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**AS IT WAS IN THE BEGINNING SO IT  
IS NOW: POLITICS AND EDUCATION  
POLICIES IN NIGERIA**

By

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*Professor of Educational Administration*



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POLITICS AND EDUCATION POLICIES IN  
NIGERIA**

An Inaugural Lecture Delivered at Oduduwa Hall,  
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**Introduction**

Mr. Vice-Chancellor Sir,

Members of the Academic Community,

Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen,

I give praise and all glory to God Almighty who has given me life and the opportunity today to give this inaugural lecture. Standing before you today is an educationist who also had a brief and eventful stint in politics. The combination of these two roles is neither odd nor incompatible. After all education (which is my vocation) and politics (which became my avocation) are like Siamese twins. It is my intention therefore to demonstrate in this lecture how education and politics are joined at the hip. Meanwhile, I guess that I am probably not too far off the mark in my hunch that many of those gathered here today assume that the title of this inaugural lecture was informed by the trajectory of my career path. This is actually not the case. I have been a student of education and politics since the 1980s. This has culminated in the award of a PhD degree in 1990 with my thesis titled “Politics of Decision Making Process in Education with Reference to South Western Nigeria, 1955-1985”.

It was simply a twist of fate in 2012, twenty-two years post-graduation, to have found myself in a couple of official positions both in a State and the Federal Government of Nigeria as an education policy maker as well as a policy implementer. This backstory underscores the need to make the audience realize that my background as an academic educationist and my foray into politics really gave me an uncommon insight into the symbiotic relationship between education and politics. The field of education is wide, dynamic and seemingly commonplace yet it is, on many

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levels, highly specialized. While a student of education may be regarded as a specialist, an education administrator may be seen as a generalist. An education administrator is a policy maker and a manager of people and resources. As a policy maker, the onus is on one to understand and consider the political and economic environment of each policy choice. The symbiotic relationship between politics and education which revealed to me as a student of the politics of education was brought into sharp and bold relief when I became a political office holder charged with education administration. In office, the reality of the findings of scholarship hit me like a brick when the rubber, as they say, met the road. It became very clear to me that it is, indeed, impossible to separate education from politics. As it is said in Yoruba, “Omi eko, eko ni.”

### **What is Politics?**

Properly understood, the word ‘politics’ covers the entire spectrum of the policy making process. This includes all the activities, interactions, and deliberations that pertain to the public policy cycle. In the event, politics and the policy making process is not the special preserve of professional politicians and government officials alone, as individual citizens and members of the organized civil society also intentionally and sometimes inadvertently participate in politics. Thus defined, political activities include all manner of participation by individuals and groups in the definition of any problem that requires the exertion of public resources as well as in the determination and choice of policy alternatives and their implementation. Of course, politics is writ large in political party formation, legislation, and mobilization, as well as in campaigns and all manner of strategies to win and exercise power. It is therefore safe to define politics, in the word of Mendoza (1973), as “a process through which any group selects its leaders, determines its policies, distributes its advantages and disadvantages”.

Similar classic definitions of politics include that of Harold Lasswell (1936), who defines politics as “who gets what, when and

how” and Easton’s (1953) widely quoted definition of politics as “the authoritative allocation of values”.

Education, especially formal education, is a value which is often allocated by politics. In defining public policy cycle as patently the political process or politics by another name, a scholar of the politics of education, such as I am, will of necessity, investigate the role of essential factors and actors in the policy making process. This calls for studies relating to the role of elected officials, the voting public and its supporting institutions along with those constitutionally enabled actors in the formulation and implementation of education policies. The student of the politics of education ought to investigate the role of the organized civil society, such as labour unions, private providers of education, women and ethnic groups, churches and mosques, in the formulation and implementation of education policies. The politics of school administration and the activities of school administrators as well as the spatial, social and, economic environment of education policies and practice should also be investigated by students of the politics of education. To the extent that we live in a globalized world, we also ought to examine the effects of global standards and mandates on education policies in Nigeria. Mr. Vice-Chancellor Sir, for more than two decades, I diligently conducted research in all the areas identified above.

### **The Interaction between Politics and Education**

The politics of education refers to the process by which individual and group interests compete over and negotiate on the allocation of resources as well as the, purpose objectives and goals of education. More than two and a half centuries ago, the Swiss pedagogue and educator, Johann Pestalozzi (1744-1827), identified education as an instrument for social reform through individual development. Education is, therefore for him, a public good that confers social, political and economic benefits on both the society and the individuals. For the purpose of this lecture, the focus is mainly on formal education. Education is considered formal when its instructional processes are planned and graded by approved

authorities and when definite infrastructure exists for its promotion. If education is understood in this way, the politics affecting it must be judged against the public interest and such interest must be declared by public organs purportedly representing the people's interest and associated civil society entities. This is why it can be asserted that the functions of government include an appropriate policy of education relevant to its political, social, and economic environment. Policies on education are affected, to different degrees, by domestic and international political, economic, historical, and socio-cultural factors including globalization. Adelabu (1990, 2004a), took a cursory look at the global trends on how politics had interacted to shape the education policies of some ancient and modern societies. The studies revealed that across the world in Europe, Asia, Middle East and in many other regions, education policies in different epochs were shaped by not only the politics of the different societies but by the abiding dominant philosophies of those societies. By way of illustration, the European philosophers of old recognised the centrality of education to the subsistence of the society. For instance, Plato the Greek philosopher in his Republic argued that only a few people have the capacity to learn the art of governing through the development of the virtue required for leadership, and this development is the exclusive function of formal education. Similarly, Aristotle asserted in his Politics that to secure a good society, education of the young into the "good life" is necessary. Plato believed that education could be used to solve the practical problems of the society.

Similarly, successive administrations in Britain had cultivated great interests in education with the aim of training and consolidating the governing class. The Tudors were quick to realise the importance of the kind of education that would make them more efficient. In the same vein, it has become difficult to draw any clear distinction between education and politics and between education and ideology especially since the successful Leninist revolution of 1917. The Leninist Education Law of 1923 provided that the teaching works in the schools and the whole

organisation of school life should be directed towards promoting proletarian class consciousness in the mind of the pupils, thus preparing them for useful and productive political activity in the state.

In Germany, philosophers such as Fichte and Hegel elaborated that, the regeneration of the country is to be accomplished by the state. In the United States of America (USA), there has been a consistency in the tradition of education from the past to the present. Education is seen as the foundation which makes democracy work. In China, one commonly accepted explanation for the changes in Chinese education is rooted in the connection between educational policy and internal power struggle.

