



Research Article

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University-Community Engagement in Nigeria: Evidence from Selected Universities

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Abstract

The imperative of knowledge based and inclusive development is making universities to realign their teaching and research missions to embrace community engagement. Using case studies of three universities in Nigeria, this paper examines how different types of Universities in Nigeria carry out community engagement and the nature of the benefits that accrues from the engagement. It also analyses the existing university policy framework with respect to university community engagement with a view to identifying the effectiveness of these policies in engendering university-community engagement in Nigeria. The findings revealed that the emerging policy to support community engagement at the universities does not provide for adequate framework to engender an effective university-community engagement. Besides, the reward systems of the universities do not support community engagement as a valid form of scholarship. Most of the university engagements are formal engagements with little or no link to immediate local communities. There is the need for a policy re-orientation that first integrates the principles of infusion model as a framework of the university community engagement policy. Secondly, the university community engagement policy must reward and recognize community engagement as a valid kind of scholarship among academics. This is a sine qua non in increasing university contributions to the development of their immediate communities.

Keywords: *Universities, community engagement, knowledge, inclusive development, Nigeria*

1. Introduction

Universities are increasingly being recognised as major agents of knowledge and innovation generation which are critical drivers of economic growth and development. There is currently a strong global advocacy for inclusive development, and universities are consequently realigning their teaching and research missions to embrace community engagement as a means of creating knowledge that engender inclusiveness. According to UNESCO (2009), universities should create mutually beneficial partnerships with communities and civil societies to facilitate the sharing and transmission of appropriate knowledge.

In Nigeria, the important roles of universities in national development are well recognized by government and other stakeholders. This is demonstrated by the rapid increase in the number of Nigerian universities in the last two decades. The number of universities in Nigeria rose from one in 1960 to 52 in 1999 and 124 by 2012. As indicated in Adeoti et al (2010), Nigerian universities can be broadly categorized into two: conventional universities and specialized universities. Conventional universities are the majority and offer courses in the pure and applied sciences, the social sciences and humanities; while specialized universities are either universities of agriculture mainly offering course programmes in agricultural sciences or universities of technology with course programmes mainly in engineering and other technology-related fields. Essentially, the primary

functions of universities are teaching, learning, research and community engagement (Waghid, 2002). While research, teaching and learning usually take place in most time within the confine of the university environment, community engagement is usually done outside the university (Weerts and Sandmann, 2008). It requires taking new knowledge produced and physically applying it to real life situation with the aim of positively impacting the lives of the people at the community level (Sanoff, 2000).

The main objective of this paper is to analyze how different types of Universities in Nigeria carry out community engagement and the nature of the benefits that accrues from the engagement. It also analyses the existing university policy framework with respect to university community engagement with a view to identifying the effectiveness of these policies in engendering university-community engagement in Nigeria.

The paper is divided into six sections. The next section discusses the conceptual framework of the paper while section three presents the research methodology. Section four discusses the findings, section five deals with the implications of the pattern of university community engagements in Nigeria, and the final section presents the concluding remarks.

2. Conceptual Framework of University Community Engagement

Community engagement as a concept is applied in different context by practitioners. Consequently, there are several definitions and interpretations of the concepts in the literature. In this paper, it is important to first understand the term community and then engagement. Communities refer to those specific, local, collective interest groups that participate, or could potentially participate, in the community service activities of a higher education institution (HEQC/JET, 2006). In the above definition, the term community is seen as made up of local groups which may be the entire community or a subgroup within a community. In this paper, the term communities represents the immediate environment in which the university is located which may be urban or rural locations. Community engagement therefore is defined as initiatives and processes through which the expertise of the institution in the areas of teaching and research are applied to address issues relevant to its community (HEQC, 2004).

