Proliferating illiteracy in the universities: A Nigerian perspective

Anthony Nwaopara
Department of Anatomy
Ambrose Alli University Ekpoma, Edo State, Nigeria

Anthony Ifebhor
Academic Planning Division
Ambrose Alli University Ekpoma, Edo State, Nigeria

Frank Ohiwerei
Department of Vocational and Technical Education
Ambrose Alli University Ekpoma, Edo State, Nigeria

Abstract

The Nigerian educational system is in crisis. This paper aims to describe that crisis and demonstrate how this situation is contributing to a downward spiral in academic standards, and in particular its effect on decreasing literacy among Nigerian students. While recognising that the educational system is part of a much broader societal predicament, this paper nevertheless makes a number of recommendations for improvements to the Nigerian educational system, including a call for increased government funding of the education system, the need for constructive solutions to end cultism, and a multifaceted approach to entrenched social problems.

Introduction

The Nigerian development story has consistently been one of helpless struggle with mass poverty, illiteracy, disease and corruption (Ajibade, 2006). The illiteracy rate in the Nigerian adult population is 49% compared to Zambia at 27%, despite the fact that Nigeria has far more universities than Zambia, and literally millions of university graduates (VOA, 2006).

The Nigerian university system is characterised by numerous problems which have resulted in a poor worldwide ranking based on research output (measured by citations of published articles of staff); teacher/student ratio; proportion of international staff; employers' rating of graduates; and peer review (Abubakar, 2005; Sokumbi, 2006). This lack of quality was also evident in the results of the accreditation exercise conducted by the nation's National Universities Commission (NUC), between November 13 and 26, 2005; with the major result being the non-accreditation of the law programmes of the first generation universities at Ibadan, Ife, and Nsukka, as well as findings by the accreditation panel that there was a dearth of qualified academic staff and learning facilities (Sun News, 2006).

The current educational crisis is emblematic of ongoing societal problems, which directly impact on education at all levels (see Okebukola & Borishade, 2006; Ajibade

2006; Kigotho, 2004; Uzokwe, 2006 among others). Rotimi (2005) explains that major societal changes since the 1960s have included "violent military coups, state sponsored political assassinations, proliferation of ethnic militia, communal clashes and total erosion of family values" (p. 79). In this environment, Kigotho (2004) notes that academic fraud and corruption are endemic.

In 1997, Adejare summarised the factors responsible for the state of the Nigerian university system thus: under-funding, inadequate infrastructure, insufficient lecturers, poor remuneration, inability to recruit qualified staff from home or abroad, and student-organised gangsterism (cultism[1]). Okebukola and Borishade (2006) made a number of useful recommendations for improving these many and varied problems. These include the necessity of high-level government interest in education reforms; the importance of university autonomy and academic freedom; the need for both the public and private sectors to support higher education; the need for substantial hikes in government funding for higher education; the participation of stakeholders in policymaking for higher education; and the precondition of good government and democracy for the success of the sector. This paper aims to examine the Nigerian university system, by situating our own experience in the literature, and making further recommendations for addressing the current crisis.

The state of affairs in the Nigerian university system

Funding and infrastructure
Nigerian Universities are known as 'glorified secondary schools' due to poor facilities and infrastructure. Olukoya (2006) describes a typical Nigerian university as having overcrowded classrooms, students sitting on the floor during lectures, and ill-equipped libraries and laboratories. This has resulted in a so-called 'brain drain' whereby many of Nigeria's brightest university lecturers are leaving to take up positions overseas. The lack of adequate training has also had an inverse effect in that many university graduates are functionally unemployable, which then requires institutions such as banks to go abroad to source qualified and capable personnel (Sokumbi, 2006).

In agreement with Rotimi (2005), Osawe (2006) traces the dwindling standards of education in Nigeria to inadequate funding that began during the 'military days':

> Schools were starved of adequate funding, old facilities were not renovated, and teachers became overworked and underpaid…
> Besides inadequate funding that has led to billions of unpaid gratuities and pensions, we now have poorly equipped libraries, obsolete laboratories, and eight or more students sharing a room meant for four people.

Bollag (2002) identifies funds misappropriation as one of the causes of declining academic standards, the result of the wider corruption practices endemic in Nigeria. Loans received from the World Bank for educational purposes during the 1990s were used to purchase unnecessary, and expensive equipment that could not be properly installed or maintained, or were irrelevant and useless. Such funds would clearly have helped improve the standard of education in Nigeria, had they been well managed.

