beacons or centres of illumination. Togas of excellence are fast becoming icons of reckless manoeuvrings and decline in standards and quality of education. Though there may be slight differences, what is true of one is true of all.

The paper highlights the various ways in which Nigerian institutions are falling short of expectations of radiating brilliance, excellence, integrity, and truly training the mind and character. This article deploys thematic approach of analysis through fact based arguments and narration, anchored on primary and secondary sources.

The paper concludes by raising a critical question that ' a mind that knows is a mind that is truly free ' a reflection of the Nigerian tertiary institutions ?

Keywords: *torch bearers, education, illumination, tertiary institution.*

GJHSS-D Classification: *FOR Code: 430199*



Strictly as per the compliance and regulations of:



© 2019. Oladipo, Folusho Adewumi. This is a research/review paper, distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution-Noncommercial 3.0 Unported License http://creativecom-mons.org/licenses/by-nc/3.0/), permitting all non-commercial use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work is properly cited.

Nigerian Tertiary Institutions: Torch Bearers and the Paradox of Illumination

Oladipo, Folusho Adewumi

Abstract- The Nigerian tertiary institution comprise of universities, polytechnics, mono-technics and colleges of education; public and private. A critical assessment of these institutions would show they have fallen short of the responsibilities of education, and being beacons or centres of illumination. Togas of excellence are fast becoming icons of reckless manoeuvrings and decline in standards and quality of education. Though there may be slight differences, what is true of one is true of all.

The paper highlights the various ways in which Nigerian institutions are falling short of expectations of radiating brilliance, excellence, integrity, and truly training the mind and character. This article deploys thematic approach of analysis through fact based arguments and narration, anchored on primary and secondary sources.

The paper concludes by raising a critical question that ' a mind that knows is a mind that is truly free ' a reflection of the Nigerian tertiary institutions ?

Keywords: torch bearers, education, illumination, tertiary institution.

I. Introduction

Education is a means of transmitting culture from one generation to another and the process of bringing about a relatively permanent change in human behaviour.[1] It is not limited to the four walls of a class nor restricted to a specific location. The Nigerian tertiary institution comprises of universities, polytechnics, monotechnics and colleges of education. These institutions are paradoxes of standards and illumination. Rather than being beacons and serving the true purposes of education, they are fast becoming togas of reckless manoeuvring and decline in the standards and quality of education. Though they have slightly different administrative structures, the decline in educational values in the universities is same for the other centres of higher learning.

Historically, the transformation of higher education in Nigeria can be traced to the arrival and growth of Britain in the 19th century in areas now regarded to as Nigeria.[2] The earliest introduction of formal education was in 1842 by Wesleyan Christian Missionaries in Badagry for reasons of creating understanding between the colonial rulers and native Nigerians for the securing of territorial space.[3] Various other religious outfits followed suit in the establishment of centres of learning such as Baptist Primary Schools, among others. These early centres of learning were mission schools run exclusively by respective establishing Christian organizations. It focused on the winning / conversion of souls hence the purposes which education served in this regard were tailored towards the infamous 4r: Reading, Writing, Arithmetic and Religion. In 1925, an advisory committee on education was established by the British government in response to international pressure put on it by America for the establishment if a commission that would cater for educational needs of the colonies. The committee played significant roles in the pursuit of colonial education goals by facilitating the establishment of departmental training schools of survey in 1908 but the lands and survey department moved to Ibadan in 1926 and Oyo in 1934. [4] Following suit were the establishment of courses / centres for Marine Department Course in 1928, School of Agriculture in 1930 with centres in Ibadan and Samaru in Zaria, Junior Technical Training Course in 1931, Post Telegraph Course also in 1931 and the Nigerian Railway Course in 1936.[5] The appointment of E.J.R Hussey as director of education in 1930 played important roles in the introduction of three levels of education namely Elementary, Secondary and vocational training to provide assistants in medical, engineering and other vocations as well as teachers of higher middle

Author: Bowen University, Iwo, Osun state, Nigeria.
e-mail: Folusho.alabi@bowenuniversity.edu.ng

[1] Nwachukwu, P, Undutimi,J, et al. 2013 Education for Development: Impediments to the Globalisation of Higher Education in Nigeria. *International Journal of Educational Foundations and Management.* 1.2:110.