There are three conceptual models that have been developed in an attempt to analyze the patterns of university community engagement. The first of these models is the silo model which emphasizes the fact that universities have three roles – teaching and learning, research, and community engagement. However, the silo model sees community engagement as a separate and predominantly voluntary activity for the academics. The silo model conception of university community engagement as voluntary activity gives little or no motivation to academics to engage in community service. The second model is the intersection model of community engagement which also sees the university as having three roles – teaching and learning, research, and community engagement but acknowledges that there is some intersection in the three core functions. It observed that where these roles intersect, there will be Service-Learning and some form of community-based research. Where there is no intersection, community outreach and volunteerism continue as separate activities (HEQC/JET, 2007) (Figure 1). This approach to community engagement views community engagement as part of the primary responsibilities of a university. However, this model of university community engagement cannot bring about a sustainable university community interaction most especially when only one of the parties is benefiting from the interaction. This occurs when there is no intersection among the three roles of the university.

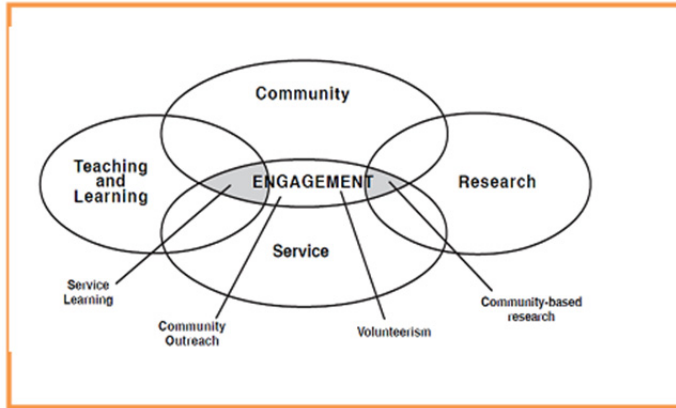


Figure 1: Intersection Model
Source: HEQC/JET, 2007

The third model is the infusion model which sees the university as having two fundamental roles – teaching and learning, and research. However, it conceives community engagement as infused and integrated into the teaching and learning processes such that teaching and learning benefits from community engagement and community engagement benefits from the teaching learning processes (HEQC/JET, 2007). This third model of community engagement is referred to as the "community-engaged university". This approach regards community engagement and service as the central overriding goal of higher education, arguing that it should be embedded within all teaching, learning and research functions. In this way, the benefits and outcomes of university community engagement accrues to both the university and immediate communities. It is vital to state that the infusion model of university community engagement holds the key to a sustainable university community interaction since both parties in the engagement benefits from the entire process. These benefits serve as a source of motivation for the two parties to continuously participate in the engagement. Therefore, it will be adopted in assessing how different types of Nigerian universities carry out community engagement in their respective communities.

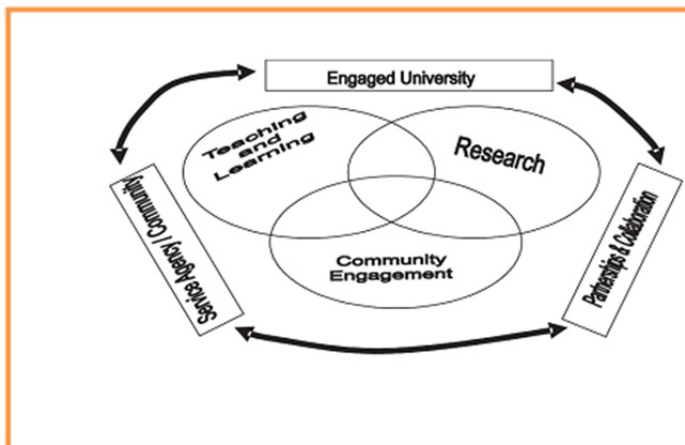


Figure 2: Infusion Model
Source: HEQC/JET, 2007

3. Research Methods

The main instruments of data collection were an in-depth interview with university management, survey of academics in selected faculties, and content analysis of key official documents of the selected universities. Three universities types in Nigeria were selected for the study. One university is a conventional university where almost every academic course of study is offered; the second university is a specialised agricultural university with bias for academic programmes in agriculture; and the third university is a specialized technology university with bias for academic programmes in engineering and technology fields. The University of Ibadan (UI) was selected as a conventional university; Federal University of Agriculture Abeokuta (FUNAAB) as agricultural university; and Federal University of Technology Akure (FUTA) as a technology university. The selection of these universities was also based on convenience as determined by limited funding for the study, proximity to the research team, and building on existing relationships between the universities and the research team. The descriptive statistics employ measures of central tendency and Weighted Average Index (WAI) to assess the degree of importance of respondents' perceptions that were captured on a Likert scale. The Likert scale used for the study ranges from 1 to 4 where 1 is "no interaction at all", 2 is "isolated instances of interaction", 3 is "interaction on a moderate scale, and 4 is "interaction on a wide scale".

