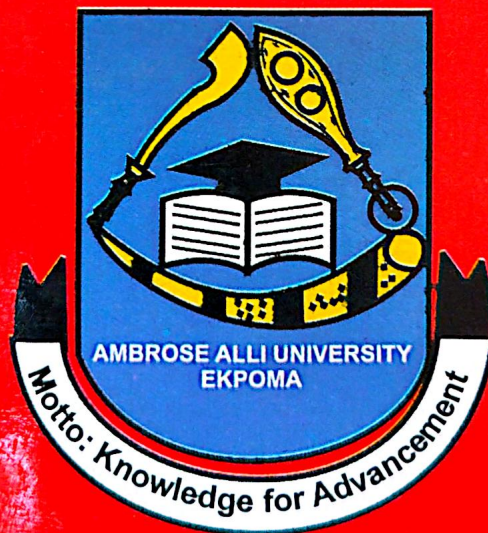


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Lecturers and Students Opinion on University Managements' Commitment to Peace and Unity in Nigerian Universities

by

AIGBOJE, Clement

Department of Educational Foundations and Management,
Faculty of Education, Ambrose Alli University, Ekpoma, Edo State, Nigeria.
billyaigboje@yahoo.co.uk

&

OSARENREN-OSAGHAE, Rosemary

Department of Educational Foundations and Management,
Faculty of Education, Ambrose Alli University, Ekpoma, Edo State, Nigeria.

Abstract

The study investigated lecturers' and students opinion on university management commitment to peace and unity in Nigerian universities. The research design used in this study was a descriptive survey. Fifty lecturers and one hundred students were randomly selected from university of Benin and Ambrose Alli University as respondents in the study. Data collection was carried out using Lecturers and Students Opinion on University Management to Peace and unity Questionnaire (LSOUMUQ). The instrument was validated by experts in the area of educational measurement and Evaluation. Test re-test method was used to validate the reliability of the instrument which yielded coefficient value of 0.82 Frequency count percentage and mean rating were used to answer the research questions raised in the study while t-test statistical technique was used to test the hypotheses formulated in the study at 0.05 level of significance. The results of the study showed that economic factor was the major function of universities. University education in Nigeria moderately contributed to peace and unity in Nigerian Universities. There was no significant difference between academic staff and students' opinion in the university management strategies for peace and unity in Nigerian universities. On this note, it was recommended, among others, that the role of university should include ensuring unification of Nigerian universities students and staff and promoting a bound of Kinship among Nigerian diverse ethnic groups.

Key words: Students, Management, Peace, Unity and Nigerian Universities.

Introduction

Education is the most potent tool for peace and unity in a nation. It is through effective teaching and learning that education is made possible, Education helps in the development of

an individual in terms of cognitive, affective and psychomotor domains. The three levels of education in Nigeria educational system are primary, secondary and tertiary. The America Heritage Dictionary of the English language (1980) refers to university education as the level of education belonging to a part of the third order or degree or ranking in the third place of the educational system. In Nigeria however, section 8; sub-section “A” of the National Policy on Education sees university education as the education given after secondary education in universities (FGN, 2004)

The background of university education in Nigeria started with the setting up of Asquith and the Elliot commission in 1943 by the colonial government in Nigeria and the sending of delegates to West Africa by the secretary of state in 1946 to observe and make situational reports and recommendation on the establishment of one or more universities in West Africa, led to the establishment of the university collage, Ibadan in 1948 (Taiwo 1985). A demand on more university education was made in 1959 when the Hshby commission was set up to carry out an investigation on Nigeria's needs in the field of post school certificate and Higher Education over the next twenty years. The commission proposed among others that university collage, Ibadan be upgraded to a full university status and more universities be established under the control of National Universities Commission (NUC). Based on the commission's report, the University College, Ibadan became a full university in 1962 and in addition to University of Nigeria Nsukka which was established in 1960, University of Lagos, 1962, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria 1962 and University of Ife now Obafemi Awolowo University (OAU), 1962 (Taiwo, 1985).