[2] Nwachukwu, P, Undutimi, J, et al. 2013 Education for Development: Impediments to the Globalisation of Higher Education in Nigeria. *International Journal of Educational Foundations and Management.* 1.2:110.

[3] Ololube, N. 2009 *Understanding Teachers Professiona Competencies for Education Effectiveness.* Owerri: Springfield .

[4] Adebayo, O. & Kolawole, T 2013 the Historical Background of Entrepreneurial Development in Nigeria: It's Gain, Shortcomings and Needful. *Journal of Emerging Trends in Economics and Management Sciences. (JETEMS).* 4.5:495.

[5] Adebayo, O. & Kolawole,T 2013 The Historical Background of Entrepreneurial Development in Nigeria: Its Gain, Shortcomings and Needful...P.495.

© 2019 Global Journals

schools. [6] Yaba Higher College now Yaba College of Technology (YABATECH) was formally established in 1934 to provide other vocational course trainings.

The inadequacies of the above education resulted it the establishment of the commission on Higher Education in June 13, 1943 in West Africa under the leadership of Sir Walter Elliot by the colonial government with mandate of identifying needs for higher education institutions. [7] The reports of the commission paved way for the establishment of University College Ibadan in 1948 now University of Ibadan... [8] While the hitherto training centres were sustained they were upgraded while some others were newly established.

II. Conceptual Clarification

Your dictionary defined a torch bearer among other definition as a person who brings enlightenment, truth, imparts and an inspiration to others. According to the Word Hippo Dictionary, a torch bearer is one that blazes a trail to guide others, leads or inspires others in working towards a valued goal. Building on these definitions and for the purposes of this paper, a torch bearer is an entity, individual or organisation that is an inspiration, a guide worthy of emulation in deeds and character and is expected to sustain this status ascribed to it.

Illumination according to the Merriam Webstar Dictionary is the action of supplying or brightening with light or the resulting state. It is a product emanating from a lightening. Hence it is inextricably tied to light and a resultant product of torch bearers.

Nigerian Institutions referred to in this work include Universities, Polytechnics, monotechnics and Colleges of Education. It is on the basis of these clarifications that these concepts will be addressed.

III. Overview of the Nigerian Tertiary Education System

The Nigerian tertiary education is one that is heavily subscribed as a result of increasing population of teeming youths who aspire to gain admission into Nigerian tertiary institutions. Sadly, the huge surge in demand has results in hundreds of thousands of aspirants turned down yearly because of the limited capacities of the various higher learning centres. Tertiary education in Nigeria is a shared responsibility or administered by the federal and state governments respectively. The Federal government through the Federal Ministry of Education is more directly involved with tertiary institutions than with pre-tertiary school education that is a responsibility of state (secondary) and local (primary) governments. [9] The contemporary pattern of four years especially for most courses save Law, Engineering and Agriculture courses was introduced in 1987 after the candidate must have spent six years in the primary education, three in the junior secondary and three years in the senior secondary.

According to the National Policy on Education [10] ... University education is for four years for most courses except Medicine, Architecture, Engineering and other allied courses. Polytechnic education is for a period of four years broken down into two stages of two years for the Ordinary National Diploma (OND) and two years for the Higher National Diploma (HND) and a compulsory one year work placement and industrial attachment Scheme...The National Certificate of Education (NCE) spans for a period of three years...

The tertiary education consists of a university sector, non university which comprises of polytechnics, monotechnics and colleges of education. The Joint Admission Matriculation Board established by Act 2 of 1978 of the Military Government and amended into Decree No 33 in 1989 was empowered to conduct matriculation examinations for entry into all universities, polytechnics and colleges of education. [11] The conduct of examination into tertiary institutions were however unified in 2014 Unified Tertiary Matriculation Exam (will subsequently be referred to as UTME). Hitherto, it has been conducted individually such as Joint Admission Matriculation Exam for Universities (will be subsequently referred to as JAMB), Poly JAMB, for Polytechnics, Monotechnics, etc. Owing to the decline in the standard of education, the Post JAMB now POST UTME was introduced in 2004 upon the need to admit into universities school leavers who had cognitive competencies and intuitive sense which were essentials for learning in the university. [12] Candidates who passed JAMB and scored above cut off marks set by the examination conducting body and individual institutions would sit for the post UTME and their success qualifies them for an admission spot. However, the education space is such that is riddled with politics. There is the place for academic excellence and politics. Both

[6] Adebayo, O. & Kolawole,T 2013 The Historical Background of Entrepreneurial Development in Nigeria: Its Gain, Shortcomings and Needful...P.495.