Examination malpractice
On the one hand, there is an over-reliance upon examination results (or paper qualifications) in Nigeria, and on the other, there is entrenched systemic corruption, which ensures that most degrees, diplomas or certificates are unreliable indicators of students' potential or achievements (Odetunde, 2006; Ebireri, 2004). According to Olawale (2006), "it is not he [sic] that approaches his [sic] study with zeal that eventually reaps the benefits of hard work but he or she that is willing to bribe, cheat

or sexually gratify a lecturer." Nwagu (2006) concurs with this view and bemoans the general poor quality of university students in the Nigerian system.

Enaowho (2006) identified examination malpractice as another plague on the Nigerian university system. A study conducted at the University of Benin, Nigeria, to investigate the attitude of university undergraduates toward examination malpractice, found that 51% of students were positively disposed to cheating in examinations, while 49% were not (Alutu & Alutu, 2003). These figures can be compared with the study by McCabe (2005), which demonstrated that 21% of American and Canadian students had engaged in examination misconduct of some form.

The different forms of examination malpractices include: impersonation; copying from other students during an examination; bringing into examination rooms, text books, microchips, organisers and diaries that have relevant examination materials; prepared answers being taken into the examination hall; discussion during examinations; writing of answers on currency notes (especially objective answers); use of coded pencils; exchange of scripts during examination; writing of answers on laps, palms and arms; and assault on examination supervisors and invigilators (Oyebisi, 2006). While it could be argued that these forms of academic misconduct are not unique to Nigeria, what distinguishes them here is the relatively high percentage of students (over half) who regard these practices as normal and acceptable.

Sexual harrassment
Another problem is the incidence of sexual harassment that has increasingly become noticeable on university campuses in Nigeria. The issue also involves lecturers and non-academic employees of the universities. It is more common however, to hear of lecturers harassing female students sexually (Denga & Denga, 2004). A few known isolated cases of some female lecturers propositioning their male students have been reported (Denga, 1986).

The magnitude of sexual harassment in Nigerian universities was revealed in an interaction between the Nigerian Minister of Education and about 1,000 students, summarised by Houreld (2006) as follows:

> Girl after girl spoke up about being pressured for sex by teachers in exchange for better grades…for years, sexual harassment has been rampant in Nigeria's universities, but until recently very little was done about it…most victims are college students such as Chioma, a slim, quiet 22-year-old with a B average, who repeatedly failed political science after refusing her teacher's explicit demands for sex. She said he was a pastor and old enough to be her grandfather…Some lecturers see young girls as fringe benefits…We've had cases where the girls have complained and the heads of their department have called them and said, 'Give him what he wants'…In a recent survey 80% of more than 300 women asked at four universities said sexual harassment was their number one concern.

This situation continues to occur despite the fact that sexual harassment in educational settings and the workplace (formal and informal) in Nigeria and other parts of Africa have in the last two decades received local and international attention and condemnation (ILO, 1992; Oppong, 1995; Mama, 1996).

Cultism
A number of commentators suggest that students' involvement in cultism on campus has also eroded educational values and goals (see Nwagwu, 2006; Rotimi, 2005; Onoyase, Onoyase & Arubayi, 2008). While it is almost impossible to accurately document the amount of crime resulting from cult activities (Rotimi, 2005), there is

anecdotal evidence that cultists engage in a range of violent and destructive acts that have radically altered the learning environment of the university. Onoyase et al., (2008) state that students' participation in cults has had the effect of ensuring that the majority of those on campus live in a state of perpetual fear, because of the common place nature of gang torture, rape, kidnapping and theft. Male cultists engage in rape, violence, murder and kidnapping, and female cultists often operate prostitution rings, and also engage in violence. In addition to acts of violence, cultists openly cheat in examinations and openly threaten their lecturers (Onoyase et al., 2008, p. 200).

According to Rotimi (2005), some factors associated with Nigerian universities have provided a breeding ground for cultism, including: "reduced funding, inadequate recreational facilities, idleness, contempt for intellectual culture and distaste for enlightened debate and easy access to sophisticated weapons" (p. 94).

