



A History of the

University of Lagos

(1962 - 2012)

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Introduction

The number of African countries that have celebrated their 50th independence anniversary in the recent past indicates how important fifty years could be in the life of a country. It is no less significant in the life of an individual or institution. The University of Lagos, in particular, has every cause to celebrate its golden jubilee. From a modest beginning in 1962, the university has grown to become the nation's pride and the most preferred University. It is on account of these phenomenal growth and achievements that the Vice-Chancellor told the audience at the 2011 convocation ceremony that the University had constituted a high powered committee to roll out the drums and the red carpet for the 50th Anniversary celebrations.

This book is an attempt to document the history of the University of Lagos in the last fifty years. An earlier volume edited by A. B. Aderibigbe and T. G. O. Gbadamosi covered the history of the first twenty-five years of the institution. The occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of 'Unilag' provides a good opportunity to assess the performance of the institution. Aderibigbe and Gbadamosi's volume emphasized, among other things, the goals and aspirations of the founders of the university. The task before us in this volume has been to assess how far these goals have been achieved. Has 'Unilag' been able to significantly meet the manpower needs of the nation, especially given its location in the metropolis? How has the environment – political, physical, economic, and social – affected the development of the institution? And how has the institution also impacted on its environment? To what extent has Unilag been able to address the challenges facing it? How does the University fare in the comity of tertiary institutions in Nigeria, and what are its dreams for the next quarter of this century? Again, what is the status of the university outside Lagos, and what has been done by its previous leadership to position it for a fair contest with other universities outside Nigeria? This work addresses these and other questions.

This is therefore a history of evolution and processes. It is a study of pioneers and their labours. It is a narrative of conflicts, resolution, rebuilding and cooperation. It is a celebration of excellence, an analysis of ties with the world outside the university campus, and the story of the growth of an organic community.

The University of Lagos has three Campuses. The main Campus is located in Akoka. The School of Radiography is at Yaba while the College of Medicine is in Idi-Araba, Surulere. The University started with a modest intake of 131 students in 1962. The total student enrolment as at the 2011/2012 session stands at 52,944. Its staff strength is now 4,551. The University started with three faculties in 1962 but now has twelve faculties and a post-graduate school. The twelve faculties are: Arts, Basic Medical Sciences, Business Administration, Clinical Science, Dental Sciences, Education, Engineering, Environmental Science, Law, Pharmacy, Social Sciences and Science.

In addition to these are the Distance Learning Institute (DLI), which offers courses in Accounting, Business Administration, Social Science, Science Education and Library /Information Science; and the Institute of Continuing Education (ICE). The School of Post-Graduate Studies awards Diplomas, Master's and Doctorate degrees in various programmes run by different faculties.

The University's undergraduate programmes remain the most sought after in the nation, hence the appellation of "University of First Choice". In 2012, the University could only admit less than 10% of the total number of candidates that applied to it.

The book is divided into three sections. Section A, which is made up of two chapters documents the early history of the University. Both chapters are in fact, reproduced from the Aderibigbe and Gbadamosi collection. This is because of the richness of both essays and the fact that most of the primary sources they cited are now extinct. A. B. Aderibigbe's contribution looks at the emergence of the University from 1962 - 1967, while T. G.O. Gbadamosi examines the period from 1967 to 1976, which he terms the 'Years of Development.' Even though these essays were written twenty-five years ago, the issues they raise are still very pertinent and these constitute the foundation on which other contributors have built their chapters.

Section B comprises twelve chapters, each of which traces the development of academic programmes in particular Faculties. The Faculties covered are Arts, Social Sciences, Law, Sciences, Education, Business Administration, Engineering and

Environmental Sciences. The section also has chapters on the College of Medicine, Faculty of Pharmacy, the School of Postgraduate Studies and on Non Full-Time Courses. Each of these chapters traces the beginnings of these Faculties; examines the labour of the pioneer staff, the early programmes taught, the strengthening of the programmes till they acquired both NUC and professional (in certain cases) accreditation. The chapters also discuss student enrolment and various individual alumni that have distinguished themselves in their various professions.

Section C looks at aspects of University administration, as well as the services provided on campus and the enterprises that generate internal funds. The first chapter in this section is on the University Council, Registry and Bursary by David Aworawo and Lateef Odekunle. The chapter on the Library was contributed by O. Adediji, R. O. Odunlade and O. M. Alatise. The history of the Central Research Committee is examined by B. I. Alo, A. O. Keshinro and E. O. Opara. Charles Uwadia writes on the Development of Information Technology on the campus. Nkem Onyekpe writes on Students Welfare; P. O. Osifodunrin on the Medical Centre, Works and Planning and Security on the Campus; and O. O. Olawoyin focuses attention on the Primary and Secondary Institutions on the campus. In the services category is R. T. Akinyele's chapter on Community Relations, Linkages and Partnerships. Two chapters in the section focus attention on the University's enterprises. M. M. Ogbeidi examines various revenue generating outfits such as Unilag Ventures, Unilag Consults, University Bookshop and the Community Pharmacy. The Comparative analysis of Oluwarotimi Shodimu and David Aworawo on Unilag's Past and Present also touches on the management of the University's landed property.

The concluding chapter appraises the performance of the University in the last fifty years. While it notes the major achievements recorded in the period, as well as the constraints experienced by the University, it looks into the future by projecting the aspirations of the University for the next few decades.

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October, 2012.