

# Strategies for Conducting Semester's Examinations in Selected British and Nigerian Universities

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**Abstract:** Globally, Universities do adopt various strategies to ensure an effective and hitch-free semester examinations. This study was carried out to examine the strategies adopted by selected British Universities vis-à-vis Nigerian Universities in the successful conduct of undergraduate examinations. The paper briefly examined the concept of examinations as well as the various forms or types of examinations. The paper further looked into the strategies employed by the selected Nigerian Universities in having a stress-free semester examination. Same was done regarding the selected British Universities. A comparison was carried out on the mode of the conduct of examinations. The paper goes further to point out what each country would likely benefit from one another regarding the system of examinations' conduct. The paper further pointed out the challenges that Nigerian Universities are likely to face in the bid to follow British pattern. Appropriate suggestions were made towards solving the mentioned challenges. Finally, the paper concluded by pointing out that the findings of this study would also be of immense benefits to other Universities outside the scope of this research

**Keywords:** Strategies, conduct, examinations, British Universities, Nigerian Universities

## I. INTRODUCTION

According to The Times Higher Education (THE) World University Ranking Methodology (2019), there are thirteen (13) carefully calibrated performance indicators that measure an institution's performance across teaching, research, knowledge transfer and international outlook. However, these calibrated performance indicators were grouped under four main areas which include resources (capacity for effective delivery), engagement (students-teacher interaction and student-teacher ratio), outcomes (adding values to students after graduation based on what they learnt in school) and environment (diverse students and faculty).

Teaching is seen as a major key which reflects and impinges on other performance indicators. The quality and standard of teaching would impact on the knowledge transfer, conduct of research by students and faculties (lecturers), student-teacher interaction, academic values as well as the assessment of the students at the end of each semester. It is widely believed that performance in examinations (internal and external) reflects the quality of teaching and forms the basis for measuring academic standard.

Examinations have become a crucial part of education. Ajelabi (2018) reiterated this fact when he pointed out that 'at every stage of students' educational attainment in a formal educational system, they are compelled to sit for one examination or the other before moving to the next level'. In essence, right from the elementary class until the time that students secured admission into the University, they have been sitting for one type of examination or the other.

Munshi, Javed and Hussain (2012) sees examination as 'a systematic method of assessing and appraising students' academic competencies and performance'. Looking at this statement, one can deduce that examinations are designed to assess students, appraise them critically and evaluate their competencies so as to know how they perform. The researchers further posit that a proper model for examination ought to assess not only the learning, but also the teaching process. This prevailing point of view was further expressed by Cresswell et al. (2000) as well as the United Kingdom Higher Education Academy Grade Point Average Report (2013-2014) that, summative appraisal determines academic honors, rank and classification of certification of deserving students.

Since it has been noted that academic honours, rank and classification of certification of deserving students is based on the performance at examinations, there is a necessity to take a critical look into how these examinations are conducted. Are examinations conducted under a conducive atmosphere? Do we have enough invigilators to supervise the candidates? Are students pleased with the type of examinations that they sat for, or, they were compelled to sit for that type of examination? In a nutshell, the integrity of the examination process is of paramount importance.

As Universities ranking has become an important annual 'ritual' and yardstick for University's reputation, Johnson (1988) argued that standards in higher education should encompass the question of comparability. Comparability would give a deep in-sight into knowing what is actually in a particular institution, and are not available in the other.

In 1999, Brooks and Brooks pointed out an important area regarding examination. The area where these researchers dwelt on was in the sphere of the conduct of examinations. They emphasized that the way, manner or strategies through

which the examination is conducted would have an impact on how students actually look forward to future examinations. In essence, if the current examination is poorly organized and implemented, it might negatively affect candidates' attitude and performance, and may discourage them from looking forward to future examinations with enthusiasm.

Munshi, Javed and Hussain (2012) were of the view that complex system of examination tends to be problematic. They stated further that examination systems can invariably become complex when a clear strategy for implementation is lacking. They cited the lack of conducive environment occasioned by the failure of such systems to enhance "students' 'ability, creativity and critical thinking', thereby failing to accomplish set objectives". Examination systems can invariably become complex when a clear strategy for implementation is lacking.

It is against the above background that the researchers decided to carry out a study on the conduct of semester examinations in selected British and Nigerian Universities. The researchers acknowledged that the issue of conduct of examinations comparability at University's level has not been frequently discussed, emphasized and even researched. This research therefore supports the growing need for a deeper and sustainable study in this area of research.

