

Social Problems in Tertiary Institutions

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ABSTRACT

This paper examined concept of social problem in tertiary institutions and various social problems/ social vices prevalent in Nigerian tertiary institutions. The paper employed secondary data. The data were collected from both print and online publications. The paper identified indecent/ obscene dressing, cultism, drug abuse, examination malpractices, sexual promiscuity and prostitution as most of the social problem tertiary institutions in Nigeria are faced with. The paper hereby recommends the following. Tertiary institutions should direct Guidance and counseling unit to embark on massive public sensitization programme against all social vice that are inimical to social development in the institutions. Students should be involved in the sensitization. Parents and guidance should train up their wards properly. Tertiary institutions should ensure that staff cover their scheme of work and examination questions are in line with the scheme of work. Effective counseling programme should be employed in tertiary institutions to against examination malpractice. CCTV Camera should be deployed in all examination halls to curtain examination malpractice. Tertiary institutions should ensure implementation of laws, policies and regulations on antisocial behaviour on campuses.

Introduction

Tertiary education refers to all formal post-secondary education, including public and private universities, colleges, technical training institutes, and vocational schools. Tertiary education is instrumental in fostering growth, reducing poverty, and boosting shared prosperity. A highly skilled workforce, with lifelong access to a solid post-secondary education, is a prerequisite for innovation and growth: well-educated people are more employable and productive, earn higher wages, and cope with economic shocks better (World Bank Education Overview undated). (Isife & Nneka 2016), submitted that tertiary institutions play a vital role not only in shaping the future by educating the professionals of tomorrow, but also creating a research based for sustainability efforts and providing outreach and service to communities and nations. Historically, higher education has served the twin purpose of research and teaching. In its knowledge production function, higher education institutions have been the centers of innovation and creators of new knowledge in diverse fields of human activity.

(Ogunode, 2020), viewed tertiary education as the post-secondary school education designed for the production of manpower. Higher education is an education that awards certificates after the completion of the programme. Tertiary education is the education that deals with teaching programme, research programme and community service programme. Tertiary education is the peak of educational institutions and it is an organized educational system that is meant to support the social, economic and political development of the country (Ogunode, 2020). (Federal Republic of Nigeria national policy on education 2013), noted tertiary education is an education given after Post Basic Education in institutions such as Universities and Inter-University Centres such as the Nigeria French Language Village, Nigeria Arabic Language Village, National Institute of Nigerian Languages, institutions such as Innovation Enterprise Institutions (IEIs), and Colleges of Education, Monotechnics, Polytechnics, and other specialized institutions such as Colleges of Agriculture, Schools of Health and Technology and the National Teachers' Institutes (NTI). Tertiary education is a system that is teaching, research inclined for the production of skilled professionals for the total development of the nation.

Tertiary education benefits not just the individual, but society as a whole. Graduates of tertiary education are more environmentally conscious, have healthier habits, and have a higher level of civic participation. Also, increased tax revenues from higher earnings, healthier children, and reduced family size all build stronger nations. In short, tertiary education institutions prepare individuals not only by providing them with adequate and relevant job skills, but also by preparing them to be active members of their communities and societies (World Bank Education Overview undated).

Tertiary institutions are micro section of the larger society. Tertiary institutions is an organized fraction of the whole society curved out for teaching programme, research and provision of community service. Tertiary institution can also be seen as a subset of the general society that is made of collection of different people, different culture, different life style and different value. Societies globally have been known to have some peculiar social problem and social issues. Social problems of most societies are migrated into the tertiary institutions because the societies and the tertiary institutions are inseparable to some extent.

Globally, tertiary institutions are found in one social problem or the other. There are many cases of social issue like discrimination, racism, gender inequality and so on. In Nigeria, there are many social problems and social issues facing the tertiary institutions. It is pertained to discuss some of these pressing social problems and suggests lasting solutions to the social problems.

Concept of Social Problems in Tertiary Institutions

Social problem are all activities that are against social order in the social environment. Social problem are general problem that is affecting the society negatively. Social problem in tertiary institutions are behaviour exhibit that by stakeholders of the institutions that is against social order and may have negative effect on the society generally.

Social Problems in Tertiary Institutions

There are many social vices and social problems in the tertiary institutions in Nigeria. Some of these social problem include; indecent/ obscene dressing, cultism, drug abuse, examination malpractices and sexual promiscuity.

