# Covenant University

## CONVOCATION LECTURE

## REPOSITIONING AFRICAN UNIVERSITIES FOR EXCELLENCE: THEORETICAL AND PRACTICAL PERSPECTIVES

### By

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# About Distinguished Lecturer

We are most delighted to have in our midst as distinguished Convocation Lecturer an exemplary and highly respected administrator. Dr. Effah was born on February 4, 1950. He obtained his bachelor's degree in Education from the University of Cape Coast in 1976 and a Master's degree in Public Administration from the University of Ghana in 1981.He was awarded a Doctor of Literature (Honoris Causa) in 2011. He started his career with the Institute of Professional Studies, Legon, Accra, where he worked as a Tutor of Economics. It is noteworthy that our eminent lecturer also had a brief working experience in Nigeria between 1984 and 1985, when he worked as a tutor in a Community Secondary School in Ondo State. He then returned to Ghana to take up a University appointment as an Assistant Registrar, where he rose to the position of Acting Deputy Registrar of the University of Ghana in 1992. Dr. Effah was also appointed as the Secretary, Committee of Vice-Chancellors and Committee of Registrars and Finance Officers. Between 1993 and 1999, he worked with the University of Development Studies, Tamale, during which time he was promoted to the position of the University Registrar. He was later appointed as the Executive Secretary, National Council for Tertiary Education, Accra Ghana from October 1999 to July 2010. Dr. Paul Effah was later appointed as a Scholar-In-Residence of the Ghana Institute of Management and Public Administration (GIMPA) School of Governance and Leadership.

Some of His major administrative assignments and contributions to Tertiary Education in Ghana include his roles as: the Chairman, Technical Committee for the review of Conditions of service and scheme of service for the Staff of the Ghanaian Universities from 1986 to 1991; the Chairman, Ad-hoc Committee appointed by the Committee of Vice-Chancellors and Principals (CVCP) to prepare a position paper on the salary structure for the Universities in Ghana, for negotiations with Government in 1995; the Chairman, Search Committee for the appointment of Principal of College of Agriculture Education, Mampong-Ashanti of University of Education, Winneba in 2012; the Coordinator, the Ghana Universities Case Study sponsored by four US Foundations (Carnegie Corporation, Rockefeller, MacArthur, Ford Foundation) between 2001 and 2002; and the Coordinator and Resource Person for training programmes under the auspices of the National Council for Tertiary Education in Governance for Council Members and in Leadership for Vice-Chancellors of Universities, Principals of Polytechnics and Heads of other tertiary institutions from 2001 to 2010.

Other National Assignments, in which our distinguished lecturer had been involved include: Secretary, Interim Administration Committee of the University of Cape Coast, established by Government to perform the functions and exercise the powers of the University Council and the Senate

and to be responsible for the Administration of the University of Cape Coast, September, from 1990 to September 1991; Secretary, Committee appointed by His Excellency (H.E.) the President of the Republic of Ghana to advise on the remuneration of H.E. President, H.E. the Vice-President, Ministers of State, Parliamentarians and some specified State Functionaries, from 1998 to 2000; and also Secretary, Committee appointed by H.E. the President to review Ghana's education reforms in 2002.

Dr Paul Effah has consulted for many countries including the Government of the Netherlands through NUFFIC in identification of needs and organisation of stakeholders meetings prior to the introduction of NPT programme in the Tertiary Education Sector of Ghana in 2003; Uganda, at the Capacity Building Workshop for members of the National Council for Higher Education, Uganda, 25th-30th July, 2004 at Nile Resort, Jinja, Uganda; Botswana, at the Governance and Leadership workshops for Heads of tertiary institutions and Council Members organised by the Tertiary Education Council, on November 8-9, 2005 in Gabrone, Botwana; Ethiopia, at the workshop on the Role of the Board in Governance of Universities Undergoing Transformation under the auspices of the African Institute of Management, Development and Governance (AIMDG) and the Centre for International Co-operation (CIS) – Vrije Universiteit, Amsterdam – 9th-10th December, 2006; and the Government of Ghana on the establishment of two new Universities – University of Energy and Natural Resources, Sunyani and University of Health and Allied Sciences, Ho in 2011 and 2012.
Dr. Paul Effah has presented over twenty Conference papers in both local and international contexts and has fourteen publications both in books and journal articles. He has received several awards including the British Council Travel Fellowship (1991); the British Council sponsorship for Higher Educational Management Programme at the Universities of Warwick and Oxford, UK (1995) and the Association of Commonwealth Universities Staff Development Fellowship (1996/97). He is happily married with two children. Ladies and Gentlemen, please join me as I request our Guest Lecturer, Dr. Paul Effah to take the podium.

