

UNIVERSITY OF PORT HARCOURT



HARVEST OF THE CHRISTMAS TREE

VALEDICTORY LECTURE

By

Professor Joseph Atubokiki Ajenka

B.Sc (*UI*), M.Eng. Ph.D (*UPH*), Hon. Degree (IFP School Paris), R.Eng (*COREN*), *SPE*, FAEng, FNSE, FNIPetE, REP (*USA*), FIPS, FNIM, FNES, FISCON

Emmanuel Egbogah Chair of Petroleum Engineering

Department of Petroleum & Gas Engineering
Faculty of Engineering

VALEDICTORY LECTURE SERIES No. 34

January 9, 2025

University of Port Harcourt Printing Press Ltd.
University of Port Harcourt
Port Harcourt, Nigeria
email: uniport.press@uniport.edu.ng

(c) Professor Joseph A. Ajienka

VALEDICTORY LECTURE SERIES NO. 34
DELIVERED: 9th January, 2025

All Rights Reserved

Designed, Printed and Bound By UPPL

DEDICATED

To the Chain of Guidance

And to

My Parents Chief Joe Atubokiki Ajenka Opungiriko and Mrs. Eunice Obieton Ajenka, maternal aunties Iwari and Dorah, all of blessed memory;

My teachers, mentors and students;

My dear wife Dr Mercy Finelady Ajenka, our children Mrs Orabelema Kalamba Anene, Dr Nemitari Miebaka Ajenka and Miss Soala Lolia Ajenka; my son-in-law Mr Chukwudi Anene, daughter-in-law Mrs Cynthia Ola Ajenka and our grandchildren NuluonuNna Lolia Anene (Nuna), NaefeNna Deinma Anene (Nene), SoluifeNna Ibinabo Anene (Soso) and Atonye Ademide Amari Ajenka

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I am deeply grateful to The Almighty for His Eternal Goodness, Guidance and Grace over me and this University I was privileged to lead as the 7th Vice- Chancellor. I thank The LORD for the opportunities to serve His Will and to serve all those who cross my path of experiencing.

I thank my teachers from primary school to the university level particularly my university research supervisors: Professor Emeritus Gabriel Kayode Falade of the University of Ibadan, pioneer Professor of Petroleum Engineering in Africa; Chi Ikoku of the University of Port Harcourt, international scholar and eminent Professor of Petroleum Engineering, who described himself as Jack of all trades in Engineering and Master of some; Dr Emmanuel Egbogah fondly called Dr E, a great mentor and Friend of the University, international energy expert who donated the Emerald Energy Institute (EEI), building to the university, endowed the Emmanuel Egbogah Chair of Petroleum Engineering and insisted that I occupy it. I am grateful to these academic giants on whose powerful shoulders, I who trained in Nigeria (hundred percent national content) stood tall and confident to survey the academic horizon.

I thank all my students and colleagues (serving and retired) in the Department, in particular Prof Godwin Chukwu (who then as Mr. Godwin Chukwu served as coordinator of our young Department), with whom we worked tirelessly to graduate the first set of UniPort petroleum engineers. Our graduates have done this University proud.

I thank distinguished Professor Emeritus Wumi Iledare who left his lucrative job in the USA to come home and serve this

University and Nigeria so creditably. A foremost petroleum and energy economist, he established the programmes in the Emerald Energy Institute and has graduated more petroleum and energy economists in Nigeria and Africa than any other. I also wish to sincerely thank distinguished Professor Godwin Igwe who volunteered to come from the United States to establish the Centre for Gas, Refining and Petrochemicals and all the lessons of university advancement he has exposed us to and for his benevolence to this University. These scholars did their jobs with so much passion, commitment and uncommon drive.

I honestly want to thank my mentors, Professors Emeriti Nimi Briggs (our 5th Vice-Chancellor (VC)), Emmanuel Anosike (both of blessed memory), and E J. Alagoa and our 2nd VC SJS Cookey for all their support. I am grateful to all the principal officers who served with me, all the staff of our Department, IPS (now IPES) and at the VC's Office. Let me particularly thank Mr Uduma Ikpa and Mr Chibuzor Wordu, the VC Orderly, very fine gentlemen. Mr Chibuzor Wordu is one of the very polished human beings I have met. I and VC Nimi Briggs planned an elaborate celebration for his retirement to demonstrate that service to an institution when rendered by ordinary people in an extraordinary manner is worthy of emulation. Unfortunately, the scourge of COVID-19 aborted the celebration.