As presented in Adeoti et al (2010), for the computation of WAI, 4 is assigned to the highest level of perception on the likert scale while 1 is assigned to the lowest level. In effect, if for a particular factor all respondents claim the highest degree of importance (i.e. "interaction on a wide scale"), then the WAI would be 4.0 while the same would be 1.0 if all respondents claim the lowest degree of importance (i.e. "no interaction at all"). The WAI is expressed as:

$$WAI = \frac{\sum_{i=1}^4 F_i W_i}{N}$$

where

F_i is the frequency of response;

W_i is the weight or number assigned to the response on the likert scale; and

N is the total number of responses.

4. Results and Discussion

4.1 Institutional Policies and Community Engagement in Nigeria

Institutional policies are fundamental instruments that promote university-community engagement activities. They provide an institutional framework for structured management and support of community engagement activities as well as define what constitutes community engagement in the context of the university and the ethos and philosophy guiding university-community engagement initiatives. The analysis of the institutional policies and community engagement in the three selected universities reveals some variations across the universities types.

4.1.1 Conventional University: University of Ibadan

The analysis shows that at the University of Ibadan, the current institutional debates are focused on how to move the university to new heights of academic excellence in postgraduate training with less emphasis on undergraduate training. In line with global practice, the university has developed and published some policy documents. These include the Research Policy (2011)¹ and Intellectual Property Policy (2012). One of the senior management interviews provided an insight into how the state and operation of these policies may guide university community engagement as follows:

There are several institutional policies to support interaction within the university. We have a research policy document. We have a research management committee and there is also a draft

¹ This is a composite document which also contains the structure and functions of the Research Management Office. The document is accordingly titled, 'Research Policy and Research Management Office (2011)'.

research ethics policy. The research ethics policy was approved by senate last year and we are currently working on the possibility of expanding the research ethics committee of the university. There is also intellectual property policy. With the ethical policy, you cannot conduct some researches within the university without securing ethical approval. The policy educate the researchers the kind of things they can do in any research. This is particularly important in medical research. The intellectual property policy talks about issues like if you have a patent, what is the university stand on ownership from the point, how do you take the patent to something or a product that can be sold. The research policy sets the guidelines for the conducts of research both within and outside the university. For the ethics policy, there is the ethic review committee that ensures ethical issues are complied with in all researches. In terms of structure, the research policy is being supported by the research management office while the intellectual property policy is supported by centre for entrepreneur and innovation (UI Management Interview, No. 6).

From the quote above, the various policies and related institutions are unlikely to foster university community engagement because the interactions are mainly within the university and across disciplines. Moreover, neither the research policy nor the intellectual policy makes concrete statements on university community engagement. The following responses from the interviews further demonstrate the fact that the policies lack the capacity to engender university community engagement.

I know of a document called research policy in the university. I also know of the intellectual property policy, amongst others. But like I rightly mentioned to you, the policies are not actually encouraging the type of interaction that benefits local communities. We are not talking about consulting with big formal organization but the marginalized in our respective communities. The policies have not done much in this respect. Yes, the policies are well coordinated by units set up by the university. Generally, in the university, we used the concept community service but to me the community actually refers to university community not necessarily local communities. Like I said, interaction here is limited to serving in committees set up within the university, not like working with any community outside the university. Although people may go to different communities to get data for research aimed at journal publication, I will not call that interaction because in most cases, the publication only benefits the academia involved when he is promoted on the basis of the publication. The communities gets nothing out of it, and that is the situation we found ourselves (UI Management Interview, No. 8).