# COVENANT UNIVERSITY

## ANTHEM

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|---|---|
| We're a Covenant Generation | Covenant generation arise |
| Pursuing excellence | Light and knowledge to shine |
| Redeemed to reign | Glorious foundation stone |
| Learning to lead | Leadership skills to show |
| We are bound by an oath | Departing from knowledge |
| Obeying rules to rule | To empowerment Legalism |
| Making Kings of youth | To realism |
| Flying high on covenant wings | Wisdom's call for change |
| Wisdom's call for change Inspired | Inspired, on fire |
| on fire | With Courage Marching on in |
| With courage Marching on in | grace |
| grace | God's own arrow |
| God's own arrow Shot for glory. | Shot for glory. |



## Our Vision

To be a leading World-Class University, committed to raising a new generation of leaders in all fields of Human endeavour

## Our Mission

To create knowledge and restore the dignity of the black man via a Human Development Total Man Concept driven curriculum employing innovative, leading-edge teaching and learning methods, research and professional services that promote integrated, life-applicable , life-transforming education, relevant to the context of Science, Technology and Human Capacity Building

# Repositioning African Universities for Excellence: Theoretical and Practical Perspectives

## Introduction

I am indeed grateful to the Chancellor, the Board of Regents, the Vice-Chancellor, Management, Faculty, Staff and Students of Covenant University for inviting me to deliver this year's Convocation lecture. It is an honour and a privilege to be here and I am humbled by the invitation. When I received the invitation, I decided to go on the Internet to find some information about Covenant. I was impressed by what I saw: powerful statements about the philosophy, mandate and core values of the University, what I would consider as the birth of a beacon of hope for the next generation of leaders in Africa. What I have read and seen about Covenant University confirms the statement that the African educational landscape has indeed been radically altered by the formal entry of the Covenant University (CU) into the Higher Education (HE) sector.

Covenant University, built on a sound philosophical foundation, demonstrating a shift from "form" to "skill"; "knowledge" to "empowerment"; "figures" to "future building"; "legalism" to "realism"; "points" to "facts" and from "mathematics" to "life-matics"; the mandate of raising a new generation of leaders through a broad based qualitative education, built on sound biblical principles as path-finders, pace-setters and trail-blazers, among others; driven by the seven Core Values of Spirituality, Possible Mentality, Capacity Building, Integrity, Responsibility, Diligence and Sacrifice – all speak volumes of the Vision and focus of Covenant University, a lineal descendent of the mediaeval university, poised to combine the ancient and modern, theory and practice, physical and spiritual nourishment, the development of the head, hand and heart to equip the next generation of leaders with the knowledge, skills and attitudes to

take Nigeria and Africa to the next level of development. I commend and salute the Chancellor and the founding fathers of the University for their Vision, creativity and tenacity of purpose. Chancellor, I was invited to speak on the topic: Repositioning African Universities for Excellence: Theoretical and Practical Perspectives.

I have structured my lecture to define excellence in African Universities, discuss the current state of African Universities and then indicate strategies that may be adopted to reposition them to achieve the excellence, aspirations and standards that we have collectively set for ourselves. I will discuss the concept of differentiation, promotion of research and scholarship, re-examine our governance and leadership systems and processes, and finally touch on the emergence of private participation in higher education. I begin the discussion with a definition of excellence in African Universities.

## Excellence in African Universities

Excellence is a very difficult concept. Applied to the University it is even more

Complex, as many authors highlight different aspects. Jamil Salmi (2009), for example, conceptualizes excellence in the form of 'world-class' universities whose characteristics he summarises as:

- High concentration of talent in terms of students, teaching staff and researchers;
- Abundant resources in the form of public budget resources, endowment resources, tuition fees and research grants; and
- Favourable governance, represented by supportive regulatory framework, autonomy and academic freedom, vision and strategy, all of which promote the culture of excellence in an academic enterprise.