## II. GENERAL OVERVIEW OF THE CONDUCT OF EXAMINATION

In order to look at the general overview of the conduct of examination, there is a need to briefly examine what an examination is and the various types. This is because the type or form of the examination, to a very great extent would determine how that examination would be conducted.

Collins English Dictionary explicitly defines an examination as 'a formal test that is taken to show knowledge or ability in a particular subject, or to obtain a qualification'. In addition, the English Wikipedia refers to an examination as 'a detailed investigation, the act of conducting the detailed investigation or a formal test of knowledge or skill in a given area'. Furthermore, it is also a test to show the knowledge and ability of a student. Essentially, an assessment is taking place.

There are different types of examinations. Notable amongst these are essay, multiple choice, open-book, oral, take home, problem or case-based examinations. It is interesting to note that we also have other types of examinations namely final examinations, special examinations and supplemental examinations. In essence, candidates and the examiners have the advantages of making a choice or choices among the alternatives.

At this juncture, there is a need to clarify that a student who takes an examination is a candidate, and the person who decode how well the student has performed is the examiner. The person who ensures that the examination is conducted according to the instructions in the examination venue or room is the invigilator.

Ideally, it is expected that every institution should have an Invigilation Booklet. This Booklet is expected to have information about Emergency Procedures, distribution and collection of papers, as well as setting up before the examination. Responsibilities of the invigilators during the examination should also be listed. Issues pertaining to queries, suspected cheating and malpractice, announcements, as well as a report or overview of the invigilator at the end of the examination should be highlighted.

In line with the above, the candidates are supposed to have information about examination process either in a booklet or on the University's website detailing how they are supposed to comport themselves during examination, what to bring and not to bring into the examination venue as well as various types of misconduct and penalties.

As good as the above over view seems to be, one needs to point out at this stage that some of this important information are either not available via the appropriate media, or are partially discussed. When they are eventually available, the information is outdated because they are not regularly revised.

## III. STRATEGIES EMPLOYED BY SELECTED NIGERIAN UNIVERSITIES IN CONDUCTING SEMESTER'S EXAMINATIONS

The selected Universities representing other Universities in Nigeria for this study are : University of Lagos, Akoka, Lagos (representing South- West), University of Nigeria, Nsukka (representing South- East), University of Port Harcourt, Port Harcourt ((representing South –South), University of Ilorin, Ilorin (representing North Central), Yusuf Maitama Sule( formerly Northwest) University, Kano representing North-West and Gombe State University, Gombe (representing North East). These Universities covered the six geo-political zones of Nigeria. In addition, they represent the Federal and state-owned Universities. The Universities students' handbooks serve as the main source of this work. However, all the researchers had at one point or the other served as either (or both) invigilators and examiners in Federal and St Universities located in the North, West and Eastern parts of Nigeria.

The prevailing paradigm in most Universities or higher institutions is the composition of an Examinations Committee, at Departmental, Faculty and University levels. The Departmental Examinations Committee is usually made up of academic members of staff whose number would range between one and four depending on the students' population of the Department. Faculty Examinations Committee are usually made up of Chairmen of Departmental Committees, headed by the Faculty Examinations Officer. Finally, the University Examinations Committee is also in place, and this is usually made up of Faculty Examinations Officers (all academic staff) and University Examinations Officer and/or Senior members of staff of the University's Examinations Office. The membership's composition varies across Universities.

Nearly all the handbooks consulted actually specified the conditions to be met before a candidate is qualified to sit for an examination. According to Gombe State University Students Handbook, University of Ilorin Students Handbook (2013), University of Port Harcourt Students Handbook (2018) and Yusuf Maitama Sule Students handbook (2017) amongst others, they stipulate that 'a student will only be allowed to take examination for a course duly registered for and attain 75% attendance in the lectures and practical session of the course'. However, University of Lagos Students Handbook (2016) emphasizes 65% attendance.

Another main issue is the examinations time table. In all the Universities, the final timetable is always released between one and three weeks before the scheduled examinations. It must be stated that the draft time table usually come out about a week before the final time table is released. This is displayed on the boards for candidates, so as to lodge complaints in terms of course omissions, clashes, venues and other challenges. Most of the Universities' Handbooks were silent on when the final examinations time table are published. However, Universities of Ilorin, Lagos and Port Harcourt stipulate duration of three weeks.

