Managing Nigerian Higher Education Programmes for Global Competitiveness: Challenges and Way Forward

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Abstract: *Since education is regarded as an effective tool for national development and transformation. Every nation wants her educational system to be ranked high at the global level. However, not every nation is providing the necessary management attention for effectiveness and efficiency. The paper therefore examined the programmes initiated at Nigerian higher education institutions the mode of operation, the effectiveness and efficiency of the programmes. The paper also looked at the view points of the programe at the global level and in accordance with the objectives of higher education. The paper however examined the challenges and the way forwards. It was however suggested that the management of Nigerian tertiary institutions need to fight against the ethical challenges and undue politics that threaten the vision and mission of teaching research and community services in tertiary institutions in the interest of making the education provided at the institution compatible to the globalization needs and aspiration and they will be able to compete with other institutions at global level.*

Keywords: *higher education, ethical challenges, politics, community services*

INTRODUCTION

Education is the system used by any nation to aspire towards greater height. Every nation wants to be ranked high among other nations at the world. No nation thereby toys with illiteracy. The government at all levels at the global level had been putting concerted effort for providing necessary education right from the grass level of the society; so that their society will be ranked high among other nations of the world. Among the efforts of the government, according to Ezeofor [1] free education and school feeding for all the disadvantaged groups and out-of-school children, Girl child, Nomads, Fishermen, Adult and Learners with disabilities. The government provide the groups with different learning opportunities like part time, Distance learning system, online education and Blended learning system with aim of providing equity, access and Quality to different levels of education in the interest of meeting up with global competitiveness on the eradication of mass literacy at world level by the year 2030. Therefore, no nation wants to be victim at the global wants to be a victim at the global level.

Federal Republic of Nigeria [2] Education is the only instrument for national transformation and sustainable national development. It should be noted that no nation that toyed with educational provisions for her citizens will be ranked high among the developed nations at the global level. However, every nation had been clamoring high towards encouraging equal educational opportunities for her citizens right from primary school education to the higher education. The federal republic of Nigeria frown against illiteracy. As Ogundele [3] pointed out that mass illiteracy has baneful effects on the national development and productivity. It is therefore important for the stakeholders to manage the educational provision right from the primary school education to the higher education programme in Nigeria. It should be noted that effective and efficiency in the management of Nigerian education will enhance quality equity and accessibility into the programme. Etejere [4] described higher education programme as the system of education provided for the students after the secondary school education. The aim of higher education is mainly to develop and train the necessary and quality middle manpower for effective management of the socio-economic sectors of the nations. The effective management of higher education will definitely enhance national socio-economic growth in the nations. It should be observed that the higher education programme is categorized into different segments such as polytechnics, monotechics colleges of education and universities. In the recent time, the admission policy of the higher education is handled by the Joint Admission and Matriculation Board (JAMB). The

board is charged with the responsibilities and quality education programme. The purpose of the jointly conducted is to have the quality products that Nigerians can proud of and be able to compatible with the other students of the same level at the global level. Therefore, the purpose of this paper is to examine the programmes that are put in place at the higher education, their mode of operations, the challenges and the way forwards for enhancing global competitiveness of the programmes.

Higher Education Programmes for Global Competitiveness

For effectiveness and efficiency of higher education toward enhancing global competitiveness and for education to be compatible with other higher education at global level, the following programmes are put in place at the higher institutions in Nigeria.

- Skill acquisition: Among the problem observed at the higher education in Nigeria that their mode of operations is characterized by poor technological and vocational orientation, culturally bias and more of cognitive development. According to Musa [5] noted the need to promote functional education in all Nigerian education programmes, the mode of the teaching advocated in Nigerian higher institutions are child centeredness approach, activity oriented and critical and creative thinking and all efforts that will aid effective competiveness of Nigerian higher education products with all other products at the global level.

