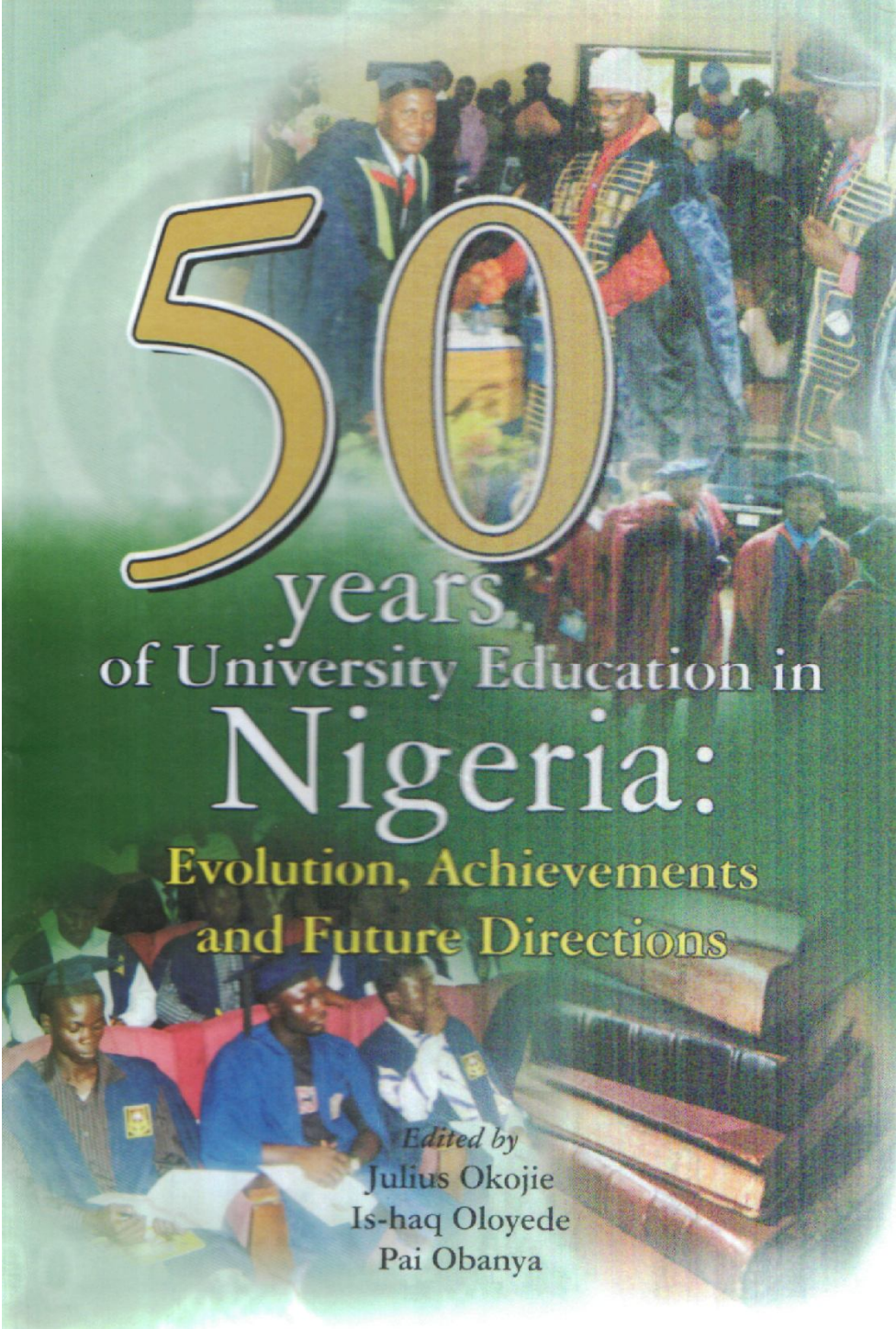




50 years of University Education in Nigeria:

**Evolution, Achievements
and Future Directions**

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CHAPTER 11

Prospects and Challenges of Private Universities in Nigeria: Focus on Islamic Missions' Universities

-Ibrahim Rafiu Adebayo

Introduction

The journey of university education could be said to have commenced in Nigeria in the 1930s when the need for higher education for the citizens of Nigeria was being stressed. This culminated in the establishment of the Higher College, Yaba in 1932 admitting students to pursue courses in medicine, engineering, secondary school teacher training, agriculture and surveying. The shallow objective of the College was not the actual target of Nigerian nationalists who clamoured for university education. However, the World War II disrupted the programme of the College. The Elliot Commission on Higher Education set up by the colonial masters in 1943 was a great landmark in the establishment of higher education in Nigeria.

The report of the Commission contained some vital suggestions and recommendations among which were the establishment of a university college in Nigeria and Gold Coast and that the college in Nigeria should have faculties of arts and science, schools of agriculture, forestry, veterinary science, medicine and few others, while that of Gold Coast was to have faculties of arts and science and an institute of education. The University College, Ibadan was consequently established in January 1948 (Fafunwa, 1982).

The Ashby Commission set up in 1959 marked another landmark in the history of university education in Nigeria. The recommendations of the Commission among others included the federal government's support to the development of the new University of Nigeria, planned in 1955; establishment of a university in the northern part of Nigeria particularly Zaria and another one in Lagos. It also recommended the widening of the curriculum of University College, Ibadan and its development into a full university; and that all the universities should have B.A. (Education) degree courses; and courses in engineering, medicine, law, commerce, agriculture and others. Finally, it recommended that all the universities in Nigeria should be national in outlook, and should be independent of one another and each should confer its own degrees; and that a National Universities Commission should be set up to have undisputed control over the affairs of the universities, particularly in terms of finance, staff and courses

(Fafunwa, 1982). The implementation of the recommendation culminated in the establishment of the University of Nigeria in 1960; University of Lagos (1962), University of Ife (now Obafemi Awolowo University (1962), and University of Northern Nigeria (now Ahmadu Bello University Zaria (1962), while University College of Ibadan was elevated to a full university status.

The right to establish, fund and manage a university was exclusively in the hand of the federal government since the inception of university education in Nigeria till 1979 when an amendment in the Nigeria constitution allowed state governments to establish state universities. This made states like Anambra, Bendel, Cross River, Imo, Lagos, Ondo and Rivers to establish their states' universities. Many other states since then have established their universities and as at 2009, the total number of state universities in the country is thirty-six equal the number of states in Nigeria. This is not to say that every state has its university, but that some states like Ogun, Ekiti and Ondo have more than one.

The emergence of private universities was of later development. Paragraph 67 of the 1998 National Policy on Education stipulates that "voluntary agencies, individuals and groups shall be allowed to establish universities provided they comply with minimum standards laid down by the Federal Government." This same document elucidates the objectives of Nigerian university education as:

- a. intensifying and diversifying its programmes for the development of high level manpower within the context of the needs of the nation;
- b. making professional course contents to reflect our national requirements;
- c. making all students, as part of a general programme of all-round improvement in university education, to offer general study courses such as history of ideas, philosophy of knowledge and nationalism.

