The Administration and Management of a University in a Recessed Economy: The Case of Nigeria

a Lecture Delivered by

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at the

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of

Prof. Adetokunbo B. Sofoluwe

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BEING LECTURE DELIVERED IN MEMORY OF PROFESSOR BABATUNDE SOFOLUWE, LATE VICE-CHANCELLOR, UNIVERSITY OF LAGOS, AKOKA, YABA, LAGOS, ON FRIDAY, 12TH MAY, 2017
INTRODUCTION

I would like to commence this Lecture by thanking the Vice-Chancellor and his Management Team of this “University of First Choice” for choosing me to deliver this year’s Memorial Lecture in honour of Late Professor Adetokunbo Babatunde Sofoluwe, the late Vice-Chancellor of the University of Lagos, who, providence made to die in office while putting his best for the system. Before coming to celebrate the late Vice-Chancellor, let me briefly commend the authorities of this University for the honour accorded to Professor Sofoluwe. This gesture may not be unprecedented; but, if it is unprecedented, it is just most appropriate, most timely and is also a product of the highest level of humanistic consideration. More often than not, especially in the Nigerian University system, nay, the entire Nigerian society, the successor would come to office to rubbish the humble efforts of their predecessor. (In parenthesis, I suffered this humiliation when I left office as the Vice-Chancellor of the University of Abuja, 2004-2009, as my successor, who incidentally, was one of the Deputy Vice-Chancellors I worked with came to the saddle. He hated me with passion and strove relentlessly to destroy even what we jointly developed and brought into being together. It is now to my eternal glory and the power, in particular, of the Omnipotent that he never succeeded in his diabolical plans. To that extent, my legacies in the University of Abuja have not only survived, but have become the reference points, which are from time to time used to judge his tenure and the others coming after him.) Perhaps, the only explanation one could offer to why such behavior and/or attitude is carried out may be informed by the notion that “if I do not demystify my predecessor, the community would not accept that I am now in charge.” If this is the case, it is not only foolish, but it is a historical. After all, it is often stated that “Rome was never built in a day.” This aphorism is quite correct, especially in an academic setting of this nature, which is always a work in progress. Nobody in this audience would deny the fact that since the current Vice-Chancellor of this prestigious University took over the mantle of leadership changes, both structurally and academically have not been witnessed. Or, is it conceivable to say that after the end of the tenure of Professor Rahamon A. Bello, whenever it shall be, there shall never be further development to the University of Lagos? Such thought should not come out of the mind of anyone of us, knowing fully well that organizational changes are always the constant and ineluctable law of nature.

It is therefore high time successors understood, as I have said, that ancient Rome was never built in one day. As a matter of fact, no community in history or living memory has ever been so built and, therefore, when successors
arrive in office, they should be humbled by the realization that their own contribution would only be an accretion to what, in sport parlance, is regarded a relay race or, in institutional cum societal terms, could be seen as a “work in progress.” Individuals who have laboured hard, whether they have succeeded or not and as long as they have not compromised the core values of the system, should always be commended, remembered and celebrated, particularly in the circumstances that our beloved Professor Babatunde Sofoluwe laboured such much for his beloved University of Lagos and met his death in the process. I would therefore like to offer my kudos to the authorities of this foremost University for this forthright insight, foresight, and proactive, trailblazing inimitable endeavor.

FUTHER HONOURING OF PROFESSOR ADETOKUNBO BABATUNDE SOFOLUWE

If the family members of our beloved Professor are here on this occasion, at this juncture, I would also like to offer my condolences. Sometimes, it is stated that time heals pains or wounds an individual might have sustained, experienced or suffered in life’s journey; certainly, not on the pains of the death of a beloved one, especially, when it is put in the context of the fact that he died at the pinnacle of his career as an accomplished Computer Scientist; a committed professional teacher; and a technocrat of administrative distinction and sophistication. I am sure that this is the case with members of the family of our highly respected departed colleague. He can never be forgotten and this Memorial Lecture is one way to keep his memory alive and evergreen. For the benefit of those who did not read the tribute made by Mr. Lekan Sote, in his column in The Punch Newspaper, I would like to share with you what he said about the Late Professor Sofoluwe and I quote in extensor:

In his seminal Inaugural Lecture, “Beyond Calculations,” delivered on Wednesday, November 8, 2006, Sofoluwe gave a good account of himself... Sofoluwe stressed the use of models in representing natural phenomena that exist in the physical, chemical, biological, environmental, management, and social sciences. The first model, probably the most fundamental, [sic.] that he discussed, was the mathematical model.

In finding a roundabout manner to reveal his age to his distinguished audience, he derived the following algebraic expression: $2X = 112$, where his age is $X$, and 112 is twice his age and arrive at 56, his age, when he delivered the Lecture.

You can imagine the relief of the non-mathematical minds [among] his audience, when he simply required them to divide 112 by 2: They would have...
thought that he was coming up with an esoteric, maybe mind-bending, procedure that might cause them some migraine and possible indigestion.