- Integration of information and communication technology (ICT) into the school curriculum presently: According to Akinnubi [6]; It is a compulsory course for the students at the higher institutions to study ICT, with the purpose of developing in them computer and digital literacy, acquisitions, utilization and to be able to meet up with the global challenges that emanated with the use of the ICT.

- Alabi [7] also noted students industrial working experience scheme and practicum exercise are initiated for the students to undertake. The aim of the scheme is to bridge the gap between schooling and employability in the country. The training received through the SIWES and practicum exercises will enable the students to practice the skills leant in the school organizations of their choice. The practice of the skills and experience will enable the products to be compatible with other products at the global level

- According to Yusuf [8] introduction of the student's personnel services by the Nigerian

higher institutions: Among the programme put in place at the higher institution level include welfare, recreational health insurance, financial assistance scheme and counseling services. The provision of the services at the higher institutions aid the conducive environment for both the teachers and the students and will embrace quality teaching-learning process that will prepare them for the global competitiveness after the graduation.

- Encouragement of students' professional association: According to Zubair [9], the Nigerian higher institutions encourage every students to be member of their professional specialized association. Such as National Association of Educational Administration and Planning Students (NAEAPS).

- It was suggested by Ogundele and James [10] that students' counseling association of Nigeria, psychology student association: The association organize their programme intra and inter faculty level through this, programme the students are able to initiate ideal that will make them relevant to the society and be able to compete with others at the global level.

Control Mechanisms for Nigerian Higher Education Programme for Global Competitiveness

It is important to note that the management of Nigerian higher institutions had advocated for quality delivery of Nigerian higher education programme. It was also noted that Nigerian higher institutions like polytechnics, monotechnic, colleges of education and universities had initiated series of control mechanisms that ensure effectiveness and global competitiveness of the Nigerian higher education products. The control mechanisms for the programme according to Ogundele and Laguador [11] are stated mentioned on the following paragraphs.

Quality control and assurance mechanism for effective global competitiveness of the Nigerian higher education programme: Every higher institution establish their own quality assurance center's, SERVICOM, advancement offices, centers for research and development all which are charged with the responsibility of supervision, monitoring and discipline of earing steffs.

Institutional ranking: for enhancing global competitiveness of higher education most of the programme operations at the institutions are ranked, both at the national and international level. Every institution is ranked based on the structure, financial utilization, stability of school calendar, e-learning and utilization, research and publication teaching and

community service, administrative skills, commitment, institutional recreational activities. It should be noted that implementations of the programme at different institution and their assessment encourage effectiveness and efficiency make every institution wants to be ranked high above others at both national and international level. The attempt of be ranked high among others encourage global competitiveness of higher education in Nigeria.

Establishment of services delivery office every tertiary institution established unit that is tagged servicom in order to enhance service delivery compliance through provision of information to the appropriate quarter that will eradicate unethical perpetration of the staff and students and be able to put things in order for effective service delivery for enhancing competitiveness of the Higher Education Programmes in Nigeria.

Admission policy initiative: It should be noted that the federal republic of Nigeria established Joint Admission Matriculation Board (JAMB). In 1970 coordinate the admission policy of the tertiary institutions in Nigeria. The admission policy initiated was 60% of the student admission is science and technology while the 40% of the admission comprise of arts, humanities and education. The JAMB therefore conducts the matriculation examination to make the selection. However, the aim of the policy is for the country to be ranked high among the developed nations in term of science, technological development and socio-economic growth. However, Oyedeji, [12] noted that any nation that toyed with educational provision for her citizen will never be ranked high among the development nations at the global level. Since every nation wants to be ranked high among the developed nations of the world, competitions begin starting from the provision of admissions to the qualified candidates that will give positive representations of the institutions and country to the international communities.

Institutional programme benchmarking: For effective competitiveness at the global level of Nigerian higher education. The institutional management through the national universities commission, national commission for college of education, national board for technical and business education (NABTEB) introduce benchmarks for maintained of standard and quality which will make the institution to be compatible with other institution at the global level. However, the issues of benchmarking, reflect in the examination question, research conduct and evaluation procedures etc. Through the programme benchmarking, every stakeholder in the tertiary institutions is guided towards his areas of jurisdictions and the limits that

will enhance effectiveness and efficiency. When there is stakeholders' effectiveness and efficiency, there will be high productivity and quality delivery in the system and high integrity will be accorded to the global level.

