Transparency, Accountability and Ethical Values in the Management of Nigerian Tertiary EDUCATIONAL Institutions

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**Abstract**

Tertiary Educational Institutions in Nigeria have remained a major topic of discussion but mostly for the wrong reasons. The attention is not on earthshaking discoveries or research but more for maladministration and unethical conduct. The issues have ranged from cult activities, admission racketeering, ‘’sorting’’; poor records keeping and politics in the ethnicization/indigenization in appointments, especially of vice chancellors and provosts. The situation in most TEIs suggests the lack of accountability, transparency and poor ethical conduct. This situation is due mostly to poor internal checks and balances and seeming abdication of external oversight function. It is suggested that the root causes relate to use and abuse of power in a situation of ineffective checks and balances which allow those in positions of power to pursue personal rather than institutional, not to talk of national interests. TEIs can turn a new leaf through inflow and better management of resources; streamlining students’ population with available resources; and regular enforcement of accreditation reports; regular audits as well as implementation of audit and visitation reports. These steps can mark the beginning of the return to administration guarded by the cherished values of accountability, transparency and ethical conduct and will better place TEIs in the position to fulfill their ***raison d’etre*** to society.

Key words: Accountability and ethical conduct in tertiary educational instructions in Nigeria

INTRODUCTION

Nigeria’s Tertiary Educational Institutions (TEIs) have hugged the headlines almost continuously for the past two years, albeit for the wrong reasons. Rather than any earthshaking piece of research or cutting edge discovery, the reportage is replete with clashes between rival cults groups, campus prostitution, the sale of hostel spaces which sometimes bring together the university administrators in student affairs with desperate students as well as students with each other. There are also issues of admissions racketeering, sometimes complete with business offices; and sorting as the trading in grades between lecturers and students is known. The list is obviously much longer. These activities put TEIs in bad light not just because of the malfeasance which they represent but more because their presence raises basic questions about the ***raison d’etre*** of the TIEs: how could institutions which run advanced degrees in administration proof so incompetent in administering its own affairs to the point that there are now sneers of physician heal thyself?. If they cannot even run the institutions, can they be trusted to train people who will run wider organizations in society?

In their contemporary form, TEIs comprise Universities, general and specialized, Polytechnics, Colleges of Education and other Schools such as Nursing, Agriculture and Midwifery. There are others which provide remedial studies to prepare students for University entry. Most of the attention here is on the first two categories.

The topic is most timely as the discussion and the resolutions which follow will hopefully end many of the maladministration and impunity which have become the hallmarks of TEIs in Nigeria. In what follows, I define the key terms transparency, accountability and ethical values after which the second section profiles the main forms of maladministration on the campuses. The third section places the situation in TEIs in some theoretical perspective, while the final section focuses on how the situation can be remedied. It is concluded that the challenge is not the absence of regulatory framework, of which there are adequate provisions, but the absence of political will to hold those who violate due process to account. It is the challenge of which takes precedence, personal interests or institutional interests? When will the current situation will change remains an open question; in the interim impunity and opaque administration have continued with little respite.

CONCEPTUAL CLARITIFACTION

We will concentrate on the concepts of **transparency, accountability** and **ethical values.** **Transparency** is a concept which has also been in the civil service guidelines but received a boost from the involvement of donor partners, including the World Bank, in social and economic activities in Nigeria. It may be defined as the conduct of business in an open manner which enables others to see through what was done and how it was done. Sometimes there are references to translucence or the ability of light to go through what has been done. It is a crucial concept in the management of public and private institutions affairs which gives these processes some legitimacy. It ensures that responsible officers are able and willing to answer and accept praises or blame from the consequences of their action. It also ensures that organizations can deliver on their missions (Alubo 2014).

**Accountability** refers to whether and the extent to which public, private and NGO office holders can be called upon to give account of their stewardship. It is based on the notion that offices are held in trust for higher power and the general public to whom the office holder must account. It is part of the duty of the office holder to be answerable and must show in deeds, and not merely in words, that they are answerable. Like transparency, the concept has gained currency in the management of public and private affairs in the past two decades.

