

## Policy Imperative of Metamorphosing Nigerian Universities into Twenty First Century Academia: Tonic for Nasarawa State University, Keffi

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**Abstract.** Attaining the enviable status of a 21st Century University is desirable and ultimate for every forward-looking university, whether in emerging or advanced world. This paper examines the status of Nigerian universities, against the backdrop of the prevailing situation, inhibitions and requirements for the needed metamorphosis, into 21<sup>st</sup> century height. The paper concludes that huge funding and, governance are a *sine qua non* for leapfrogging Nigerian universities, Nasarawa State University inclusive, over the problems; and recommends that owners and managers of universities should priorities funding and good governance.

**Keywords:** Twenty First Century, University, Funding, Governance, Metamorphosis

### 1. Introduction

The pivotal role of education in individual, corporate or national development is so fundamental that its imperative cannot be tritely examined. For example, the duality in development between the set of advanced and industrialised countries and the set of emerging countries is firmly rooted in the disparity in educational levels. The gains of education can only be roundly estimated when the cost of ignorance, disease, poverty and other major insidious social vices attributable to lack of or poor education are known and appreciated. That countries of the “northern hemisphere” have progressed remarkably, as is aptly reflected in their superior human development indices, vis-à-vis the undesirable doldrums into which countries of the “south” have been relegated, is thus only a reflection of the differentials in the level of education.

The challenge of education, particularly in emerging countries as Nigeria, dated back to pre-colonial era when Africa as a dark continent was impermeable to civilization. However, through the concerted efforts of the colonialists, the erstwhile impenetrable continent experienced semblance of civilization ostensibly introduced through missionary evangelism. In this regard, a few pioneering secondary educational institutions including Church Missionary Grammar School, Lagos, Hopewadell Institute, Calabar; Methodist College, Uzoakoli; Dennis Memorial Grammar School, Onitsha; Kings College, Lagos, and a host of teacher colleges, were established in Nigeria between the mid 1880s and early 1900s. (Mkpa, 2013).

Many privileged Nigerians with learning desire for advanced studies, particularly up to higher technical colleges and universities were compelled by the inauspicious situation to seek private tuition in overseas institutions on correspondence basis, or travel to the few existing African universities such as Furra-Bay College in Sierra Leone and Achimota College in Ghana. Others who were better opportuned travelled to the United Kingdom. Although a higher technical college was established in Nigeria at Yaba near Lagos in the late 1940s known as Yaba Higher College, it was not until 1948 that a degree training tertiary institution was established in Nigeria, at Ibadan: the University College, Ibadan (UCI). Essentially, UCI was a campus of the University of London, and provided academic instructions to students who earned degrees of the latter university. This phenomenon marked a new epoch in university education in Nigeria.

The objective of this paper is to conduct an expository analysis of the prevailing situation of

Nigerian universities, with a view to proposing the antidote for leapfrogging the academic into the 21st century status.

## **2. Evolutionary Trajectory of University Development in Nigeria**

The trajectory of development of university education in Nigeria, for precision and ease of examination, can be categorized into different eras: first, second, third, specialized and new generation (Tomori, 2016), as examined.

### **2.1 First Generation Universities in Nigeria (1948-1962)**

Encouraged by the huge public response to the new dawn in tertiary education, and propelled by the need to prepare Nigerians for the post-independence manpower needs, Nigerian Government and the Regional Governments established new universities between 1960 and 1962: Universities of Nigeria (1960), by the Eastern Region; University of Ife (1962), by Western Region; Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria (1962), by Northern Region; and the University of Lagos (1962), by the Federal Government. UCI became fully fledged and autonomous in October 1962, with the new name as University of Ibadan. To provide effective coordination, and for quality assurance, Ashby Commission was appointed by the British Colonial Administration in 1959. The report of the Commission led to the establishment of National Universities Commission (NUC) by the Federal Government of Nigeria in 1962 as a department in the Cabinet Office.