Management is the organization and mobilization of all human and material resources in a particular system for the achievement of identified objectives in the system. If critically examined, the human resources in the school system composed of staff (teaching and non-teaching) and students. The material resources within the school system are “monetary” and “non monetary” such as assets like land, furniture and fitting, equipment and buildings. It is the responsibility of the management to ensure maximum utilization of the available resources for the achievement of the goals of universities (Mgbekem 2001).

According to Maiwada (2001), peace education is socialization aimed at inculcating virtues of tolerance, cooperation, patience, good interpersonal and other values of integrity, honesty, hard work, humanness and the brotherhood of mankind. Peace education also includes conflict resolution. Peace and justice can be achieved by creating opportunities for interaction among people of different culture, race, language and social interaction. Peace though an abstract spatial fruit is a social force which its absence in an individual can devastate not only the individual, but also the entire society (Abdullahi, 2006).

Unity refers to the state of being one; harmony of opinion, interest or feeling. By implications, it is only when there is peace and unity that stability can be seen in an institution. Appreciation of individuals' different cultural values through the general courses being offered by students in Nigerian universities is a step towards promoting unity through advancement of learning and transmission of different cultural values in Nigerian Universities (Akinnubi and Taiwo 2013). The concept of unity states that unity not conflict is

the central proving Law of life and that once unity is established; conflicts are often prevented or easily resolved. Aigboje and Omoregie (2013) defined unity as a conscious and purposeful condition of convergence of two or more unique entities in a state of harmony, integration and cooperation to create a new evolving entities usually of some or higher level of integration and complexity. The animating force of unity is love, which is expressed variably in different conditions of coexistence.

Graduates of Senior Secondary Schools struggle to gain admission into universities preferably than other tertiary institutions. This indicates that perhaps, people have realized the significant of university education in the area of higher education as a means of social mobility, self development and self actualization (Aigboje, 2014). There is no gain saying the fact that there seems to be a general perception in Nigeria that only university degree education can promise a good future. It is on this note that the Federal Republic of Nigeria (2004) spells out the goals of university education as making optimum contribution to national development as:

- (a) Intensifying and diversifying its programmes for the development of high level manpower within the context of the needs of the nation.
- (b) Making professional courses to reflect our national requirements.
- (c) Making all students, as part of a general programme of all round improvement in university education to offer general study courses such as history of ideas, philosophy of knowledge, nationalism and recently entrepreneurship education.

University education ought to be relevant to the nation's development goals that ultimately lead to peaceful coexistence among people that can bring about peace and unity in Nigerian universities that can only be achieved when people agree to organize themselves into one strong community. Abdullahi (2006) maintains that peaceful coexistence is necessary for the preservation of the centrality and integrity of the society's common interest. Peace is not just a state of human mind which is personal, but also that which could be interpersonal, inter-communal, inter-regional international and therefore global. In this modern era of science and technology, education is the major economic development of the world. This view is supported by the report of the commission on the review of higher education in Nigeria FRN (1991) when it recommended that the focus of Nigeria education at this point in our development is to orientate Nigerian to a production rather than a consumption culture by effectively programming Nigeria educational system with a bias towards science and technology for peace and unity.

University education is referred to as innovative because it is an instrument for technological, economic, political and personality agent of change. The education system is therefore expected to be a preserver of old method of doing things and the major source of new knowledge, skills and ideas, particularly in this age of science and technology for peace and unity (Mgbekem, 2004).

According to Aigboje (2014) effective management of university education in

Nigeria is meant to reduce conflict which would make universities administration be focused thereby achieving their institutional goals. Appreciation of individuals' different cultural values through the general courses being offered by students in Nigerian universities is a step towards promoting unity in universities campuses through advancement of learning and transmission of different cultural values in Nigeria. This is especially appreciated when one realizes the fact that education itself has been sociologically defined as cultural transmission and renewal for peace (Abdullahi, 2006).

