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ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING TODAY

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Communication Skills**

Volume 12

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TEACHING TODAY
(ELTT)**

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Aims

ELTT is a bi-annual journal devoted to the publication of articles, research reports and reviews on English Language Teaching for those involved in the teaching of English as a second Language. It aims to:

1. Provide a forum of exchange of ideas and experiences for teachers of English.
2. Encourage teachers and researchers, publishers and writers to work together to develop teaching procedure, ideas and materials for the advancement of ELTT.
3. Promote and support research in the areas of English for Academic/Special Purposes.

Although ELTT welcomes contributions in all areas of English Language and Literature research, greater emphasis will be given to papers with strong practical classroom experience and application. Such areas may cover Needs Analysis, Course Design, Methodology, Testing, Materials Development, Programme Management, Literary studies and criticism, Teacher Training, and Evaluation.

Manuscripts:

If you wish to make a submission to ELTT, please note the following:

1. Articles should not be more than 14 double-spaced pages of A-4 paper, references inclusive.
2. Send 2 copies of the article. The article can be returned to you only if you enclose sufficient postage.
3. Your article should be preceded by an abstract of not more than 200 words. On the first page, detachable from the manuscript, please type the title of the paper, your name and mailing address.
4. Book reviews of relevant and recent publications are also welcome.
5. The editors will assume that any article submitted to ELTT has neither been published nor is being considered for publication elsewhere.
6. Publication fees will be stipulated in the letter of acceptance, after review.
7. Please direct your articles or questions to: the Editors, ELTT, c/o Department of Communication & General Studies, Federal University of Agriculture, PMB 2240, Abeokuta, Nigeria. Or email: natresleltt@gmail.com

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EDITORIAL

ELTT Volume 12 focuses on pedagogical innovations in the teaching and learning of the English language in Nigerian classrooms. The selections of articles in this volume are garnered from discourses and contributions at the annual conference of the National Association of Teachers and Researchers of English as a Second Language (NATRESL) held in Benson Idahosa University (BIU) Benin-City, Nigeria from October 6-9, 2015 with the theme: "Innovations in English Language Teaching and Learning."

This volume has sustained the eclectic approach to style and spelling format to preserve the contributors' originality and to conform to emerging philosophy in research and codification. Drawing from this background, we hope to continue to serve teachers, researchers and policy makers by communicating current ideas and significant contributions to knowledge to boost its commitment to giant stride in the field.

The 13th Annual Conference of NATRESL has been scheduled to hold in the Federal University of Agriculture, Abeokuta, Nigeria. Watch out!

Editorial Collective

ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHERS' MOTIVATION FOR CAREER ADVANCEMENT IN NIGERIA: THE PLACE OF DESIRE FOR ACQUISITION OF INNOVATIVE SKILLS

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Abstract

Career advancement should normally include desire for increased job efficiency. Many English Language teachers go for further studies yearly in form of in-service programmes. So, it should be expected that such teachers' teaching expertise would be upgraded and updated through participation in staff development programmes. But the perennial mass failure of Nigerian students' performance in major examinations does not portray the innovativeness and pedagogic efficiency expected of the English Language teachers that have gone for further education. This survey was thus carried out on two hundred English Language teachers in their final academic session of in-service courses to determine the place of desire to learn new techniques in their motivation for enrollment in such a major career development scheme. Frequency counts, percentages and bar charts were employed in analyzing data collected through copies of a self-constructed and validated seventeen-item questionnaire. These were used in answering two research questions: What is the degree of the quest for acquisition of innovative pedagogic skills in English Language teachers' motivation for in-service training? Do the in-service English Language teachers believe that their students can benefit from innovative language teaching strategies? The findings reveal that quest for acquisition of innovative skills ranks low in the teachers' reasons for enrolling in in-service education programmes and their attitude to innovative practices in language teaching is generally poor because they doubt that their students' performance in the subject could respond positively to any innovative language teaching strategies.

