

University as Instrument for National Development and Identity

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Abstract

This paper review University in any given nation as access-pool of knowledge necessary for both material and financial human resource development instrumental in overall national transformation growth. The development of university itself is based on the national policy thrust and it defines it identity of Nigeria. This paper further takes the position, that the task of the university in the national development and identity should not be seen as the exclusive preserve of the university and government alone but a joint responsibility of all staff (stakeholders) in the institution and the general public.

Keywords: Universities National Development, identity, NYSC, Resources

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Introduction

The development and identity of any given nation depend upon the extent to which human and non-human resources (physical, materials and financial) are developed. According to Emmanuel (2001): The need to engaged human resources at the barest minimum (cost) that led the colonial administration to begin to groom the Nigerian under the leadership of the Europeans through various departmental training programme of 1900. However, most of the institutions established then have today growth into formal colleges, schools and other training centers, awarding certificates and diplomas in various fields of knowledge.

The dire need for national development, during independence preparation, led to the establishment of pre-primary, post primary and tertiary institutions to take care of the demands. In 1945, Elliot's commission recommended, the establishment of university of Ibadan in 1948 as a Nigeria campus of the University of London. In 1954, Nigeria become a federation. This marked the turning point in the development of formal education in Nigerian as institution of identity and development.

According to Fedipe (2000), "the National Policy of Education (2004 4th ed); the teaching and research functions of the higher educational institution have an important role to play in the identifying, national development particularly in development of high level manpower. Furthermore, universities constitute one of the best means of developing national consciousness.

Conceptual clarification

To create a context for clearer appreciation of the discussion and analysis. The following central or major concept of the study needs to be clarified.

1. University: Attempt have been made by various scholars based on the word "University" ambit of the academic activities which are perceived to be the function of institution. Encyclopaedia Britannica defined University as an institution of higher education, unusually comprising a liberal art and science, college and graduate and professional school and having authority to confer degree in various fields of study. The buttresses significance of the above definition on the concepts.

University said to be different from colleges based on the largeness, curriculum and degree professionalism. Furthermore the learners Dictionary defines university as an “institution of learning of a highest level, having a college of liberal art and a programme of graduate studies together with several professional schools as an art of technology, theology, law, medicine and engineering and authorized to confer both undergraduate and graduate degrees”.

The World Book Encyclopaedia, view university as a place where men and women are helped to enjoy a richer or more meaningful life. They prepared for professional career such as doctors, engineer, lawyers or teachers. They also give persons better appreciation of such fields as an art, literature, history, human relations and science in doing so university education enables individuals to participate with greater understanding in community affairs. The term university is better understand and appreciated based on the development both human and brawn.

2. National Development: Dawning from our understanding of what university is all about Poters (1975) defines National Development as a transformation growth or advancement to a better understand or appreciated when another concept is profaced to it and in which case use may have political development, economic development, educational development socio-cultural development and technological development.

The Objectives of Nigerian university

The Nigeria University is geared toward the following;

- i. Development of the intellectual capacities of individual to understand and appreciate their environment.
- ii. Acquisition, inculcation and development of the proper value-orientation for individuals and society.
- iii. The acquisition of objective view of the local and external environment
- iv. Acquisition of both physical and intellectual skills which will enable individual to develop into useful member of the institution.
According to Augustus (2021) Universities should pursue these goals through;
 - i. Teaching
 - ii. Research
 - iii. Store house of knowledge
 - iv. Existing dissemination of information
 - v. Service to the community

However, government of any given nations should be convinced of these for universities to make optimum contribution to national unity and development in the following ways;

1. There is need to diversity and intensify and intensify programmes for effective and efficient development of high level manpower base on needs of the economy.
2. Need for effective administrative machinery, for the identification of manpower needs of the basic economic; to guide the universities on the national manpower Board to represent the national universities commission.
3. Courses, content should reflect national requirement in case of professional course.
4. They should be improvement in the university education, thereby making students to take causes on history of ideas, philosophy of knowledge or other suitable course as may be determined.
5. They should by measures taken to involves the government. Universities and the employer, with the aim of maintaining and creating the atmosphere of corporation and unitization of expertise talent in the universities in both administrative policies and decision making.

An Act Establishing the University

An act to provide for the establishment and incorporation of the university and to make comprehensive provision for its due administration.

Constitution and function of the university and its constituent bodies

1. Incorporation and objective of the university

1. It is hereby established, the “university” (in this Act referred to as “University”) which shall be a body corporate with perpetual succession and a common seal.
2. University may be sue or be sued in its corporate name
3. The objects of the university shall be
 - a. To encourage the advancement of learning and to hold out to all persons without distinction of race, creed sex or political conviction the opportunity of acquiring a higher and liberal education.
 - b. To provide courses of instruction and other facilities for the pursuit of learning in all its branches, and to make those facilities available on proper terms to such persons as are equipped to benefit from them.
 - c. To encourage and promote scholarship and conduct research in all fields of learning and human endeavour.
 - d. To relate its activities to the social cultural and economic needs of the people of Nigeria and
 - e. To understand any other activities appropriate for university of the highest standard.

