

Effective Management of Tertiary Education in Nigeria as a Panacea to Good Governance and National Security

Musibau Adeoye Yusuf^{[a],*} Festus Oluwole Afolabi^[b]

^[a]Department of Educational Management, Faculty of Education, Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-ife, Nigeria.

^[b]Department of Educational Management, School of Education, Adeyemi College of Education, Ondo, Nigeria.

*Corresponding author.

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Abstract

Tertiary education is widely accepted in Nigeria today as a form of investment in human capital development that yields economic benefits and contributes significantly to the nation's future wealth and development by increasing the productive and consumptive capacity of the citizens. Tertiary education equips the individual with relevant knowledge, skills and attitudinal orientation required to progress in one's chosen career in life and contribute meaningfully to the economic growth and security of the nation, through purposeful governance. Ironically, tertiary education in Nigeria today is facing myriads of problems. Effective management of the tertiary education entails that the administrators of the tertiary institutions must identify these critical problems and harness judiciously available resources towards alleviating them. Effective management of tertiary education in Nigeria as a panacea for good governance and national security depends greatly upon the quality and quantity of all resources earmarked for this level of education, by all its stakeholders as well as prudential management of the resources.

Key words: Tertiary education; Educational Management; Good governance; National security; Indispensable tool

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INTRODUCTION

Tertiary education is widely conceived in Nigeria today as an indispensable tool for the people's socio-economic advancement, their political survival, and for the fullest realisation of their aspirations and potentialities. While the Federal and State Government largely perceived tertiary education in recent times as an investment in human capital development, with the sole aim of producing the required skilled manpower for managerial and technocratic levels of the economic, social and political sectors of the nation. Many secondary school leavers in Nigeria conceive tertiary education as a legitimate passport not only to self fulfillment, but also a ladder to higher socio-economic status in the society. Many individuals, groups and organisations hold tenaciously to the fact that tertiary education is a formidable instrument that could be judiciously used in Nigeria to wipe out all social vices, economic woes and ills that usually plague an illiterate society. Such vices include corruption, bribery ignorance, conservatism, disease, malnutrition, superstitious beliefs, tribalism, nepotism, political instability, unemployment and economic stagnation. As succinctly remarked by Amaele (2005).

An educated Nigerian should be equipped with skills knowledge and character to be able to take his rightful place in the country. In this complex society, he should not be carried away by the ethno-centric or religion-centric circumstances, but be logical in thought and humane in acting. He must not be gripped by the shackles of outdated cultural values nor get intoxicated by undigested foreign values.

Undoubtedly, tertiary education in Nigeria today could be seen as a reliable instrument which assists the nation in meeting her social, political, moral, cultural, technological and economic aspirations, by inculcating in the individual knowledge, skills, dexterity, commendable deamenour and desirable attitudes and values that foster national

development, self actualisation, good governance and national security.

According to Adesina (2005), “the product of the Nigerian educational system should be able to take his place meaningfully in the society and make positive contributions to national development through the knowledge, skills and exposures that he has acquired from the educational system”.

As tertiary education is well embraced in Nigeria, the demand for this level of education in the last three decades, precisely between 1984 and 2014, had been unprecedented. The tertiary educational institutions in Nigeria, as in January, 2013 are depicted in Table 1 below.

Table 1
Tertiary Educational Institutions in Nigeria as in January 2013

S/No	Forms of tertiary institutions	Ownership	Number	Percentage
1	Universities	Federal	35	31.0
		State	35	
		Private	43	
		Total	113	
2	Polytechnics	Federal	23	20.3
		State	33	
		Private	18	
		Total	74	
3	Colleges of Education	Federal	20	21.9
		State	43	
		Private	17	
		Total	80	
4	Monotechnics	Federal	27	14.5
		State	24	
		Private	22	
		Total	53	
5	Innovation enterprise Institution	Federal	0	12.3
		State	0	
		Private	45	
		Total	45	
Ground Total			365	100.0

Note. Source: *Statistical Report on 2012 Admissions and 2014 Unified Tertiary Matriculation Examination (UTME) Applications*. Abuja: Joint Admissions and Matriculation Board (JAMB)

