The Changing Landscape of Higher Education Research In The New Normal Era: Prospects And Challenges

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Abstract
Nigeria needs a viable, robust and applicable higher education research and innovation to meet the reality in the society today. That researches are being carried out in the nation's higher institutions is an understatement. Qualities of these researches and the implementation of all the recommendations compare with other advanced nations are the issues to be addressed especially around now that the new normal era occasioned by Covid-19. Since Covid-19 has greatly changed the way things are being done, it is imperative that improvement in the quality of higher education research and innovation be given adequate attention in order to assist the stakeholders in higher education in overcoming some of the challenges posed by the disruption of the new normal era. This paper discussed issues around the landscape of higher education research in Nigeria. The challenges hindering research activities of academic staff in Nigerian higher institutions were discussed and recommendations were made to improve the landscape of research and innovations in Nigerian higher educational institutions

Keywords: *Higher Education, Research, Innovation, New normal era, Nigeria*

Introduction

Higher educational institutions are centers with programmes designed for generation of ideas and innovations through researches and inquiries as well as creative and critical thing with the aim of engendering meaningful societal development and advancements for societal development. The World Bank (2012), described higher education institutions as such as high-tech institutions, such as centres of excellence, technical training institutes, community colleges, distance learning centres research laboratories, colleges, nursing school and universities. The National Policy on Education (2004) defines Higher Education as the Post-Secondary educational institutions of the national education system, which is includes Universities, Polytechnics and Colleges of Technology and Education including courses as are given by the Colleges of Education, Advanced Teachers Training colleges, Correspondence Colleges and such institutions as you can socialize with them. Accordingly, Adeyemi (2001), higher education is referenced as a structure which holds much of the country's research strength and give birth to majority of the skilled professionals that are required in the labour market.

The conduct of research is one of the basic functions of higher educational institutions with the academic staff of these institutions required to carry out researches as part of their core duties since their promotion is based on the results of their researches. Aside being promoted through research publications, research activities strengthen their credibility, status, and also adds value both regionally and globally. The major functions of the academic teaching, research and community service. The roles of these component aspects of higher education are all meant to develop the human society, be it at individual, national or international level. It is very evident that research occupies the center stage in the mission of higher educational institutions.

Research is a scientific approach to preferring to solution societal problems. According to Imo (2015), it is the strategy adopted to answer questions raised about and the processes of answering the questions. In his own view, Eric (2009) sees research as the process of systematic inquiry by which humankind increases knowledge of how things are, why things are the way they are and how they could be improved. Consequently, research seeks to discover the truth about the world

through goal-oriented, systematic and logical processes. Therefore, research is considered as extremely essential if the higher education system is to be regarded as a developmental mechanism and an essential instrument for sustainable development, (Michaela, 2012).

Odia and Omofonmwan (2014) opine that advance in research have led to the development of science and technology which, in turn, has led to job creation, increased income, creation of wealth, job opportunities, increased income, production of goods and services, improved quality of life, transportation/communication system, networking regions of the world, clustering of people and integrating nations of the world socially, economically and politically. Research has assisted people across the globe to have better knowledge of all universally emerging issues. Unfortunately, surge of Covid-19 pandemic has led to endless disruption of educational activities including researches. Hence, there arose a growing sense of urgency on the need to protect and recover the education system and the lost learning periods during the lockdown occasioned by the pandemic through varieties of innovative methods and strategies that emerge from high-yield research findings. New perspectives emerge as a result of the findings from the higher education research.

Innovation is defined as incremental, radical and revolutionary changes in thinking, products, processes or organization (Akomolafe, 2011). In the view of Oteh and Akuma (2011), innovation is a decisive operation carried out with a view to introduce a given change to be accepted and used and involves a process whereby, a new product is made available, spread through the system and infused into operating practices. Therefore, deliberate change is innovation, it is purposeful and can be for immediate or long run. In view of this it is a departure from an existing workout that can be maintained for a while, and is conditional and useful for a group at a time or place.

Despite the challenges facing higher education research in developing solutions countries, it is a reality and is adjudged internationally that the university programme is a hub of nation-building, national growth and development. As citadel of knowledge, tertiary education is the foundation of innovation through teaching and research. Therefore, nations that are able to establish and maintain effective higher education system are differentiated in the areas of science and technology speeding up in all aspects of their development. It is a formal process of cultivating specific value, habit and knowledge in the citizens to enable them understand human nature and become source of social change.

