

## Russia-Ukraine War and Nigerian Migrant Students in Ukraine: Effects and Recommendations

Joseph Okechukwu Nwoke

Department of History and International Studies

Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka

Email: jo.nwoke419@gmail.com

### Abstract

Due to the incessant strike by ASUU (Academic Staff Union of Universities), a lot of Nigerian students left the shores of Nigeria from 2000 to pitch their academic tent in Ukraine. A lot of them went into medical sciences and engineering as some were sponsored by parents and relations and others were on scholarship by the state government, federal government and non-governmental agencies. Before the Russia-Ukraine war which started on 24th February, 2022, there were about 12,000 Nigerian students studying in various universities in Ukraine. However, prior to the war a lot of Nigerians were not aware that Ukraine was a receptacle of Nigerian students. This study sets out to examine the impact of the outbreak of the Russia - Ukraine war on Nigerian migrant students studying in Ukraine, after delving into the reasons for the migration. The data contained in this study is gleaned mainly from the internet. The push-pull theory by Lee is used to display the link between migration of Nigerian students and what attracted them. The argument of this paper is that as a result of the lip service paid by the federal government to education a lot of Nigerians left Nigeria for Ukraine, making them to be negatively affected during the invasion of Ukraine by Russia. Findings reveal that despite the corruption and decrease in quality in Ukrainian tertiary education, Nigerians still trooped to Ukraine. This study recommends that the Nigerian government should pump adequate funds into revitalization of the university system and improve on the working conditions of university workers. This will stem the tide of incessant strike.

**Keywords:** Russia-Ukraine War, Nigerian Students, Ukraine, Education,

### Introduction

After 1917, Vladimir Lenin of Russia began spreading his tentacles to territories around it through communism. By 1939, most parts of Ukraine came under communist Russia in a union known as USSR (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) also known as Soviet Union.<sup>1</sup> From 1922 to 1991, Soviet Union was intact until the West through USA contributed to its disintegration as Ukraine became independent. After the disintegration of USSR, Russia as the major power in that region still picks interest in the countries around her borders as some of them have a good number of Russian speakers. In 2012, she attacked Georgia and in 2014 annexed Crimea from Ukraine. Before the war with Ukraine on 24th February, 2022 which forced a lot of Nigerian students to flee Ukraine, Russia supported separatists in breakaway Donetsk and Lugansk in Donbas region. Before the war started in 2022, tension had been building up in 2021 as Russia moved military hardware to her border with Ukraine. There were attempts by Russia for the West and her to reach an accord that NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organisation) to stop moving its frontier towards Russia's borders. The attempts were ignored by the West and it continued to allow countries close to Russia to join NATO.<sup>2</sup> Russia saw this as a threat to her security. Russia does not want Ukraine to become a member of NATO. Estonia and Latvia, neighbours to Russia and members of NATO are seen as a threat to Russia by the Russians. Sweden and Finland wanted to join NATO and this was strongly opposed to by Russia.

By 1576 in Ukraine, the first HEI (higher educational institution), Ostrozska Academy was floated and in 1632 Kyiv-Mohyla Academy was set up which was a centre for innovation and research. In 1661 the University of Lyiv was established by the Catholics which produced a lot of graduates. By 1875, another university was set up in Chernivtsi. In the Eastern part of Ukraine, HEIs were opened up in Kharkiv (1805), Kyiv (1834) and Odessa (1865). Prior to the communist revolution of 1917, there were 27 HEIs with over 35,000 students and by 1941 she had 162 HEIs with about 130,000 students.<sup>3</sup> Ukraine joined the Bologna process in 2005 and this process was aimed to have a uniform higher education system in Europe as the European Higher Education Area was created.<sup>4</sup> There are over 800 higher institutions in Ukraine in and around cities like Kharkiv, Lviv, Kyiv, Dnipro, Zaporizhzhia and Odesa. By 2019 there were 75,606 foreign students studying in 443 Ukrainian higher institutions from 154 countries.<sup>5</sup> Languages for instruction included Ukrainian, Russian, French and English. For

disciplines that Ukrainian, or Russian was used one needed to study the language. A lot of Nigerians were found in medically and engineering related programmes where English Language was used during lectures. International students particularly Nigerians were found in V.N karazin Kharkiv National University, Dnipro State Medical University, Sumy State University etc