Social norms

Odetunde (2006) has been critical of the shift in education (and Nigerian society more broadly) from an emphasis on hard work and excellence to success through political connection. He traces this shift to changed behaviour by all stakeholders, but particularly a lack of leadership in government and a change in parenting practices in Nigeria:

> Parents used to be the backbone of the nation. They taught their children right from wrong, and they also taught them the value of hard work. One may ask how parents contributed to the decline in education in all tertiary institutions in Nigeria. While parents were sure that their children did not meet admission requirements, they encouraged purchase of admission but did not follow up their children's performance to ensure a good return on their investment. … The result is a graduating student that passed through schools but did not excel and yet graduated…Government must be blamed for not creating an enabling academic environment through prioritization of funds and the creation of necessary employment to justify the establishment of so many universities…our capable and able parents failed to monitor the progress of their children against morally, socially, academically acceptable standards.

It is apparent that the Nigerian education system is corrupt at almost every level, from administrators to lecturers and students. Okoye (2006) refers to lecturers not following school timetables, conducting other business from their offices, exploiting students both sexually and financially, and being intellectually and academically lazy. The spin-off effect is students who are similarly lazy and corrupt. Students routinely cheat on examinations, pay others to sit exams for them, falsify academic records, and 'pay' for university admission, grades (and even certifications) with gifts, money or sexual favours (Kigotho, 2004). An example of the extent of the deterioration of the Nigerian university system was the revocation of the degrees of 7,254 graduates, in a crackdown on academic fraud at the University of Port Harcourt, southeastern Nigeria.

Uzokwe (2006) makes clear, however, that the corruption in the education system is emblematic of the broader corruption, which characterises Nigerian society[2]. As Uzokwe comments: "it is a shame that one cannot get anything meaningful in Nigeria without bribing someone. Careful observations show that those Nigerians that have perfected the act of bribery and corruption seem to be getting well ahead of the others that have shunned it". Uzokwe (2006) concludes that the logical result of such endemic corruption is "university graduates that are functional illiterates".

Our experience in the Nigerian education system

Based on our own experience in the Nigerian education system, it is clear, as alluded to by Uzokwe (2006), Okoye (2006) and Olawale (2006), that there is a growing awareness that academic success no longer depends on how hard working you are, but on how much money you are willing to give or receive. Sometimes, some of us had to contend with the embarrassments occasioned by the negative exploits of some university students and staff when the media, the churches, mosques, and other public gatherings, highlight them.

As much as it is true that our university system is in ruins, we must acknowledge here that there are some university staff, students and parents who abhor the decay in the system and wish to contribute their quota in setting things right. In fact, to facilitate the accreditation process of some the departments in our university, parents gathered and agreed to contribute money annually towards the provision of necessary teaching and learning facilities. This was occasioned by the government's indifference to the plight of students admitted into unaccredited programmes in the university.

In 2001, the democratically elected government attempted to retrench most of us, the academic staff, for questioning the rationale behind the government's indifference towards funding the state owned university. For this, our chapter of the Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU) was seen as a tool in the hands of the opposition party. The truth however, is that ASUU was mounting pressure on the government to address the issues of under-funding, infrastructural decay and understaffing but the government resisted it in a tyrannical manner. As a result, ASUU engaged the government in a ten long months labour conflict to address the problems facing the university. These problems are traceable to the effects of a 'self-sustenance policy' by the previous administration. The policy required that all government institutions including the university, should as a matter of compulsion, generate their own funds from which all its financial obligations including salaries would be met. This policy had several negative effects on the universities amongst which were population explosion, different dimensions of academic and certificate fraud, 'brain drain, infrastructural decay, insecurity and cultism.

As reported by Nwagwu (2006), Olawale (2006) and Odetunde (2006), some students in our university actually spend most of their academic years outside the walls of the university, doing unrelated activities to enable them to pay for unmerited examination scores and grades. We are also aware that such students are seen on campus only during examination periods while some that have intermediaries, are never on campus as long as they are willing to send the required amount of money. It is disheartening to acknowledge also that the actions of both the academic and non-academic staff in our university, do not encourage academic excellence and proficiency because even the diligent students are forced to engage in corrupt behaviour, since the obviously lazy and unmotivated students that are never in class or in practical sessions, pass their examinations with good grades ahead of the seemingly conscientious ones.