Unity is a process of working together cooperatively, physically and mentally to achieve specific objective. In university for instance, the university manager should involve their subordinate in decision-making process in order to enjoy their cooperation. Staff and students often cooperate with their leaders to ensure the effective implementation of educational goals if their consent is sought. Contrived inter-ethnic tensions are deliberate tactic of all bankrupt ruling classes to prevent the popular unity that could put an end to mass deprivation. Ethnicity is understandable in terms of elite conflict of group interest, the allocation of centralized material resources and it will continue as long as extreme inequalities persist. Effective management of university education in Nigeria will go a long way in ensuring that peace is maintained in university campuses in Nigeria which will invariably foster peace in the country.

Unity depicts a state of harmony, integration, and cooperation to create a new evolving entity, usually, of same or higher level of integration and complexity (Danesh and Danesh, 2013). There is no gain saying the fact that level of unity in university education has great impact on the entire nation, since graduates from universities actively involved in the societal affair for peace and unity. By this assertion, it is obvious that a state of peace in universities campuses would greatly enhance attainment of vision and mission statement of Nigerian universities. Hence, this study succinctly investigated lecturers and students opinion on universities management commitment to peace and unity in Nigerian universities.

Statement of the Problem

University education in Nigeria is a conglomeration of people from different clans, races and background in which its ineffective management would result into a state of conflict at one time or the other. Flippo (1999) attempted an explanation when he remarked that a total absence of conflict would be unbelievable, boring and a strong indication that conflicts are being suppressed. University education in Nigeria are characterized by clashes between one group of students cultist and another, students and lecturers, students and management and lecturers and management. The occurrence of killings and fighting on campuses of Nigerian universities are major concerns to stakeholders in education as these menace often militate against achieving the goals of university education. This study therefore, investigated lecturers and students opinion on universities management commitment to peace and unity in Nigerian universities.

Purpose of the Study

The following specific objectives guided the study:

1. To examine the extent to which management of university education brings peace and unity in Nigerian universities.
2. To determine if a significant difference exists between lecturers and students opinion in the management of university education for peace and unity in Nigerian universities.

Research questions

The following research questions were raised in this study:

1. What is the major function of university education in Nigeria that can bring peace and unity in Nigerian universities?
2. To what extent does the management of university education bring peaceful coexistence in Nigerian universities?
3. To what extent does the management of university education brings unity in Nigerian universities?

Research Hypotheses

The following research hypotheses were formulated in this study:

H_{01} : There is no significant difference between lecturers and students opinion in the management of university education for peace in Nigerian universities.

H_{02} : There is no significant difference between lecturers and students opinion in the management of university education for unity in Nigerian universities.

Methodology

The study adopted the survey research design that is a descriptive survey. Fifty lecturers and one hundred students were randomly selected from university of Benin and Ambrose Alli University, Ekpoma both in Edo State as respondents in the study. An instrument titled "Lecturers and Students Opinion on University Management commitment to Peace and Unity Questionnaire" (LSOUMPUQ) was used to elicit relevant information from the lecturers and students. LSOUMPUQ contains two sections namely A and B. Section A sought information on the demographic data of the respondents in the areas of name of university, status and sex, while section B contains 20 items on management of peace and unity in Nigerian universities draw up in a 4-point Likert-type scale of strongly agree (SA) 4 points, Agree (A) -3 points, Disagree (D) 2 point and strongly Disagree (SD) -1 point. The instrument was validated by two experts in the areas of Educational Management and Evaluation in the Faculty of Education, Ambrose Alli University, Ekpoma, Edo State, Nigeria. Test re-test method was used to ascertain the reliability of the instrument through a pilot study conducted and this yielded a coefficient value of 0.82. The researcher personally administered the instruments on the respondents in the sampled universities. Frequency count, percentage and mean rating were used to answer the research questions raised in the study, while t-test statistics was used to test the hypotheses formulated in the study at $P < 0.05$ level of

significance.