As clearly indicated in Table 1, Nigeria as at January, 2013 had 365 tertiary educational institutions, which include 113 (31.0%) Universities, 74 (20.3%), Polytechnics; 80 (21.9%), Colleges of Education; 53 (14.5%) Monotechnics; and 45 (12.3%) Innovation Enterprise Institutions. In spite of the astronomic increase in the number of tertiary educational institutions in Nigeria, in recent times, the nation has been witnessing all kinds of economic woes and social vices, which are being reported daily in some national newspapers and

magazines. While some have become regular features of some Federal, State and Private Broadcasting Cooperations. Such reported cases include insecurity in nooks and crannies of Nigerian societies, inter-tribal war, feuds over chieftaincy affairs, land disputes, arson, rape, bunkering, willful vandalisation of oil pipe-lines, Boko-Haram insurgencies, assassination of political opponents, political thugery, incessant strikes by workers, periodic hike in prices of petroleum products, cultism in educational institutions, examination malpractice, armed robbery, bribery and corruption, and graduate unemployment. All concerted efforts made by the three tiers of Government in Nigeria, that is, Local, State and Federal to alleviate these economic, socio-political problems have proved abortive. Hence, the inevitable need to use the highly cherished tertiary education as a panacea for good governance and national security. For the Nigerian tertiary educational institutions to accomplish the lofty goal of producing the required skilled manpower who would excel in their various leadership positions in Government, parastatals and business organisations and contribute meaningfully to national security, prominent attention must be given to sound management, adequate funding and quality control through effective monitoring and supervision of the tertiary educational institutions.

1. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The critical issues addressed in this paper include:

- What measures to be put in place towards ensuring effective management of Nigerian tertiary educational institutions as a panacea for good governance and national security?
- What model to set up to clearly indicate the effective management of tertiary education in Nigeria for good governance and national security?
- How can the resources earmarked for tertiary education be effectively managed to achieve its lofty goals.
- What submissions can be made towards effective management of tertiary education in Nigeria as a panacea for good governance and national security and ensure economic, technological and socio-political development of the nation?

2. CONCEPTUALISATION OF TERMS

2.1 The Concept of Tertiary Education

As explicitly stated in the Fourth Edition of the National Policy on Education (2004), “Tertiary education is the education given after secondary education in Universities, Colleges of Education, Polytechnics, Monotechnics, including those institutions offering correspondence courses”.

2.2 The Concept of Educational Management

Ibukun (2003) succinctly remarked that, “A major concern of management is to arrange workers into units with specified activities to be performed for the purpose of ease of supervision and performance evaluation”. Afolabi (1998), defined educational management as “the identification, organisation and coordination of human, material, physical and fiscal resources as well as other available education programmes, using them judiciously towards the attainment of objectives of education”. Educational management as defined by Resser and cited by Nwankwo (1982), is “the utilisation of physical and human resources through co-operative efforts and it is accomplished by performing the functions of planning, organising, staffing, directing and controlling”. According to Mishra (2008) educational management is “the process of utilizing appropriate materials in such a way to promote effectively the development of human qualities. It includes all those techniques and procedures employed in operating the educational organisations in accordance with established practices.

From these definitions, educational management can be simply defined as managerial process through which efforts of members of the educational system are co-ordinated, directed and guided towards the accomplishment of the goals of education, by carrying out management functions such as planning, organising, directing, financing, supervising, monitoring, inspecting and evaluating.

2.3 The Concept of Good Governance

Good governance in this paper is simply defined as a demonstration of commendable, well-pleasing and exemplary leadership role by a superordinate who occupies a position of authority and can influence the behaviour of the subordinates in order to get desirable things done by them. Such designated official maintains good human relationship with the subordinates and shares leadership role with them. The organisation decision making is usually based on consultation, deliberation and participation of the leader and subordinates.

Essentially, a leader whose focus is good governance performs the following functions.