The involvement of private individuals and organisations seems to have become the trend of university education throughout the world. In essence, the rapid expansion of nations' higher education in recent years has largely been due to rapid expansion of the private sector. Most developed countries relied on the investments of the private sector in education starting from Harvard in 1534 and Yale in 1701. Okojie (2010) mentions some religious bodies which have been participating in this exercise. Such include the American Catholic University in Washington by 1824 and then the Jesuit Priests also in America in addition to some other Presbyterian churches. The global trend in private proprietorship of education sector at all level gives the impression that Nigeria too should not lag behind.

This is the situation in most Latin American countries and the Caribbean. In Columbia, the private sector is seriously responding to the increased demand for tertiary education with almost 67 percent of total enrolment and 40 percent of enrolment in evening and night courses. In the same vein, the decentralization policy of China has resulted to private involvement in the education sector. The same thing is applicable in such countries as Belgium, Spain, Australia, India, Trinidad, Tobago, Ghana and

Mongolia. In Bangladesh, out of the 82 universities in the country, 54 of them are privately owned with 46 out of this located in Dhaka city, the capital of the country. Also, in Kenya, the number of private universities is three times the number of public universities.

The Emergence of Private Universities in Nigeria

Some private universities could be said to have been established in the second republic of Nigeria prior to the military coup of General Muhammadu Buhari which truncated the administration of the Alhaji Shehu Shagari's civilian government. Gabriel & German (2006) identified one Dr. Basil N. Nkaegbu who attempted to establish a private university at Owerri in Imo State but was frustrated by the military government. The legal frustration which followed the incidence did not allow the university to see the light of the day even though the legal battle was in his favour. Consequent upon this, the military General did not only lay embargo on further establishment of private universities, but also ordered the closure of the existing ones.

The administration of General Ibrahim Babangida took another step on establishment of private universities by lifting the embargo laid by his predecessor and setting up the Longe Commission to review the existing higher education policy in Nigeria. The report of the Commission was however favourably disposed to establishment of private universities. However, the political atmosphere of the period was not suitable for private individuals and organisations to embark on setting up universities.

The Olusegun Obasanjo civilian administration marked a new epoch in the history of university education in Nigeria. That was the time when three private universities were licensed to operate out of about forty applications received for the purpose. The Igbinedion University, Okada, Edo State, Babcock University Ilisan Remo, Ogun State and Madonna University Okija, Anambra State thus became the first set of approved private universities in Nigeria. In 2001, Bowen University, Iwo, Osun State joined the list. The third batch of the approved private universities was released in 2002. They are Benson Idahosa University, Benin, Pan-African University, Lagos, and Covenant University, Ota. A year later the ABTI-American University, Yola was added. A long list of approved private universities was also released by the National Universities Commission (NUC) in 2005 containing fifteen universities. In 2006, Joseph Ayo Babalola University was approved for operation.

The following year (2007), another ten private universities were granted licences to operate. As if this was not enough, late October 2009, the Federal Executive Council approved the issuance of provisional licences for the establishment of additional seven private universities. As at the time of this writing, there are 41 private universities in Nigeria which have been given licenses to operate.

The geometrical rate at which the business of university education is going, in the next few years, private universities will double if not triple the number of federal and

state universities in Nigeria. The breakdown of the distribution of the universities as given below confirms that the establishment of universities by the federal and state governments is at snail pace while that of the private universities is as fast as light.

Table 1 - Number of Federal, State and Private Universities in Nigeria

Period	Federal	State	Private	Total
1948		-		1
1950-1959	-			
1960-1969	4	-	-	4
1970-1979	8	1	-	9
1980-1989	9	6	-	15
1990-1999	3	6	3	12
2000-2009	2	23	38	63
Total	27	36	41	104

From the above, it is observed that prior to the federal government's approval of involvement of private individuals and organisations in the establishment of universities, the nation was aspiring to have private universities. No sooner that the government allowed it than they started springing up from every nook and cranny of the nation. It is also observed that most of the private universities are sited in the south-western part of the country. The reason for this could possibly be the cumulative effects of the free education programme being run in the defunct Unity Party of Nigeria (UPN) ruling states which gave opportunities for their citizens to have free access to primary and secondary education.

Involvement of Muslims in Private Universities

Although most of the achievements of the Muslims had been passed under the carpet by the influence of colonialism, it seems Muslims are now waking up to the task of making their impact known in higher education in compliance with contemporary demands. Appreciable developments are being made in Muslim education in Bangladesh, India, Indonesia, the Philippines, Saudi Arabia and in the African continent. In Bangladesh, apart from the *madrasah* and some higher institutions of traditional Islamic learning, some Islamic universities have been established to teach both modern and Islamic subjects. The International Islamic University Chittagong (IIUC) founded in 1995 is one of the government- approved private universities in Bangladesh. The Jalalabad International Islamic University in Sylhet of the Hikmah International Islamic Trust (HIIT) is also one of the universities, while the Bangladesh Islamic university

in Dhaka has just taken off in 2006. The International Islamic University in Uganda also came into existence in 1988 while the Graduate School of Islamic and Social Sciences was established in the United States by the International Institute of Islamic Thought.

In Nigeria, Muslims seemed to have been fast asleep and felt unconcerned of private Islamic universities by the time their Christian counterparts had established quite a good number of universities. When the Christians started establishing private universities in 1999, the Muslims did not respond until when in January and June 2005 three private Islamic universities were given licences of operation. Ever since then, one was added to it in 2007. Presently, out of the forty-one private universities in Nigeria, only four are owned by Muslim individuals or organisations. The table below shows the list of private Islamic universities in Nigeria to date.

Table 2 - List of Islamic Universities in Nigeria

S/N	Name of university	Date of Licensing	Founder
1.	Al-Hikmah University, Ilorin, Kwara State	January, 2005	Abdur-Rahim Oladimeji Islamic Foundation
o 3.	Katsina University, Katsina State Crescent University, Abeokuta, Ogun State	January', 2005 June, 2005	Katsina Islamic Foundation Islamic Movement for Africa of Prince Bola Ajibola
4.	Fountain University, Osogbo, Osun State	May, 2007	Nasrul-Lahi-1-Fathi Society of Nigeria, (NASFAT)

In spite of the fact that the National Policy on Education allows voluntary agencies, individuals and groups to establish universities provided they comply with the minimum standards laid down by the federal government, the National Universities Commission does not allow such universities established by religious bodies to bear names that reflect the name of such societies. Except for the Redeemer's University established by the Redeemed Christian Church of God (RCCG); Covenant University; and Al-Hikmah University which bears Arabic name, most of the private universities established by individuals or religious bodies, do not reflect the names of the bodies which established them, for reasons best known to the NUC.