### **2.2 Second Generation Universities (1970-1989)**

As Nigeria's population increased from 45.2million in 1960 to over 56million in 1970, and as the number of eligible candidates soared, the need for additional universities to meet the demand for higher education arose. To be sure, the growing population created huge deficits in well trained manpower needed in administrative, scientific and technological development of Nigeria. Such high level manpower was also essential in supporting the new-independent status of Nigeria. Thus, between 1970 and 1989, 24 additional universities were established across Nigeria. Of the number, 17 were federally owned; while 7 were state owned. This set of universities have been classified as second generation.

### **2.3 Third Generation Universities (1990-2015)**

Because the population of Nigeria continued on a trajectory of rapid growth, the pressure to expand the existing universities to accommodate new applicants mounted further. To be sure, from 56.1 million in 1970, Nigeria's population grew to 95.6 million in 1990, nearly 100per cent increase, as reported by population census. The census figures put the growth proportion of the population, particularly within the school age bracket of 15-24 years, at about 20 per cent. In the circumstance of population pressure, and the scramble for admission placement in the limited spaces, additional universities were established between 1990 and 2015. In this regard, 112 additional universities, made up of 18 federal, 33 state and 19 private were established, bringing the total to 141 during the period. The 112 new institutions belong to the set of third generation.

An interesting perspective on university categorization was the historical and political underpinning. While the first two universities established in Nigeria, that is, Universities of Ibadan and Lagos, were federally owned, to usher in the epoch of university education in Nigeria, the seven subsequent federal universities, established at Benin (1970), Kano, Calabar, Ilorin, Jos, Maiduguri, Sokoto and Port Harcourt (1975-1977), were fondly christened second generation universities. For the note, the Universities of Nigeria, Ife and Ahmadu Bello were, although first generation, regional institutions, established by Eastern, Western and Northern Regions respectively, to address the specific educational needs of the regions.

### **2.4 Specialised Universities (1980-1992)**

Between 1980 and 1992, the Federal Government established a new set of universities based on areas of special needs and focus. These universities were intended to provide specialised teaching and research in agriculture and technology. While those with focus in agriculture were located at Makurdi, Abeokuta and Umudike, the technology-focused universities were located respectively at Yola, Owarri, Akure and Minna. In terms of their chronological order of emergence, however, the universities may be rightly classified as third generation.

### **2.5 Fourth or New Generation Universities**

The establishment of additional universities continued with time and pressure. During the era, in the 2000s, no clearly defined criteria seemed to have guided establishment of universities. Thus, an assortment of universities, for the Military Police, Maritime and Petroleum Sectors, were haphazardly

established. The era also experienced an “epidemic” of state-owned universities, particularly as thank you gifts’ by Governors for election support. To be sure, in the decision to establish additional universities, no recourse may have been made to available and potential facility requirements or needs, be they infrastructural or human; instead, the desire to provide admission for the soaring number of eligible candidates was often advanced as the cardinal reason for the action.

### **3. The Notion of “New Generation University”**

The notion of “new generation” presumes that the Nigerian academia is saddled with the aspiration to upscale to the lofty standards set and indeed attained by foremost universities of international repute, based on modernity. In this wise, the pertinent question is what constitutes a “new generation university”?

Answer to the question is obtainable from a cursory examination of the attributes or characteristics of a new generation university. With regard to periodicity, Wissema (2009) suggested that first generation universities existed during the medieval period, 1100 - 1700. They were off-springs of the Latin Schools, from Plato’s Academia and Aristotle’s Lyceum. Their locations were around important buildings housing churches and monasteries. The major medium of instruction was Latin; while their core mandates included education, defence of the truth and production of professionals (Tomori, 2016).

The period 1400-1860 witnessed the second generation universities, or Humboldt. The mandate of these universities, in addition to those of the first generation, extended to research, in order to explore nature through science and technology. In effect, the products of the new universities were doubly scientists and professionals. From the late 1990s, the third generation universities emerged, through periodic changes, to the fourth and current generation.