Background to the Study

The Paradox of Large Scale Enrolment of English Language Teachers in In-service Education Programmes and their Students' Endemic Failure in the Subject

It has been severally stressed that teaching is not, and cannot be, an all-comers' affair. A father does not become a teacher just by showing his son how to farm. A mother is not qualified to be referred to as a teacher simply by

telling her daughter how to sit decently in a lady-like manner in public or how to prepare a delicacy. A person must possess and manifest certain distinguishing qualities and qualifications before bearing the title “teacher” (Dada, 1999). Among the expected qualities are a considerable mastery of the learning content knowledge in the subject of specialty and adequate pedagogic skills. Kolawole (2013) describes subject-matter mastery as the “what” and pedagogic skills as the “how” of teaching. Since the goal of teaching is to facilitate a relatively permanent behaviour change in learners, a persons' subject mastery (no matter how amazing) cannot qualify the possessor to be called a teacher if the person lacks the knowledge of appropriate methods that can get the goal successfully actualized (Adeyinka and Kolo, 2007).

It is in recognition of the significance of a teacher in the education enterprise that the Nigerian government has continually amended the stipulations regulating teacher education, recruitment, retraining, promotion, and so on. The minimum qualification for entry into teaching has been raised from Standard Six certificate to secondary school leaving certificate, to Teachers Grade Three certificate, to Teachers Grade Two certificate and now Nigeria Certificate in Education (NCE) successively. Also, those that smuggled themselves into the teaching service because of non-availability of their desired jobs for which they obtained degree certificates were encouraged to go for the required professional training by 1996 or get laid off (Araromi and Adeyoju, 1996; Faniran and Olatunji, 2011).

Those with required teacher education certificates, too, can be seen going for further studies. Holders of the Nigerian Certificate in Education (NCE) register for sandwich degree programmes while those with the first degree go for postgraduate degrees. All these programmes are duly regulated by appropriate government agencies for quality assurance. For example, the National Commission of for Colleges of Education and the National Universities Commission oversee colleges of education and universities respectively.

Teachers of English Language are not exempted from the in-service education programmes. Therefore, it is not uncommon to see English Language teachers that possess NCE, B.A.Ed. and M.Ed. teaching English Language in Nigerian secondary schools. One could, therefore, reasonably expect better output resulting from greater efficiency and effectiveness acquired from learning at the higher level of professional education. It is noteworthy that the universities that offer the sandwich education at the degree level are traditionally reputed to be centres for research, training and time-relevant public service (Obanya, 2004; Adeoti and Adeoti, 2009) and research is a very great driver of innovation in any field of endeavour.

A Plausible Explanation for the Discrepancy between English Language Teachers' Certificate Upgrades and Students' Downward Performance in the Subject

Candidates' woeful performance in English Language has paradoxically remained unreflective of the better certified teachers of English handling the subject in Nigerian secondary schools. The students' performance in the subject at all levels of education can be described as an endemic of failure. A situation in which the analysis of candidates performance over a period of thirteen years in English shows that less than 35% of the candidates had the grade of passed (credit level) required for admission to tertiary institutions (English Language **Chief Examiner's Reports 2000 - 2013**) is antithetical to the fact that several NCE holders teaching the subject have undergone further education or are on it in universities while those that entered the teaching profession with the first degree have upgraded to the masters degree level and those without initial teacher education have been exposed to postgraduate diploma degree programmes in education.

Taking cognizance of the facts that the institutions that provide in-service education to English Language teachers are under government monitoring, it could be assumed that the programmes are not grossly far from being adequate, all other things being equal. Even with Kolawole's (2013) dissatisfaction with the quality of the sandwich programmes, one would still expect some modest degree of knowledge and skill upgrade resulting from the in-service teachers' exposure to a four-year programme for first degree programmes and two years for postgraduate degree courses in such institutions. It should not be outrageous to anticipate, at worst, maintenance of modest standards of performance, if much positive difference cannot be observed in the general performance of the students being taught by such teachers.

There are many factors that can be blamed for the constantly nose-diving performance of students in English Language in contrast to their teachers' accumulation of higher certificates. The students themselves may be the problem (Osuji, 1996). Government may be to blame for non-availability or gross inadequacy of teaching and learning materials (Obanya, 2004). Parents may share significantly in the blame for failure to give children enough cooperation time at home for private studies. The list can go on and on.

But because of the central role that teachers play in determining students' academic performance, this study is throwing its searchlight on the teachers. The best way to find the most appropriate answer to the degree of a teacher's effectiveness is to ask his or her students (Ojelabi, 2009). This can be extended to mean not only asking for the students' opinions but also

assessing the students' mastery levels of the topics taught.