Kathryn Mohrman (2005) defines a world-class university as one in which Faculty regularly publish their research findings in top "defining" journals, and has a substantially large number of post-graduate students, international in character. Ambrose King (cited by Mohrman, 2005) adds a third dimension, namely, graduates employable anywhere in the world. The University must be grounded in the culture of the society where it is located and be useful not only in its own time but in preparing for future times. (Ruth Simmons, cited in Mohrman, 2005), Philip Altbatch, (2005) has also set some benchmarks for a world-class university: excellence in research; excellent  Faculty with job security, appropriate salaries and benefits, and adequate facilities, academic freedom and an atmosphere of intellectual excitement; freedom to pursue knowledge; significant measure of internal self-governance; and consistent and substantial public support, feature among these benchmarks.

A number of issues emerge from these definitions. Excellence may be interpreted in terms of research and scholarship or quality of students and teachers measured by grades students obtain or publications by teachers and researchers or quality of the teachers in terms of whether or not they hold terminal degrees. But there could be many more. Universities are local, national and global institutions, referred to by Marginson and Rhoades (cited in Marginson et al, 2011) as "Glonacal" Higher Education, where Glonacal represents the three dimensions of global, national and local. A change in one dimension affects the others. For example, it is the local or national which attracts attention to become global and international. Every university must meet the three criteria. What is the value of a university to a locality if it is unable to help in addressing the problems of that community? There is a lot more that is expected of the University. Jacques Delors (1999), for example, identifies four (4) pillars or missions of education, namely, to learn to do, to learn to live together, to learn to be and to learn to know.

- To learn to know is the learning which equips us with learning tools and critical mind which engenders greater curiosity and sharpen our critical faculties to enable us to develop our own independent judgment. It is also about lifelong learning and continuous professional development;
- To learn to do is associated with the issue of occupational training, emphasizing how we adapt education to equip people to do the types of work needed in the future. The emphasis is on skill acquisition and personal competence;
- To learn to be, i.e. character training, has been one of the pillars of university education. It is professional training plus " …moral education essential, for producing men of character suitable to be leaders of the people and custodians of the cultural heritage" (Ashby, cited in Odumosu; 1973);
- To learn to live together is about social cohesion, how our education and social training should bring us together. In this regard any education that sets us apart from our neighbour and community is not education but mis-education.

The question is 'Which of the four missions of education should we benchmark our universities against?' This brings to mind a debate opened by a comment of Oscar Wilde (The Sunday Times, October 10, 2010) that the value of university education is teaching "the exquisite art of idleness", in apparent reference to graduate unemployment. The case for knowledge generation and skills development as a basis for excellence has been made. This is reinforced by several authorities. The World Bank (2008), for example, argues that knowledge-intensive approach to development is emerging as an attractive option for many African countries – possibly the only route that could permit sustained, outward-oriented development. In this regard, a call

for universities to step up research and publication is justifiable. Similarly, putting emphasis on skills development is even more justifiable. In furtherance of this, the World Bank (2008) states that "in the face of competition from South and East Asia, a more skill-intensive route to development could provide an avenue for raising domestic value-added. Nor can we limit the discussion of excellence to research, skills development, critical thinking and character training. Quality is also critical. The evidence is that quality is more closely correlated with growth. Workers with higher quality cognitive, technical, communications and team skills are better able to: assimilate technology; push the knowledge frontier; work in groups and make efficient decisions (World Bank, 2008). Quality can, therefore, lead to lower unemployment and enable graduates to effectively participate in lifelong learning.

Taking into account all these indicators of excellence discussed above, it is inconceivable that a particular institution which emphasizes the need for institutional differentiation, one of the subjects I propose to discuss in this lecture can meet all of them. There are challenges in using common criteria such as the international rankings to determine excellence. Although desirable, the process is flawed in many respects. What African universities should strive to do is to try to focus on their mandate and seek excellence in what they have been enjoined to do and translate this into raising the standard of living and general conditions of the people. This is what excellence should mean to us. Can African Universities translate excellence into forms that bring joy and happiness to the people? I will discuss this in the next session beginning with the current state of universities in Africa.

**The Current State of African Universities**
Universities in Africa, particularly those in Nigeria and Ghana, were not only modelled on the British tradition, but also took

along with them the insistence on high standards which Sir. Eric Ashby refers to as "the gold standard of learning (Odumosu, 1973). This high standard was maintained during the formative years of university education in Africa.