The concept of higher education research

Research as an endeavour comes in three forms: basic (theoretic or experimental) research, applied research, and development research. Basic research as identified by Frascat-Manual (2018) and Yusuf (2016) refers to experimental or theoretic work undertaken primarily to acquire new knowledge of the underlying foundations of phenomena and observable facts without any particular application in use. The main aim of this research is to gain deeper knowledge or understanding of the subject without specific application in mind. Basic research does not have specific immediate commercial objectives, although it may be performed in fields of present or potential commercial interest. The outcomes or results are not generally sold but are usually published in scientific journals or circulated to interested groups.

Applied research, on the other hand, are undertaken as original investigation to acquire the knowledge. According to Siyanbola (2018), it is primarily directed towards a specific practical aim or objective to gain knowledge in meeting a specific and recognised need. In industry, applied research are undertaken to discover new scientific knowledge that has commercial objectives with respect to products, processes or services. This type of research gives operational forms to ideas and the knowledge or information obtained from it is often patented, but may also be kept from the public. The third type of research, the development research is the systematic use of the knowledge derived from research directed towards production of useful materials, devices,

systems or methods including the design and development of prototypes and processes. This type of research is systematic in nature, inferring from knowledge gained through research and practical experience which is directed to producing new products, devices as well as installing new ones and improving the existing ones. The outcomes are intended primarily to produce particular products that will be able to meet customers' expectations in the market or a product that will enhance productivity. In the US for instance, the universities and colleges performed approximately 53.8% basic research and the federal government estimated to have provided 58.9% basic research funding most of the time. Industry, on its own part, accounts for 65.7% of all applied research, while federal laboratories and universities accounted for the rest

Funding of higher education in Nigeria

The notion that it is only the government that can effectively provide education led to the explicit position raised by National Policy on Education (2004) that education is a government responsibility in which free education is to be provided by the government at all levels when and practicable Omolade (2007). With this, government remains the major provider and financier of education in Nigeria dated back to mid-70s. In the demand for development, third world countries have agreed that investment in and adequate funding of quality higher education are viable conditions that facilitate change since the value of education hinges on teaching, learning, research and the production of qualified personnel which are needed for national development UNESCO, (2002).

Oghenekohwo (2004) classifies the funding of higher education into the following two eras of Pre-deregulation era and Deregulation era. Higher education funding in Nigeria was done by government or public funding alone during the pre-deregulation era. Priority given to higher education funding then was high, hence the misconception among Nigerians that higher education funding is the exclusive control of the governments. On the other hand, in the deregulation era, which is mostly a post Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP) inevitability, situations changed. Private individuals now largely have the gains of higher education programmes for which beneficiaries and their families should pay (Schuttz, 1961; Psacharopoulos 1984; Babalola 1995; Adedeji 2003; Okebukola 2003). In the submission of Omolade (2007) notes that an additional concomitant of the 'private good is that, grants have been converted to loans which affected many of the university graduates. Educational outcomes are products of the complex interactions of the different stakeholders that directly participate in the school process (parents, teachers, supervisors, students, administrators, ministries and so on) and those indirectly connected to the educational system. The financing of education should, therefore, be the function of all the major stakeholders. This is because government alone cannot fund higher education.

Recently, subventions to higher educational institutions through the federal government has not been pleasant to university stakeholders across board. Higher educational institutions most of the times fault government for deficient level of higher education funding in Nigeria while the government on the other hand blames the education sector for not using allotted resources efficiently since education and in particular higher education is to change all aspects of the national care system (Akpan, 2003). However, if higher education is only financed by the government, required quality and quantity of this education may never be gotten easily. This is because education competes with other sectors in the share of available resources, in funds allocation, government ought not concentrate on education alone at the expense of others.

Omolade (2007), identifies some of the factors affecting higher education research as staff strength, source of data collection, developmental focus of the nation, political will on the part of the leaders, goals and objectives of the nation's education and resource management level. Fagbulu (2003) equally identified economic situation of the country as another factor. Aside these, Akintayo (2004) highlighted the problems of very low educational budget by the government,

dwindling financial support from foreign donors, weak economic growth in Africa that is no longer strong enough to fund programmes in higher education, uneven distribution of wealth and limited numbers of higher education providers as major barriers to research and innovation in African higher educational institutions. In the light of these all stakeholders must be involved in the provision of higher education through integrated approach. To this end, Omolade (2007) suggested the following possible options for the finance of higher education which include, payment of tuition and fees, funding by the owner government, grants and endowments, investment income, auxiliaries (Enterprises, Licenses, Parents and Alumni Association), community participation and consultancies and research activities. Other sources as highlighted by Bagiwa (2013) are launching/appeal funds, endowment funds, award of honorary degrees, undertaking part-time, remedial and long-vacation programs, researches, contracts and consultancy services.