#### Top 10 countries of origin of international students in Ukraine in 2018

	Country	Number of Students
1	India	14,958
2	Morocco	7,390
3	Azerbaijan	6,288
4	Turkmenistan	5,033
5	Nigeria	3,552
6	Egypt	3,412
7	Turkey	3,254
8	China	2,721
9	Israel	2,460
10	Georgia	2,397

**Source:** “Education in Ukraine”, O. Friedman and S.Trines, 25th June, 2019, <https://wenr.wes.org> (Accessed 15th April, 2022)

**Remark:**From Africa, Nigeria came second after Morocco in terms of population of students in Ukraine in 2018.Majority of Nigerians living in Ukraine were students. In United States of America, there were 13,762 while United Kingdom had 13,020 students as at 1919/2020 probably because of the perceived high quality education obtained in those climes and the high number of Nigerians living there.

In the 1970s and 1980s, there was a reasonable number of foreign lecturers and foreign students in Nigerian universities.<sup>6</sup>During this period very few Nigerians migrated to Ukraine, then part of USSR to study. By 2000 the number increased majorly because of the incessant ASUU (Academic Staff Union of Universities) strike. Just as there is religious persecution, there is also academic persecution. What the Nigerian students have been going through is what this study will label as academic persecution. The Nigerian students are being persecuted because a good number of them are from poor homes. This persecution is being carried out by the government officials because they reneged on their agreements with ASUU as most of them have their kids in foreign universities. Some members of the public see ASUU as the one persecuting students. It is the view of this paper that there is a grand design by those in power to allow the university system to collapse, so as to pave way for their children in foreign universities to be miles ahead academically. After their graduation they are planted in positions of authority in Nigeria without following the due process. They also graduate before their mates in Nigeria due to the near absence of industrial action in foreign universities. Some top past and present government officials own private universities in Nigeria. In order for their private universities to thrive, all efforts must be in top gear to emasculate the public universities.

This study is built on the push pull theory adopted by Lee which is built on Ravenste in’s theory of migration.<sup>7</sup>In his view push factors force people to leave their area of origin while pull factors attract people to their destination. Push factors include war, drought, family and religious disagreement and others are poor economic activities, lack of job opportunities, discrimination, political intolerance and persecution. Pull factors include better economic opportunities, more jobs and the promise of a better life. Warm weather, peaceful and comfortable locations also attract people.<sup>8</sup>In the case of Nigeria, the major push factor that pushes students out of Nigeria is the constant ASUU strike. The pull factor in Ukraine pulling Nigerian students before the Ukraine-Russia war was the conducive atmosphere for learning where there was rarely strike. Migration here implies movement of individuals from an uncomfortable place to a comfortable place.

There are some related works on education tourism. N.O Madiche examines the attraction to UK’s (United Kingdom’s) higher education degrees in comparison, to the low regard of Nigerian degrees.<sup>9</sup> Okunola and Ikuomola dissect the reasons Nigerian students rush abroad to acquire education, noting