With respective to scope, the third generation universities were more global in orientation and perspectives, in contradistinction to the rather national outlook of the second generation institutions. Besides, the latter generation was keenly interested in collaboration with industry, to ensure that their products transformed to entrepreneurs. As a corollary, the third generation universities went beyond conventional teaching and research, to building centres for the creation of innovation, transfer and adoption of technology.

Latching on to technology therefore, a set of third generation universities was created, composed of assortment of students, some distance students receiving instructions and lecture from some 300 kilometers or more, through various electronic or e-media and platforms. New teaching methods and open exchange of ideas characterized learning; while alternative educational products were developed. Providing vocational training support alongside academics became part of the response to the demand of the emerging communities and their diversities. Put succinctly, the universities played a pivotal role, a potent force for the growth and prosperity of their communities. That way, they repositioned their relevance to their immediate environment.

### **3.1 Building a New Generation University: Approaches and Ingredients**

In the light of the identified characteristics, which Nigerian university is truly “new generation”? Put otherwise, what should a Nigerian university do, to become first generation? In answering the question, the fundamental issue relates to efforts made at, or derelictions committed, in leap- frogging Nigerian universities over the critical obstacles at attaining the desired first generation status by stakeholders.

The aspiration to build a world-class university has found an admirable place in contemporary lexican description of the desired destination with regard to the type of university system envisioned by education stakeholders, be they government or individual. Such university of stakeholders’ dream must be one that aspires to “transplant” the Harvards, Oxfords, Yales, Londons, MITs, Stanfords, etc, in Lagos, Kano, Nsukka, Zaria, Abuja, Keffi, Benin and Port-Harcourt. To achieve such feat is Herculean but not impossible.

One approach is to transform an older university to a new generation university. In this regard, South Korea, Taiwan, China, Germany and Russia achieved remarkable success. All the countries did was to leapfrog their older local “Ivy Leagues” over their challenges, by hugely funding their operations and repositioning them to challenge the global “Ivy Leagues” Nigeria’s attempt at similar transformation. Though, a step forward, was largely unsuccessful, because the outcome painted a pen-picture of good money sunk into the pursuit of lost loans by a troubled bank.

Where “rebranding” is inefficacious in building a new generation university, the option of “producing a new body” may be explored. In this approach, the

goal of establishing a new citadel from the foundation must be pursued with a clean objective of creating a world class “Ivy League”. This approach provides an apt opportunity to create a brand new institution with a distinct character and focus. Richard Miller, Head of Olin College, is unique and charitable for his position that, ideas and thoughts which eluded the “rebranded university” are conceived, articulated and incorporated when a new generation university is designed. To be sure, the process of building “a new generation university is a tortuous, arduous and lengthy task which requires careful planning and scrupulous attention to details”. (Bush, 2006)

For the emphasis, providing huge funding is *a sine qua non* for building a new generation university; just as crafting a sharp, unique and realistic vision, to be driven by a very clear mission is. Expectedly also, the mission should be clear and achievable.

The curriculum of the new generation university contemplated should derive from its vision and mission. But it is common place to find the academic profiles or briefs of many Nigerian universities merely presented as juxtaposed excerpts of the visions and missions of the old universities whose goals are at variance with the new ones being established. Even the physical planning, academic costumes, academic calendars and anthems of admired institutions are merely copied and adopted, more often unreflective of the essence of the new universities.

Society is dynamic and current, with regard to emerging global trends and needs. A new generation university should therefore design academic curricula that are capable of teaching and researching in topical issues that can address the contemporary challenges of its society. Such new generation university must, for example, be equipped to teach and conduct researches in contemporary epidemiological issues: Lassa fever, HIV/AIDs, Corona Virus, Ebola, fever, etc. The same is true for emerging global security threats: Boko Haram, Farmers-Herders, Maitatsine, Niger Delta, Ombatse, etc, in various parts of Nigeria. The existing curricula are static, with teaching methodologies dating back to pre-Newtoman era; or at best, with curricula running on pre-independence designs. Is it not common place experience to find old and new universities in Nigeria giving much priority to teaching single honours like, Botany, Philosophy, Zoology, Classics, English, Geography, French, Yoruba, Igbo and History, among others?