We here focus on **ethical values** as these relate to work. Ethics comprise notions of right and wrong, proper and improper in general life and with regards to work in particular. Where ever there is maladministration and lack of transparency, it points to the lack of ethical conduct; rules and guiding principles are not followed.

Ethical values relate to orientation which guide work in terms of what is proper and improper, right or wrong and what is permitted and what is not.  **Values** are general orientations about notions of right and wrong, proper and improper, desirable and undesirable which guide actions and behaviours in society. Values represent what the generality in society consider as the ‘’oughts’’—what an individual should do, have or attain as a mark of success. Sociologists talk about value orientation in reference to what is uppermost in people’s mind: is it altruism?; individualism?; holiness? profits?, etc. In many ethnic groups there are overarching values taught to everyone from infancy (Alubo 2012).

The three concepts, transparency, accountability and ethical conduct underscore the nature of work and the guiding principles in the modern era. Work in general and broader concept of running TEIs are now founded on these concepts as contained in the rules and appointment of staff; issues relating to the senate or the board of studies and daily activities. The application of these principles should guide overall conduct as well as specific activities in TEIs such as staff recruitment, admissions, hostel allocation, and the extent to which these are transparent, follow ethical guidelines and accountable. Where transparency, accountability and ethical conduct are breached, chances of grievances, snafus and open revolts increase. While many recent revolts on campuses may pertain issues such as increase in tuition fees (without following due process and infrastructural inadequacies), many more are due to high handedness and resort to backdoor instead of established procedures. As the next section will illustrate, the presence of most malfeasances are due to abandonment of due process, accountability and transparency. And hence in many instances the Vice Chancellors (and their opposite number in the Polytechnics) have transformed themselves into chancellors of vices who place more emphases on personal rather than institutional interests. It is anticipated that this meeting of eminent people will point to the way of ending this practice.

Malfeasances on campus

The campuses of virtually all TEIs are in sore need of repairs and renovations. This renovation however goes beyond the decaying infrastructures, even as these are the most visible for which there are needs assessment and further funding. The decay on the campuses also includes graft and sharp practices related to many areas such as admissions; hostel allocation; sorting; falsification of results; poor records keeping/compilations of results; the raging cult wars and attendant deaths. It is important to highlight these issues in broad strokes.

1. **Admissions racketeering**

Universities and other TEIs are administered, ***de jure,*** through the various committees whose existence is recognised in the statute books. The ***de facto*** situation is different, and as explained presently, the situation is more akin to what M.T Liman, a former Minister of Education, referred to as ‘’One man show’’. The laws also spell out eligibility and required criteria for membership of the various committee. This is also true of headships of departments; Deans and Directors; and appointments of Deputy Vice Chancellors. The responsibility of the Rector or Vice Chancellor becomes, for the most part, coordinating the activities of these various committees.

The experiences on many campuses are however different. Rather than the committee system working unhindered in which the VCs/Rector is the ***primus inter pares,*** committees are reduced to the whims and caprices of the VCs/Rectors. Curiously, many VCs/Rectors refer to themselves as Chief Executive Officers, a label, which before now, was restricted to the industries. In any case, the chief accounting officer is not the same as chief executive officer. The entire admission process, in many TEIs, has been commandeered by the VCs or one the principal officers (in one University it was the Registrar) who turned this into a money making enterprise. In this way, it is easier for a messenger in the office of the VC/Provost to facilitate admissions than a Dean. In at least two instances I know, the principal officers opened an office in town for collection of illegal payments from admission seekers. The sums charged are graduated according to how competitive the courses are such that those who wish to study Medicine and Law may be asked to pay as much as 3-4,000. Once payment is made, the candidate is told when his/her name will appear on the list. There are various ‘’admission officers’’, more appropriately agents, who are engaged in this sharp practice. These racketeering perhaps account for the exploding population where admissions shoot many times over available facilities leading to overcrowding; growth plans; carrying capacity and arts/science ration. In this way, the overcrowding of classrooms, laboratories, etc in TEIs arise out of some pecuniary interests.