This is just one of the ways that Sofoluwe sought to demystify mathematics, and demonstrate its usefulness to even mundane, everyday issues of life. He showed that mathematics is important for making informed decisions, as he argued that mathematical models are a far cheaper option to committing actual resources into defining problems.

Sofoluwe’s major academic interest seemed to pertain to the area of providing storage for all manner of liquid [sic.], especially water and petro-chemical products, which are both vital to the people and economy of Nigeria. His major contribution was in the development of the drop-shaped tank.

Besides, his humility in attributing his success and achievements to a collaborative effort between himself and others rings throughout his Inaugural Lecture. This agrees with the impression that he had no chips on his shoulders.¹

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As I have said above, based on his academic achievements, Professor Sofoluwe shall never be forgotten; he left behind not only ideas, but also good character that can never be impeached. It is therefore my prayers that God would give the family members the fortitude to bear the irreparable loss. I equally pray that he (our dear colleague) will continue to rest in the bosom of the Lord, well protected and well taken care of. Amen. I equally commiserate with the University community over the loss of such a distinguished colleague.

**CHOICE OF TOPIC**

I was given the free hand to select the topic of the Lecture, with the suggestion (which I regarded as a subtle instruction) that it should be appropriate for the occasion. A topic appropriate for the occasion should be, in my opinion, something that is related and relevant to education, since our highly departed colleague worked in and, literally speaking, died in the education industry. Having zeroed in on the education industry, I further had to decide how could I twist the topic around to a manageable size so as to enable me remain focused and the audience satisfied by the conversation that shall be embedded therein. This is how I finally decided to talk on the topic of: “The Administration and Management of a University in a Recessed Economy: The Case of
Nigeria." For sure, this topic is not a reflection on any particular Nigerian university, whether public or private; federal, state, or private, as well. However, the topic speaks to the entire Nigerian university system, which has, most probably and without an exception, been afflicted by the very likely harmful impacts of the recession. What is going to be said about the Nigerian university system may apply to one university or other, most probably in varying degrees. This is because even when there is no recession or any thing that buffets the economy in any remarkably harmful manner, the Nigerian university system is never too far away from one crisis or the other. Invariably, such developments one way or the other come with a telling effect on the administration and management of the system. We shall talk about this as we go on with the Lecture.

At this juncture, let me state that this topic was coined and mailed to the University of Lagos Authorities for endorsement long before the World Economics, a London-based organization declared on Tuesday, April 18th, 2017, that "...after a few quarters of negative growth that saw the death of businesses, the Nigerian economy has wriggled out of recession." 2 The International Monetary Fund (IMF), as reported by the paper on the same day made a statement to the effect that "Output in Nigeria is projected to grow by 0.8 percent in 2017 as a result of a recovery in oil production...." 3 The paper attributed this to Mr. Maurice Obstfeld, the IMF Chief Economist. I shall come back shortly to discuss recession conceptually; what it entails and even risk an attack (since I am not an economist and would therefore not like the professional economists in our midst to take me to the cleaners) by arguing that the Nigerian economy can and has never been out of recession if it is looked at critically from its very structural nature as an economy that is not resilient, it is imbalanced, dependent, and, what is more, it operates very morbidly, meaning that it will die even with the mildest fit of asphyxiation. Since I shall be coming back to say a word or two about the nature of a recessed economy in due course, let me sketch how we shall

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2 See Leadership Newspaper of Wednesday, April 19, 2017, p.5.

3 Ibid. Emphasis mine.

The Hon. Minister of Information and Culture, Alhaji Lai Mohammed has also lent his opinion on the receding pace of the recession. According to him and relying on the statement credited to the Governor of the Central Bank of Nigeria, the country would exit recession by the end of June, citing as evidence the reported fall in the rate of inflation as well the sanity being realized in the exchange rate regime. See The Nation Newspaper of Sunday, April 30, 2017, p.8.
proceed with the remaining part of the lecture at this point.
The next section shall look at some of the conceptual issues of the paper, particularly administration, management, and good governance. This shall be followed by a brief analysis of university, particularly the Nigerian university system in its perennial state of flux. This section shall be succeeded by the nature of the Nigerian economy, especially whenever it is in a state of recession. The penultimate section shall be devoted to some pieces of advice as to how the various features (particularly the negative ones) of the Nigerian university system could be creatively managed. The final section shall provide summary and the concluding remarks.

CONCEPTUAL ISSUES:
ADMINISTRATION AND MANAGEMENT

The words - administration and management - would appear to be familiar concepts, especially to most of us seated here. If this is the case, let me drop the poser: are the two words synonyms or are they different terminologies in their entirety? To answer this question, perhaps, we should provide conceptual clarifications and this is what I proceed to do, both with them and other concepts such as governance and recession that we may have to explain in the course of the Lecture.

Administration, according to The New International Webster's Comprehensive Dictionary of the English Language, is defined, among other usages, as:

The act of administering or the state of being administered; management of public affairs. The government as existing or the persons collectively who compose it, especially its executive department; also, the official tenure of such government.

