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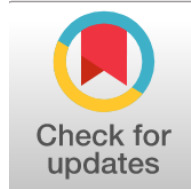
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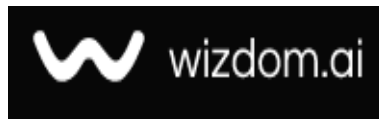
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Institutionalised Ethical Issues in Nigeria's Tertiary Education: An Inquiry in Relation to Normative Quality

Masalah Etika yang Dilembagakan dalam Pendidikan Tersier Nigeria: Penelitian Terkait dengan Kualitas Normatif

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Abstract

Tertiary education in Nigeria has been facing challenges of quality that become a serious concern to the entire citizens particularly stakeholders for that it is the tool relied upon for growth and development of the country. This study aimed at exploring institutionalised ethical issues in Nigeria's tertiary education system and inductively speculate whether they are capable of posing a threat to the expected quality for effectiveness. Qualitative method of research was employed in the study using interview protocol to 18 participants drawn purposively from regulatory agencies of the tertiary institutions by their categories, other governmental agencies that make policies and or have necessary stake in tertiary education, and a randomly selected tertiary institution each from the four broad categories. After applying thematic techniques of analysis from the raw interview data collected, themes were identified that confirmed existence of ethical issues condensed in mutilated funding, corruption, autonomy factor, institutionalisation of tertiary education, politicisation and marketisation in the tertiary education sector. Presence of the institutionalised ethical issues raised is a shared responsibility of all stakeholders, and consequential resistance is seemingly difficult. It is therefore concluded that by their strength, the issues are capable of weakening the normative quality of Nigeria's tertiary education as defined by the National Policy on Education (NPE), hence the need for a realistic improvement.

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INTRODUCTION

Tertiary education translates into postsecondary education, or third level of formal education after preschool. Alternatively called higher education, further education or last stage of formal education, tertiary education is the level at which specialisations are formed in individuals to be able to perform special tasks that require expertise [1][2]. World Bank (2017) categorise tertiary education as that obtainable at any institution attaining which is strictly upon graduating from secondary school, but Sustainable Development Goal number four (4) mentions tertiary education alongside university education and technical and vocational education under higher education [3][4]. Probably, UNESCO means something else by tertiary education, but certainly not divorced from higher education being on the same scale since even the university mentioned is equally higher education. The most common thread in tertiary education despite all semantics in the concept is that its greatest role is training and producing skilled graduates for the world of labour [5][6]. Sustainability of the world through work largely relies on tertiary education according to Cortese (2003) as emphasised by Sibbel (2009) [7][8]. The duration and nature of study is immaterial in defining tertiary education as such is determined by certain factors [9], what matters most is the level and business of it.

Nigeria as a developing country made education the instrument per excellence for achieving the stated national objectives, meaning, the singular tool with which the national objectives could be achieved as enshrined in the National Policy on Education. It sounds obvious as with other world countries where education is equally the basic machinery for growth and development. Nigerian education as system is of different levels, but tertiary education is principally relied-upon for the said vision. No doubt, quality of the tertiary education is proportional to its effectiveness in giving the country what it is meant for, and many factors are threatening the quality. This study investigated the aspect of tertiary education, specifically institutionalised issues, and the possibility of them weakening the expected quality.

The National Policy on Education [10] defines Nigeria's tertiary education as the education provided by and in tertiary institutions, only after graduating from secondary school with varying qualifiers. In the existing structure of 10-3-4 system of Nigeria's education, tertiary education is represented by the last digit (4). The structure interprets 10-year basic education (p1-year preschool, 6-year primary education, 3-year junior secondary education), 3-year secondary education and 4-year tertiary education although duration varies depending on programme of study, course, institution and mode of entry. This means there is no any other package of formal education above tertiary education. The growth and development of the Nigerian state with sustainability is tied to tertiary education as in the case of the global trend [10][11]. The tertiary educational institutions are broadly categorised into inter-university centres and universities supervised by National Universities Commission (NUC); colleges of education supervised by National Commission for Colleges of Education (NCCE); then polytechnics, monotechnics, specialised institutions and innovation enterprise institutions supervised by National Board for Technical education (NBTE); each with a mandate of specified programmes offered, qualification awarded and mode of entry [12]. Government controls tertiary education and institutions through those regulatory agencies in terms of license of operation, approval of courses, accreditation, curricular and extra-curricular contents, policy formulation, monitoring and evaluation. However, the body tasked with admission into tertiary institutions remains Joint Admissions and Matriculation Board, but with exceptionalities in the case of postgraduate and below National Diploma programmes [13].