that in Western Europe they rushed to Sweden, Norway, Finland or Denmark.<sup>10</sup> Agbeniga sees international student mobility as a glaring testimony of internationalisation as about 3.7 million international students left their homeland in 2009, indicating a 77% increment since 2000.<sup>11</sup> Iseolorunkanmi et al state that the population of international students in 2001 moved up from 2.1 million to more than 5.3 million in 2019 and go further to identify USA, France, U.K, Australia and Germany as the most educationally attractive.<sup>12</sup> C.O Chidi looks at the challenges affecting the sustainability of tertiary education in Nigeria.<sup>13</sup> Manzuma-Ndaaba et al opine that internationalisation of tertiary education is part of the globalization process reducing higher institutions to a global village by enhancing teaching and learning across the globe, positing that in 2011 not less than 4.3 million students studied outside their countries of origin and estimated that this number was to increase by 2020 to about 5.8 million.<sup>14</sup> Setrana et al point out the revival of the interest of African governments in academic diasporas by the African Union in Addis Ababa from 13th to 14th November, 2019 with the motive of discerning the role of the diaspora in tertiary education, research and innovation in Africa.<sup>15</sup> Abdullahi Umar et al affirm that Malaysian universities were centres of attraction to students from Africa with Nigeria not being an exception, as there were over 9000 Nigerians in different Malaysian universities in 2010. Challenges encountered by these students included exploitation by landlords, poor finances, stigmatization amongst others.<sup>16</sup> These works never discussed Nigerian students in Ukraine, hence the essence of embarking on this study. This study is divided into reasons Nigerian students migrated to Ukraine, effects of the outbreak of the Ukraine-Russia war on Nigerian migrant students, conclusion and recommendations.

### **Reasons Nigerian Students Migrated to Ukraine**

**ASUU Strike:** ASUU (Academic Staff Union of Universities) was formed in 1978 taking the place of Nigerian Association of University Teachers (NAUT), formed in 1965 with membership drawn from University of Ibadan, University of Nigeria, Nsukka, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, University of Ife and University of Lagos.<sup>17</sup> Amongst its objectives is to ensure that public universities are adequately funded by the federal government. In 1988, it embarked on its first strike and before the ushering of the fourth republic in 1999 there were other strikes. In 1999 during Obasanjo-Atiku presidency, ASUU began a strike over the working conditions of its members. This strike lasted for five months. In 2001, it protested against the unlawful sack of forty-nine lecturers from the University of Ilorin with a strike that was called off after three months. There was a six-month old strike in 2003 as a result of renegeing on past agreements comprising inadequate university funding, discrepancy in salary and retirement age. In 2006, there was another strike which was dogged by another one in 2007 which kicked off on 26th March that came to an end after three months. In June 2009, there was an industrial action that came to an end in October the same year. The 22nd July, 2010 strike lasted till January 2011. In December 2011, an industrial action commenced which lasted for 59 days as it was called off in 2012. On 1st July, 2013 the university education was once disrupted till 17th December, 2013 when ASUU sheathed its sword. The strike lasted for 5 months and 15 days.<sup>18</sup> From 4th November, 2018 to 7th February, 2019 another strike lasted for 95 days. In 2020, university education was paralysed for 9 months when ASUU downed its tool from March to 23rd December. This strike (COVID strike) must have lasted for so long because this was the peak of COVID 19 and the government of Nigeria had declared a lockdown on the whole country. Before the strike, ASUU had come out from a two week warning strike that ended on 23rd March, 2020. On 14th February, 2022 it embarked on a month warning strike which was further extended to two months when the Federal government renegeed on the 2009 agreements it signed with ASUU particularly on the conditions of service for lecturers.

Outside the 2009 agreements is the fight between IPPIS (Integrated Payroll and Personnel Information System) introduced by the government and UTAS (University Transparency and Accountability Solution) proposed by ASUU. These strikes have made students to stay longer in the public universities as one could spend six years for a course of four years which is very demoralizing. Also, knowledge is not passed to students as lecturers rush through lectures whenever strike is called off.