The same Dictionary has defined “management” as: “The act, art, or manner of managing, controlling, or conducting. [It is the] skillful use of means to accomplish a purpose. Managers or directors collectively.” The Dictionary goes further with respect to the concept of management to specify its synonyms, which include, among others, care; charge, command, control, direction, inspection, superintendence, supervision, surveillance, watch, watchfulness, etc. All of these synonyms could apply when an analyst's concern with administration. For instance, in the administrative activities of the head of an academic institution, there are moments when the leadership would have no option but to resort to the use of instruments such as “care,” if it would show the softer

5 Ibid., p.773.
side of the administration; or "command," to make it clear to the subordinate workers that the administration can also bite if it becomes necessary for purposes of achieving institutional goals. This instance would definitely be the case during the preparations for the convocation ceremonies when deadlines are expected to be met in order to avert a huge disappointment before distinguished guests such as President or his representative plus dignitaries from outside the country may be present and/or invited. The tool of "inspection" is also a useful mechanism in administration. It goes without saying that an effective and efficient leader of a university set up would not themselves be buried in heaps of paper work without, from time to time, venturing out to have a first-hand appraisal of the numerous reports that his aides are wont to forward to the office.

From the foregoing, the two concepts appear to be synonyms to one another; but they could also be seen from a slightly different but related perspective. That is to say that "administration" may be used with respect to institutions and/or systems in the public sector. For instance, it is a common practice to refer to the administration of President Muhammadu Buhari, rather than the management of President Muhammadu Buhari. When the concept of "management" is used in reference of the government of a particular political leader, chances are that we are more concerned with the "management style" of such a regime. Therefore, the reference to the concept of "management" in the literature is more often than not seen as a process that is associated with organizations in the private sector.

Another way of clarifying the two concepts, especially in the context of the university system is to see "administration" as the structural arrangement through which a university is governed. This will be in the sense of the creation and/or existence of a committee system that is so peculiar to this type of educational institution. In the Nigerian university system, for instance, the following structures such as the offices of the Visitor, the Chancellor, the Pro-Chancellor and Council with its sub-committees, the Vice-Chancellor and Senate with its sub-committees also, the Congregation, the Convocation, the faculty boards, the departmental boards (all of which are statutory) are seen as administrative structures for purposes of running a university. In the way, we can also take cognizance of the existence of non-statutory structures. It is not inconceivable to see reference made to the "administrative style" of a particular regime; such reference may be more concerned with, strictly speaking, the extent of "showmanship" of the leader rather than the substance of the regime. Whereas, "management style" is about substance, as it should connote the extent to which the leadership is able to bring about improvement in the quality of life or the existential conditions of the people.
committees, whether standing or ad-hoc, are also so recognized. In this sense, too, the management committee of a university is seen as a foremost committee or a *primus inter pares* administrative structure (even though it is not statutory) that is part and parcel of the various committees that exist in a university.

As much as it shall be feasible in this Lecture to use the two concepts interchangeably, it is also pertinent to introduce a concept that could also be operationally relevant. This is the concept of "good governance," whose explanation could provide the framework for the understanding of the way a university should be administered and managed.

**THE CONCEPT OF GOVERNANCE**

Governance, as a concept, is much broader than the concept of government even though it has the same etymological roots as the latter term. Actually, the terms - governance and government - are derived from the word "to govern." Government is defined as "the exercise of political authority over the actions, affairs, etc., of a political unit, people...." On the other hand, governance, by the same dictionary is regarded as "the action, manner, or *system of governing*." (Emphasis mine.) From the definitions (which on the surface look alike), it can be argued that government is an aspect of governance as the latter comprises the entire system that constitutes government, including structures (the three arms of government as well as well the other apparatuses of state for coordinating, synthesizing, and executing policies and programmes of the government). Governance is also about the personnel of government, i.e., who can be in government, how are they to be recruited - by selection, election, or through appointment through examinations, interviews, etc.?

Governance also encompasses the procedures for carrying out the activities of government. In this latter regard, one is trying to find out whose responsibility it is to carry out specific activities of government. For example, the executive branch does not have the power to appropriate (i.e., to authorize) funds for running the government in a democracy - even though it is the one that is expected to prepare an appropriation bill for the consideration of the legislative arm, with a view to enacting same into law. Similarly, although it is the responsibility of the judiciary to interpret the law that has been enacted by the legislature, it does not behoove

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the former to dabble into law making beyond, in infrequent cases, suggesting the review of certain extant laws - through the exercise of constitutional review powers granted it by the constitution. On the whole, governance is the totality of the process of constituting a government as well as of administering a political community. It is the umbilical cord that links the governor and the governed. The latter are involved especially in the way a particular regime is to be constituted.