In Nigeria, the symbiotic relationship between politics and education is neither new nor modern. Some are rooted in formal, informal and non-formal educational systems. For instance, the *traditional* educational system responded well to evolving circumstances in politics, the economy and, culture (Adelabu, 2004b).

It is pertinent to note that education was also used extensively as a political, cultural, and economic tool by the various organized religions in Nigeria. In Islam, the promotion of Arabic language through Quranic education provided not only literacy but also a common language of communication between Nigerians and the proselytising North Africans which in turn promoted trade and political linkages. With regards to Christianity, formal education that came through the Christian missionaries could be described as an enabler of British imperialism in West Africa (Abernethy, 1969). It is obvious that the early missionaries used their education policies to pave the way for the colonisation of Nigeria. In seeking to consolidate British power in Nigeria, the colonial regime had to deal directly with educational matters having seen it as a veritable tool for effective colonisation (Abernethy, 1969). Lugard viewed education as an instrument to be used explicitly for political ends. To him, education was the most important and most urgent of all

policy choices to secure the amalgamation of Nigeria. Lugard's philosophy of secular education as a means of character training was later used as a means of indoctrination (Fajana, 1976).

While confirming the symbiotic relationship between education and politics, Thomas (1976) observed that whenever any country is going through political transformation, the leaders always engage in revamping the whole educational system. This was the case in Nigeria where the evolution of federalism provided the three regions in Nigeria the autonomy and opportunity to legislate on education policies that were consistent with their individual regional politics and the tenets of a federal structure. When federalism was introduced in 1951 by the McPherson constitution, it provided the real opportunity for the old Western Region of Nigeria to design and implement education policies that were distinctly different from those of the other two regions of the country and that were responsive to the needs and the level of development of the region. This resulted in the first ever Universal Primary Education (UPE) in Nigeria. (Adelabu, 1990; Adelabu, 2017).

Paradoxically, education which was used by the colonial powers for domination became the tool for political emancipation in Nigeria (Adelabu, 2004a). Many of the nationalists who championed Nigeria's political emancipation were those who had the privilege of Western education. Among other demands, these opposition figures started clamouring for an education system that would meet the challenges of self-government and nationhood. Hence, the UPE of the 1950s.

A couple of decades down the road, we found an exemplary evidence of the symbiotic relation between politics and education policies. The 1976 Universal Primary Education (UPE) policy during the military regime was primarily facilitated by the extant Nigeria's political environment. Having suspended the Constitution and in consonance with the military regimes' centralisation policy, the government transferred primary

education from concurrent list to exclusive list. The policy was used to bring about the much-needed rehabilitation of the Eastern States that witnessed a heavy school dropout during the civil war. Beyond this, the UPE was meant to bridge the educational gap and pervasive inequality between the North and South, a gap that for long had been a source of conflict and distrust.

Political factors are not the only drivers of education policies, economic circumstances and ambitions are significant determinants. As demonstrated in many of my publications, the buoyant economy of Western Nigeria in the 1950s, driven by cocoa production and export, facilitated some positive achievements in the education sector. Furthermore, the 1976 UPE policy was also facilitated by the petroleum oil boom of the 1970s. These instances bear witness to the fact that, more than any other factor, the nation's economy often determines the agenda and content of education policy.

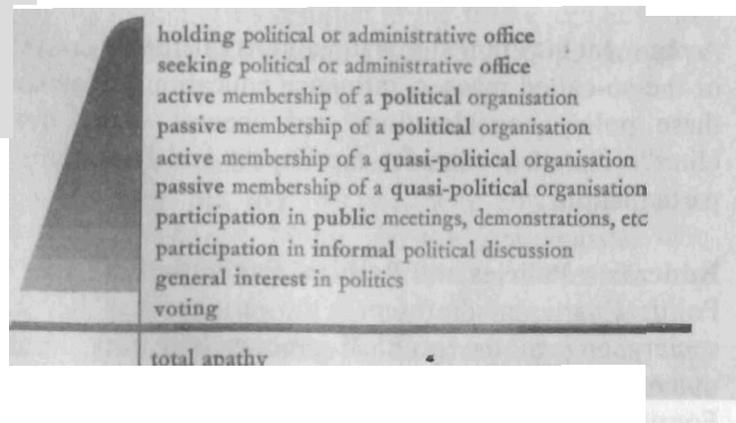
A pertinent question at this juncture is this: How does the citizenry, or the so-called masses, influence education policy choices or are these policy considerations and choices solely determined by elites? Here we consider the impact and limitations of political participation.

### **Education Policies and Political Participation**

Political participation refers to the various ways the citizens of any society engage the political process and seek to influence its outcomes. Political participation may be formal or informal. Formal participation tends to conform to constitutional and legal provisions while informal participation tends to be extra-legal and outside the boundaries of the established political process. It may be channelled through state institutions or the civil society such as labour and student unions, women and religious groups and so on. Thus understood, voting, registering with a political party, violent and nonviolent protests, petitioning state officials are all examples of political participation.

Adelabu (2008) showed a correlation between literacy and political participation. Following Rush & Althof, (1971) the study differentiated the quality of participation of respondents who are rural illiterates. The quality of political participation ranges from holding political office to merely showing interest in politics and voting (see Fig. 1). The study by Adelabu and Akinsolu (2009) showed that higher institutions are where ideologies are formed and better opportunities for political engagements are achieved. This confirms Almond and Verba's (1963) argument that education determines political attitude and that the more intensive an individual's education is, the greater the likelihood, that he/she would be more aware of the relevance of government activities, follow development in politics, have more political information and, engage in political discussions with a wider range of people.

**Figure 1:** *Political Participation*



**Source:** *Rush & Althof (1971)*

Mr. Vice-Chancellor, Sir, as a proposition, while one cannot deny the correlation between literacy and political participation in Nigeria, this correlation is, at best, more nuanced and layered than direct. Many observers and students of Nigerian politics have correctly noted that politics is more vocal, aggressive, and prominent among the grassroots of the society, the majority of

whom are non-literates. They tend to vote at a higher rate and behave politically more aggressive than the theory predicts. Thus, it can be argued that the Nigerian rural and largely non-literate electorate actively participate in politics, perhaps even more actively, than the literate cohort of the electorate. However, as predicted by settled theory, compared to the literate segment of the electorate, the “quality of participation” by the non-literate segment of the electorate is low.