More research less impact in Nigeria

Nigerian universities have often been criticised as ivory towers that churn out graduates and researchers that are irrelevant to the needs of employers and the social, economic, and technical challenges facing Nigerian economies. There is a growing perception that the knowledge and skills taught to students at Nigerian universities do not meet the requirements of industry and the wider economy. This mismatch, coupled with lack of training in the critical and creative thinking skills, problem solving, analytical thinking and communication skills, are considered to be responsible for the emerging high graduate unemployment and researchers that can drive the meaningful growth and development in many parts of Africa (Pauw, 2008). The question of whether tertiary education in Nigeria plays its role (and significantly too) particularly with respect to the essence of education and the goals set for it in the national policy on education should agitate our minds at this point.

In more organised societies, tertiary education is acknowledged and respected as the engine house for research and innovations which are fundamental to social and economic transformations. Responsible and informed governments look up to higher education for empirically based ideas to support policies rather than base such policies on common sense or political consideration as mostly observed in Nigeria. Governments in organised societies fund tertiary institutions to carry out researches on national priorities such as security, welfare, health and agriculture, among others. The quality of research being carried out by Nigerian academics has been adjudged to be of low standard, when compared to their counterparts in other parts of the world (Emunemu, 2009). Since the world is a global village, it is expected that research findings from the nation's tertiary institutions meet international standards. That is to say that lecturers of tertiary institutions in Nigeria should be able to develop the skills required to effectively embark upon and successfully complete researches designed to understand and explain various aspects of society or nature; provide solution to the social and natural problems that impinge on human well-being in the immediate environment and globally (Ajayi, 2009). It is necessary to note that no university in Africa features among the two hundred in the world (Owan, 2005). This is a likely indication of the low quality of teaching and especially research in this part of the world. By implications, without the insistence and maintenance of standards, global competitiveness will be dangerously undermined (Paul, 2015).

In recent times, Nigeria has witnessed astronomical increase in the number of higher institutions the federal, states and private proprietors have established a vast number of such institutions. To the Federal and State governments, it is nothing but political while the main attraction is profit for the private proprietors. Evidences abound on the state of some of such institutions in terms of organisation and adequacy of qualified manpower as well as relevant facilities. The creation and management of functional tertiary institutions in Nigeria remain an issue for discussion now and in the foreseeable future. In view of the foregoing development, most tertiary institutions in Nigeria exist largely for certification of students rather than provide appropriate and adequate

training for technological, economic and social transformation through researches and innovations. It would appear that states or zones or communities are competing in terms of the number of graduates of their origin rather than the quality of the graduates. Are we ever interested in the quality of some products of Nigerian tertiary institutions? Should there not be a national programme for the evaluation of products of Nigerian universities based on certain criteria? Should there not be national programme for the comparative evaluation of graduates of the various Nigerian universities? These are issues that should deserve our attention now. We must be concerned about the impact of Nigerian tertiary education system.

Our institutions cannot continue to be certification institutions instead of educational institutions. These institutions seem not to have made significant impact on the pace of national growth and progress because there is a disconnection between theory and practice. Tertiary institutions in Nigeria cannot continue to teach students how to use imported technologies. The time has come for Nigeria to learn how to domesticate such technologies and how to produce them. Selected universities did this for China, India, Malaysia, Korea and Singapore. Have we seen anything fantastic from our specialised institutions in Nigeria? Most of them have lost their focus since universities of technology run Adult Education and Social Sciences as well as management programmes. This should be an issue in the effort to redirect and revitalise the Nigerian tertiary institutions.

