

Improving Quality Higher Education in Nigeria: The Roles of Stakeholders

Romina Ifeoma Asiyai¹ (Dr.)

¹ Department of Educational Administration and Policy Studies, Faculty of Education, Delta State University, Abraka Nigeria

Correspondence: Romina Ifeoma Asiyai, Department of Educational Administration and Policy Studies, Faculty of Education, Delta State University, Abraka Nigeria. Tel: 234-81-6681-7721. E-mail asiyairomina@yahoo.com

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Abstract

This paper discusses the roles of stakeholders in improving quality of university education in Nigeria. Internal and external stakeholders are identified and the various roles they could play in improving the quality of university education are discussed. The paper contends that continuous and holistic improvement in university education system requires the collaborative efforts of various stakeholders both internal and external. Collaboration will help to trigger improvement in university education system. Such collaboration could be achieved through universities establishing a close link or relationship with employers of labour and other external stakeholders such other educational institutions, non-governmental organizations, private sectors. Universities can also collaborate with firms/industries by utilization of their technologies and expertise to influence improvement through staff training. Thus, quality can only be attained in university education through cost sharing among stakeholders such as government, universities and public/private sector. University administrators and university board management committee could ensure continuous improvement in university education system by ensuring constant training and retraining of teachers and other staff via professional development programmes of high quality. In this way, excellence and high standards is attainable in university education systems in the country.

Keywords: Collaboration, University education, External, Internal stakeholders, Improvement, Quality

1. Introduction

Nigerian higher education stakeholders are greatly concerned about the quality of education provided the citizens of the country. Concerns about the quality of education students receive from universities, the quality of lecturers (teaching staff) employed to teach students, the quality of infrastructures and instructional facilities have always been of utmost interest. Additionally, university education stakeholders are interested in the quality of health facilities for students/staff health services, quality of students' hostels, quality of the overall institution environment, quality teaching and learning as well as quality support services from non-academic staff. Researchers have linked quality in higher education with student intake, academic programs, program designs, lecturers, teaching and learning, students' experiences and academics as well as non academic support for the students (Baird, 2006; Fry, 1995; Nordvall and Braxton, 1996). Baird (2006) maintains that quality in higher education relates to development of intellectual independence. He recommended collaborative action research for improving quality, stressing that institutions of higher learning must take the lead in fostering improvement in quality of education at all levels. The quality of knowledge which is generated in institutions of higher learning is critical to national competitiveness (Asiyai, 2014). She emphasized that it is only quality education that can sharpen the minds of the individual and help transform the society economically, socially and politically.

Among the aims of university education in Nigeria outlined by the Federal Ministry of Education (2004) and highlighted by Asiyai (2005, 2014) are:

- Production of the much-needed high-level manpower essential for the nation's growth and development.
- They are centers of excellence in teaching, research and storehouses of knowledge for nurturing the manpower needs of the nation.
- Promotion and encouragement of scholarship and community services.

The Federal Ministry of Education also stated that universities in Nigeria shall vigorously pursue these goals through:

- Teaching
- Research and development
- Knowledge generation and dissemination and international cooperation
- Dedicated services to the communities through extra-mural and consultancy services

All these stated goals are closely related to quality education. Nigerian government both state and national level has considered quality higher education a veritable instrument for achieving radical social, economic and political development. Nigeria intend to use education as a vehicle for fostering development of all her citizens to their full potentials in the promotion of a strong, democratic, prosperous, indivisible and indissoluble sovereign nation (Ehigiamusoe, 2012). The attainment of this objective noted by Ehigimusoe necessitates that the inputs into Nigerian university systems be of high standards since other levels of education depend on the University for the production of high level manpower to man the systems. According to Kufi (2013), issues of focus when craving for quality are learners who are healthy, well-educated and ready to participate and learn. As well as learners who are supported in learning by their families and communities. And an environment that is healthy, safe and provides adequate resources and facilities, including content that is reflected in relevant curricula and material for the acquisition of basic and life skills and knowledge. UNICEF (2000) definition of quality education embraces learners who are healthy, well-nourished and ready to participate and learn and who are supported in learning by their families and communities. This implies that the roles of parents, guardians and family members are significant in improving the quality of education their children receive in universities.

