

**U.S. FUNDED FULBRIGHT JUNIOR STAFF
DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM IN NIGERIA: PROGRAM,
PARTICIPANTS AND IMPACTS, 2000-2015**

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Abstract

The Fulbright program is America's flagship international educational exchange program funded by the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs. For over five decades, Nigerians have tremendously benefitted from this prestigious program. This paper reviews and analyzes the Fulbright Junior Staff Development program, its participants and impacts in Nigeria. Archival records show that 128 faculty participated in the JSD from 2000 to 2015. Data analysis shows a huge gender disparity among participants with male-female ratio of about 70:30. Moreover, majority of these participants are in the field of sciences, followed by those in the field of social sciences, then humanities and arts. Some impacts of JSD include academic and professional developments of participants, teaching and research expertise, personal development, capacity building, mentorship, international exposure, promotion of cross-cultural understanding, institutional development, as well as internationalization of Nigerian universities. Thus, the Fulbright program is of immense benefits to the development of the Nigerian state. Also, the intended aim of the program to increase mutual understanding between the United States

and other countries, including Nigeria through the exchange of persons, knowledge, and skills is being realized.

Key words: Fulbright program, educational exchanges, Fulbright Junior Staff Development Program, impacts.

The United States of America has a long history of education diplomacy aimed at serving their country's priority interests. The United States education diplomacy involves people to people diplomacy, and the administration of educational and professional exchange programs. Examples of educational and professional exchange programs funded by the U.S. government include the Fulbright program, the Hubert Humphrey Fellowship program, the International Visitor Leadership program (IVLP), FORTUNE/U.S. State Department Global Women's Mentoring Partnership, Study of the U.S. Institutes for faculty, secondary educators and students leaders, Teaching Excellence and Achievement program, Pan Africa Youth Leadership program, the Youth Exchange and Study program (YES) and the Mandela Washington Fellowship/Young Africa Leaders Initiative and so on.

The Fulbright program operates in over 166 countries worldwide, including Nigeria, and it is crucial in promoting United States foreign policy as it presents the American model on intellectual freedom, academic standards and cooperative research (2011-2012 Annual Reports of the FSB, p4.) The main source of funding for the Fulbright program is an annual appropriation by the United States Congress to the Department of State. However, the J. William Fulbright Foreign Scholarship Board (FSB), a twelve educational and public leaders appointed by the President of the United States to formulate the policies, procedures and selection criteria that govern the Fulbright program, has emphasized the expansion of a cost-sharing model that significantly leverages the U.S. government investment. Thus, some foreign governments through binational commissions, host institutions, corporations and foundations in other countries and the United States, provide financial contribution through cost-sharing and indirect support, such as salary supplements, tuition waivers, university housing, and so on. For example, Congressional appropriation for the Fulbright program in fiscal year 2016 was \$236 million, which was signed into law by President Obama on December 17, 2015. Currently, the Fulbright program provides 8,000 grants annually and it is administered by the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs of the United States Department of State under policy guidelines established by the FSB and in cooperation with the Public Affairs Section of the U.S. Embassies and Consulates in the different countries, Fulbright commissions and a number of private organizations. These organizations include the Council for International Exchange of Scholars (CIES), as well as the Institute of International Education (IIE) in the United States.

The Fulbright program is a two way street. As American scholars, professional, researchers and students are sent abroad, similarly, scholars, researchers and students from participating countries are sent to the United States. Since its founding in 1946, over 360,000 persons have participated in the Fulbright program by engaging in educational, cultural and professional exchanges, and are now “Fulbright alumni.” Among them are presidents, prime ministers, cabinet officials, Nobel Laureates, teachers, scientists, economists, financiers, poets, traditional and religious leaders, entrepreneurs, and members of the U.S. Congress. These are world leaders and unique men and women who are empowering future generations of leaders. Today, the Fulbright program is a model of diversity, flexibility and it adapts to U.S. priorities and global concerns.

Fulbright Programs in Nigeria

The Fulbright program has become a household name in the institutions of higher learning in Nigeria. Records from PAS revealed that Nigeria has hosted about 400 American scholars, researchers and students and about 1,000 Nigerian faculty and students have participated in different Fulbright programs at U.S. universities, colleges and research institutions where they taught, conducted research, interacted with colleagues, fostered academic collaboration and linkages, and participated in workshops, enrichment seminars and conferences. The Fulbright program forms people-to-people bonds by promoting communication, cooperation and unity. One of the beneficiaries of this multibillion dollar academic exchange program is the first elected Vice-President of Nigeria, Dr. Alex Ekwueme.