I thank my predecessor VC Don Baridam for his trust and confidence and the Governing Council of Dr Dan Shere that appointed me. I was the first VC of this University appointed directly by the Governing Council following the University Autonomy Act.

I thank the management of TOTAL Energies for establishing

IPS (now IPES) and all those who chaired the IPS Governing Board for their trust and confidence.

I thank the Officials of the Society of Petroleum Engineers (SPE) and Board of Trustees for all the support and professional development. I also thank the Officials of the Nigerian Institution of Petroleum Engineers (NIPetE) and Nigerian Institute of Management (NIM). I thank my friends and colleagues for the rare privilege of the Festschrift in my honour. This is the second Festschrift organised in my honour. I thank my family and friends, classmates and schoolmates at Government Comprehensive Secondary School. That great School that laid the solid foundation for us to excel. I thank my classmates at UI and in the graduate programmes of UniPort particularly Prof Adewale Dosumu. I thank you all.

Finally, let me very sincerely thank the 9th VC Professor Owunari Abraham Georgewill and his Management for all the support and the opportunity to deliver this Valedictory Lecture today. Thanks-a-Million!

NOTE (A Disclaimer!)

*The overarching purpose of higher education is the **Pursuit of Truth** in every Discipline of Study. In this pursuit, we acquire knowledge, skills, attitude and values; through Nature Study we come upon discoveries and gain recognitions of the Natural Laws of Creation and through these Perfect Laws, we come to the recognition of the Unchangeable Eternal Truth, The Almighty Creator of the Universe (the university takes its name from the word universe).*

The thoughts expressed in this Lecture are a reflection of my present level of appreciation. As one matures, insights become sharper, recognitions deepen and understanding improves. Readers and listeners are therefore encouraged to earnestly seek The Truth, the Source of all Knowledge.

Prefatory Remarks and New Year Wishes in the Year of The Lord 2025

This is the third and final valedictory Address I shall deliver in this university. The first two were Valedictory Addresses to Congregation and to Senate in July 2015 at the end of my tenure as Vice-Chancellor. This last one is a Valedictory Lecture as a retiring Professor of the University. In 2015, at the Valedictory Address to Congregation, I announced that the title of my retirement Valedictory Lecture in 2025 would be 'Harvest of the Christmas Tree'. I hereby stand before you today to fulfil that obligation and promise. Because of the essence of the topic, I wanted to deliver the lecture in December on the waves of Christmas but for logistic challenges of travelling by friends and family during this busy period and the fact that my formal retirement is on the 10th of January 2025, I chose to give the lecture today 9th January 2025 with the approval of the Vice-Chancellor, Professor Owunari Abraham Georgewill. Many thanks our VC and University Management.

Let me start with some prefatory remarks and New Year wishes. We thank The Almighty for granting us the Grace to experience the new year. The Year of the Lord 2025. A very significant year for all of us and for our university. We shall be celebrating the milestone golden jubilee: UniPort @ 50. It is customary at this time of the new year to wish each other 'Happy New Year!' Yes, the year is new. But whether it will be a happy one depends on us. Therefore, shall I say 'Happy New Us' for we alone can turn a new leaf and make the year a happy one for ourselves through the harvest of our activities - our thoughts, words and deeds. Happy if our activities are beautiful and swing in the Will of the Creator. We can truly and truthfully decide to make the Year 2025 a turning point in our lives and that of our university.

In ancient Roman religion and myth, Janus is the god of beginnings, gates, transitions... January the first month of the year is named after the Roman god Janus. The symbolism of Janus is a metaphor on how to reflect on the first month that opens the gate into the new year. Janus is represented by a head with two faces, one looking back to the past to learn from the experiences and the other looking ahead to the future full of hope. Both faces are anchored in the present. And the present is more important in our existence as through our determined effort and decisive earnest volition, we can start a new turning point. The way we live today determines the harvest of the experiences of the future; either pleasant, fruitful and bountiful or a painful famine. The year 2024 came with painful experiences not only for us in this country but globally. The year 2025 is pregnant with experiences. For our University, the race for the appointment of the 10th Vice-Chancellor will heat up the system. We need to stand in prayer for help and strength so that we can go through the year with confidence and courage, with firm conviction in the Omnipotence of The Lord, with gratitude and absolute trust in His Goodness, Guidance and Grace. In the year 2025, our University will celebrate the important milestone of UniPort at 50.