Ethics and Quality in Tertiary Education

Ethics, the principles of moral judgement, alternatively called moral philosophy is all about character, habit, conduct or morality [14]. The moral principles of conducting self in relation to self and other conscious creatures. The basic questions that ethics responds to are '*how should a person live?*' and '*how should a person act?*' [15][16], but Irwin (1995) adds '*how can we know how we ought to live?*' without changing the theme [17]. Ethics summarily deals with principles of drawing a distinctive line between 'morally right' and 'morally wrong' in human character and actions towards the common good of society on the basis of rational appetites. This connotation pervades the entire human affairs as there is none without a sort of such principles. As Singer (1985) argues, ethical demands apply to all human endeavours to sanitise them for prudence despite the lingering debate on its properties and source.

In education generally, particularly tertiary education, ethics has undoubted relevance to the degree of necessity, given that it is wholly human enterprise, so necessarily requires ethical involvement for sanity being integrated with profession [18]. In spite of the arguments put forward by radical philosophers like Illich (1971) [19] and Bereiter (1973) [20] of moral indefensibility of public education including tertiary, yet, others see the necessity of integrating ethics into education especially adult education like tertiary for necessary need and effect of fruition [21]. As rightly put by Peters (1966) [22], corroborated by Rich (1984) [23], ethics has a far reaching touch with education. Areas of ethical interest in education include rights and privileges, obligations and duties, individualism and altruism, personal relationships, motivation, equalities and inequalities, pleasure and pain, interest, paradox of freedom and liberty, autonomy, respect for human person, fraternity, discipline and punishment, justification and elimination of responsibility, democracy in and democratization of education, test and testing, research with human subjects, conflict of interest, honesty, merit standard, nepotism rule, industrial tussle, relationship between school and community. Adewole (1989) [24] goes on to include societal needs and public interest in educational priorities

among ethical issues. Levinson and Fay (2016) [25] are of the opinion that marking and grading are ethical issues too. Stemming from the foregoing, ethics determines justification of educational organs to balance moral defensibility and prudence. It goes to the extent of giving shape to research in education, curriculum design, curriculum planning, curriculum implementation, processes of education, organisation of educational system, perspectivism; and, fashioning content and aims of education. The principles of ethics decides functionality and effectiveness of educational enterprise that involves diverse classes of stakeholders because what every party ought to do and how to do it are taken care of, and corrective measures are put in place in case of violation. The only needed task in education is ensuring compliance for quality to be realised regardless of the robust nature of the design or implementers. It seems worthy noting here that Nigeria's tertiary education, like in other nations, necessarily has business with ethics being envisaging a pragmatic quality to meet the demands of labour for growth and development.

The quest for quality in tertiary education is a global phenomenon in response to which certain mechanisms emerged [26], like: quality assurance in 1991 [27][28], internal self-evaluation [29], external accreditation [30] and international university ranking system that started in 2003 [31]. Being a global issue, quality in tertiary education stretched to Nigeria which called for due campaign [32]. There is nationwide outcry on deteriorating state of quality of Nigeria's tertiary education for a quite long time, a problem that affects every system in the country [33][34][35][36]. Many researches were conducted from different perspectives to trace the root of the problem and find a lasting solution to it but could not yet give any result. The normative quality of the Nigeria's tertiary education is next to open-ended, its definition requires explanation as there is absence any index to give it a clear-cut value. This study concentrated on ethical aspects to explore associated institutionalised issues as constraints. The rationale behind taking the ethical aspect is that ethics is generally less researched as regards the problem of quality in tertiary education, while ethical gap is identified as a factor that can neutralise all efforts towards addressing quality [37][38] Prisacariu & Shah (2016) even insist that giving adequate attention to ethics is a must if at all quality is needed in tertiary education [39].

On the merit of this basis, this study had the general purpose of making an inquiry to explore institutionalised ethical issues in Nigeria's tertiary education against the normative quality in the definition of National Policy on Education before going further to inductively speculate whether the explored ethical issues are capable of constraining the realisation of the normative quality expected of Nigeria's tertiary education.

