

IMPROVING QUALITY UNIVERSITY EDUCATION FOR SUSTAINABLE GROWTH; SECURITY AND DEVELOPMENT IN NIGERIA

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Abstract

This paper reviews the various ways of improving quality university education so as to achieve sustainable growth, security and development in Nigeria. University education is education obtained after the secondary level. Sustainable growth refers to the attainable growth an institution or a country hopes to maintain without problems or defects. Security is freedom from danger, threat or harm. Development is the process that creates growth in the environment. The purpose of this paper is to find out how security, development and sustainable growth can be achieved in Nigeria through quality university education. The objective of this paper is to figure out ways through which there can be quality standard of university education, so as to achieve sustainable growth, security and development in Nigeria. Some of the ways given include provision of adequate funds, installation of adequate number of working security cameras and the introduction of e-learning facilities. The problems facing the achievement of sustainable growth, security and development in Nigeria through university education include lack of funds, greedy and corrupt administrators, tribalism and nepotism. Part of the conclusion made is that university education improvement is a necessity, as it is one of the basic foundations for the development of the country. The way forward is that the federal government through the Federal Ministry of Education and other organizations such as TETFUND should fund university education in order to achieve sustainable growth, security and development in Nigeria. Also, staff and students causing insecurity problems in the university should be properly dealt with.

Keywords: Quality, University Education, Security, Sustainable Growth, Development

To achieve sustainable growth, security, and development in Nigeria, it is important that university education is of top quality. The reason behind this is that the university consists of the youths who are the next generation of leaders, engineers, lawyers, etc in the country. Thus, universities must ensure that the leaders of tomorrow get nothing less than quality education. Quality university education refers to university

education that is without fault. The aim of improving quality education is to promote sustainable development, growth, and security in the Nigerian society, and to achieve an error-free university system that ensures quality university education. This will in turn produce quality products (graduates) who can complete globally. The objective of this paper is to figure out ways in which university education can be at a quality standard to achieve sustainable growth, security, and development in Nigeria. It is important to improve quality university education to provide the Nigerian society with graduates who are sound, both academically and character wise.

Quality

Quality is something everyone considers good and wants to have cited in Babalola, Akpa, Ayeni and Adedeji (2007). Ajayi and Adegbesan (2007) rightly stated that quality refers to the total features of a process, product or service on its performance, in customers or clients perception of that performance. It is not just a feature of a finished product or service but involves a focus on internal processes and outputs and includes the reduction of waste and the improvement or productivity. Ekong (2006) observed that quality builds knowledge, live skills, perspectives, attitudes, and values. Horn by (2000) also said that quality refers to the standard of something when it is compared with other things, like how good or bad that thing is. Obadara and Alaka (2013) submitted that quality is the ability or degree with which a product, service, or phenomenon conforms, to an established standard, and which makes it to be relatively superior to others. Asiyai and Oghuvbu (2009) opined that quality is a measure of how good or bad the products of higher education institutions are in terms of their academic performance and meeting established standards. Idumange and Major (2006) observed that quality in education is usually confused with standards; whereas standards are usually specified targets with measurable indicators for comparative purpose, quality can be referred to an achievement in core function of the university. Peters (1977) as cited in Asuka (2019) views quality in two perspective or dimension, these are the product judgement of quality and the process judgement of quality and the process judgement of the quality. The product judgement refers to the extent to which those who had been to schools satisfying the first and secondly criteria of being educated. These include; the persons who have graduated from school, must be committed to the worthwhile knowledge transmitted to them, while the second criterion demands that the person who has gone through school must have both knowledge and understanding of what he/she claims to know and put this attribute into use. Redwood-Sawyer (2017), Okandeji (2007) and Jaiyeoba and Atanda (2007) identified the following as critical factors in quality of any higher education, namely:

- Professionally qualified faculty.
- State of the art facilities.
- Regular accreditation of courses.
- Adequate funding; and

Improving Quality University Education for Sustainable Growth; Security and Development in Nigeria