The concept of governance is usually prefixed with the adjectival word: “good.” Why do we have to qualify it? Is it necessary and what is the implication of qualifying governance? Basically, it has to be so qualified because history has shown that the end of a state as well as the means of attaining that end are not generally shared or understood in the same manner by all. (This may also be the case with respect to a university. Contestations of what, for instance, could be a sound and excellent university would be rife.) A political community is so diverse and conflictive for one to think that everyone has the same frame of mind or the same frame of action (for that matter) as to what is the purpose of a state and the direction it should take or be taken to. Besides, modern system of governance is complex that except a grundnorm is agreed upon reckless forces can easily hijack the ship of state. And as usual, the grundnorm

(especially when codified in a system of laws and rules, i.e., an agreed constitution), is inevitable for the good of the political community, as it would stipulate most succinctly the “what” and the “how” of the welfare needs of the people are to be met.

The attempt to define good governance has somehow made a long detour to how, in the field of political science, we look at the instrumentality of good governance in a state formation. The impression is not to be given in this Lecture that good governance is only relevant to a nation-state. It is indeed an important tool for any social institution. Consequently, it is a framework of analysis to underscore why and how good governance may have to be applied to corporate organizations such as commercial entities. Equally, good governance is highly recommended for application to the university system, which prides itself as a fulcrum of open, accountable and transparent administrative and managerial practice.

THE NIGERIAN UNIVERSITY SYSTEM: FEATURES AND GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE

I do not need to dwell much on what the university is all about. Virtually, all of us seated here are either products of the university system, whether here in Nigeria or in its overseas equivalent; or we have seen an institution that
is usually referred to as a university. The University of Lagos is so popular or is such a huge brand that even people who might not have stepped into its Campus had to pay attention to it when the entire community rose up to protest the attempted change of its name by the decrepit and defunct regime of Goodluck Ebele Jonathan some few years ago! So we all know what a university is: it is a place of higher learning, which makes it possible for those who seek admissions into them to the acquisition of skills that are likely to be relevant to the larger society. What I think may not be too familiar with everyone here present is when reference is made to a university system. A system is, among other things, defined as “An assemblage of organic structures composed of similar elements and combined for the same general functions....”

Based on the foregoing, does Nigeria have a university system? Before I answer this question, let me state that there can never be the same university system across different climes. Some university systems are stable, well funded, have high standards in academic undertakings, and the academics that drive the system are truly professionals that are determined at all times to defend and promote scholarship. On the other hand, some university systems are buffeted by unnecessary crises emanating from the ones generated internally – such as in the cases of staff and students’ restiveness, all manner of academic frauds perpetrated by both the academic and the non-academic staff as well as the students. In addition, the ugly face of some of such university systems is manifested in cultism, shameful mode of dressing, especially by the female students and, probably, their female lecturers, who are supposed to be their mentors as well as examination malpractice. The legion of negative aspects of a bad university system is not in anyway exhausted by the few examples provided here.

The university system also may differ in the manner of admission; the way each segment of the system examines the students, especially in the values that may be used to determine the class of the degrees that are awarded to the students; the length of the period students are required to study to earn such degrees; the remuneration of the workers; the number of years faculty and non-faculty staff are expected to work before retiring; etc.; etc.

To now answer the question if Nigeria does have a university system, one would like to say “Yes; Nigeria does have a university system.” The issue of course is to underscore whether or not the system approximate or goes close to ideal type: that is, is it endowed with the

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8 The New International Webster’s Comprehensive Dictionary of the English Language..., op.cit., p.1274.
What is the character of the governance system, in general terms? Without doubt, in the generation of those of us who went to the Nigerian university system between 1960 and 1985, the system could be given a clean bill of health: standards and the culture of academic excellence were maintained and sustained at that point in time. Equally, the phenomenon of cultism, sexual harassment and all the negative attributes of the system that people talk about these days were not as prominent as they have become. Furthermore, the phenomenon of graduate unemployment that seems to have defied solutions at this point in time was also not the concern of the administration and management of the Nigerian university system. Let it be stressed that whether there or not there is recession in the Nigerian economy, the administrative cum management approach to governance that is adopted by the Nigerian university system is not going to be different from, among other things, does the system have a structure? How is the structure constituted? Does it actually follow the laid out procedure? Is governance based on democratic or non-democratic processes? Furthermore, does the administrative cum management system allow for participation? Is there a system of relative autonomy accorded to the sub-units of the administrative cum management system? How effective are such sub-units to the realization of the core mandate of the university system? These are the issues that we shall look at after examining the nature of the recession in the Nigerian economy and its likely impact on governance in the Nigerian university system.