Another form of racketeering is the post UTME screening for which candidates are required to pay some money via scratch card. After the screening, candidates can only verify their results through further scratch cards, making this one of the few examinations for which candidates register and must pay further fees to obtain the results. The same process obtains when they want to check if they have been admitted; scratch cards are required as many times as they check. In the later instance, the culprit is the institution where admission is sought.

**2. Sorting**

The unending oddities on campuses are throwing up several vocabularies, one of which is sorting. The term refers to the process of impressing on lectures to award more marks than earned; often money or sex or both is exchanged. As an editorial in Daily Champion of April 28, 2005 put it,

The system encourages otherwise deficient students to engage in gratification of their lecturers with items as money, expensive gifts and even sex, in the case of female students, in order to obtain good grades in examinations. Most times, such students either failed the courses involved or may not have written the examination in the first place (Daily Champion 28/4/2011).

With some morbid humour, eminent columnist Okey Ndibe calls the process ‘sexually transmitted degrees’’—and diplomas-- which means that in ‘’Nigeria’s university and polytechnic students – mostly females, but some males as well – barter their bodies in exchange for grades. In effect, this inventive adaptation of a well known, frightening shorthand for venereal infestation seeks to sum up a disturbing social trend: students sleeping (or otherwise bribing) their way to a degree’’ (Ndibe 2011). It is common to see students hanging around and visiting lecturers after their examinations for sorting purposes.

1. **Scams in hostel allocation**

The regulations which guide the allocation of hostels are clear. On most campuses, first year and final year students receive priority. Other students such as those in Medicine, Architecture and Pharmacy who courses require long hours in the laboratory are also considered. Priority is given to sports men/women and members of the Student Union Government. The practice is often different as other students can be allocated spaces for a fee. In some instances, more daring girls in town purchase hostel spaces in order to enhance their ‘’market value’’. Some of the non-students include security operatives who supposedly need to stay on campus to monitor what the students are up to. Thus, the campus is regarded as a trouble spot which needs to be monitored and pacified (Alubo 1999). In addition, the sale of bed spaces between a student legitimately allocated and others is common; there are frequent references to ‘’I bought accommodation’’ often for several times over the official price. The issue is where was the TEI administration when all these were happening? In relation to the students, why could they condemn public office holders while they themselves exploit colleagues?

**4. Poor records keeping**

In most TEIs records are poorly kept such that the issuance of academic transcripts is a tug of war. When they are eventually issued, the details might be incorrect. There is an instance in which a former VC and Chairman of Council of another university had to step in for the transcripts of two daughters. When these were eventually issued, one of the daughters was designated as male, while the class of degree of the other as borne in the certificate was changed to a lower class. There are many instances in which students wait months and years for transcripts which may never be issued. The challenges relate to the analogue system of records keeping, poor work attitude and muddled up filing system. The harm done to students who may be seeking post graduate admissions or employment is simply incalculable. In other TEIs, staff in charge of records used the office to change grades for a fee. In effect, the grades down to class of degrees and diplomas are beginning to have questionable integrity.

**5. Unjust rewards**

With the collusion of the necessary staff, students turn failures into passes such that those who are yet to graduate can serve in the National Youth Service Corps. This is made possible through the collusion –and corruption—of designated officers who issue testimonials even when they know the students have carryovers. Relatedly some students who are not eligible for the NYSC such as those over 30 years of age and those who graduated from the part time programmes are cleared for NYSC. I mention parenthically that with rising unemployment the NYSC scheme is now highly desirable, and hence those who are illegible do everything to be part of it.