Regrettably, owing to a combination of factors, the situation could not be sustained. In 2003, Damtew Teferra and Philip G. Altbach (2003:3) reported that, by international standards, Africa was the least developed region in terms of higher education institutions and enrolments. Again, at the plenary session of the World Conference on Higher Education in Paris in 1998, the Secretary-General of the Association of African Universities (AAU) commented that "in spite of the crucial role of higher education, most agencies and African governments disengaged from the sector in the 1980's and early 1990s on the argument that rates of social return in basic education were much higher than in higher education. Denied of funds, African higher education was brought to nearcollapse"
(Matos, cited in Teferra and Altbach, 2003). These considerations led Johann Morton to describe higher education as a stepchild of education in Africa (Carnegie Reporter, Vol.4,No 3, Fall 2007). Higher education was in crisis. John S. Daniel (cited n Sami, 1999) identifies five components of the higher education crisis as follows: inability to accommodate the volume and variety of student demand; education was too costly and not sufficiently relevant to the labour market; teaching methods too inflexible to accommodate a diverse student body; educational quality not assured and the university sense of academic community eroded.

In Nigeria, Issac Olawale Albert (2010: 492) discusses the state of university education in terms of gaps in its functions of teaching, research and community service. With regard to teaching, he cites the consistent unemployability of graduates as a result of their lack of skills to support his assertion that there

was something wrong with the system. Even with formal professions like law, accounting, computer science, etc., he laments that the focus is more on theory than practice. In terms of gaps in research, although Albert did not have enough evidence to draw a firm conclusion, he gave indications about the falling quality of PhD theses, non-teaching of research writing skills, as well as the sheer lack of commitment on the part of students, to support his claim. I shall return to this subject later in this address. The last gap, community service provision, according to Albert, is the responsibility of the university to contribute to finding solutions to societal problems. In his view, this aspect of the university's work is very poorly emphasized.

While acknowledging the points raised above, low research output, lack of skills acquisition, poor teaching, inadequate community service, etc., it is important to emphasize that these trends are being addressed. Ghana, for example, has established the Ghana Education Trust Fund. Nigeria has established an Education Trust Fund for the purpose of injecting more money to improve higher education. Universities are seeing more infrastructural development, while the emergence of private participation in higher education is changing the higher education landscape. The next section of this address is devoted to some of the strategies being adopted to reposition African Universities, beginning with the concept of differentiation.

**The Concept of Differentiation**
A major difficulty facing higher education in Africa can be put down to a lack of commitment to a functional differentiated system or institutional segmentation. The problem seems to be the over-concentration on the grammar type of education to the detriment of technical, vocational education and training (TVET). Another is the near neglect of science and technology. This is not unexpected, as most of the educational systems in Anglophone Africa were modelled on the British tradition which

frowned on TVET and career-focused training. It is common to find many senior high school graduates trooping to the universities for admission while student-places high in TVET institutions remained unoccupied. This is largely due to the social status and image associated with university education, confirmed by the following words of Lord Bowden (1977: 18) of British universities. "Universities were seen as centers of privilege with very little to do with industry, commerce and society". It is this lopsided development of higher education that I call "the missing link" in our education system. Best practice points to an educational system which tapers to the top in the form of a pyramid. The example of the United States of America illustrates a differentiated higher education system which has the community colleges at the base. In the middle of the structure are the land grant colleges and the state universities established to deal with a particular problem – Agriculture – which had been identified with mechanical arts and the trades at the Boston Convention of 1848. The land grant colleges pursued their mission and helped to solve the problem of agriculture in the United States. The American commitment to open access to higher education and career- focused and skills-oriented education was the reason for the establishment of community colleges which altogether enroll close to a third of all American students in post-secondary education, at present, the only sector which continues to grow. It is at the colleges where students are equipped with the knowledge and skills in applied and vocational courses in a range of fields that lead directly to employment such as in restaurant management, metal work and automobile mechanics. The students are further trained in general education so that those who wish to transfer to other universities can do so. The issue of academic drift or "mission creep" in higher education where all intuitions within the higher education sector would like to become like universities should be reversed. (Addea-Mensah, 2013). Even within the university sector, institutions must be made to focus on their mission and mandate