To also ask: how has the avalanche of graduates in Economics, Finance, Insurance and Business Administration impacted the observed sluggish growth nature of the economy of Nigeria? Are there no tens of thousands of graduates of Sociology and Political Science, given the current social malady and political nonsense across the wide spectrum of Nigeria?

The early European explorers and missionaries, including Mungo Park, Mary Slessor, the Lander Brothers, etc, were highly unreceptive to malaria, a tropical disease that is well dreaded in the temperate hemisphere. Many of them died of the scourge; and many refused to come, or return to Nigeria when they fled home. From that time immemorial till 2020, is the prevalence of malaria not well sustained in Nigeria as the commonest illness? To be sure, almost 99 per cent out of all laboratory tests ordered by a medical doctor in Nigeria must include malaria. And almost 90 or 95 per cent must test positive. Why has medical research not been able to find an antidote? All these point to the question of the continued relevance or otherwise of the various academic curricula of Nigeria’s universities.

On manning administration, would it not be more egalitarian and morale boosting, if recruitment into all line academic offices is democratized? That way, the electorate, composed of lecturers who arguably are well informed, collectively express preference for an aspirant. If therefore a senior is less preferred to a junior at the polls, the superior will take solace in his popular defeat at the boxing ring, where the field was level. The duality in the existing process in which some offices are elective, while others are appointive, leaves room for grudges, particularly by seniors who may feel that seniority is scarified at the alter of ‘politics’ or sentiments.

Without doubt, a new generation university is global in orientation, distinct from the national orientation of the older generation university. It should be a centre of excellence in teaching and research; and it should create entrepreneurs out of its products. Very importantly, it should be an agent of change, innovation and transformation, leveraging contemporary information and communication technology. Teaching, learning and ideas sharing are effected among teachers and students of diverse ethnicities and locations. Academic solutions are provided to complex problems through design of tailor-made products which offer alternative solutions.

But can effective learning and research take place when the physical environment is uncondusive? First, what is the ratio of student population to the available physical infrastructure: lecture halls or rooms, ICT facilities, office and hostel accommodation, laboratories, furniture, transportation and logistics, etc, in an average Nigerian university? What is the student:teacher ratio? Are guidance and counseling facilities and services available to needy students? What is the fate of the student who requires a wise counsel on choice of courses; or whose academic progress is challenged? Beyond mounting sign boards to warn students against enlistment in social vices, what counseling services are provided, to re-orient a confused student who is at the crossroad of deciding in favour of an invitation or pressure to join an anti-social group on or off campus?

What is the state of available recreational facilities: indoor/outdoor games? To achieve the vision of a new generation university, the design, aesthetics and ambience must be carefully considered because environment plays a considerable influence on the psyche of the dwellers and visitors. The first thing a fresh student relishes upon assumption of residence in some of the overseas “Ivy Towers” is the fantastic scenery, represented in well arranged buildings, wonderful land scape and beautiful flora. In Nigeria, the scenario is one of litters of unkempt buildings, most new ones simply juxtaposed beside older ones; and many unmaintained others providing fertile structures for plant propagation. With such uncondusive environment: physical and human, learning is difficult, because a university become the hostile place for teaching, learning and research. As a corollary, it is little wonder that official and interpersonal relationships among university stakeholders are far from cordial. Bonding, friendship and trust which derive from a condusive environment, and which are essential ingredients of learning, become elusive. (Ekundayo and Ajayi, 2009)

All said and done, is a new generation university one typified by misuse and misappropriation of public funds? Is it one that places premium on corruption in all ramification? Certainly, ‘No’ is the answer. What does it take to overcome the challenges of environmental nuisance or nuances; and to emplace the right environment? Jhingan (2006) writes that one of the major characteristics of underdevelopment of Third World countries is the lack of knowledge of and capacity for the effective and productive utilization of available natural resources.