The question arises, why is this so? The answer can be found in two embedded factors that work to the disadvantage of the non-literate segment of the society. Firstly, the constitution which stipulates that the minimum qualification for any person seeking elective post in Nigeria is the secondary school certificate which automatically disqualifies the non-literate segment of the electorate from participating at a qualitatively higher level than their literate fellow citizens. Secondly, Nigerian electoral politics is a money-guzzling enterprise. Almost by definition, the non-literate segment of the electorate and society is desperately poor and unattractive to the so-called political “godfathers”. Consequently, the poor and the non-literate are destined to become political foddors in the Nigerian political game. Therefore, to the extent that there is a strong correlation between literacy and quality of participation on the one hand, poverty and national underdevelopment on the other, the selfish interest of the political class is protected by a denial of functional education of the non-literate segment of the society and the intolerable level of underdevelopment and poverty. Thus, the national interest will best be served by the promotion of universal, functional and quality of education in the country. Does it mean then that the non-literate and the poor **play no role** in education policies in Nigeria?

### **The Civil Society**

It is misleading to conclude that the influence of the stereotypical “Nigerian masses” on policy choices is low because of the poor quality of participation in the formal political process. The quality of political participation is often measured by the location and the

activities of the individual or group in the formally recognized political process, system and structure. This is why many analysts of African politics claim that the overwhelming segment of the population do not participate in politics. However, in the past two decades or so, political scientists have taken a deeper look into the civil society and they found that the political influence of Africans on the political process can best be measured by their activities in the civil society. It can be measured by how they activate their memberships in labour unions and associations, civic organizations, ethnic formations, religious organizations, and resistance movements to seize the attention of the State and extract favourable concessions and policies or else challenge and contest policy decisions and outcomes.

Mr Vice-Chancellor Sir, this perspective informed some of my research which focused on the role of community-based groups and non-governmental organizations in the funding, promotion, and democratization of education in Nigeria.

The community is a useful resource for the democratisation of education. Towards this, Adelabu (2002) advocated a strategy for State Community Partnership for the Universal Basic Education (UBE) programme in Nigeria. This is premised on the fact that the UBE scheme may not have met the expectation of both the government and stakeholders due to lack of or poor funding. It, therefore, became imperative to explore areas of cooperation between the communities and government in the implementation of the programme. This study analysed the roles and responsibilities of the communities in the provision of basic education and in the implementation of the Universal Basic Education Scheme in their areas. It revealed varying degrees of participation in the different demographic areas. For urban communities like Ikorodu for example, parents visited schools only when required. In the case of rural communities, like Bale in Oyo State and Igbokoda in Ondo State, the story is different. The study provides evidence of increased participation of stakeholders either in cash or in kind in semi urban and rural areas in the education

sectors which resulted in an improvement of the relevance, effectiveness and sustainability of education.

The School-based Management Committee (SbMC) is another form of community participation in education. The SbMC was set up in 2000 in line with global efforts to increase citizen participation in school management. It is another way of decentralising school control either from the federal, state and local governments to individual schools. The study by Ogundele and Adelabu (2009) and Adelabu (2009), focused on the health of the school child as a major factor in educational quality and management concern. This is because quality learners are learners who are healthy and supported in learning by their families and communities. Since health programmes are found to reach more pupils through their families and communities than any other form of health education approaches, the SbMC presents an obvious vehicle for reaching the parents, the community and the students. The two studies draw up an advocacy strategy to be used by SbMC in partnership with the school authority to, at least, minimise the challenges posed by the major health issues identified in the studies.

The Non-State Providers (NSP) also known as Private school Proprietors also play a significant role not only in democratising education but in making it accessible. Towards this, Rose and Adelabu (2007) investigated the role of the NSP in achieving Education for All in Nigeria. Equal educational opportunities and equity in education may be difficult to achieve if State, the community, and Non-State Providers do not complement one another (Adelabu 1991; Adelabu 2000; Ogundele & Adelabu, 2009). The need for private support in education grew because estimates suggest that while overall net enrolment rates for Nigeria are like the average in sub-Saharan Africa, just one-third of those in the poorest quintile are in school (Table I).

**Table 1: Net Enrolment Rates**

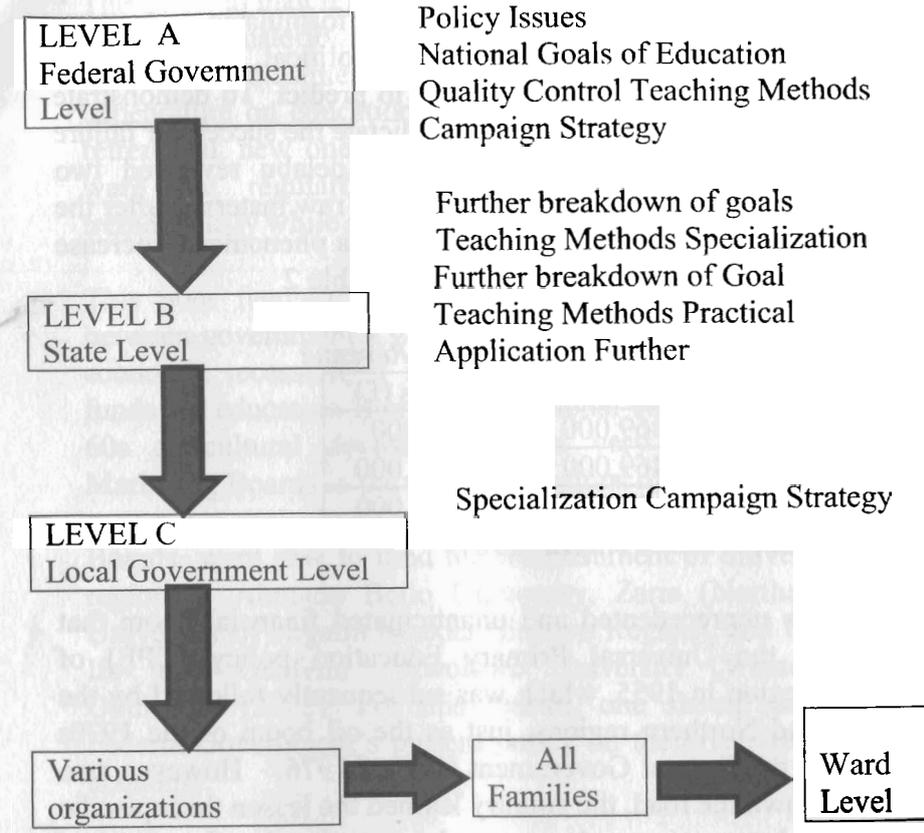
Poorest	Second	Middle	Fourth	Richest	Overall
Nigeria	33.1	42.6	63.0	76.0	84.0
SSA	37.1	45.4	52.7	61.4	75.6

Source: World Bank (2003)

One important finding of the study on NSP was the establishment of registered private providers of Education referred to as “Association of Formidable Educational Development” (AFED) in Lagos State in 2002, in response to Government threat to shut down their unregistered or illegal schools. AFED, although not recognised by Lagos State government, but because their schools were more pro-grassroot and pro-indigent than other private schools, AFED seems to enjoy political popularity with the poor citizens and grassroots who were the voters and could mobilise to either support or work against Government or any political party. Consequently, government often turned “blind eyes” to their unregistered schools. In Enugu State, for instance, individual proprietors of unapproved schools also have political influence which they have been able to exert to avoid school closure. This is a direct way of participation of both the civil society and the community power structure in education policy intervention.