In the meantime, the profiles of the Nigerian university system are as follows: there are a total of 152 universities in the Nigerian university system, with 40 belonging to the Federal Government; 44 owned by the states; and the remaining 68 controlled by private interests. They are superintended regularly by the National Universities Commission (NUC) set up by the Federal Government to, among others, control the stable development of the universities; to set academic standard by conducting accreditation visits to each and everyone of them at intervals of five years to ensure that they are qualified enough to confer degrees on their deserving students; etc. Another feature of the Nigerian university system is the establishment of the Joint Admissions & Matriculation Board (JAMB), set up in 1978, to conduct entrance examinations into all the universities as well as other higher educational institutions (HEIs) such as the polytechnics, colleges of education, and the mono-technics. As part of the features of the higher education institutions, we also have the Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TETFund) set up in 1994 to provide interventions to the components of the HEIs, as afore-mentioned. One recurring theme in the Nigerian
university system in the administration and management of the universities is the vexed issue of the pattern of funding of the government-owned and private universities. For the former, inadequate funding is often referred to as their bane. The latter is even more complex because it is not a requirement for them to make public their cash books or account figures like the strictly private commercial entities are regularly required to do. Yet, they generate revenues from the huge fees they charge their students. It is a controversy I would not like to go into; but it must be appreciated as a feature of the Nigerian university system. How has the

The Vice-Chancellor of The King's University, Osun State, Professor Oladiran Famurewa, was asked whether his institution was a service provider or a venture and he answered as follows: “it is a venture though but [sic.] not in a commercial sense because it is very tough.

You need to nurture the system to a level that in a way it can stand on its own. It can break even but if you are expecting returns, forget it because you can never recoup your money. The venture keeps demanding.” When the journalist demanded to know whether or not a private university could make profit, he answered thus: “You can easily and really make money when you have a large population....If we had 200 students already after our first year, may be, this place would be self financing. I recall former President Olusegun Obasanjo saying it will take his university some 25 years before becoming profitable.” See excerpts of the interview granted to Mr. Sunday Oguntola in The Nation Newspaper of Sunday, April 30, 2017, p.49.

Nigerian university system fared in the period of recession? To what extent has recession affected the effective and efficient administration and management of the Nigerian university system? In the next section, we shall take a look at the concept of recession and its various dimensions.

THE NIGERIAN ECONOMY IN RECESSION
According to Ekpo, economic recession should be seen as:

...a phase in the business cycle defined as the periodic but irregular up-and-down movements in economic activity measured in real GDP [Gross Domestic Product] and other macroeconomic variables like unemployment and inflation. The phases of the cycle include recovery, boom, decline and trough that repeat [sic.] themselves over-time anywhere from about two to twelve years with most cycles averaging six years in length. There have been numerous recessions in the global economy since the 17th century, some very serious (depressions) in the UK [United Kingdom], USA [United States of America], Europe and developing countries like Nigeria. Some developing countries experience recessions and depressions as clients.
[Recession] is a permanent feature of capitalist development[,] which is characterized essentially by entrepreneurs seeking high/higher profits in order to accumulate wealth. The main interest of capitalists/entrepreneurs is not to serve consumers but to make [huge] profits and if profits can be made by serving the consumers less[,] so be it.

The causes of the recession are many, complex and interrelated. These included poor policy formulation, which should be aimed at stemming the tide of underconsumption, reversing infrastructural deficit, burgeoning inflation, unemployment, and declining investment. This combination, according to Ekpo:

resulted in two consecutive quarters of negative GDP growth in 2016. At this juncture, the economy entered a recession. The -2.24 per cent growth of the GDP in the 3rd quarter and the -1.30 per cent in the 4th quarter of 2016 confirmed that the economy was deeply in a recession. For the year 2016, the economy contracted by -1.51 per cent. The

recession is of special type — affecting both the demand and supply side of the economy.11

The features of the Nigerian economy are such that shall never allow it to escape from intermittent recessionary fits. As already indicated, recession is a characteristic of the capitalist mode of production and, therefore, as long as Nigeria remains in the capitalist orbit, her economy can never escape the stranglehold of recession or, if it prolongs and it is intractable, it descends into a depression. Other features of the economy that will make it prone to recession from time to time include its monocrop nature. This is with respect to its absolute dependence on oil: the capacity produced and the heavy dependence on the price the international market is prepared to pay for the commodity. Other features are the decrepit nature or virtual death of the manufacturing industry; inability to feed the population owing to crude agricultural practice, monumental corruption, especially as we have witnessed or revealed through the somehow uncoordinated but high yielding approach of the Muhammadu Buhari regime to the fight against corruption. This kind of economy is characterized by high inflation, which currently stands at 18.55 per cent;


high levels of unemployment and under-employment, which also stand, over a period of time, as follows: in 2010, 21.4%; in 2011, 23.9%; in 2012, 27.4%; in 2013, 4.8%; in 2014, 25.4%; in 2015 Q4, 29.1%; and in 2016 Q2, 32.8%.\textsuperscript{12}

In spite of these negative features, an investment banker has argued that a recessionary phenomenon that the country is going through can offer some investment opportunities in the capital market:

There is no doubt that the downward trend in the equities market presents buying opportunities, in my view, as many of the listed stocks are believed to be under-priced \textit{[sic.]} compared with their intrinsic value. We at Stanbic IBTC [Stockbrokers Limited] believe it is the right time for investors to take position in the market, especially in quality names with attractive valuation supported by compelling outlook.

