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**UNIVERSITY EDUCATION AND SUSTAINABLE
DEVELOPMENT IN NIGERIA: THE NEXUS**

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SUMMARY

Education in general and university education in particular is very important for man's existence. University education through its lofty programme is a veritable tool for development of man both morally and intellectually for achievement of sustainable development. In Nigeria, it is argued that university education has failed to bring about sustainable development. This work was undertaken to examine whether university education in Nigeria has in a remarkable level contributed toward sustainable development of the nation. Findings, however, revealed that university education in Nigeria has not in a significant way contributed toward sustainable development of the nation due to numerous challenges it is facing including government's and society's lackadaisical attitude toward education in particular and university education in general. It is the view of this work that where it is allowed to take normal course university education is a veritable tool for sustainable development. The work adopted qualitative approach and descriptive methodology which allowed it to present the exact picture of the phenomena under study. It was recommended among others that for

university education to enhance sustainable development in Nigeria, government should show greater interest in the university education by making its funding a priority which should be reflected regularly in its budgeting pronouncements.

INTRODUCTION

Education is a process of developing or perfecting human being; it is to make man good. It is perceived as a systematic process of training designed to transmit knowledge and the development of skills and values beneficial to both individuals and the society. As a systematic and deliberate attempt to achieve desired goals, various inputs, processes, and disciplines are employed to change the behavior of individuals in a desired direction. Many people both ancient and modern hold this view. They include Plato, Aristotle, Edward Blyden, Garvey and millions of others in Nigeria who impoverish themselves to ensure that their children are educated. Its end is to cultivate the humanity of man by developing his special human excellence, both intellectual and moral, to enhance the achievement of human happiness and welfare of the society. The university education plays a strategic role in education of man through its lofty programmes and curriculum. Where this is allowed to take normal course it leads to good governance and sustainable development.

Conceptual Exploration

The UNESCO and World Bank (1998) and World Bank (2000) in agreement reported that universities are founded for the promotion of endogenous capacity sustainable development, the building and strengthening

of peace, understanding among human beings and democracy. Universities also promote freedom and human rights, changes in work processes and in the nature of economic activities and the extraordinary development of the new information and communication technologies. University education must be relevant to individual and community needs and aspirations to be called quality education as it is only quality education that could ensure sustainable development. Similarly Orwig and Caruthers (1980) opined that university's credibility is enhanced or reduced by the extent to which results are achieved or not, even in a situation where money is never available in unlimited quantity.

A university education is more than the next level in the learning process; it is a critical component of human development worldwide. It provides not only the high-level skills necessary for every labor market but also necessary for the training essential of teachers, doctors, nurses, civil servants, engineers, humanists, entrepreneurs, scientists, social scientists, and a myriad of other personnel. It is these trained individuals who develop the capacity and analytical skills that drive local economies support civil society, teach children, lead effective governments, make important decisions which affect entire societies and enhance sustainable development. A good university education trains a student as a person to broaden his mind and horizons, to allow them to see the relationships of apparently disparate phenomena, to acquire knowledge independently and to develop the confidence to challenge authority or dogma.

In Nigeria university education is planned to have the following as its objectives:

- i. Inculcation of national consciousness and unity.

- ii. The inculcation of the right of value and attitudes for the survival of the Nigerian society.
- iii. The training of the mind in the understanding of both the immediate and the remote world.
- iv. The acquisition of appropriate skills, ability, and competence, both mental and physical, as equipment for the individual to live in, and contribute to the development of society (Tom and Ibok, 2009).

According to the World Commission Report, sustainable development is defined as the process of developing land, cities, business, communities, etc. to meet the needs of the present generation without compromising the ability of future generation to meet their own need (World Commission on Environment and Development, 1987). It is tied down to economic prosperity, environmental quality, social equity and cultural diversity (Ogunyemi, 2005). Sustainable development is also seen as a process of developing land, cities, business, communities, etc. to meet the needs of the present generation without compromising the ability of future generation to meet their own need (World Commission on Environment and Development 1987). Furthermore, Briggs (2008) described sustainable development as a socio-ecological process characterized by the fulfillment of human needs while maintaining the quality of life and the natural environment indefinitely.