It is deemed profitable to investigate the mindset with which most English Language teachers enroll in in-service programme that prevents them from coming out with the innovative ideas necessary to arrest and sustain the interest and enthusiasm of the 21st Century students of English Language, and thereby make better performers of them in the subject. Thus, Balogun (2005) identifies update/upgrade (extension of competences/skills) and initiating the capability for adaptation to new changes in their fields as the two basic functions of in-service education for teachers. It can be noted that the first has to do with the maintenance or sharpening of already mastered skills and competences while the second can be simply denoted with the word "innovation".

A teacher needs to be computer literate, for example, to make a meaningful and positive impact on the 21st Century students that have been described as "Digital Natives" who wake up listening to radios, text friends before getting out of bed, play computer games on the way to and from school, blog, tweet, e-mail, design websites (Guinan, 2011:1). Being merely computer literate is even not enough, a teacher needs to be able to deploy computer and other digital equipment for pedagogic use with a great deal of personal innovative strategies in order to have students excited in the language class in this age (Jayachandran, 2007; Hennessy, Harrison, and Wamakote, 2010).

The language teacher should be able to creatively weave language learning topics around some of the seemingly non-educational activities that give students thrills. Such strategies as giving the language learners opportunities to interact with unsuspecting business tycoons, executives of parastatals like personnel managers, registrars of educational institutions, etc email through correspondences or telephone conversations can produce such high impact results in boosting the learners' confidence in future application of what is learnt. For instance, Lai (2004), after teaching a class some linguistic requirements for writing a good email, gave each student the assignment of initiating an email correspondence with one official of a college outside or the other, asking for information about admission requirements into one course of study or the other from a university registrar.

The students were most excited because of the real and authentic situation characteristics of the practice occasioned by the fact that the officers at the other ends thought they were interacting with real prospective customer, admission seeker, and so on. The contents of each student's initiation in relation to the response elicited served as useful materials for deliberation, correction and reinforcement. This type of innovation perfectly eliminates the deficiency of what Paulo Freire (1970 and 2005:81) refers to as banking education in which "anesthetizes and inhibits creative power" in

students because they do not get to practice most of what they learn in school until years after they must have forgotten it. The students' learning is most effectively and efficiently reinforced because they are learning by doing in authentic situations.

It has been reported that most students spend much more time on home video viewing and internet surfing than they do reading (Olatunji, 2008). They remember words they hear in music more easily and longer than they do with their school learning contents. An innovative language teacher would think of the best way to adapt these resources to the teaching-learning endeavours and thereby achieve excellent results in the students' learning content mastery. Several studies have, however, indicted language teachers of adopting uninteresting and unproductive teaching methods that make the learning of the various aspect of language studies tortuous to students (Ohia and Adeosun, 2002; Fawwas and Mahmoud, 2010). Salau (2006) too reports quite a number of cases in which the educational television was employed successfully in literacy education both in conventional classrooms as well as adult literacy programmes. But one may rightly ask how many teachers of English Language in Nigeria have developed the ability to leverage students' interest in the television, using it as a teaching and learning facility.

One could reasonably expect that the desire to learn new strategies to make English Language teachers' endeavours more successful would be paramount among the factors that propel the teachers to enroll in sandwich education programmes. Of course, it would be wicked of anyone to expect this to be the sole reason. But with academics that are not only teachers but also researchers handling the sandwich classes, it can be expected that the in-service teachers being taught should gain some state-of-the-art strategies from the former and have these reflected in their own students' performance. This would be in line with Balogun's (2005) observation that it is necessary to investigate how our teacher education subsystem has been responding to the demands of the changing world. The question that is resonating in the present study is, "Are the English Language teachers that go for in-service education ever motivated by the desire to learn innovative strategies in doing so?"

There are many factors responsible for Nigerian secondary school students' perennial failure in English Language, which is a reflection of their poor mastery of the subject. But one of the plausible factors which this study is investigating is their teachers' lack of interest in acquiring twenty-first-Century-compliant innovative pedagogic skills. The study also posits that this lack of drive for innovation may be reflected in their reasons for enrolling in sandwich programmes. This, however, shall remain a speculation until proved either valid or otherwise with empirical evidence.