However, it is suspected that one of the reasons might be to protect the universal nature of university education which could be confined to a particular group of candidates for religious affiliation. Whatever might be the reason, it is a fact that cannot be denied that most of private universities in Nigeria are established by religious bodies. Although the word 'Islamic' is not attached to any of the so-called Islamic universities, they are distinguished from others by the founders of such universities.

The Katsina Islamic Foundation could be regarded as the first Muslim community in Nigeria to have come with the idea of establishing a private community-based Islamic university. The idea was further accelerated in November 1999 when the Katsina State Government allocated a piece of land covering 246 hectares (608 acres) for the body. No sooner that the land was allocated than the work on the first phase of the construction on the land started. This included general land clearing and filling, internal roads, main access dual carriage way, main gate, staff houses, university mosque, main lecture hall, central library block, and central administrative block. Eventually, the federal Government officially registered the University as Katsina University while 400 candidates were approved for it in the take-off colleges of Natural and Applied Sciences; Social and Management Sciences and Humanities. A total student population of 7004 was granted the University at ultimate development.

Al-Hikmah University, Ilorin, was founded by Abdur-Rahim Oladimeji Islamic Foundation. Members of the Board of Trustees of the University include Dr. Bello H. Mohammed, HRH Alhaji (Dr) Ibrahim Sulu Gambari, Dr Owaish Bn Harbi Al-Ghamdi, Hon. Justice O. Belgore, Prof. Musibau Adewumi Akanji, Prof. Ibrahim A. Mukoshy, Lawyer Yusuf Olaolu Ali (SAN), Alhaji As-Sheikh Dr Musa Muhammed and Hon. Justice Mustapha Akanbi (retired) as the Chairman.

The University was given licence to operate in January 2005 with take-off candidates of 350 foundation undergraduate students and a total population of 5,000 at ultimate development. Colleges of Natural Sciences; Engineering and Technology; Humanities; and Management Sciences were the take-off faculties as Phase one of the University. The University could be said to be an extension of the University of Ilorin, as all her Vice-chancellors since inception are drawn from the University of Ilorin. The foundation Vice-chancellor of the University, Professor Musibau Akanji hails from the Department of Bio-Chemistry of University of Ilorin. Professor R.D. Abubakre was the second Vice-chancellor and he is from the Department of Arabic, University of Ilorin. The current Vice-Chancellor, Professor Abdul-Kareem is also from the University of Ilorin and immediate past Dean, Student Affairs of the University.

Crescent University Abeokuta is the first Islamic university in the south-western Nigeria. The move to establish an Islamic university by Prince Bola Ajibola was preceded by the establishment of the Islamic Movement for Africa (IMA) in 1996 as a process of reforming the propagation of Islam and establishing a citadel of learning which would combine Islamic moral education with western education to serve as a basis for moral re-awakening and rejuvenation in the society. Consequent upon this, a Muslim Intellectual Summit conveyed by IMA was held at IMA Research Centre, Abeokuta on July 5, 2003. More than seventy participants attended the Summit in addition to delegates that were drawn from eight universities and other tertiary institutions.

The Summit concluded among other things that the IMA should set up a University Planning Committee to be responsible for implementing the decisions of the Summit among which was the presentation of all necessary documents for establishment of a university to the National Universities Commission (NUC) for assessment and decision by the IMA Governing Council. The NUC approved the establishment of the University in June 2005 and she commenced her academic programmes in December 2005 with three Colleges namely, College of Information and Communication Technology; College of Natural and Applied Sciences and College of Social and Management Sciences. The mission of the University is guided by the will to:

- i. turn out graduates imbued with character and knowledge, conscious of the fear of God in their daily life;
- ii. provide an enabling environment in which the pursuit of knowledge can be done in an atmosphere of peace, love and harmony;
- iii. develop a new generation of Nigerians equipped with entrepreneurial skills to survive in the ever-changing society and still be loyal to God, nation and fellow human beings (Crescent University Undergraduate Prospectus, 2005-2008).

Fountain University, Osogbo was established by a renowned Islamic prayer group - Nasrul-lahi-Fathi Society of Nigeria popularly known with the acronym NASFAT. At initial stage, the body focused mainly on prayers but later realised the importance of education in the realisation of her objectives, hence started establishing nursery, primary and secondary schools in Lagos, Ogun, Oyo, Kaduna and Niger states. In January 2004, the National Executive Council of the association, the Board of Trustee and the Council of Elders constituted an Academic Brief Review Committee to work harmoniously with the University Project Committee led by a one-time Vice-Chancellor of University of Agriculture Abeokuta (UNAAB) and some notable academics across Nigerian universities.

The outcome of the session was the decision to have a university and this was licensed by the federal government on May 17th 2007 with the name Fountain University established in Osogbo, the Osun State capital under the first Vice-Chancellor of a former Dean, Faculty of Science, University of Ilorin, Professor Hussein, O.B. Oloyede and Pro-Chancellor and Chairman Governing Council, Professor Nurudeen O. Adedipe, former Vice-Chancellor, University of Agriculture, Abeokuta. The University commenced operation with only two colleges namely College of Applied and Natural Sciences and College of Social and Management Sciences. The other phases of development of the University will include colleges of Education, Medicine, Humanities and Technology.

The Prospects of Private Universities in Nigeria

The introduction of free education programme in the political agenda of the then Unity Party of Nigeria ruling states led to the massive enrolment in the states' primary

and secondary schools. This cumulatively led to demand for higher education in universities, polytechnics, colleges of technology and colleges of education. Most of the states affected then took to establishment of polytechnics and colleges of education leaving university education as an exclusive responsibility of the federal government which was believed to have had the constitutional and financial backings to undertake such a gigantic programme. However, insignificant measures were taken by the federal government to establish new federal universities despite the challenges of a constantly changing environment, possibly for insufficient financial resources which did not also allow the existing ones to be adequately funded as well. Run-down physical infrastructure, inadequate laboratories and ill-equipped libraries and dearth of other resources and facilities therefore were the major characteristics of the existing universities consequent upon their under-funding and inadequate financial resources (Akintayo, 2008).

In spite of the irregularities in the facilities in Nigerian universities, increase in enrolment of candidates forced some universities to admit more than their carrying capacities. The table below is an attestation to this.

Table 3 - Enrolment and Carrying Capacity of Nigerian Universities

Type of Universities	Carrying Capacity	Current Enrolment	Difference
Federal Universities	342,049	442,834	+ 100,785
State Universities	163,586	265,166	+ 101,580
Private Universities	28,548	19,740	- 8,808
Total	534,183	727,740	+ 193,557

From the above, it is clearly manifested that both the federal and state universities are chewing more than their mouth could contain, while private universities are yet to fill their expected quota of the number of candidates that could be admitted by them.

The instance of admitting candidates above carrying capacities does not augur well for Nigerian universities. Apart from creating avenue for students' unrest and other social vices, the available facilities which are not yet sufficient will be overstretched and so in the verge of destruction and this consequently aggravates further crisis in the education set-up.

