

Nigeria Agricultural Policy Project Highlights

June 2018

Scholar Program 19

THE PROJECT SCHOLARS PROGRAM, PERSONAL BENEFIT TO ME. IT IS A GOOD INVESTMENT.

Professors' need for regular interactions with academic colleagues in other countries and re-tooling for currency of knowledge beyond the normal short duration conferences and workshops (which many don't attend) cannot be over emphasized. This programme, to a reasonable extent,



PRESENTING ON MY RESEARCH AND POLICY IMPACT IN NIGERIA

provided a platform for these important academic exercises. The programme is comprehensively educative and worth investing on considering its potentials and efficacy. Indeed, the value for money invested on the program is very high especially in non-cash terms.

Few examples include the multiplier effects of the Professors' field and class observations, and the subject matter knowledge gained by the student-beneficiaries of the program. Both the students and their professors are faculty members who will return to their home universities to teach their courses and the knowledge gained will be brought to bear on their lectures. My student under the programme



I WAS 1 OF 3 NIGERIAN SUPERVISORS VISITING MSU

teaches research methodology with me and exposure to this programme has brought us in contact with a professor who participated in the design of many surveys done by our National Bureau of Statistics (apex body that conducts most of our national surveys). It was thus easy to have hands-on engagement with the expert and to discuss many design, sample selection and bias issues in social science research. Hence, the idea that knowledge is broadened by exposure, exchange of ideas, collaborations and networking was evident in the programme.



DISCUSSING EXTENSION AT THE KELLOGG BIOLOGICAL STATION

The environment for good study especially as it concerns infrastructure is another benefit. The programme enabled positive change of teaching and learning environment for us the visiting professors, who came from environments where public infrastructural development, especially in terms of power and ICT is slow. MSU has state of the art publicly supplied and functional infrastructure. The visit therefore availed us the opportunity to get both hard and soft intellectual materials that will facilitate teaching and learning in our home universities on return. We also got information on the availability of valuable teaching and library materials that can be ordered by our universities or even donated to our institutions as part of the collaboration. Interactions with colleagues in the department, other faculty members and different categories of staff enabled me to compare notes on content and quality of academic materials in my

home University. I was able to see the efficacy of using effective ICT apparatus at pre and post course delivery periods; use of students' result as data for planning, modifying and changing a course curriculum with the involvement of all stakeholders in the teaching and learning of the course; among other things. Though I am conscious of the challenges of implementing some of the gained knowledge especially in terms of infrastructure limitations, the zeal to advise policy on the urgent need to upgrade facilities in my university seems to have increased. Indeed, I couldn't wait to go home to advocate for in-service training of our ICT personnel and to mount subtle pressure on my University management to increase financial allocations to power and ICT. These actions were aimed at improving ICT-based teaching and learning including uploading of lecture materials and assignments before commencement of the semester. It is also important to learn how to detect defaulters and electronically apply sanctions. I submit that despite the fact that I have been a faculty member in an international school, I still had more to learn in terms of rudiments of ICT-based teaching and learning for the 21st century education management.



BEST PRACTICES AT THE MSU STUDENT ORGANIC FARM

Some interactions that I had in MSU which are worthy of mention include but not limited to:

- Various targeted discussions with Dr Saweda Liverpool-Tasie who gave us (the visiting lecturers) a thorough orientation on the programme and acted as link to other colleagues/faculties. She in addition to co-advise my supervisee in the programme, participated in and facilitated discussions of many collaboration meetings and followed up on resolutions, especially as these will enhance the long standing historical relationship between MSU and UNN.
- Interacting with Dr Laura Schmitt Olabisi who apart from being the co-supervisor of my student at MSU, plans to visit UNN as a major trainer and co-facilitator

of our proposed UNN summer training workshop on systems dynamic modelling.

- Others include, Dr. Oyinkan Tasie, Professor Andrew Dillion, Richard Wolf, Richard Mkandiwire, Dr. Amy Jamisson and Dr. Gretchen who added a lot of value to my participation in the NAPP activities at MSU.

[In terms of research collaborations, it may be important to note that I was able to reach an agreement with MSU colleagues in MSU to hold a joint design workshop in UNN. Consequently, a team is being formed at both institutions (UNN and MSU) to discuss some curriculum and design items for establishment of a Gender Research Centre in UNN and to further discuss an earlier planned regional conference on Gender and Food Security in 2019.



FOOD PRODUCT INNOVATION CENTER ASSISTS STAKEHOLDERS

[Visits to research centres and stations like the MSU Product Centre, Kellogg Biological Station and Students' Organic Farm also yielded benefit to me. I observed a link between curriculum, farm engagement and commercialization in the product centre and student's organic farm. It was also exciting to see robot-milking of cows in large dairy farms. In summary, my short-term *scholar visit* to MSU widened my academic horizon and can simply be described as a worthy and memorable experience.

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