[7] Enaohwo, J. 1985 Emerging Issues in Nigerian Education – The Case of the Level and Scope of Growth of Nigerian Universities. *Journal of Higher Education*. 14:308.

[8] Enaohwo, J. 1985 Emerging Issues in Nigerian Education – The Case of the Level and Scope of Growth of Nigerian Universities. *Journal of Higher Education*. 14:308.

[9] Ojo, A., Wahab,B & Ogundipe, A. 2014 Students' Enrolment into Tertiary Institutions in Nigeria: The Influence of the Founders Reputation – Case Study. *Computing, Information Systems, Development Informatics and Allied Research Journal*. 5.3:57.

[10] National Policy on Education (NPE) 2004. 4th Edition.

[11] Decree. 2019. Retrieved February 25, 2019, www.jamb.gov.ng.

[12] Post-UTME: Varsities Deviated from 2004 Agreement-Okebukola. *Vanguard News Nigeria*. June 2016. Retrieved February 25, 2019 from vanguardngr.com/2016/06/post-utme-varsities-deviated-2004-agreement-okebukola/amp/

© 2019 Global Journals

combined or either guaranteed prospective students admission.

Nigerian tertiary institutions are divided into public and private. Public institutions are government owned namely Federal and State Universities, Polytechnics and Colleges of Education. They are heavily dependent on funds from the government. However they secure sponsorships and grants from International Organisations such as the United Nation Educational Scientific Commission, United Nations, Non Governmental Organisations such as Mac Arthur Foundation, Bill and Melinda Gates, etc. Nigerian private institutions are owned / run by individuals, religious organisations and other Nongovernmental organisations. They are heavily dependent on internally generated revenues particularly from students' school fees, contributions from founder(s) or proprietor(s). Their funding is not limited to the mention but also include donations from well meaning Nigerians, Nongovernmental organisations, business organisations, etc. Though they are regulated by the federal government through various agencies such as the National Universities Commission, National Board for Technical Education (NBTE), they are not funded by the government. Their establishment have being controversial as some scholars regard private institutions as profit oriented enterprises.

A common phenomenon to both public and private institutions is the dearth of funds which is the bed rock of dwindling Nigerian tertiary education. The federal government has being falling short of its responsibilities of funding education in public institutions. Private institutions have also not being better off in this regard. In recourse to addressing paucity of funds, institutions have resorted in raising internally generated revenues through some exploitative measure under which parents and wards groan.

IV. The Paradox of Illumination

Tertiary institutions scholars are regarded to as minds that know and are charged with the responsibilities of emancipating from mental slavery, training minds, character and producing students worthy in learning and character. On the basis of their knowledge, they are believed to be responsible, credible, forthright and embodiments of integrity. It is on the basis of this status that they are assigned to perform and provide adhoc services to government and other agencies. Capacities in which they have served include being Returning Officers for the Independent National Electoral Commission, Chairs of government agencies such as the Nigerian Electoral Body among others. The deployment of university scholars particularly for national democratic process became preponderant in the 21st century Nigerian democratic process. However, togas of integrity have turned togas of political manoeuvrings and stunts particularly for the ruling class. A Nigerian Returning Officer is one appointed on an adhoc basis by the Nigerian electoral body to ensure that an election is in accordance with the law in the area designated. However, some scholars that have acted in this capacity have been accused of partiality, engaging or playing somersaults with simple arithmetic of election results, and declaring electoral process inconclusive among other charges laid. Hence causing disrepute to the respected academia.