Indecent/Obscene Dressing

Tertiary institutions globally is faced with the problems of social issues emanating from students. One of these social problem is the problem of indecent dressing. Many tertiary institutions in Nigeria are daily facing the problem of indecent dressing. (Onyike, 2019) maintained that that educational institutions of learning in Nigeria have been bedeviled with indecent dressing particularly by female students. Most girls go bare, display their navels and boobs and wearing whatever to display size and shape of their private parts. It appears now that to be fashionable, one has to become half nude, dressed in sleeveless/see-through tops without bra. According to Irtwange (2004), this constitutes

Weapons of Mass Distraction (WMD) and sexual harassment. This seductive dressing has profound negative effect on both the students and the lecturers alike as they can hardly concentrate in their academic work under such environments. (Onyike, 2019) identified causes of immoral dressing among student to failure of the family to instill strict moral values in their children from tender ages: peer group pressure, cajoling upright students to go astray, to watching too many movies that portray American and European culture as superior and the in-thing. There must be a moderate position that allows the students to dress in a certain way that would meet societal value. The higher institutions of learning have been fighting against other social vices such as cultism, examination malpractice and drug abuse but the issue of obscene dressing is only recently receiving attention.

Cultism

Cultism is a major social problem in tertiary institutions in Nigeria. Cultism have claimed a lot of lives and caused a lot of damages. According to (Denga (1991) in (Anzene 2014) cultism is a system of religious belief and practice or an ideology. Orukpe (2008) defined secret cults as a group who share and propagate peculiar secret beliefs divulged to members. In addition their initiation procedures often involve secret rituals like swearing by some deity, human blood and other procedures, which send shivers down the spines of most people. (Onyike, 2019) noted that the origin of the phenomenon of cultism in Nigeria tertiary institution is traceable to the formation of pirate confraternity at the University of Ibadan in 1952 by Wole Soyinka and members of his group mainly as lobby group of students in order to score even with the university authorities. Besides, one of the objectives of the group was to inspire patriotic sentiments and to check the neo-colonialist mentality spreading among the nation's educated class due to western education. At that time, violence was not said to have manifested in their conduct. Nevertheless, this initially peaceful group later snowballed into esoteric gangs whose members were highly steeped in ritualism and voodooism. From there, the phenomenon of cultism became pronounced in almost all the tertiary institutions in the country and the secondary schools. Secret cult groups are now dreaded on the campuses. Because of their secret activities and ascribed mysticism and power, members enjoy an aura of fearsomeness especially from nonmembers. Some of the most notable of these secret cult groups are the Sea Dog, Black Axe, Aiye, Vicking, Amazons, white Angels, Black Brassieres, Buccaneers, Confraternity and others.

Cultism have led to death of many students, lecturers and destruction of institutional properties. (Onyike, 2019) argued that cultism lead to outbreak of violence on campuses and its attendant destruction of lives and property. The frequent outbreaks of cult activities in some campuses have generated feeling of fear and social insecurity among students and lecturers. The unhealthy rivalry among secret cult groups often intensifies acts of terrorism and hatred among students on campuses. These sometimes result in the closure of tertiary institutions for quite a long time, which has negative effect on implementation of academic programmes. (Ogunode, Audu, Ahaotu, (2020); (Ige, 2014,) and (Igodo,2002), posited some male students, particularly the cultists often rape female counterparts when there is no compromise over love advance. Some male students also hide under campus journalism to expose the secret and background of female students. They are thus fond of cartooning and writing malicious information about them. (Okoli, Ogbondah, & Ewor, 2016).

Drug Abuse

Drug abuse is another major social issue and problem in tertiary institutions globally, Students of undergraduate students are involved in the act and many lives are going down. (Olatunde 2009), defined drug as a substance of biological or chemical origin which when applied to a living tissue, produces an effect. Drugs include what are commonly called medicine and are not only substances which alter mood, perception or normal awareness as some people erroneously believe (Igbokwe, 2007). According to (Onyike, 2019), there are certain drugs, which users including adolescents, become easily addicted to and therefore abuse a lot. These are mostly (i) Central Nervous system stimulants (ii) Central Nervous system depressants (iii) Hallucinogens (iv) Narcotic analgesics (v) Alcohol and (vi) Tobacco While Central Nervous System stimulants such as Amphetamine and Caffeine speed up people's reactions and counteract fatigues, the depressants calm people and relieve

anxieties. Example of depressants include Phenobarbit one and Valium. Alcohol, though a social drug when taken in excess causes undesirable effects on individual personal judgment and social relationships. Tobacco is a stimulant that increase mental alertness and in high doses causes unsteadiness and muscle tremors. Narcotic analgesics such as Morphine, Heroine and Opium are pain relievers with marked effect on mood of people. The causes of drug abuse among students include; coping with pressures/stress of *school life ignorance*, pleasure, curiosity, incorrect drug dosage, low self-esteem, inferiority complex or feeling of inadequacy, and membership of group/peer pressure. Various reports about the factors associated with drug abuse suggest that parents have a primary role to play in reducing its incidence. Parents should ensure adequate supervision and control of children to inculcate good value systems in them (Onyike, 2019).