A study of teachers' attitude or disposition to innovation is necessary because no matter the volume of innovative strategies included in a teacher

preparation or skill upgrade programme, all efforts at inculcating such in the in-service teachers would prove futile if the supposed recipients are not favourably disposed to innovation. Ojelabi (2005:24) also identifies, from a review of extant literature, "commitment" and "drive", also referred to as "relentlessness" as imperatives for aspiration to improvement or innovation in a teacher of any subject.

A teacher well motivated for attaining mastery of innovative practices in pedagogic deliveries would be enthusiastic, energetic, approachable, open, imaginative, and possess a good sense of humour – will be a master of subject-matters, be organised and emphasize important concepts, clarifying ideas in such manners that the students, too, would be motivated (Ojelabi, 2005). Balogun (2005) also includes attitude as one of the components of a teacher's competence and informs that researches and analyses carried out in the United States show that skills, motives, habits, and knowledge are paramount in that order to attainment of success at keeping abreast of latest developments and new challenges in the teaching profession. This, in other words, means motives is second only to skills while it is weightier than habits and knowledge.

It is, therefore, important to investigate English Language teachers' attitude or disposition to acquisition of innovative pedagogic strategies. If this is not ascertained as positive, all efforts of lecturers in the sandwich programmes to update the concerned teachers' teaching skills may produce too little or no observable positive results. The students being taught by such teachers could then not be expected to exhibit much improved enthusiasm or academic performance in the subject.

Materials and Method

This descriptive survey of the ex post facto type was carried out on a total of two hundred randomly sampled in-service English Language teachers currently in 500 Level (final session) of sandwich degree programmes in four institutions in Oyo State of Nigeria, fifty from each institution. The instrument used is a self-constructed and validated eighteen-item questionnaire that yielded 91.13 cronbach alpha. The instrument tagged **Motivation for Sandwich Programme Enrollment Questionnaire** is divided into sections A, B, and C. Section A has three items requiring indication of each respondent's age, gender, and occupational tenure. Section B comprises twelve items probing the respondents' reasons for enrolling in the programme. The first six items express reasons that have nothing to do with desire for innovation. The next six are expressions reflecting desire for innovation and skill update. The respondents were asked to tick the response that agreed with their reasons for taking part in the sandwich programme in the four likert scale responses: Very Weak; Weak; Strong; and Very Strong.

Section C comprises two Yes-or-No items investigating the respondents' opinion as to the potential of innovative strategies to help their students turn around the story of mass failure in English for the better.

Copies of the instrument were personally administered to the respondents in their respective institutions of study and were collected immediately to forestall loss or other influences that could reduce the authenticity of their responses. Each response that indicated a motive that is very weak in relation to desire for innovation was scored 1. Each indicating weak relationship with desire for innovation was scored 2. Each response that is strongly related to desire for innovative strategies was scored 3, while each that was very strong in reflecting desire for skill update was scored 4. For each of the two items in Section C, a negative response was scored 1 while a positive response was scored 2. So the total obtainable score in the section is 4. The nearer the score to 4, the more the responses are to positive attitude and vice versa. The statistical tools of frequency counts and percentages were used in analyzing the obtained data to answer two research questions.

Analysis of Data and Discussion of Findings

Research Question 1: *What is the degree of quest for acquisition of innovative pedagogic skills in English Language teachers' motivation for in-service education?*

Table. 1: Presentation of General Strength of Quest for Acquisition of Innovative Pedagogic Skills in the English Language Motivation for Sandwich Programmes

Category of Motives	Weighted Frequency
Motives with very little connection with desire for innovative teaching skills scored	146 (73%)
Motives with medium level relationship with desire for innovative and pedagogic mastery improvement	38 (19%)
Motives with significant content of desire for innovative pedagogic skills	16 (8%)

Table. 1 shows that the overall motivations for the NCE holder English Language teachers' enrolment in the in-service programmes have very low contents of aspiration for acquisition of latest innovative pedagogic skills. The responses indicating very little connection with desire for innovative teaching skills scored 146 (73%) among the motives declared by the respondents for enrolling in the certificate upgrading in-service education. The responses with medium level relationship with desire for innovative and pedagogic mastery improvement score 38 (19%) while those indicating for

greater degree of masterly lesson handling scored only 16 (8%). The answer to Research Question 1 is thus that quest for acquisition of innovative pedagogic skills in English Language teachers' motivation for in-service education is very low.