The categories of the Fulbright program administered by the Public Affairs Sections (PAS) of the U.S. Embassy and the U.S. Consulate General include the Fulbright Junior Staff Development program (JSD), Fulbright Africa Research Scholar program (ARSP), Fulbright Scholar-In-Resident program (SIR), Fulbright Specialist program (FSP), Fulbright Foreign Language Teaching Assistant program (FLTA), International Fulbright Science and Technology Award program and Fulbright Trans-Sahara Undergraduate program.

Significance of this Study

Since inception, scholars, writers and authors have written about the Fulbright program but there are few literatures that documented the historical overview, detailed analysis of participants and impacts of the program in Nigeria. Some existing works on the Fulbright program in Nigeria include Ogbeidi, Monday Michael (1999) who wrote on “Educational Exchanges in Nigeria-U.S. Cultural Relations 1938-1988.” His well-researched PhD thesis focused on the Nigeria’s quest for higher education in the United States and the place of the Fulbright program in consolidation of Nigeria-U.S. cultural relations. His study detailed the history of early American Baptist missionary educational programs in Nigeria. Also, a few articles have been reported in Nigerian

dailies on alumni sharing their U.S. experiences and their views about the Fulbright program. In addition, the annual report of the J. William Fulbright Foreign Scholarship Board (FSB) documents the annual global program review, funding and featured a few success stories from Nigeria participants. In their book titled “The Fulbright Program: A History” Walter Johnson and Francis J. Colligan (1965) stated the history of the Fulbright Program and highlighted the objectives and global impacts in fulfilling the mission that Senator Fulbright envisioned in advancing people-to-people diplomacy.

D.S. Essien (1965) discussed the financing of public education in the United States and its implications on the educational sector in Nigeria. Moreover, C. Udokwu (1974) did a comparison study of American and Nigerian educational system. Conklin P. (1981) wrote on the University of Nigeria, Nsukka, the first American style university in Nigeria. Despite the contributions of these scholars to U.S.-Nigeria educational system, none of their work gave a detailed account of the Fulbright Junior Staff Development program in Nigeria.

Hence, this exploratory study provides an evaluation of the Fulbright Junior Staff Development Program in Nigeria from 2000 to 2015 and adds to the available literature on the Fulbright program. It is an analytical and recruitment tool for the Public Affairs Sections of the U.S. Embassy and the U.S. Consulate General who administer the program in Nigeria. By extension the U.S. Department of State’s Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA), Council for the International Exchange of Scholars (CIES) and the Institute of International Education (IIE) who are responsible for funding and administering the Fulbright program will find this work very useful. Additionally, it is a very useful reference material for Nigerian faculty and students who are interested in applying for the Fulbright programs. Similarly, education and research institutions as well as government agencies like the Nigerian Universities Commission (NUC), Ministries of Education would find this work handy for educational program appraisal and policy formulation. This study can be adopted as best practice and a model for the Nigerian government. It attempts to fill a gap created by dearth of literature focused on the Fulbright program in Nigeria.

The Fulbright Junior Staff Development Program

The Fulbright Junior Staff Development program (JSD) also called the Fulbright Visiting Student Research program is a non-degree program that is fully funded by the U.S. Department of State’s Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA) and administered by the Institute of International Education (IIE). The purpose of the JSD is to strengthen African universities. Specifically, this program aimed at developing staff capacity by investing in junior faculty in the Nigerian universities, and other African countries. The program offers young and exceptionally promising faculty members the opportunity to conduct a one-year (9-10 months) doctoral research at a United States academic or research institution. At the time of the application, interested applicants

must be at least two years into their doctoral program in any discipline at a Fulbright affiliated university or research institute in Nigeria.

Records from PAS show that 128 Nigerian faculty benefitted from this program between 2000 and 2015.

The JSD grant covers the participant's TOEFL internet-based test, round trip airfare to the U.S., travel allowance, a settling-in allowance, monthly stipend, housing allowance, books-and-supplies allowance, computer allowance and participation in enrichment seminar. The grant also covers basic university health insurance as a primary insurance coverage and the Fulbright ASPE health benefit as secondary coverage. The grant does not cover travel of dependents.