to produce better results. Many universities spread themselves so thin that they hardly stand out in anything. It is heart-warming to note in this regard that Covenant University focuses on two colleges, College of Development Studies and College of Science and Technology, two critical areas for national development, as well as a School of Postgraduate Studies which underscores the University's commitment to research, one of the core functions of the University. The developmental university concept takes its roots from the land grant colleges of the United States and emphasizes the application of knowledge and skills to solving problems affecting the community. The motto of the University of Wisconsin, one of the land grant colleges, "The boundary of the campus is the boundary of the state", illustrates the link that existed between the state and the university. The University of Dar-es-Salaam in Tanzania and recently the University for Development Studies in Ghana are further examples of the developmental university concept dedicated to addressing specific developmental issues. Through the founding of Covenant University which focuses on development, science and technology and postgraduate studies as well as your commitment to the raising of a new generation of leaders, you have carved a niche for yourselves and registered your name among the international academic community, poised to make a difference in Africa and beyond. One way you can achieve this is through research, good governance and leadership, to which I now turn.

**Repositioning African Universities through Research, Governance and Leadership**

Research is a core function of the University, even for those institutions categorized as teaching or professional. So also are governance systems and leadership key driving forces behind any successful university. A report commissioned by H.E Mr. Kofi Annan, then Secretary-General of the UN emphasizes the importance of research, particularly science and technology

research, in the following words, "No nation can now afford to be without access to a credible, independent science and technology research capacity that would help it to develop informed policies and take effective action in these and other areas" (UN 2004, cited in Effah and Addae-Mensah, 2013). Micheal Daxner (1999:59) emphasizes the importance of research when he states that, "the University of the future will largely be defined by its research or there will be no university". A recent study commissioned by the Centre for Higher Education Transformation (CHET) in South Africa and undertaken in eight flagship universities in Africa, has come out with startling revelations with regard to their performance in terms of research and publications. The study revealed that in terms of publications only one university, University of Cape Town, achieved a ratio of one article per an academic per year (Cloete, 2011). At the Nelson Mandala Metropolitan University (NMMU), the ratio was one article per academic every three years. At Makerere in Uganda, the ratio was one article per academic in five years. At the other Universities including those in Ghana, each academic was likely to publish, on average, only one article every ten or more years.

A 2009 UNESCO Science Report indicates that sub-Saharan Africa's share of world researchers was 0.8% or 71.7 researchers per million population. The corresponding figures for Asia and North America were 38.2% and 660.2 and 26.8% and 4,653.2 respectively (cited in Tagoe, 2013). A number of international university rankings have been developed which periodically prepare "league tables" of universities in which research output features prominently. The Shanghai Jiao Tong University (SJTU), the Times Higher Education (THE) and the Ranking Web of World Universities (webometrics) are among those in vogue. While these rankings allow institutions to benchmark their performance and inform student choices and even help governments to better understand some of the modern policy

challenges of mass higher education, they have been criticized as reducing universities and their diverse mission and strengths to a single composite core (Baty, 2012).

The lesson for Africa is that, whether we like it or not, our institutions would be subjected to international rankings and so we should prepare for them. As a continent, Africa should establish its own criteria which emphasize the unique roles and mandates of our institutions. It should also be possible for each institution to asses itself based on its own mandate and key performance-indicators established by its Board or Council.

One worrying aspect of research in African universities is that most of the research is financed by foreign donors who invariably dictate the terms of the research. This was confirmed in a study undertaken at the University of Ghana in 2010 by the Ghana Institute of Management and Public Administration (GIMPA), which indicated that about 90% of research funds in the university were from international agencies or collaborative efforts with other institutions abroad (GIMPA: 2010). A related issue to externally drawn research agenda is the whole question of dissemination of research results which often is not made available to African governments and institutions for implementation. Another is that the external partners always become principal researchers with the contribution of the local counterparts hardly acknowledged (Effah and Addae-Mensah, 2011).

Other concerns with research in African universities include situations where relatively young and inexperienced academics are saddled with administrative duties such as Headship and Deanship early in their career, making them unable to devote time to undertake research. Many other academics have heavy teaching loads at the undergraduate level, leaving them very little time to undertake research. There are also those who hop from

one institution to the other teaching on part-time basis. There are even stories of some who hold multiple full-time appointments.