Thus, sustainable development involves all citizens of the nation whose knowledge and skills are essential for solving today's problems and preparing for future challenges. University education is expected to play a central role in the production of these human resources. Particularly, university education is to intensify and

diversify its programmes for development of higher level manpower within the context of the needs of the nation (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2004). It calls for participatory and multi-stakeholder approaches to dealing with development issues, involving a wide range of actors-government, private sector, civil society organizations, institutions of higher learning and research and development partners.

Theoretical Framework

The analysis of development is largely situated within the framework of the modernization and dependency theories of development which draws on the capitalist and Marxist ideologies respectively. The modernization theory, which this study is situated, is capitalist oriented, and sees development as the transition from a pre-modern to a modern state of being (Naanen, 1984). It posits that underdeveloped or less developed societies are in that condition because of internal factors such as corruption and wrong approach to development.

The theory takes the developed capitalist countries as the model of development, and attributes their success in development engineering to their possession of values that promotes development such as investment on university education and research. The diverse strands in their theory for example, the psychology personality, the institutional and economic variables (Ekpe and Awofeso, 1999), the Index Gap, Psycho-Dynamic and Diffusionist perspective (Okodudu, 1998) call for the replication of western values, through university education as the strategy of and *sine qua non* for development.

University Education and Sustainable Development:

The Nexus

University education is critical for promoting sustainable development and improving the capacity of the people to address environment and development issues. It is indispensable to changing people's attitudes so that they have the capacity to assess and address their sustainable development concerns. It is also critical for achieving developmental and ethical awareness, values and attitudes, skills and behaviour consistent with sustainable development and for effective public participation in decision making.

The unique characteristics of the university make the future possible through the kind of research knowledge generated and disseminated to the other members of the society and these in turn enhance the present and future which sustainable development entails. Therefore the central task of university education is to train and educate from a long term perspective, short term adaptation to the labour market, personal development and contribution by individuals to social and economic development through education in citizenship and lifelong training (UNESCO, 1998). Thus the development of the nation's human capital to explore and exploit the country's natural resources tends to depend on the universities' ability to generate knowledge, transfer knowledge and apply knowledge. This had necessitated the statement of objectives of teaching, research and community service that are explicitly geared towards the sustainable development of the nation in all ramifications (FGN, 2004).

The nexus between education in general and university education in particular and sustainable development is complex. Generally, research shows that basic education is key to a nation's ability to develop and

achieve sustainability targets. Research has shown that university education can improve agricultural productivity, enhance the status of women, reduce population growth rates, enhance environmental protection and generally, raise the standard of living, without jeopardizing the future. The goals of university education as highlighted by Edigheji (2009) are to:

- a) Train and empower students to become critical thinkers;
- b) Equip students with competency and skills required for socio-economic development;
- c) Promote and advocate for political freedom, democracy, human rights, equity, justice and good governance;
- d) Produce technocrats, political and administrative leaders able to address developmental issues and challenges facing the society;
- e) Produce professionals capable of planning, designing and inventing new products and solutions;
- f) Serve the needs of the market, the public and the surrounding Communities;
- g) Produce graduate entrepreneurs who will also promote social networks at the Community level;
- h) Work with industry to turn innovations and research outputs into commercial enterprises;
- i) Forge strong relationships with business community in order to secure research and investment funds.

From the goals of university education, as highlighted above, it is easy to allude that the nexus between university education and sustainable development is not limited to sustenance of environment that is friendly, it also involves developing life-skills including leadership, communication and management all

of which are extremely important for personal development. By equipping young people with these relevant capabilities in addition to their environmental knowledge, they can excel at living lives which not only further humanity, but that care for and respect the planet's resources too. Since it is now a reality that University education is key to any country's development, many countries are now investing in university education in order to create knowledge and human resource required for the country's long term developments. From a global perspective, economic and social development are increasingly driven by the advancement and application of knowledge. Education in general, and university education in particular, are fundamental to the construction of a knowledge economy and society in all nations (WORLD BANK 1999). Yet the potential of university education to facilitate sustainable development in developing countries to fulfill this responsibility is frequently thwarted by long-standing problems of finance, efficiency, equity, quality and governance. Now, these old challenges have been augmented by new challenges linked to the growing role of knowledge in economic development, role changes in telecommunications, technology, and the globalization of trade and labor markets (SALMI 2001).