Applications are accepted each year beginning on February 1 with a strict deadline of June 1. In general, participants are selected based on a rigorous multi-tiered, merit-based process with final selection by the J. William Fulbright Foreign Scholarship Board. More information on this program including the application process can be found at: http://nigeria.usembassy.gov/educational_exchange.html

Table I: Fulbright Partner Institutions in Nigeria as of 2015

S/N	NAME	LOCATION
1	University of Nigeria, Nsukka	Nsukka, Enugu State
2	University of Benin	Benin City, Edo State
3	University of Port Harcourt	Choba, Rivers State
4	University of Lagos	Akoka, Yaba, Lagos State
5	University of Ibadan	Ibadan, Oyo State
6	University of Calabar	Calabar, Cross River State
7	Lagos State University	Ojo, Lagos State
8	Obafemi Awolowo University	Ile-Ife, Osun State
9	Delta State University	Abraka, Delta State
10	University of Uyo	Uyo, Akwalbom State
11	Federal University of Technology	Akure, Ondo State
12	Federal University of Technology	Owerri, Imo State
13	Federal University of Technology	Minna, Niger State
14	Covenant University	Ota, Ogun State

15	University of Jos	Jos, Plateau State
16	University of Maiduguri	Maiduguri, Borno State
17	Ahmadu Bello University	Zaria, Kaduna State
18	Bayero University	Kano, Kano State
19	UtmanDanfodio University	Sokoto, Sokoto State
20	University of Ilorin	Ilorin, Kwara State
21	Benue State University	Makurdi, Benue State
22	Afe Babalola University	Ado Ekiti, Ekiti State
23	NnamdiAzikiwe University	Awka, Anambra State
24	American University of Nigeria	Yola, Adamawa State
25	National Institute for Policy and Strategic Studies	Kuru, Jos, Plateau State

Theoretical Framework

For the purpose of this study, relevant theories of International Relations are explored. Julia Catherine Starr (2012) opined that the Fulbright program rests on theories of liberalism, soft power, leadership and multiculturalism.

Liberalism recognizes the potential for state relations to ameliorate social inequities in the society. Thus, the Fulbright as an academic exchange is premised on liberal values of progress, intellectual development, freedom, tolerance, and enlightenment. It has been noted that:

The Fulbright Program, as a concrete expression of liberalism, serves as an institution that develops individuals that will contribute to the strength of their own nation as well as the stability of the international community as they excel in professional realms with a multicultural consciousness that extends past their own nation's borders. Liberalism differentiates itself from other theories of international relations by defining individuals and groups as the primary actors bin the international system rather than states. In contrast to explaining state behavior through the international balance of power, states act in response to their relations with domestic or transnational non-state actors (Julia Catherine Starr 2012.)

Soft power is the ability of a state to exert influence on others in order to get desired outcomes without using force, threats or coercion. Thus, the United States is using soft power of educational exchange programs such as Fulbright to promote its national interest on the global level. The Fulbright programs are soft power resources and assets used to attraction other states which lead to acceptance, influence and compliance to the U.S. ideals. The Fulbright Program promotes people-to-people

diplomacy through the exchange of persons, knowledge, culture, values and skills in order to achieve the intended aim of the program in promoting mutual understanding between the United States and other countries.

Theories of multiculturalism and leadership describe the co-existence of diverse cultures and promotion of cross-cultural understanding, diversity and leadership within a society. Julia Catherine Starr (2012) noted that these theories:

explain the influence an experience abroad contributes to a person's development of leadership and personal skills, and how the acquisition of these skills can lead to an ability to function in an increasingly diverse professional environment. As more firms and organizations internationalize, it serves the United States to prepare its citizens to take roles of leadership in various markets, strengthening the U.S. economy, image, and influence. In turn, the community of respect and camaraderie that Fulbright alumni and their contacts in host countries comprise maintains avenues through which soft power can be developed and wielded.

Analysis of the Participants of the JSD Program, 2000-2015

Historical archive from PAS, U.S. Embassy and U.S. Consulate in Nigeria indicated 128 alumni of the Fulbright Junior Staff Development program in the academic year 2000–2015. The tables below show the data presentation:

Table II: Gender Trends of Participants in the Fulbright Junior Staff Development Program (JSD), 2000–2015(Fulbright Visiting Student Program in Nigeria)

Grant Year	All Scholars		No of Male	No of Female
	No	Percent		
2000-2001	7	5.47	4	3
2001-2002	10	7.81	9	1
2002-2003	6	4.69	5	1
2003-2004	8	6.25	4	4
2004-2005	8	6.25	8	0
2005-2006	10	7.81	5	5
2006-2007	9	7.03	6	3
2007-2008	7	5.47	4	3
2008-2009	9	7.03	6	3
2009-2010	9	7.03	7	2
2010-2011	12	9.38	9	3
2011-2012	11	8.59	6	5
2012-2013	8	6.25	5	3
2013-2014	7	5.47	7	0
2014-2015	7	5.47	6	1