METHODS

The method employed in this study was qualitative method for suitability having the aim of obtaining in-depth primary data from respondents. It was selected on the merit it has the tendency of giving, as it warranted the researcher to visit the research sites by self, not through any inanimate inventory or means of technology. The data collected was analysed using thematic analysis technique to extract main themes and sub-themes for analysis, which is a befitting method for analysing qualitative data. The instrument used in collecting the data was semi-structured interview protocol being a popular and effective means of eliciting information through verbal conversation with the participants as respondents.

The interview was conducted with 18 participants from institutions and agencies that necessarily have direct business with tertiary education in Nigeria. Those 18 participants were the sample, selected from the concerned institutions using purposive sampling technique as Guarte and Barrios (2006) recommend in studies of this nature where specific post of participants matters to the information needed during the interview. The number of the participants was arrived at considering the institutions and agencies involved in the study. The tertiary educational institutions in Nigeria as population could not be visited individually and there is need to explore each category, so, the supervising and regulatory agencies (of the tertiary institutions) were considered as adequately representing their affiliated institutions. The participants were drawn from those agencies and other related organisations having business with tertiary education because of the difficulty of reaching to the entire population [40].

The participants were interviewed individually and privately on appointed dates upon securing their consent to participate with assurance of total anonymity. The participants were asked some questions addressing first and second objectives only, while the third objective was addressed using inductive reasoning to arrive at induced conclusion on the strength of the themes derived from the data of objectives one and two as premises [41]. However, the interview questions to participants' on second objective elicited data to explain the National Policy on Education (NPE) on same. The administered semi-structured set of the interview questions were earlier validated by experts, and the responses of the participants were concurrently recorded by two research assistants as note takers, after which member check was done instantly by the participants to accept the 'transcribed' data as their own response.

After following the steps of coming up with themes out of the interview data collected from participants using thematic analysis procedure, the following themes were identified.

Objective	Main Theme	Sub-themes
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Exploring institutionalised ethical issues in Nigeria's tertiary education	Mutilated fundingCorruptionAutonomy factorInstitutionalisation of tertiary educationPoliticisationMarketisation	-Sentiments.-Interference/interest of ruling party.-Mismanagement of resources.-Diversion of funds.-Conflict of prerogatives.-Abuse of autonomy-Over certification.-Extrinsic motivation.-Public recognition.Politics of zoning.-Mass production game.-Unions factor.-Skyrocketed teacher-student ratio.-Mass admission.-Proliferation of substandard private tertiary institutions.-Visiting job by faculty.
-Self-reliance mission-Work centeredness-Fitness for purpose theory	-Preparation for labour.-Perfection.	
-Constraint tendency	-Possibility rationalised using inductive reasoning.	

Table 1. Identified main themes and subthemes from the transcribed interview data

In the table above, themes and subthemes were sorted using the techniques of thematic analysis as discussed in the following paragraphs.

Mutilated Funding

Funding of Nigeria's tertiary education is ideally a whole responsibility of government because is a capital-social intensive service (NERDC document), so it necessarily requires sufficient financing which only government can shoulder, with the aid of private sector. On this note, the Nigerian government notes with admittance the monetary investment needed for tertiary education in particular, not denying the 26% benchmark of UNESCO as minimum standard recommendation for the annual budget of government to be invested in education. On the contrary, the qualitative data collected from the interview shows that what government disburses to the tertiary institutions is far from adequate, the society complements the rest through but not only tuition fees. The institutions devise means of survival, and the problem affects both federal and state institutions, but state governments owned institutions suffer most because some are even owing their workers many months' salaries. Most state governments pay nothing more than only staff monthly salary, the institutions would have to source the funds for daily running from elsewhere. Some state governments even go to the extent of requesting for 75% of the internally generated revenue from their tertiary institutions to be remitted to the state treasury, left to utilise the remaining 25% percent only which is very close to impossibility. Some institutions protest, but government threaten sacking the managements to silence them. In addition, Rowell and Money (2018) claim that a touching part of the issue is that despite the shortfall in the budget, yet, funds released to the tertiary institutions is not up to the allocation. Meaning, there is a variance between allocation (on paper) and actual disbursement. With this type of issue, hardly the tertiary institutions be effective to foster what they ought to, because the resources to run them are grossly inadequate, a lot of things needed cannot be done as they involve finance.