Nigerian Universities usually earmark an average of about three weeks for the undergraduate University's Examinations. At times, some candidates would need to sit for almost ten to twelve courses (depending on the Faculty) during this period. Occasionally, few candidates (especially those having carried over courses) are requested to write two examinations concurrently in different Faculties. Candidates at times do sit for three courses in a day, which might have negative impact on the preparation and performance because some Nigerian Universities handbook were silent on the number of courses to be taken a day. However, University of Ilorin in her handbook limits this to maximum of two courses a day.

Most of the Nigerian Universities Examiners do set essay and multiple-choice questions. Hard copies are produced by the Departmental or Faculty Examinations Officer. The reproduction is under the control of the Departmental or Faculty Examination officer who serves as the custodian of the examination question papers until the examination is held. The Departmental or Faculty Examinations Officer is also responsible for the drafting of the invigilation rota which is normally released between a week and a day to the commencement of the first paper.

With reference to invigilator-candidates ratio, most of the Universities Handbook were silent on this. However, what most of the University's Management recommended verbally varies from one invigilator to thirty candidates (minimum) or to fifty candidates (maximum). Invigilation usually takes places in classes for examinations involving few candidates, and halls are used for examinations involving large numbers of candidates.

Another area of interest is in the duration of the examinations. The University rule in some cases mandates all semester

examinations to have a minimum of one hour and maximum of three hours duration. The Universities of Lagos and Ilorin handbooks stipulates a duration for all examinations based on the credit load. However, Universities of Nigeria, Nsukka and Port Harcourt as well as Yusuf Maitama Sule University, Kano were silent on this.

After examining the pre-examination activities, it is pertinent at this stage for us to dwell on the actual examination processes. On the examination's day, candidates are requested to be at the venue at the appropriate time. Candidates are advised to be on a queue for onward check-in to the examination hall. Male invigilators carry out body search of male candidates while female invigilators do same for female candidates. University's Security personnel are at times requested to support with the body search. This is applicable to many Universities in Nigeria, except in the North. It was observed at Yusuf Maitama Sule University, Kano and other few Universities in the Northern part of Nigeria that there is no provision for body search of candidates. Ajelabi (2018) observed that 'candidates have realized that effective machineries are not put in place to check them when entering examination halls, and candidates seize this opportunity to smuggle in items, which are of benefits to them in enhancing their academic performance'.

It is of great interest to read the information in the University of Ilorin's Handbook that functional wall clocks must be provided and should be hanged in central places within the examination hall. This clock would guide candidates without wrist watches and help them in planning. Gombe State University's handbook stated that the 'invigilators shall tell the candidates the exact time at the start of the examination and therefore inform them of the time at reasonable intervals'. Although, other handbooks were silent on this. However, what was documented in Gombe State University's handbook is the norm.

With reference to lateness, all the handbooks were in unison. It was documented that 'no candidate shall be allowed into the examination hall after thirty minutes of the start of the examination' (University of Lagos Students' Handbook). In addition, all the Universities are of the view that the candidates should be at the examination venue thirty minutes before the commencement of the examinations. Nevertheless, Gombe State University differs by emphasizing fifteen minutes.

As a rule (though, not documented), the course examiner is not expected to invigilate his or her own paper. They are however allowed into the examination room in the first thirty minutes to provide information to the candidates where necessary. It was mentioned in the University of Ilorin's handbook that the course examiner should be around in the first thirty minutes of the commencement of the examination to announce any corrections to the examination questions.

Absolute silence is expected in the examination rooms. 'Silence shall be maintained throughout the duration of the

examination' (Gombe State University Handbook). This is because the candidates need total concentration in order to be at their best. Candidates that needed assistance or clarifications are expected to signify by raising up of hands. Related to this is the issue of attendance where candidates are expected to write down their names and sign (sign in) in the examination hall, and do same when they are submitting their scripts (sign out). University of Lagos Handbook and that of Gombe State University emphasized that 'attendance must be taken in the first thirty minutes of entering (sign in) and remaining fifteen minutes of ending the paper (sign out)'. Furthermore, all the handbooks emphasized when candidates can leave an examination room. University of Lagos, Yusuf Maitama Sule University, University of Nigeria and Port Harcourt handbooks mentioned one hour, while that of Ilorin and Gombe State Universities stated thirty minutes into the commencement of examinations.