There are many types of interaction and is mainly institutional collaboration with institutions like IITA, NIHORT, IAR&T. Foreign collaboration is not as many as local collaboration. Several other departments like agriculture and extension, crop protection departments are involved in several researches that involved working with local communities. So I will say that the types of interaction are both formal and informal (UI Management Interview, No. 7).

It is also important to note that the institutional policies have little or no incentive mechanisms to promote or support University community engagement. While patented inventions are relatively highly rewarded in promotion assessment of academics,² there is currently no institutional award for research that leads to innovation that benefits local communities. Since a patent may not necessarily lead to innovation, depending on whether or not it eventually has a debut in the market, an additional reward for a patent that becomes innovation is a missing gap in the university reward system. Most importantly, the promotion criteria do not reward academics involved in university community engagement and there are no specialized funds for promoting university community engagement. The following responses to interviews of senior management staff of the university are apt illustrations of the lack of recognition for interactions with external social partners in the university reward system:

What do you mean by incentives? There is nothing like that. Performance criteria are based on your number of publication. There are no special awards of any sort for working or interacting with local communities. I know that there are specialised funds for research like the senate research

² In the university promotion assessment criteria, a patent or an authored book may score as much as 10 points, while any other object of assessment (journals, book chapters, monographs, etc.) scores not more than 5 points.

grants but it is general and not specifically dedicated to interaction with local communities (UI Management Interview, No. 8).

I think in the course of research for their own development researchers may find that a community is lacking or suffering from a particular problem. And so they go ahead and do the interaction. If you developed a patent or journal, there are scores awarded for the purpose of promotion. If you carry out community service and no publication coming out of it, the university does not provide any incentive for such researchers. And that is where the people feel that the promotion guideline is poor because there is no reward for community service. There are no special awards and is never used for the purpose of promotion unless there are publications coming out from it (UI Management Interview, No. 6).

In addition, there is no formal policy on time allocation to university community engagement. This only explains the importance attached to community engagement at the university. The absence of time allocation to community engagement only makes community engagement a voluntary activity for the academics implying that the prevailing model of community engagement is the silo model. The following responses to the senior management interviews amply demonstrate this.

Teaching, research and community service are the core mission statement of the university. In terms of balancing the three activities, within the university there is no law on specification of time allocated in the three; but I know that in some universities, they say 25% to teaching, 70% to research and 5% to community service. I must confess, there is nothing like that here. The primary responsibility is teaching. But there is argument that teaching should be part of promotion criteria. This is because teaching is the fundamental thing (UI Management Interview, No. 5) ... teaching and research takes the bulk of the time while community service takes nothing... Say I will give teaching like 60% and research 40%. However, this varies among individual lecturers. But I know that teaching takes much of the time and of course you have to publish or perish (UI Management Interview, No. 8).

4.1.2 Agricultural University: Federal University of Agriculture, Abeokuta

The result from the Federal University of Agriculture Abeokuta (FUNAAB) shows conflicting views on the existence of institutional policies that promote university community engagement. The following excerpts buttress this fact.

The university council has put in place policy that is making it mandatory that the tripodal mandate of the university is respected by any administration that comes in, more especially the outreach and extension aspects that emphasizes interaction." (FUNAAB Management interview No.2).

Yet another said:

We have some institutional policies; some are just developing over the years. We just approved research policy for the university, we have linkages and partnership policy in place, even though we are also modifying them and this dovetailed into community engagement (FUNAAB Management interview No.17).

One other senior management staff however expressed a contrary view on the existence of institutional policies thus:

... as far as my memory can carry me, I am not aware of any written policy concerning this type of interaction but what I know is that, in some instances, the university signs MoU with some organizations concerning specific things. For example, some years ago a MoU was signed with a particular individual who has plantation of oil palm to the extent that this university will be harvesting the palm fruit to make palm oil for some years. So besides MoU that the university signs from time to time with specific organizations I am not aware of any institutional policy supporting interaction with external social partners (FUNAAB Management interview No.3).