Innovations and the New Normal

Since the Second World War, the COVID-19 pandemic has been deemed as the greatest world calamity. The level of its globalisation and interconnectedness makes the world feel the heat so generated by the pandemic (WHO, 2019) The depth of the global economic crisis is exceptional; not only is it considered by experts as worse than the 2008 global recession, but it is exacerbated by its occurrence at a point where there is weakened global collaboration and political posturing over COVID-19 at an international level and in many individual countries (Remuzzi, 2010). Countries across the globe are all witnessing another era, the era of 'new normal'. This will affect so many ways through which things are done. The African continent and the world at large are in the throes of a "new normal" revolution which has changed the way we live, work, play, organise our societies and ultimately define ourselves. According to WHO (2019), the pandemic has affected over 213 countries and territories with more than 14.8 million confirmed cases and over 613,000 mortalities. As of the 20th of July 2020, reports on COVID-19 cases in Africa indicates 721,292 confirmed cases, 15,169 deaths and 383,195 recoveries in all 55 African Union (AU) Member States. It has affected countries of the world over in all facet of life endeavour including educational institutions and has equally calls for new approaches to issues. Solving the pandemic calls for the harnessing of innovations resulting from researches.

This write up is calling for more innovation concentrations. The government should undertake a review of assessment and accountability mechanisms across our education system in the light of the pandemic. Where and how learning take place putting the following into consideration: enhanced teaching in the classroom; improved learning outside the classroom; personalised education where possible; reduced teacher workload should be given adequate attention. Digital technology and blended learning should be given top priority. The government's digital strategy in schools should be focussed on four key objectives of enhancing teaching in the classroom; improving learning outside the classroom; personalising education where possible; and reducing teacher workload. Government should create a national transformation fund and support unit, with a focus on spreading best practice, supporting procurement and implementation, and training teachers to adapt to new ways of working.

Implications of higher education researches and innovation on Nigeria societies

Higher education research and innovation have once again proved to the whole world their relevance in sustainable development of the nation and the world at large especially during this pandemic period. Academia submitted the following implications:

1. Creation of new knowledge, transmission of such to the students and fostering innovation. New knowledges are created on daily basis through painstakingly carried out research. Knowledge so created are transmitted for further knowledge creation. This would in the long run be applied when and where necessary in other to have societal problem solved.
2. Intellectual leadership, human development, promotion of globalisation and economics, and intercontinental harmony and global understanding (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2017). Notable nations of the world are those spending greatly on the field of higher education research. New normal is actually talking about the different ways of doing things. The world is talking about blended teaching now against the traditional face-to-face mode of teaching and learning.
3. Opening new space and phase of government responsibility such as provision of adequate ICT in Schools for Online Education (Ogunode, and Abubakar, 2020).
4. Encourages the government on adequate funding of education.
5. The concepts contribute to finding lasting solutions to actual challenges and bridge the gap between the political decision area, the governance and the labour market

Prospects

Governments, parents, students, guardians, individuals and voluntary agencies, have invested and have continued to sponsor higher education research because for government and society, it is a weapon for national development. About 16 percent of the annual budget being money raised through national resources are committed to education. Private investment to educational system is as high as the social contributions. Human resources ventured into education in form of teachers and non-teaching in higher education are enormous. Facilities and equipment committed to education both publicly and privately as well as to formal and non-formal education are countless. To this end, Jones (2013) submitted that higher education research study that will improve politics, education and care among their members is encouraged. Through political education research, national unity can be achieved especially in a plural society like Nigeria. Higher education research will examine community research that will provide permanent literacy, numeracy and the ability to communicate effectively on citizens for effective participation in and contribution to the world

Hasbison, (1971) opined that economically, higher education research helps in the identification of skills and and the necessary techniques to empower human beings. This would lead to an increase in the stock of knowledge and ensure its spread. The prime movers of innovation in various areas of economic endeavour are those who can read and write. Commercialisation of research results has become the new catch-cry in most advanced economies as they embrace innovation as a key driver of economic policy. The transfer, exploitation and commercialisation of public research results have become a critical area of science, technology and innovation. The knowledge and research generated by public research system is diffused through a variety of channels among which are the mobility of academic staff, scientific publications, conferences, contract research with industry and the licensing of university inventions. Effective commercialisation of research results in any nation depends on rapid technological innovation, effective strategic management of knowledge and a clear focus on value-added goods, services and industries (Ibeme, 2020).

According to Bently (2013), the world treats vital forces like weather forecasting, changing age demographics and limited natural resources, hence the need for a move into more sustainable economy is opening up global market opportunities for completely new solutions. Advances in the development of the technology has radically altered global economic system. The national

perspectives that can precede high performance levels in innovation and research would be well positioned in order to be one of tomorrows' leaders. Therefore, wealth is no longer limited in terms of physical possession only but also include advancement characterised by the degree of access to and timely use of knowledge and technology sourced from higher education research leading to increased value-added capabilities. Therefore, commercialisation of their research findings are becoming important aspect of economic development. According to Kumar and Jain (2013), in India, the development and commercialisation of new technology has become an important activity in the research mind.