It needs to be mentioned as well that commercialisation of university education culminated in the attempt of universities admitting above their carrying capacities. One is aware of the fact that federal universities are tuition free institutions, but with meagre amount being paid by students for administrative purposes. However, for

sustainability reason, the universities admit more than their carrying capacities to attract more funds. Both federal and state universities further adopt methods of opening branches of their universities which they called centres at venues not conducive enough for learning, while some opened affiliated campuses in colleges of education far away from their institutions for the purpose of mounting degree programmes. The large number of candidates registering in these centres and campuses is indicative of the inadequate number of universities in Nigeria which private universities help in no small measure to alleviate.

The wide gap between the number of candidates that register for university education admission and the number of candidates admitted over the years is another indication that private universities have better chance in Nigeria. The table below shows the justification for having private universities in Nigeria to check the wide gap between the applicants and the admitted candidates.

Table 4: Applications and Admissions to Nigerian Universities 1995-2009

Year	No. of applications	No. admitted	Left Over
1995/1996	512,797	37,498	475,299
1996/1997	475,923	79,904	396,019
1997/1998	419,807	72,791	347,016
1998/1999	340,117	78,550	261,567
1999/2000	417,773	78,550	339,223
2000/2001	467,490	50,277	417,213
2001/2002	550,399	60,718	544,321
2002/2003	994,380	51,845	942,535
2003/2004	1,046,950	105,157	941,793
2004/2005	841,878	122,492	719,386
2005/2006	916,371	N/A	N/A
2006/2007	803,472	123,626	679,846
2007/2008	1,054,053	194,521	859,532
2008/2009	1,182,381	N/A	N/A

Source: <http://www.ume.com.ng> & JAMB, 1988, 1999, 2001.

The shortcomings in the inadequate number of the nation's universities would further be revealed when children of the Universal Basic Education (UBE) are passing out of secondary schools seeking admission into universities. Prior to the commencement of the programme, there has never been a year when the existing universities absorbed up to 25% of the candidates seeking admission into universities. This in essence means that it will require the establishment of more universities to cater for the products of the UBE programme, or else, a large number of them will not have advantage of university education. However, since the government alone could not fulfil this obligation, private universities have opportunities to come to the rescue.

It needs to be mentioned that lack of foresight and future plan has largely been responsible for the failure of many programmes in Nigeria. It is our opinion that ever since the commencement of the current UBE programme, the federal government ought to have been planning ahead for the admission of the products of the programme into the nation's universities by establishing more universities and expanding the existing ones. A leaf could be borrowed from the 8th five-year Development Plan (2005-2010) of Saudi Arabia where the Council of Ministers included the establishment of seven new universities and about 50 colleges of technology in which the 2006 budget allocated a huge sum for the constitution of three new universities in Jizan, Hail and Al-Jouf and one King Saud University of Health Science in Riyadh (Mozemmel, 2005). The prediction of Fafunwa in 1971 that Nigerians would be clamouring for more universities is an indication that the seasoned educationist had foreseen the inadequacy of universities in the face of enrolments into primary and secondary schools or other political reasons. He succinctly writes:

There is no doubt that, sooner or later, Nigeria will be forced either by compelling needs or by political pressure, or by both, to build new Universities or University Colleges. It is of utmost importance, therefore, that the Federal Government in co-operation with the National Universities Commission should establish a firm policy on the opening of new universities. Such a policy must be forward-looking. It must attempt to assess Nigeria's needs for higher education between 1970 and 1999 which is less than thirty years away (Fafunwa, 1971: 209).

A comparative analysis of the number of universities of some selected countries and Nigeria shows that the number of universities in Nigeria is grossly inadequate in view of the population of the country. The Chairman Standing Committee on Private Universities (SCOPU), Professor Onwudike came out with the table below to drive home this point.

Table 5 - Number of Universities in some selected countries

Country	Population (in million)	No. of Universities
India	1000	8,407
USA	290	5,758
Bangladesh	138	1,258
Argentina	39	1,705
Indonesia	238	1,236
Japan	127	1,223
Nigeria	140	104

Source: Onwdike, C. (Inceptional Interaction with Proposed Universities)

Note:- That of Nigeria was updated by us.

Looking at it from another dimension, most of the public universities in Nigeria could not boast of regular academic calendar. While students' unrest forced many to close down, many are contesting one thing or the other with their proprietors, while incessant union strikes have made many of them to close down for more than half of a year. Strikes in Nigerian tertiary institutions lead to destabilization of the learning process which consequently cause low quality service from lecturers because of their desire to cover lost ground.

Akpotu (2004) in his research found out that a total of 99.55 weeks (i.e. 3.32 academic years) were lost in Nigerian universities for a period of six years and that a total of 11.4million man-hours and 28.54 million student-hours were lost during the strikes. This has made many parents to lose confidence in these universities. They thus look for alternatives where their wards could have uninterrupted academic calendars and students could be almost certain of graduating at the stipulated time. Private universities therefore become a viable option, after all, some of the best universities in the world are private universities — Harvard, Princeton, Stanford, Yale and some other.

Closely related to the above is the incessant strike of the campus cultists in public tertiary institutions in Nigeria and this has being a source of great concern to stakeholders in education, namely the government, the parents and the management of the various educational institutions. The phenomenon of campus cults in Nigeria which was dated back to 1952 when the National Association of Seadogs otherwise known as Pyrate Confraternity was formed by the University College Ibadan with the aim of opposing nepotism, favouritism, corruption, tribalism, racism and colonial policies that were considered anti-black and anti-human.

This noble intention of the group was later shattered by the upsurge of several other groups with different nomenclatures like Black Axe, Buccaneers, Eiye Fraternity, Black Hearts, Green Berets, Ozo, Ku Klux Klan (KKK) and such women groups as Daughters of Jezebel, Pink Ladies and Black Brassiere. The cults are known by different names in various Nigerian institutions — Parama in University of Lagos; Bara Cudas in River State University; Jolly Rogers I in University of Ibadan; Jolly Rogers II in University of Nigeria Nsukka; Aquamella in University of Port Harcourt; X'lkings in University of Jos and Walrus in Yaba College of Technology (Paramole, 2002).

The danger of cultism in the nation's tertiary institutions became a matter of serious concern due to incessant bloody conflicts, assassination of people, destruction of properties and disruption of academic programmes of various institutions. A resume of some instances of cultic strikes in Nigerian tertiary institutions is given by Bamgbose (2005) who writes:

In 1991, a University of Benin student received 22 matchets in a clash which involved the Eiye Confraternity. In 1992, six students of Federal Polytechnic, Oke, Anambra State were murdered in a cult clash. In the same year, 2 students of Auchu lost their lives in cult clash. In 1993, Enugu State University of Technology lost a Part five medical student, when the Black Axe and Black Berets engaged each other in open clash. In 1994, clash between the Buccaneer and the Black Axe led to the death of two students at Ondo State University, Ado-Ekiti. The Obaferni Awolowo University carnage of year 2000 where some SUG executives were brutally murdered coupled with clashes in the Polytechnic, Ibadan, Kwara State Polytechnic, Ilorin, Federal Polytechnic, Offa; and of recent were the cult crises in Olabisi Onabanjo University, Ago-Iwoye, Lagos State University and the Federal Polytechnic, Ilaro.