In the resort to sourcing for funds by Nigerian institution in the face of neglect and dwindling funds, a compulsory subtle extortion strategy has been put in place in the forms of acceptance fees, developmental fees, Identity card fees without being served identity cards was one of the fundamental grievances of students revolt in one of the public universities in western Nigeria. A great number of prospective students are denied the opportunity of being undergraduates' haven passed through the tedious processes of passing the UTME and post-UTME but still miss out of the eventual matriculation due to inabilities to pay acceptance fee. The acceptance fee is a compulsory payment made by candidates offered admissions in higher centres of learning, however valid with its payment as an indication of willingness to take up the admission offer. The fee ranges from #10,000 and above. It is not in any way connected to tuition fees but rather a subtle way of extorting Nigerian students. The payment of this extortion fee cuts across all levels of tertiary education ranging from undergraduate to postgraduate. Non payment of this fee guaranteed an automatic loss of admission. Worthy of note is the fact that many Nigerian parents and wards subscribe to Nigerian public institutions, not for standards but economic reasons. [13] With the high poverty rate in Nigeria, many families cannot afford the exorbitant fees charged by private institutions though having its benefits such as guaranteed convocation day, freedom from incessant age long strikes among other benefits. Despite the options of public universities, a very many public tertiary institution subscribers still cannot afford tuition fees which ranges from 30,000 naira to 250,000 naira, and in their financial in capabilities, the burden of paying acceptance fee is unavoidably laid on them. The loss of admission on the grounds of inability to pay acceptance fees has left disgruntled feelings, frustration, desperation and disappointments in parents and prospective student. Centres that should illuminate light and be examples of an ideal society have being caught in the web of subtle extortion.

Sexual corruption and perversion is a negation to the illumination expected to be radiated by torch

[13] Aladejobi, J. Student of the Faculty of Education, University of Ibadan. Phone Interview conducted on February 25, 2019.

© 2019 Global Journals

bearers in the education sector. In the researcher's interviews, the researcher conducted interviews on some students of The Polytechnic Ibadan and University of Ibadan. In the Polytechnic Ibadan, a female lecturer has been accused of specialises in sexually harassing her students and would go the extra mile in achieving her aims otherwise failure awaits such students. Sexual corruption include sex for mark, a rampant examination malpractice form whereby morally debased lecturers extort sex and sexual intimacies from both male and female students to award marks directed at both weak and brilliant students. In a nationwide survey by Exam Ethics Marshal International in 2014 indicated that not less that 50billion naira was extorted from students in tertiary institutions each session, coughing out 25,000 to 50,000 for sorting or settlement and not less than 200,000 female students are subjected to sexual extortion each year. [14] Sexual perversion of this sort is one of the highest forms of sexual exploitation in Nigeria, emanating from a supposed centre of illumination.

Flowing from the above is also the settlement pattern engaged in by some bad omen of non academic staff of tertiary institution. These bad omens are settled or sorted by students in return for boosting of marks.

The illumination paradox in the Nigerian tertiary educational system is however not limited to tertiary staff members but has also flowed down to students of higher institutions, consequently fulfilling the law of law. Though blames have being laid at doorsteps of tertiary workers, the disposition of students have also left a lot to be desired. Some victims of institutional sexual assault are masterminds of these acts against them. The decency and modesty on Campuses have fallen save institutions that have dress codes and ensure their compliance. Some students adorn themselves with skimpy, revealing dresses inspiring erotic feelings and often times lead to sexual exploitation forgetting the essence of dressing which is a reflection of attitudes and personality. Rather than being agents of illumination, they are agents of temptation and stumbling block.

Some students that are being trained to be worthy in learning and character or those that have being found worthy are displaying their worthiness in fraudulent activities such as internet fraud, scam popularly regarded to as yahoo yahoo or yahoo plus. This crime became prevalent in Nigeria in the wake of the 21st century with access to internet. [15] Skills that should be channelled to the course of self and societal advancement are being deployed for scam and fraud consequently turning innovative minds to grand masters of internet fraud. Students caught in this web are falling short of expectations of training other minds to be useful to their society. Nigerian being a heavily monetised society has encouraged the engagement in get quick acts which provide overnight riches, owing choice properties at any cost. Scam is performed in various shades and through divergent methods. A popular state owned university in the south western Nigeria has been labelled by the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission as having an outstanding level of cybercrimes, a paradox of education.

