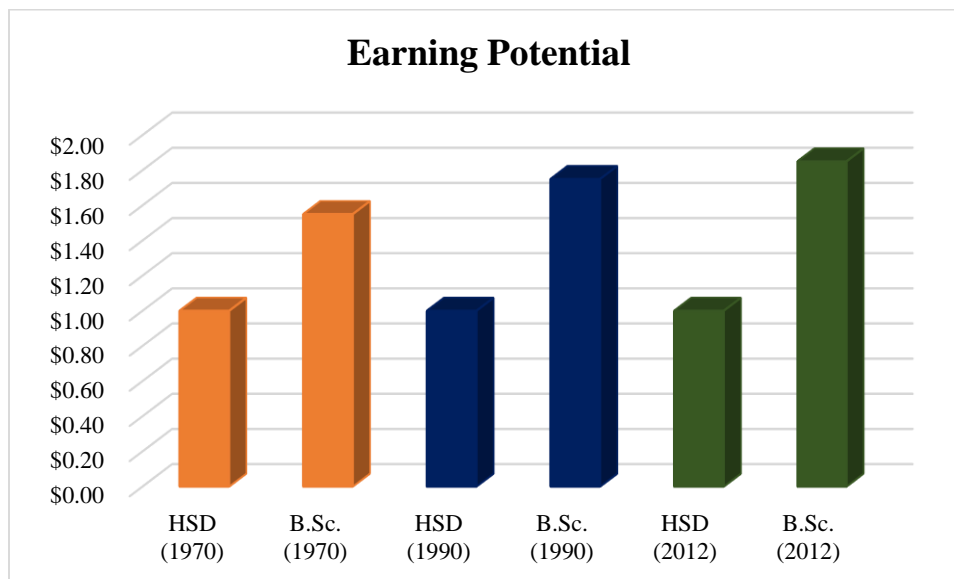


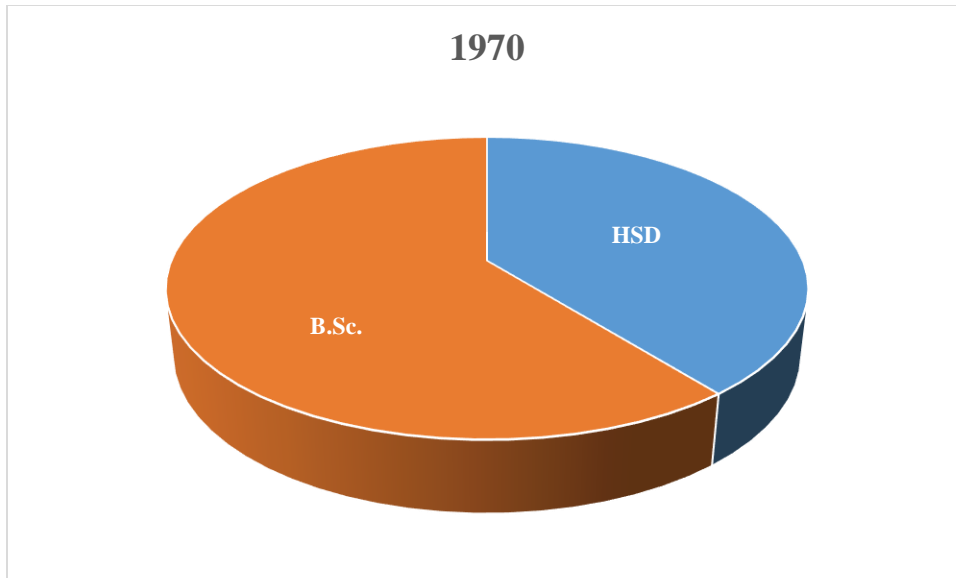
## The Quest for a New Beginning: Introducing ‘The Light Bulb (TLB)’ Program

Arguably, education is, and will always be, the defining factor that elevates society from the mundane to the urbane. The illumination of the mind comes with attributes that, trigger an aspiration for the upliftment and advancement of quality living and, accelerates a spirited search for the ever elusive state of utopia. It goes without saying that a good education leads to a more financially rewarding life. A simple exemplification to support this argument can be drawn from data obtained from the US Census Bureau which suggests that the increase in the earning potential of baccalaureate degree holders over high school graduates has risen progressively over time. In the 1970’s, bachelor’s degree holders earned 55% over high school graduates over a life time (40 year period [25-65 years]). This figure rose to 75% in the 1990’s and is presently 85% today (Scott 2012, Fig.1-4).