Countries such as Japan, Korea, Malaysia and Singapore have used university education in general and research in particular to achieve sustainable development. Research had been utilized as an engine of progress much that they have crossed the technology hurdle within one generation, crashed the poverty barriers and are joining the developed nations of the world (Nwokolo, 1989). According to Nwokolo (1989) a country is said to be technically advanced when it has

acquired the scientific, technological, and industrial infrastructure to manufacture and sell enough goods and expertise to sustain economic growth and is able to feed her people. Such countries have promoted university from skill and knowledge acquisition to empowerment as in the United States of America, France, Canada, the United Kingdom and South Africa. Their universities have consistently been listed among the world best 200 in all areas of human endeavour (Okebukola and Ibiapo-Obe, 2009). On the other hand, Nigerian economy is import-driven and relies on foreigners to drive almost all developmental projects even in sensitive areas such as exploration and exploitation of crude oil because university education is yet to play its vital role.

Consequently, as Adedeji (2016) observes, in this era of knowledge explosion and innovation economy, universities are expected to continuously improve in generating skills, resourcefulness and creation of public knowledge, as well as exchange of skills between industries and academia and come up with better technologies that support sustainable development. University education is a manpower industry that produces the knowledge and skills necessary for development therefore the university must prevent human capital deficiency especially in critical areas of the economy that promote sustainable development.

University Education in Nigeria: The Challenges

Nigeria possesses the largest university system in Sub-Saharan Africa. Although South Africa's tertiary enrollment are higher, Nigeria boasts more institutions. With 48 state and federal universities enrolling over 400,000 students, its university system supports numerous graduate programs (9% of enrollments) and

serves as a magnet for students for neighboring countries. The system embraces much of the country's research capacity and produces most of its skilled professionals. Although Universities are supposed to be the engine of change and drivers for socio-economic and technological developments, majority of universities in third world countries including Nigeria according to Muchie (2009) are facing a number of challenges which are very similar. Amongst these challenges include;

- i) **Little investments and inadequate budgets set aside by Governments to run Universities;**
- ii) **Competition for resources with other more popular sectors like primary and vocational training sub sectors, health, agriculture, water and infrastructure;**
- iii) **Competition for good students and academic staff with other Institutions;**
- iv) **Increasing student fees due to high running cost of Universities**
- v) **Dilapidated infrastructure and aged teaching facilities;**
- vi) **Brain drain to greener pastures, politics and other more paying jobs;**
- vii) **Poor staff incentive packages and retention schemes;**

In addition to the above listed problems that are faced by the universities in the third world countries, Shu'ara (2010) identified specific problems facing Nigerian Universities to include;

- a) **There are academic staff shortages across board particularly in the critical areas of science and technology;**
- b) **Over 60% of the academic staff in the Nigerian University System are in the category of Lecturer**

and below;

- c) **These shortages are compounded by inter-and intra-sectoral brain drain;**
- d) **Dilapidated infrastructure and aged teaching facilities;**
- e) **Brain drain to greener pastures, politics and other more paying jobs;**
- f) **Poor staff incentive packages and retention schemes;**
- g) **Lack of qualified teaching and technical staff;**