From the foregoing, it can be deduced that the university institutional policies that support community engagement are either unpublished or not available in the public domain. The first

institutional policy which though not codified, but was strategic for the university, was the policy establishing Research and Development Centre (RESDEC) and Agricultural Media Resources and Extension Centre (AMREC) in 1990 and 1991 respectively. The establishment of these two centres was a major decision in the organization of research and extension services for achieving the mission of making the university a centre of excellence in knowledge generation and community engagement

Result further indicates that the university actually emphasizes community engagement as a priority especially for its extension services. The extension services often involve university engagement in the rural farming communities. This was captured by one of the respondents to the senior management interviews as follows:

Our University has series of interaction. From the rural point of view, we started with agricultural extension arm of the university that takes most of the academia to the local community vis-à-vis interacting with farmers to know their problems in agricultural produce and also in value addition. We also attempted to go into what we call pilot studies: we selected villages, this we did for more than one decade, before we upscaled those activities. The first thing that informs the upscaling was the transformation of our Research and Development Centre to IFSERAR. The second approach was the transformation of our farm practical year which we normally do on campus. We moved the practical year to the communities, and we had the community rural farming scheme. Those two major key interactions are very important because they have addressed the primary subject of the value chain and the extension mandate of the university (FUNAAB Management interview No.17).

The deputy vice chancellor (academic) also viewed the university extension services in the context of community engagement as follows:

...community engagement is important for us because we have three mandates; teaching, research and extension. And the extension aspect is the community engagement. The engagement in that respect has to do with our community villages. We have what we call the extension villages where we send our teams to teach the farmers, and they sensitize the villagers. When we go there, we do not only teach them but we also provide services for them. We have some villages where we gave them bore holes, we have some villages where when we go there we go with our medical teams who will interact with them and the villagers will be free to interact with the medical team. So community engagement is very important to our University (FUNAAB Management interview No.1).

It is also important to state that FUNAAB is organized such that the level of involvement of academic staff in community engagement activities would depend on their location within the university structure. The following remarks by a senior management staff on the balance of time allocated to teaching, research and extension services by academic staff aptly illustrates this:

The details on the balance will depend on the sphere within where you work in the university. For instance if you are in the teaching sector (colleges), certainly more of your time and resources is given to teaching and research and the balance in residue to extension. If you are an extension personnel, then the bulk of your work is based on extension and less on research and teaching. And then if you are into research like those in IFSERAR, they do most of their work in research and then the residue is spent in teaching and extension. So it depends on where your main activity is because in this university we have those that their primary assignment is teaching, we have those that their primary assignment is research, and we have those whose primary assignment is extension (FUNAAB Management interview No.14).

4.1.3 Technology University: Federal University of Technology, Akure

The Federal University of technology (FUTA) is a specialized university of technology with the main objective of contributing to the development of human and technological infrastructure for industrial development. In order to realize this objective there are claims by few of the senior management staff interviewed that the university has policies which could facilitate engagement within the university and between the university and communities. These policies include the research policy,

strategic institutional policy, community engagement policy, and the teaching and learning policy. Besides these, specialized Bureaus were established to play important role as facilitators of university community engagement with external actors. These are:

- 1) Intellectual property rights (IPR) office
- 2) Technology transfer office
- 3) Teaching and Research Farm (T&RF).

According to FUTA (2012), the T&RF serves as the field laboratory of the School of Agriculture and Agricultural Technology. It also serves as a teaching and demonstration centre for modern technologies of farming to students and farmers in the neighbourhood communities.

Furthermore, community engagement is perceived in FUTA as 'community development'. The notion of development in this context is not about interaction of agents but rather activities or engagements that results in technological development or '*technology for self-reliance*'. Institutional policies for community engagement are thus mainly aimed at formal sector (public and private) interactions with the university.

Table 1 presents some engagement activities reported by FUTA Annual Report (2012). These engagements are mainly traditional forms of engagement as exemplified by academic exchanges and scholarly collaborations sometimes sponsored by a third party agent such as development cooperation partners. A good example of third party involvement is the World Bank Step-B project which has a component of sponsorship of university exchange programmes.