**Poor Infrastructure in Nigerian Universities:** The lecture halls, libraries, laboratories, hostels etc are in dilapidated condition. A lecture hall meant for 100 students will contain over 200 students during lectures. Some students will be standing and others will be outside. In some cases, there is no

microphone to deliver such lectures implying that not everyone will hear the lecturer. Some seats in the lecture halls are equally broken. There are also damaged white boards in the halls as public universities rarely use power point to deliver lectures. University libraries are not stocked with current journals and books. Some of these libraries lack enough seats and tables for students to make use of. The laboratories are not equally equipped. The ASUU President, Prof Emmanuel said he was a member of a committee headed by Prof Mahmud Yakubu (the present Independent National Electoral Commission Chairman) some years ago to carry out a survey of infrastructure decay in public universities. It was observed that a first generation university was making use of electric stove in the place of Bunsen burner.<sup>19</sup> Hostels are congested and are not taken care of as they lack electricity and constant flow of water. The absence of water results in a stinking environment as the lavatories are not flushed in the midst of dilapidated septic tanks. ASUU has been fighting for revitalization of public universities. In the 2020 agreement with the federal government, ASUU brought down the funds from 1.3 trillion naira meant for the revitalization to 220 billion naira to be given to the universities yearly, following the complaint of the government that the earlier amount was too much. The government still is yet to honour its agreement. If not of the frequent strike by ASUU some of the facilities found today in both state and public universities would not have been there today, such as projects being financed by the TETFund.<sup>20</sup>

**Relatively Affordable Tuition Fees:** The fees in Ukraine were affordable just like the cost of living when compared to that of USA and Britain. The fees were equivalent with that paid by some private universities in Nigeria. Considering living expenses in 2016, Ukraine was the most affordable nation and in terms of personal financial satisfaction ranked second best.<sup>21</sup> Out of 132 costliest countries in the world in 2020, she ranked 107th, making it cheaper than Australia (16th), USA (20th), Canada (24th) and the UK(27th). In Ukraine tuition for MBBS (Bachelor of Medicine, Bachelor of Surgery) was from \$4000 to \$5000; in Australia, it ranged from \$25000 to \$75,000; in Canada \$20,000 to \$90,000; in USA \$15,000 to \$75,000 and in UK \$15,000 to \$60,000.<sup>22</sup> Adegbinyi Adebayo whose children were at Sumy State University noted that the tuition was 4000 dollars while in United Kingdom, the lowest was 17,500 pounds which was expensive.<sup>23</sup> Instead of attending these private universities some Nigerians preferred sending their kids to universities in Ukraine which they felt were better equipped in terms of infrastructure and qualified staff. States in the country did send their students to Ukraine on scholarship. The Osun State government through the Director of Bureau Communications and Strategy revealed that the government financed the studies of 87 students reading medicine before the Russia-Ukraine war.<sup>24</sup>

#### Tuition Fees to Study in Ukraine (1USD to #199.06 )

Programs in English language	Duration	Fees(\$ ) Per Year	Approximate Fees(₦) Per Year
Medicine	6 years	\$4,100	₦816,105
Dentistry	5 Years	\$4,400	₦875,820
Nursing	4 years	\$3,750	₦746,437
Pharmacy	5 years	\$3,800	₦756,390
Civil Engineering	4 years	\$2,400	₦477,720
Mechanical engineering	4 years	\$2,400	₦477,720
Electrical Engineering	4 years	\$2,400	₦477,720
Computer engineering	4 years	\$2,400	₦477,720
Petroleum Engineering	4 years	\$2000	₦398,100
Aviation	4 years	\$3,300	₦656,865
Management	4 years	\$2,150	₦427,957
International economics	4 years	\$2,400	₦477,720
computer science	4 years	\$2,400	₦477,720
Business administration	4 years	\$2,400	₦477,720
Preparatory course	6 months	\$1,300	₦258,765

**Source:**“Study in Ukraine Details for Nigerian Students” <https://studyinukraine.site>(Accessed 2nd April,2022)

**Remark:** The official exchange rate stated above (1USD to #199.06 ) was for May2015.By 31st May, 2022 the exchange rate became 1 dollar for about 414 naira officially and about 600 naira in the parallel market