Therefore, let me wish you what I wish myself ‘Happy New You!’ The choice is ours to make the Year 2025 a memorable and happy year for ourselves and for our university through the decisions we make and the way we live our lives.

I was born on Monday 10th January 1955. Those of us who were born early in January celebrated Christmas, in our mother’s wombs and arrived just in time on the jubilant waves of the Creation Festival of Love. From childhood, I have always enjoyed the refreshing Rays of Christmas. In fact, it has always been my best season. The elements dutifully announce

the coming of the special season of the Creation Festival; the air is charged with vibrations of happiness and we feel it. And so, every year as we celebrate Christmas, I remind myself of some beautiful thoughts:

Many of us celebrate Christmas in remembrance of the Birth of the Lord Christ without realising that it is a Creation Festival of Love every year when the Love of God inclines towards Creation ever anew at this time. The elements prepare for it and celebrate it properly but we do so apathetically without proper understanding. Even understanding that the Ways of The Creator are different. For instance, among the high and mighty, the Creator chose simple humble shepherds to bear witness to the sublime Happening in Bethlehem. The Radiant Star which announced the Holy Birth was seen but its significance and the glad tidings of the luminous herald were known only by the simple shepherds who were made clairvoyant and clairaudient to bear witness. This is very instructive.

At Christmas, we visibly feel the closing of the cycle of the year that comes with acceleration of events, the commercialism and inflation of cost of goods and travel fares; we remember our earthly homes and have the urge to join our friends and family, to celebrate the Festival; But do we remember the beautiful song that this world is not our home, that we are just passing through, that our real home is Paradise; does the Festival awaken in us the earnest longing for our true home, does it awaken the longing for our spiritual home Paradise; do we long to join our kith and kins in Paradise who do the Will of God in Heaven as we say in the Lord's Prayer: 'Thy Will be done on earth as in Heaven'. How have we done His Will on earth so that His Kingdom shall come? These are important questions to consider.

Every year at Christmas, we decorate our homes and cities with Christmas Trees and with beautiful lights and colours in particular the red colour that symbolises love. We adorn ourselves with beautiful new dresses to celebrate Christmas; But do we remember to adorn our spirits with radiant new garments rejoicing in the Grace of God and celebrating His Goodness in sending to us the Supreme Gift of Love for our Salvation. Do we remember the admonition: *Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works and glorify the Creator in Heaven?* What is the relationship between good works and the light of the soul that must *so* shine? The corollary is also true of evil works that darken the soul. All these remind us of the harvest of our works. How did we celebrate Christmas, we give gifts to each other, send Christmas cards with beautiful wishes perhaps in remembrance of the gifts of precious materials of the three wise kings who failed to understand their true Calling of protecting the Holy Child from the envy and vanity of Herod that led to the killing of the children just to be able to eliminate Baby Jesus. We give gifts without appreciating the Sublime Gift of the Love of God for our Salvation for which we are to be eternally grateful. We give gifts to others without giving to ourselves the most important gift each alone can give to himself, the gift of the firm resolution to change for the better, to turn a new leaf and follow the path of Salvation in the Word of Truth.

But about 40 days after Christmas, as the waves of this beautiful Creation Festival wane, mankind instigated by Darkness, intellectually instituted the so-called St Valentine Day as the 'day of love' to quickly efface the sweet memories of Christmas, the Divine Festival of Love that came with glad tidings full of promise. But what kind of love do we celebrate on that day, February 14th? This digression is only to stimulate and induce a reflection.

I delivered the 47th professorial Inaugural Lecture on the topic: Christmas Tree: Tree of Life, Tree of Knowledge. As a petroleum engineer, specialising in Production Engineering, I was fascinated by the fact that the Wellhead is also called Christmas Tree. In the wellhead, is the brain box through which we control the production of oil, the black gold. Thus, from the Christmas Tree we harvested oil and natural gas - fruits of Nature - that gave the country and indeed the world fossil fuel and so much wealth. Those who misuse or abuse the use of these gifts of Nature also suffer consequences of a disease called Dutch Disease, the harvest of poverty in the midst of plenty. In the Niger Delta, we suffer from environmental degradation, decay and death. We suffered and endured the gas flare day and night. Worsened by the sooth of artisanal refineries, we could not breath. We were being choked to death in a climate of sooth. We could not breathe!