Adelabu (2002) noted that despite several attempts to democratise education in Nigeria since 1955, these attempts failed to fully universalise education. In its effort to make education accessible to all sectors, the Federal government established the National Commission for Mass Literacy, Adult and Non-formal Education (NCMLANA) which was charged with promoting literacy nationwide. It also advocated such projects as Each One Teach One (EOTO) and Each One Fund the Teaching of One (EFTO). With this enlarged concept, a broader view therefore emerged which recognised that education occurred whenever, wherever, and however learning takes place. Based on this concept, I designed a model for possible democratisation and universalization of education (See figure 2).

**Figure 2: The Master Training Models  
HIERARCHY OF MASTER TRAINERS**



Source: Adelabu (2002)

This model is hinged on my belief that education for all should not rest only on our primary resource which is teachers, but on other resource persons who can facilitate learning, be it in a formal or non-formal way. The position of this study is that just as there is universal right to education, there is also a corresponding duty for others to support the education of the non-literate among them.

## Socio-Economic Factors and Education

During the economic recession of late 1980s, Adelabu (1992) argued that policy making is affected by prevailing circumstances which may cause a divergence between policy making and policy implementation. To be considered well formulated, education policies must be compatible with the political and economic projections both of which are difficult to predict. To demonstrate how the economic fortunes of a nation dictate the success or failure of ostensibly well-formulated policies, Adelabu reviewed two historical cases. The world-wide shortage of raw materials after the Second World War (1939-1945) resulted in a phenomenal increase in the export trade of Nigeria as shown in Table 2

**Table 2:** *Amount Spent on Imports and Revenue*

Year	Exports (£)	Imports (£)
1939	10,469,000	6,757,000
1948	62,469,000	41,947,000
1951	130,358,000	84,401,000

**Source:** *Otonti Nduka (1964)*

It was this unprecedented and unanticipated financial boom that facilitated the Universal Primary Education policy (UPE) of Western region in 1955, which was subsequently followed by the Eastern and Northern regions, just as the oil boom of the 1970s facilitated the Federal Government UPE of 1976. However, two decades down the road, the country learned the lesson that episodic economic booms were always inadequate for the financing of sustainable free Education policies.

The study on “Education Policy Making and Implementation in the Era of Economic Recession” (Adelabu, 1992) demonstrated this fact all too well. As it was then, so it is now. In his budget speech in 1978, the then Nigerian Head of State, General Olusegun Obasanjo noted that

*“Oil revenue is not a cure-all. Our resources from oil are not enough to satisfy the yearnings, aspiration and genuine needs of our peoples”*

*development and social services”* (Budget Speech March, 1978).

The effort to match policy aspirations with available resources led to a lot of austerity measures which eventually culminated in the Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP) in 1986. The nation’s expenditure on education was drastically reduced. Teachers were retrenched, new ones were not recruited and the ones on ground were not regularly paid. Non-salary items also suffered tremendously while school infrastructure was in shambles.

This poor funding of education led to a regrettable difference between government’s wish and its achievement. In any period of economic recession, it is advisable for government to generate funds for education from non-traditional sources. After all, in the 60s agricultural development was very spectacular. Produce Marketing Boards in the then four regions of Nigeria were set up to export our agricultural commodities. These Produce Marketing Boards were able to fund the establishment of universities in the regions – Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria (Northern Region), University of Nigeria Nsukka (Eastern Region), and University of Ife- now Obafemi Awolowo University (Western Region) Onukaogu (2012). For this reason, one should commend the Federal Government’s present policy on the diversification of the economy.

## School Administration for Excellence

Adelabu (2004b) developed a Qualitative Assurance Model for Effective Supervision of Education which was premised on the view that, hitherto, supervision of education in Nigeria is more of quality control rather than quality assurance. Quality assurance is based on prevention and seeks to define requirements in advance to minimise the possibility of a product or service not conforming to specification. Quality in the education industry depends on how the manufacturing process (teaching and learning) in the education industry is supervised. For a long time, educationists have assumed that quality control is the only mechanism one can use to infuse

quality into the educational system. This is because quite often people assume that quality assurance is synonymous with quality control. Quality control emphasizes productivity at the expense of quality as (Fredrick Taylor's Scientific Management Theory) it focused on final inspection; whereas, quality assurance drives the works from the beginning to the end. It is more about the journey than results. (Swanson 1995). Control leads to waste scrapping and reworking. Assurance seeks to create the situation where right first time is a possibility (West-Burnham, 1995). Ayeni and Adelabu (2012) further focused on sustainable quality assurance practised by improving learning infrastructure and environment in Ondo State which at the time of this study was the only state in south west that had established a Quality Education Assurance Agency.

In trying to assess the factors that may affect quality of university students, Adelabu and Akinwunmi (2008) found that assessment alone has no significant impact on quality of education. This can be attributed to the fact that, assessment of students by the teachers either in form of class test, assignment or term papers might not necessarily be a true measure of the students' ability academically, but effective teaching has a significant impact on quality of education. However, for effective teaching to take place, lecturers must have done what is expected of them in the most efficient or effective manner. These are areas of quality teaching, conventional curricula and making teaching collaborative. Other findings are that faculty has significant impact on quality of education. It concluded therefore, that no independent variable can solely impact on quality of education without the existence of other variables.

### **The Principalship**

Mr Vice-Chancellor Sir, a major actor in the education policy process is the school principal. Principals work for and on behalf of many constituents. These are students, families of students, staff and staff union, the community power structure, the school board of Education, the Ministries of Education and the various governors in their respective states. They occupy midway

interpretative and executive position between various groups they work with and are always susceptible to role conflict. Depending on how it is handled, role conflict can be destructive or constructive in a policy making cycle. If role conflict is managed well, it can strengthen the relationship among stakeholders and thus assure the attainment of set goals. On the contrary, if such conflict is poorly managed, it will certainly lead to grand failures that could negatively impact the students, the community and, ultimately, the nation. This realization led me to investigate one of the basic causes of role conflict, namely, the dissonance in the perceptions and expectations among critical stakeholders. This study of the principal role perceptions of their reference groups (the school board members, the teachers and students) showed marked difference between the two entities. This is not unexpected because school principals are presumed to understand their roles better than any other stakeholder. Besides, principals primarily derive their role perception from existing regulations and circulars which may be unknown to the various groups.