However, one critical challenge to quality higher education especially university in Nigeria is funding. Nigerian government appears not to have seen the need to allocate a reasonable proportion of budget to higher education. World Bank (2012) analysis of budgetary allocation to education in selected countries of the world indicates that Nigeria is the least country in terms of budgetary allocation. The analysis shows that Ghana allocated 31%, Cote d'Ivoire 30.0%, Uganda 27.0%, Morocco 26.4%, South Africa 25.8%, Swaziland 24.6%, Mexico 24.3%, Kenya 23.0%, Botswana 19.0%, USA 17.1%, Burkina Faso 16.8%, Norway 16.2%, Colombia 15.6% India 12.7%, Nigeria 8.4%. UNESCO (1995) had recommended 26% budgetary allocation to education in terms of GDP but Nigerian government appears to play down on this recommendation despite the numerous mineral resources at her disposal. According to Akaranta (2014), the standard argument for Nigerian government not paying adequate attention to the education sector is the competing demand from other sectors such as transportation, health and similar areas of services to the economy. This study is based on contemporary literature on stakeholders' participation in influencing improvement in university education in Nigeria.

2. Theoretical Framework of the Study

This study is hinged on the stakeholder's theory propounded by Freeman in Fontaine, Haarman and Schmid (2006). Freeman (1984) sees stakeholders as any group or individual who can affect or is affected by the achievement of the organization's objectives. As noted by Freeman (2006), the organization itself should be thought of as grouping of stakeholders and the purpose of the organization should be to manage stakeholder's interests, needs and viewpoints. As a result, institution managers have the responsibilities of meeting the needs, interests and viewpoints of stakeholders. This implies that institution managers should on one hand manage the institution for the benefits of the stakeholders in order to ensure their rights and participation in decision. On the other hand, institution managers must act as stakeholder's agent to ensure the survival of the institution to safeguard the long term stakes of each group. According to Freeman (2004), stakeholders are those groups who are vital to the survival and success of the corporation. Stakeholders are any group or individual who can affect or is affected by the achievement of an organization's purpose (Freeman, 1984). Camphell and Rozsny (2002) see stakeholders as students, society, and government participating in or benefiting from the provision of education. From Camphell's definition, stakeholders can be grouped as internal and external. Internal stakeholders are groups within the university system who have an interest in the quality of education provided learners as well as in the standard of the outcomes.

Freeman (2004) maintained that the principle of stakeholder's recourse is brought into the management of organizations/firms. The main tenet of the principle of stakeholder's recourse is that stakeholders may bring an action against the directors for failure to perform the required duty of care. Freeman (2006) identified three types of stakeholder's theory as normative, descriptive and instrumental. The normative theory is the core of the stakeholder theory (Donaldson and Preston, 1995). The normative theory deals with how managers or stakeholders should act and should view the purpose of the organization based on ethical principle (Friedman and Miles, 2006).

The normative theory is linked to moral, values and philosophic purpose (Fontaine et al (2006). The descriptive stakeholder's theory is focused on how managers and stakeholders actually behave and how they view their actions and roles while the instrumental stakeholder's theory is concerned with how managers should act if they want to flavor and work for the interest of the organization to maximize profits and maximize shareholders value (Fontaine, Haarman and Schmid, 2006).

Friedman and Miles (2006) highlighted stakeholders of a firm as : customers, employees, local communities, supplier and distributors, shareholders, the media, the public in general, future generations, past generations, academics, competitors, non-governmental organizations, activists, trade unions or trade associations, financiers, government, regulators and policy makers. Freeman's stakeholder's approach to strategic management (1984) suggests that managers must formulate and implement processes which satisfy all and only those groups who have a stake in the business. The main tasks in this relationship is to manage and integrate the relationships and interests of shareholders, employees, customers, suppliers, communities and other groups in a way that guarantees the long-term success of the firm.

Attainment of quality university education in Nigeria requires continuous and holistic improvement which necessitates cost sharing among stakeholders both internal and external. Stakeholders' collaboration is about exploring partnership with another organization or group owing to lack of resources or competencies (Jackson, 2009). Collaboration will help to trigger improvement in university system. Such collaboration could be achieved through universities establishing a close link or relationship with employers of labour/industries and other external stakeholders, or by utilization of technologies and expertise from the environment to perform activities that staffs are not competent in performing.

The figure below shows internal and external stakeholders of higher education like Nigerian universities.