To check the menace of cultism in Nigeria's tertiary institutions, several steps were taken among which were expulsion of students and temporary closure of institutions affected. For instance, about thirty-eight students were said to have been expelled in the Polytechnic, Owo; thirty in Tai Solarin College of Education, Ijebu-Ode; thirty-three in University of Port-Harcourt and sixty-eight in Ogun State University. In short, more than five hundred students were reportedly expelled from various institutions of higher learning across the nation between 1998 and 1999 (*Newswatch*, July 19, 1999). There is no doubt that the menace of cultic activities in the nation's tertiary institutions has disappointed the parents and they are ready to adopt any alternative available to them.

Of such alternatives is to take their wards out of the country for their university education. As many could not afford this, private institutions within the country

became their solace as no case of cultism has been reported in any of them ever since their inception. There is also the hope of moral development in private universities particularly mission-owned ones which they believe would not sacrifice morality for intellectualism and would pursue knowledge in a Godly manner.

Student unionism and student political groups struggling for control of the students' union organisation also constitutes another serious threat to public university education in Nigeria. Akintayo (2008) cites an instance at the University of Ibadan, where in 2001 the competing political groups resorted to violence using guns, charms, knives and other dangerous weapons in their quest for political supremacy. The Vice Chancellor of the University narrowly escaped being kidnapped and assassinated, as his official car was driven away by an unknown student and the whole university was held hostage for several days by the armed student groups. There is no doubt that no tangible educational achievement could be attained in an atmosphere of rancour, conflict and insecurity. While these happenings are going on in public universities, private universities serve as alternatives where parents who could afford it, prefer to register their wards.

Akintayo (2008) looks at university educational service delivery in Nigeria from an ethical point of view and leadership integrity. He posits that high incidence of political and ethnic conflicts among the staff, conflicting interests and goals between university administration and various academic and non-academic unions are the main characteristics of the nation's tertiary institutions. A good example of this case took place at the Ahmadu Bello University (ABU) Zaria, where the Hausa community in the institution, motivated by spirit of ethnicity complained about inequality of posts of responsibilities among the staff of the University. The staff, mostly Hausa-Fulani constituted themselves into an organisation called Northern Elements Coalition (NECO), accused the Yoruba and Tiv staff of marginalising them. Losing sight of the fact that positions in tertiary institutions are filled on merit and qualifications and not on the basis of ethnicity, they accused the then Vice-Chancellor, Prof. Daniel Saror (a Tiv man) of collaborating with the University Senate and Council which were composed essentially of professors of Yoruba extraction to "destroy" the University. The rancour consequently led to the brutal murder of Prof. Bamidele Bandipo who hailed from Offa, a Yoruba town in Kwara State (Adeyemi, 2005). This state of insecurity made many lecturers of the institution especially the Yoruba and Tiv to look outside the institution for other universities where their lives and properties would be protected. Such a step no doubt contributes to brain drain which is inimical to pursuits in higher education.

Challenges of Private Islamic Universities in Nigeria

(i) The Challenge of University-community Relationship

The need to correlate the acquired education with the value system and ideological disposition has been emphasised by scholars and administrators. In his speech in

December 1972 at the 10th Anniversary convocation of Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, Waziri Junaidu (1979) decried the wide gap between the community and the type of education offered in our universities. With particular reference to ABU, he lamented:

I shall be frank with you. In matters such as this one must resist shyness. I must state that your University like all others in Nigeria is a cultural transplant whose roots lie in another tradition. Like other institutions to which we have been struggling to adjust, it is of the cultural baggage bequeathed to us through our association with those traditions. I speak for many of my countrymen when I say that, unlike Sankore, our universities appear to belong to us only in their location and in their names. This state of affairs has risen, I think, because the movement towards the kind of change which the universities symbolize has been taken without at anytime evaluating it in terms of its ultimate effect on our society and on our character as a people. It is especially in regard to their work and in their approach to the cultures of our societies that our universities contrast sadly with the traditions of Sankore.

In the same vein, the then military Head of State, General Olusegun Obasanjo was said to have declared in 1977 thus:

University staff and students are products of their society; the University is meant to serve the society and should be its reflection. Our Universities must identify themselves completely with their surrounding communities if they are to improve them. They must develop a harmonious relationship between themselves and the local population (Aminu, 1986: 59).

Still stressing the great dichotomy between our education system and our value system, Shehu (2006) quoted Smith (undated) to have said:

In Nigeria, and elsewhere, the wisdom of a nation is preserved and developed in its institutions of higher learning, and we have seen that it is on the basis of what is thought and taught in the Nigerian universities that the fashion of the whole intellectual outlook of the nation will eventually be set, the thought and teaching of our universities are based firmly on the philosophy of the West. Then what we are witnessing here is not the renaissance of African man and his emancipation from Western imperialism, but the final phase of his permanent subordination to the West. In other words, our universities, because of their excessive Westernization, stand as formidable obstacles to the achievement of those very goals which the peoples of this continent are committed to achieve, namely the intellectual self-determination of Africa.

Gone are the days when Africans were more at universities abroad than on African land and when the staff strength of a university had more expatriates than Africans all with the aim of producing a small group of elite that would serve the interest of the colonialists. Then, the colonial educational master plan was not drawn from our culture, belief and value system, and as well, our aspirations were not taken care of. The education then was meant to provide manpower to keep the colonial machinery in motion.

As a matter of fact, Nigerian universities are expected to reflect the environment of their place of operation. African ideas and moral system are expected to be included in their curriculum. However, some of the private universities in Nigeria are still upholding the western ideological principles in their universities sticking strictly to western concepts as if glued to them and with no consideration for their immediate environment. The devastating effect of this is observed by a scholar who laments:

...our system of education is incapable of producing scholars who are sufficiently and profoundly informed about our society and are equipped with the ability to solve its problems. To put it starkly, our educational system produces scholars who are intellectually and morally alien to our environment. While they understand or claim to understand everything about America, Soviet Union or Europe, they are generally ignorant or grossly misinformed about their own people and countries. Even when they study our environment, they do so from the perspectives and intellectual frame forced on us by colonialists. Thus, they see the wrong picture of us. Therefore, our intellectuals are as harmful to us as the colonialists have ever been (Sulaiman, 2000: 17).

Faulting the type of education bequeathed to us by the colonialists and its influence on the environment, Sulaiman further writes:

Yet our educational system prevents us from focusing our attention on ourselves which have otherwise enabled us to develop our own experience and build our own world in accordance with our history, belief, culture and intellectual tradition. Hence, our world collapses before our eyes because we have denied its existence, while the lamp we have borrowed from Europe fails to provide the light we truly need.

