

## Links and Experience Between Institutions, Industries and Local Community

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**Abstract** *The desire of the Federal Republic of Nigeria to emerge from her current position to a position of greater height with other developed countries prompted her to adopt education as an instrument per excellence for development. But due to enormous demand of educational institutions which exceed government budget allocation for educational sector, government sees it wise to involve the community and others in the establishment of schools. Federal republic of Nigeria through her National Policy on Education (2004:22) state that 'government welcomes the participation of voluntary agencies, communities, private individuals, and public organization in the establishment of schools...' This formed the basis for this paper and thus it examined historical background of knowledge industries; links between school and community; the conditions for successful transfer between institutions industries and local community, and benefits to the institutions and community.*

**Keywords:** *Links and experience; institutions; industries; local community.*

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### Introduction

Education has been described as the bedrock of every society and tool for nation building. For quality education to be achieved in a nation, the institutions, industries and local community must co-corporately link together. Ordinarily, educational institutions and industries do not exist in a vacuum but within a community they serve. Although, the school may be regarded as a society of its own, but outside itself, it is a part of the wider society in which it is located.

In a normal situation, the school should reflect and teach the values of the contemporary society in which it is located. It is from this point of view that in educational administration, the relationship between an institution and its community is of vital importance. This fact may be illustrated with the tri-dimensional concept of educational administration namely; the job to be done, the man to do the job and the environment. The symbiotic relationship between the school and community and how this determines the quality of education is the focus of school community relationships in educational management. Likewise, since the school graduates/outputs are meant to serve in the local industrial organization where they are employed, then there must be a cordial relationship between the institutions, industries and local community.

### Historical Background of Knowledge Industries

The link between institutions, industries and communities can be dated back to medieval age when the various questions of life were treated by the philosophers and corresponding solution were used to develop several items for the comfort of humanity. The questions of life as it have been used in this concept, were the challenges that emanates from the community due to the man's ways of life's. The philosophers then serve as the origin of ideas and the solution to any human challenges. During this there was clear demarcation between the communities, the local industries and institution of knowledge due to size of the community and the miniaturized nature of human needs and challenges. The challenges of human were basic need of life (physiological need) there were no distance separation between the body of knowledge (philosophers and the community). Philosophers were part the needful society and they generate the idea through research into various things that can solve human need.

Outburst of world population at the recent time makes the human needs to increase and there has the corresponding requirement for enormous needs of the world to be met. The community has grown in size, knowledge thus, the medieval ways of handling challenges of life has proved inadequate. While the modern ways of handling issue of life was introduced in other to increase the production to meet up with the enormous needs of people. The industrial revolution made life easier for the community by providing plenty of cheap food for the people. Thousands of families moved to industrial towns to work in coal mines, iron foundries and textile mills (Awake, 2009).

In conclusion, the need for sharing knowledge between institutions and industry has become increasingly evident in recent years. Historically research institutions were perceived as a source of new ideas and industry offered a natural route to maximizing the use of these ideas for the benefit of the community.

### Links Between School and Community

There are varieties of ways in which school and community interacts. Seven different channels of relationships between the two may be identified in a summarative table by Kenkwo quoted by Agabi and Oluwuo in Nnabuo, Okorie, Agabi and Igwe, (2004:316-319), Igwe, (1997:96-101) and Igwe, (2006).

Types of Link	School to Community	Community to School
(1) Use of physical school facilities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i) Classrooms and halls for adult education classes and community occasions.</li> <li>ii) Venue for short in-service training courses particularly at the teacher training and secondary school levels.</li> <li>iii) School farm or garden as a model for locally-based farmers for demonstration work, or model farms.</li> <li>iv) The use of sports grounds for civic occasions.</li> <li>v) Ground for gazing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i) Shared use of Church hall, water supply, Clinics, Hospitals, library etc.</li> <li>(ii) Providing houses for teachers.</li> <li>iii) Providing land for school buildings, sports field farms or gardens.</li> </ul>
(2) Economic contribution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i) Labour contribution on local project.</li> <li>ii) Provision of employment opportunities.</li> <li>iii) Purchase of local products.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i) Labour contribution</li> <li>ii) Financial contribution for new facilities.</li> <li>iii) Provision of materials and furniture.</li> </ul>
(3) General services and help	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i) School as base for local groups, choirs, scouts, and guides, sports, teams, plays and concerts.</li> <li>ii) Help for old and sick peoples.</li> <li>iii) Help with harvesting participation in local national festivals.</li> <li>iv) Fund raising</li> <li>v) Schools as postal center and polling stations.</li> <li>vi) Use of school bus.</li> <li>vii) Loan of equipment, furniture</li> <li>viii) Premises and teachers in national campaigns such as census, elections and health education.</li> <li>ix) School as based for post school training.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i) Maintenance of school facilities</li> <li>ii) Provision of school security</li> <li>iii) Lending of equipment</li> <li>iv) Housing of students.</li> <li>v) Serving as gardeners/caretakers.</li> <li>vi) Provision of resource persons.</li> </ul>