**6. Raging cult wars**

Many TEI campuses are in virtual wars against cults and cult groups. As I argued over a decade ago (Alubo 1999), the administration of many TEIs are less than honest as many use cult groups to whip other students into line in exchange for all sorts of favours. In this way the unabetting cult wars are often due to the collusion of the TEI administration. In many instances, revival cults break into an orgy of violence and bloodletting. The phenomenon is generally more pronounced in some campuses than others and generally in the southern half of the country. Cult groups capture girls, intimidate lecturers and some have been found in criminal activities such as car jerking and armed robbery. Whatever else they do, they are certainly no good advertisement for their ***alma mater*** or Nigerian youths.

**7. Staff recruitment**

The malfeasance in TEIs includes staff recruitment through which the process that ought to be open and transparent has been turned in many institutions into a game of hide and seek. More frequently than not, vacant positions are not advertised and the powers that be hand pick candidates, often without any interviews. Based almost purely on the personal interests appointments are made to ethnic kin, as well as religious affiliations and state of origin. In many cases, the urge to hire particular candidates overrides the needs of the institution such that particular specializations are overloaded while others are understaffed. In many situations people are employed for particular departments and faculties without in-puts of heads of these departments and deans. These functionaries, who ordinarily should be part of employment process, are confronted with strange fellows reporting for duty. Issues such as geographical spread or federal character receive short shrift as the VCs/Provosts load the institutions with persons from their states and ethnic roots.

**8. Discipline and punishment.**

The disciplinary process in TEIs is clearly spelt out. Staff who have cases to answer are indicted and taken before the disciplinary committee in which the accused has full opportunity to defend him/her self. At the end of the hearing, the staff might be cleared or punished. There are instances when the chief executive constitutes him/herself into judge, jury and hangman. Among the most spectacular is where a VC ordered the immediate sack of staff and to ensure such staff leave campus, he would remove the doors, windows and roof of their staff houses. Here was an illustration which reminds one of Louis the 14th, (***l’etate c’est moi***) ***l’universite c’est moi!***

**9. The Politics of appointment of vcs/provosts**

The vacant positions of vice chancellors and provosts are advertised and the criteria spelt out. As part of the 1991/92 ASUU/FGN agreement, individual universities now conduct the selection and appoint VCs. There are also interviews in accordance with the rule books. However, the unadvertised criteria become part of the politics in which all mobilizations (ethnic, religious, indigeneity, etc) are thrown into the fray. Sometimes the Federal Government seems to acquiesce, collude or even discriminate against certain candidates. In one case the clearly spelt out criteria for the appointment of a VC were held in abeyance to pander to the interests of indigenes. In another instance the usual criteria of 10 years as Professor was edited out of the advertisement because the favoured indigene would not have qualified. In a federal university in the old mid-west there was a spirited contest for vice chancellorship in the early 2010s. The clamour to appoint an indigene was animated leading to demonstrations in which coffins were carried around the campus in a more heightened display of Chukwu Emeka Ike’s ***Naked Gods***. Presentations were made to the main traditional ruler about why an indigene must be appointed. The governor of the state also jumped into the pro indigene bandwagon. The campaign led to the removal of the chairman of the University Governing Council perceived as a stumbling; in the end an indigene was appointed.

In a related manner, a Federal University in central Nigeria have been virtually ‘’indigenized’’ to the extent that it has recorded the appointments of five indigenes as Vice Chancellor in succession. Simultaneously with this is the transformation of staff composition which now comprises up to 40% from one state. In a recent event, the Academic Staff Union of Polytechnics opposed the imposition of a rector allegedly by the current Education Minister, Mr Nyesom Wike. They alleged that the new appointee was from a university instead of a Polytechnic, contrary to existing regulations (Anonymous 2014). Questions about what happens to the Governing Councils who also seem to be in collusion as these acts are perpetrated.