**Absence of eligibility test:** It is normal for one to sit for an external examination before being given admission to study in a higher institution. In the case of Nigeria, there has been JAMB(Joint Admissions Matriculation Board) that organized UME (University Matriculation Examination) and PCE(Polytechnics and Colleges of Education)Examination in the past which were combined to be known as UTME (Unified Tertiary Matriculation Examination)in 2010.<sup>25</sup> In 2005, higher institutions introduced their own examinations after the general UTME as another hurdle for students to cross before finally gaining admission depending on the performance of the students. Such is not a prerequisite in Ukraine. With just a secondary school certificate like WASSCE (West African Senior School Certificate Examination) or its equivalent one was eligible to apply for a university in Ukraine with a high probability that the candidate would be given admission. This policy could be a boost to the low birth rate, high mortality rate and large scale out migration as the number of students given admission swelled up the population in Ukraine. Between 1993 and 2013, the population of Ukraine declined by 6.7million. According to the United Nations, the population would diminish until 2050 by another unprecedented 18% from 44.2million in 2017 to merely 36.4million. UNESCO (United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization) stated that students in tertiary institutions went down in 2008 from about 2.85 million to 1.67 million in 2017. In 1996, the total number of universities and other higher education institutions (HEIs) decreased from the over 1000 to 661 in 2017/2018 academic year.<sup>26</sup> International students contributed a great percentage to the GDP (gross domestic product) of Ukraine.

**Recognition of Certificates:** Certificates in Ukraine included Bachelor (Bakalayr), Master (Magistr), Doctor of Philosophy/Art and Doctor of Sciences and Doctor of Medicine. The duration of the bachelor programme is 3-4 years. Masters lasted for two years. Doctor of Philosophy/Art and Doctor of Sciences formerly called Candidate of Sciences (kandydat Nauk) lasted a minimum of 3 years. Another doctoral level qualification called Doctor of Sciences (Doktor Nauk) was meant for those interested in becoming full professors in Ukrainian university. Dentistry, Pharmacy and veterinary medicine lasted for five years. Medical programme lasted for six years and one was eligible to practice after compulsory one to three years’ clinical internship in an area of specialty.<sup>27</sup>With this certificate one could settle and work in most countries of the world, especially in any European country such as Poland, Rumania, France, Italy or Spain as the tendency of gaining European residency was high though Ukraine was not a member of the European Union. In 2015, Ukraine was labelled as the most corrupt country in Europe. This corruption pervaded the education system, making Saudi Arabia and some countries in the Middle East not to recognize its medical degree by 2011.

### **Effects of the Outbreak of the War on Nigerian Students**

**Re-enactment of Fatein Nigerian Government:** The Russia-Ukraine war saw Nigerian students being stranded and there were calls on the Nigerian government for immediate evacuation of the students. The embassy at Kyiv merely told the students to stay calm. The presidency announced a budget of 8.5 million dollars and commenced bringing back Nigerians on 2nd March, 2022. By 14th March, 2022 the Nigerian government through Gabriel Odu noted that about 1,200 Nigerians including students had been evacuated.415 students from Romania who escaped from the Ukraine war successfully landed at the Nnamdi Azikiwe International Airport, Abuja on4th March, 2020.<sup>28</sup> The Nigerian government that financed this evacuation promised to evacuate about 366 Nigerian students at a later date from Sumy State University. As the evacuees landed at the airport they were profiled and a rapid COVID19test conducted on them and each was given 100 dollars to take them back to their various destination. Some students that fled to Hungary, Poland, Romania and Slovakia refused to return to Nigeria because of the hopelessness in the country. A masters student of Nigerian origin lambasted the Nigerian government for not giving them any form of psychotherapy in Poland. He was

not ready to come back to a country where its president declared the youths to be lazy. He averred thus

No therapy, as I am here now. I was ill for two days. The Nigerian embassy keeps making us get scared by sending us warning messages that we should return home, else we are going to suffer for it and be deported back to our country.<sup>29</sup>

It is true that the Nigerian government has been deficient in a lot of its responsibilities to its citizens such as providing security to its people. The government has done well in terms of evacuating its citizens from war-torn countries like Liberia and Sierra Leone in the past. In 2011 when Libya was boiling in which Muammar Gadhafi was assassinated, the Nigerian government equally evacuated Nigerian citizens. The call to the Nigerian government to embark on the evacuation of its citizens was a show of fate by the Nigerians in Ukraine.