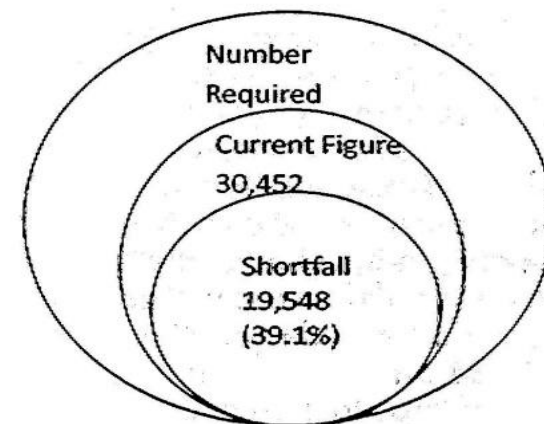
A closer look at some of these factors will help one to appreciate why university education in Nigeria has not fulfilled its role as a tool and driver for sustainable development. The shortages of academic staff particularly in the critical areas of science and technology has led to poor staff/student ratios. There are instances where a lecturer has to teach up to 1000 students. The NEED Assessment Report (2012) was shocked by the unsatisfactory quality and quantity of academic staff and ratio of teaching to non teaching staff. While there were non teaching staff in abundance in the universities with the average ratio of 1:3 of non-academic staff to student, academic staff were so inadequate that the ratio of lecturer to students on the average was as high as 1:100 in many universities. Academic staff/student ratio in some universities like National Open University of Nigeria (NOUN) was 1:363, University of Abuja 1.122, Lagos State University 1.114 compare to Harvard 1:4, MIT 1:9, Cambridge 1:3. This condition is worsened by the increasing culture of visiting lectureship in the university system. From available data over 60% of the academic staff in the Nigerian university system are in the category of lecturer one and below (Shu'ara 2010). Of a total of 37,504 lecturers only 28,128 of 75% are engaged in full

time basis. This means that 9,376 or 25% are recycled as visiting, adjunct, sabbatical and contract staff lecturers. NEED Assessment Report(2012) revealed a serious crisis of manpower. Instead of having 100 per cent academics having doctorates, only 43 per cent have the qualifications while 57 per cent do not. Besides, only seven universities (Imo State University, Universities of Uyo, Port Harcourt, Ilorin, Calabar, National Open University of Nigeria and Ondo State University of Science and Technology) have 60 per cent of their academic staff with PhDs as at the time of the report.

The Kano State University of Science and Technology, established in 2001 has only one professor and 25 Ph.D. holders. Kebbi State University of Science and Technology, established in 2006 has only two professors and five Ph.D. holders. The Ondo State University of Science and Technology, established in 2008 has only 29 lecturers. The report also revealed that in the Gombe State University, only four of the 47 professors are full-time while all the 25 readers are visiting. In Plateau State University, 74 per cent of the lecturers are visiting while in the Kaduna State University, only 24 out of the 174 Ph.D. holders are full-time staff (NEED Assessment Report, 2012).

Teaching Staff distribution in the country, both by qualification and rank indicates that Nigeria's university system is in crisis of manpower. Instead of having 100 per cent of the academics having PhDs, only about 43 per cent do so. Instead of having 75 per cent of the academics between senior lecturers and professors, only about 44 per cent are within the bracket. There are universities in which the total number of professors is not more than five; and the total number of PhDs in the whole university is not up to 30. This problem is compounded by aging and high

retirement rate of senior and experienced staff. With such academic condition, there is no gain saying that university education could not play its role as agent of sustainable development.



Shortage of fund available for running universities is another major factor dampening the prospect of Universities in Nigeria to serve as harbinger of sustainable development. Developing countries have limited partnership with business community and low capacity to turn innovations into commercial products. Research funds for basic and innovations are also limited. These together with Low enrollment of students in science and technology programmes contribute to inability of the county to produce enough innovative and entrepreneur graduates.

In recent years, the economic success of newly industrializing nations (e.g., the "Asian tigers") has been linked to substantial prior investment in human resources. These strategic investments, together with particular institutional and policy choices concerning the

nature of the university system, the extent of intellectual property protection, the historical evolution of industrial R&D organization, and division of labour between private industry, universities and government in R&D performance and funding combine to form what is called a "national innovation system" (Nelson 1993:9). Research suggests that public policy plays an important role in shaping national innovative capacity by determining human capital investments and creating incentives for innovation. Countries that have increased their innovative capacities have invested heavily in science and engineering education, and also in promoting competition as the basis for innovation (Stern, et al. 2000:33).