**10. Contract administration**

Like other institutions, TEIs resort to contractors for certain services such as construction, supplies and equipment. Available contract jobs are advertised and the entire process of awards commences. This process was recently revised to make it even more transparent and accountable through the 2007 procurement act. This act is binding on all federal institutions, including TEIs. VCs/Provosts still award contract without reference to the act; many of such contracts are of questionable value, always inflated and the job quality is doubtful. There are also services such as security, cleaning which are awarded to close relations of the top administrators. Many of the services hitherto performed by junior staff are now outsourced and thus the opportunity to make award to cronies and friends. In addition, there is internally centralization such that every supply like stationary is through the central stores. The problem is that such stationary is inferior in quality (low gramme paper, refilled toners, etc) and also overprized. In at least one instance, the post JAMB screening was awarded as contract to an ICT firm, raising questions about why a university whose primary functions include administering exams would award the conduct of examinations to a private company. The message here is that complaints about the TEIs being underfunded, must also include internal leakages being factored into the equation.

11. **The Management of funds**

Public TEIs owned by the federal and state governments receive regular subventions. Such subventions are meant to fund operations, salaries and place TEIs in a position to render services. Often ignored is the internally generated revenue which in many TEIs amount to substantial sums. It is not certain how these internally generated revenues are spent. Equally dubious is what happens to the revenue from post-UTME screening; in at least one situation such funds were shared between principal officers and those involved in administering the examination. There are no transparency and accountability in the management of funds from government either and hence there are many abandoned projects, poorly maintained municipal services and poorly lit classrooms. One supreme irony in the management of resources is during convocation when money is splashed in celebrating the graduation of students who were poorly trained because of poor funding. Hugh funds are spent on the CEO virtually all of who own brand new jeeps, the so called sport utility vehicles, SUVs, and other official cars; their spouses also have chauffeur driven cars furnished by the university; in addition their residence is run like government where food is provided free. In essence for years of vice chancellorship’s/provost’s food and transportation, down to fuel and maintenance are free.

12. **Academic programmes**

There are growing questions about the nature and quality of academic programmes. The necessary supervisory organizations such as the National Universities Commission, National Board for Technical Education have enforced a regime of accreditation programmes which stipulates, among others, minimum requirements in staffing, equipment and space. Programmes such as medicine and architecture have their own requirements enforced by the professional bodies. Through the intervention of the Board for Medical and Dental Education, an entire graduating class had to be distributed to other universities because the medical school was not accredited. In a similar vein, the first set of students in another school spent ten years (they were later pacified with salaries) waiting for approval before they could graduate. In another, the university had admitted students into programmes for which it had no approval to run as illustration of what the NUC calls legal universities running illegal courses. These illegalities are in addition to universities which have not been properly registered and are therefore illegal.

While the exercise is well intentioned, the process is often corrupted through the borrowing of staff and equipment just to scale through the screening. I once listened to a dean of medicine complain that some of his own staff were introduced to an accreditation panel as staff from that institution. He had no way of knowing where the rest of the staff came from.

This process of withholding the truth from the accreditation panels, dearth of vital equipment and teaching staff are taking a toll on quality. It is now common knowledge that many graduating students cannot express themselves in the English language. Worse still, many are now labelled as ‘’unemployable’’ in apparent reference to little skills acquired. There are weighty moral questions for institutions which graduate students who have learnt little. Is it time for such graduates to sue their institutions?

The issue of quality in university education is now further complicated by the increasing number of TEIs; there are now so many private colleges of education, polytechnics and universities. With reference to universities there are now 129, comprising 40 owned by the federal government; 39 owned by the states and 50 by private/missionary interests (NUC April 14, 2014). In addition there are also 55 illegal universities who might be running academic programmes but without proper approval. Quality assurance in these newer universities is difficult to ascertain if only because there might be a tendency to cut corners and demand for time to grow.