As regards Islamic universities, a reflection of Islam is expected to be considered in the curriculum of the universities to serve the purpose for which they are established. Reflecting on what actually constitutes a real Islamic university, Sardar (1984: 42) has this to say:

The main objective of Islamic universities should be to build a comprehensive foundation for the reconstruction of Muslim civilisation. As such they are service institutions, which generate and provide knowledge-base which supports and carries the Muslim civilisation forward.

(ii) *The Challenge of Funding*

One of the major challenges of private universities is sourcing for fund by the proprietors of these institutions. Stressing this fact, Alanamu et.al (2009: 169) cited Obasi (2007) and Okebukola (2002) to have claimed that the federal government spends about N300,000.00 (US\$2,308) per session as subsidy on training an undergraduate in its universities, and that in 2001, the total average unit cost student in science-based disciplines was N239,408 (US\$1,842) and N186,505 (US\$1,435) for the Arts-based disciplines. In addition to other financial commitments of the government to public universities, six public universities recently received a sum of N5.5 billion each from the Education Trust Fund special intervention fund.

The big question then is how could private universities which to a large extent are run as business enterprises pump such huge amount of money into their institutions, or rather how could they source for such an amount for the purpose of improving the standard of the institutions. With particular reference to Islamic universities, there is every evidence to support the fact that they are grossly under-funded. A comparative analysis of what obtains in their Christian counterparts shows that where as much as half a million is charged as school fees, the Islamic ones go as low as N250,000 per session. Even a university receives N50,000 per session from candidates offering Arabic and Islamic Studies as courses of study, though with the claim that an international body subsidises the balance.

The income generated by the private universities is mostly used to improve facilities and infrastructure for teaching and research to provide programmes in enhancing generic competencies amongst students. While universities should not be seen as a business enterprise, private universities would have no option than "corporatisation" in view of their serious need for fund. Therefore, this will imply that academic programmes with less popular or low employability rate will not be floated by these universities and this will mostly affect courses in arts, like literature, history, Yoruba, Arabic and religious studies and even pure sciences.

In another word, only programmes which are able to generate income will be given priority. This explains why some private universities established by religious bodies do not offer Islamic Studies or Christian Religious Studies which they believe may not attract serious attention by students, and which many parents may not be ready to pay such amount of school fees on. They thus resorted to mounting some religious based courses as general courses to be offered by all candidates of the institutions regardless of their course of study.

As a means of checking or finding solution to the problem of fund in private universities, they could be forced to admit students more than what the available facilities could accommodate. This could further drag them into opening campuses which are sub-standard and lack necessary facilities and amenities which can facilitate effective teaching and learning. Apart from this, most universities resorted to running programmes which are not productive instead of courses that have a premium both in

the education market and on the labour market. It is observed that most of the private universities offer courses that are market-driven and profit-generating where demand is sufficient to break even. The table below shows the list of faculties and colleges offered at the first phase of the inception of some private universities.

Table 6 – List of Faculties and Colleges in Some Universities

Universities	1 st Phase	2 nd phase	3 rd phase
Ajayi Crowther University, Oyo	Faculty of Natural Sciences, Faculty of Environmental Studies, Faculty of Humanities	Faculty of Law; Faculty of Social and Management Sciences;	Faculty of Health Sciences
Al-Ikrah University, Ilorin	College of Natural Sciences College of Engineering and Technology College of Humanities College of Management Sciences	College of Education College of Agriculture and Rural Development	College of Health Sciences
Bingham University, New Karu	College of Science & Technology; College of Medicine; College of Humanities College of Management Sciences	Colleges of Technology; Environmental Studies and Agriculture	Colleges of Pharmacy, Veterinary Medicine, Law and Education
Caritas University, Amorji-Nike	Faculties of Natural Sciences; Engineering; Management Sciences and Environmental Sciences	Faculties of Humanities, Law and Education	Faculties of Agriculture, Health Sciences, Dentistry and Pharmacy
Katsina University, Katsina	Colleges of Natural and Applied Sciences; Social and Management Sciences; Humanities	Colleges of Agriculture & Rural Development; and Engineering & Technology	Colleges of Environmental & Space Sciences; Law, and Health Sciences
Edoamer's University, Edo	Colleges of Engineering, Natural Sciences and Management Sciences	Colleges of Environmental Studies; Agriculture & Veterinary Medicine and Law.	Colleges of Health Sciences and Education

Source: NUC Presentation of Licences to New Private Universities, January 2005

(iii) *The Challenge of University Ranking*

A recent development in the world of university education is ranking of universities based on certain criteria. Okebukola (2008) identified some major ranking schemes which include the Time Higher Education - QS Ranking which publishes annually a list of top 500 universities in the world using a battery of indicators and data gathered through academic peer review, employer review, faculty student ratio, international faculty, international students and citations per faculty.

There is also the Academic Ranking of World Universities which ranks universities based on the total number of the alumni of an institution winning Nobel Prizes and Fields Medals; the total number of staff of an institution winning Nobel prizes in physics, chemistry, medicine and economics and Fields Medals in mathematics; the number of highly cited researchers in twenty-one broad subject categories in life science, medicine, physical sciences, engineering and social sciences; the number of articles published in Nature and Science in the past years; and the total number of articles indexed by Science Citation Index-Expanded and Social Science Citation in the previous year. The total score of all these indicators is divided by the number of full-time equivalent academic staff and where this is not available, the total scores of the five indicators.

Apart from this, there is also the Webometrics Ranking which ranks universities web publications based on the number of pages recovered from search engines like Google, Yahoo, Live Search and Exalead; the total number of unique external links; Rich Files and the Scholar database representing papers, reports and other academic items. Others are the Professional Ranking of World Universities; the Newsweek Ranking; the Performance Ranking of Scientific for World Universities and other regional and national ranking such as those in Canada, India, Ireland, United Kingdom and United States.

The National Universities Commission has opted to domesticate these ranking criteria and based her ranking of Nigerian universities on:

- i. Percentage of academic programmes of the university with full accreditation status;
- ii. Compliance with carrying capacity (measured by the degree of deviation from carrying capacity);
- iii. Proportion of the academic staff of the university at professorial level;
- iv. Foreign content (staff): proportion of the Academic staff of the university who are non-Nigerians;
- v. Foreign content (students): proportion of the students of the university who are non-Nigerians;
- vi. Proportion of the staff of the university with outstanding academic achievements;
- vii. Internally-generated revenue;

- viii. Research output;
- ix. Student completion rate;
- x. Ph D. graduate output for the year;
- xi. Stability of the university calendar; and
- xii. Student to PC ratio.

From the above, it is observed that private universities, particularly the Islamic universities, have a hard nut to crack for them to meet the required standard that will set them in the foremost ranking status worldwide and even among Nigerian universities. A cursory look at the accreditation status of most of the programmes run by these universities shows that they still have a long way to go. It is also observed that most of them have not been internationally known for patronage purposes. It is not an overstatement to say that some private universities are yet to have websites through which they can be accessed. A click at the acclaimed websites of some of the private universities shows nothing about them. To be on track of being ranked high in this aspect, the universities will have to improve their facilities to attract international students while their staff welfare package will have to be improved for them to attract international academic staff.