As a Petroleum Engineer specializing in production engineering, my work centred largely around the Christmas Tree, the wellhead. I had used the wellhead data to develop a model for predicting downhole conditions of the well. I had developed wellhead choke performance models for multiphase flow and to accurately predict critical and subcritical flows. I had developed diagnostic model for predicting unstable wellhead flow which saved industry a lot of cost. I had developed a new approach for oilfield chemical demulsification which is more effectively administered at the wellhead. I had done well health assessment, well diagnostics to study healthy wells, sick well and dying wells. I had developed novel techniques in flow assurance and production enhancement. These are harvests of innovations. (Figure 1 is a painting of Christmas Tree and a family, Figures 2 and 3 are Oilfield Wellheads also called Christmas Trees)

As every head is where the intellect is rooted, the wellhead is envisaged as the intellectual powerhouse of the oil well. For us human beings, the intellect, a vital tool, must be under the guidance of the intuitive perception of the spirit to be successful. Therefore, you can see the connection when today I speak of the Harvest of the Christmas Tree. We are to celebrate the harvest, the intellectual harvest in the citadel of learning. And even more, the harvest of values and creativity of the intuitive perception. Every Harvest Festival should be a Festival of Thanksgiving to the Almighty through Whose Perfect Will, is the Law of Sowing and Reaping, the Creation Law of Reciprocal Action, responsible for the harvest.

Every tree teaches us about Nature. The roots of the tree go deep into the soil to anchor it firmly in obedience to the Law of Gravity. The leaves as if in prayers, open their palms to the rays of the sun and photosynthesis happens that sustain the tree, enable it to flower and bear fruits. These are important lessons for us. We should be properly anchored and open to the rays of the Divine Light so that photosynthesis also occurs within us to sustain us.

From the structure of the fundamental hydrocarbon, methane, I recognised the form of the equal-armed cross, the Symbol of Truth. This set me reflecting on the nature of petroleum. I learnt a lot about the origin of petroleum **as a form of energy**. We have been taught about the Law of Conservation of Energy that energy can neither be created nor destroyed. Energy is inorganic. So, what really is energy? Indeed, currents of energy streamed down from the Radiations of The Light and took on form. The Light brought about Creation when the Almighty in His Goodness decreed with a fiat of proclamation: *'Let There be Light!'*. Thus, petroleum, **a form of energy** harbours a secret of Creation. The form is organic but the

content, the energy is not organic. I drew attention to the refinery process which faintly reflects the creation process; how through reduction in temperature, components of the crude oil separate out at different levels of cooling and condensation. At that inaugural lecture, I also drew attention to the profound discovery of the nature of water by the Japanese scientist Masaru Emoto; that we should study the formation waters we encounter in the process of drilling and in petroleum reservoirs. Recently, I came to the strong perception that formation water is not waste water but mineral water. It is like the amniotic fluid in the womb of the earth in which petroleum took on form. Today, lo and behold, lithium, a vital mineral used in the energy industry, described as white gold, has been discovered in some oilfield formation waters.

Therefore, through Petroleum Engineering, through the establishment of the Institute of Petroleum Studies (IPS), thus through the Christmas Tree, the University of Port Harcourt has reaped a bountiful harvest of innovations, strategic partnerships, projects and programmes that accelerated development and put our university on the global map. Recognising the importance of natural gas and the fact that Nigeria has abundance of gas reserves, our university was the first to start a programme in Gas Engineering in Nigeria and even changed the name of the Department from Petroleum Engineering to Petroleum and Gas Engineering. In keeping with emerging trends particularly the challenge of global warming which instigated the new era of energy transition from fossil fuels to renewable green energy sources, many oil and gas companies have changed to energy companies. For instance, the sponsors of IPS, Total Exploration and Production (E & P) Company is now Total Energies. Consequently, IPS has also changed gear to become Institute

of Petroleum and Energy Studies (IPES) and the programme MSc Petroleum Engineering and Project Development has been changed to MSc Petroleum Project Development and Energy Transition. Apart from the Centre for Nuclear Energy Studies and Emerald Energy Institute (that specialises in Petroleum and Energy Economics, Policy and Strategic Studies), there is now an Energy Technology Institute established in the Faculty of Engineering in partnership with Cypher Crescent Company pioneered by Alumni of our Department. Our University is gradually developing to become the Energy School in Nigeria and indeed Africa having supported the development of petroleum and energy engineering programmes in other countries in Africa. With Professors Emeriti G. K. Falade and Wumi Iledare we have established PetroNet Africa to pool expertise together to actualise the vision of maximising the benefits of national content development in Africa.