I am not suggesting here that all TEIs are not properly run. They are like different points on the continuum with best cases and worst cases. The itemizations above may have bearing in some TEIs but not in others. The reality would be that many TEIs are not run by the rule books. Routine procedures like registration of new and returning students are left to linger for weeks both because registration officers are hardly there and because students only trickle in. I know a university which resumed in October but students turn up only in January and thus losing two months. Indeed, many TEIs are run by cliques that alienate the followership. There is thus a sense of ‘’their administration’’ alienated from the generality rather than ‘’our administration’’, a collective/participatory process. This situation is possible because internally, the committee system upon which university administration is based is frustrated by the executive excesses. Furthermore, externally the supervisory organs look the other way rather than exercise real oversight. The current situation shows that in many ways there is lack of transparency and accountability which is leading, among others, to wastage and unethical conduct. In many TEIs teaching staff with questionable credentials (some have third class) are hired, even as others with more formidable standing are ignored. The implications of this hiring practice for standards seem obvious. Furthermore, in a situation where examination results are doctored, better yet grades sold, the impact on the integrity of the institutions is also obvious. The current situation reflects the decay in Nigeria’s TEIs, which two decades ago were among the finest in the Africa, if not the world. Many who had undergraduate education here and went overseas felt completely at home in those institutions. The situation is redeemable if only sufficient political will can be mustered.

Theoretical perspective

I have followed the reverse route here, to wit: instead of the theoretical perspective at the beginning of the essay, this is towards the end. The idea here is to present the malfeasances of TEIs and explore how the theory being proposed explains the presentation.

There are several perspectives about crime, criminality and corruption. Some theories focus on culture and how it promotes corruption (Ejionye and Emereuwaonu 1986; Smith 2006), others focus on the entire system and how certain systems are more corruption prone than others (Alemika and Zack Williams 1986). In the wider literature there are also illegitimate opportunity theory as well ecological theories. I will not engage these various perspectives in any debate; the purpose here is simply to acknowledge their existence and lay out my own perspective which is here called the political economy of corruption. It borrows from the work of two scholars as explained below.

In searching for explanations for corruption, I am greatly fascinated by the work of Robert Merton and Karl Marx. The first is usually pigeonholed as functionalist and the other as part of the conflict school. The two schools are perceived as diametrically opposed to each other in terms of worldview. The aspect of Merton of interest here is the theory of **social structure and anomie**. According to Merton, every society has culturally defined goals and socially approved means of achieving such goals. However, there is some inequality in opportunity and these inequalities in access may result in deviance and criminality, including corruption; i.e. as those disadvantaged seek similar goals, there might be a predisposition to cut corners and use means which are not socially approved. Deviance is thus, a way the individual reacts to inequalities in opportunities and chooses which path to follow. It must be stated that cutting corners is not a preserve of those who lack opportunities as many highly placed people also use shortcuts for further accumulation. In Nigeria, most of the cases of corruption relate to highly placed people who use their offices for enrichment. The theory therefore points to how individuals, disadvantaged or well placed, may use the wrong means in seeking well recognized goals in society.

Merton’s theory perfectly fits my notion of power and how it can be used for corruption. This is because as Alvin Gouldner (1970) long noted, Merton’s social structure and anomie is effectively a class analysis of opportunities. Corruption in TEIs clearly bears this out as some are better placed to push their personal interests instead rather than the institutions’.

Closely associated is Marx’s theory of society which focuses on the entire system of how people meet their survival needs. This is Marx view of ***historical materialism,*** also called the materialist interpretation of history; it states that before anything else, the human must fulfil the basic survival needs: - food, water, clothing, shelter. Even among the needs, food comes first and hence: before the human being can pursue arts, history and critique literature, s/he must first eat.

The imperative of meeting this survival needs forces human beings to enter obligations and contractual relationships either as workers or employers of labour. The totality of these contractual relationships which govern the production of goods and services in society is called the ***mode of production***. The mode of production has two components: - ***forces of production*** and ***relations of production***. The forces of production refer to technology and labour, while the relations of production refer to legal provisions about rights, duties and entitlements of the two classes.