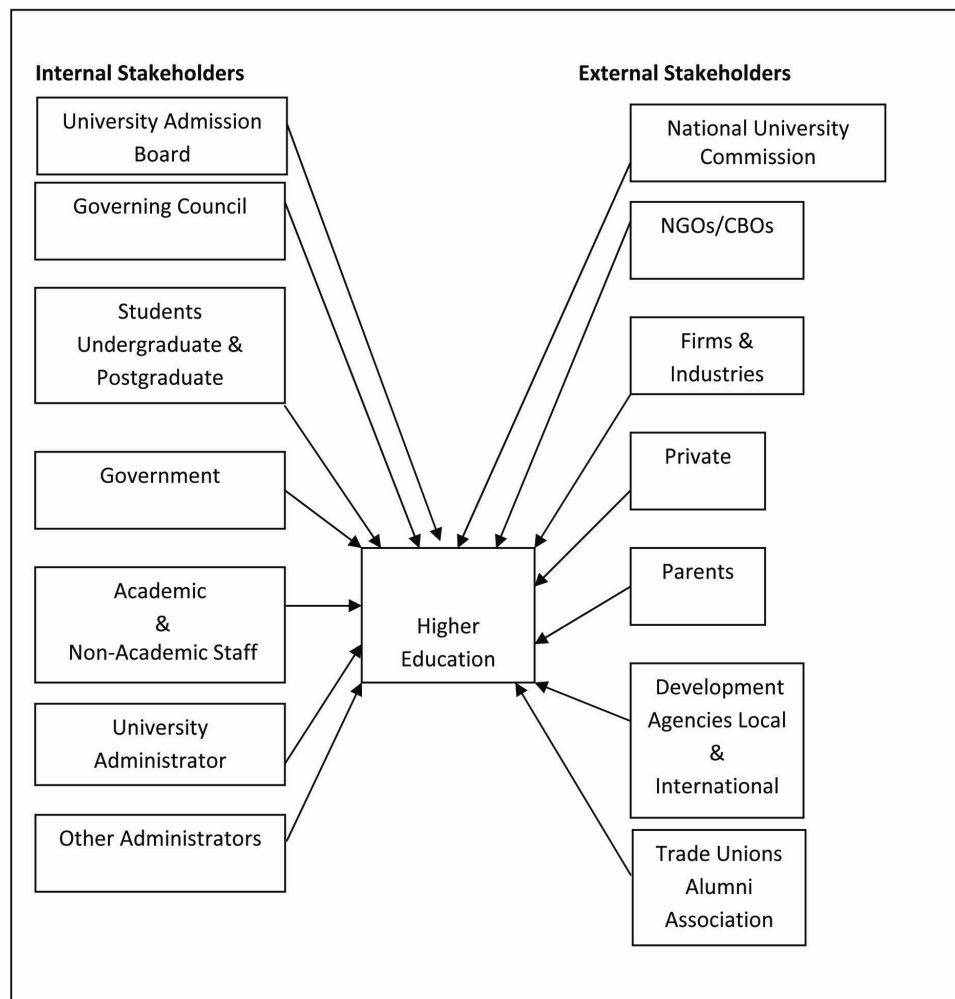


Figure 1. Higher Education Stakeholders

The stakeholders are grouped as internal or external. Internal stakeholders include government who is the owner of higher education institutions or service provider, students-on whom all the activities of university education systems are centered, academics-who are constantly engaged in teaching, research and community service, university administrators who manage the affairs of the institution by providing leadership, non-academic staff, and other management staff, principal officers, senators, directors of institutes, heads of departments and internal members of governing council. Internal stakeholders must be committed to the principles of SERVICOM-Service Compact with all Nigerians which is government initiative in pursuing excellence in delivery of services for all Nigerians. Universities in Nigeria must adopt the golden principles of accountability and transparency in the process of service delivery. In this way, improvement in quality university education is attainable.

The external stakeholders include National University Commission (NUC), non-governmental organizations, community based organizations, parents, employers of labour, trade unions, alumni association, industries/firms, the private sector, development agencies both local and international, and the society as a whole.