In fact, refusing to 'play games' with such poor students by those of us that are intolerant to academic fraud, makes them desperate, especially after making several futile efforts to cajole the course lecturer. Most times, they resort to violent tactics such as the delivery of parcels containing bullets into the offices of those of us who have been labelled 'uncompromising'. These parcels are often accompanied by various inscriptions like "if you love your life and family, allow us to graduate" or "we shall send these bullets into your brain if we fail your course(s) again" or "these bullets are for your wife and first son if you keep on failing us". These tactics are intended to intimidate us as we insist that they must attend classes and practical sessions (if applicable), before they could be allowed to sit for examinations and even when they

do, passing will depend strictly on academic performance. These violent operations often times are the handiwork of cult members.

Ironically however, instead of an outright condemnation of such a development, some colleagues plead that a pass grade be given to such students even if it is done to prevent a violent attack on one's family. This is so because the security of life and property on campuses has over the years been compromised. Of course, by heeding this plea, which often occurs for fear of death, an academically unqualified student is allowed to graduate after having probably benefited from such academic 'amnesty' through the same means.

Again, there have been circumstances whereby final year undergraduate students who are expected to undertake a research project in partial fulfillment for the award of a degree, choose to go to another school to copy another student's research project under the watchful eyes of a supervising lecturer that has received an agreed sum of money. In this case, when would the student learn how to conduct research and come out with findings and recommendations, which is a basic achievement in the university? When would the student learn the skills for independent study that is expected to be adapted for masters and doctoral degree programmes?

Insisting that such final year students must conduct a well-supervised research project, has not earned us peace on campus as well. Some of us have been dubbed 'too hard', 'too righteous' or ' too meticulous'. It has also attracted several threat letters that were neatly tucked into our offices. Such final year students do all in their fraudulent power, to achieve a change of supervisor even in the middle of the project. Often they successfully effect the change, which unfortunately and regrettably, is a reward for financial or sexual gratification to those in charge of allocating students to academic supervisors. Once more, by this action, an academically unqualified student is fraudulently allowed to graduate.

In our university system also, we are aware that male lecturers sexually harass female students and are particularly interested in how many of them they could take to bed at the expense of their basic academic responsibilities. They tag a female student 'stubborn' if she resists their advances and this attracts result seizure or outright examination failure, irrespective of her academic standing. This is similar to the reports by Houreld (2006), Olawale (2006), Okoye (2006) and Denga and Denga (2004). It is however unfortunate that some senior members of staff to whom the matter is reported but do not take the necessary action, are often also involved. Adedokun (2005) described the complexity of sexual harassment on Nigerian campuses as follows:

> Sexual harassment and violations on…campus take six main forms:
> male lecturers to female students (by far the commonest), male
> students to female students, male lecturers to female non-academic
> staff, male non-academic staff to female students, male lecturers
> (usually senior) to female academic staff and male non-academic staff
> to female non-academic staff.

Having served as an examination officer and student's academic adviser in the university, we further confirm that sexual harassment exists in our institution. There are first hand instances whereby cases of sexual harassment involving a male staff and female students were carefully managed without confronting the male staff in question. This we did by assisting the female students to psychologically discourage their male opponent from further sexual advances using the powers of words and friendly dialogue. We understood that managing such cases without confronting the male staff member, safeguards the female student from further victimisation as it would seem to their male opponents that the female student is 'blackmailing' them.

Sometimes however, we become helpless ourselves, particularly in cases that involve highly placed members of staff.

We wish also to state here that from our observation, cases of sexual harassment are rampant among students who are under pressure to get their transfer forms, industrial training forms or final year clearance forms signed because these forms enjoy a 'compulsory' status. Others faced with incessant cases of sexual harassment are those that are under pressure to meet the requirements for proceeding to the next academic level. For instance, the medicine and surgery undergraduate students in our university, unlike students of other departments, need a pass grade in all their first year core courses and can not afford a failure grade in one core course as that would amount to a repeat of one academic session. Another failure grade for that same course in the repeat session, amounts to a withdrawal. This mounts pressure on them and in turn makes them all desperate to pass. Some staff members, who are aware of how the regulation is applied, unfortunately capitalise on this to intimidate and harass the female students for sexual gratification. Hence, the increasing call by some of us in the medical faculty that there is a need for a second look at the academic regulations to bring about a form of relaxation in such regulations, which of course, should not significantly affect the established academic goals.