Organizational structure: According to Oyedeji [12], effective use of the organizational structure of the institutions for enhancing global competition is another control mechanism. It should be noted for any institution to work effectively there are need for people of different caliber such caliber of the people includes skilled, semi-skilled and non-skilled workers. The people are therefore categorized into different groups to extent that one group need to be reporting their stewards to each other. The groups are arranged in hierarchical order in ascending order right from top to the bottom. The arrangement is called organization structure. The highest in the structure of the university is the vice chancellor, Register, Deputy Register, Deans, Directors, Head of departments, unit coordinator, level coordinator, Lecturer and the students. The head of the polytechnic are the Rectors, Deputy rectors, Registers, Deans, Head of departments, Directors, and level coordinators, and students. Ojedele [14] put that there are three floors of structure which he named line structure, functional and staff structure. However, the organization structure enables everyone to have close supervision efficient communication and information and togetherness in the institution with the organization structure everyone will be committed and efficient towards the goals achievement of the organization. When everyone is working together and achieving the predetermined objectives, the global competitiveness will not be problem for every institution. Challenges of global competitiveness of Nigerian Higher Education programmed.

Challenges Militating Against Higher Education and Management

Despite the fact that Nigerian higher education management are so much interested in having the best of the best institutions and as well having the best products that the institution will be proud of the global level. Yet, the Nigerians had been trying through their commitments, hardworking, honesty and positive attitude to work, encouraging stable academic calendar at the institution level.

However, the following challenges had been affecting the Nigerian Higher Education that made global competiveness so difficult.

Politics

Politics in the institution management among the factors that made the global competiveness difficult

is the undue politic in the admission, employment, appointment and awards of contracts. According to [15], the political interference in the management of Nigeria higher education had negative impact on the quality delivery and productivity. The quality of the products and the structured had been greatly hampered by political interference in financial allocation, the issue of god fatherism and favourism had affected the disciplinary action, quality assurance and qualification of the graduates which are shameful to present at the global level.

Ethical Challenges in Higher Education

According to [16] ethical challenges in the management of the higher education how constituted threats into the global competeness. In the recent time the proclamation of unethical behavior like sexual harassment, sex-for mark scandal, prostitutions, bribery examination malpractice, public funds, embezzlements, misappropriation, plagiarism killing kidnapping armed robbery and all those evils that are perpetrated at the institutions level made the global competition of the Nigerian higher education with their international counterparts difficult.

Poor financial Management at the Institutional Level

The Nigerian higher institutions are faced with the problem of financial management ranging from the fraudulent, budgetary allocation of UNESCO 26% which the Federal government failed to release the amount to education, embezzlement if the internally generated revenue (IGR) Misappropriation inflationary trends, high cost of the instructional facilities. And the student population explosion which made the utilization of both the financial and physical resources to be difficult for quality delivery (Dunosaro, 2012).

According to Oke [17] low research publications sponsorship and utilization of the research findings. It should be noted that a lot of research activities had been initiated through series of conference, seminars, workshops, retreats, lectures and educational trips. The findings and discoveries which if effectively implemented will aid effective competiveness with the other scholars at the global level. According to Ogundele [18], noted that the findings of the researches and discoveries were not funded nor coordinated towards enhancing global research integrity at the international levels.

Shortage of Power and Energy

Furthermore, shortage of power, energy and infrastructural facilities that the electrical and electronic gadget easy. As Jimba [20] observed that for any quality education to be ensured at the global level, there is the need to have effective power and energy supply to put the electronics facilities into the proper working condition, it should be noted the problem of power and energy supply made the installations and the usage of computer system, digital literacy, information and communication technology difficult for global competiveness. Nigeria socio-economic crises leading to truncated school calendar and low productive always affect global competitiveness.