Corruption

Sentiments of religion, tribe, culture, region and similar differences influence some affairs of tertiary institutions when it comes to staff recruitment and placement, students' enrolment and composition of management especially in more pluralistic regions of the country. Conventionally, sure is usually made to strike a balance of involvement and participation for peace to reign, not mind the envisaged quality to be affected by possible weaknesses of the persons selected since meritocracy is not the criteria. Worst part of it is that those selected come in with preconceived mission to do the wish of the affiliations that brought them, even if to the detriment of quality, so selfishness and irregularities pervade the system. The participants of the interview also lamented annoying interference of the interest of the ruling political party and politicians in the affairs of tertiary institutions, particularly state institutions. The little some state governments do for their tertiary institutions is usually determined by the alliance of the managers, staff and the host community on one hand with the government in power. The interest of the ruling political party always prevail in appointing established office holders and employing academic staff of tertiary institutions, only those connected with the politicians get the job regardless of competence. In situations like this merit does not matter, and if the system is unlucky to get incompetent persons surely will have same feature reflected in its output. Another issue lamented by the respondents was the attitudes of some managers of mismanagement and embezzlement of the little resources the tertiary institutions depend on, mostly through selfish misplacement of priorities. Ideally, when the available resources are limited, most important projects related to academics should be prioritised, it would not be wise to spend the available for unnecessary expenditure while there are hard biting needs on ground. Even the intervention funds received from sectorial bodies get diverted to welfare purpose or projects with no direct bearing to teaching and learning by managers of some institutions mostly for personal gains. In such situations, it is the core academic programme that suffers.

Autonomy Factor

Autonomy being a privilege given to tertiary educational institutions in Nigeria as enshrined in the National Policy on Education. Under this package, each tertiary institution is responsible for its internal organisation and administration which include but not limited to selection of students, but the same document says “except where the law prescribes otherwise” (NERDC document). This clause leads to conflict between the tertiary institutions and Joint Admissions and Matriculation Board (JAMB), a national body solely tasked with responsibility of admitting and matriculating students into tertiary institutions except below diploma and postgraduate courses. JAMB usually considers basic requirements (secondary school certificate examinations grades and Unified Tertiary Matriculation Examination score) and federal character in offering admissions but the institutions most especially conduct another series of screening that includes written test and oral interview before confirming the admission. Some students already admitted by JAMB lose their preferred course or the admission itself on such grounds and others like state of origin if it does not fall among the catchment area of the institution. Each institution particularly the federal ones has a list of priority states called catchment area which is highly considered during admission exercise. The students’ choice of courses also does not always prevail because the institutions often change it during screening to fit the performance of the candidates or else factor especially in highly competitive courses. Victims of ‘preferred course’ change by institutions get demoralised and do it for necessity but without interest, hence possibility of low dedication and consequently proportionate performance. Deducted is the possibility of demoralisation and suitable candidates to lose admission while non-best may gain on the bases of catchment area or secondary admission screening by the institutions, all resulted from the conflict of who has which prerogative power between tertiary institutions and JAMB. Besides, some tertiary institutions abuse the autonomy by truncating semester

Institutionalisation of Tertiary Education

What all participants of this study affirmed is institutionalisation of tertiary education upon making it necessarily formal, obtained in formal tertiary institutions of learning, certified with a paper qualification called certificate. Strings of benefits are tied to attending formal institution upon obtaining a certificate. Any non-certified skill is seen as next to nothing, therefore citizens strive to obtain the certificate at all cost including criminal means like forgery, racketeering or whatever way even with empty head. The major task of Nigeria’s tertiary education is contributing to national development through inculcating knowledge and skills for self-reliance and world of work in response to the needs of labour market and the Nigerian society, and this is obtainable in both formal and non-formal setting (NERDC document). Contrarily, the same document makes only provisions for the all-important education only in formal tertiary institutions of learning. Certificate is almost the only requirement for employment and public recognition. Anybody with formal certificate of higher qualification is recognised, and due for lucrative jobs, while non-certified persons resort to menial jobs for survival regardless of their talent and applied skills, and therefore considered ‘ignorant’. The motivation or urge to tertiary education is therefore extrinsic, for the sake external attractions rather than its own sake. As such, all effort is towards securing certificate rather than actual knowledge or skill because the commitment to the former not latter. Resultantly, quality would not be primary because emphasis is shifted to certificate rather than expertise, motivation is towards attached material benefits rather than internal values of knowledge, and, the public is bent on formal qualification only for recognition which human beings naturally pursue.