From our observation, two factors that have an influence on examination malpractice in our university system are the disregard for professional ethics and the lack of value attributed to integrity by most university staff. We have observed that even when our university students are not inclined towards academic fraud, they are intimidated to oblige by those who would have been teaching them the gains of academic integrity. There are instances when students were aware of the unethical conduct of some senior members of staff in our university and this strips such a staff member of the moral power to preach academic discipline, integrity and success through hard work.

As this issue compounds the problems of examination malpractice, we agree with the separate opinions by Adejare (1997), VOA (2006), Ajibade (2006), Online Nigeria (2007), and Saint, Hartnet, and Strassner (2003) that examination malpractice has become the greatest threat to the eradication of illiteracy in a nation with a comparatively high level of adult illiteracy. This is despite the huge resources that are available to Nigeria and the large number of private and government owned educational institutions, be it nursery, primary, secondary, teacher training institutes, colleges of education, seminaries, colleges of education and agriculture, polytechnics and universities. We believe that the different dimensions that examination malpractice or academic fraud have assumed, particularly in our higher institutions, have entrenched an academic culture that encourages the education of students on how to remain 'functional illiterates' while pretending to be literate. It is this that has earned Nigerian students the tag 'half-baked graduates' (Uzokwe, 2006).

These generations of 'pretenders' are now becoming educators and education managers themselves as a result of corrupt practices at every level of society. This is one of the reasons for the increasing number of unqualified teaching staff, while the nation struggles with 'brain drain'. The question is: what would a 'functional illiterate' from the university transfer to the next generation, knowing quite well that even the half-baked knowledge transfer would not be reliable? The consequence is a gradual proliferation of incomplete and defective knowledge, with a flow-on effect to professions such as medicine, engineering, architecture, nursing, pharmacy, dentistry, law, and accountancy, to mention just a few. Furthermore, Ebireri (2004) maintains that examination fraud has even more important ramifications in education:

> …considering the fact that if a medical doctor makes a mistake, the patient dies, if an engineer makes a mistake, the bridge collapses; but if a teacher makes a mistake, it affects the unborn generation…

therefore, [there is a] need to ensure that the teachers who are on professional training …do not engage in examination malpractice...

Dike (2005) therefore insists that the first step towards improving the education system in Nigeria is to 'educate the educators', because of teachers' central role in the economic, social and political landscape of the country. In fact Olajuwon (2008) has recommended 'transformative education' as a solution to the numerous problems facing the system. This proposed system entails refocusing and re-energising the educational system to bring about quality research, governance and administration and above all, aligning it with individuals' needs, aspirations and goals towards a better society.

Our recommendations

Despite the challenges highlighted in this paper, we believe that sincere efforts on the part of the stakeholders, including the government, university authorities, parents and the students themselves, will significantly enhance the integrity of our university degrees. Hence, we make these recommendations.

1. Increase government funding
We recommend that the government should take proactive measures towards enhancing the budgetary allocation to the education sector. The recommendation by Okebukola and Borishade (2006) that public and private sectors should join hands in supporting higher education is as well advocated.

We acknowledge that ASUU Nigeria has persistently challenged the government of the day regarding its responsibilities towards the funding of education in Nigeria. In most cases, labour conflicts (Nwagwu, 1997), closure of universities for long periods and the distortions in the academic calendars, are the consequences. We agree with ASUU that the federal government should take the blame for the decadence in the Nigerian school system (ASUU, 2001; Bassey, 2001) and as Akinkugbe (2001) asserts: "there seems…no turn around unless funding is addressed positively and aggressively". Increased funding would also ensure adequate remuneration for teachers, improved learning environments and increased occupational satisfaction. This would have the added benefit of reducing the need for lecturers to 'commercialise' their intellectual efforts, and thereby give them more time to devote to the core business of teaching students on campus.

In terms of funding therefore, we recommend that the present government should give priority to the education sector in order to compensate for decades of under-funding. The government should also institute an effective anti-corruption measure that would check funds misappropriation in the universities as this is another facet of the under-funding dilemma (Bollag, 2002).