Over dependency on Foreign Goods

Finally, over dependence on the foreign or imported materials for the livelihood affect global completeness of Nigerian Higher Education. The development of local technology for the use of the society was affected by the over dependence on the foreign materials. However, the Nigerian higher institutions failed to make use of local environmental resources to develop goods that can be exhibited at the global level. If the local environmental resources these agricultural, vegetation, water, climatic and soil resources are effectively used to produce certain products for exhibitions at the global level. The initiative will accord integrity to Nigerian higher education products, and certificate awarded [21].

CONCLUSION

Based on the need for the Nigerian higher institutions to embrace global competitiveness through their quality delivery, control and effective supervisory strategies. It can therefore be concluded that efforts should be put in place by everyone including the three tiers of government phortantropist educational stakeholders the management to encourage the Nigerian higher institution to embrace conducive institutional environments and supportive services for both the teachers and the students that will aid their institutional activities for enhancing global competitiveness in the country.

It should be noted that every citizen in Nigeria are making use of all opportunities provided by the three tiers of government on the educational provisions so that Nigeria as a nation will be compatible with other developed nations at the global level in the area of mass literacy.

Based on the needs to effectively manage the Nigeria higher education programmes for global competitiveness and the identified challenges the following suggestions were made:

All programmes should devoid of political interference: In Nigerian higher institutions the management should always avoid political interference and godfatherism the issues of

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appointments, employment, financial allocation, "whom you know dependency". The institutions should always stand firm on the quality delivery quality assurance, equal educational opportunities for all in the initiated programmes it should be noted that the quality assurance in the programme will enhance quality of the graduates that will make the society proud at the global level.

Effective management of Ethical challenges in Nigerian higher institutions. The institutional management should have effective monitoring and supervisory strategies that will expose all sorts of indisciplinary behaviours such as sexual harassments, examination malpractice, truancy, moral decadence in the school system, plagiarisms and fight against them in the schools. In the interest of enhancing positive integrity of the institutions at the global level.

Need for cost analysis for effective financial resources management in Nigerian Higher Education. The Nigerian institution managers should always encourage educational cost analysis by determining the cost of the educational materials, the available funds sources of reviews, adequacy for both recurrent and capital expenses and the effectiveness of the opportunity and total cost. The cost analysis will enable effective spending for the provisions and procurement of facilities that will be used for the instructional activities that will quality delivery and productivity for the global competitiveness of the institutions.

Establishment of centre for African Research Excellence and Development: Nigerian higher institutions should collaborate with other international institutions and be able to work together and make necessary observations and adjustment towards enhancing global compliance in the research conduct. The collaboration will aid global competitiveness of Nigerian Higher Education programmes especially in research publication and conduct.

Research publication and teaching need to be adequately sponsored towards effective usage of Nigerian environmental resources like the use of forestry materials for modern furniture, the use of rubber plants to construct plastics, the use of agricultural materials and canning method, winds and sunlight to generate electricity. The utilization of the local materials will aid effective competitions with other institutions at the global level.

Nigerian higher institutions need to adopt the spirit of innovation diffusions in their teaching – learning activities. Innovation diffusion like what is theoretical learnt should be put into practice, dismantling of foreign materials and re-assembling transforming knowledge to practical will aid economic growths and the quality education will be enhanced for global competitiveness

Development of cultural and sound moral values during the instructional activities. The cultural value will help the learners to develop likeness to the culture of the land and all the cultural products. Developing positive moral standard and convictions will aid positive integrity and respect for the citizens of the country and the global competitiveness will also be accorded a greater respect.

Finally, there is the need for educational support services which can be done through the community institutions or learners support services that will aid effective instructional activities. The support services include recreational health insurance, welfare, financial support, transportation and home grown, feeding in the institutions. The supportive services will encourage efficiency and effectiveness in their jobs and excellence performance will be enhanced.

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