To answer the question as to what must be done to overcome the challenges associated with the

environment, it is suggested that good governance is the key to effective utilization of the resources available to universities, for productivity and results. As to what constitutes good governances, it is submitted that elements which include visionary leadership, team work, qualified academics transparency, accountability and sound administration are indispensable.

The university structure must cascade hierarchically, from an independent and impartial Council, a sagacious Senate, down to a sound Management, capable of providing cutting-edge leadership, based on ability, responsibility and discipline, to manage the complex human, environmental and institutional diversities, for ultimate cohesion, peace and harmony. In this regard, the right governance framework which provides a clear definition of the structural-functional relations should be provided from the on-set.

Adherence to the structural-functional framework and relationships in the implementation of the organogram should be sacrosanct, to avoid or curtail ugly situations in which blurred functional overlaps initiate and propagate wragglings between Council and Management; or inter-office squabbles among departments or units. Even the succession wars often fought when vacancies arise from the expiration of the term of a principal officer, particularly Vice-Chancellor, can be avoided, if the University Act clearly defines succession process and procedure. To be sure, if, to the contrariwise, such water-tight and essential succession procedure is enshrined, it will forestall “political selection”, which is often preferred and more often adopted by the political class. For this reason, a candidate must belong to a political parity, a cabal or society, because such ascription guarantees success, vis-à-vis relying on the dicey meritocracy. Tomori (2016) observed that in following this despicable alternative, many university political office appointees see their appointments as an opportunity for self-service; and for recouping whatever they “expended”, in the University Council. Temori (2016) therefore concluded that the beauty of a university without the appropriate academic and administrative leadership is an empty cell. To be sure, a new generation university is not built on unsound and despicable structural-functional arrangement. Ofcourse any structure, whether a university or otherwise, built on shaky and wrong foundation must give way shortly, irrespective of the craft or tact adopted in its management.

### **3.2 Is Establishing “New Generation Universities” Feasible in Nigeria?**

As an institution for providing a public good, a university, particularly one which aspires to be new generation, must go beyond the ordinary, to deliver the perceived socially unattainable. Reeds and Hawkins (2003) noted that “the new generation university has become a particular kind of public corporation, autonomous but accountable, state-funded yet fee-charging, open to all yet selective, enjoying special privileges but expected to fulfil a range of functions for the public good” Implicitly therefore, the new generation university must transcend the domestic environment to the international market place. To achieve such lofty height, the new generation university in Nigeria must substantially increase its efficiency level; and it must be fantastically prudent in resource management, to meet the challenges of dwindling government funding. Indeed, it should be inward-looking for unexploited resources for self-funding, to support its autonomy. Furthermore, it should be very competitive in all its activities and programmes: curricula, teaching methodologies, research, recreation, accommodation products, etc, so as to attract and retain high quality students and teachers. The university must position very strategically so that its global public perception can confer some advantage on it in the comity of top-rate domestic and international universities.

Under the aforesaid conditions, and many more, establishing universities in Nigeria that meet the global standards of a new generation university maybe a mirage in near term. To ask therefore, what are the factors that militate against establishing new generation universities in Nigerian that are “world-class”? W.W. Reotow in his “Stages of Growth” theory identified five stages through which growth progresses, to attain maturity. One of the critical stages is the preconditions for take-off, after the traditional stage. This stage is characterised by rethinking, reawakening, new ideas about the desire and drive for change and, indeed, a period of renaissance. When this stage of rethinking overtakes the erstwhile traditional, albeit static stage, it is true that moving a system to the next desired level has begun to attain agenda status. From this stand point of history, people reinvent themselves in a new process of creative thinking, the stage when a nation is willing and ready for a change. Even the Scripture posits that new things will replace old things, when the old ones pass away. And so, “replacing” old universities with new ones must come to pass. If the desire for new generation universities must be realised, old ways: poor attitude to doing things, corruption, nepotism and stealing, etc, must die, and new ideas characterised by excellence, honesty, opposition to evil, probity, accountability, pro-

activeness in problem solving and indeed a penchant for culture of best practice must be borne.

