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# Letter To The Editor

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## **Equipping the Nigerian Tertiary Institutions for Meaningful Technological Development: Anatomy as a Case Study**

Anatomy as a core descriptive science requires dedicated, hard working and disciplined group of scientists and well equipped instruments to expose the ultra structure of cells, tissues and organs of organisms. The Anatomists under the umbrella of Society of Experimental and Clinical Anatomy for example have been diligent and steadfast in trying to advance the course of anatomy in the subregion within reams of their limited technological availability. Since the inception of the society a decade ago, the society has been visiting respective universities demonstrating their know-how during the conferences by presentation of different research works conducted by members which are published regularly in their scientific journal and in other journals. This focused unity of purpose is the driving force in promoting the society ahead of other Anatomical societies in the country.

Nowadays, every branch of human endeavor is rebranding and getting sophisticated in order to cope with the new trends and requirements to forge ahead. Anatomy as a discipline is not left out. Molecular Anatomy is one aspect progressing very fast. In vitro fertilization, gene replacement and technology, stem cell technology to mention but a few, are different aspects involving anatomical know-how. In the developed countries these aspects have gained a lot of academic and technological grounds.

In Africa we are still lagging behind in all aspects of endeavour including the field of Anatomy. The reasons for the backwardness are not far fetched. The conducive environment for proper research seems not to be present for high-tech research in anatomical sciences. The study of gross, tissue, and cellular structure must necessarily be accompanied with equipments required to view structures at the cellular level. The scientist is handicapped to progress beyond certain levels because the machinery to translate theoretical knowledge into practical gains is unavailable.

In the second place, Government involvement

in pioneering discoveries and inventions in Nigeria is at a low level. In the scientific arena, for example, our laboratories are not equipped; most institutions cannot afford the funds to equip laboratories without Government intervention. As a result, the laboratories in the tertiary institutions fall below standard capacities for tertiary level education.

Young and old researchers in the higher institutions of learning are yearning for modern equipment in order to attempt developmental feats. No department of anatomy in Nigeria for example has the basic equipment including the gene processing machine for genetic research. Accreditation exercises in the tertiary institutions embarked by the Nigerian Universities Commission (NUC) is to correct the imbalances, to ginger the government and the proprietors of the institutions into acquiring the necessary equipment hence the skills necessary for attaining certain developmental requirements or goals. It is not really geared towards black mailing or closure of the defaulting institutions. It is rather a corrective measure.

Sometimes during such visits the host institutions borrow equipment from a fairly equipped neighbouring institution. This is an aspect of corruption, owning what you don't have in order to pass an accreditation examination. The borrowed equipment is returned to the owner after the visit of the accreditors. This is back to square one phenomenon. How do we then pursue our researches, discover and invent new items for development? How many Nigerian Universities are counted amongst the first hundred Universities in Africa and the first one thousand Universities in the world?

We should reorder our developmental proprieties. Without a sound equipment base, followed by mastery of the know-how, we won't make much progress in development of research. Different Governmental set ups, individuals, corporate bodies must team up and equip our tertiary institutions, provide them with infrastructure which will enable the scientists to work hard and embark on meaningful researches for national development.

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