(iv) The Challenge of Personnel

One of the major challenges facing private Islamic universities is inadequate manpower to handle the universities in line with their objectives, namely serving as an alternative to conventional universities. Most of the academic staff in these universities is drawn from conventional universities where the total number of Muslim academics is less than 10%. In his research work, Salisu (2002) found out that there was acute shortage of staff in Nigerian higher institutions. With particular reference to Lagos State University, he found out that only 18.9% of the teaching staff of the University was Muslim, while the allied academic staff i.e. Library, Educational Technology and Centre for Environmental and Science Education recorded 33.3% each and 0% respectively.

If this is the case, one wonders how private Islamic universities could get adequate personnel that would assist in the Islamisation programme of the universities. So if the mission of Muslim private universities is to Islamise knowledge, one therefore wonders how much impact could be made in a situation where the institutions are filled up with members of staff who do not have knowledge of the programme. The case would be as worse as a person with an eye trouble who went to a veterinary doctor who applied to his eyes what he was accustomed to applying to the eyes of animals. Such a veterinarian should not be accused but the man who rendered himself an ass.

Generally speaking, many of the private universities in the country raked their staff from the existing public universities. Many of them have few full-time academic

staff and rely only on part-time academic staff or rather visiting staff who are on sabbatical leave from their universities. Most of the staff in private universities are young graduates who are still pursuing their doctorate degrees and are ready to leave for public universities where there is better condition of service.

(v) *The Challenge of student enrolment*

In case of student enrolment, there is appreciable increase in the population of students in private universities. Madonna University which graduated 390 students during its first convocation ceremony in 2004 is said to have had 7,000 students as at 2007 (Obasi, 2006). Thus, private universities are facing the challenge of admitting more than the facilities on ground and since it is to their delight to admit as many students as possible for financial reasons, the quality of the universities could be jeopardised. That notwithstanding, it has been observed that while some of the Christian established universities recorded considerable number of candidates at their inception, the Islamic universities have low number of candidates. Alanamu et al (2009) cited Obasi to have said that Covenant University started with a first batch of 1,500 undergraduate students; Benson Idahosa University registered 989 full-time undergraduate students and 131 part-time students, while Bowen University had 650 at its inception. But in case of Al-Hikmah University, only 167 undergraduate students were registered at inception while Crescent University had only 66 students and Katsina University with 312 candidates.

The multi religious nature of the society, which implies that academic institutions admit candidates of different religions to various areas of disciplines, constitutes a serious challenge to mission universities. There then arises conflict of ideas such that the candidates of other religions are not allowed to practice their religion on campus. A very good example of this happened at Bowen University, Iwo, where the Muslim students protested on the refusal of the University management to grant them authority to observe their prayers in the university premise. Some Christian oriented universities do not allow Muslim students in their institutions to organise themselves into religious organisations such as the Muslim Students Society of Nigeria. In the same vein, one doubts if such will be accepted by the Islamic universities for Christian students as well. However, we do not doubt the fact that the Muslims would be more affected as they are more in number at Christian universities than the Christians in Islamic universities.

The issue of admitting non-Muslims in the Islamic universities further raises the issue of differences in the mode of dressing of the students. While Islam sees the whole body of a woman as naked which must be totally covered, this is not emphasised by non-Muslims. An attempt to impose Islamic mode of dressing on non-Muslim

students poses a great challenge to private Islamic universities which could not compromise morality in the name of academic freedom.

(vi) ***The Challenge of Islamisation of Knowledge***

The concept of Islamisation of knowledge is operationalised to refer to an attempt to make the programme of studies; the programme of guidance and the programme of activities within the school system conform to the Islamic worldview (Adebayo, 2008). According to Sulaiman (2000), it refers to "an attempt through which aspects of the body and purpose of knowledge and of the process and methodologies of discovering, validating, imparting and applying it, which oppose Islam, are identified and made subservient to the Islamic worldview." In essence, Islamisation of knowledge is aiming at revamping the body of existing knowledge within the axis of Islam in such a way that the curricula, teaching materials, personnel, methodology of teaching, research and evaluation would reflect Islamic ethos. In the words of Al-Faruqi (1988: 16-17):

As disciplines, the humanities, the social sciences, and the natural sciences must be re-conceived and rebuilt, given a new Islamic base and assigned new purposes consistent with Islam. Every discipline must be recast so as to embody the principles of Islam in its methodology, in its strategy, in what it regards as its data, its problems, its objectives and its aspirations. Every discipline must be remoulded to incorporate the relevance of Islam along the triple axis constitutive of *tawhid*.

It therefore behoves the private Islamic universities in Nigeria to face the challenges posed by the Islamisation of knowledge programme if actually they wish to be true Islamic universities. It is however observed that the strategies of these universities as far as Islamisation is concerned differ. While some adopt having pure Islamic Studies Department, some combine this with having Islamic related courses as general courses in the universities to be offered by all the students regardless of the courses of study. Crescent University, Abeokuta has Department of General and Islamic Religious Studies and it offers courses leading to award of B.Sc Islamic Studies with Banking and Finance and B.Sc. Islamic Studies with Actuarial Sciences. Discussing the curriculum of Islamic universities in Nigeria, Adebayo (2008) writes:

The curriculum of some of these universities is as secular as other contemporary universities. The most pathetic of it all is that for a period of four academic sessions, students from departments other than Islamic Studies Department, if any, may offer only four Islamic related courses throughout their tenure in the university. In short, some of these universities will remain Islamic by virtue of their names, while their products will lack the much-cherished flavour of Islamic education. Another sad point is that some of these private Islamic universities do not mount Islamic Studies and Arabic as courses to be offered. Where there is any at all, few students offer it. This is because most parents are not ready to pay or that they cannot afford the exorbitant school fees charged by these institutions.

It needs to be stressed that despite the fact that many institutions are springing up for the purpose of Islamising knowledge and despite the establishment of some Islamic

universities for the implementation of the decisions reached in the various conferences on Islamic education, it is observed that most of the Muslim countries are yet to have a model curriculum based on the various conferences. For example, the Islamic University in Bangladesh was established with the objective of Islamizing modern knowledge, yet instead of doing this, it has the same old courses in political science, commerce, Islamic history and some others (Naqi, 1987). This is also the situation in Pakistan where the problem of bifurcation of education still persists. The non-availability of a model Islamic institution on Islamisation of knowledge has resulted in designing different curricula to suit individual environments. It has also created lack of vision and clarity about the concept of Islamic education. In some instances, instruction in the fundamentals of religion has been erroneously taken to mean Islamization of knowledge. This obstacle to Islamisation of knowledge programme is observed by Al-Faruqi (1988: 31) who laments:

It is most regrettable that the Muslim world is still devoid of a centre where thinking on this high level takes place. What is needed is a university, which acts as headquarters for Islamic thought, where the disciplines undergo Islamization and the process gets tested in the class and seminar rooms of the undergraduate and graduate programs of study. Until Islamic University of Islamabad entered into collaboration with the International Institute of Islamic Thought, not one educational institution in the Muslim world had moved a finger to Islamize knowledge, to produce Islamic textbooks for college use in the disciplines, or the tools of research necessary for the writing of these textbooks. And yet, everywhere in the Muslim world one hears of the need to Islamize education, its men and institutions, its curricula and textbooks. On the official level where the power to decide rests, one finds little more than lip-service, either made by the ignorant or designed otherwise to mislead the masses.