15-year total	128	100	91	37
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Table II shows gender trends of participants in the Fulbright Junior Staff Development program in Nigeria, 2000-2015. The table shows that majority of the participants during the academic years under review are male. For instance in 2013-2014 academic year, all the nominees were male while in 2014-2015, the candidates comprises 6 males and 1 female. This table also shows that academic year 2010-2011 recorded the highest number of participants who are predominantly male. In summary, male-female ratio of participants during the academic year under review stood at about 70:30.

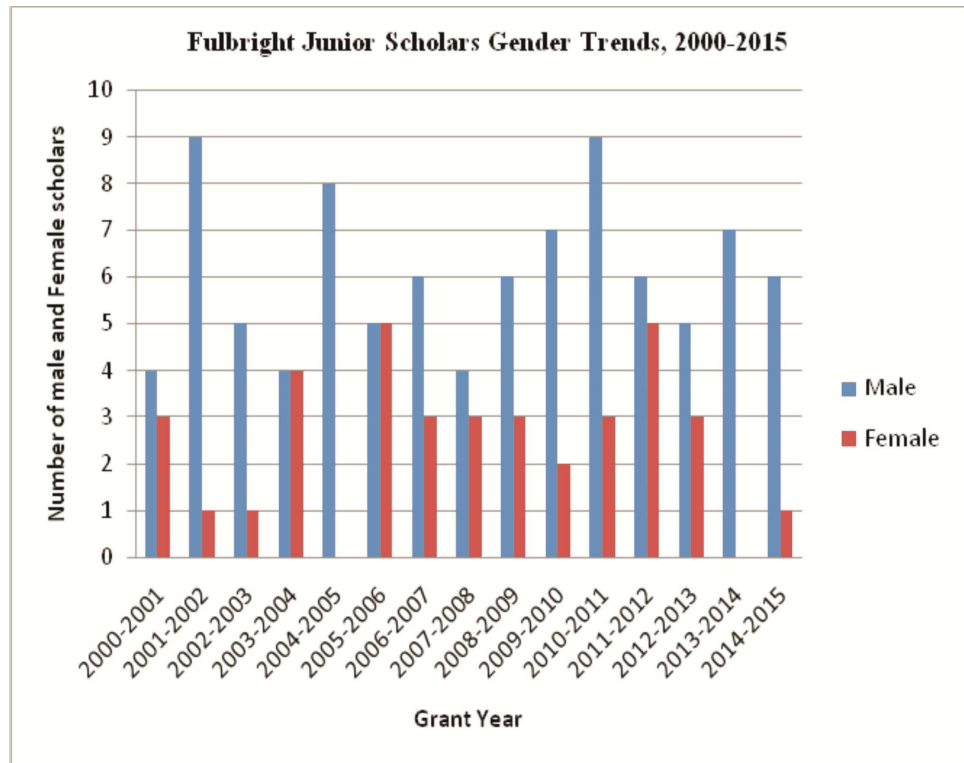


Table III: JSD Participants’ Fields of Specialization, 2000–2015

GRANT YEAR	Number of participants	Agricultural Sciences	Biological Sciences	Business Management	Chemistry	Communications	Computer & Info Sciences	Education	Engineering	Earth Sciences & Geo.	Health Sciences	Humanities & Arts	Law & Legal Studies	Mathematics & Physics	Social Sciences
2000-2001	7	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	6
2001-2002	10	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	2	-	1	3
2002-2003	6	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	2	-	3
2003-2004	8	2	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	2
2004-2005	8	1	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	-	3
2005-2006	10	2	-	-	-	-	1	2	1	-	-	1	1	-	2
2006-2007	9	2	1	-	1	-	-	3	2	-	-	-	-	-	-
2007-2008	7	-	1	1	1	-	-	1	-	-	1	-	1	-	1
2008-2009	9	-	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	1	-	4
2009-2010	9	1	-	-	-	-	2	-	3	-	1	-	1	-	1
2010-2011	12	1	3	-	-	-	1	-	-	1	2	1	-	1	2
2011-2012	11	1	1	-	2	2	-	-	-	-	3	1	-	1	-
2012-2013	8	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	4	1	-	-	-
2013-2014	7	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	4	1	-	-	-
2014-2015	7	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	4	1	-	-	-
15-Year Total	128	12	11	3	5	2	4	7	9	1	23	14	7	3	27