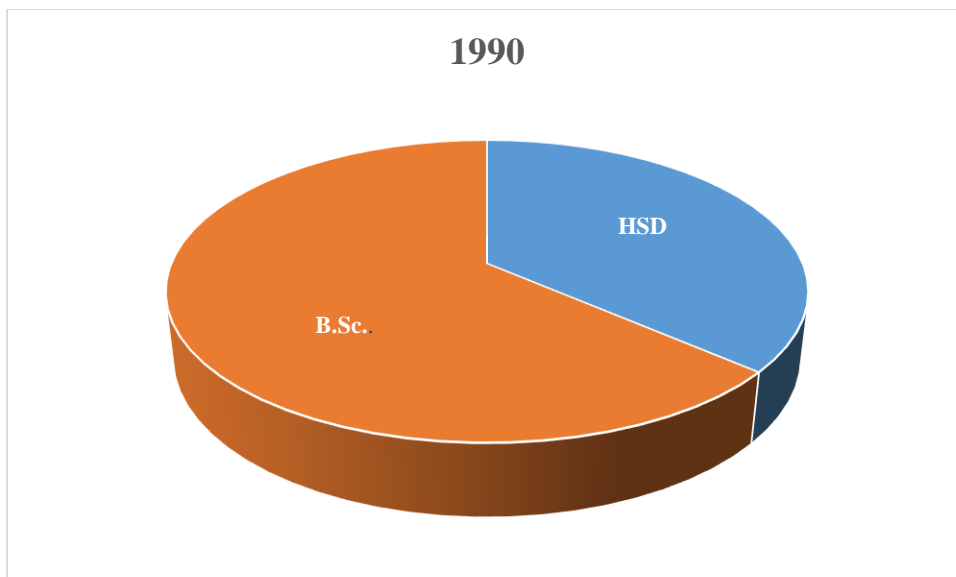
\*HSD = Higher School Diploma; B.Sc. = Bachelor of Science

**Figure 1:** 3D Bar chart illustrating differential in the earning potential of HSD and Baccalaureate degree holders (1970-2012).



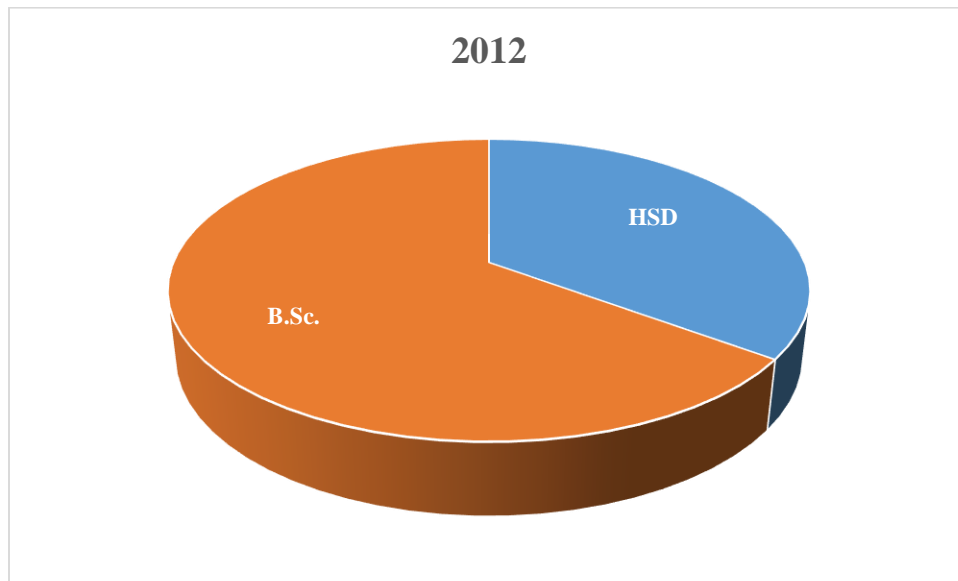
\*HSD = Higher School Diploma; B.Sc. = Bachelor of Science

**Figure 2:** 3D Pie chart illustrating differential in the earning potential of HSD and Baccalaureate degree holders (1970).



\*HSD = Higher School Diploma; B.Sc. = Bachelor of Science

**Figure 3:** 3D Pie chart illustrating differential in the earning potential of HSD and Baccalaureate degree holders (1990).



\*HSD = Higher School Diploma; B.Sc. = Bachelor of Science

**Figure 4:** 3D Pie chart illustrating differential in the earning potential of HSD and Baccalaureate degree holders (2012).

It is impossible to ignore the correlation between education and sustainable development. The United Nations in recognition of this launched a campaign called “Education for Sustainable development (ESD)” (UNESCO 2012). Sustainable development translates easily into quality living and decreased mortality rates (UNICEF 2013). Today, the world is littered with nations that have liberated themselves from the shackles of compromised growth. These nations have launched educational programs that are designed to arm their citizenry with qualifications and skill sets that will make them globally competitive. This invariably leads to increased optimization and consequently enhanced productivity of their work force.