In contrast, many developing countries have neither articulated a development strategy linking knowledge to economic growth nor built up their capacity to do so. Nigeria is one of these. Although it is Africa's largest country with 20 percent of the region's population, World Bank (2002) reported that Nigeria had only 15 scientists and engineers engaged in research and development per million persons when that report was made. This compared with 168 in Brazil, 459 in China, 158 in India, and 4,103 in the United States during the same period. For instance on laboratories and workshops, the Need Assessment Report (2012) found out that many of them were old with inappropriate furnishing. Power and water supply problems persist; they had scanty and broken furniture and were overcrowded. Besides, equipment and consumables were absent, inadequate or outdated. Kerosene stoves were being used as Bunsen burners in some, including the Universities of Uyo and Jos. Some Engineering workshops were operating under zinc sheds and trees, and many science-based faculties were running what is referred to as "Dry Lab," due to lack of reagents and

tools to conduct real experiments. Sadly, no laboratory in any public university ranks among the top 1000 in the world.

Available data indicate low levels of investment in research and education, and this help to explain why the country's non-oil economy has remained consistently sluggish during a decade of international economic expansion. For education, Nigeria spends an estimated 2.4% of its GNP while Sub-Saharan Africa as a whole spends 5.1% (Hinchliffe, 2002; UNESCO 2000). Higher education enrolls a very modest 4% of the relevant age cohort. This level compares poorly with economic competitors such as South Africa (17%), India (7%), Indonesia (11%) and Brazil (12%) (Task, Force 2000). The elements of national innovation system are clearly not yet in place.

Much of university teaching in Nigeria as Saint Hartnett and Strassner (2003) rightly observe is based on traditional pedagogy and conventional curricula, and does not even meet the government's own standards in these areas. Available records show that the content and method of Nigerian university teaching is often outdated, not responsive to employers' requirements, and disconnected from the labour market just as its research output is extremely low and unable to prompt innovation-based productivity gains. These are attributed to lack of focus on student learning performance and academic programmes due to non existence of stronger linkages with employers and universities or having coalitions with other institutions that possess a comparative advantage in aspects of teaching and research.

It is opinion of a cross section of people that government alone cannot fund education. In most developed nations, universities have overtime evolved

numerous ways of sourcing for funds to augment government efforts in running university education. Such funding often comes as donations, endowments, professorial chairs, gifts, grants, etc. All these are as old as education. Most successful universities have utilized these means of funding to great effect. The rationale behind such move is deduced from the fact that the benefits of higher education are for both public and private sectors. There is a very large range in the shares that different countries assign to the public and private sectors. In Korea, for example, 84 percent of the total expenditures for higher education come from private payments and only 6 percent from the public sector. In contrast, in Denmark 0.5 percent of the total expenditures for higher education come from the private sector and 99.5 percent from the public sector. In the United States, 52 percent of the total expenditures for higher education come from private payments, which include 38 percent from households and 14 percent from other private contributors. The donations, gifts and endowment earned by three selected private universities in 2014 and 2015 in United States are listed below (Babalola, 2017)

	2014	2015
Harvard	\$1,735,151,000	\$1,691,253,000
Yale	\$1,911,920,000	\$1,860,662,000
Stanford	\$1,291,747,000	\$1,181,396,000

None of the Nigerian universities has devised means of sourcing and collaborating with private sector to raise the funding. Though sourcing funds from private sector to

finance university education has gained prominence in other countries, mostly in developed countries, Nigerian universities are yet to evolve a stable system of sourcing funds from private sector. Yet the expanding capacity of university education in the country has made it difficult for government alone to serve as the principal financier of this growth. Under these conditions, according to Saint, Hartnett and Strassner (2003) local income generation in Nigerian universities have gradually risen in recent years and creates the fear that it may soon reach the limit which therefore calls for urgent need to establish cost-sharing formula which some Nigerians have already advocated for.