•Research publications

Major (2006) in Idumange and Major (2006) also asserted that the quality of university education is measured in the following criteria:

- a) Teaching/learning and research environment,
- b) Quality of students, quality of staff and the university curriculum.
- c) The availability of standard, functional well-equipped laboratories, libraries, special rooms, lecture theaters and audio-visual aids - constitute the teaching and learning environment.
- d) Tougher admission requirements,
- e) Smaller class size,
- f) High quality man-power and manageable teacher-student ratio
- g)

Fadokun (2005) characterized quality in three ways

- (i) Efficiency in the meeting of its goals,
- (ii) Relevance to human and environmental conditions and needs,
- (iii) Something more” that is the exploration of new ideas, the pursuit of excellence and encouragement of creativity.

Education

Ofogbor and Emekedou (2017) quoted UNESCO’s definition of education as the total process of developing human ability and behaviours. They said that education is an organized and sustained instruction designed to communicate a combination of knowledge, skill and understanding, values for all activities of life. Madu (2010) rightly described education as a vehicle that lifts one above conditions unacceptable to him/her. Hamidu (2013) mentioned that education is the complete mental and physical transformation of a person(s) as a result of the structured mode of training that the person(s) acquire to be more productive in a given society. Asuka and Asuka (2017) acknowledged that education has always been a vital tool for achieving individual and national development. Bello and Ayilara (2019) submitted that education is the process of receiving and giving planned instructions in educational institution. Amuche and Kukwi (2013) opined that education is a weapon for acquiring skills, relevant knowledge and habits for survival in an ever changing world and as a dynamic instrument of change which has led developed countries and those aspiring to develop adopting it as an instrument per excellent for effecting national development. Adejumo (2010) sees education as the process of transmitting knowledge through schooling, in order to bring about improvement in the quality of life and meeting the quality of life and meeting challenges of the society. Ndum and Okey (2012) asserted that education as the entire process of the development of an independent and integrated personality which encompasses training and the acquisition of special skills, knowledge, attitudes needed by the individual to be responsible in the society and therefore be able to contribute effectively to the growth of the society. Akpo (2015) posited that education is the process

Stella Ofor-Douglas, Ph.D

of facilitating knowledge through the transfer of skills, values, beliefs and habits under the guidance of educators through the learners may also educate themselves in a process called autodidactic training. Akpoalso submitted that education is the acquisition of knowledge planned or unplanned which enhances the all-round development of human potentials for the good of the individuals and his general society. Okojie (2013) mentioned that education is a process for manpower development which is necessary for the achievement of rapid growth and development in any country. It deals with mental, physical, psychological and social development of citizens in a given society. Luther King Junior(1948) cited by Twebaze (2015) opined that the function of education is to teach one to think intensively and critically.

University Education

University education is education obtained after the secondary school level. The purpose of the university is to train future leaders who will be politicians, educationist, lawyers, engineers, doctors, and scientists etc. The activities of university education include teaching, learning, research, community and skill development. The lofty goals of university education are to be achieved through teaching, research, dissemination of existing and new information, services to community, skill development and a storehouse of knowledge. Ayim (2012) opined that the University is a community of scholars and students engaged in a complex task to which humanity looks up for new knowledge, innovation, ideas and way forward for overall human progress. Adeogun, Subair and Osifila (2009) rightly stated that the entire intellectual and professional life of a country depends on sound education, especially University education that provides quality products (graduates) of international standard.

Benefit of University Education

- Individuals are required to have degrees for a wide range of careers such as medicine, education, engineering, accounting and law and the university provides for the obtainment of such degrees.
- University education will help an individual to succeed in today's workforce and establish an enjoyable career of his/her choice
- The job market is extremely competitive and employers require the services of skilled employees to work for them. This skill can be developed in the university.

