**CHAPTER ONE**

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

The African higher education system has grown significantly over the past twenty years in response to demand for admission spaces by secondary school leavers. From about 700 universities, polytechnics, colleges of education and other post-secondary institutions classified within the higher education group in the early 1990s, the system now has well over 2,300 of such institutions. The growth of the system with respect to enrolment is judged to be one of the fastest in the world (UIS, 2010).

This impressive performance on access has failed to be matched by improvement in quality (Materu, 2007; Okebukola and Shabani, 2007; World Bank, 2008). As a way of clustering the good from the bad, stakeholders, especially potential students, employers and parents, have turned to the ranking of these institutions to provide a basis for selection. The first ports of call are typically global ranking league tables such as Webometrics, Times Higher Education (THE) and the World University Rankings and Academic Ranking of World Universities (ARWU), commonly called the Shanghai Ranking (Salmi, 2011). These rankings are regularly updated and readily available in the public domain, hence individuals or groups desiring relative standing of their national institutions find them to be an easily accessible resource. Unfortunately, these global ranking schemes provide little help for the locals, especially potential undergraduates, since over 90 per cent of the higher education institutions in Africa are not captured in the top leagues (Salmi and Soroyan, 2007). A sprinkling of universities in Africa shows up in the top 500 of all global league tables. For instance, in the 2010 Academic Ranking of World Universities, only three universities, all from South Africa, were listed in the world's top 500 and only two in the 2011–2012 Times Higher Education best 400.

The practice of university rankings dates back to around 1900 in England. The explosion of university rankings perhaps signals the reality that we live in a compared and ranked world. The twenty-first century is increasingly compared and ranked along a myriad of dimensions. Based on levels of GDP, countries are designated as part of either the first, second or third worlds, and are ranked as developed, developing or least-developed, based on a complex cluster of indicators. They are accorded human development rankings – low, medium, medium-high or high – and are ranked on income as being low, middle, middle-high or high-income countries. Comparisons and rankings go far beyond the macro level of 'worlds' and countries, to the meso level of institutions such as restaurants, schools, hospitals, airports, banks and, of course, universities. Universities are among our canonical twenty-first century institutions. In and of themselves, they are standard setters for how other aspects of our 'worlds, countries and institutions' are compared and ranked. It therefore seems inevitable that universities would themselves be subjected to comparisons and rankings. However, being complex institutions and being part of complex systems, it seems equally inevitable that comparisons and rankings of universities would be anything but polemical. Comparing and even ranking our 'worlds, countries and institutions' impels the construction and use of common 'yardsticks' along whose gradations these entities can be placed. Yet, unlike length, height and width, these 'yardsticks' are used to measure very complex, often multi-faceted, fast-changing, contextually varied and even conceptually contentious phenomena.

A lot of factors are considered as ranking indicator, they includes percentage of academic programmes of

the university with full accreditation status, compliance with carrying capacity (measured by the degree of deviation from carrying capacity), proportion of the academic staff of the university at professorial level, foreign content (proportion of the Academic staff of the university who are non-Nigerians) and foreign students. A closer look at these factors will reveal that they can be influenced by the way things are been done (organizational culture) in the university.

Organizational culture as defined by Lundy and Cowling (1996) is "the way we do things here." Organizational culture is the deeply rooted values and beliefs that are shared by personnel in an organization. Various organizations have differing terms used to collectively refer to the values and beliefs of its members. Most organizations term these guiding principles that dictate behavior and action (Core Values). However, this study is examining organizational culture and ranking of universities in South Africa and Nigeria.

## 1.2    STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Every organization has a survival objective and what differentiates organizations is the method through which this survival objective is achieved, usually through maximum utilization of available resources. It is within this context, that organizations are conceived as little societies characterized by social norms and structures, commonly allegorized as organizational culture. These management strategies adopted by these institutions including African University also affect their performances which determine their position when ranked.

Moreover, Okebukola (2011) showed that labour employers were quite excited about the ranking, as they seek ways of selecting graduates from the best-ranked schools in the midst of the graduate glut. Parents and potential students found ranking helpful in the selection of institutions and were quite happy to turn to league tables showing universities with very good rankings in the programmes desired for study. The researcher is curious about how organizational culture has affected the ranking of universities in South Africa and Nigeria.

## 1.3    OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The following are the objectives of this study:

To examine the relationship between organizational culture and ranking of Universities in Nigeria.

To examine the relationship between organizational culture and ranking of Universities in South Africa.

To examine the differences in Organizational culture and ranking of Universities in Nigeria and South Africa.

## 1.4    RESEARCH QUESTIONS

What is the relationship between organizational culture and ranking of Universities in Nigeria?

What is the relationship between organizational culture and ranking of Universities in South Africa?

What are the differences in Organizational culture and ranking of Universities in Nigeria and South Africa?

## 1.5    RESEARCH HYPOTHESIS

$H_O$: There is no significant relationship between organizational culture and ranking of Universities in South Africa and Nigeria.

$H_A$: There is significant relationship between organizational culture and ranking of Universities in South Africa and Nigeria.

## 1.6    SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The following are the significance of this study:

This study will educate the management of universities in Nigeria and South Africa, students seeking admissions, employer of labour and the general public on how organization culture has affected the ranking of Universities in Nigeria and South Africa.

This research will also serve as a resource base to other scholars and researchers interested in carrying out further research in this field subsequently, if applied will go to an extent to provide new explanation to the topic

## 1.7 SCOPE/LIMITATIONS OF STUDY

This study will cover the universities in Nigeria and South Africa. This study will also cover the organizational culture or cultural practices that are specific for universities in Nigeria and South Africa considering how it has affected their ranking.

LIMITATION OF STUDY

Financial constraint- Insufficient fund tends to impede the efficiency of the researcher in sourcing for the relevant materials, literature or information and in the process of data collection (internet, questionnaire and interview).

Time constraint- The researcher will simultaneously engage in this study with other academic work. This consequently will cut down on the time devoted for the research work

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