It is not always that we can put the blame on government. A Training Needs Assessment (TNA) undertaken by Effah, et al, as part of a Senior Academic Leadership Training (SALT) programme for senior university managers in West Africa, sponsored by the Carnegie Corporation of New York, confirmed the importance of research and scholarship. The disturbing feature of this study was that while 53% of lecturers rated research as most important, followed by 39% of Heads of Department, only 25% of Senior Management rated it as most important. This is worrying because it is Senior Management who have to take the initiative and provide the resources to stimulate research.

The above discussion points to the urgent need to invest more money in research and also for senior management of universities to demonstrate more interest and commitment to research. While we may have to continue to source external funding for research, it is necessary to enforce the policy on local content requirement that insists on evidence of collaboration with local researchers and the use of local materials in research.

My last comment on research relates to the importance of indigenous knowledge and the need to infuse it into the research that we do.

Chancellor, let me illustrate what I mean by sharing with you the knowledge exhibited by a local kenkey producer at a village in the Central region of Ghana called Yamoransa and reported by a Professor of Food Science at the University of Ghana, Legon;(Gyekye,2005). Kenkey is a popular food in Ghana prepared from fermented corn dough wrapped in plantain or banana leaves before boiling. Researching into the properties of

kenkey, the Professor had gone to talk to this woman with a group of students. In the process of sharing some of their research results with the woman, she also took the advantage to ask the Professor and the students a question.

She asked: if you had a 40-gallon barrel of kenkey on a traditional cooking stove using firewood and saw water leaking at the bottom of the barrel, what would you do?

Tried as they could, none of the answers given by the Professor and the students satisfied the woman.

She then decided to give them the answer. She said: adjust the firewood in the stove to allow increased burning. Collect two or three handfuls of dry palm kernels and throw them in the fire. They will heat up and turn red hot; finally collect coarse table salt and throw it into the hot kernels. The salt would explode and in the process seal the leakage at the bottom of the barrel.

This woman who had never entered any classroom had exhibited knowledge about metallurgy, physics and chemistry to the admiration and amazement of the Professor and his students. This is what I mean by indigenous knowledge which university researchers should take advantage of and make a difference with in Africa.

I wish now to turn attention to how African Universities can be repositioned for excellence through governance and leadership.

A World Bank/UNESCO Task Force on Higher Education and Society (2000) has confirmed that, without exception, university leaders see dysfunctional governance as the single greatest obstacle facing them. Any effort therefore to reposition African Universities should review the governance structure and practices which have been modelled on those of the universities

in the developed world.

Burton Clark (2010) identifies three University governance models, the European (Continental), the British and American models. Balderston (1995) cites other models such as the hierarchical, collegial, polycentric, atomistic decision-making, and organized anarchy, all of which may be regarded as variants of the British model which emphasizes self-governance with a powerful professoriate, a tradition of institutional autonomy and a weak state control. The European model tends to be state controlled and directed, with the responsibility for planning vested in the government. Government determines academic programmes and Faculty are treated as civil servants. In the American model, the Chief Executive Officer or President is vested with substantial authority than what his or her counterparts would wield in the other models. The American model is driven by practices in the corporate world such as strategic and business planning and entrepreneurship. The Confucian model of higher education, which operates in East Asia and Singapore (Margison; 2011) has gained currency in recent times, giving meaning to the phrase the "East is Rising" in higher education. Some of the characteristic features of this model are:

- Relatively closer national supervision and control than in the English speaking systems;
- Rapid growth of tertiary participation beyond 50% towards universal levels, simultaneous with a continuing increase in the proportion of tuition costs funded by households rather than the state;
- One chance examination system at the end of schooling, which differentiates entry into tertiary education as the basis of the status of the institution;
- A high and growing public investment in research, particularly in science and technology; and
- Placing less emphasis on university executive authority.

Having discussed all these foreign governance models, it is necessary to ask which of them approximates existing structures in African Universities. Is there a need for an African university governance model? If the answer is yes, what should be its key characteristics? Certainly, participatory approaches, autonomy and shared or distributive authority, should feature prominently in this African university governance model. The example of the East Asian countries suggests that a growing interest in higher education, demonstrated by a continuing increase in the proportion of cost funded by households, is a prerequisite for growth and economic development. It also highlights the fact that increased investment in science and technology is a necessity. These should serve as useful lessons for African governments and universities.