Saint, Hartnett and Strassner (2003) identified governance and management as major problem facing Nigerian universities. These authors asserted that increasingly large and complex institutions of higher learning demand the application of professional management techniques, strategic vision, more proactive corporate management styles that address problems through innovation, and governance structures that facilitate institutional responsiveness to the wide range of university stakeholders. These shifts, however, according to them have been slow to materialize within Nigerian universities. This is because the transition towards more flexible management and governance required a national training capacity in university management, a budget allocation process that recognizes institutional performance, and financial management that empowers strategic planning and decentralized governance which Nigeria is lacking.

University education is also faced with the problem of dilapidated infrastructure and aged teaching facilities. An average public university in Nigeria lacks basic

infrastructure like regular water supply, electricity, accommodations, well equipped libraries and laboratories. A look at the level of infrastructure in Nigerian universities shows that it is a far cry from what is obtainable elsewhere in the world. This account for why none of Nigerian universities was listed among the world top 1000 ranking universities. As revealed by the NEED Assessment Report most of the infrastructure on campuses, including classrooms, laboratories, libraries, offices, water facilities, and road networks as overstretched, dilapidated, and inadequate. Most of the classrooms, accommodating large numbers of students did not have public address systems, or multimedia tools compliant with the digital age. Laboratories lacked equipments, while libraries stocked inadequate or old books and were not automated. Many workshops were filled with obsolete, while those that are modern are inadequate for the number of students to use.

On laboratories and workshops, the committee found out that many of them were old with inappropriate furnishing. Power and water supply problems persist; they had scanty and broken furniture and were overcrowded. Besides, equipment and consumables were absent, inadequate or outdated. With such conditions, university education can hardly enhance sustainable development.

On municipal services, the report declared that very poor maintenance culture is costing Nigerian Universities a lot of resources. Municipal services that require cheap and routine maintenance schedules are generally ignored until they completely fail or collapse. Artisans and technicians in most universities are sidelined in favour of contractors, who are not familiar with

university installations and infrastructures. Basic municipal facilities like water, electricity, transportation, market are either lacking or highly inadequate. Most of the universities rely on water tankers and boreholes. There is no university that has a functional integrated water supply and distribution network. There is no organised market on most of the university campuses, resulting in inappropriate use of learning spaces for trade. Healthcare facilities at the Universities are grossly inadequate. The land areas of most universities are unsecured and are therefore encroached upon by neighbouring communities.”

At accommodations managed by most institutions, students live in sub-human conditions – with hostel rooms overcrowded and lacking proper ventilation, with toilet facilities so poor that many students resort to bathing in the open or defecating in the bush. Laundries and common rooms have also been converted to hostel rooms, which are usually overcrowded. More than 70 per cent of the hostels assessed needed rehabilitation. On subhuman accommodations condition the NEED Assessment reports:

The lavatories in most of the hostels of Nigerian universities are both inadequate and unfit for human use. This is not surprising given the average ratio of toilet to users of 1:20. The unhealthy condition of lavatories is forcing some students to use the bush and/or the surrounding compounds of the hostels as open toilets. This poses serious health hazard. In some universities (for example Michael Okpara University of Agriculture, Umudike (MOUAU), female students take their bath in the open because the bathrooms

are in very poor condition. The hostels are infested with rodents. Laundries and common rooms in many universities have been converted into rooms where students live. In these improvised rooms, there is no limit to the number of occupants

Brain drain to greener pastures like multinational companies, politics and other more paying job stands between university education and sustainable development. Since sustainable development requires knowledge and skills that are oriental for solving current problems and preparing for future challenges it is only a university system with high manpower that can serve this purpose. In other words, university education can bring about sustainable development if its manpower is made up of the best brain. For some years it is observed that some of the best brains have left Nigerian universities to obtain employment elsewhere, the staff scarcity is most acute in engineering, science and business discipline. Shortfalls are estimated at 73% in engineering, 62% in medicine, 58% in administration, and 53% in sciences (NUC 2002). As at 2010, of about fifty thousand academic staff required, thirty thousand four hundred and fifty two academic staff were available with sixty percent of this being of lecturer I category and below. This has implications on the quality of teaching and learning.