- (a) To understand his rights, obligations and responsibilities in accordance with the governing constitution or other statutory documents.
- (b) To earn his livelihood in an honest way.
- (c) To utilise his leisure profitably.
- (d) To act upon principles courageously.
- (e) To have firm belief in democratic ideals of life.
- (f) To understand the economic, social and political forces that are shaping the face of modern world.
- (g) To think logically and effectively without any kind of prejudice.
- (h) To believe in equality of people, irrespective of their creed, tribe, religion, political affiliation and gender.

2.4 The Concept of National Security

The term “security” is simply conceptualized as the condition of feeling safe from harm, danger or peril, the defence, protection and preservation of core values and the absence of threat to acquire values (Francis, 2006). It is quite apparent in this definition that security is about survival and the conditions of human existence. Francis (2006) further affirmed that security embraces non-military dimension such as environment, migration, ethno-religious and nationalist identities, poverty and human insecurity and disease. While peace refers to the absence of war, fear, conflict, anxiety, suffering and violence, and peaceful coexistence. Essentially, peace focuses on creating and maintaining a just order in society and the resolution of conflict by non-violent means. From these definitions, it is obvious that security and peace are mutually re-enforcing, as the absence of peace entails the absence of security. Also, the existence of peace, connotes the existence of security. Based on this premise, national security is simply defined as the protection and preservation of citizens and foreigners from fear, peril, anxiety and danger that threaten people’s the survival within the sovereignty of the nation.

3. MEASURES TO BE ADOPTED TOWARDS ENSURING EFFECTIVE MANAGEMENT OF TERTIARY EDUCATION AS A PANACEA FOR GOOD GOVERNANCE AND NATIONAL SECURITY

3.1 Goal Identification

The goals of tertiary education in Nigeria shall be to:

- (a) contribute to national development through high level relevant manpower training;
- (b) develop and inculcate proper values for survival of the individual society;
- (c) develop the intellectual capability of individual to understand and appreciate their local external environments;
- (d) acquire both physical and intellectual skills which will enable individual to be self-reliant and useful members of the society;
- (e) promote and encourage scholarship and community service;
- (f) forge and cement national unity; and
- (g) promote national and international understanding and interaction. (FRN, 2004)

A clear identification of the goals of tertiary education by the administrators of the tertiary educational institutions in Nigeria is a central factor required for effective management of this level of education.

3.2 Role Identification

To ensure effective management of the tertiary educational institutions in Nigeria, as a panacea for good governance and national security, the administrators of these institutions must intensify efforts towards the identification of the specific functions of the institutions. As explicitly stated in the Fourth Edition of the National Policy on Education, the tertiary educational institutions in Nigeria should pursue their lofty goals through effective performance of the following functions:

- (a) teaching;
- (b) research and development;
- (c) virile staff development programme;
- (d) generation and dissemination of knowledge;
- (e) a variety of modes of programmes including full time, part-time, block release; day-release; sandwich and so on.
- (f) access training funds such as those provided by the Industrial Work Experience Scheme (SIWES);
- (g) maintenance of minimum educational standards through appropriate agencies;
- (h) inter-institutional co-operation;
- (i) dedicated services to the community through extra-mural and extension services.

Of all these functions of the Nigerian tertiary educational institutions; the teaching, researched and development and dissemination of knowledge functions are very crucial and instrumental to the production of high level manpower that will excel in their various leadership positions in Nigeria and contribute significantly to national security.

3.3 Resource Identification, Procurement and Utilisation

In ensuring effective management of tertiary education in Nigeria as a panacea for good governance and national security, the required human, physical, material and fiscal resources must be properly identified, sufficiently procured and effectively utilized. High quality and adequate quantity of staff must be recruited for the various programmes of the tertiary educational institutions. The conditions of service must be attractive and modern working tools must be provided to enhance job satisfaction and productivity among the staff. Also, provision must be made for adequate infrastructure facilities and the working environment must be attractive and aesthetically pleasing.

All concerted efforts must be made towards provision of sufficient fund for effective running of the Nigerian tertiary educational institutions. As remarked by Ogunu (2000) “adequate financial input is crucial to the success of any system of education, because provision of facilities and equipment, payment of teaching and non-teaching personnel, procurement of materials and other needs is dependent upon availability of fund”. It is therefore

imperative for the tertiary educational institutions to improve their Internally Generated Revenue (IGR) to argue their financial grants by the stakeholders.