Quality Education

Oseni (2014) rightly said that it is the extent to which education accomplishes the various roles ascribed to it such as usefulness of education for employment relevant to the developmental needs of the recipients and the society in which the individuals live and operate as citizens, and achievement of students. Olaleye and Babatope (2013) posited that to pursue quality education system, there should be quality of its inputs, quality of teachers, (lecturers), instructions and evaluating procedure among others, and must be properly supervised for sustenance. Omemu (2015) citing Anikweze (1989)

Improving Quality University Education for Sustainable Growth; Security and Development in Nigeria

noted that quality education is a body of highly valued knowledge also reflected as observable behaviour and performance of the product of educational system. Mu'azu (2011) posited that quality education connoted not only the production of college or university graduates who can perform efficiently and effectively, but those who can function with the right types of values and attitudes for the survival of individuals and society in general. Garba (2014) mentioned that quality education is the ability to satisfy customer's needs, including the learning environment, process, and outcomes (graduates), that the graduates should be able to go into the society and give their worth by their level of performances in the society. Tanagahar and Orokpo (2018) maintained that quality university education involves the coordination of finance, infrastructural facilities, staff, students, and education policies. Universities plan, organize and coordinate human and material resources at their disposal for the overall benefit of the society. Thus, university products who are awarded certificates are considered to have possessed the knowledge and skills to impact on society, having fulfilled all stipulated requirements.

Sustainable Growth

Economic growth is a process of transformation which involves quantitative measure of the goods and services produced by an economy over a period. Wikipedia (2020) defines economy growth as the increase in the inflation-adjusted market value of the goods and services produced by an economy overtime. Economic growth is also defined by Business Dictionary (2020) as an increase in a country's productive capacity, as measured by comparing gross national products (GNP) in a year with the GNP in the previous year. The university is responsible for producing members of the workforce who would contribute to the growth of the nation's economy. Thus, the quality of a Nation's university education would determine whether or not her economy will grow.

Security

Security is freedom from danger, threat or harm. As the saying goes, "where there is peace, there is progress". Bassey (2009) submitted that security are measures put in place to ensure that things work well to one's advantage and which makes sure that nothing goes wrong with what affects one's personal or group interest in whatever way. Security of a nation is paramount to its existence, as the characteristics of nation hood is the ability to provide security for her citizen and to defend her sovereignty and territorial integrity (Udah,2012). Vegher (2013) noted that peace and security have universally been recognized as necessary conditions for development in any society. Adebayo (2013) rightly said that security and crime have been deeply rooted in the political history of Nigeria, particularly in recent times, hence struggle for good governance, sustainable democracy, and development by the few patriotic citizens of the economy. Olive (2010) rightly said that security places individuals at the centre of security equation, thereby bringing in the concept of human security which combines

elements of national security, economic development .and basic human rights. Mukhtar (2012) in his own submission opines that the concept of security has always been associated with the safety and survival of the state and its citizens from harm or destruction or from dangerous threats. Jain and Rao (2011) rightly said that security is the provision against theft and entry of unauthorized persons into work premises and is essential for preventing sabotage. Even though security institutions are available with the duty of protecting their lives and property, they have no confidence in these institutions to carry out their duties efficiently. Thus, they live in trauma, fear, anger, despair, suspicion, and mistrust. Insecurity may also represent an atmosphere, or a state of mind characterized by self-doubt and vulnerability. It is a situation in which the citizens do not feel safe, in which crime rate is high and where the inhabitants feel vulnerable.

Forms of Insecurity in Nigerian Universities

- Theft of personal items of both staff and students as well as university property by hooligans within the university campus.
- Kidnapping of students and lecturers
- Rape of students by fellow students and lecturers
- Cult activities which are characterised by violence
- Riots due to unfavourable university conditions.
- Fire outbreak in laboratories, hostels, and university cafeterias.
- Invasion of university campus by insurgents terrorising the community in which the university is situated.