In all the Universities under consideration, candidates are expected to bring their own writing materials such as pen, pencil, non-programmable calculators (where required) and all other items. A candidate who falls short of this responsibility during the examination is considered ill prepared. Also, candidates are expected to bring their identification cards, docket or slip to the examination venue as proof of identification.

### *3.1 Theory with Practice: Any synchronization?*

In the last sub-title, the researchers took an in-depth look at the strategies employed by Universities as stated or written in the handbooks. The basic question that we need to provide answers to at this moment is this: How are these implemented?

First, Examinations Committees at the Departmental and Faculty levels are constituted. However, on most occasions, the task is a one-man show, whereby the Departmental Examinations Officer solely carries out all the tasks, and the Faculty Officer at the Faculty level performs all the duties, thereby making the members redundant or inactive,

Secondly, the candidate's 75% attendance criterion to qualify to sit for an examination is not taken into consideration whenever examinations are taking place. This is because at times, the examiner might have not attended or taught the candidates more than four or five times out of the thirteen or fourteen weeks that made up the semester. Also, taking attendance of a large class of about 500 or more candidates might not be feasible. Even when attendance is taken in a small size class, the examiner hardly keeps records of this. Due to this anomaly known to the candidates, some candidates turn up in the University for the first time on the examination day and they were never prevented from writing the examination.

Related to the above is the clause that 'students must have duly registered for an examination before been permitted to write the examination'. At times, candidates are unable to

complete their course registration exercise before examinations because previous examination results are still unpublished. Add and delete forms are still being processed during examination period. Some candidates do submit their course registration forms few weeks after the examinations must have ended, and the level advisers or co-ordinators still accept them because the fault might not be that of the candidate.

The posting of draft time table at times serve as confusion to newly admitted candidates. They take record of the pasted draft time table as the final time table, so when the final time table is eventually published with minor amendments, these candidates would not bother to copy the final version. Eventually, they do end up missing some examinations. Close to this is also a fact that instead of publishing the final examinations time table, about three weeks to the examinations date, these are released just few days or a week to the period.

An unpleasant situation is the fact that some invigilators report late or out rightly fail to turn up either by omission or commission at the examination venue. At times, where ten invigilators had been assigned to supervise 500 candidates in a big hall, only five invigilators might end up doing the job, consequently, stressing up the invigilators.

Provisions of functional wall clocks in all examination rooms to guide candidates as stipulated in the University of Ilorin Handbook is a good development. However, in practice, the researchers gathered that this lofty idea is not in place in all the examination rooms, especially the classrooms involving small number of candidates.

Candidates, are expected to be at the examination's venue thirty minutes before the examinations, and are also given thirty minutes of grace for lateness. Occasionally, some candidates who violated these rules are not barred from sitting for the examinations, particularly if such a candidate is 'known' to one or more of the invigilators.

The aspect of not maintaining total silence when the examinations are ongoing is very common. This is more pronounced in a situation whereby the examiner of the course being taken comes into the examination venue; few candidates are fond of making open remarks regarding the ease or difficulty of the examination. Consequently, the examination time is encroached into and it will take a lot of effort to bring the situation back to normalcy. Ajelabi (2019) found out that some of the invigilators do exhibit non-challant attitude to the assigned duty as some are found talking, gesticulating with colleagues, making and receiving calls, using laptops etc. during examination rather than concentrating on the candidates they are invigilating.

#### IV. STRATEGIES EMPLOYED BY SELECTED BRITISH UNIVERSITIES IN CONDUCTING SEMESTER'S EXAMINATIONS

The research portrays selected British Universities who follow a variety, yet distinct patterns in the administration of their semester's University's examinations. The examinations strategies in the following British Universities were discussed. These include University of Bath, Bath, University of Bristol, Bristol and University of the West of England, Bristol (located in South West England). The other two Universities are University of Oxford, Oxford and University of Oxford Brookes, Oxford (located in Midlands of England).

Unlike the quartet, University of Oxford operates a Collegiate system which runs in three terms instead of semesters. All materials referenced are the Universities' Students Handbook. In addition, in the last couple of years till date, the researchers have been associating with three of the Universities as well as invigilated in one of the three selected universities.

In all the British Universities, issues bothering on examinations are left with the Examinations Unit. There is hierarchy of officers responsible for each sub-unit of the Examinations Unit. These key officers are directly responsible to the Director of Examinations in the day to day running of the affairs of the Unit.