4. QUALITY ASSURANCE

To ensure effective management of tertiary educational institutions in Nigeria as a panacea for good governance and national security, the supervisory and regulatory agencies, namely National Universities Commission (NUC), National Board for Technical Education (NBTE) and National Commission for Colleges of Education (NCCE) must adopt appropriate quality assurance strategies towards effective supervision and monitoring of the institutions. The quality assurance strategies include:

- (a) Laying down and reviewing minimum standards for all Nigerian tertiary educational institutions.
- (b) Periodic accreditation of academic programmes in tertiary educational institutions in Nigeria, to ensure quality and parity in all the programmes offered in the various tertiary institutions, in accordance with set standard.
- (c) Specifying guidance for establishing and maintaining new programmes in the institutions.
- (d) Periodic guidelines of academic programmes and infrastructure facilities, to ensure that the guidelines specified in their minimum standard documents are strictly adhered to.
- (e) Encouraging external moderation system so as to ensure quality control and parity in educational programmes of the Nigerian tertiary educational institutions.

5. SETTING UP A MODEL OF EFFECTIVE MANAGEMENT OF TERTIARY EDUCATION FOR GOOD GOVERNANCE AND NATIONAL SECURITY

A model showing clearly the effective management of tertiary education for good governance and national security is depicted in Figure 1. As clearly indicated in the model, the procedural steps for effective management of tertiary education for good governance and national security are as follows:

- (a) A clear identification of the goals of the tertiary education.
- (b) Identification of specific tasks of the tertiary education institutions which include teaching, research and development, dissemination of information, staff development and community service with which to accomplish their specified goals.
- (c) Procurement and effective utilisation of human, physical, material and fiscal resources to carry

- out effectively the lofty tasks of the tertiary educational institutions.
- (d). Adoption of quality assurance strategies by the internal and external regulatory and supervisory bodies.
 - (e) Supply of high level manpower who will

- contribute significantly to the economic efficiency, political consciousness, social reconstruction, cultural change, and scientific and technological advancement of the nation.
- (f) Realisation of good governance and national security.