Examination Malpractice

Another trending social problem in the tertiary institutions in Nigeria is examination malpractices. The problem of examination malpractices started from the basic school habit. (Onyike, 2019) lamented that in recent times, examination malpractice has gone from simple "giraffing" where students occasionally stretch their necks to catch glimpse of what they want to copy from other students' scripts to a variety of sophisticated methods which include; (a) Use of micro-chips'; writing very tiny summaries on pieces of paper, parts of the body, or on materials found within the venue, (b) Sorting'; in which students negotiate with corrupt lecturers for scores by rewarding' the lecturers in cash or kind (c) ECOMOG/ECOWA/OAU: which is an alliance among classmates, to communicate via coded 'language' (d) Hand-held smart devices such as modern cell phones (Anzene, 2013).

There are many factors responsible for examination malpractices in the tertiary institutions. (Onyike, 2019) observed that one of the major causes of examination malpractice in the campuses can be attributed to moral decadence in Nigeria because of the deplorable value system. In this country, cheating, dishonesty including embezzlement and stealing of public funds and properties do not attract the condemnation and punishment they deserve. The emphasis on paper qualifications or certificates is another cause of examination malpractice. If admissions to schools and employment of graduates are based on actual performance of candidates during interviews or entrance examinations rather than on mere certificates, examination malpractice shall be discouraged or minimized.

Another major cause of examination malpractice is inadequate teaching and learning facilities such as classrooms, libraries, laboratories and even teachers compared to the population of students. Thus effective conduct of examination becomes difficult. Other students' vices such as cultism, drug abuse, sexual promiscuity and truancy are also encouraging examination malpractice on campuses as students devote more time to them than their studies. Since examination malpractice sows seed of fraud and criminal values in society, this vice cannot allow us to realize future greatness because it renders useless certificate and debases the foundation for assessing our skills and capacity. Examination malpractice, therefore not only promotes breakdown of moral and ethical standards in society but it also prevents achievement of meaningful and sustainable development for like the aspiration to become one of the top twenty economies in the world by the year 20:2020 (Onyike, 2019).

Sexual Promiscuity

Sexual promiscuity in tertiary institution is a very serious problem that is affecting social stability of the institutions. (Onyike, 2019) asserted that sexual promiscuity among students of educational institutions in Nigeria is another serious vice that calls for serious concern. Most of the students who for the first time gain some social freedom from their parents watchful eyes and guidance, easily fall prey to the temptation of tasting the forbidden fruit. Some of them become so wild on the illicit lovemaking that they give most of their time and attention to it to the detriment of their studies. They become so much engaged in nocturnal activities that they sleep throughout the daytime in hostels or during lectures. Some other ones completely abandon their lectures to keep appointment with boyfriends or "sugar daddies". (Onyike, 2019) maintained that sexual promiscuity could lead to

contracting terrible diseases, unwanted pregnancies, babies or even pre-mature death. In an attempt to get rid of an unwanted pregnancy, complications may result which may lead to hospitalization and absence from lectures for those who may survive. Some of the students are so morally bankrupt that they rely absolutely on their womanhood to "pass" their examination. They seduce fellow male students or examiners to assist them write their examination or award them pass marks as the case may be.

Prostitution

Prostitution is another major social vice engaged by students in tertiary institutions in Nigeria. Most students engages in prostitutions to meet up with economic needs while other just take pressure in it as their friends influence them into. There are many other factors that has pushed many students in to prostitution. (Ogunode & Odanwu, (2023) concluded that increment in the public university fees in Nigeria may lead many young girls in Nigerian universities into prostitution and other social vices because most girls in the various institutions sponsor themselves in the universities. When young girls who are struggling to pay the fees before when it was low are now expected to pay as much as double or even more than what she was paying before, the effects would be too much for such girls. The present increment may lead some of them to prostitution and school runs to raise money to pay. Obi (2015) maintained that one of the reasons why young ladies in higher institutions in Nigeria engage in prostitution is because of the high rate of higher school fees. Majorities of the ladies engage in these social vices as students do it to raise money and meet up with social and academic needs in their schools.