We believe Nigeria’s current economic situation is just a ‘slowdown’ as the country passes through this transition phase to what we potentially call a reinvigorated growth phase. We believe ongoing economic reforms\textit{[sic.]} if properly managed\textit{[sic.]} will be the much needed catalyst to unlocking the country’s vast potential. We favour [the] development of domestic manufacturing capacity as a sustainable fulcrum for Nigeria’s growth. There is an urgent need to develop other key manufacturing sectors of the economy to an export potential so as to be less dependent on oil for FX [foreign exchange] and inclusive growth. \textit{[sic.]}\textsuperscript{13

Much as an astute business person would like to take their money to the Stock Exchange to invest when prices are depressed or are declining in the hope of coming back to enjoy sharp rise in share values when prices pick up, all that the Managing Director of the Stanbic IBTC Stockholders Limited, Mrs. Ogungbesan, is saying is not more than an abstract and speculative analysis of a “potential” economy that has no guarantee of sustainable growth or that most probably does not exist in reality. As Ekpo has shown, the Nigerian economy “grew by almost 6% between 2007 [and] 2014[,] but poverty incidence stood at almost 70 per cent while the rate of unemployment averaged 28 per cent. This situation is definitely not economic development\textsuperscript{14} (nor can it be

\textsuperscript{12} National Bureau of Statistics figures cited in \textit{ibid.}, p.8.

\textsuperscript{13} Ogungbesan, T. (Mrs.), ‘Recession Offers Investment Opportunities in Capital Market,’ in an Interview with Mr. Ibrahim Apekhaede Yusuf, which was published in \textit{The Nation} Newspaper of Sunday, April 23, 2017, p.13.

\textsuperscript{14} Ekpo, \textit{op.cit.}, p.4.
regarded as "inclusive growth, which she is touting). In short, as a person, I am always disoriented when policy makers or shapers take delight in dwelling in a Nigeria that is full of potentialities. When are the potentials that Nigeria is endowed with going to come off as realities? Besides, economic growth anywhere in the world is always promoted vigorously when it takes place in the realm of real production rather than in speculation!

WHAT COULD BE REGARDED AS THE IMPACT OF RECESSION IN THE NIGERIAN ECONOMY ON THE ADMINISTRATION AND MANAGEMENT OF A NIGERIAN UNIVERSITY?

To therefore attempt to go beyond Mrs. Ogungbesan, it can be seen from the foregoing analysis of the Nigerian economy that a few issues have come up for close scrutiny (especially, of the recessionary phenomenon and its impact). In the first place, the recessionary situation has not been just a 2016 economic phenomenon, even if it came to a head in that year. Indeed, I would still want to maintain my position that recession is a permanent feature of all capitalist economies and, in the Nigerian case, it may have come about as an infraction from its global occurrence. But there is also the domestic dimension to it. Thus, an economy that is not industrialized; that is not diversified (that is mono-crop, which is a primary product without any value added); that is heavily dependent on global market with its secular declines; that is buffeted by decrepit infrastructure; that is stupidly corrupt; etc., is not one that can wean itself from what Ekpo has called "periodic but irregular up-and-down movements...measured by fluctuations..." (See above)

Secondly, even before the recession peaked in 2016, there were trends that indicated that all was not well with the economy. These were exemplified by the high rate of unemployment (particularly as the phenomenon affected graduates of the universities); double-digit inflation; and falling foreign reserves occasioned by the equally falling oil prices in the global market. Prior to the official declaration of the onset of recession, in the larger society, the effect of a recessed economy was being felt: workers were being owed several months' salaries; companies were closing shops as a result of the lack of foreign exchange to import raw materials, equipment and spare parts; workers who, as a consequence of non-operation of the industrial complexes, were also being retrenched; the unions were on protests against wage freeze and/or arrears of unpaid salaries and other general hardships at work; etc.; etc. In addition, workers were agitating for increased wages to cushion the deleterious effects of inflation and the other related hardships.
The situation in the Nigerian university system might have been different from what was happening in the larger society, not because either the institutions themselves or the individuals working in them were different species of people, but because the basis (objective) of this Lecture appears not to have been assaulted by the recession. This paper is not an empirical piece of work; it did not actually set out to find out what would or had been the impact of the recession on the administration and management in the universities across the country. But anecdotal snippets from a few campuses do indicate that they have also not been spared from the ugly economic impact of the recession. On a few campuses, there are places where fractions of the salaries are not being paid, and that situation exists even up to this moment. There are a few others where salaries are being owed in excess of three to five months. The situation over salaries does not appear to be so bad – hence, the Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU); the Senior Staff Association of the Nigerian Universities (SSANU); and the Non-Academic Staff Union (NASU) have not found it expedient to mobilize their respective members to bring the entire system down. Of course, there are pockets of agitation against one policy issue or the other in a few campuses that some and not all the unions have had to rise against the authorities, only on such campuses. A few of these agitations, which border on what one would like to describe as latching on to the current mood in the country, whereby the fight against corruption in high places has led unions in some Campuses to call on government and her anti-graft agencies to turn the searchlight against some management staff that are being alleged to have a hand in high-profile corrupt practices. Such reported cases have no connection with recession. In other words, they are administrative and management lapses that are likely to take place one way or the other, with or without recession!