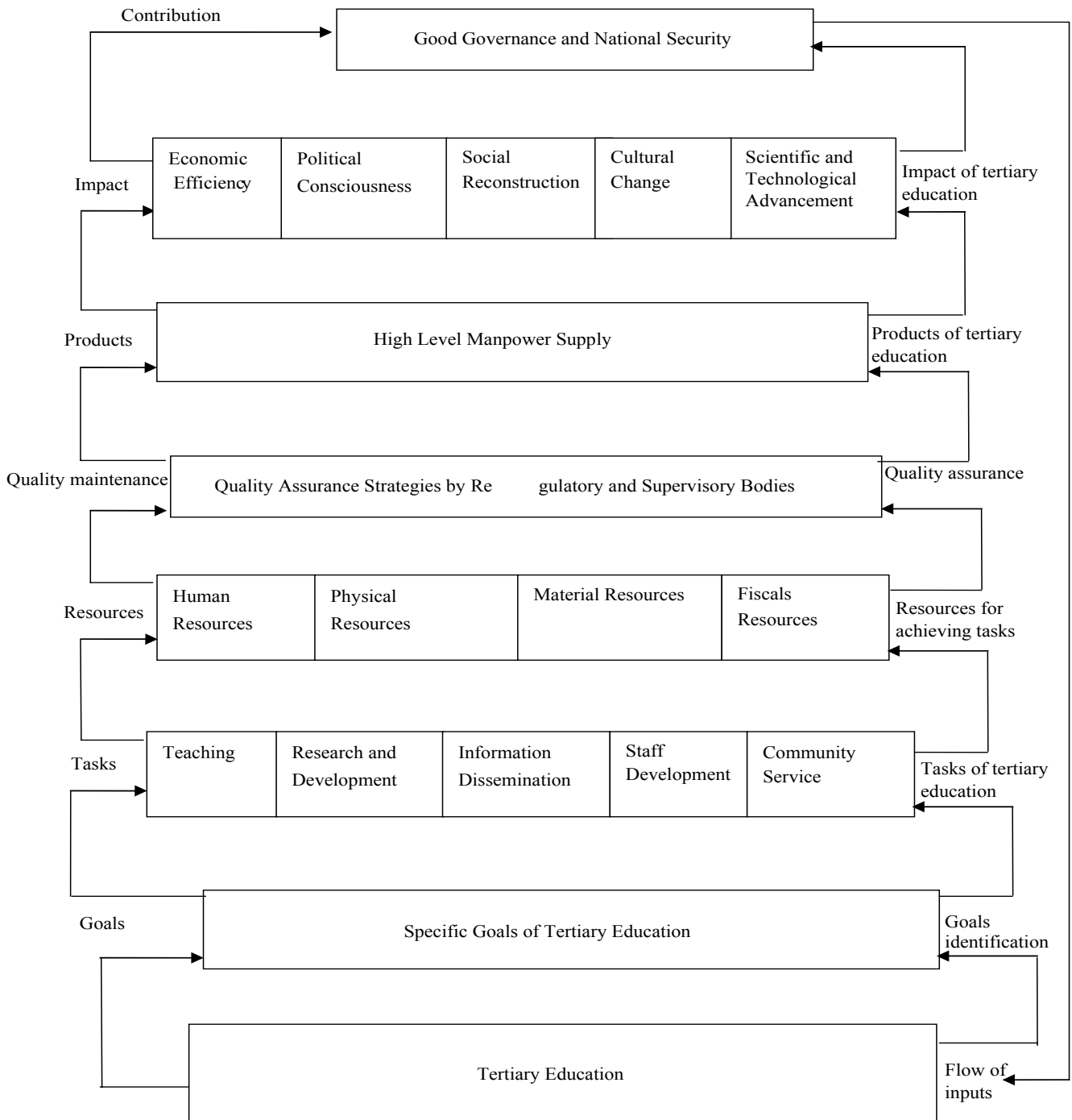


Figure 1
A Model of the Effective Management of Tertiary Education for Good Governance and National Security.
 (Designed by the Author of the Paper)

CONCLUSION

The primary goal of tertiary educational institutions in Nigeria of producing the required skilled manpower for managerial and technocratic levels of the economic, technological, social and political systems and contribute immensely to good governance and national security could be effectively accomplished, if this level of education is effectively managed, sufficiently founded and ensuring quality control through effective monitoring and supervision of the tertiary educational institutions. Since everyone benefits immensely either directly or indirectly from tertiary education, its finance should be a joint responsibility of the Government, business organisations, voluntary, agencies, communities, Non-Governmental Organisations and the households. All the stakeholders in the tertiary education sector must face the challenge of transforming this nation with special focus on good governance and national security rather than fleeing to foreign lands in search of greener pastures.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations and submissions are made towards effective management of tertiary education in Nigeria as a panacea for good governance and national security.

The training received and the skills acquired by the products of Nigerian tertiary educational institutions would be a monumental waste, if they are not maximally utilised in the service of the nation. It is therefore mandatory to make curricular of tertiary educational institutions in Nigeria, more pragmatic and have built-in-job training programmes which will enable all students to acquire relevant entrepreneurial skills required for self-employment.

As no meaningful development can be precisely recorded in a nation with an atmosphere of insecurity, uncertainty, unbridled self pursuits and lawlessness, it

becomes highly imperative for all concerned and relevant agencies and legislative houses to frontally address all pervasive corrupt practices and selfish attitudinal dispositions pervading Nigeria today.

Security and peace education should be made a special compulsory elective course in all tertiary educational institutions in Nigeria. The students should be sufficiently exposed to security, peace and conflict studies in their institutions. Also, the supervisory and regulatory bodies, namely National Universities Commission, National Board for Technical Education and National Commission for Colleges of Education should be properly funded, adequately staffed and more empowered by the Federal Government for effective service delivery.

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