It is not unusual for instance, that board members view the principals' role differently from their own expectations because of their varying backgrounds, the interests they represent which are sometimes political. As for principals and students, they are at the two extreme ends of a continuum separated in the first place by age, and secondly, by the well-known communication gap between adults and youngsters or adolescents. The principals' role expectation by students also differed from those of school teachers because the two groups represent different interest groups. Adelabu (1996) further showed that even within a single reference group, in this case the teachers group, principals experienced role conflict and this is as a result of contrary and contradicting expectations of this group which are often mutually exclusive. For instance, urban teacher's expectation differed from rural teachers' expectations and, there was also a significant difference between the expectations of male teachers and those of female teachers.

### Rural-Urban Dichotomy

Other than the political economy, there are other factors in the policy environment such as cultural and physical environment which also affect education policy making and implementation. One of such factors is the rural and urban dichotomy in relation to education. Poverty cuts across urban and rural centres. Many often migrate to the urban areas for employment to enable them get out of poverty, whereas, even in the cities, the poor exists. Since UPE was introduced in Nigeria, important gaps in universal coverage still remain particularly in rural areas where the education given lacks relevance to the people.

The systems of education appear not to have produced the desired results in terms of individual achievement and skills development. Because of this, rural schools produced unemployable citizens who possess no marketable skills. The problem with rural education is not only with the content of the curriculum but also with its relevance. The crucial problem therefore is how to combine the official curriculum with local content and also link the school with the community so that they can work together to provide resources and application of the knowledge and skills students would have learnt. (Adelabu, 2008).

Unless the government at all levels pursue a concerted and sustained programme of rural development, we can expect that rural-urban migration will persist. This is based, as we argued, on the fact that the job aspirations of rural students derive from an understanding that formal education consists of academic courses only rather than vocational and technical courses. .

Adelabu (1987) also considered unemployment as a major factor for the urban poor. The more education a person acquires the greater is the range of job opportunities that will be available to him or her and the greater his or her security against unemployment and consequently against poverty as shown in the Table 3.

**Table 3: Educational Background of the Urban Poor**

Market Women	(%)	Street Trader	Shop (%)	Unemployment
No. of Formal Education	40.4	27.3	15.3	3.45
Literate in Vernacular/ Arabic	0.5	3.0	-	1.15
Below Primary Six	5.4	16.3	5.4	4.93
Primary Six	13.1	53.5	10.0	27.77
Below Secondary & Modern School	N. A	N. A	N. A	33.24
Secondary Education	10	3.0	54.3	25.54
Professional Diploma	-	-	4.2	2.3
Below University Degree	-	-	4	87
Others and No Response	30.5	-	10.3	20

**Source: Sada (1975)**

Based on the findings, Adelabu (1987) concluded that technical and vocational education can combat poverty in urban locations as well as in the rural areas. Traditional crafts and industries such as yarn spinning, dyeing, weaving, pottery, blacksmithing, and oil pressing that have disappeared in the rural areas should be integrated into Vocational and Technical Education of the various communities.

### Globalization and Educational Policies

Globalization became a widely used concept in the 1990s, (Giddens 1990). Broadly defined, globalization embodies and exhibits trends and characteristics which tend to de-emphasize the primacy of the traditional nation state while simultaneously accentuating the ascendancy of world-wide structures, regimes, practices, and tendencies since a nation is not an island unto itself.

Mr. Vice-Chancellor Sir, in my research, I found that globalization is an imperative for changes in education policy making and implementation in Nigeria as in all places around the world. Sir, Nigeria's education policies were influenced by both local and

global political economy and technological trends. Adelabu (2007) showed that globalization constitutes an inescapable imperative for changes in education policies in Nigeria. Nigeria made the first attempt with the first ever Universal Primary Education scheme when it declared that "Survival as a race in this atomic age will depend on our ability to initiate and our competence to implement bold schemes of political, economic and educational advancement". (Nigeria Western Region Debates 1952, (Adelabu, 1990). Both the Federal and Universal Primary Education scheme of 1976 and National Policy on Education with 6-3-3-4 structure resulting in the UBE scheme and the then on-going Education For All exercise show that Nigeria had consistently fashioned its educational policies to make her relevant to developed economies and subsequently through education integrate her into the global economy. Globalization also affects changes in school curriculum from mono-cultural approach to education to multi-cultural approach. Hence, the emphasis on Technical and Vocational education in the National Policy of Education (FGN/NPE 2003). Considering the intensity and extensity of globalization, Adelabu (2014) underscored the need to keep pace with and respond to the changing dynamics of globalization. To prepare our students for the globalized economy, Adelabu advocated for changes in Nigeria's educational curriculum to include entrepreneurship education. To buttress this, Adelabu, Subair and Adebakin (2018) advocated that entrepreneurial content should be incorporated into every discipline in the universities so as to shape undergraduates' job preference for entrepreneurial endeavor after graduation as this will change their orientation for entrepreneurial activities and also facilitate the school-to-work transition.

Globalization also affects teacher education and teacher re-training. It is for these reasons that the trend for teachers in-training focus on School-Based Cluster Training (Adelabu & Onukaogu, 2005). This is a system of mentoring whereby teacher educators and other professionals within the schools and across a cluster of schools develop reflective practices and reflective practitioners. The good news is that this innovative method of

training has been adopted by both Universal Basic Education Commission (UBEC) and State Universal Basic Education Boards (SUBEB) for teacher capacity development programme. Its enhancing and transformative effect in schools and colleges in Ondo, Lagos, Ekiti, Abia and Anambra States through the utilization of the model in promoting literacy in the above states is quite outstanding and very encouraging.

Globalization also impacts on educational assessment and practices in Nigeria. The adoption of curricular innovations must also involve corresponding innovations in educational assessment policies. The global challenge made it expedient for Nigeria to generate more assessment policies and have enough examination bodies to reflect the cultural pluralism and diversity in the Nigeria society. Such examination bodies include West African Examinations Council (WAEC), complemented by a more recent National Examinations Council (NECO) and National Business and Technical Examination Board (NABTEB).