The factors that most strongly motivate them to go for in-service education programmes are desire to increase their promotion prospects on the job, catch up with colleagues that have surpassed them, do what their colleagues that have also enrolled are doing, prevent being retrenched, and other motivations that have little or nothing to do with pedagogic skill development. This means it will be gross self-deception to expect most of the concerned teachers to do anything differently from how they had been doing it before being exposed to the further education. It then means no better results than their students currently get can be expected in the nearest future. Their teachers approach their teaching endeavours with the "business as usual" and "nothing changes" attitude in spite of new exposures in the universities. This is a pathetic fallout from the solely-certificate-oriented nature of the criteria for promotion in the Nigerian society. The teachers go away with certificate upgrade but no skill update and that suffices for their much needed promotion.

Research Question 2: Do the in-service English Language teachers believe that their students can benefit from innovative language teaching strategies? It is also necessary to investigate the teachers' general disposition to innovation in language teaching. Do they have the conviction that implementing innovative language teaching strategies that have produced recorded good results with language learners in other countries can also help their Nigerian students?

Table 2: Representation of the In-service English Language Teacher Education Programmes' Beneficiaries' Belief in their Students' Ability to Benefit from Innovative language Teaching Strategies

Degree of the Teachers' Belief in their Students' Readiness to Derive Maximal Benefits from Innovative Language Pedagogy	Weighted Frequency
Responses depicting absolute disbelief in the students' capacity to benefit from innovative language pedagogy	93 (46.5%)
Responses depicting indicating modest disbelief in the students' capacity to benefit from innovative language pedagogy	72 (36.0%)
Responses depicting indicating mere doubt of the students' capacity to benefit from innovative language pedagogy	28 (14.0%)
Responses depicting indicating neither positive nor negative belief in the students' capacity to benefit from innovative language pedagogy	7 (3.5%)

Table. 2 shows that the responses depicting **absolute** disbelief of the English Language teachers taking part in the sandwich degree programmes in their students' capacity to benefit from innovative language pedagogy are in the majority (93 or 46.5%), followed by those indicating mere disbelief (72 or 36.0%), then those indicating probability or uncertainty (28 or 14.0%) and lastly the non-indication of any positive or negative belief (7 or 3.5%). This means the totality of the teachers that do not believe their students' academic performance in English Language can be positively improved with innovative language teaching strategies is overwhelming with a total of 165 (82.5%) negative response scores while only a total of 28 (14.0%) responses indicate hope. The remaining 7 (3.5%) that were silent can be rightly categorized in the region of hopelessness, thus increasing the volume of disbelief in the capacity of the in-service teachers in their students' capacity to leverage innovative teaching strategies for better mastery of topics taught.

This further presents a bleak future for the stakeholders in the Nigerian education system that hope that the tide of the endemic abysmal failure of our students in English Language can be stemmed soon. If the teachers that handle the subject go for further studies merely for certificate upgrade and jamboree and do not have any faith in the prospect of their students being improved with state-of-the-art instructional strategies, then there is still a very long way to go before a lasting solution can be found to the perennial problem of mass failure in English Language. Several studies have emphasised the utmost importance of teachers' disposition to their profession, their subjects as well as the students they are employed to teach in successful discharge of their professional duties (Faniran and Olatunji, 2011). The success of the English Language teachers studied is to be measured with the success of their students in examinations. Unfortunately, the teachers' disposition to innovative language pedagogy and disbelief in the students' ability to benefit from innovative pedagogy reeks of gross discouragement. If the teachers are so disinterested, one can be realistic in expecting the students to be infected with the teachers' hopelessness. Improved academic performance in English Language examinations would thus be a perpetual mirage.