Development

Development is the process that creates growth in the environment. Sustainable development is the organizing principle for meeting human development goals while simultaneously sustaining the ability of natural systems to provide the natural resources and ecosystem services upon which the economy and society depend. Lawal and Oluwatoyin (2011) maintained that development is a process of societal advancement, where improvement in the well-being of people are generated through strong partnerships between all sectors, corporate bodies and other groups in the society. Sen (2013) maintained that development is a process of expecting the real freedom that people enjoy; that development requires the removal of major sources of unfreedom, poverty, as well as tyranny, poor economic opportunities as well as systematic social deprivation, neglect of public facilities as well, as intolerance or over activities of representative state. Aruma (2010) mentioned that development takes place in a country when the citizens are well educated and acquires the relevant knowledge and skills that will enable them to solve the numerous problems that confront their country and promote national development which will enhance improved living conditions of people. Tomori (2013) rightly put it that, development implies modernization of society into, entails the conversion of a peasant society into an industrial one and means a change in the whole

Improving Quality University Education for Sustainable Growth; Security and Development in Nigeria

way of life, in expectations and motivations and even physical environment. Osahon and Oshon (2011) stated that development is a gradual process of change, improvement, upgrading and expansion in knowledge, skills, and attitude such that potentialities and capabilities are manifested for optimal performance. Development can be seen as a gradual growth of something that would become advanced and stronger (Lemke,2016). Paulley (2011) documented that is imperative to adapt development option which will guarantee equal opportunities to the present and future generations in the quest to achieve their improvement in the quality of life, poverty eradication and good governance which can only be guaranteed through good quality education. Olulube (2009), was of the view that Nigerian children need to be taught by qualify teachers who could apply various innovations that would help the students acquire live skills that will help them be their own masters in a hash economy, that is, being security conscious, self – employed and even employer of labour. Bandele (2011)rightly put it that the level of development that we desire in the country can be attained when adequate security has been put in place and quality assurance is ensured.

The National Policy of Education (NPE) 2014 provided the aims of university education in Nigeria as follows:

- a) To contribute to national development through high level relevant, manpower training;
- b) to develop and inculcate proper values for the survival of the individual and society;
- c) to develop the intellectual capacity of individual to understand and appreciate their level and external environment;
- d) to acquire both physical and intellectual skills, this enable individuals to be self-reliant and useful members of the society;
- e) to promote and encourage scholarship and community service (NPE, 2014).

University Education makes optimum contribution to national development by:

- a. Intensifying and diversifying its programmes for the development of high-level manpower within the context of the needs of the nation.
- b. Making professional course contents reflect our national requirements.
- c. Making all students part of a general programme of all-round improvement in university education, to offer general study courses such as history of ideas, philosophy of knowledge, nationalism. and information technology (IT); and
- d. Making entrepreneurial skills acquisition a requirement for all Nigerian universities. (National Policy on Education 2014).

How to Improve Quality University Education for Sustainable Growth, Security and Development

The author was able to provide some ways in which quality university education could be improved to provide for sustainable growth, security and development and they include:

- **E-learning:** This is an innovative/creative form of learning that requires the use of modern-day technology and the internet to teach students. Horton (2011) submits that e-learning as a set of instructions delivered via electronic media such as internet, intranets and extranets. Quality university education in Nigeria will achieve a great improvement if university students are familiar with e-learning and its facilities and thus would be able to compete with their peers in abroad universities abroad.
- **Adequate Funding:** Funding refers to the financing of activities within an institution. Ogbonnaya (2012) asserts that funding involves the provision of physical cash, credit facilities, that is trade credits, bank credits, allowances or discounts received, differed expenses such as differed taxes, rents, rates, bill, undistributed profits in the form of retained earnings, reserves, depreciation provisions, and others. Money is a very important resource needed in the educational system and requires adequate provision because through it, all other vital elements in the school can be obtained (Nzepueme, 2011). Oralu and Oladele (2015) maintained that adequate funding could defray for and provide basic requirements for the achievement of educational goals for each level of education.
- **Entrepreneurship Education:** Entrepreneur education can be referred to as any or a collection of teaching's that is designed through trainings, workshops and seminars to create an awareness in business, entrepreneurship skills or in development of a business. Singh (2015) submitted that entrepreneurship education is the process of professional application of knowledge, attitude, skills and competences. Entrepreneurship education equips students with the skills they need to be self-sufficient, independent and self-employed. To improve quality university education for sustainable growth, security and development in Nigeria, universities must provide entrepreneurship education in their curriculum.
- **Effective Supervisory System:** Diksha (2016) posited that supervision is a planned programme for the improvement of teaching and learning. Udoh and Akpa (2010) consider supervision as the process aimed at improving classroom instruction. Ogbonnaya, Oboegbulem, Onwurah and Enyi (2013), said that it is concerned with maintaining the efforts of personnel in line with the goals of an organization. An effective supervisory system refers to a system whereby the supervision of university activities, including the activities of the staff and students is done effectively. To ensure that quality university education improves in universities in Nigeria, supervision needs to be carried out to ensure that staff, students and other personnel within the universities carry out their activities
- **Peace Education in the Curriculum:** Peace education is the development of skills and acquisition of knowledge to be able to live in harmony with oneself, others and the society at large. Peace education is proposed because it is a highly fundamental