Corruption in the Nigerian University system is a serious impediment to the Nigerian universities functioning as instruments of sustainable development. Corruption is endemic in Nigeria. This social problem no doubt has stretched its tentacles to Nigerian Universities. Reports of resume falsification, plagiarism, cheating, examination malfeasance, sexual harassment, contract kickbacks, and obligatory purchase by students

of professional lecture notes have regularly been reported in Nigerian newspapers in recent years about Nigerian universities. There are also reports of growing menace of student gangsterism, cult practices, examination malpractices and other forms of violence and disruptive behaviours within the university system.

The effects of corruption have also impacted upon admission process in the Nigerian universities. Instances abound where candidates with higher scores in JAMB are denied admission into undergraduate programmes. In some universities some candidates are said to buy admission while others are admitted through influence of favouritism. At postgraduate level, most of those admitted, are not the best qualified candidates. Some of those admitted are those that can pay their way into the system. Some head of departments and other lecturers with questionable characters involve in these practices, while university management behaves as if they are not aware of this.

Such ones when they are admitted would contract more intellectual endowed students to do all their academic work for them including writing of thesis and dissertation. In some instances corrupt heads of departments will connive with some unscrupulous lecturers and go into unwholesome agreement with well to do post graduate students with intention of fastening their tenure as student while benefiting financially from such students. They have made such students their special source of revenue generation. The worst effect of this practice is that most of the students recommended for the award of higher degree do neither have average knowledge about subject where degree is awarded nor do they have due respect for such degree or the university system. Once this level of university education where emphasis is on research and

innovation is mortgaged the tendency of university education to serve as an instrument for sustainable development is forfeited.

Some academic personnel have remained academic appendages and parasites. They have not engaged in researches but attach themselves to other colleagues for publications. They neither have flair for research nor do they exert themselves vigorously on other academic activities. Such ones rely on contracting others to publish for them for their promotion. Without prejudice to the fact that now emphasis is placed on academic collaboration for better research outcome, it is totally wrong, criminal, unproductive, and unprofessional for a university lecturer to lack professional alacrity and remain academic parasite. This has contributed to low research output in the country. For example, as Saint, Hartnett and Strassner (2003) noted, on the research side, Nigeria's number of scientific publications for 1995 was 711 – significantly less than its output of 1,062 scientific publications in 1981 by a comparatively much smaller university system (Task Force, 2000). In contrast, scientific publications were 3,413 for South Africa, 14883 for India, 310 for Indonesia, and 5,440 for Brazil (Task Force, 2000). When such people find their way into university their aim is to develop themselves materially by assuming positions or climbing professional ladder through fraud while jeopardizing the future and development of students under their watch. This in effect widens the gap between university education and sustainable development.

The role of university education as instrument of sustainable development is very much hampered by the hypocritical disposition of Governments, NUC Accreditation Teams and University Management. Every

university is eager and sometimes desperate to have accreditation for its programmes from NUC Accreditation Team. Quite often some of the programmes presented for the accreditation do not meet NUC benchmark or basic requirements for floating of such programmes. In such cases the university managements would do everything possible to obtain accreditation for such programmes including giving wrong information, over use of hospitality, and presenting facilities that had earlier been presented for another programme. Some NUC Teams played a toehold to the university management in such pretence. The federal and states governments as proprietors of the federal and state universities respectively are aware of the deplorable conditions of the infrastructure and other deficiencies in the public universities at least through their interaction with the Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU). As major financiers of public universities, both federal and state governments are aware of what they budgeted for university education and what that can accomplish in term of provision of infrastructure and defraying of other deficiencies. It is therefore hypocritical on the part of governments through its agent to accept any contrary positions presented during accreditation by the university managements. Besides, all NUC Accreditation Teams members are employees of Nigerian universities. They are quite aware of the deplorable condition in Nigerian universities and that most of the reports made by the teams are not correct and accurate. With such disposition by the university managements, NUC Accreditation Teams, and the governments they deny Nigerian universities the proper attention they deserved.