Higher education research encourages universities, industry and government linkages which can take many dimensions and corporate levels of collaboration from contract or sponsored research, to joint research, professional courses, consultancies to creating opportunities for students' placements, staff exchange, and joint curriculum development. University Industry-government linkages are often conceived as a three-way interaction between universities, government, and firms as described in the *Triple Helix Theory* (Etzkowitz, 2008). The United States of America, for instance, put in place laws such as the Bayh-Dole Act 1980 to patenting, licensing, and technology transfer of university research. Through the contributions of the state, Brazil has helped universities as technology potter's wheel (Etzkowitz, 2008). At the University level, technology incubator, technology transfer departments and science parks have been set up to encourage and manage entrepreneurial activities (Schiller, 2007).

Higher education research facilitates indigenous technological development by moving research results from university to the industries and the government. This emphasis was intended to assist the continent in indigenous technology development specifically targeted at small scale manufacturing enterprises and other local problems (Jones, 2013). It reminds and foster in Nigeria, the Federal Universities of Technology Act CAP F23 LFN 2004 and the Federal Universities of Agriculture Act CAP F22 LFN 2004 which are examples of such envisioned University-Industry linkages where the universities are mandated to identify technological and agricultural problems and needs of Nigeria and to find solutions to them within the context of overall national development. Geiger and Sa (2015) opined that through educating well-trained professionals, the conduct of research in technological fields relevant to industry, supporting faculty to engage in consulting, providing technical assistance to local firms and commercialisation activities, the universities can contribute to technological innovations.

Challenges facing higher education in Nigeria

There is no doubt that the twenty-first century has brought lots of challenges to the control, nature and values, of higher education worldwide, hence the reason for higher education research studies. There is a paradigm shift in what constitute the society and taxpayers' resources expectations regarding higher education. This shift is affecting every facet of the society. Therefore, Adepoju and Okotoni (2018), and other researches highlighted the following challenges with higher education in Nigeria:

Drop in state funding for higher education

Higher education funding suffered a lot in some states of the federation especially from the year 2015 till date. More than 27 states of the federation-imposed reductions in their higher education allocations and resorted to the federal government for assistance in form of bailout so as to be able to meet certain obligations. On the part of the federal government, there is no stability in her allocations to education in her annual budget. In 2015, it was 10.78% of the total budget, 7.92% in 2016; 7.40% in 2017; 7.04% in 2018. All these, are far cry from the 15% - 20% of total annual budget recommended by UNESCO for education (Adepoju and Okotoni, 2018). As a result of this inconsistency, lots of institutions are left with no other option than to cut their annual budget on education. This equally affects research funding in higher institutions of learning

Lack of collaboration to aid research

Many higher institutions in Nigeria have failed in the area of research collaboration as it is being witnessed in other developed nations. Frontier of knowledge expansion is being aided by this process. According to Okebukola (2004), for over 25 years now, US has recorded a significant turnaround in the area of scientific research. These include the development of fields and techniques not even imagined a quarter of century ago, increased targeting of federal research funding for specific projects, growing university/industry collaboration in the commercial marketing of research discoveries, more political involvement in funding and in prohibiting funding of research in politically charged areas, and a movement toward "big science" projects involving hundreds of researchers and billions of dollars. Nigeria still has a long way to go in this direction. Areas like vaccines development, biotechnology, engineering and pharmaceutical are areas that demanded huge amount of money, hence, the need for collaboration.

The changing and uncertain job market for higher instructions graduates

Growing number of graduates without jobs is generating heat in the society day by day. Nigerian higher institutions are turning out graduates in hundreds of thousands without correspondence job creation. This is placing embargo on the mind-set of the new graduates because there is limit to what the current labour market can absorb. Unemployment state in Nigeria as at 2016 fourth quarter was estimated at 21.0% (National Bureau of Statistics). It increased to 18.80% in the third quarter of 2017 from 16.20% in the second quarter. This led to the submission of Kazeem (2016) in a survey, where he noted that 47.0% of Nigerian university graduates are unemployed.