However, the exploration of new markets for the Islamisation of knowledge projects through trans-national education by the protagonists of the programme will help Islamic universities in Nigeria to appreciate the programme more. In this wise, rather than expecting international students coming down to the international Islamic universities, lecturers and professionals in the field should deem it fit to visit the universities in Nigeria for the purpose of taking them through the Islamisation curriculum. They would thus be relieved of wobbling amidst western and Islamic curriculum in the name of Islamisation.

The multi-religious nature of Nigerian society is highly responsible for the inability of her Islamic universities to uphold Islamisation project with all seriousness. A section of the Nigeria constitution states that "no person attending any place of education shall be required to receive religious instructions or to take part in or attend any religious ceremony or observance if such institution, ceremony or observance relates to a religion not approved by his parent or guardian" (Section 35 (1) of the 1979 Constitution). This is not peculiar to Nigeria; even in Malaysia where Islam is declared the official religion, a sort of cautious Islamisation is in operation, so as not to hurt

the feeling of adherents of other religions. This forced the first Prime Minister of Malaysia to remark:

Experience has shown that too much emphasis on religion will lead to misunderstanding, as Malaysia is a country of mixed population and mixed religions, and would not be congenial to the happy relationship that exist among the people today (Wan Daud, 1989: 115)

(vii) The Challenge of Globalisation and Internationalization

Globalisation according to Knight (1997) is the flow of technology, economy, knowledge, people, values and ideas across borders. This informs that for Islamic universities and private universities generally to respond positively to it, they have to embrace internationalisation as a means of globalising their institutional programme and as well collaborate with renowned universities in all fields of disciplines and particularly Information Technology. This collaborative effort will help in pooling resources together for the purpose of upgrading and application of Information and Communication Technology in the programmes of the universities. Islamic universities in Nigeria could facilitate the much desired progress in ICT if they maintain worldwide links with such reputable universities in the field as the Nettuno University in Rome, Italy; Computer Man University College, Khartoum, Sudan; Limkokwing University College, Malaysia and other renowned universities in the UK, USA, Canada and Australia (Adebayo, 2009).

Internationalisation of universities would help in positioning private universities in relation to other universities globally and would foster international standardisation of the curricula and the methodology of teaching, research, evaluation and assessment of the universities. International recognition will reflect comparable standards or even of higher quality with the international norm and therefore, will attract international academic and researchers to create collaborations and consultations.

Conclusion

This paper has tried to examine the development of university education in Nigeria with particular focus on private universities and Islamic private universities as case study. The paper identified that private institutions are out to rescue the existing situation of insufficient number of public universities which could not accommodate the large percentage of candidates seeking admission into universities. Other factors responsible for rapid upsurge of private universities were also discussed. Meanwhile, these private universities have a hard nut to crack for them to compete favourably with their public counterparts.

For them to perform the rescue exercise they are out to execute, there is need to see the task of producing graduates who would be able to compete favourably with others in the world, a matter of great concern. As such, the universities must creatively and jealously integrate both academic and non academic curricula to produce

wholesome graduates for the competitive world. To do this, the private universities should not underrate the ranking criteria of university ranking both at local and international levels. In other words, there is need to enhance quality assurance and the capacity for ranking through constant upgrading of the facilities on ground, supporting instruments and infrastructures; and reviewing of academic programmes, personnel and both input and output of the universities.

To a very large extent, the income of a private university depends mostly on the number of candidates it admits. This implies that private universities would like to admit as many candidates as possible. In doing this, they should not compromise standard by reducing their cut-off to create rooms for admitting every Dick and Harry that applies for admission lest they turn their institutions to dumping ground of incompetent students who would not be able to defend the certificates awarded them at the end of their programmes. As a matter of fact, the standard of a university can be judged by the choice of students admitted and admission policy and the choice of potential employer of their graduates. Competent alumni could be produced subject to the quality of students admitted and this portrays the quality of the institutions as well. In other words, quality admission policy is a prerequisite of quality alumni.

Private Islamic universities which have low number of admission should not because of this, reduce their entry qualifications and scores to attract candidates, but should rather maintain standard which will eventually promote their institutions. They should come up with good and marketable courses that would take care of the current and future needs of the nation. At this juncture, one needs to commend the authority of Crescent University for her initiative of designing programmes that are marketable for candidates offering Islamic Studies in the institution by giving the opportunity of pursuing programmes leading to award of B.Sc Islamic Studies with Banking and Finance and B.Sc. Islamic Studies with Actuarial Sciences. Others should also design courses of that nature that are cross-disciplinary or multi-disciplinary that will make their products marketable, self-employed and contributory to economic growth of the nation.

A candid advice to private universities is that they should not compromise qualitative academic staff, as this is the brain-box and life-wire of any institution. In the words of Sir Ahmadu Bello:

Anyone can construct buildings and call them a university, but without competent and dedicated teaching staff, the correct and accepted international standards cannot be attained. It is the staff who set these standards and maintain them (Nuchi & Muhammed, 1999: 242).

Apart from academic qualifications, academic staff in private Islamic universities must possess all qualities of a good teacher in character, appearance and general disposition. They must be the ones who put into practice what they teach. The universities should also look for staff who are resourceful and innovative and not those who are not productive and non-adaptive to modern development.

It is high time for private Islamic universities to graduate from total dependence on tuition fees as the only source of income. They should now delve into researches with potential commercialisation capability. This can be facilitated by creating an atmosphere conducive for it by updating their infrastructure and combine fundamental researches with commercial researches. Collaborations could be made with industries for their research outcome and this will in addition facilitate employment opportunities for the graduates of their institutions. In other words, collaboration with industries will facilitate effective utilisation of the manpower resources and expertise in enhancing research activities. Effective collaboration and proper linkage of private universities with industries will afford them opportunities of getting the industries concerned to serve as training centres for students to acquire necessary skills needed for their future careers. Such students will thus have practical experience of what they were taught under classroom situation. Also, some industries may be ready to sponsor students on research relevant to their industries.

Finally, the National Universities Commission (NUC) must be highly vigilant and must put all hands on deck to ensure that university education is not rendered useless by private institutions that see the establishment of universities as a business venture rather than social service which attracts celestial blessings later. The federal government should also ensure adequate funding of public universities so that Nigerian universities will be among the highly-ranked universities not only in Africa but also among the world universities. The absence of a Nigerian university among the first fifty of the Top 100 Universities and Colleges in Africa should be a great concern to all stakeholders in the education sector of the nation.

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