The conduct of some student bodies is a negation of the illumination expected with the National Association of Nigerian Students (NANS) as study, the foremost Nigerian student representative association. The association was birthed in 1980 as a successor of the National Union of Nigerian Students (NUNS). NANS was established to represent the interest of millions of Nigerian students both within and outside the country. However the reverse of responsibilities seem to be the case as its activities range from political puppetry in the hands of public office holders, taking sides with the government with evidence from the February 9, 2019 3 months strike suspension by Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU) which deployed the use of industrial actions to achieve the revitalization and resuscitation of public universities by the federal government. Rather than lending a voice to the pursuit of a revitalized education, they were caught in the web of attempting to disrupt ASUU negotiations with government and promising 20 million votes to a Nigerian presidential candidate. Hitherto September 2018, awards or recognition was not on the basis of credibility but for the scoring of cheap political recognition. [16]

V. Conclusion

The Nigerian tertiary institutions over the years are fast falling short of the high hopes and expectations of education institutions which are meant to centres of productive ideas, integrity, guide and emancipation: products of government failing responsibilities at providing basic amenities for the public and reduced expenditure on researches. The activities of many Nigerian institutions, deeds of staff and students leave little to be desired of expectations from minds that truly knows. Is "a mind that knows is a mind that is truly free" a reflection of the reality of the Nigerian tertiary institutions?

[14] Sex-for-marks:Okebukola Wrong to Blame Students. *PMNews. October 2018.* Retrieved from www.pmnewsnigeria.com/2018/10/19/sex-for-marks-okebukola-wrong-to-blame-students/.

[15] Prevalence of Internet Fraud Among Nigerian Youths. *The Guardian.* January 2017. Retrieved from https://guardian.ng/saturday-magazine/prevalence-of-internet-fraud-among-nigerian-youths/amp/.

[16] 8 Ugly Sides of National Association of Nigerian Students (NANS). *Nigerian Bulletin.* July, 2016. Retrieverd from www.nigerianbulletin.com/threads/8-ugly-sides-of-national-association-of-nigerian-students-nans.216666241.

© 2019 Global Journals

Bibliography

1. Adebayo, O. & Kolawole, T 2013 The Historical Background of Entrepreneurial Development in Nigeria: Its Gain, Shortcomings and Needful. *Journal of Emerging Trends in Economics and Management Sciences. (JETEMS).* 4.5:495.
2. Aladejobi, J. Student of the Faculty of Education, University of Ibadan. Phone Interview conducted on February 25, 2019.
3. Decree. 2019. Retrieved February 25, 2019, www.jamb.gov.ng.
4. Enaohwo, J. 1985 Emerging Issues in Nigerian Education – The Case of the Level and Scope of Growth of Nigerian Universities. *Journal of Higher Education*. 14:308.
5. National Policy on Education (NPE) 2004. 4th Edition.
6. Nwachukwu, P, Undutimi, J, et al. 2013 Education for Development: Impediments to the Globalisation of Higher Education in Nigeria. *International Journal of Educational Foundations and Management.* 1.2:110.
7. Ojo, A., Wahab, B & Ogundipe, A. 2014 Students' Enrolment into Tertiary Institutions in Nigeria: The Influence of the Founders Reputation – Case Study. *Computing, Information Systems, Development Informatics and Allied Research Journal.* 5.3:57.
8. Ololube, N. 2009 *Understanding Teachers Professional Competencies for Education Effectiveness.* Owerri: Springfield.
9. Post-UTME: Varsities Deviated from 2004 Agreement-Okebukola. *Vanguard News Nigeria*. June 2016. Retrieved February 25, 2019 from vanguardngr.com/2016/06/post-utme-varsities-deviated-2004-agreement-okebukola/amp/
10. 8 Ugly Sides of National Association of Nigerian Students (NANS). *Nigerian Bulletin.* July, 2016. Retrieverd from www.nigerianbulletin.com/threads/8-ugly-sides-of-national-association-of-nigerian-students-nans.216666241.

© 2019 Global Journals