All the five selected Universities uses online resources for the publication of the time table prior to the start of examinations. University of Bristol and University of Oxford stipulates that the examinations unit should publish the examination dates and time tables well ahead of time, like two months or more to give room for adequate preparations for both the candidates, examiners as well as the invigilators. Being on the University's website, it can be assessed globally. This awareness gives the candidates opportunity links to help with their study skills.

It must be stated that the University of Bristol, University of Bath as well as University of Oxford Brookes emphasized categorically that lecturers are given deadlines for submission of examination papers which must be strictly adhered to, otherwise, penalty is enforced.

With reference to examination types, all the Universities except Oxford do run regular semester examinations; re-sit examinations and Alternative Examination Arrangement (AEA). The University of Bristol website distinctively explains the AEA examination as a provision for candidates not to be disadvantages because of a disability. It further explained that this recommendation is given to the candidate to have a fair chance to display learning. The opportunity given to the challenged candidate is in the area of extra time (at times), using a computer or other specialist equipment, rest breaks, a smaller or less distracting examination venue, as well as provision of a reader or a scribe or both.

In University of the West of England Handbook, three major types or modules of examinations are identified, these are,

Multiple Choice Question (MCQ), Problem Questions and Essay. Examinations are paper based and computer-based examination formats. Candidates are given the option of their preferred choice. It was affirmed that 75% of candidates prefers the MCQ because there is the possibility of the candidates getting the right option if they have studied and are conversant with the modules in the topic.

All the Universities do make provision for external invigilators. Some of these are post graduate research students of the Universities as well as interested members from the wider society. Teaching staff from within the University are not directly involved in the invigilation of the examination in all the Universities. They occasionally show up at the examination venue when there is a need for them to ascertain that candidates using the approved examination materials in specialized courses like Law wherein candidates are allowed to bring notations/citations.

The examinations Unit is responsible for the recruitment of the temporary part time invigilators. Invigilators must be competent and computer literate having knowledge of web-based applications, and Microsoft word etc. The examinations time table is always sent to the email addresses of all the recruited invigilators between four and six weeks to the commencement of the examinations. On receipt, the invigilators are given few days to one week to indicate their availability. Training (for new invigilators) and re-training (for experienced invigilators) would hold in different sessions about two weeks to the examination. Responsibilities are spelt out, and updated guidance documents are given. Invigilators are expected to familiarize themselves with the different venues before the examinations day to avoid lateness to venues.

None of the handbooks indicated the invigilator to candidate's ratio. However, this depends on the nature of the course being offered and the peculiar needs of the candidate. At times, two or more personnel can be assigned to a single candidate, especially candidates with special needs, whereby some of them can be reader or scribe to provide necessary assistance.

Candidates are expected to arrive the examinations venue at least twenty minutes before the start in Oxford and The West of England Universities and thirty minutes in Oxford Brooks. In Bath, candidates are admitted into the examination venue not later than five minutes before the start, while University of Bristol candidates are simply expected to arrive in 'good time' before the examination starts. However, no extra time is allotted, despite the lateness.

A restriction rule applies to candidates not to leave the room immediately the examination starts. Oxford Brooks specifies for the first hour, while others stipulate for the first thirty minutes. In addition, University of the West of England stated that candidates cannot leave in the last thirty minutes, while Bath, Bristol and Oxford Brooks stipulated fifteen minutes. In all cases, rules pertaining to lateness are strictly adhered to because candidates who showed up after thirty minutes are

never admitted to the examination halls, irrespective of the reason that the candidate has tendered.

The rules guiding the examinations are either read out or a recording of such is played. In line with Health and Safety procedure, emergency fire exit procedures are announced, which everyone must obey should the fire alarm sound goes off during the examination. Candidates are not permitted any form of communication, except through the simple raising of the hand for the attention of the invigilator. Toilet breaks that must be accompanied by an invigilator are permissible during a certain period. Each break is marked on the script or recorded in log book by an invigilator.

According to the University of Oxford Students Handbook, examination candidates are required to produce their University identification card for invigilator's inspection. Oxford Brookes, The West of England and Bristol have similar requirements of a University identification card, or any official photo identification. The University of Bath have a slightly different requirement. The University academic Registry webpage (viewed 2020), under rule 2 (conduct of examinations) stipulates that candidates are to display their University Library Card for the same purpose. In all the five British Universities, candidates are expected to have a candidate/student number, and place the form of identification on the upper right corner of their desk, with photo side facing up.