Results

Research Question 1:

What is the major function of university education in Nigeria that can bring peace and unity in Nigerian Universities?

Table 1: Function of University Education in Nigerian Universities

S/No	Item	Frequency	Percentage
1	Conservative	12	8%
2	Innovative	41	27%
3	Political	15	10%
4	Economic	82	55%
	Total	150	100%

As shown in Table 1, economic function has the highest frequency with 82 (55%) points while conservative has the least frequency with 12 (8%) points, innovative and political functions are not too popular among the respondents with 41(27%) and 15(10%) points respectively.

Research Question 2: To what extent does management of university education bring peaceful coexistence in Nigerian universities?

Table 2: Management of University Education for Peace in Nigerian Universities

S/No	ITEMS	SD	A	D	SD	MEANS
1	Universities management is committed to peaceful coexistence among students on campus	32	93	14	11	3.03
2	University management helps to inculcate the spirit of having no quarrel in universities campuses.	51	80	10	9	3.23
3	University management helps to eliminate abuse of wealth and power	42	79	21	8	3.11
4	Courses offered in university education helps to promote peace in universities campuses.	21	68	45	15	2.69
5	The Vice-Chancellor ensures that lecturers do not miss lectures.	32	86	7	25	2.90
6	University management ensures that activities of students on campus are monitored by the security personnel.	41	96	8	5	3.21
7	University management ensures that there is no occurrence of violence on campus	5	27	79	39	1.91
8	University management ensures that orientations are often organized for students to prevent unrest on campus	21	32	78	19	2.42
9	University management helps to reduce political violence in Nigeria universities.	36	93	10	11	3.03
10	Vice-Chancellors of universities often meet with the students and lecturers to strategized ways of ensuring peace in their campuses	58	79	6	7	3.23
	Overall mean					2.69

Mean: >3.00 = High, Mean: 2.50-2.99 = Moderate Mean: 0.00-2.49 = low

From Table 2 above, management of university education for peace in Nigerian universities was moderate with a mean of 2.69. This means that university education in Nigeria moderately contributed to peaceful coexistence in universities campuses.

Research Question 3: To what extent does management of university education bring unity in Nigerian universities?

Table 3: Commitment of University Management to Unity in Nigerian Universities

S/No	ITEMS	SD	A	D	SD	MEANS
1	University management is committed to forging and cementing unity in university campus.	12	36	74	29	2.22
2	University management is committed to promoting understanding and interaction in universities campuses among staff for unity.	7	21	64	58	1.85
3	University management is committed to promoting understanding and interaction among students for unity.	41	40	46	22	2.71
4	University management is committed to help in formation of Alumni association for unity.	48	71	17	14	3.11
5	University management is committed to help in achieving institution's mission and vision for unity.	26	74	41	9	2.79
6	University management is committed to help in developing team spirit among students for unity.	38	89	10	12	3.03
7	University management is committed to help in developing team spirit among lecturers for unity.	19	34	71	26	2.05
8	Students of different ethnic background are united under a single association for unity.	34	58	46	12	2.79
9	Lecturers of different ethnic background are united under a single association for unity.	34	79	30	7	2.67
10	Courses offered in university education helps to promote unity amongst students.	28	56	61	15	2.37
	Overall mean					2.56

Mean: >3.00 = High Mean: 2.50-2.99 = moderate, mean: 0.00-2.49 = low.

Based on the result in Table 3 above, management of university education for unity in Nigerian universities was moderate with an overall mean of 2.56.

Hypothesis 1:

There is significant difference between lecturers and students opinion in the management of university education for peace in Nigerian universities.