Another emerging trend in higher education is what Schapper and Mayson (2004) have termed Taylorisation of higher education. It relates to the growing trend towards centralization of management decision-making and standardization, which are the key elements of Taylor's scientific management. Increasingly, Vice-Chancellors are being given a lot more delegated power to take decisions in return for accountability. The increasing establishment of new units such as information centres, advancement offices and advisory councils, all located in the Vice-Chancellor's office, tends to support this assertion. This trend is not necessarily a bad one, but if not managed well, it can lead to situations where academic substructures no longer have the power to decide on such matters as teaching and research.

Extreme application of the concept of Taylorisation leads to a loss of academic autonomy, professional engagement and intellectual thinking among academic staff. Professors may show minimal interest in organisational matters and prefer to be   left alone to do their work, a practice referred to as fluid participation.

Also associated with the concept of Taylorisation is what Schapper and Mayson (2004) term macdonaldization, the application of the principle of fast food outlets in dispensing education, leading to degree Mills, the de-skilling and deprofessionalisation of academics in today's factories of learning.

Still on governance, Ernest Boyer (cited in Carnegie and Tuck, 2010) argues for an integrated governance for Universities by disaggregating the roles of the university into academic, business and corporate governance. Academic governance which is to stimulate scholarship, has four separate but overlapping facets, namely, discovery, integration, application and teaching. Scholarship of discovery is the core business of the University which advances the frontiers of knowledge, seeking to answer the question, "What is yet to be found?" Scholarship of integration involves making connections across disciplines and educating non-specialists, and also seeks to determine what the findings mean. Scholarship of application provides service to the wider community to show how the knowledge generated can be responsibly applied to solve problems. The last facet of scholarship, scholarship of teaching, relates to the situation where the knowledge generated is transmitted through teaching.

Business governance on the other hand, focuses on strategy, value creation, resource utilization and performance management, all principles in corporate governance, which are now increasingly being applied to the university. The last aspect of integrated governance is corporate governance or conformance, which involves accountability and emphasises the need to safeguard institutional resources. I have highlighted these three aspects of governance, academic, business and corporate to serve as a guide to African universities, the Chancellor, Board or Council as well as the entire Faculty as to what to look for in assessing the efficiency and effectiveness of the university.

My last comment on governance brings to the fore the role of leadership, which is defined to include all functionaries such as Vice-Chancellor, Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Deans/Directors, Heads of Department, Registrars, etc, who have the capacity to effect change in the University. (Johnstone, 2010)

As the university is complex, so is its leadership structure. Indeed, in the university, leadership is shared and not concentrated in any one person. The university is perhaps the only institution with the highest concentration of intellectual capacity or brainpower which makes coordination difficult. It has Faculty which defines its own schedule. It operates a bi-cameral system because it has two supreme bodies or organs, Council or Board with financial and oversight responsibilities and Academic Board or Senate with responsibilities for the academic business of the university such that Council cannot take a decision on any academic matter without reference to the Academic Board or Senate. The membership of the university, encompassing Council or Board, Faculty, students, alumni and a host of other stakeholders, makes it a rare institution. The department is the knowledge cell or hub, generating the majority of activities or decisions in the university. This is why Heads of Departments play a key role in the activities of the University. Their initiative and drive propel the university forward. Heads of Department and Deans who swim in mediocrity can kill the university. Myles Munroe (2008) admonishes leaders to avoid mediocrity which he defines as the region in our lives bounded on the north by compromise, on the south by indecision, on the east by past thinking and on the west by lack of vision.

The committee system of administration is a legal requirement which dictates its own unique procedures and processes. Why do we need academic leadership? In other words, academic leadership for what? I suggest a number of answers:

- To understand the academic environment, sufficient enough to appreciate the need to defend it;
- To promote a research culture;
- To develop academic programmes in line with the vision and mission of the institution;
- To take difficult decisions;
- To overcome resistance to change from Faculty;
- To communicate effectively to faculty, students and other stakeholders;
- To mobilise resources for academic work;
- To promote change; and
- To deal with difficult people, a situation which is inevitable in every human society and endeavour. (See, for example, Johnstone: 2010).

