

ADVANCING DIVERSITY IN SCIENCE: A SEMINAR AT KADUNA STATE UNIVERSITY

PHARMAFLUENCE EDUCATION ADVANCEMENT NETWORK (PEAN) *In Collaboration with* KADUNA STATE UNIVERSITY

Presents

Diversity in Science Seminar
DIVERSITY IN SCIENCE IN HIGHER EDUCATION:
Celebrating Differences and Building Unity

SPEAKERS

Prof. Timothy Babes
Prof. Ahmed L. Isah
Prof. Abdul E. Olu
Prof. Hassan U. Yusuf

Featuring:
Panel Discussion
Networking opportunities
Breakfast sessions
Fireside Chats
Expositions on Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion

Date: **Thursday, 12th September, 2024**
Time: **10:00am Prompt**
Venue: **500 Seater Pharmacy Lecture Theatre, Kaduna State University**

For more information, Please Call: 08161233115, 08139416256
Sponsored By **BIOCHEMICAL SOCIETY**

The Diversity in Science Seminar, organized by Kenneth Bitrus David (Biochemical Society's International ambassador and CEO of the Pharmafluence Education Advancement Network - PEAN) held on September 12, 2024, at Kaduna State University (KASU)Nigeria sought to promote Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) across science-based faculties. A total of 169 attendees, consisting of 91 males and 78 females, participated in the event. The audience included faculty members from the Departments of Biochemistry, Biology, Pharmacy, Medicine, Chemistry, and Microbiology, as well as students, university officials, and representatives from the Kaduna State Ministry of Education.



Invited Speakers

Hajiya Adama Abdullahi, who represented the Honorable Commissioner of Education, Kaduna State, emphasized the need for policymakers and practitioners to adopt EDI principles at all levels. She underscored that Kaduna State, as Nigeria's Centre of Learning, should set an example for others by leading the way in EDI adoption. Hajiya Adama also stressed the importance of students as catalysts for EDI, urging them to understand their role in promoting diversity through academic excellence. She explained that students' success attracts both local and foreign investments, fostering diverse interactions and laying the foundation for EDI. She further addressed the challenges posed by division, favoritism, and bias,

calling on the younger generation to address these issues for the benefit of future generations.

Prof. Abdullahi I. Musa, Vice Chancellor of Kaduna State University, shared his international experiences regarding EDI and advocated for its adoption in Nigeria. He highlighted the importance of understanding EDI concepts and encouraged students to report any violations of EDI practices within the university community. Prof. Timothy Bulus, Former Head of the Department of Biochemistry, emphasized the need for individuals to expose themselves to environments that promote EDI. He cited his decision to pursue education in different regions as an example, stressing that fairness is central to EDI and that students must fulfill their responsibilities to see an equitable and inclusive system in place.

Prof. Audee T. Giwa, Former Dean of the Students Affairs Division, discussed the importance of curriculum restructuring to support EDI adoption and practice at the university. Malam Usman Ladan, representing the Acting Director of University Advancement, highlighted the challenge posed by the shift from free education to a financially demanding system in Nigeria. He suggested that this barrier could be addressed through the creation of alumni societies that promote collaboration and provide need- and skill-based scholarships to support EDI.

Participants engaged in breakout sessions to discuss practical ways to improve EDI within the faculties. Discussions focused on curriculum, admissions, and staff recruitment. Regarding admissions, 43% of student responses recommended adopting a screening process that excludes information on applicants' ethnic or religious backgrounds. In terms of inclusiveness, 38% of student responses suggested providing scholarships for free education and reducing tuition fees.

Prior to the seminar, a research study was conducted to evaluate EDI compliance in KASU's science-based faculties. The study revealed challenges related to diverse representation among faculty, the inclusion of EDI-related courses in the curriculum, and the lack of support systems for students facing discrimination. Based on these findings, several recommendations were proposed, including establishing clear EDI policies, promoting diverse representation among faculty and staff, integrating EDI-focused courses into the curriculum, and developing robust support systems for students experiencing discrimination. Additionally, it was recommended that a dedicated office or department be created to oversee and coordinate EDI efforts. These recommendations were shared with the university for further consideration and action.