Table 4: commitment of University management to Peace in Nigerian universities

Respondents	N	Mean	df	Cal t-Value	crit. t-Value	Decision
Lecturer	50	2.11	148	1.25	1.96	H ₀
Students	100	1.99				Retained

As shown in Table 4 above the calculated t-value of 1.25 is less than the critical t-value of 1.96 at 0.05 Level of significant and 148 degree of freedom. Therefore the null hypothesis is retained. It can be agreed that there was no difference between lecturers and student opinion to the universities management commitment to peace in Nigerian universities.

Hypothesis 2:

There is no significant difference between lecturers and students opinion in the university management commitment to unity in Nigerian universities.

Table 5: Commitment of University management to Peace in Nigerian universities.

Respondents	N	Mean	Df	Cal t-Value	crit. t-Value	Decision
Lecturer	50	2.62	148	1.14	1.96	H ₀
Students	100	1.02				Retained

Table 5 above shows that the calculated t-value of 1.14 is less than the critical t-value of 1.96 at 0.05 level of significant. Therefore the null hypothesis is retained. This implies that there was no different between lecturer's opinion and students' opinion in the universities management's commitment to unity in Nigerian universities.

Discussion of Findings

The findings of the research question one revealed that peace and unity management strategies was needed to enhance the administration of university education in Edo state. This was as a result that the economic function has the highest frequency, while innovative and political factors were next. This means that economic, innovative and political functions should always be enhanced to improve university education administration. This is because, the management of peace and unity in educational institutions helps to achieve broad goals and objectives of the university system. This finding is in consonance with the finding of Akinnubi and Taiwo (2013) who revealed that managing tertiary education for peace and unity must be economically viable, there must be constant innovations and the political class must be interested in the education system. Similarly, Akintayo (2012) suggested participatory management style in ensuring that there is peace and unity in educational institutions.

The findings in research questions two and three revealed that university education in Nigeria moderately contributed to peaceful coexistence and enhances unity in Nigerian universities. This finding agreed with Bush (2007) that management is seen as maintenance activity, maintaining efficiently and effectively current organizational arrangement and often exhibits leadership skills for peaceful coexistence in the universities.

The findings of the hypotheses revealed no significant difference between lecturers and students opinion in the universities management's commitment to peace and unity in Nigerian universities. This finding is in line with the finding of Aigboje (2014) which revealed that effective management of university education in Nigeria is meant to reduce conflict which would make university administration be focused, thereby achieving their institutional goals for peace and unity. Similarly, the finding of the study is also in tandem with the previous studies of Abdullahi (2006) and Akinnubi and Taiwo (2013) who posited that appreciation of individual's different cultural values through the general courses being offered by students in Nigerian universities is a step towards promoting unity through advancement of learning and transmission of different cultural values in Nigerian universities for renewal of peace. Lack of peace and unity in schools cannot support effective management and administration of our educational institutions.

Conclusion

Nigerian university education is one of the third levels of Nigerian educational system, the first two being primary and secondary education levels. This level of education being the highest among tertiary institutions is playing a very vital role in maintaining peace & unity among the various ethnic groups in Nigerian universities.

Recommendations

Based on the findings, the following recommendations were made that:

1. To play the role of maintaining peace and unity in universities campuses, the Nigerian university education should be expanded.
2. Apart from its traditional role of teaching, conducting research and publications and participating in community development the role of universities should include ensuring unification of Nigerian regions and promoting a bound of kinship among Nigerian diverse ethnic groups. This is in line with the recommendations made during the 1962 UNESCO conference on the development of Higher education in Africa.
3. The rigidly followed admission policies of some universities especially the state owned and private universities should be reviewed to give room for more considerations of non-indigenes of their states and the poor ones in term of school fees. This will go a long way in unifying Nigerians from various states and classes.
4. The scope of the existing general courses should be increased to include courses that will show appreciation and respect for various ethnic groups. This would make the students and staff to understand and respect the cultural values of other regions apart from their own.

5. The federal government should increase access to Federal universities. This will encourage youths of various ethnic backgrounds to meet at federal universities where they unite on the same purpose.

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