2.1 The Role of Different Stakeholders in Improving Quality University Education in Nigeria

2.1.1 Internal Stakeholders

i. University Administrator /other Administrators

The university administrator play very critical roles towards improving the quality of teaching and learning, research, community services and other functions of university. The university administrator is designated as Vice-Chancellor. He is the most influential stakeholder in the institution. The Vice-Chancellor sets the academic tone of the institution for students, teaching staff, other staff, parents and community members by providing effective leadership. The university administrator is assisted in administering the university by other administrators including the deputy Vice-Chancellors, registrar, deans of faculties, directors of institutes and heads of departments. The Vice-Chancellor contributes to institutional improvement by developing a collaborative team approach to school decision making process and problem solving. The administrator should employ a distributive approach to routine operations of the institution to ensure maximum involvement of other internal and external stakeholders (Spillane, Camburn & Pareja, 2007). Adopting a distributive approach involving other internal and external stakeholders in the management of affairs could enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of the decision making process of the institution for improved policy implementation and better learning outcomes of students. For adequate improvement in the quality of university education to be achieved, Vice-Chancellor and management should be performance and result oriented by focusing on the pursuit of the vision and missions of the university. As well as commitment to infrastructural development using internally generated fund. In addition, the Vice-Chancellor should ensure that good leadership is provided by creating conducive school climate where student/student, student/lecturer, lecturer/staff and management/staff strives in a harmonious relationship. In such relationships, cross fertilization of ideas, information, knowledge and skills is enhanced for good quality of academic activities and disharmony, antagonism, mutual suspicion, acrimony and crises of various dimensions which are inimical to improved university education system and development is avoided. Additionally, the Vice-Chancellor must be highly committed to pursuing excellence in all service delivery.

The university administrator must ensure that relevant curriculum is implemented for students' better learning. School curriculum must emphasize skills that are commonly sought by employers. Such skills of important quality values to students include communication skills, problem solving, critical thinking, critical analysis, thinking inventively, logical reasoning, confidence and ability to see things from different perspectives (Siew and Sufean, 2011). As rightly noted by Salami (2007), institutions aspiring to become world-class-universities can innovate in many ways by choosing a radically different approach to organize the curriculum and pedagogy. The Vice-Chancellor being driven by attainment of excellent university education should collaborate with members of the governing council to ensure that only high quality staff especially academics is employed. The most important determinant of excellence in university education is the presence of a critical mass of outstanding teaching staff, researchers and students. In addition, Nigerian university Vice-Chancellors should improve the working conditions of staff especially teaching staff/academics. This could help to attract highly experienced and competent academics such as professors, readers and senior lecturers that would help as role models and mentors to the poorly trained, inexperienced and young academics presently dominating the system as lecturers. Through mentoring, experienced academics provide support to young and inexperienced academics to facilitate their adjustment into the teaching profession, nurture their talents and assist them to practice effectively. In this way, quality is improved upon in Nigerian universities.

University administrators should ensure that the quality of research is improved. Achieving this objective necessitate improved spending on research and universities adopting a good research culture. Establishing a good research culture in Nigeria universities, it becomes imperative to increase national investment on research. Studies have shown that African countries spend as little on research compared to developed countries (Saint, 1995). The poor spending on research in Africa (Nigeria inclusive) is responsible for poor performance of the university system (Saint in Alimba, 2013). In addition, Nigerian universities must check staff and students research activities through establishment of internal quality control mechanism. To improve the quality of research, the plagiarism detection software should be established in universities so that research conducted by staff and students are submitted through the software to control plagiarism. This would be one of improving the quality of research.

The university Vice-Chancellor has a critical role to play through to ensure that institutions mission statement is vigorously pursued by all stakeholders. The administrator should set the vision and empower other stakeholders to take responsibility in achieving it. Through collaborative efforts involving different stakeholders, universities could sponsor lecturers and other staff to training programs such as workshops, seminars and conferences both local and international for update of knowledge and skills. Such training programs could involve trade unions, employers of labour and public assistance. This will help in shaping education and training to make it more relevant to the needs of the market. Nigerian university Vice-Chancellors must ensure that lecturers continue to learn through continuous education and training via professional development training programs. The education and training of lecturers is critical to continuous improvement in quality of university education. Lecturers' capacity building or professional development will help to keep them abreast of modern teaching technologies as well as innovations and changes in teaching and learning so that they are able to guide students in learning experiences to meet world-class standards. The more professional knowledge teachers have, the higher the level of student achievement (Villegas-Reimers, 2003).