2. Provide constructive solutions to cultism
Appreciating the fact that our collective psyche has been assaulted by the tragic wave of secret cults on school campuses (Ayu 1994 cited in Smah 2001), some, in an attempt to proffer solutions to the cultism dilemma, have suggested that suspected cultists should be arrested, tried and when found guilty, should be jailed or hanged depending upon the magnitude of the offence (Ede, 1995 and Ige, 2000 as cited in Onoyase et al., 2008).

On the contrary however, Osemeikhian (1998) and Sowore (1998 as cited in Onoyase et al., 2008), maintain that the use of force to curb cult activities might not yield any positive result since members of these secret cults are already used to violence. In support of this stand, Onah (1999 as cited in Onoyase et al., 2008) states: "cultists should be handled with care and not through the use of force". Indeed, we are of the

opinion that solving violence related problems like cultism, with other forms of violence, breeds more violence. Experience has shown that some of our colleagues, who have openly challenged the activities of cult groups, eventually became perceived enemies and targets of violent attacks.

In view of the need to achieve maximum results, we recommend that universities should adopt the cultism management techniques that were identified by Onoyase et al. (2008). These techniques include coercion, persuasion, public awareness campaigns, public renunciation and school disciplinary measures.

3. Establish a multifaceted approach to entrenched social problems
On the issues of examination malpractice, sexual harassment and the disregard for social norms and values, we recommend that a multifaceted approach be adopted, since the probable factors which might be responsible, are common to each of them. Of course, these negative trends have been linked with the endemic corruption in our society, gross under-funding, inadequate teaching and learning facilities, indiscipline among staff and students, unethical conduct of lecturers, parental indiscipline, cultism and population explosion (see Ebireri, 2004; Okoye, 2006; Uzokwe, 2006; Nwagwu, 2006; Odetunde, 2006; Olawale, 2006; Houreld, 2006). It is our opinion therefore, that for these negative trends to be eradicated, the causative factors must be addressed simultaneously and this demands the combined efforts of the stakeholders.

Of greater interest however, is the role of the lecturers, the university authorities, and parents. As we urge the public and private sectors to fund education adequately, we also recommend that the lecturers should be made to uphold the ethics of their profession at all times. The university authorities should be alive to their responsibilities. Parents should be more responsible as to be able to teach their children the honest ways to success. They should also enlighten them on the benefits of hard work and integrity.

It is our belief that these recommendations, if implemented, will not only checkmate the negative trends, but will help in improving the standard of academic activity on our campuses as well as the integrity of the degrees awarded.

Conclusion

The Nigerian education system graduates thousands of graduates yearly, while simultaneously de-emphasising academic excellence and proficiency. This paper has identified some of the key problems which have contributed to this situation, and made a number of recommendations to address ongoing problems. These recommendations have included a call for increased government funding for the education sector coupled with an anti-corruption measure to ensure against funds misappropriation, constructive approaches to end cultism and a multifaceted approach to dealing with entrenched social problems. Without urgent action by all stakeholders, the Nigerian education system risks multiplying the number of citizens with insufficient education, which is equivalent to no education at all. Put simply, the current system of education in Nigeria is guilty of proliferating illiteracy.

Endnotes

[1]The origins of cultism in Nigeria can be traced to the Prates Confraternity founded in 1953 which was non-violent, and had parallels with the sororities and fraternities common to many American university campuses (see Rotimi 2005). The confraternity has changed since the 1960s so that it is now characterised by "physical torture as a means of initiating new members, maiming and killing rival cult members and elimination of real and imagined enemies" (Rotimi, 2005, p. 79).

[2]According to Transparency International, Nigeria is perceived to be one of the most corrupt countries in the world (147 out of 179 countries surveyed).

Author Biographies

Anthony Obioma Nwaopara holds a Master of Science Degree (M.Sc.) and a Bachelor of Science degree (B.Sc.) in Human Anatomy. He is an academic in the department of Human Anatomy, Ambrose Alli University, Ekpoma, Edo State, Nigeria.

Anthony Odion Ifebhor holds a Master of Education degree (M.Ed.), Bachelor of Education degree (B. Ed), National Certificate of Education (NCE) and a Teacher Training Certificate (TC II). He is a staff member in the academic planning division of Ambrose Alli University, Ekpoma, Edo State Nigeria.