Improving Quality University Education for Sustainable Growth; Security and Development in Nigeria

instrument in moderating unwanted behaviour in a society. It can change the physical, intellectual, emotional and spiritual milieus for sustainable peaceful living. Peace education can encourage the cultivation of peaceful attitudes in its receivers and create conducive climates in tertiary institutions that will promote its effective and efficient management for optimal performance (Alimba, 2013).

- **Adequate and Efficient Security Facilities and Personnel:** Adequate security facilities and personnel are required by universities in Nigeria to ensure a safe and secure environment for its members. Jain and Roa (2011) were able to outline some security facilities to include perimeter fence or walls of premises, lighting for security alarm system, close circuit TV, communication systems of locks and keys and entry pass system. Also, adequate security personnel who are highly trained in protecting lives should be provided by the university to safeguard and protect members of the university. Where these are provided, a university can be assured that her environment would be safe and secure for activities to take place.

Problems Facing the Improvement of Quality University Education

- **Lack of adequate funding:** This refers to a situation whereby funds are inadequate and thus e-learning equipment cannot be bought or maintained, there would be minimal funds to provide adequate security personnel and security equipment for the school and university facilities such as tables, chairs, hostels, etc cannot be maintained. Also, some materials are required for certain entrepreneurial tools and material purchase, so it becomes expedient that money be made available for the acquisition of such to enhance the teaching and learning of entrepreneurship subjects (Kannno and Onyeachi, 2012). The problem of lack of adequate funding is usually caused by the misuse of funds by greedy university administrators or failure of the government to allocate adequate enough funds into the educational sector.

- **Inadequate Security Facilities and Personnel:** In most universities in Nigeria, security facilities and personnel are inadequate. These facilities despite the fact that they are expensive, are necessary for the attainment of a safe and secure environment within the university. However, the funds are inadequate and thus, these facilities cannot be provided. Moreover, the security personnel hired by the university to protect lives and property are either inadequate or inefficient. Some even run on the first sight of danger.

- **Poor Supervisory System:** Most universities in Nigeria lack an effective monitoring/supervisory system thus things are done anyhow. Otokune for (2011) argues that poor quality of graduates is due also to failure of university supervisory agencies. Incompetent staff and undisciplined students misbehave because they are not being effectively supervised by efficient supervisory agents and this would lead to a total breakdown of law and order within the university.

- **Mismanagement of University Resources:** Mismanagement of funds refers to the dishonest and incompetent management of the financial resources which are given to a person to carry out an activity. Where this person fails to carry out this activity for

which he was given the financial resources, and uses those financial resources for something entirely different, he is said to have mismanaged the funds. Tihamiyu (2012), observed that there is a lot of mismanagement of funds by educational boards and the moneys meant for higher education are mismanaged and as such Nigerian higher education institutions have joined other public sector institutions in having a sizeable number of uncompleted or abandoned projects. Ololube (2016) noted that grant monies provided by the NUC and NBTE which are meant for capital projects are either stolen (wholly or partially) or diverted to other projects. Mobegi (2015) rightly said that any country where mismanagement of funds is experienced, its quality of education is bound to decline.