Additionally, Nigerians in diaspora who are experts in research and other disciplines could be encouraged to come home to be engaged in teaching and research. To achieve this objective, enabling environment must be created for them as well as provision of adequate incentives that could motivate them to put in their best in the pursuit of excellence higher education in the country. Salami (2012) showed that engaging those in diaspora through the 'brain circulation process' was practiced in South Korea and it yielded an excellent result. Accordingly, Pohang University in South Korea filled all the full-time teaching staff positions with doctoral degree holders who were renowned Korean scientists living abroad. To ensure that these Koreans in diaspora returned home, Pohang University provided an excellent research environment, a competitive salary that was among the highest in Korea and staff apartments near the campus. In Nigeria, engaging renowned Nigerians abroad in brain circulation process has worked efficiently to improvement in delivery in both teaching and research at the University of Port Harcourt and University of Ilorin (Akaranta, 2014 and Olugbenga, 2014). Staffs of institutions of higher learning need to acquire new skills needed for improvement as well to ensure that performance go beyond bringing about piece-meal improvement to institutional wide improvement. Institutional administrators must ensure that evaluation procedures are established for proper assessment by external stakeholders. This will help to ensure that the education provided learners by universities in Nigeria contributes significantly to the educational needs of the society.

ii. The Government and University Governing Council

The government is the owner of public state and federal universities in Nigeria. The federal government owns and finances federal universities through the National University Commission (NUC) while the state government owns and finances state universities. In Nigeria, government has continued to be the main financier of education. Government can influence the improvement of higher education by ensuring that relevant funding policy is established for proper funding of universities in the country. Government must ensure that relevant curriculum is implement in universities and also see to it that such curriculum is constantly review in line with market demands.

The university governing council or board of governors performs numerous roles in ensuring continuous improvement in quality of university education. They make important contribution in defining strategic vision for the universities. They are also responsible for policy formulation and monitoring institutional performance. Members of board of governors contribute immensely in institutional decision making. Usman (2013) asserted that effective policy making requires enlightened governing board that has a broad view of the impact of higher education on the society and is cognizant of the strategic directions and resources for achieving institutional missions with quality. Additionally, council members should ensure that academics of good quality are employed. Members of governing council must work as a team with external stakeholders in seeking continuous improvement and in the process of reviewing academic standards and quality in university education systems in Nigeria.

iii. University Admission Board (UAB)

The university admission board in Nigeria comprises the deputy Vice-Chancellor Academics as chairman, the university admission officer and deans of faculties and heads of departments. The UAB reports all issues concerning admission to the Vice-Chancellor. The UAB chairman of the university admission board must ensure that admission policies of good standards are put in place. The UAB perform the role of ensuring that only qualified candidates are admitted into the various departments. Members of UAB can influence improvement of quality university education by ensuring that they do not compromise quality during admission process. This is because the inputs into university determine the quality of the outputs. Additionally, the UAB should ensure that learning environments are healthy, safe and protective and provide adequate resources, instructional and infrastructural facilities for effective teaching and learning including provision of information and communication technologies. Such infrastructural facilities like lecture hall or auditorium, workshops, theatres, libraries, laboratories, staff offices as well as public utilities like water and electricity should be adequately provided. The importance of these facilities for quality delivery in institutions of higher learning have been stressed by Isangedighi cited in Aigbomian (2012) who noted that institutions of higher learning do ensure that things like canteen, shopping centres are established within or near the school.