Globally, educational achievement has been and continues to be an index of success for individuals (OECD 2015). It is therefore incumbent on parents, guardians and mentors to encourage their children and wards to strive to acquire a good education. It is also pertinent for other stakeholders to participate in the attainment of this noble objective. While, in certain societies, it may have become pedestrian for people to acquire elementary and secondary education, the challenge has always been making the transition from secondary to tertiary education. This challenge is certainly not limited to students in underdeveloped or

developing countries. While indicators suggest that students in developed nations may enjoy higher transition rates, these indices are less than desirable. This is the crux of this commentary and leads to a proposition for an escalation in bilateral collaborations between post-secondary institutions in developed and underdeveloped/developing countries as a possible panacea for this troubling issue.

The proliferation of tertiary institutions in Africa's most populous nation, Nigeria, has led to the closure of several post-secondary institutions geared towards facilitating the transition of high school leavers to universities and polytechnics in that country; many of these institutions that are not closed have become enveloped in emerging tertiary institutions that sprinkle the terrain. Unfortunately, this presents a huge challenge for several high school leavers without the necessary credentials to proceed to college. In light of this development, SEEED (Sustainable Energy Environmental and Educational Development), an organization headquartered in Houston, Texas, USA with points of contacts (pocs) operating out of Europe and Africa is embarking on a campaign to address this challenge.

SEEED is the initiator and facilitator of its flagship program tagged 'The Light Bulb (TLB).' TLB targets our persons of interest; students who face the challenge of transitioning from secondary (High School) to tertiary (College) education. SEEED's TLB program will connect students with a vision of global awareness and align them with potential career opportunities; ***TLB students will be 'decidedly [globally] marketable and ready to compete in today's and tomorrow's labor market.'***

In the FALL of 2014, SEEED/TSF under the umbrage of TLB successfully initiated and facilitated the establishment of a collaboration between two post-secondary institutions: **a)** E. L. Broady Academy, San Antonio, Texas, USA; and **b)** EL-THOMP College of Technology, Abak, Akwa-Ibom State, Nigeria. These two institutions share a common vision anchored on providing innovative, interactive, cutting edge quality education and Christian spiritual guidance and counseling. This vision is encapsulated in a two pronged methodology which will address the needs of, and present a holistic approach to, the intellectual and spiritual well-being of the student. It is SEEED's hope that this collaboration initiates a program that **i)** embraces the needs and aspirations of high school leavers with inadequate qualifications; **ii)** provides a

structured pathway towards a successful college education, and ultimately **iii)** results in a lifetime of sustainable financial and spiritual fulfillment. SEEED prays that ‘The Light Bulb’ campaign gives birth to a plethora of similar programs that plays a pivotal role in assuaging the needs of this category of students. SEEED humbly solicits for the active partnership of all stakeholders as it begins this incredible journey.

- Classes at EL-THOMP College of Technology commence on Monday, 28<sup>th</sup> September, 2015: <http://www.elthomportal.com/>.

*\*The writer, Dr. Etetor Roland Eshiet, is a graduate of The Institute of Environmental and Human Health (TIEHH), Texas Tech University’s doctoral program. He is Co-Founder /Managing Partner, SEEED/TSF. T. +1.713.714.7477. E. [etetoreshiet@yahoo.com](mailto:etetoreshiet@yahoo.com), [etetor.eshiet@seeedusa.com](mailto:etetor.eshiet@seeedusa.com). PO Box 720959, Houston, TX, USA.*

## References:

1. Scott, G. S. 2012. Earnings widen between college and high school-only grads, On Numbers, The Business Journal. Available at: <http://www.bizjournals.com/bizjournals/on-numbers/scott-thomas/2012/12/grads-earn-85-more-than-those-without.html> (accessed 16 Feb 2015).
2. UNESCO. 2012. Shaping the education of tomorrow: 2012 Report on the UN Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (DESD). Available at: <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0021/002166/216606e.pdf> (accessed on 17 Feb 2015).
3. UNICEF. 2013. Sustainable development starts and ends with safe, healthy and well-educated children. Available at: [http://www.unicef.org/socialpolicy/files/Sustainable\\_Development\\_post\\_2015.pdf](http://www.unicef.org/socialpolicy/files/Sustainable_Development_post_2015.pdf) (accessed on 17 Feb 2015).
4. OECD. 2015. OECD Better Life Index: Education. Available at: <http://www.oecdbetterlifeindex.org/topics/education/> (accessed on 17 Feb 2015).
5. E. L. Broady Academy. Available at: <http://www.broadyacademy.com/> (accessed 16 Feb 2015).
6. EL- THOMP College of Technology. Available at: <https://www.facebook.com/ElThompTechCollege> (accessed 17 Feb 2015)
7. SEEED. Available at: <http://www.seeedusa.com> (accessed 16 Feb 2015).