On the whole, the system of administration and management has not been adversely affected as a result of recession. Most Nigerian universities are generally reported to be carrying out their mandate of teaching, research and rendering community services. It would appear therefore that the administrative and management systems put in place in the various campuses of the Nigerian university system are performing reasonably well; they probably need some tinkering here and there to make them more effective and more efficient. Based on this observation, it is not out of place to refer to what one would like to regard as a monstrous assault on the administrative and management systems by a Vice-Chancellor that I feel should be shared with the audience. (The full as carried by the *Leadership* Newspaper of Friday, April 28, 2017, p.40, is reproduced as an Appendix to this Lecture.)
As I said earlier while commending the authorities of this University in sustaining the legacies of one’s predecessor in office and condemning at the same time the myopia of my successor at the University of Abuja, the case reported fully below is the height of administrative and management blunders in the annals of Nigerian university system. The case concerns the Federal University, Dutsin-Ma in Katsina State, where a Vice-Chancellor in serial sacking sprees wrongly terminated the appointments of 260 staff between June and October 2016. He was also alleged to have cases of gross financial misconduct; willful violation of the procurement act of the federal government; and abuse of office as well as infringing on due process in award of contracts. Just as we have found out or stressed in the Lecture, the Nigerian university system has had a robust administrative and management system, which the Governing Council of the University resorted to, to discipline the erring Vice-Chancellor. The Governing Council should be commended for the initiative and the courage it has and the wisdom in distancing itself from the shenanigans of the Vice-Chancellor by the suspension punishment it has meted out to him. (In parenthesis, some Governing Councils would have denigrated their offices by colluding with the Vice-Chancellors, especially some of the issues involved contract award and the raking in of some monies voted for the physical development of the Campus). The Vice-Chancellor’s suspension should be regarded as a first step to the ultimate action to sack him too, if investigations and trials reveal that he has compromised the time-tested administrative and management system that is in place. Indeed, since the Governing Council has the power to appoint and discipline the Principal Officers in any university, it should go the whole hug to dismiss this particular Vice-Chancellor and merely report to the Visitor, as a recommendation. The Vice-Chancellor’s offence of sacking the number of staff reported in the press without due process should never be condoned, especially since, reading between the lines, one can smell willful and jaundiced hatred for the staff fired on the account of their ethnic, religious, and other identities.

I must stress that the one fundamental lesson that should come out of this Lecture on the administration and management of a university, no matter what may be the prevalent situation associated with the economy or any other phenomenon in the horizon, strong character and a sense of purpose to run the university system without compromising its ethos and core values are the desiderata that can preserve the system in question. If the audience does not believe in my “heresy,” let us all beg ex-President Goodluck Ebele Jonathan to come back to ruin this country once again!!! In other words, theories of administration and management exist and are independent of those who operate them; but the
character and integrity of the people at the helm of affairs are equally important in the difference that may come up in terms of the fortunes of the institution being administered and managed.

CONCLUDING REMARKS
The Lecture has been concerned with whether or not the recession in the Nigerian economy has affected effective and efficient administration and management of the Nigerian university system. Although the Lecture is mainly a position paper, not in any way based on any rigorous empirical method of data collection or research, it nonetheless and based on observation of events across the universities in the country as well as the fact that the Lecturer himself is an operator in the system, I have come to the conclusion that the time-tested administrative and management system, especially the committee system and the statutes that undergird such operation of the administrative and management system are sound enough and must be held on to tightly by incumbent operators at all times. This is not to suggest that wherever and whenever there is a need to tinker with the administrative and management theory we have been operating with and which is yielding some good results, we should not precisely carry out such reforms, especially if they promise to yield greater and better results.

The Lecturer was lucky to have stumbled on the disciplinary measure taken against the Vice-Chancellor of the Federal University, Dutsin-Ma in Katsina State. I am indeed impressed by the courage and forthrightness of the Pro-Chancellor and Chairman in conjunction with the other Members of the Governing Council for their patriotism, and determination to ensure that there is the institutionalization and operation of the rule of law in the running the University. Universities the world over are never places of dictatorship and the assault of the rule of law. Were that to have been the case, the benefits and usefulness of academic institutions would long ago have gone into oblivion. This Lecturer, therefore, commends the adoption of the courageous stance of the Governing Council of the Federal University, Dutsin-Ma.

Finally, the Lecturer commends the gesture of University of Lagos to remember heroes past by staging annually this Lecture series to honour our departed colleague – Professor Adetokunbo Babatunde Sofoluwe. What this gesture reminds me any time I shall recall my participation in the scheme, I shall feel delighted that there is still an institution in Nigeria that symbolizes love, integrity, scholarship, and, above all, the development and preservation of a human community. Mr. Vice-Chancellor, well done; please, keep up this spirit.