For Marx, the mode of production is the economic base or the foundation upon which is built aspects of society such as institutions. The idea is that the social organization of society reflects, corresponds with, and also reproduces the mode of production. Thus, the form of state, education, family and other institutions reflect the dominant mode of production. In effect, in a capitalist society, the polity, educational and health systems would also reflect capitalist principles and ethos.

In modern society, the capitalist mode of production is based on private ownership of the means of production, exchange and distribution. Capitalism is primarily based on the pursuit of interests and accumulation of profits and what would enhance one’s position within the mode of production, or class interests. According to Marx, the interests of the bourgeoisie and the proletariat are antagonistic and irreconcilable. From this perspective, corruption is about power, position and determining what happens or does not happen. In TEIs, there are several positions of authority and some of these wield more control over the purse strings. There are for example directorates of TEIs such as works, student affairs and central administration which exercise more control over what jobs should be executed and for what amounts. It is thus not just control of the purse strings but, more importantly, about the extent to which these executions adhere to transparency, accountability and ethical practice.

In this way, some may wish to have access to illegal funds but cannot, because their schedule does not including dealing with money. Relately, others have access to smaller opportunities and might extort in small proportions. Corruption is therefore about power and authority within the TEIs. There are many directives which VCs/Provosts may issue some which may be outside the demands of accountability and transparency. Here then is a major source of conflict between the CEO and staff who may wish to abide by ethical conduct.

My main point is that because of capitalist economic system many administrators see positions in the university as avenues for money making. This is especially true in a context of little monitoring and evaluation from statutory organs who are by law supposed to carry out oversight functions. In the modern age capitalism has transformed into global form with new ethos in the university. No longer is association with industry pejorative, industries are now openly courted. Secondly course offerings are now reflecting this reality with preference for business and management and distancing of the more traditional areas of history and philosophy (Alubo 2004). What is more information and communications technology is now used to run degree and other programmes in cyberspace such one could enrol in academic programmes from the comfort of one’s home.

There is perhaps some general consensus that the TEIs are running at less than optimum. There is also some general consensus about what needs to be done. The suggestions about what needs to be done are contained in visitation panels, many of which are not acted upon, agreements between labour unions and government. Most of these suggestions have concentrated on:

* Inflow of more resources variously to pay enhanced emoluments, provide better municipal services, and provide more infrastructure and equipment
* Stream line students population and bring them in line with available spaces

There is very little on how TEIs are administered and how iron fists of VC/Provosts are responsible for the many of the crises. It does seem that the Councils for the universities and the Boards for the polytechnics pay only fleeting visits and have little time to scrutinize activities. I propose the following:-

* Placing TEIs under the oversight of Councils and Boards; including periodic scrutiny and certainly holding these bodies to account.
* Full implementation of commissions of inquiry and white papers of visitation panels.
* University and polytechnic management to accept full responsibility for lack of accreditation. There was a time when 70 percent of courses in a university failed accreditation; the management got off scot free.
* University management must take responsibility for all courses run on campus or under its name anywhere in the country and beyond.
* Periodic inspection of physical facilities of all TEIs to ensure these meet minimum public health standards and are conducive for teaching and learning.
* Regular audits of TEI accounts, including subventions and internally generated revenues, and availability of such report to the public.

CONCLUSION

The travails of TEIs are long running; reforms have been made but there is little systemic improvement. A few heads have truly transformed their institutions while others dug in to pursue their personal instead of institutional interests. Where the latter happens, the institution is the worse for it. The experience suggests that most of the decay is due to the way the TEIs are run by chief executive officers whose preoccupation is impunity and opaque administration. The poorly unaccountable system is facilitated by ignoring internal systems of checks and balances and the seeming abandonment responsibility by external regime of enforcement. The time has come not just for transparency, accountability and ethical conduct, what is needed is the enforcement of these cherished values to better place TEIs in the position to fulfil their ***raison d’etre*** to society.

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