Table 1: Linkages and Relationship consummated in 2011/2012

Institutions	Date MoU was Signed	Scope of Coverage
University of Namibia, Windhoek	8th Dec. 2011	Academic exchange and scholarly linkages and collaboration
Universita Trieste, Italy	21st Oct. 2011	Academic exchange and scholarly linkages and collaboration
KARMA Food Industries	n.a.	Research and Industrial Production of Soya Beans
MIDATCO Group	n.a.	Teaching and Research in Renewable energy
Havilah Merchants Nig. Ltd	31st Oct. 2012	Joint Operation of Bookshop on campus
Nigerian Airforce	2012	Training and Research

Note: n.a. = not available

Some of the respondents to the senior management interviews confirm the existence of MoUs on academic exchange and research collaborations as follows:

We have MoUs with other academic institutions within and outside the country. This enables research collaboration and exchange of staff and students (FUTA management interview, No.5). Normally as the mission of the university is to sell the product of the university, FUTA tried through his mission to link to other university, in U.S.A, Japan, and South Africa. Our students and lecturers mix with people in the global world to interact. Some of our staff are abroad for post-doctoral fellowship which occurs as a result of linkages. Because we have MoU with other universities, our lecturers go to these universities to teach, and they are exposed to the material and equipment that we do not have in our university. Example is University of Namibia, where lead researchers and lecturers come to teach here and our lecturers go there to teach. Also FUTA staff go to one of the universities in South Africa to contribute to teaching programme. Currently four of our staff has gone for staff exchange programme in South Africa. Our university has been able to purchase some equipment from university outside as a result of interaction and the assistance of World Bank Step-B project. (FUTA management interview, No.7).

Evidence from Table 1 points to the fact university community engagement at FUTA is conceived more in terms academic exchange programmes between the university and other institutions. This pattern of engagement will have little or no benefits to the university local community. Besides, the outcomes and benefits of such engagement will accrue to the two academic institutions in the engagement process.

4.2 Main Partners in the University-Community Engagement

As demonstrated in the section 4.1, the results from the three selected universities shows some evidence of the existence of university community engagement policies. However, the impact of these policies in engendering community engagement at the universities is an important focus of this paper. The effectiveness of these policies in engendering university community engagement in their respective communities was indicated by identifying the key partners in the university community engagements across the selected universities. Table 2 shows the main partners in the university community engagement activities in the three selected universities.

Table 2: Main Partners in University Community Engagements

University	Main external social partners		
	First	Second	Third
UI	Individuals and households (3.0)	National universities (2.71)	Primary/secondary schools (2.6)
FUNAAB	Primary/secondary schools (3.4)	Individuals and households (3.3)	National universities (3.1)
FUTA	Individuals and households (3.3)	Primary/secondary schools (3.0)	Small, medium and micro enterprises (SMMEs) (2.91) National Universities (2.91)
The least three main external social partners			
UI	Trade unions (1.8)	Social movements (1.8)	Political organizations (1.4)
FUNAAB	Civic associations (2.1)	Trade unions (1.8)	Political organizations (1.6)
FUTA	Clinics and health centres (2.0)	Sectoral organizations (2.0)	Political organizations (1.7)

Note: WAI scores are reported in parenthesis

Source: Analysis of survey data, 2018

Table 2 reveal similar types of main partners in the university community engagement activities in the three universities. These are individuals, households, schools, and national universities. The above suggests that the pattern of main partners is a reflection of teaching as the main function of the three universities. As the interviews of senior management staff of these universities indicated, irrespective of university type, teaching is seen as the main function that take precedence over research and community engagement. For example, in spite of the fact that the University of Ibadan is tending towards becoming a research university, the deputy vice chancellor (academic) emphasized the importance of teachings as follows:

Teaching, research and community service are the core mission of the university and this is very much in line with interaction with external social partners. In terms of balancing the three activities, within the university there is no law on specification of time allocated but I must confess, ... the primary responsibility is teaching. This is because teaching is the fundamental thing (UI senior management interview No.5).

In view of the above findings, it can be inferred that the existing university community engagement policies are not effectiveness in promoting community engagement in the respective universities. In pursuant of the above fact, it was important to identify the outcomes and benefits of university community engagements in the three selected universities. This is important because communities are expected to be the main beneficiaries of community engagement.