Table III summarizes JSD participants' fields of specialization during the academic years under review. Majority of the participants are in the field of sciences (46%), followed by those in the fields of Social Sciences and then, Humanities and Arts. Analysis of the participants' fields of specialization show that 12 scholars were nominated in the field of Agricultural Sciences, 11 from Biological Sciences, 3 from Business management, 5 from Chemistry, 2 from Communications, 4 from Computer and Information Science, 7 from Education, 9 from Engineering, 1 from Earth Science and Geography, 23 from Health Sciences, 14 from Humanities and Arts, 7 from Law and Legal studies, 3 from Mathematics and Physics and 23 from Social Sciences.

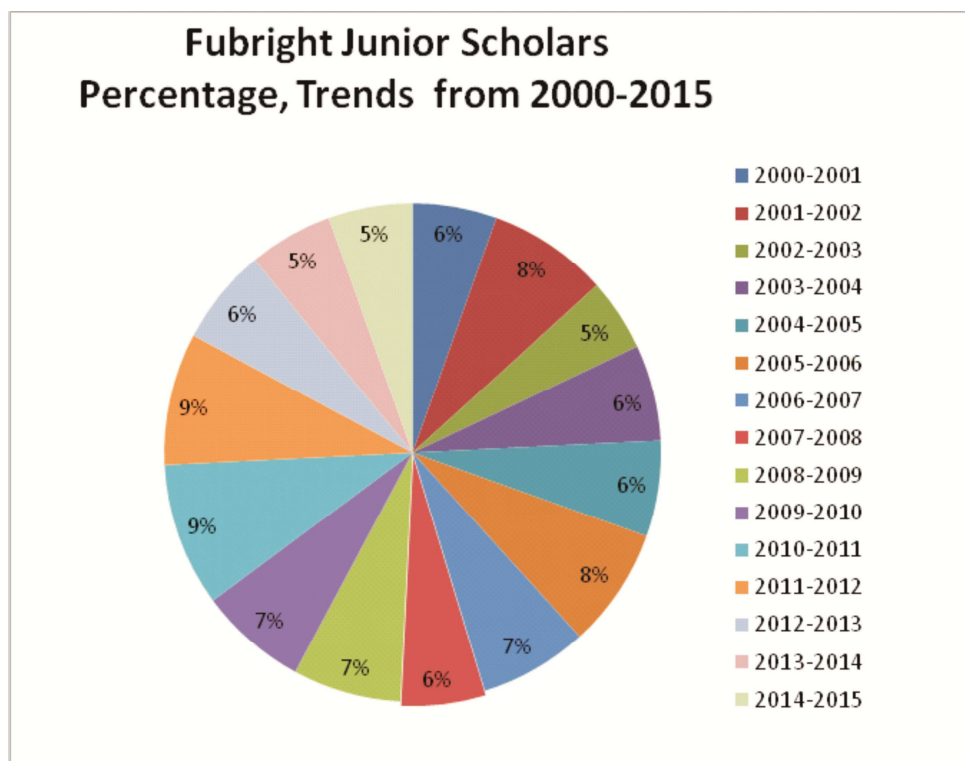


Table IV: JSD Participants Home Institutions in Nigeria, 2000–2015

NIGERIAN UNIVERSITIES	2000-2001	2001-2002	2002-2003	2003-2004	2004-2005	2005-2006	2006-2007	2007-2008	2008-2009	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014	2014-2015	TOTAL UNIVERSITY	PER
University of Ibadan	-	-	-	1	1	1	1	1	1	-	1	2	-	1	5	15	
University of Lagos	-	1	2	-	-	3	-	1	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	9	
Uni. of Nig. Nsukka	1	2	-		1	-	1	-	-	2	1	-	-	1	-	9	