Teaching/Academic and Non Academic Staff

The lecturers are the teaching or academic staff of Nigerian universities. The teacher's (lecturer's) role is pivotal in the improvement of quality of teaching and learning in universities. Lecturers are frontline producers of university education in Nigeria. The lecturer is a pace setter who sets plans aimed at ensuring students' effective learning by devising learning experiences which arouse students interest and inspire them to work diligently so as to become creative problem solvers. All over the world, the teacher is recognized as a major factor in implementing educational reform efforts aimed at improving the quality of education. Teachers are the most significant change agent in educational reform (Villegas-Reimers, 2003). Teachers are key players in the process of educational change and school improvement, who not only deliver the curriculum, but are engaged in defining and interpreting curriculum. The teachers classroom practices can help to ignite the interest of students and inculcate in them, positive attitude towards their studies. The lecturer is a professional in a given discipline, an instructional expert who plans, guides, and evaluates students' learning. The lecturer's role in improving the quality of university education is that of a manager charged with the provision of stimulating and conducive learning environment for students' productive learning as well as ensuring effective classroom management during lectures. Lecturers must ensure that they provide good teaching and be supportive of students' problem. They should improve students' transferable skills to enhance their chances of employment. According to Ramsden (1991) good teaching involves giving clear explanation through interesting lessons and providing useful and timely feedback. As rightly observed by Dembele, (2005), unless teachers provide effective instruction and create classroom environment conducive to learning, students will not achieve at high levels even when essential material inputs are available and curriculum is relevant. Lecturers are critical to quality improvement in universities and their sense of ownership is important in order to ensure quality teaching and learning. High quality staff, better teacher incentives, relevant curriculum and decentralized decision making involving lecturers would help to facilitate improvement in university education systems in Nigeria. Describing a holistic model for assuring quality in higher education, Srikanthan and Dalrymple (2003) upholds that learning is based on dynamic engagement between students and teachers especially about the nature, scope and styles of their learning and hence they recommended transformation by shifting attention from teaching to learning. According to Kettunen and Kantola (2007), the sense of responsibility and high level of engagement between students and teachers makes quality assurance effective. Lecturer commitment is one of the quality values in congruence among higher education stakeholders (Telford and Masson, 2005).

The lecturer can also help in the improvement of university education through involvement in collaborative action research with employers of labour. Such research must have bearing with the needs of students and the society. To improve the quality of teaching and learning in Nigerian university, the lecturer's roles are:

- Adopt a good work ethics and habit
- Encouraging team work, innovation and creativity among students
- Provision of guidance to students in their learning
- Ensuring effective classroom management and control during instruction
- Creating positive leaning environment or climate so that students can actively be involved in learning process to ensure in them, a permanent change in desirable behaviour
- Promotes a classroom atmosphere that motivates self-directed and cooperative learning
- Communicating with parents students learning progress

- Ensuring that they attend their lectures regularly and timely
- Ensuring that lectures are student-centered
- Teaching effectively, using active learning strategies
- Avoiding unethical conducts such as plagiarism, poor teaching, aiding examination malpractice and missing students scores
- Conducting researches that can help improve instructional practices
- Monitoring and evaluating students learning

The learning environment is positive when it is favourable for students' meaningful and productive learning. In such an environment as noted by Morphet cited in Nwadiani (2014), "educational programs, materials and procedures are designed to meet the needs of each student"(p. 11)

iv. Students (Customers)

Students are customers in the education industry striving to get the best education. The essence of the establishment of any institution of higher learning is to ensure the sound development of students academically, morally, socially, politically, spiritually. Students must be made an integral part of the success of any educational institution. Successful institutions encourage significant participation by students, teachers and parents (Wilson, 2008). Consequently, university administrators should incorporate students in the participative decision making of the institution. Short and Greer (2002) clarifies that empowering students with shared decision making increases their choices and responsibilities of their own learning. Students can gain the skills, knowledge, values and attributes needed for productive and viable living in the society through participation in institutional decision making. For quality education, students must be encouraged to exercise their decision making roles in the education process especially participation in decision in issues pertaining to their academics. The attainment of quality requires that students resume at their institutions at expected date, regularly attend their lectures so that they can learn and avoid issues of academic misconduct.

2.2.2 External Stakeholders

i. National University Commission (NUC)

The national universities commission is the regulator of university education in Nigeria. It regulates all the activities of public and private universities in Nigeria. The NUC accredits programs of university education in the country. It ensures that only accredited programs are ran by universities. The NUC is charged with ensuring quality and quality assurance in Nigerian universities. The NUC has a quality assurance unit that is responsible for using international best practices on quality assurance. The NUC demands accountability from universities and checks the overall effectiveness and efficiency of program offerings and all activities of Nigerian universities. The NUC sets the minimum standards regarding qualification of teachers, the quality of teaching in institutions, number of students to be admitted and the universities carrying capacity. As a way of improving quality, the NUC regularly monitors the activities of universities and conducts a need assessment exercise.

ii. Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), Local Communities and Private Sector

Non-governmental organizations, local communities and private sectors have numerous contributions in improving the quality of university education in Nigeria. An earlier study by Asiyai (2008) showed that NGOs and Community Based Organizations (CBOs) have numerous contributions in garnering resources for quality education delivery. In developed countries, school improvements have been greatly achieved through collaborative participation of different stakeholders such as non-governmental organizations and local communities. A study conducted in Pakistan by Barrs cited in Asiyai (2012) showed that community organizations provided monitoring of teaching by teachers which lead to significant improvement in the quality of teaching and improved accountability systems and ethos of schools. Studies carried out in USA by Sanders, in Australia by Duncan et al and in the UK by Farrell all cited in Asiyai (2012) indicates that local communities contributed in educational reform, school decision making and information access and in rebuilding of secondary schools across England through philanthropic donations of funds.