Frank Ohiole Ohiwerei holds a Master of Education degree (M.Ed.), Bachelor of Education degree (B. Ed), and a National Certificate of Education (NCE). He is an academic in the department of Vocational and Technical Education, Ambrose Alli University, Ekpoma, Edo State, Nigeria.

References

Abubakar, M. (2005). African varsities missing in world ranking. Retrieved January 27, 2007, from http://www.odili.net/news/source/2005/nov/15/48.html.

Adedokun, O. A. (2005). Sexual harassment in Nigerian educational settings: Preliminary notes from a qualitative assessment of Lagos state University, Ojo, Lagos, Nigeria. *Sexuality in Africa Magazine*, *2*(4). Retrieved December 10, 2006, from http://www.arsrc.org/downloads/sia/dec05/researchnote.pdf

Adejare, O. (1997). Cancel Jamb's UME Exam. Retrieved January 28, 2007, from http://groups.google.co.uk/group/soc.culture.nigeria/browse_thread/thread/ c6729592db2ab252/2f02b99fe10e0b5f? ink=st&q=soc.+culture.+nigeria+on+cancel+jamb+ume+examination+&mum=1 &hI=en#2f02b99fe10e0b5f

Ajibade, I. M. (2006). The challenge of democratic consolidation in Nigeria: A case for strengthening the media. Retrieved December 13, 2006, from www.africaninitiative.org.

Akinkugbe, O. O (2001). The piper, the tune, and university autonomy. *The Nigerian Social Scientist, 4*(1), 2-6.

Alutu, O. E., & Alutu, A. N. G (2003). Examination malpractice among undergraduates at a Nigerian university: Implications for academic advising guidance and counseling. *Guidance and Counseling*, *18*(4), 149-152.

ASUU (2001, January 15). Press Statement on the "Budget 2001 by the Calabar zone, Budget 2001 and University Education in Nigeria" (Lagos) *Sunday Punch,* p. 4.

Bassey, O. (2001, April 24). ASUU Exonerates Lecturers from Students' Poor Performance. *THISDAY* (Lagos), p. 9.

Bollag, B. (2002, February 1). Nigerian universities start to recover from years of violence, corruption, and neglect. *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, pp. A40 - A42.

Davies, G. K. (2001, November 30). *The Chronicle Review*, pp. B16-B17.

Denga, D. I. (1986). *Counselling on campuses.* Lagos, Nigeria: Erit Egwa Press.

Denga, D. I., & Denga, H. (2004). Sexual harassment: A student's view from a Nigerian university. *The African Symposium, 4*(1). Retrieved January 26, 2007, from http://www2.ncsu.edu/ncsu/aern/sexhass.htm.

Dike, V. (2005). *The state of education in Nigeria and the health of the Nation.* Retrieved January 26, 2005, from http://www.africaeconomicanalysis.org/ articles/gen/education1024234737htm.html.

Ebireri, O. R. (2004). Counselling students of the Faculty of Education at the University of Maiduguri against examination malpractice. Retrieved January 27, 2007, from http://www.onlinenigeria.com/articles/ad.asp?blurb=63.

Enaowho, J. (2006). A Matriculation address on cultism and exam malpractice*.* Retrieved January 26, 2007, from http://www.delsunigeria.net/matric2006.asp

Gboyega, I. (2005). Cultism and violent behaviours in tertiary institutions in Nigeria. *Zimbabwe Journal of Educational Research, 17*(1), 39-53.

Houreld, K. (2006). Nigerian girls harassed by teachers demanding sex. The Associated Press. Retrieved April 5, 2007, from http://www.azstarnet.com/ news/175318 ; http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/ article/2007/03/25/AR2007032500577.html; http://www.washingtonpost.com/ wp-dyn/content/article/2007/03/25/AR2007032500577.html

International Labour Organization (ILO) (1992). Combating sexual harassment at work. *Conditions of Work Digest,11*(1).

Kigotho, W. (2004, November 1). Nairobi Nigerian University revokes thousands of diplomas in crackdown on academic fraud. *The Chronicle of Higher Education.* Retrieved January 27, 2007, from http://www.utexas.edu/conferences/africa/ ads/19.html.

Nwagwu, J. (2006). The role of African universities in a global society: The case of Nigerian universities. Imo State University Owerri, Imo state, Nigeria. Retrieved January 27, 2007, from http://www.interaction.nu.ac.za/SAARDHE2005/ full_papers.htm.