The budgetary allocation for education in general and university education in particular in Nigeria is ent in

discouraging as it is always quite below the UNESCO recommendation of 26 percent of the total budget. When compared with other smaller African countries, Nigeria is doing badly in its attempt to meet the minimum UNESCO bench mark on budgetary allocation for education. For instance, budgetary allocation for education few years back in Ghana was 31%, Cote d'Ivoire 30%, Uganda 27% and Kenya 23%. Botswana spend 19%; Swaziland 24.6%; Lesotho 17%; South Africa 25.8%; Burkina Faso 16.8%; Tunisia 17% and Morocco 17.7%. Lack of seriousness and sincerity on the part of government in funding university education is seen in the inconsistency that characterised the percentage of budget allocated for education. For instance the allocation in 2005 was 9.3 percent then was increased to 11 percent in 2006 but declined to 8.09 percent in 2007 and then jumped again to 13 percent in 2008 then crashed to as low as 7.6 percent in 2011 then rose up again to 8.4 percent and 8.7 percent in 2012 and 2013 respectively. If the growth of at least 10 percent was maintained from 2005 by 2017, it would have surpassed UNESCO recommendation of 26 percent.

CONCLUSION

The main aim of this paper was to examine the nexus between university education and sustainable development in Nigeria. The paper relying on empirical evidence concluded that by all means university education if it takes normal course is a veritable tool for sustainable development. This is evidenced in what is happening in many developed and Asian countries such as Japan, Korea, Malaysia, etc. Specifically it was emphasized that if government and society at large showed genuine interests and effort in funding university education in Nigeria, sustainable development will be

achieved.

THE WAY FORWARD

1. For Universities to be able to address these challenges and be relevant to the society as well as productive power, they have to be responsive to the needs of the society, play more public roles and proactively engage with the state
2. The more the public understands and appreciates the roles of Universities in socio-economic developments, the more the chances of Universities getting more public funds. For that reason universities need to create awareness and consciousness among public on the benefit of their contributing financially and otherwise to make universities an ideal place for research and innovation.
3. Conducive environment for learning, research and teaching must be created in the universities through provision of standard and required infrastructure ranging from adequate lecture halls to laboratories and student hostels.
4. Accreditation teams from National University commission should be meticulous in handling their accreditation assignments. Their verdicts on whether programmes in the university deserve accreditation or not should base on merit and not on fear or favour no matter who is concerned.
5. Universities should use appraisal of academic staff for promotion to ascertain the productivity of such staff. Those found wanting of not publishing but are always or most of the time requesting others to add their names for article publications should be

- denied promotion as well as sanctioned appropriately.
6. More qualified academic staffs should be employed in order to reduce high students/ lecturer ratio .
 7. Each university should evolve or device systems that will help it in sourcing fund from individuals and business organizations as well enhance internally generated revenue..
 8. More than 26% of the budgetary allocation of the federal and state governments must be devoted for education. Depending on circumstances substantial percentage of the amount should go to university education.
 9. The best brains in the country should be attracted to the university system through motivational incentives such as good pay packages, good condition of service and conducive working environment. Besides, those employed as lecturers should be those that have flair for teaching and researching.
 10. It is expedient and mandatory for governments to provide necessary infrastructure that will enhance effective teaching and learning. Governments should make this a regular provision in their budgetary pronouncements and be willing to implement and monitor its implementation.
 11. As much as possible, Council shall ensure that all appointments in the university are need-based and done in accordance with the provision of the relevant laws and without resort to any regional-tribal sentiments. Objective criterion be put in place for appointment of Council members.
 12. Adequate financing of Nigerian universities by the various governments and other sources will make the universities concentrate their efforts on the core

the universities concentrate their efforts on the core mandate of high quality teaching and learning, research and community services.

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