### **Globalization, Gender and Education**

Mr. Vice-Chancellor Sir, my exploration of issues that relate to the politics of education policies led me to examine how gender differences play into education policy choices and the consequences of such choices. The United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) insisted that gender issues are global issues as well as education issues (UNESCO 2003). As it was in the beginning, education of women and girls remain a major challenge in the developing countries. Since the World Conference on Education for All in 1990, many countries in the region have made remarkable efforts to reduce the gender gap in access and quality of education. Undoubtedly, the key to women empowerment is education. This is a major factor in national development and a key to poverty reduction as well as the enhancement of women social and political status. An Action Research by Afonja, Aina and Adelabu (1997) was designed in response to the general concern about the low educational status of women in Nigeria. The analysis of the research showed that at

various levels, gender disparities existed in all segments of the society. Where there was some development, there were more egalitarianism and better opportunities for women. Earlier in my study on women in educational leadership (Adelabu, 1993), it was observed that the politics of Nigeria's education since the pre-colonial era influenced the low status of Nigerian women both in political, religious and educational leadership.

Historically, the traditional educational system, the Christian Missionaries education and Muslims Arabic education were determined by the political environment and the education system themselves operated within the national needs and policies set by the ruling classes who were males while females were in the background. Although, teaching itself is highly feminised, when it comes to principalship, men tend to dominate, whereas none of the criteria for ascendance to principalship was gender based but on the myth that men should lead while women follow.

Adelabu and Adepoju (2008) focused on the need for gender parity in higher education. This study revealed, among other things that gender gap exists in higher education and that female participation rate is very low in Science and Technology but fairly impressive in Humanities. This low enrolment of females in higher education would continue to give women just a token representation both in government and private sectors.

Tertiary education is fundamental to the construction of knowledge and knowledge itself has become a vital factor for political education. It is also known that higher institutions are where ideologies are formed. Even where we have quite a good number of female representations in the university, research on political education of students in the university has shown that a significant difference exists between the political education of male and female students, (Adelabu & Akinsolu 2009). Although male and female students were equally exposed to the same agencies of socialization in the university, there are more politically active male students than female students. This is because women

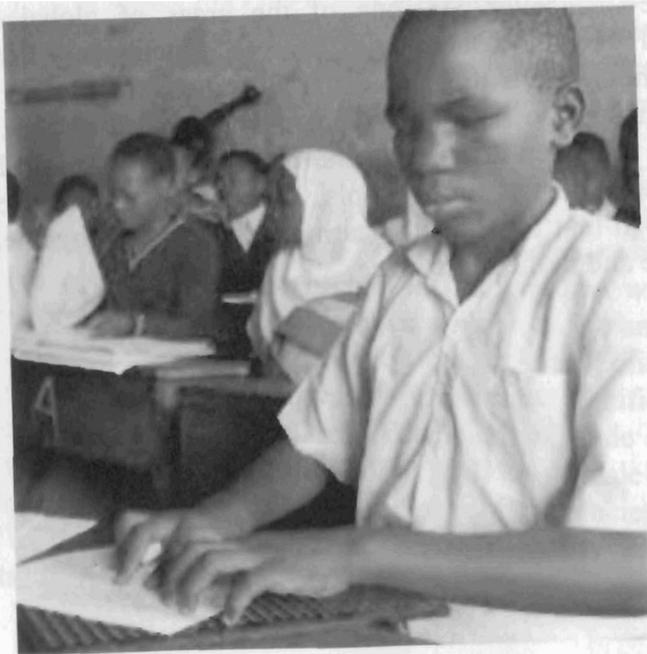
themselves seem to have internalised the culture of marginalization in politics and have willingly ceded political power to the men.

Clearly in the studies by Adelabu (1993), Afonja, Aina and Adelabu (1997), Adelabu and Adepoju (2008) and Adelabu and Akinsolu (2009), it is evident that women are less empowered educationally, socially and politically than men. Subair, Yusuf and Adelabu (2017) focused on the need to examine an avenue by which policy instruments can promote equity in diversity judging from the fact that women and men have significant differences. The study advocated for gender mainstreaming as a perspective and a strategy for achieving gender equality, human development, economic growth and poverty reduction. Towards this end, it examined through the lens of gender mainstreaming, private and public sectors' activities, where men and women are not at par, thereby preventing equal benefits from and towards development efforts. The study concluded that gender mainstreaming will enable women influence, participate and benefit from national developmental agenda. (See also Aina, 2016).

Mr. Vice-Chancellor Sir, one of the areas of global concern addressed by Adelabu (2016), is Inclusive Education. Inclusiveness means those students with disabilities or in Special Education need to be included in mainstream education settings alongside their non-disabled peers. Inclusiveness is about how we develop and design our schools, classrooms, programmes and activities so that all students learn and participate together at the same time and in the same place.



Nigeria has not done much in the area of inclusive education. The common approach in Nigerian education system is special education for the disabled which is often segregated from the normal public school system. Adelabu (2016) therefore suggested the need to mainstream children with disabilities into regular classes with children without disabilities.



## Teachers and National Development

Teachers are central to educational development in any country. Adelabu and Alao (2002a), in a study of professional stock-taking regarding Nigerian teachers by education stakeholders provided conceptual guides in charting new paths for teacher education reforms in Nigeria. The paper concluded with an advocacy for annual conveyance of education stakeholders' summit in Nigeria to institutionalise a regular feed-back mechanism to guide the future course of education and teacher education in Nigeria. Permit me to say here Sir, that this is not new to Nigerian Education system. In the days when the Parents Teachers Association (PTA) was active it was an avenue for regular feedback to stakeholders.

In order to achieve a National Agenda on Education, Alao and Adelabu (2002b) also addressed the challenges and problems of recruiting and retraining quality teachers for Nigerian schools. The paper examined the phenomenon of job-turnover rate among professional teachers in Nigeria. Findings revealed that irregular payment of salaries, lack of job tenure, low public rating of teachers and unstable education policies of various Nigerian governments were the major problems confronting the recruitment and retention of teachers in the Nigerian public school system. (The situation still remains the same till date). The research concluded by providing a number of practical proposals that could assist the government or its agencies in recruiting and retaining quality teachers. These include:

- Radical improvement of the conditions of service of practicing teachers.
- Professionalization of teaching in Nigeria.
- Introduction of individualised and merit-driven promotion policy for school teachers.
- Enactment of legislations on job-tenure of practicing teachers.
- Improved educational funding at least to conform to International minimum standards.

Adelabu (2003) identified three components of teacher motivation. These are

- (i) Job context, that is the condition under which teachers perform their job and the demands imposed on them;
- (ii) Job content which is the teachers' workload and other school-based activities that are sometimes labour-intensive; and
- (iii) Reward system in terms of pay packets and promotion.