With reference to permitted items in the examination halls, candidates have the privilege of bringing water (in transparent, label-free and spill-proof bottle), medications and small snacks (for those with medical conditions only) into the examination rooms. Also, transparent case is allowed for stationery. When required and approved, candidates may be allowed to bring a list of references, textbook (s), law reports and other items in to the examination hall. While the situation is similar in all other Universities, University of Bath does not allow refreshments. Candidates' bags and coats are kept in designated areas, usually in front of the examination rooms. Revision jottings, notebooks, mobile phones and smart wrist watches all constitute prohibited items. The imposition of fines or other disciplinary measures are set out against defaulting candidates. This rule applies to all the five Universities.

Finally, the invigilator calls for the end of the examinations after fifteen minutes earlier warning. Candidates are to remain on their seats for the scripts to be collected by an invigilator. The invigilator gives permission for candidates to leave the examination venue.

## V. COMPARATIVE STUDY OF THE TWO COUNTRIES

This paper has taken a detailed look at how these two countries conduct semester examinations. At this point, we shall take a critical look at the comparison.

*A. Invigilator Training:* In Britain, all the invigilators must undergo a mandatory training before they embark on the

exercise. Irrespective of the number of years one must have been involved in invigilation, it is still mandatory for the individual to undergo this exercise. However, there is no such activity in all Nigerian Universities as it pertains to semester examinations.

*B. Composition of Invigilators:* In Nigeria, all academic members of staff and serving National Youth Corps members constitute the invigilators. This is part of their regular responsibilities. The senior academic members of staff usually play the role of Chief Invigilator. On the other hand, in Britain, non-teaching and external members of the University, as well as members of the society are recruited on temporary basis as either Invigilator or Chief Invigilator. They are remunerated after the exercise.

*C. Semester Calendar:* British and Nigerian Universities undergo twelve to fourteen weeks lecture. Thereafter, candidates sit for examinations between three and four weeks.

*D. Publishing of Examinations Time Table:* In Britain, examinations time table are published online and on websites between two and three months before the commencement of the examinations for students to prepare adequately, whereas, in Nigeria, this is pasted on the Departmental or Faculty notice boards between one week and three weeks to the examinations period

*E. Use of Technology for Examination:* Technology is widely and effectively adopted for the conduct of examinations in Britain. It is used in the examination hall as well as for invigilation. In Nigeria, there is limited use. Technology is only used for conduct of and grading Computer Based Test (CBT)

*F. Examinations Rule and Policy:* Invigilators in British Universities usually follow examination rules and policies to letters. They ensure that they keep strictly to guidelines because of the training they have received. In Nigeria, the policies are sometimes bent to suit situations and circumstances.

*G. Attitude of Invigilators:* The British invigilators had been trained on human relations and etiquette during invigilation. Knowing the pressure and the stress that candidates are likely to exhibit in the course of writing the examinations, the invigilators are always friendly, warm and willing to respond lovingly to the demands and requests of the candidates. However, in Nigeria, few of the invigilators can be hostile, unfriendly and unmindful to sort out candidates' challenges.

*H. Ratio of Invigilator to Candidates:* The ratio of invigilators to candidates in Britain is higher than Nigeria.

*I. Population of Candidates:* It must be stated that the number of candidates who sit for a Faculty or University wide examination at times normally shoot up to three thousand or more. Consequently, the examination is conducted in batches. This figure is a myth in the British Universities

*J. Scheduling of Examination Time Table:* In Britain, candidates' date of examination is well spaced out to cater for adequate preparation. In Nigeria, examination dates can be congested due to multiple examinations going on simultaneously.

#### VI. LESSONS TO BE LEARNT BY NIGERIAN UNIVERSITIES FROM BRITISH SYSTEM

*A. Use of External Invigilators:* This lends credibility to the examinations because the candidates are being supervised by invigilators unknown to them.

*B. Training of Invigilators:* This is very key to the success of the examination. There is a need for yearly training and re-training.

*C. Option of examination type:* There are two main types of examinations namely Essay and Multiple-choice questions. In Britain, candidates who have learnt same content during the semester are given a choice of whether to sit for MCQ or Essay. The levels of ease or difficulty are same. A slow writer or dyslexic candidate will prefer to choose MCQ, whereas a fast writer who is excellent in expressing would prefer essay type. What matters most is excelling in the examination.