In Nigeria and Delta state in particular, communities are gradually being involved in institutional improvement. In Delta State University, through collaborative efforts, Abraka community donated over twenty acres of land to the university. This kind gesture of land donation by the local community have facilitated the construction of several modern lecture auditorium, the senate building, the Faculties of Arts, Education and Science complexes, Post graduate hostels and medical students hostels as well as construction of modern car parks and walk ways and repainting of existing buildings, using internally generated revenue by Prof. E. A. Arubayi, the current Vice-Chancellor. This improvement in infrastructure in the university has lead to increase in the university's quota in

number of students admitted into the university by the National Universities Commission (NUC) as well as accreditation of 90% of the programmes run by the university.

Private sectors such as alumni association, religious organization, manufacturers associations, trade unions, industries/firms, other employers of labour, other institutions, bilateral and multi lateral agencies have numerous contributions in seeking improvement of university education in Nigeria. They can contribute greatly to the growth and development of university education for improved quality delivery. Since private business organizations and industries/firms employ the services of university graduates, their participation in funding and provision of physical facilities will enhance efficiency of university education systems. Alumni association could assist in improving funding of their alma mater through a fixed levy paid by members of their institutions (Egbo, 1997). According to Ibeh (2012), there is need to reduce the overdependence of government in funding higher education in Nigeria through private sector participation in funding of education. The industries can assist be financing universities in research or training students in practical areas required by the industries while the industries can leverage universities research since they lack the capacity to innovate. In developed countries private sector participation in education is well established. David (2002) indicates private sector participation in education in school building construction and provision of health facilities in schools in Florida. Duncan, Leigh, Maddeh and Tynan (2004) found that the private sector contributed immensely for schools in Port Philip Specialist School in Port Melbourne which serves about 140 students with moderate and severe disabilities.

iii. Parents

Parents' contributions are numerous in the improvement of the quality of university education in Nigeria. Parents are to ensure that their children are provided with adequate materials needed for their academic activities. Adequate provision must be made for students in terms of buying their food stuff, early payment of tuition fees, provision of accommodation and provision of books. Parents could also play the roles of provision of counseling to ensure that their children stay in school, attend lectures, refrain from joining secret cults, develop good study habits and learn effectively. Parents should also play the role of provision of spiritual support for their children while at school through praying for them. The primary objective of parents is the assurance of their children quality education which will enable them to lead productive and rewarding adult life in a global society (Cotton and Wikelund, 2001).

3. Conclusion

This article discussed the roles of internal and external stakeholders in influencing the improvement of quality university education in Nigeria. The paper contends that government who has continued to be the main financier of education in Nigeria has not been able to meet the demands of university education systems in the country. Government alone cannot continue to fund education. Attainment of quality university education can be achieved by collaboration of universities with industries in research and development activities. The industries can assist by financing universities in research or training students in practical areas required by the industries. This paper maintains that improving the quality of university education in Nigeria, much sacrifice is required from some stakeholders of university education including internal stakeholders such as academic staff, non academic staff, university administrators, deans of faculties, directors of institutes, heads of departments, senators and board of governors of universities. Lots of improvement can be recorded in university education through contribution of the different stakeholders both internal and external. External stakeholders can influence improvement in quality in donation of fund, implementing reform, participative decision making, institutional policy making, construction of buildings, donation of health facilities and textbooks, construction of access roads to institutions, monitoring performance. Systematic transformation efforts must involve internal and external stakeholders whose contributions are imperative in achieving the desired changes in the functions of universities in Nigeria. To facilitate improvement in university education, government of Nigeria should come up with a policy on how private sectors should support in improving the quality of university education through active participation in funding and physical facilities development in Nigerian universities.

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