Adelabu (2005), also studied the key determinants of teacher motivation in Nigeria. These include working and living conditions, effects of teachers' salary and benefits on teachers' morale. The findings corroborated Adelabu (2002) and were later confirmed by Adelabu and Alao (2002) who maintained that there is a teacher motivation crisis in Nigeria. The most serious symptoms of this crisis are low teacher output, high teacher turnover and incessant strike actions. Other factors include poor pupil performance, refusal of teachers to accept postings to rural areas, and irregular attendance and teacher absenteeism, especially in rural areas. It is a no-brainer that all the identified problems militating against teachers' effectiveness and motivation constitute a serious drawback on the standard of education in Nigeria which, in turn, retards the overall level of our national development. This disconcerting situation led me to seek administrative methodologies that might help ameliorate some of the challenges identified in my investigations.

### Reflections

Mr. Vice-chancellor Sir, my academic and professional career witnessed rather intensive community engagement services. I have directed and coordinated more than 100 capacity development workshops involving more than 20,000 teachers and educational practitioners in most states in south western Nigeria. Through these workshops, I brought the results and fruits of my research to the door-step of classroom teachers who ideally should reap the fruits of professional academic researchers in the field of education.



Sir, I have also in various fora, in partnership with the development partners, built capacity of educational administrators.



Through these community engagements exercises, the group of activity-based teaching has been brought into teaching and learning in most classrooms in south western Nigeria.

Mr. Vice-Chancellor Sir, it will interest you to know that quite a number of my recommendations are on Technical and Vocational Education as a major panacea for poverty reduction and national development. Today, to the glory of God, I am the Chairman of the National Board for Technical Education where, hopefully, I would implement some salient areas of my research.

Sir, undoubtedly there are policy gaps in major educational policies either for lack of political will for enforcement or because of unpredictability of policy environment. My role as Ekiti State Universal Basic Education Board Chairman and later as Deputy Governor overseeing education sector of the State, gave me opportunities to bridge some of the identified gaps in the basic education sector. Remarkable among my accomplishments are:

- i. Introduction of trade fair/exhibition of pupils' TVE activities as entrenched in the National Policy on Education Section. This is to facilitate pupils' interest in Technical and Vocational Education.
- ii. Involvement of the community in education via Public Private Partnership (PPP) arrangement such as Reading Parents Programme (RPP) and the effective use of School Based Management Committee (SBMC) in the management of the newly built Pre-Primary school facilities.
- iii. Encouragement of Inclusive Education by mandating that new structures in the Basic Education schools should be built with ramps to give access to pupils who are physically challenged.

Most of the programmes above were through private partnership initiative. This is because I was aware that government cannot do it all particularly because of the dwindling economy of the state and the county at large and also because the school and the community should not live in isolation.

Mr. Vice-Chancellor Sir, these and many other initiatives were not only to make our schools 'Child-friendly' but to reduce the

nagging issue of child labour and out-of-school children in Ekiti State. Sir, I was able to do these because of my background as an educationist. Consequently, I wish to recommend without mincing words that because of the importance of Basic Education to education any Chairman to be appointed across the states should have an education background just like any other professional parastatal in the country.

### **Contribution to Scholarship**

Mr Vice-Chancellor, Sir, with all sense of humility and to the glory of God, I want to testify that I have contributed my own quota to academic scholarship in my department, Department of Educational Administration and Planning, now Department of Educational Management. As a young lecturer, I coordinated the departmental activities as the Department Secretary between 1977 and 1987. I was for a long time Course Adviser to the students at the undergraduate level. I have been able to graduate about ten quality Ph.D students, thirty M.A Ed/ M.Ed students. I was a Head of Department twice between 2005 and 2011. As Head of Department in 2011, I started the process of restructuring the departmental courses in line with best practices to accommodate all teaching subjects in the Department and to the glory of God, all have passed through due process of accreditation. At the faculty level, I was the Coordinator of the Long Essay Committee for many years. I also represented the Dean on the board of Faculties of Law and Arts. I was a member of the Steering Committee on Women Study Group now known as Centre for Gender and Social Policy Studies.

In academics, I have attended and presented papers in at least forty-five conferences both nationally and internationally. I was and still, external examiner to some universities such as the University of Lagos, University of Ibadan, University of Ilorin, and Ekiti State University. I have published forty-five articles both in national and international journals and co-authored four books. With the cooperation of the research action team of the Faculty, I was able to successfully organise an International conference in the

Faculty on the Environment and Sustainable National Development.

### Community Service

Mr. Vice-Chancellor, Sir, I have contributed in a number of ways on educational issues and policy making both at the International, National and State levels. At the international level, I have served as:

- Consultant and National Researcher, Department of International Development (DFID (UK), on Non-State Provision of public services studies (Education).
- Consultant and National Researcher DFID (UK), Teacher Motivation Study.
- Nigeria Consultant, International Labour Organisation (ILO) Manual Development on Education and Child Labour.



At the national level, I have served as:

- Coordinator/Facilitator of the World Bank supported Cluster Teacher Training methodology for Universal Basic Education Commission and the World Bank. Mr Vice-Chancellor Sir, It gladdens my heart that this methodology has been adopted by UBEC for training of teachers by SUBEB in all States in Nigeria.
- Coordinator/Facilitator of World Bank Action Research on the use of mother tongue, and on effective language and instruction.
- Member of Governing Council, National Teacher Institute, Kaduna, 2001- 2003  
Vice Chairman South, Presidential School Debate, from 2015 till date.
- Chairman, National Board of Technical Education (NBTE), 2017 till date.

At the State level, I have also served as:

- Chief Facilitator on SUBEB, Teacher Capacity Building in Oyo, Ondo, Osun and Lagos States.

- Chief Facilitator on management training for various public and private institutions.  
Member of Board Ekiti State World Bank Assisted Poverty Reduction Board, 2000-2003.
- Member, Ekiti State Education Task Force, 2011.
- Chairman, Ekiti State Universal Basic Education Board, 2011-2014.
- Deputy Governor of Ekiti State, 2013-2014.



### Other Community Services

I served as member of Joseph Ayo Babalola University Planning Committee and also as pioneer member of the Governing Council of the University. I was also a member of the Governing Council of Christ International Divinity College (an Affiliate of Acadia University, Canada). I was a member of the Governing Council Osun State Unity School, Osogbo. I also facilitated the UNDP/Osun State, Micro Credit Scheme through my NGO, Centre for Education and Rural Development (CEDRUD).

Mr. Vice-Chancellor Sir, as can be seen, I have through these projects and activities made my modest contributions both at International, National, State and local levels.