### 3.3 What are the Challenges?

Riggs (1961)’s Ecological Thesis attempts to explain the influence of ecology or environment on the character and behaviour of a nation’s public institutions. As in Riggs’ thesis therefore, the first obstacle to building a new generation university in Nigeria is Nigeria. In this regard, juxtaposing the essential criteria adopted in ranking universities with the challenges of Nigerian universities provides insight into the expected role of stakeholders: the state, behaviour or attitude of Government, and indeed Nigerians at large, in promoting, thwarting or retarding building new generation universities. (Schultz, 2002).

Put succinctly, the ranking criteria of universities, as reported by Wissema (2009), traverse the following:

- Funding;
- Quantity and quality of academic staff (PhD holders);
- Quantity and quality of functional and adequately calibrated equipment;
- Availability and sufficiency of physical facilities certified as meeting quality and safety standards;
- Book volumes of the Library;
- Student-teacher ratio;
- Level of accreditation by regulatory and professional bodies;
- Amount received in research grants;
- Quantity and quality of research products and recognitions thereof accorded by national and international organisations;
- Paper referred and cited in top class international journals;
- Publication per staff;
- Products commercialised;
- Number of staff winning nobel prizes and medals;
- Number of highly cited researchers in top 21 broad subject categories;
- Number of papers published in Nature and Science journals;
- Number of papers indexed in Science Citation, Index-expanded and Social Science Citation Index; and
- Per capita academic performance of an institution.

Without doubt, the criteria are more, depending on whether a simple or complex ranking is conducted.

**4. Strategies for Metamorphosing Nigerian Universities into New Generation Status: Lesson and Tonic for Nasarawa State University**

In its 'Editorial Comment', NSUK Official Bulletin, December 2018 edition quoted the then Acting Vice-Chancellor upon assumption of duties in October 2018 as saying:

"my responsibility is essentially to make sure that Nasarawa State University, Keffi becomes a 21<sup>st</sup> Century University". In the same vein, the then Ag. Vice Chancellor in his acceptance speech remarked, as reported by NSUK Official Bulletin (2018): "We want to have a University that will compete with other universities in Nigeria and globally; a university where teaching, learning and research will be driven by ICT..., we are working to see that the university is transformed". By such giant initial strides, the then Acting Vice-Chancellor set the tone and left no one in doubt as to the challenges ahead and the redness to overcome them.

But if the array of criteria listed is truly applicable in deciding the attributes of a new generation university, obviously, a Nigerian university may not come a distant 5000th position in the comity of world universities. Nasarawa State University, with all its huge potentials, will surely not make the list; not only because of its limiting young age factor, but because of more critical challenges. No one requires a soothsayer to confirm the problem, given the gaps: infrastructure, manpower development, lecture and hostel accommodation, laboratory equipment and materials etc. An inspection of the physical development profile on-campus is suggestive of reliance on the generosity of external donor-partners, notably TETFUND, education-loving philanthropists and PPP business venture capitalists.

On recurrent expenditure, it may be surmised that appeals had gone out to the political authority to completely take over the responsibility of the basic but essential funding needs covering personnel emolument, in order to lighten the burden on the University Management so as to inch towards the prospects of predicting smoothly pay day for employees, for survival, morale boosting and stronger commitment.

Keeping to the prescribed student-teacher ratio, for effective teaching and learning, may also be Herculean, in the circumstance of the inadequate funding, because of the high correlation between student population and the level of internally

generated revenue required to augment the derisory statutory receipts.

Every member of the academic staff is desirous of obtaining the required minimum teaching qualification of a PhD. Consequently, many have to stretch their financial resources beyond their ordinary limits, to achieve the target. A "world-class" university would provide the opportunities for the junior academics to advance, under alternative funding schemes. Where and when TETFUND is unavailable, the student-lecturer is on their own. The challenge limits the quantity of the PhD-teaching staff.