Nwagwu, C. C. (1997). The environment of crisis in the Nigeria education system. *Comparative Education 33*(1), 87-95

Mama. I. A. (1996, December 15). Violence Against Nigerian Women (In reflection). *Sunday Guardian*, p. 41.

McCabe, D. (2005). Cheating among college and university students: A North American perspective. *International Journal for Educational Integrity, 1*(1). Retrieved April 24, 2008, http://www.ojs.unisa.edu.au/index.php/IJEI/article/ viewFile/14/9.

Odetunde, C. (2006). The state of higher education in Nigeria. Retrieved March 31, 2007, from www.nigerdeltacongress.com/ sarticles_of_higher_education_in_nig.htm

Okebukola, P., & Borishade, B (2006). *Repositioning Higher Education In Nigeria.* Nigeria: Heinemann.

Okoye, C. U. (2006, December 16). Need to revive Nigeria's dying education. *Saturday Vanguard*, p.38.

Olawale, E. (2006). Nigerian educational system – The best of the worst: A need for a complete overhaul (Part I). Retrieved January 27, 2007, from http:// nigeriaworld.com/articles.com/articles/2006/nov/213.html

Olajuwon T. (2008). Transforming the Nigerian educational system. Retrieved March 14, 2008, from http://www.transformedu.org/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=M% 2Bue2PaoA6U%3D&tabid=71&mid=416

Olukoya, S. (2005). Africa: Universities that aren't worth the name. Retrieved January 27, 2007, from http://medilinkz.org/news/news2.asp?newsID=9985.

Onoyase, D., Onoyase, A., & Arubayi, D. (2008). Effective cultism management techniques as perceived by staff and students in higher education: A case study of federal colleges of education in Nigeria. *Journal of Social Science*, *16*(3), 309-214.

Online Nigeria (2007). Education in Nigeria and expansion of primary education. Retrieved April 5, 2007, from online Nigeria portal www.onlinenigeria.com.

Osawe, T. (2006, December 11). Varsity students must pay tuition fees. *The Sun News Online.* Retrieved from http://www.sunnewsonline.com/webpages/ features/education/2006/apr/04/education-4-04-2006-003.htm

Oppong C. (1995). A high price to pay: For education, subsistence and a place in the job market. *Health Transition Review*, Supplement to Volume 5, 35-56.

Oyebisi, E. O. (2006). Consequences of examination malpractices and other vices. A Talk Delivered at the Orientation Programme for 2006/2007 Freshmen Obafemi Awolowo University IFE, Nigeria.

Reisman, D. (1980). On higher education. The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, United States of America.

Rotimi, A. (2005). Violence in the citadel: The menace of secret cults in the Nigerian universities. *Nordic Journal of African Studies*, *14*(1), 79-98.

Saint, W., Hartnet, T. A., & Strassner, E. (2003). Higher education policy: A status report. Retrieved November 11, 2006, from http://www.wes.org/ewwnr/04sept/ feature.htm.

Smah, S. O. (2001). Perception and Control of Secret Cult and Gang-induced Difficulties for Quality Living and Learning in Nigerian Universities: The Case study of Universities in the Middle Belt Zone". Retrieved April 25, 2008, from http://www.aau.org/studyprogram/notpub/SMAH.pdf.

Sokunbi, W. (2006, January 26). Before another ASUU strike. Retrieved from http:// www.sunnewsonline.com/wbpages/opinion/2006/may/03/opinion-3-05-2006-001.htm.

Sun News (2006, June, 30). Accreditation hurdles in universities, (Editorial), *Daily Sun Nigeria.*

Transparency International (2007). *Corruption Perceptions Index 2007.* Retrieved March 6, 2008, from http://www.transparency.org/

Uzokwe, A. O. (2006). Collectively, we have failed Nigeria! Part II. Retrieved March 31, 2007, from http://www.nigeriaworld.com/columnist/uzokwe/120406.html.

Voice of America, (2006). Brain drain: Education in Africa interview of Philip Emeagwali. Retrieved January 26, 2007, from www.emeagwali.com/interviews/ brain- <http://www.emeagwali.com/interviews/brain->drain/education-in-africa-brain-drain-problem-worldnet-africa-journal.html.