**Basement/Bunker Confinement:** As the war was going on the students were advised to stay in the basement or bunker at the underground level of their hostel or any other bunker. Bunkers could also be located above the ground but below the ground is preferable. A bunker (bomb shelter) is a concretely constructed shelter that cannot be easily damaged by a bomb. Types of bunkers include trench, artillery, industrial, personal and munitions storage trenches. Bunkers are common features as there are about 5000 of them in Ukraine with many being renovated since Russia's take-over of Crimea in 2014. A bunker can accommodate about 350 persons. Most of these bunkers were built during the cold war era.<sup>30</sup> Nigerian students were in the bunkers for days and their food supplies ran out. The experience of the students could be described as a baptism of fire as their psyche was affected. A lot of thoughts crossed their mind. Staying in the basement was a sort of confinement because it was against their will and they had no option but to stay safe. Bamisaye Victor who was in Crimea in 2014 during Russian annexation advised the Nigerian students to stay in the basement as the bombardment was going on.<sup>31</sup> Isaac Thomas, a Nigerian student in a basement at Kyiv complained that his food would last for few days.<sup>32</sup>

**Trekking Experience:** The Russia-Ukraine war forced students to trek for long distances to the Polish, Hungarian, Romanian and Slovakian border as there was the near absence of vehicles to take them to their destination. Some of these students before the war had not walked a distance of even 1000metres and were forced to do this during the war. Timothy Adegbile asserted that students trekked for about 16kilometres like from 9pm to 6am, spending 9 hours on the route.<sup>33</sup> Intermittently, along the route they had to rest and even sleep in the cold. In some cases, they trekked from about 1 to 2 hours to the Polish border. Bamisaye Victor revealed that during the Crimea annexation by Russia in 2014, some Nigerian students that were running for their lives were kidnapped and later released after much torture and diplomacy with ransom being paid. He foresaw a possible repeat of this in the Russia-Ukraine war.<sup>34</sup> His fears were even confirmed in a report where it was alleged that some whites in their cars cajoled the trekking Africans to come and join them promising to take them to the border. On boarding these vehicles, they drove to a different direction.

**Racial Discrimination:** The views of the Caucasian race about the Negroid race have always been negative. The views include-Africa had no ingenious manufacturers; it was not a historical part of the world; it could not boast of any empire before colonialism etc. In the 1980s and 1990s, there was this almanac with the picture of Jesus Christ with the usual fair complexion of the Caucasians while that of Satan was painted black depicting Africans. It is true that a good number of Africans are dark in complexion but due to the Eurocentric view about Africa, whites arguably came up with some compound words such as blackmail, black market, black magic, Black Maria, black mass, black sheep, black spot etc to discredit Africans as these words connote negativity. The Europeans labeling themselves as white is a misnomer because that is not their real complexion. The use of the word 'white' is just to show superiority as it indicates holiness amongst other meanings. They even introduced the Hamitic theory to make the whites look superior to the Africans. This opinion of the Europeans concerning Africa is the bedrock of racial discrimination. As the students were fleeing the war in Ukraine some of the students that were lucky to board trains were asked to give up their seats to Ukrainians. At the border the students were barred from crossing the border and they initially

stayed there for about two days, in some cases in the open without being attended to as preference was given first to Ukrainian citizens. Africans were asked to stay on one side and were asked to always give way whenever a Ukrainian was to pass through the border.<sup>35</sup> This means that the life of an African was of lesser value when compared to that of a European. The Ukrainians saw Africans as slaves that willingly migrated to their country and could be treated with disdain. Tade Omotosho, the Chairman of NIDOP (Nigerians in Diaspora in Poland) said about thirty students were stopped at the Polish border as at 25th February, 2022. NIDOP had plans to provide accommodation to Nigerians that successfully crossed the border into Poland.<sup>36</sup> At the Hungarian border, the Nigerian embassy came to the rescue of Nigerians by getting accommodation for some of the students.

