

The Menace of Secret Cults in Higher Educational Institutions in Nigeria

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ABSTRACT This study was undertaken to establish the reasons why students in higher educational institutions in Delta State of Nigeria join secret cults on the campuses, the effects of the incidence, and the strategies to employ to eradicate it from the institutions. It was a descriptive survey in design, and using a systematic, proportionate random sample of 665 students, 220 lecturers and 115 school administrators in the state-owned University, three Colleges of Education and three Polytechnics, who duly completed a closed-ended and open-ended 31-item questionnaire, the study confirmed the supposition that students join secret cults in the institutions to terrorize lecturers to pass their courses at all cost, and to provide security services to new initiates and shield them from oppressive students and the perceived hostility of wicked lecturers. A number of effects of the secret cults in the institutions were also established, some of these being cultism leading to certificates not being backed up with true academic struggle, and this leading to reduction in manpower quality; by design, cultists seriously abusing hard drugs like cocaine and alcohol, and in that state of mind, committing heinous crimes; identified and expelled cultists possibly becoming school drop-outs, robbers, prostitutes, drug-peddlers and maladjusted people in life; and cultists spearheading riots at the slightest opportunity and in the process looting and causing damage to school property. It was then concluded that the solution to the menace of secret cults in the institutions rests with evolving a broad-based approach which should involve all stakeholders—students, lecturers, institutions' authorities and government.