As a corollary, teaching and research grants are very scarcely available, except where they are exogenously sponsored and funded. Again, all eyes and hopes are on the inexhaustible TETFUND sources. The limitation has serious implications for productivity; besides retarding the production possibility of research-hungry young academics. During an annual research seminar for young academics in 2019, a participant asked to know how a young entrant, given the earnings, would publish in top-rate overseas academic journals that would normally ask for between USD150 and USD200 per article. At average USD1/N360 exchange rate, the publication fee is N54,000 to N72,000. In the circumstance, publications are unavoidably localized, to reflect the possibility. The article will not likely be globally top-rated, not because the quality is lower than the one published in Harvard Business Review, but because of the financial constraint. In totality, the number of publications in top-rate internationally cited journals must be meagre.

It is likely that many of the research-centric members of the academic staff are aspiring to join the league of Nobel Laureates like Oluwole Soyinka; but none has attained the feat so far. This should not however dampen the enthusiasm and focus of academics: Soyinka laboured for a very long time in a much older university, before the fruit came to him, the University, Nigeria and African continent. Neither should the prevailing situation forestall the bright prospects of achieving higher per capita performance.

To move forward however, academic productivity must be the cardinal objective of achieving excellence. Productivity of the academic staff and students, to be sure, is a derivative of several factors: modern teaching and research methodologies, based on state-of-the-art ICT framework. Where lectures are still delivered with chalk and black board methods, and where lecturers and students are largely

oblivious of ICT techniques and plat forms, particularly because the equipment are unaffordable, effective teaching and research are unlikely. In a new generation university, it is very likely that providing modern computers for lecturers is a necessity, and not a luxury, as it is often suggested in a “lower-case” university.

The outcome of a survey of the teaching staff of NSUK was negative on the question of whether or not the University provided such ICT equipment. An analog university is far from new generation. When the physical infrastructure are provided, work moves on progressively. But that progression can only be short-lived, when the complementary human element is either inadequate or lacking. The situation arises when the quantity and quality of the human capital are compromised. Of more critical importance is quality. Raising the quality can be achieved in a two-prong approach: human capital development and motivation. It had been noted earlier that academic staff development has not taken a stage, talkless of a centre-stage, at NSUK; when the support from TETFUND is subtracted from the sum total of the effort.

On incentives, not much is known about benefits-in-kind for the academic staff; nor is much known about availability to the non-academic staff. How will any academic staff acquire a vehicle, to facilitate his movements for prompt attendance at lectures from the remote part of the sub-urban university location? How is the psyche of the lecturer who resides in Angwan Lambu or High Court area under the same tenancy arrangement as his student postured? Which mortgage arrangement is available to leap-frog the lecturer over such dilemma of low residential esteem? How will a lecturer who has no hope of a paid overseas holiday or a local recreation (due to absence of facilities) enjoy quality health? The “good thing” about the egalitarian nature of the university community is absence of differentiation in, and respect, for status: the facilities are for staff and students on equal basis. The lecturer may therefore not have moved to any level, talkless of the next level. But if any movement, it was to a lower pedigree

## 5. Conclusion and Way Forward

It is discernable from the analysis that NSUK, or indeed any Nigerian university, is not a “new generation” university, although the desire may be strong. The criteria for the metamorphosis are known, clear and achievable, if and only if the situation is well appreciated and the truth is accepted with

equanimity. Only then will “development” be appropriately prioritised for agenda status. As aptly noted by Ake (1981), the problem in Third World countries is that development has not been on the agenda of the ruling elite class. Quite truly, and expectedly, the explanation, plausibly, for the gross deficit of the “development” criteria is the age of the university. But in the digital era, emphasis on age in explaining low speed or declaration is now diminished, if not untenable.

Accordingly, NSUK should retool, recalibrate, reposition and leverage its sole state-owned university advantage to overcome the obstacles, for a rapid drive towards achieving the enviable status of a new generation university, in medium or long term. Very importantly, the University stakeholders should move to address the identified problems; otherwise, the effort and situation will remain one of motion without movement.

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