**Academic Disruption:** Majority of Nigerians living in Ukraine were students as they were about 3,552 of them as at 2018 coming second after Morocco based on the number of African students in the country. In Sumy State University alone there were not lesser than 368 Nigerian students.<sup>37</sup> Cliff Ogbeide stated that two months before the war, there were over 12,000 Nigerian students in Ukrainian universities. The war disrupted the academic pursuit of these students as they fled Ukraine. The government of Nigeria promised to liaise with universities in European countries such as Poland, Greece and Hungary to see if they could admit the students who were already in their fifth and sixth year in medical school. Private universities in Nigeria started wooing runaway students from Ukraine. Adegbinayi Emmanuel, a fleeing Nigerian student from Ukraine revealed that he was not ready to attend any university in Nigeria or anywhere else.<sup>38</sup> Some students preferred to remain in Poland to continue with their studies there rather than return to Nigeria. Wegwu Kella, a Nigerian student at Dnipro Medical Institute described her fleeing from her studies in Ukraine as ‘a sweet bitter experience’. She saw Ukraine as her home.<sup>39</sup> A master’s student, Mose Anthony lamented that the war stopped his programme abruptly that was supposed to end in seven months’ time.<sup>40</sup> A good number of these students that were affected by this war would not gain admission immediately in universities in other lands, thereby prolonging their year of graduation. In June 2022 the Nigeria Medical and Dental Council announced it would not recognize medical online degrees awarded by Ukrainian universities because some universities decided to go online as the war raged on.<sup>41</sup>

## Conclusion

This paper has x-rayed the attraction of Nigerian students to Ukraine. It brought into limelight the impact of the commencement of the Russia-Ukraine war on the Nigerian migrant students studying in Ukraine. The Central Bank of Nigeria revealed that Nigerians spent 28.65 billion dollars between 2010 and 2020 on foreign education.<sup>42</sup> If Nigerian institutions were running smoothly such amount would have been on the low side. Despite the positives highlighted about studying in Ukraine, in 2016 it was observed that the introduction of private HEIs earlier in the education system diluted the system.<sup>43</sup> Also, graduates displayed lack of essential employability skills based on the 2011 World Economic Forum Global Competitiveness Report.<sup>44</sup> The low quality of its medical degree partly as a result of corruption could be a contributory factor to the mass failure in the examination organized by the MDCN (Medical and Dental Council of Nigeria) for foreign graduates who wanted to practice in Nigeria. This might have been the reasons a lot of Ukrainian students are found studying in Poland and Russia. However, Nigerians still trooped to Ukraine these shortcomings notwithstanding in the education system in Ukraine, they were considered to be insignificant when compared to the rot that has disfigured and dismembered the Nigerian higher education system.

## Recommendations

- Laws should be made by the National Assembly and with the President of Nigeria giving his assent to ensure that public office holders should desist from sending their children abroad to acquire foreign education.
- The Nigerian government should pump adequate funds into revitalization of the university system and improve the working conditions of the university workers. 26% of the annual budget should be mapped out for education as recommended by UNESCO.
- NANS (National Association of Nigerian Students) should always back the demands of ASUU as it (ASUU) is fighting also for the benefit of students. A divided NANS will never help matters.

- Parents of students should also support agitations of ASUU. If not for ASUU, the fees paid by their children and ward would have skyrocketed and also the present infrastructure in the universities would not have been realized. The public universities would have been wearing the look of public primary and secondary schools.
- In a situation where the government is claiming it does not have enough funds to run the universities and it is being supported by parents and NANS, then the senates of various universities should decide on what the departments in the universities should pay as tuition. This may likely be between 500,000 and 800,000 naira per semester.

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