I THANK YOU ALL FOR THE AUDIENCE!!!
The suspension of Prof. Haruna Abdu Kaita, the Vice-Chancellor of Federal University Dutsin-Ma seems to be long overdue considering the palpable and debilitating conditions of over 260 staff of the university he unilaterally and wrongfully terminated their appointment without the knowledge of the University Governing Council. The remaining staff of the University who were overworked and at the same time go to work without knowing what would befall them also were relieved of the uncertainty.

It would be recalled that the Governing Council of the Federal University Dutsin-Ma had on Thursday 13th April unanimously agreed to suspend the Vice-Chancellor, Prof. Haruna Abdu Kaita for a period of six months after being severally warned. With this development, the Vice-Chancellor is now the second principal officer of the university to be suspended after the suspension of the Bursar, Mr. Momohjimoh Sadiq in May, 2016. The Council received several petitions, complaints and appeals bothering on gross financial misconduct, willful violation of the procurement act of the Federal Government, abuse of office and due process of award of contracts and wrongful termination of appointment of 260 staff between June and October 2016 including some in the much-sought-after specialized arrears that are difficult to replace and who are among the most hardworking staff of the University. He at the same time declared vacancy of their positions in the national dailies which amounted to waste and mismanagement of government resources, a decision the Federal Character Commissions seems poised to distance itself from.

The suspended Vice-Chancellor had since his assumption of office in February, 2016 taken some vital and critical decisions without the knowledge either the University Management Committee or the University’s Governing Council. The University has been struggling to survive since he took office over a year ago; for instance, he was planning to scrap the Department of Food Science and Technology and transfer the entire students to another University as a result of the sack of the entire Departmental staff (both academic and technical).

The same fate affects Department of Forestry and Wildlife Management.

The suspended Vice-chancellor has not only wasted Federal Government resources but has denied Federal University Dutsin-Ma well trained and seasoned
academics, even the host community is groaning because most of the economic activities have grounded.

The Staff Development Programme of the University that was applauded by the NUC accreditation team in March, 2015 visitation was seriously frustrated by the suspended Vice-Chancellor. For instance, millions of naira was spent by both the University and TETFund on Staff Development for staff to pursue MSc and PhD within and outside the country but the Vice-Chancellor unilaterally terminated appointment of many of the staff under Staff Development before the completion of their studies. Most of these staff had signed bonds with the University to return and serve the University for twice the period spent to complete the programme.

Some of these staff had obtained approval for TETFund grant to travel for studies but due to the fact that TETFund did not release their money on time, they borrowed money and proceeded for the study. They have since come back and TETFund has released their money but the Vice-Chancellor refused to refund the money already expended on their study.

It would be recalled that the Vice-Chancellor Prof. James O. Ayatse in order to promote academic excellence among the students instituted scholarship for the best students from 200 to 500 levels. The students in 1st class categories were on tuition free plus N20,000.00 book allowance, while those in 2nd class upper division received N20,000.00 book allowance each. This well applauded practice has been stopped since assumption of office of Professor Kaita as the Vice-Chancellor. The 1st University Convocation held in January, 2016 was highly celebrated and seen as a moment of joy and happiness for both parents and [the] 1st class graduates received automatic employment with University as obtainable in other Universities around the World. The pronouncement that was highly applauded by the Visitor was, however, cancelled by the Professor Haruna Abdu Kaita. He also recommended the demotion of Professors who laboured to raise the University to its enviable position before his coming.

The Vice-Chancellor already has many cases bordering on abuse of office and wrongful termination of appointments against him before the National Industrial Court of Nigeria (not less than 100).

The Governing Council has acted in the best interest of the Federal University Dutsin-Ma, the host community and Nigeria at large. The allegations leveled against him leading to his suspension cannot be swept under the carpet. According to Martin Luther King Jr, “Like a boil that can never be cured as long as it is covered up, but must be opened with all its pus-flowing ugliness to the natural medicines of air and light, injustice must likewise
be exposed, with all the tension its exposing creates, to the light of human conscience and the air of national opinion before it can be cured.”

To this end, the decision of Pro-Chancellor and Council members to suspend the Vice-Chancellor, Professor Haruna Abdu Kaita in order to salvage the University from collapse is a welcome development at this critical moment.

We believe that Professor H. A. Bichi as the Acting Vice-Chancellor (pending investigation of allegations against Professor Kaita), would work hard to restore the lost glory of Federal University Dutsin-Ma.

As one of the pioneer Professors in the University, who has also served in various capacities as pioneer HOD Fisheries and Agriculture, Dean of Faculty of Agriculture and Agricultural Technology and Deputy Vice-Chancellor (academics) he would hopefully salvage Federal University Dutsin-Ma from total collapse with the support of the Pro-Chancellor and Council members.

- Illu wrote in from new layout, Dutsin-Ma town, Katsina State.