### Conclusion and Recommendations

Mr. Vice-Chancellor Sir, Ladies and Gentlemen, from the theme of my lecture, I have been able to look extensively into how politics had always influenced education policies and how education in turn had influenced political developments not only in Nigeria but all over the world. I have also acknowledged the fact that most education policies had faced challenges because some of these policies were based on financial and political postulations whose predictions were often not accurate. I also focused on Urban and Rural dichotomy of education policies. In my papers, however, I have strongly advocated for a diversified economy and a vigorous reliance on Vocational and Technical Education not only as *sine-qua non* for poverty eradication but also as avenue for making education services relevant to both urban and rural dwellers. I also concluded in my researches that oil money is not infinite and therefore reliance on oil alone would make education policies face challenges in Nigeria. Sir, am happy to note that, these my predictions have come to reality as the scenario facing Nigeria now is, the search for alternative means of funding not only for educational programmes but for other national programmes. Having said all these, there must be synergy between government and the community members and the Non-State Providers in the management, funding and provision of education. Nigeria must not ignore the political environment, the economic environment and the international environment as chief facilitators to our educational policies and programmes. This has been the thrust of my research. Moreover, my definition of politics goes beyond party politics, as some tend to believe, although party politics is also embedded in the political drama of education.

Mr. Vice-Chancellor, Sir, Ladies and Gentlemen, I cannot conclude this lecture without acknowledging a lot of people who have lent me their shoulders to lean on. My sincere appreciation

goes to my parents, who despite the fact that God blessed them with five females and two males, they defied stereotypes by training all of us without discrimination. I acknowledge the support of my teachers especially in the University, Prof. Adeniji Adaralegbe, Prof. S.O Awokoya, Prof. Stella Olatunji, Prof. Babs Fafunwa, all of blessed memory.

I also thank most sincerely, Dr. Oluyomi Durotoye my co-supervisor, who rendered an unflinching support to me while writing my Ph.D dissertation. This same goes to Prof. T.O Fasokun, all these made significant impacts on my academic career. I also want to acknowledge other people who offered to give me materials and their time during my research on political decisions in Nigeria. These are: Prof. S. O. Awokoya, who proposed the first ever Universal Primary Education at the floor of Western Region House of Assembly in 1952, Chief Onabanjo, former Governor of Ogun State, Chief Bola Ige former Governor of Oyo State, Chief Ajasin former Governor of Ondo State, Pa Alayande an Action Group political stalwart and Chief Bunmi Rotimi former Chief Inspector of Education all of blessed memory. I also acknowledge the Librarian of the National Archives of the University of Ibadan who allowed me to have access to archival records. I want to acknowledge the support of my colleagues in the department (present and past) such as late Prof. J.A Akinola, Prof. Bamisaye, Prof. M.U.C. Ejieh and Dr Kola Junaid. I must also not forget to thank the present members of the department for their support at all times. Dr. Adepoju, Dr. Subair and Dr. Azeez Adebakin. I appreciate other Professors within and outside my faculty who have helped me in my research and those who served as mentors to me. These include Prof Simi Afonja , Prof. Tenwa Odebiyi, Prof Francisca Aladejana , Prof Kayode Alao, Prof. Yemisi Obilade. The support of friends who are like family to me cannot be ignored. These are in particular (Mrs) Kikelomo Ojo, Mrs. Iyabo Opeyokun, Mrs. Omowale Akinrinade, Chief (Mrs) Elizabeth Adegite and Mrs. Adeola Yesufu.

Mr Vice-Chancellor, Sir, Ladies and Gentlemen, let me acknowledge in particular and with deepest gratitude the friends of my late husband. They have given me their shoulders to lean on at the critical times of my life. They are General Alani Akinrinade, (Rtd) Chief Pius Akinyelure, Dr Sanmi Ajaja, Dr Kayode Ojutiku, late Prof. Adeleye Adegite and Asiwaju Bola Ahmed Tinubu.

Sir, permit me to also specially acknowledge a distinguished Nigerian who had facilitated my ascendance to the political terrain of Nigeria by giving me an appointment as Ekiti State Universal Basic Education Board Chairman, and later as Deputy Governor of his administration, Dr. Kayode Fayemi, the former Minister of Solid Minerals and Steel Development and now, second time Governor of Ekiti State. His wife, Erelu Bisi Fayemi, who was also instrumental to the political upliftment of women in Ekiti State to which I am one of the beneficiaries. In this category, I thank Otunba Adebayo who as Governor of Ekiti State (1999-2003) appointed me as board member of Ekiti State Poverty Reduction Board and Late Prof. Aborisade, who as Minister of Education appointed me as a Council member of National Teachers Institute. All these people exposed me to practical experience as educational policy maker and implementer in a political environment. I am grateful to them.

Other personalities that have impacted my life both in academic and international terrain include Prof. Tunde Adekola of the World Bank and Dr. Pauline Rose of University of Sussex. I must appreciate also the support of those who have helped me in the production of my academic materials since the beginning of my career. They are Mrs. Oloba of Hezekiah Oluwasanmi Library, Mr. Ochi of Educational Management Department; also I acknowledge the support of Mr. Fakeye Olusegun in the production of this lecture.

I thank my spiritual leaders who have in various times supported me with their prayers; Prof. Imevbore of CAC Bethel, Ile-Ife who incidentally dragged me into the membership of Joseph Ayo

Babalola University (JABU), as well as CIN DICO, Late Rev. Ibukun Falope of Anglican Church of Ascension, Ibadan, and the subsequent Vicars of the Church. Pastor S. K. Abiara of CAC Agbala Itura, and Pastor D. K. Olukoya, the General Overseer of the Mountain of Fire & Miracles Ministry, and other pastors have supported me at different times with their prayers.

Who could have done all these, who could have favoured me this way, who could have exalted me to all the high positions I already mentioned, who could have given me a loving husband, a king among men, a husband like a father, a husband like a friend, a husband who stood by me and who was commendably supportive to my career, the Father of my children, Nike, Dolapo, Doyin, Dayo, Dapo & Ronke. He is the Almighty God, the maker of heaven and earth who is worthy to be praised at all times. To Him I give all the glory, honour and adoration, thank you God.

Who is this Husband that I have talked so much about, he is Prince Adedeji Adelabu of blessed memory, a former Librarian of this great citadel of learning. I thank you so much and I will continue to acknowledge you in death as in life. To my children, you are simply "Gifts" from God. When God gives a gift, he adds no sorrow. Thank you all. You are my "Aso Ibora".

Mr Vice-Chancellor, Sir, Ladies and Gentlemen, I will like to end this lecture with this song.

*Jesus, what didst Thou find in me,  
That thou hast dealt so lovingly?  
How great the joy that thou has brought,  
So far exceeding hope or thought!  
Jesus, my Lord, I thee adore,  
O make me love thee more and more.*

Thank you for listening.

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