4) Research, knowledge and cultural records	i) Recording and preservation of local traditions lore, historical events etc. ii) Providing the personnel for research into local history and problems.	i) Provision of information for school museum. ii) Contribution of artefacts to school museum. iii) Opportunities for study of local activities and customs.
5) Teaching	i) Education (literacy) for adults and out of school youths. ii) Extramural classes, seminars and course for professionals. iii) Correspondence courses.	i) Use of local people as instructors, religious leaders, story tellers, dancers, carpenters. ii) Parental help as teacher assistants, etc. iii) Practicing professional demonstration.
6) Curriculum	i) Sources of information and new ideas for use in community e.g. craft, linguistic influence, hygiene etc. ii) Transmission of culture, folk-lore, customs, music dance. iii) Courses geared to specific problems of the community.	i) Use of and access to local facilities e.g. visit to local industry, farms, research stations and commercial centers. ii) General visit to areas of interest, parks, zoos. iii) Provision of case-study materials (colleges).
7) Management	i) Staff and students involvement in local affairs committees, church, mosque and agriculture. ii) Pupils involvement youth organizations. iii) Training in management	i) Participation in school committees ii) Local coaches helping in soccer, basketball, swimming, athletic etc.

From the table above, there is no doubt that the school cannot operate independence of its community based on symbiotic relationships which have been enumerated above on school and community interactions. Since the industry is also located in the community and the community members are workers in the industry, the links above are also applicable to them. So, both the school industries and community need to see one another as partner in progress in educating the young ones who belong to the two worlds, the world of the community and the world of the school in other to ensure effective teaching and learning.

### Creating the Conditions for Successful Knowledge Transfer between Institutions, Industries and Local Community.

It has been recognized that the involvement of involvement of industrial managers in the governance of institutions especially research institutions can help to orient education activities towards the need of society, bringing expertise to support knowledge transfer activities, and signal willingness to introduce innovation-oriented approaches in all activities. Such interaction will help the young graduates to secure employment in the industry.

Also, institutions especially research institutions should set up knowledge transfer offices which will help to improve collaboration and exploitation of research results and their uptake by industry. For instance, many European research institution have set up knowledge transfer office in recent years, aiming to improve collaboration and exploitation of research result and their uptake by business.

Moreover, the personnel working on knowledge transfer must possesses a wide range of skills in other to carry out their task effectively. The European commission is currently studying ways to address their problem of inexperience staff by building a framework to provide new knowledge transfer officers with qualification which mutually recognized between them. Likewise Proton Europe, building on the U.K's

institute for knowledge transfer, is looking to create accreditation scheme for existing knowledge transfer officers based on their experience and track record. Also, research institution should be given sufficient autonomy to recruit experienced knowledge transfer staff on a competitive basis and this will help them to identify the share needs with industry and the community as a whole.

Furthermore, there is also a need for existing resources to be made more accessible and this will help catalyse links with industry. Also, community members should actively promote and support the pooling of resources among research institutions. (European commission, 2007).

### **Balancing the Benefits**

Examination of successful research collaborations in Europe and the USA show that sustainable 'win-win' can be obtained, which produce good science, publish result without unreasonable delay, contribute to the general education and training of new graduates, and generate valuable intellectual property that supports innovation by industrial partners. When managed in professional and balanced way, knowledge transfer can be beneficial both for the institutions and community in general (European commission, 2007).

### **Benefit to Institutions**

- ❖ Institutions especially research institution generates money from their knowledge transfer to industry and this fund can also help fund other institutions activities.
- ❖ The development of mutual trust between the research institution and industry, beneficial to establishment of long-term strategic partnerships;
- ❖ The result of research institutions research activities improve understanding market need and of industry problems.
- ❖ The result from successful partnership and product resulted into gaining status and prestige.
- ❖ The enrichment of research institutions teaching and learning activities through the involvement of industry based lecturers with practical examples of teaching contents and materials which aid learning how to apply skills and knowledge to solve real business problems.
- ❖ The identification of potential new partners for further research;
- ❖ Attracting, retaining and motivating good scientist interest in entrepreneurial aspect of education;
- ❖ Contributing to public authorities better recognizing the socio-economic relevance of public funded research, potentially leading to increased funding thereof.
- ❖ Employment of new graduates (community children) from institution by industry is another good advantage.

### **Benefits to Community**

The successful implementation of policies to deal with inventions and collaborations with industry can lead to a number of benefits for society at large and, in particular, the local economy. These benefits include new jobs, new products on the market and better education.

### **Conclusion**

It is very clear from this paper that institutions and industries are located within community and their roles in educating the young ones and improving social economy cannot be overemphasized.

Moreover, this paper showed that to create the conditions for successful knowledge transfer between institutions especially research institutions and industry, the industry managers should be involved in the governance of institutions in other to orient education activities towards the community needs; research

personnel must possess a wide range of skills in order to carry out their task effectively; and the existing resources should be made accessible and this will help catalyse link with the industry.

Finally, the paper examined the benefits to research institution resulting from knowledge transfer to industry and the benefits to the community which include new jobs, new products on the market and better education.

## Recommendations

Recommendations on links and experience between institutions, industries and local community are as follows:

- ❖ The board of governors should develop policies and laws that encourage community. Industry participation in the management of institutions.
- ❖ Train school-industry-community liaisons who know the community history, language, and cultural background to contact community members and coordinate activities.
- ❖ Develop and outreach strategy to inform industry about their involvement in institution management in order to enhance better socio-economic.
- ❖ Regularly evaluate the effectiveness of community and industry involvement activities in the institution.
- ❖ The contractual arrangement for research must be established between the research institutions and industry.

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