4.3 Outcomes and Benefits of University-Community Engagement

Table 3 shows the outcomes and benefits of university community engagement in the three selected universities. For the three universities, improved teaching and learning dominates as the main outcomes of university community engagement. Outcomes and benefits of university community engagement by FUNAAB academics agree with UI only with respect to 'improved teaching and learning', but agree with FUTA on both 'improved teaching and learning' and 'training and skills development'. 'Improved livelihoods for individuals and communities' are a third

outcome/benefit which is not among the three most frequently mentioned outcomes by the research sample in UI and FUTA. Thus, while the outcomes/benefits of interaction as perceived by the respondents in UI and FUTA tend to be focused on the outcomes that directly affect the university reputation and performance, the results from the respondents at FUNAAB focused more on the benefits derived by rural communities.

Table 3: Outcomes and benefits of academic interactions with external social partners

University	Outcomes and benefits of interaction		
	First	Second	Third
UI	Improved teaching and learning (3.4)	Academic and institutional reputation (3.3)	Relevant research focus and new research projects (3.24)
FUNAAB	Improved teaching and learning (3.8)	Training and skills development (3.4)	Improved livelihoods for individuals and communities (3.3)
FUTA	Improved teaching and learning (3.5)	Academic and institutional reputation (3.1)	Training and skills development (3.0)

Note: WAI scores are reported in parenthesis.

Source: Analysis of survey data, 2018.

However, it is germane to state that the outcomes and benefits of university community engagements accrue more to the university and the individual academics than to local communities.

5. Implications of the Pattern of University Community Engagement

This paper examined the influence university policies on community engagement in the selected universities. The analysis revealed that lack of time allocation to university community engagement a major constrained on a productive university community engagement in the selected universities. The absence of time allocation to community engagement makes community engagement as part of the core function of the university a voluntary activity for the academics. This indicates that university policies are not effective in promoting university community engagement in selected universities.

One of the significant findings of the paper is the fact that the main partners in the university community engagement activities are individuals, households, schools, and national universities. The partnerships with schools and national universities would provide opportunities for improving the quality of education in high schools and learning among the interacting universities. It is however doubtful if this has direct benefits to immediate communities in the improvement of livelihoods and in tackling other development challenges of local communities.

At the University of Ibadan, a conventional university, the findings of this paper shows that there has been a paradigm shift in the university's mission from the mere production of elite leaders and civil servants to that of a research university. It is indicative that the tendency towards becoming a research university may not involve substantial interactions at the community level except teaching and research are deliberately made to be community based. For FUNAAB, there is ample evidence of community based interaction through the university extension services and practical year training in the rural farming communities.

The outcomes and benefits of university community engagement from each of the three university types are not only similar but they accrue mostly to universities and individual academics to the neglect of local communities. Improved teaching and learning dominates as the main outcomes of university community engagement. The above shows that the existing framework of university community engagement mirrors greatly the silo model of university community engagement where community engagement is perceived as a voluntary activity for academics within the university. This model cannot guarantee a continuous and sustainable university engagement since the academics are at will whether to engage or not to engage.

6. Concluding Remarks

According to UNESCO (2009), universities should create mutually beneficial partnerships with communities to facilitate the sharing and transmission of appropriate knowledge. Consequently, on a global scale, universities are realigning their teaching and research missions to embrace community engagement. In Nigeria, the situation is not different. However, the emerging policy to support community engagement at the universities does not provide for adequate framework to engender a sustainable university community engagement. In addition, the reward systems of the universities do not support community engagement as a valid form of scholarship. Beyond this, most of the university engagements are formal engagements with little or no link to immediate local communities. The corollary of this is that outputs and benefits of university community engagement accrue only to the university which is against the principle of university community engagement as stated by UNESCO and the infusion model. There is the need for a policy re-orientation that first integrates the principles of infusion model as a framework of the university community engagement policy. Secondly, the university community engagement policy must reward and recognize community engagement as a valid kind of scholarship among academics. This is a *sine qua non* in increasing university contributions to the development of their immediate communities.

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