Conclusion

English Language teachers are expected to deploy latest and innovative skills in instructional material development and pedagogy in remedying the problem of perennial failure recorded by their students in the subject. In-service education programmes constitute one of the major avenues for teachers to acquire, practise and master such innovative skills. But this study has revealed that most English Language teachers that are holders of the National Certificate in Education that enroll in in-service

sandwich degree programmes for reasons other than acquisition of innovative language teaching skills. This shows that most of them still teach the ways they were taught decades ago and are, therefore, not millennial-compliant enough to meet the learning needs of the present age. Thus, all stakeholders can only wait for the worse in terms of the poor results recorded every year by students in the subject except drastic measures are taken to re-orientate the teachers themselves.

Recommendations

Consequent upon the findings from this study, the following recommendations are made:

1. Government should do all that is possible in elevating the status of the teaching profession. This would rev up English Language teachers' enthusiasm concerning their field.
2. Bodies regulating teacher education programmes in universities should put measures in place to ensure that research into the latest discoveries in language teaching and learning are accessible to the teacher educators and they in turn concentrate on these in teaching the in-service teachers under their tutelage.
3. The providers of English Language sandwich teacher education programmes should de-emphasise mere theoretical knowledge acquisition and restructure their curricula to include more of practice-oriented contents.
4. Government should equip all schools with state-of-the-art language learning equipment for the use of teachers and students so that innovative language teaching and learning may become demystified.
5. English Language teachers, upon completion of sandwich education programmes, should be further assessed by a professional body to be inaugurated for opportunity to demonstrate new strategies learnt in the course of the programme. Having been satisfied with the teachers' demonstration of practical improvement, the successful completers should be promoted without any delay.
6. Mass promotion of teachers should be stopped. Only language teachers, and indeed teachers of any subject, that prove worthy of promotion based on clearly stated terms should be promoted. Thus, the general lackadaisical attitude reported of most teachers would be significantly reduced.

7. Endowment funds should be established to assist any language teacher who wishes to perform an experiment with a new teaching idea. This will engender the spirit of constant innovativeness.
8. English Language teachers with proven outstanding innovativeness and results should be identified through unambiguous procedures and handsomely rewarded to serve as an incentive to all.

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telling her daughter how to sit decently in a lady-like manner in public or how to prepare a delicacy. A person must possess and manifest certain distinguishing qualities and qualifications before bearing the title “teacher” (Dada, 1999). Among the expected qualities are a considerable mastery of the learning content knowledge in the subject of specialty and adequate pedagogic skills. Kolawole (2013) describes subject-matter mastery as the “what” and pedagogic skills as the “how” of teaching. Since the goal of teaching is to facilitate a relatively permanent behaviour change in learners, a persons' subject mastery (no matter how amazing) cannot qualify the possessor to be called a teacher if the person lacks the knowledge of appropriate methods that can get the goal successfully actualized (Adeyinka and Koloi, 2007).

It is in recognition of the significance of a teacher in the education enterprise that the Nigerian government has continually amended the stipulations regulating teacher education, recruitment, retraining, promotion, and so on. The minimum qualification for entry into teaching has been raised from Standard Six certificate to secondary school leaving certificate, to Teachers Grade Three certificate, to Teachers Grade Two certificate and now Nigeria Certificate in Education (NCE) successively. Also, those that smuggled themselves into the teaching service because of non-availability of their desired jobs for which they obtained degree certificates were encouraged to go for the required professional training by 1996 or get laid off (Araromi and Adeyoju, 1996; Faniran and Olatunji, 2011).

Those with required teacher education certificates, too, can be seen going for further studies. Holders of the Nigerian Certificate in Education (NCE) register for sandwich degree programmes while those with the first degree go for postgraduate degrees. All these programmes are duly regulated by appropriate government agencies for quality assurance. For example, the National Commission of for Colleges of Education and the National Universities Commission oversee colleges of education and universities respectively.

Teachers of English Language are not exempted from the in-service education programmes. Therefore, it is not uncommon to see English Language teachers that possess NCE, B.A.Ed. and M.Ed. teaching English Language in Nigerian secondary schools. One could, therefore, reasonably expect better output resulting from greater efficiency and effectiveness acquired from learning at the higher level of professional education. It is noteworthy that the universities that offer the sandwich education at the degree level are traditionally reputed to be centres for research, training and time-relevant public service (Obanya, 2004; Adeoti and Adeoti, 2009) and research is a very great driver of innovation in any field of endeavour.

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