2. Constitution and principal officers of the university

1. The university shall consist of

- a. A Chancellor
- b. A Pro-chancellor and a council
- c. Vice-Chancellor and senate
- d. A body to be called congregation
- e. A body to be called convocation
- f. The campuses and colleges of the university
- g. The faculties, schools, institutions and other
- h. The persons holding offices constituted by the first schedule of this Act other than those mentioned in the paragraphs (a) to (c) of this sub-section.

(First schedules)

- i. All graduate and under graduates
 - ii. All other persons who are members of the university in accordance with the provision made by statute in that behalf
2. The first schedules of his Act shall have effect with respect to the principal officers of the university therein mentioned.
 3. Subject to section 5 of this Act, provision shall be made by statute with respect to the constitution of the following bodies, namely the council, the senate, congregation and convocation.

Administrative body of the university/policy makers

The governing council

Eddie (2021) defined the governing council as body of principal officers (executive) which makes policy within the university system. It is vested with the responsibility of the day to day administration of the university, for defining its mission, for planning its works and for management of its resources. It has the power to take such action as it necessary to discharge these responsibilities. The general control, superintendence of policy, finances and property of the university is statutorily vested with the governing council or board.

Membership is drawn within and outside the university some are appointed while others are elected by virtue of the position they occupy in the university. The power exercised by the members

of the council is for the interest of the university as a whole rather than as representative of any constituency. The council is guided by university miscellaneous provision Act on selection of members with the same applicational policies within the federal university.

The members of the council consist of

1. The pro-chancellor as chairman
2. The vice-chancellors, the Deputy vice chancellors, the chief university librarian, the Bursar, members elected from the senate, convocation, congregation, Alumni Association etc and the Registrar as secretary of the council.

In the state universities, the proprietor is regarded as the chairman of the council board with the highest policy making body vested with power and finance of the university with some major appointment, promotion, disciplinary committee, finance and general purposes committee.

2. The Senate

The senate composed of the vice-chancellor as chairman, the Deputy vice-chancellors, the chief librarian, all professors, acting Deans, Head of Department, Faculty representatives, director of academic unit, Academic planning and the Registrar as secretary of the senate.

Functions:

1. It organised and control the teaching by the university as well as admission and discipline of students and promote research at the university.
2. It established, organized and control campuses, colleges, faculties, department, schools, institutes and other teaching and research units.
3. It allocate responsibilities for different branches of learning
4. Organizing and controlling all courses of studies
5. Appointment of examiners both internal and external award degrees and other qualification such as award of honorary fellowship or honorary degree or title of a professor emeritus grant of fellowship, scholarship, prizes and other similar awards.
6. Establishing and control of halls of residence and similar institution at the university.
7. Supervision of the welfare of students at the university and the regulation of their conduct and determine what description of dress shall be academic dress for purpose of university convocation and regulating the use of academic dress.

University as a system

Arcus dictionary defines system as “instrumentality that combines interrelated interacting artifacts designed to work as a coherent entity” and an online English Dictionary define a system as a whole consisted of relationship among members. As an institution of learning, university system consist of a sub-system/component or units. The sub-system consist of its colleges example college of medical science, institutes, college of education, faculty of social science, faculty of Art, faculty of basic medical etc. Departmental example Department of Public Administration, Department of Political Sciences, Department of Social Studies, Department of policy and Administrative Studies, Registry Department, Works Department, Physical Planning Department and the departments are usually headed by skilled professional addressed as directors. The legislature arm include the council senate. The management, committee of Deans (Eddie, 2021).

A system or institution is related to a workshop or workforce since it involves trained to handle and execute. A workforce is not properly equipped for the system for effective efficient service delivery are the institutions or sub-system which further break into department and unit. Every unit or department has Head and subordinate as actors within the system. The preservation and laid down policies rules and regulation which guide the conduct of an individual define the power has well as the limitation of power of every principal officer. This is usually describe as “University” culture with a common “entity or symbol”. The system also entail a constituted bodies as the council, the senate, the convocation, the congregation, matriculation, the faculties, department as well as rules and conduct which guide the degree award. It also involves

appointment, requirement, promotion and appraised and punishment for erring staff, define responsibility and limitation of power of each serving officers. In addition, the relationship of this units in a giving this service promote a concern goal or objectives of transmitting knowledge is what constitute university as a system.

The role for national development and identity in Nigeria

According to Ozurumba (2006), human resource development is the "process of acquiring an increasing number of persons who have educational, skill and experience for social, economic, cultural and political development of a country.