Impact of Social vices on Academic performance of Students

Social vices in respective of the forms that is being manifested by students has its negative impact on students' academic performance in tertiary institutions. Foster and Young (2004) conceptualized student academic performance as the parameter for determining the worth and carrying capacities of the students. Abdul (2002) considered academic performance as the students' level of attainment in the grade point average of courses offered in their yearly examination. In other words, it is the outcome of students' assessment through comprehensive, systematic, diagnostic, progressive, formative, summative and cumulative evaluation of what they had gone through in a school setting. It is the main focus in the overall educational performance. Oloyede (2008) classified students' assessment into three areas (i) cognitive (ii) affective and (iii) psychomotor. The first type of assessment is typically academic. The second is adjustment while the third entails the development of motor skills. (Zaifada, Olowonefa & Ogunode,.2023) students' academic performance is the achievement of student learning, mastery of curriculum and acquisition of social skills that help students to become useful and relevant in their respective societies.

There are many factors that enhance the students' academic performance in the schools. Some of these factors include students' parent socio-economic factors, teaching methods, school environment, availability of instructional materials, adequate supervision, training and retraining programme, adequate infrastructure facilities, teachers' qualifications, experiences, motivation and team work relationship etc (Zaifada, et al.,2023) and there are also many factors that can hindered effective academic performance of students in tertiary institutions. (Ogunode & Ndayebom, 2022;Ogunode, Akinjobi, & Olatunde-Aiyedun, 2022;Ogunode, Johnson, & Olatunde-Aiyedun, 2022; Ogunode 2020; Okoli, 2015) identified some of the factors as social activities that the students engages in always. (Ali,. 2017) carried out study and identified drug addition, prostitutions, drunks, cultism and pornography as factors that have affected students' academic performance in higher institutions.

Solutions to Social Problems in Tertiary Institutions

There are many solutions to some of the social problem discussed above. Some of these solutions includes;

1. Tertiary institutions should direct guidance and counseling unit to embark on massive public sensitization programme against all social vice that are inimical to social development in the institutions. Students should be involved in the sensitization.
2. Tertiary institutions should ensure fully implementation of dress code to curtail the problem of indecent/obscene dressing on campuses. (Onyike, 2019) observed that some professions have dress codes for example Law and Medical students; Accountancy. Hospitality Management, etc which other professions can follow suit. Gladly, a general dress code has been introduced in each higher institutions of learning. One must quickly advise that such dress codes should make provision for lecturers to insist that their students must be decently dressed or be sent out of class. Parents and religious organizations also have a big role to play in curbing this menace through appropriate upbringing and counseling by guiding the young girls against indecent dressing to minimize the temptation of randy and sometimes, insane men to rape them (Onyike, 2019).
3. Effective counseling programme in tertiary institutions and riot act can be used to curtail the activities of cultic in the tertiary institution in Nigeria. (Onyike, 2019) suggested proper moral upbringing of children and wards by parents and guardians is recommended as a remedy to cultism in tertiary institutions in Nigeria. The youth should be properly counseled on peer group relationship. An innocent child can easily be transformed into a dangerous fearful young man if he is allowed to make friends indiscriminately.
4. The government and educational institutions should declare state of emergency on drug abuse in Nigeria and in Nigerian educational institutions. Special intervention programmes should be institutionalized to curtail the problems. (Onyike, 2019) observed that the need for education and public enlightenment of parents, students and general public cannot be overemphasized. Education and conscientization about the dangers of drug abuse should be provided by parents, teachers, traditional rulers, religious leaders and the mass media.
5. Managements of Tertiary institutions should ensure that all staff cover their scheme of work and examination questions are set in line with the scheme of work. Effective counseling programme should be employed in tertiary institutions to against examination malpractice. CCTV Camera should be deployed in all examination halls to curtail examination malpractice.
6. Tertiary institutions should ensure implementation of laws, policies and regulations on antisocial behaviour on campuses. (Onyike, 2019) suggested that the Students Information Handbooks in Tertiary Education System should be re- enforced. For instance, in Nasarawa State University, Keffi; Nasarawa State Polytechnic, Lafia, Federal College of Education, Katsina and other institutions have adequate provisions for general conduct and discipline of students. If these rules and regulations guiding conduct of students are enforced by the school authorities, these wicked and immoral acts in campuses would be reduced to the barest level.

Conclusion and Recommendations

This paper discussed the concept of social problems in tertiary institutions and various social problems/ social vices prevalent in Nigerian tertiary institutions. The paper employed secondary data. The data were collected from both print and online publications. The paper identified indecent/obscene dressing, cultism, drug abuse, examination malpractices, sexual promiscuity and prostitution as most of the social problem tertiary institutions in Nigeria are faced with. The paper hereby recommends that the responsibility of preventing or curbing general students' vices in tertiary institutions should be a collective one resting on parents, teachers, religious leaders, authorities of the institutions as well as government. Tertiary institutions managers should ensure full implementation of laws, policies and regulations on antisocial behaviour on campuses.

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