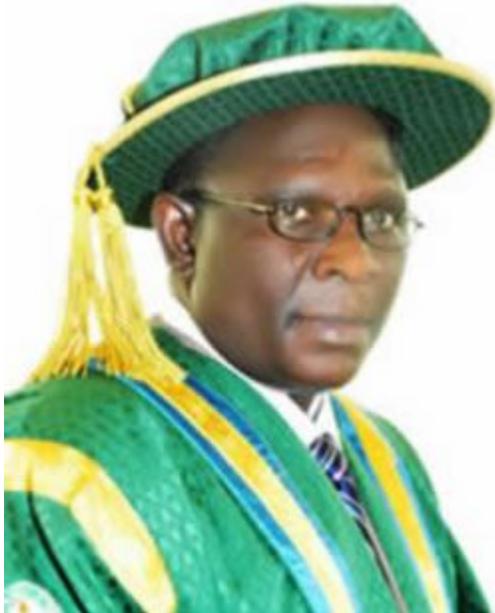


Rising youth unemployment worries VC

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Vice-Chancellor, Federal University of Agriculture, Abeokuta, Prof. Olusola Oyewole
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Vice-Chancellor of the Federal University of Agriculture, Abeokuta, Ogun State, Prof. Olusola Oyewole, has expressed concern over rising youth unemployment, saying about 40 per cent of Nigerian youths are jobless.

Oyewole stated that the youths who fell into this category of Nigerians were only roaming the streets, with nothing to do because of lack of gainful employment.

The vice-chancellor, who said this while addressing 3,653 fresh students of the institution during the matriculation ceremony for the 2012/2013 academic session, also urged the Federal Government to address the issue of youth unemployment.

He said this would enhance the nation's progress.

Oyewole stressed that the future of the country depended largely on the quality of the youths it could produce today.

“Our country is one that is suffering from statistics ‘fever;’ if not, we would have seen that between 30-50 per cent of our youths, if not more, are roaming the streets without job.

“It is a shame that our youths come into the university for four-year programmes, but they end up spending six or seven years, not because they have not performed well, but because of factors beyond their control,” he said.

In his paper titled, “Let us rethink,” the VC said the country required graduates who possessed the skills and competence that could make them competitive in the evolving knowledge economy driven by information communication technology.

Oyewole challenged universities to live up to the task of producing competent graduates who would be relevant and marketable in the labour market and also useful in national development.

He decried a situation where students would spend more than the required number of years for their programmes because of certain factors “beyond them.”

He said, “The future of our country depends on our youths. The future of our country also depends on the quality of education that we give to our youths of today.”

The FUNAAB described as shameful the resolve of some students to join cult groups and engage in other anti-social vices, adding, “This is not the path to greatness.”

Oyewole therefore assured that FUNNAB was not only concerned about the certificates awarded, but would continue to give room for the development of appropriate skills and competence that would distinguish its products in the years ahead.