- **Inadequate facilities:** This refers to a situation whereby the facilities meant for teaching, hostel living and general activities of the universities are not provided or are not enough to accommodate members of the university. Most technical or technology education departments in Nigerian universities do not have laboratories or workshop space, let alone useable equipment and where they exist, they are grossly inadequate since the funds are not used for the facilities and the workshops. The only items or equipment that are available are the ones provided when the departments were first established with most of them already becoming obsolete or grounded (Ojimba, 2012). Ololube, Agbor, Major, Agabi and Wali (2016) rightly put it that inadequate funding of higher education creates room for weak infrastructures, poor maintenance of school buildings, office blocks, classroom blocks, student hostels, staff quarter, etc.
- **Poor Entrepreneurship Education:** Most universities in Nigeria have a poor entrepreneurship education system. Where there is poor entrepreneurship education in a university, students would not be able to grasp the concept of self-employment and independence and thus, upon graduation, these students would begin to depend on white collar jobs from the government. These jobs are hard to come by these days. Thus, a student that is not self-sufficient, dependent and unemployed would result to theft and other devious means to make quick money. This would further endanger the Nigerian society and lead to a decline in the growth and development of the nation.

Conclusion

It is the goal of every university in Nigeria to produce students who will contribute positively to the growth and development of the nation. Universities in Nigeria serve as the basic foundation for the achievement of security, growth and development in the nation. This paper has shown that for there to be quality university education, there must be a presence of security which will in turn lead to growth and development. The provision of a safe and secured environment for staff, students, and other personnel in universities in Nigeria should be the paramount duty of university administrators. It is very important for university administrators to carry out essential measures to ensure that there is peace and security within the university environment which would promote growth and development because as the saying rightly put it, where there is no peace,

Improving Quality University Education for Sustainable Growth; Security and Development in Nigeria

there is no progress. University administrators do this by adopting supervisory systems, carrying out training and retraining sessions, effectively communicating with stakeholders, etc. Where an administrator fails to carry out his duties properly, quality assurance in the university cannot be achieved. University administrators in Nigeria should work hand in hand with stakeholders to ensure quality in the university. Despite the fact that there are numerous problems facing the achievement of quality assurance, the administrators can adopt the following suggestions;

Way Forward

- The curriculum of universities in Nigeria should reflect on growth, security and national development, and their issues and possible solutions to the issues.
- Members of the public are to be security conscious and closely monitor the activities of their children.
- Adequate security facilities such as CCTV cameras, security personnel and much more should be put in place so as to dissuade students from engaging in all forms of protests, demonstrations and violence in the campus.
- Institutions should carry out training sessions in e-learning so that the staff and students will have knowledge of e-learning practices.
- Heads of both private and public schools are enjoined to increase security within schools and around the school environment.
- Security personnel in the campus should be well trained and disciplined, refusing to accept bribes from students.
- Greedy administrators when caught and investigated thoroughly should be sacked immediately.
- Destruction of university facilities should be frowned upon and the offenders should be adequately punished.
- Organizations such as FME, TETFund and non-governmental organizations should aid in the funding of the university to achieve quality university education.
- The university should work hand in hand with security agents in the community where the university is situated to combat acts of insecurity in the university.
- Cult members found within the university campus should be expelled immediately and handed over to the police.
- Universities in Nigeria should partner with other universities in Nigeria as well as some foreign universities to achieve quality university education. They can swap ideas on how to promote peace and security within their universities which would in turn lead to the growth and development of their societies.

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Improving Quality University Education for Sustainable Growth; Security and Development in Nigeria

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Stella Ofor-Douglas, Ph.D

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Improving Quality University Education for Sustainable Growth; Security and Development in Nigeria

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