University of Ilorin	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	2	2	3	-	-	-	9
University of Benin	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
University of Port	2	2	1	1	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	2	-	-	-	10
University of Cal.	-	-	-	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	4
University of Uyo	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	1	3
University of Jos	1	2	1	-	1	1	1	2	-	2	2	1	-	-	-	14
Uni. of Maiduguri	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2
University of Abuja	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	2	1	1	5
Obafemi Awo. Uni.	-	-	-	1	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	-	-	5
Ahmadu Bello Uni.	-	1	-	-	1	2	1	1	1	1	-	-	1	2	-	11
Bayero University	-	2	1	1	2	2	3	1	1	1	1	1	2	-	-	18
Lagos State Uni.	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1	-	-	3
UtmanDanfodi. Uni	-	-	1	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	4
Covenant Uni.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	1	2	-	-	-	-	5
NIPSS, Kuru, Jos	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Delta State Uni.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Benue State Uni.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
FUTMINNA	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
FUTA	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
TOTAL	7	10	6	8	8	10	9	7	9	9	12	11	8	7	7	128

NOTE: Uni. is an abbreviation for university

FUTMINA is the Federal University of Technology, Minna

FUTA is the Federal University of Technology, Akure

Table IV shows the distribution of JSD participants in Nigerian universities and research institute. During the academic years under review, some institutions like Delta State University, Benue State University, Federal University of Technology, Minna and the Federal University of Technology, Akure did not benefit from the JSD because of the rigorous application and merit-based recruitment process. In fact, some academics

from some of the universities have participated in the JSD and developed collaborative research with U.S. universities before year 2000.

In summary, Bayero University in Kano produced the highest number of participants (18) during the academic years under review. The University of Ibadan produced 15 participants while the University of Jos produced 14. Also, the highest number of JSD (12) was nominated in 2010-2011 academic year.

Conclusion and Recommendation

This study shows that the objective of the Fulbright program as defined by Senator Fulbright to “increase mutual understanding between the United States and other countries” through the exchange of persons, knowledge, and skills is being realized.

The Fulbright Junior Staff Development program offers a great opportunity for Nigerian faculty to conduct doctoral research in the United States academic environment for an academic year, taking advantage of educational opportunities that are not readily available in their home universities. The JSD grants cover a wide range of fields in order to accommodate a variety of scholars and their research interest. Moreover, participating in the JSD offers great opportunity for nominees to complete their doctoral bench work using state-of-the-art equipment in the United States. The JSD also promote long-term friendship and connections between the academics and their host communities. It is commendable to know that some of the participants developed and maximized their research and writing skills during their Fulbright program. The experience also afforded nominees the opportunity to value other people’s culture including their languages, orientations, food, and music. The JSD has made significant contributions to addressing some of the challenges of building staff capacities in Nigeria universities for effective service delivery. In collaboration with their host, some participants have initiated institutional linkages and collaborative research aimed at solving societal problems as well as complex and evolving global problems in the area of public health, environment, security, agriculture, education.

The study concludes that the importance of the Fulbright Junior staff development program cannot be over emphasized because of the vital role it plays in strengthening staff capacity in Nigerian universities for efficient and effective service delivery.

The study recommends that Nigeria government should collaborate with the U.S. Embassy to establish a Fulbright Commission like other countries. Both the U.S. and Nigerian governments should commit financial resources to fund the commission in order to increase the number of Nigerian scholars in the fields that will help address the developmental and sustainability needs of the country. This type of collaborative effort can enhance Nigeria’s ability to generate the knowledge, innovations and technological advancement that are critical for long-term growth and development.

The study further calls on the Nigerian government to show sincere interest in collaborating with the private sector to generate funds in support of the Fulbright program. This will enable qualified scholars from all Nigerian universities participate in this prestigious academic exchange program as opposed to recruiting scholars from only 25 Fulbright affiliated institutions.

The study also suggests that female faculty should be encouraged, mentored and empowered to take advantage of the Fulbright program for their professional and personal development. More female participant should be considered for grants in order to close the gap of great gender disparity revealed by the study.

Furthermore, PAS of the U.S. Mission should carry out detailed post program evaluation and thorough follow-up on the beneficiaries of the JSD in order to sustain the gains and determine the measurable impacts of the Fulbright program in Nigeria.

Also, PAS should adopt campus based recruitment strategy with focus on Fulbright affiliated universities whose faculty have not benefitted from the program. Collaboration with Fulbright alumni in Nigeria in this regards will help amplify the recruitment drive.

The study also suggests that special Fulbright program should be designed for university administrators in the areas of educational management, policy formulation, planning, implementation, budgeting and resource management. Training university administrators in these areas will expose them to international best practices that will enable them to effectively and efficiently manage human, financial and material resources, thus contributing to the overall institutional quality.

Considering the important role the Fulbright program is playing in fostering peace, mutual understanding, cultural and educational development in the world, the study appeals to the United States government not to reduce funding to the Fulbright Program.

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