Politicisation

Tertiary education ought to be from all sorts of internal or external politics in order to achieve the set objectives in the interest of the nation only. Explored from the interview conducted is politics of rotational zoning of the leadership of institutions at various levels. Merit is mostly ignored in this respect for that the most qualified candidates do not emerge if unfortunately they come from the zone not having the turn at the time. There is also a silent policy of ensuring students graduate despite non-performance, popularly called ‘let my people go’. It is institutionalised to the extent that managements of tertiary institutions query lecturers to explain massive failure in their courses. That may not be bad given that the lecturers concerned may be at fault, but even if there is justification of it the managements normally insist on “doing something” in the result at departmental level to reduce the casualties, so a portion of the failures pass even if they do not deserve. The problem is that a percentage of pass is predetermined, and therefore must be realised. This is propelled by number of graduates every institution produces annually to convince its owner that much success is being recorded and pervade labour market with products. It is like a competition among the institutions where each strives to beat others, obviously quality of the education provided must be compromised to achieve this aim. Staff unions particularly academic staff unions of the different categories of tertiary institutions as pressure groups and protectors of their members from ‘injustice’ of administrators and government occasionally become obstacle to quality moves by government. They kick against any policy they perceive as encroaching on the dignity or autonomy of their members or institution, even if it is for the common good. Instance of this was Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU) rejection of lecturers’ punctuality register to ensure quality service delivery for quality education. With this, lecturers can decide to be punctual or not, and it has eminent effect on quality. This follows the politicisation of personality and integrity, which should not arise when a case of national interest like quality tertiary education is at stake.

Marketisation of Tertiary Education

Tertiary education is a public enterprise that ought to be exclusively for production of skilled manpower for national growth and development, even the privately owned tertiary institutions have the obligation of tilting towards this perspective under strict watch of government to ensure compliance (NERDC document). Lamentation of participants in this study revealed that tertiary education is almost being marketed like commodity going by what is on ground in the sector. It is unethical as the main objective is neutralised and quality being risked for material gains. Teacher-student ratio is beyond maximum limit thereby stressing the teaching staff with additional burden. This eventually follows inadequacy of teaching staff and institutions' massive admission beyond the intake capacity recommended by regulatory agencies based on the available facilities. Owners of the institutions are very stingy in employing adequate qualified lecturers on the ground of non-availability of funds to pay them, and the institutions do admit more than enough to generate more income in order to sustain operation. The effect is felt by the students because of overcrowd, the lecturers for much workload, the system and the society. In a different angle, private tertiary institutions are being given affiliation by existing public institutions, some given license of operation rampantly, but most of them do not meet the required standard. Most of them depend on part-time staff from neighbouring institutions for cheap labour and save cost because they normally start on loan to pay when the business is established. Such borrowed lecturers are used by those substandard institutions to secure approval at start and accreditation in subsequent times, but they are not permanent staff so may not put in their best because they have multiple places to work. High profile faculty in universities also do visit other universities on similar status which makes their attention divided and it is really affecting their productivity, obviously the system suffers, although the National Universities Commission (NUC) is stepping up to limit the number visiting jobs. Needless to say, quality of tertiary education is prone to weakness with these issues for their direct bearing.

Defining the Normative Quality of Nigeria's Tertiary Education

Nigeria's tertiary education is designed to train skilled manpower with specialisations in various aspects of life take care of the country's needs for world of work, tilting everything to labour for general growth and development of the country. Quality is imperative, which translates into soundness and ability to do what it is meant for to the satisfaction of Nigerians and the Nigerian society without importation of experts on the ground of competence. Specifically, quality of Nigeria's tertiary education as a system is the case only when it is able to practically cater for Nigerians' needs as demanded by varieties of wants and constant social change. The definition of normative quality of Nigeria's tertiary education as equally perceived by stakeholders through the response of the participants in this study is not in any way different from the stipulation of the National Policy on Education, embedded in three similar connotations.

Self-Reliance Mission

This warrants that the tertiary education provided by Nigeria's tertiary institutions be of higher reliable value that graduates can be equipped with the needed relevant skills for life to be self-reliant by being able to have what to trade to get employed or self-employed for the living, at the same time professionally contribute in relevant quota to make the country self-reliant without depending on other countries for anything. As the policy states, it is to prepare students with knowledge and skills for self-reliance and the world of work.