*D. Provision of Needs for physically challenged candidates:* The needs of these kind of candidates are always taking into consideration when examinations would be conducted

*E. Candidates who failed an examination are given the opportunity to re-sit at the next available opportunity. This was the practice years ago in some Nigerian Universities, but was scrapped for obvious reasons.*

*F. Candidates to invigilator ratio needs total overhauling. At times, some examinations do have 1:1 ratio*

*G. Provision of examinations time clock visible to all the candidates throughout the period of examinations to guide them. The clock is a timer that reduces as the examination progresses. Ensuring that the environment of the examination is free from noise and other forms of distraction.*

*H. Attitude of invigilators to job descriptions and schedules to be improved upon. There is a need for integrity and commitment.*

*I. Provision of Extra writing Materials:* It should be noted that the provision of extra writing materials will prevent any form of distraction which can enhance the performance of the candidates.

*J. Examinations time table should be released and be on the University's website at least two months before the commencement of the examinations.*

#### VII. LESSONS TO BE LEARNT BY BRITISH UNIVERSITIES FROM NIGERIAN SYSTEM

*A. One-off end of semester examinations:* When candidates are aware that they do not have an opportunity of re-sitting for an

examination, the chances are very high that they will work harder for that examination.

*B. Involvement of Academic Staff in Invigilation:* Involvement of academics in the conduct of examinations will deepen their understanding of the psychology of candidates in the examination hall and this will impact on the teaching strategies for subsequent examination questions.

*C. Mandatory Examination Materials:* Candidates are to be advised to bring in all their examination writing materials. This would inculcate in them the attitude of responsibility, as against relying on the University's supplementary materials, which would further deplete the University's scarce resources. This would also inculcate in the candidates the spirit of preparedness at all times.

#### VIII. CHALLENGES OF ADOPTION OF BRITISH SYSTEM IN NIGERIA

*A. Population of candidates:* The population of undergraduate students in the first-generation Universities like University of Ibadan, Ibadan, University of Nigeria, Nsukka and Ahmadu Bello University among others are rather too high. The academic staff ratio does not match the candidates' ratio. It would be difficult therefore to implement these policies

*B. Lack of Funding:* Due to lack of funding to education, there are limited infrastructures for the proper conduct of examination.

*C. Resistance to Change:* Generally, it has been observed that some people tend to resist change. A good example is the agitation that arose some few years back in Nigeria, when Joint Admissions and Matriculation Board (JAMB) Registrar wanted to replace the paper-pencil test with the Computer Based Test (CBT).

*D. Power supply:* There is the fact that energy supply can be epileptic in Nigeria. Certainly, this can affect the conduct of examination in terms of disruption.

*E. Attitude to work:* Some individuals do develop lethargic and lukewarm attitude to work which is also exhibited during examination invigilation.

*F. Inadequate Manpower:* As a result of lack of funds, some Universities are not able to provide adequate manpower especially expertise in technology for the conduct of examination which can generate some loopholes.

##### 8.1 Suggestions to Minimise the Challenges

*A. Over-population of candidates:* There is a need to discourage the idea of undue emphasis on certification.

*B. There should be proper budgetary provision and appropriate disbursement as well as sourcing for alternative Internal Generating Revenues (IGR).*

*C. Since change is inevitable, therefore, there is a need to orientate the examiners and invigilators on the conduct of examination.*

D. Since power supply is epileptic, there is a need to source for other reliable, sustainable and affordable means of power supply.

E. Effective and realistic disciplinary measures should be given to erring academic members of staff accordingly.

F. The required professionals and experts can be sponsored to attend adequate training and short courses related to examinations.

## IX. CONCLUSION

This paper looked at the strategies adopted by British and Nigerian Universities in the conduct of semester examinations. The research presented an in-depth analysis of how both countries conducted their undergraduate semesters' examination. Potential benefits from both universities were also appraised.

The work revealed key similarities and differences in strategic approaches adopted by the selected Universities in both countries. Also, this paper shows that there are similarities and differences in the way by which Nigerian and British Universities generally do conduct their semester examinations. The mode of conduct also slightly varies between one institution and the other in terms of efficiency and effectiveness.

It must be stated that the mode of the conduct of British system can be generalized for the entire European continent. Similarly, the mode of conduct in Nigeria can be generalized for the entire sub-Saharan Africa. What was discussed in this paper can also be of benefit for institutions outside the scope of these two countries and continent. Notwithstanding, what is of great importance is that each University should strive for the best practice that is suitable for her institution as long as best practice is achieved.

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