Nigeria adopted educational institution for Excellence for effective national development

The efficiency belief on education as a powerful institution of national development has led many nations to commit much of their wealth to the establishment of government. Hence in Nigeria, government, organizations, communities and individual have been involved in this effort. And four (4) universities were established in Nigeria. They include;

1. University of Ibadan owned by the federal government
2. University of Nsukka owned by the Eastern Region
3. University of Ife (now Obafemi Awolowo University) owned by the Western Region.
4. Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria owned by the Northern region. Today there are about one hundred and seventy universities in Nigeria all producing the manpower needed for national development and unity.

All over the world, Universities are look upon as the citadel of knowledge, education and human resource development. The sprang out of the Nigerian universities for the development of all higher-level manpower to take the challenges of nation development and identity after independence in 1960.

It is the hopes of the people that universities shall produced the qualified manpower in sufficient quantity and quality (Fadipe, 2000) for the transformation of the nation (Nigeria) from a developing country to a developed country. In it's attempt to encourage the government toward the development of science and technology which are fundamental for technological developmental advancement of Nigeria. A ratio of 60:40 admission into social science and arts disciplines in federal tertiary institutions have evolved.

More so, as a way of enhancing access of candidates to social science faculty based courses, many universities in Nigeria have established pre-degree science programmes that are basically remedial in nature (UNESCO, 1998). For the government, organizations and private individual to create jobs opportunities for the increasing number of unemployed graduates of Nigeria universities to enable them contribute effectively to national unity and development an increased in number of universities over the years in order to take care of human resources capacity needs of the nation have been established. This appreciates improvement in human resource development in science and technology, mostly in federal universities. This is probably in anticipation of the mush needed development in the country.

The human, material and financial resources needed by the universities are less far than those available. This is probably why institutions have been witnessing incessant strikes by their staff in order to demand for improvement. Finally, Nigerians obtained degrees, diplomas and certificates in various educational disciplines not particularly required by the economy and invariable end up staging without jobs or with jobs not related to the academic field of study. This reduced the efficiency of educational system. However, there is therefore, the need to make the system work effectively to human, material and financial resource which is needed for national identity and development.

Contributions of universities to national identity and development via NYSC programme

In Nigeria, the national scheme NYSC was launched in 1973 with the aim of uniting Nigeria after the civil war which lasted for 30th month (Fab, 2012). The programme was launched by the then head of state General Yakubu Gowon. The programme was designed mostly for the youthful universities graduates who are posted to serve outside their own state of origin. Some of the major contributions carried out by the scheme include;

- An important aspect of how the graduates are utilized during the service year is the community development service. This apply as an all round programme of NYSC through which corps members are organised to work with local communities to promote and execute development projects (NYSC Project Document, 1984)
- It serves the need to correct the imbalance in the social, economic, cultural and political development of our country (Nigerian) where by rural areas are neglected and social amenities re concentrated in the urban region (arcus)
- It helps in developing the spirit of unity and entrepreneurship within the corps members due to de-emphasizing dependence on public service employment and promoting self-employment.
- Positively and practically impact base on the improvement in rural community life by onward motivation of people toward self help project for greater self-reliance.
- It exposed corps members to traditional diverse and custom of the host communities.
- It give opportunity for corp. members to experience new ideas and translate then into concrete achievements thereby relying less on foreign technology and thereby encourage local developmental in the projects executed.
- Complementary services are provided in all nations to enhance even development through the appropriate technological concept being promoted by NYSC.
- It given opportunity for job training and experience for corps members in areas of law, health, agriculture,, education, politic, social services and engineering etc.
- Finally, it encourage development of skill, talent of corps member for effective administration of human, material and financial resources within the various arms of government (legislature, executive and the judiciary) non-governmental organization, and regional administrations.

Furthermore, corps members have contributed greatly to improve the standard of living in various local areas/communities through social welfare scheme, health service bridge constructions, roads provision of essential portable drinking water (Okechukwu, 2013).

Conclusion

The systematic identity and development of human and material resource should be a joint responsibility of both the government at all level (federal, state and local government) professionals organization (academics and non academics) industrial organization and communities.

The national youth services projects have help to improved the standard of living in various rural communities and also exposed the members into various cultural diversification of the host communities. Furthermore, universities within the country have successfully encouraged people within a given geographical to study together and accommodate each other based on cultural belief for nations building. Based on this the following recommendation were made.

- Government at all levels should encourage the study of science, social science, administration/management through the award of scholarships to undergraduate student in Nigeria Universities.
- Both private organizations, companies' communities and all level of government should provide monthly allowance, incentive like transport allowances to all corps members to enable them work effectively and efficiently.
- Universities task for unity and development of the nation should not be seen as an exclusive preserve of the universities but as a joint effort for both the government, private sector, non-governmental organizations, regional leaders and the general communities.
- The work equally recommended the review of university curriculum in all the university in Nigeria to ascertain national development and identity.

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