Work Centeredness

The aspired quality of Nigeria's tertiary education amounts to preparing potential graduates of tertiary institutions for the consumption of labour market. Its quality lies in the ability of graduates to practically not just theoretically fit the requirements of labour market satisfactorily if not perfectly, on the presumption that every graduate would work in relevant area. It is not simply to obtain certificate but fail to defend it practically fail to pass employability test. As a system, the policy insists that tertiary education shall contribute to national development through high level manpower training and reduce skill shortages through production of skilled manpower relevant to the needs of the labour market.

Fitness for Purpose with Perfection

Another conception for quality of Nigeria's tertiary education expressed by participants in this study as defining the connotation of the National Policy on Education on same was in agreement with Harvey and Green's (1993) 'fitness for purpose' and 'perfection' theories of quality[42]. The former means successfulness in accomplishing the purpose or mission for which it was made to the satisfaction of user; while the latter stands for flawlessness and absence of defects, weakness, or tendency of failure in doing what it is meant for. Invariably, Nigeria's tertiary education by its normative quality ought to be reliable devoid of all shortcomings so as to be able to inculcate in graduates the requisite stuff in response to the needs and interests of all Nigerians.

Inductive Speculation on the Explored Ethical Issues Capability of Constraining the Normative Quality Expected of Nigeria's Tertiary Education

Constraint Tendency

The themes raised out of the interview data conducted on stakeholders as participants of this study are ethical and institutional, and may not be divorced from having direct bearing with the process of tertiary education. The issues

are not associated with a particular category of the tertiary institutions, nor are they attributable to specific set of stakeholders. Besides, the issues are institutional and institutionalised, they are beyond resistance by the educational process or any party among stakeholders for that they are rooted in the systemic structure. The data collected showed that the blame goes to federal government, state governments, tertiary institutions' regulatory agencies, policy makers, tertiary institutions' managements, administrators, educators, politicians and the general public. If all those stakeholders are to be blamed on the issues raised in one sense or the other, hardly can the enterprise of tertiary education yield the expected normative quality. Possibility of the institutionalised ethical issues constraining the realisation of the normative quality of Nigeria's tertiary education is apparent. Given that those factors stand the way of tertiary educational process, they can logically be regarded as individual evidences to warrant drawing a generalised conclusion of their capability to halt the quality of Nigeria's tertiary education. It is therefore safe to logically conclude using principles of inductive reasoning that the institutionalised ethical issues stand as obstacles between tertiary institutions as providers and the quality tertiary education as product.

1. **Introduction**
2. **Background**
3. **Methodology**
4. **Findings And Discussion**
5. **Conclusion**

CONCLUSION

It could be safe to conclude that ethical issues have the tendency of relegating the quality of tertiary education in Nigeria. The issues prove to be real, institutionalised in Nigeria's tertiary education system rooted in procedural and systemic structure of it. Most convincingly, the issues emerged from policy and convention coupled with social order in the Nigerian society, but not ruling out the possibility of reform. This study may be useful to Nigerian state for that a biting problem in tertiary education was investigated from the perspective of ethics. Quality of tertiary education was approached through the lens of institutionalised issues of ethics in which some existing problems are exposed, probably unnoticed by government and other stakeholders, this may alert them for necessary action towards improvement. It may be obscure to many that ethics matters to quality of tertiary education, but this study is able to explain how and why. It may also benefit other societies suffering from similar problem to have a bit of clue, or researchers to use it as a basis in affirmative or criticism for further study. One new thing about this study is humble novelty as the researchers have never come across any research using any method addressing quality of tertiary education from the general perspective of ethics.

Recommendation

The task of transforming Nigeria's tertiary education along ethical line is a responsibility of educators, administrators, managers of tertiary institutions, students and the general public, but government has the biggest portion of it. It is therefore recommended that the policies guiding and regulating the operation of tertiary institutions in Nigeria need to be holistically reviewed to remedy inadequacies and fill the gaps left that create unnecessary conflict. A clear cut demarcation of rights, privileges and obligations ought to be drawn boldly and enforced to avoid overlap with honesty. Finally, every aspect of tertiary education need to be maximally protected from all influence of politics and politicians thereby allowing meritocracy to prevail for optimum results.

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