I propose to end this section on leadership with some general comments, particularly because of the mandate of the Covenant University to develop the next generation of leaders. Not everybody who is occupying a leadership position is a leader. Some get put into leadership positions and lead by accident, which is why it is said that the world is overmanaged and underled. The few leaders available are being compelled by circumstances and the organizational setting to become managers. Endangered species indeed! This is not to conclude that our institutions do not need managers. They are needed. Their role is important to ensure efficiency. But more than ever before, Africa needs a new generation of leaders, men and women of vision, who are creative and innovative to transform our institutions and nations. We need leaders who are capable of leading their followers through turbulence; leaders who have integrity and are selfless. Jeremie Kubicek (2011) puts it succinctly when he says that leadership is alive when it is used for others; it dies when it is about ourselves.

Leaders have the ability to spot and take advantage of

opportunities. There is a lot to learn from the example of Uzziah in the Bible (2 Chronicles 26). For those of us who are familiar with the story, three things defined his leadership success, namely: role model, body of knowledge and a good team. But his success did not last because it got into his head and so he stumbled and fell. We need to be humble, illustrated by Jim Collins' level 5 executive leader who achieves an enduring greatness through a paradoxical combination of personal humility with professional will (cited in Convey: 2004)

In order to be useful to God, our humility should always exceed our ability. (1 Sam. 15:17).

Without a corps of dedicated and committed leaders, men and women of vision, action and character, growth and development will continue to elude Africa. The challenge is for African Universities to strive to turn out leaders to transform the continent and take it to the next level of development. Covenant University has already taken the lead; others must follow! I devote the last session of this address to the contribution of the private sector to higher education.

**Private Participation in Higher Education**
Private participation in higher education in Africa is relatively new. Beginning with investment in student hostels to take advantage of the high social demand for high education following reforms in education in almost every country in Africa, the 1908s saw an upsurge in the establishment of a variety of higher education institutions for profit and not for profit. Covenant University belongs to the not-for-profit category founded on a Christian mission ethos and committed to pioneering excellence at different paradigms of learning.

Today, all over Africa, there is hardly any country in which one cannot find a private higher education institution. T.Ajaya

(2006), Director of the National Institute of Educational Planning, Ondo, here in Nigeria has observed that it is the wish of over 80-90% of students leaving the secondary school system to go to the university, confirming the intense competition that the system generates. The situation is similar in almost all African countries, thus putting undue pressure on the public institutions. The emergence of private higher education institutions has, therefore, become a relief to both government and parents. Indeed, some of the public institutions have both private and public characteristics, charging fees to a category of its students. In Ghana, for example, following Cabinet approval, universities have been given quotas of five percent each for Ghanaian fee-paying and foreign students. This means that the public universities can admit up to five percent of Ghanaian nationals on fee-paying basis.

The emergence of private institutions has come with a number of benefits. These include:

- Expansion of educational opportunities;
  Freeing of more public resources to be targeted at the
- vulnerable and disadvantaged;
  Demonstrable capacity to innovate in higher education
- provision and delivery;
  Increasing employment opportunities. (citied in Effah, 2006)

Although Covenant University is a relatively new institution, the evidence available confirms that it is achieving its Vision. Its graduates have been found to be performing well and serving as good ambassadors of the University. No wonder they are regarded as "people of integrity, sound knowledge and a beacon of hope and transformation". Congratulations!

Private participation in higher education has a lot of potential in complementing the public effort to address the challenges facing

the higher education sector. What it needs is an appropriate regulatory framework that would not only make the sector thrives, but also to contribute its quota to national development and social transformation.

**Conclusion:**

I wish to conclude my address by admitting that it has not been possible in this address to raise all the issues that are required to reposition African universities for excellence. I have, however, given an indication of the current state of African universities, discussed some of the key indicators for accessing excellence and discussed extensively differentiation, research, governance and leadership as well as private participation in higher education, which are among the key parameters in any attempt to reposition African universities.

Indeed, Simon Marginson, (2012), a Professor of higher education at the University of Melbourne, Australia, confirms this when he states that higher education in East Asia and Singapore is advancing rapidly on three fronts at once: the overall rate of participation in tertiary education, – now exceeding 85% in Taiwan and South Korea – the quality of leading universities and rapidly growing research and development.

I hope that I have sufficiently covered these grounds.

May Covenant University grow from to strength to strength to become the Harvard of Africa; May you continue to search for your treasure;

And, May you find it in the fulfillment of your dream of raising a new generation of leaders for Nigeria, Africa and beyond.

I thank you for your attention and may God Richly Bless Us All!

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