Shortage of academic staff

Efforts to expand enrollment and quality of learning programmes are a hotbed because of shortage of academic staff. Statistics have it that between 1997 and 1999, there was a significant reduction of academic staff by 12.0% despite enrolments expansion that was recorded at 13.0%. There are certain fields that recorded this shortage as recorded by NUC document of 2002 viz: 58.0% in administration, 73.0% in engineering, 62.0% in medicine and 53.0% in sciences.

Political influence

There are times when establishment of some higher education institutions in Nigeria were based on politics canvas, election promises fulfilment, and not with expected planning and objective educational needs of the nation. This usually leads to appointment of institutional heads based on influence and affiliation. This goes a long way to affect research output and innovation that can bring expected results towards problem solving.

Industrial actions

Frequent and endless industrial actions is one of the features of education sector in Nigeria, particularly higher education. Various educational trade groups in tertiary institutions had embarked on industrial actions at one point or the other. This is as a result of various complaints ranging from government neglect of education section, non-payment of entitlements, infrastructural decay, to mention but a few. There are times that these industrial actions lasted for eight months. Adepoju and Okotoni (2018) recorded the numbers of industrial strike actions declared by the Academic Staff Union of the University (ASUU) between the year 2010 to 2017 as follows: 5 months and 1 week (2010), 3 months (2011-2012), 5 months and 3 weeks (2013), 1 week (2016) and 1 month and 5 days (2017). These have affected so many things in the system including disruption of academic calendar, social life of the people, as well as research flow. All these have negative impact on our higher education system especially in the area of research collaboration.

Poor institutional-industrial collaboration to aid research

Unlike what operates in many developed nations, quite a number of higher education institutions in Nigeria have not fully aligned themselves to the practice of Institutional-Industrial collaboration. This practice to a very large extent has helped in expanding the frontier of knowledge. Researches and observations have also revealed that where the practice exists, the level of unemployment of graduates has reduced tremendously. According to Okebukola (2004), in the past 25 years, significant changes in the nature of scientific research have occurred in the US. These was made possible as a result of the level of collaboration between the educational sector and the private sectors. The secrete of fund raising rest on the level of collaboration engagement. Areas of collaborations include fields of development techniques, marketing of research discoveries and special funding for research specific projects, (Okebukola, 2004; Adepoju, 2007; Adepoju 2018).

Changing Public Expectations

Higher education is increasingly viewed by both policy makers and the general public as primarily a private benefit, rather than a broader social good. Many Nigerians believed that every potential candidate who wants a four-year higher education should have the opportunity to gain one since education is the right of individuals and should be provided by the government. By implication therefore, state and federal governments are expected to invest more money in higher education. On the other hand, few people believed that students and their families should pay the largest share of the cost of a tertiary education. Given ongoing access barriers, these perceptions may make it more difficult than in the past now that spaces for candidates in public tertiary institutions could not meet the high demand from the intending candidates, hence, the resort to private institutions.

Inadequate funding of research projects

If not for the interventions of TETFund, failure would have been the best word to describe the state of research in Nigerian higher institutions of learning today. Nwoye (2002) reports that federal and state governments turn deaf ears to financing and supply of essential scientific materials or facilities needed in higher institutions and secondary schools for effective teaching and learning. For functional and effective research, Nigeria needs a functional source of funds that will always meet the research financial needs of our higher education sector.

Poor quality staff

Change is inevitable, academia should always move in such a way that will make them blend into the dynamic world of technological revolution. Technology competence in the present dispensation is a must for whoever cares to be relevant in the higher education sector. According to Braimoh (2008), the ever-present problem with the Nigeria teachers is their resistance to change. Despite the change in the educational systems all over the world, some Nigerian lecturers still keep track with the old traditional ways of doing things with resultant negative implications as regards research outputs of higher institutions of learning.

Misplacement of Priority

There is no nation in this world that performs above her educational level. Countries like Indian, China and US spent a lot on education to get to the level they are placed today. It is high time Nigerian government leant from her past mistakes and give priority to education for significant national development.

Conclusion

For humanity to cope with the new normal as a result of this pandemic, higher education research and innovation is key. Generally speaking, since the closure of schools in the third month of the year 2020 and now, there are certain areas of human endeavour that have witnessed new ways of doing things outside the former and traditional ways. Relevance of higher education research

cannot be over emphasised, since researches emanating from our higher institutions of learning will not only solve societal problems but also serve as a means of exchange through commercialisation of research results which are systematically carried out through concerted effort given by innovation. It is high time that Nigerian government released more fund into our tertiary institutions so that they will be able to be relevance and be competitive

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