Our graduates from the Department of Petroleum & Gas Engineering, the Institute of Petroleum and Energy Studies and Emerald Energy Institute are among the best in the industry. Many occupy the commanding heights in their companies. UniPort has been a leading participant in the Annual Conference of the Society of Petroleum Engineers in Nigeria in terms of volume of papers presented and teaching of professional short courses.

In 2015 as we celebrated our 40th Anniversary, the Times Higher Education (THE) ranking on Research Influence placed our university 1st in Nigeria, 6th in Africa and between 276-300 in the world; We had secured the United Nations University Centre for Sustainable Development; we developed legacy Centres of Excellence and Institutes, first of their kind in Nigeria and Africa, World Bank Africa Centres of

Excellence and even International Association of Athletics Federation (IAAF) Centre of Excellence in Sports, etc. Now in the year 2025, as we prepare to celebrate the 50th Anniversary, may we count our blessings full of gratitude.

Through the foresight of our 5th Vice-Chancellor Professor Nimi Briggs who established the IPS, the University gained so much in physical development and recognition. We even organised two international Convocation Ceremonies in Paris and in The Hague to award honorary degrees to the Presidents of TOTAL and Shell respectively at which the Nigerian Ambassadors represented the Visitor. As Director of IPS, I was the youngest man in the delegation and so was the automatic choice for mace bearer.

I gave that memorable professorial inaugural lecture on Thursday 15th December 2005 with the beautiful Christmas Carol in praise of the Christmas Tree (O Christmas Tree!) to set the tone for the celebratory lecture. Although we are in January, let me use it to also set the tone and solemnity of this Valedictory Lecture properly with my two favourite musicians Andre Rieu and Sissel:

O Christmas Tree!

*O Christmas Tree! O Christmas Tree!
Thy leaves are so unchanging;
O Christmas Tree! O Christmas Tree!
Thy leaves are so unchanging;
Not only green when summer's here,
But also when 'tis cold and drear.
O Christmas Tree! O Christmas Tree!
Thy leaves are so unchanging!*

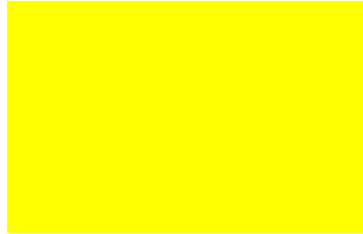
*O Christmas Tree! O Christmas Tree!
Much pleasure thou can't give me;
O Christmas Tree! O Christmas Tree!
Much pleasure thou can't give me;
How often has the Christmas tree
Afforded me the greatest glee!
O Christmas Tree! O Christmas Tree!
Much pleasure thou can't give me.*

*O Christmas Tree! O Christmas Tree!
Thy candles shine so brightly!
O Christmas Tree! O Christmas Tree!
Thy candles shine so brightly!
From base to summit, gay and bright,
There's only splendour for the sight.
O Christmas Tree! O Christmas Tree!
Thy candles shine so brightly!*

*O Christmas Tree! O Christmas Tree!
How richly God has decked thee!
O Christmas Tree! O Christmas Tree!
How richly God has decked thee!
Thou bidst us true and faithful be,
And trust in God unchangingly.
O Christmas Tree! O Christmas Tree!
How richly God has decked thee!"*



Figure 1: A Painting of a family by their Christmas Tree



O Tannenbaum (O Christmas Tree)

<https://youtu.be/Hn7Ldd3Ijl0>

By Andre Rieu

<https://youtu.be/uWOFkA5ZAIs>

Sissel

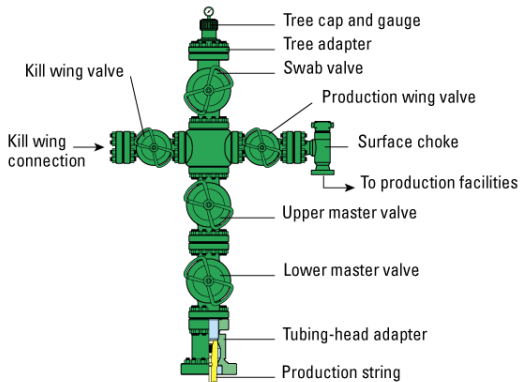


Figure 2: Oilfield Christmas tree (dry)

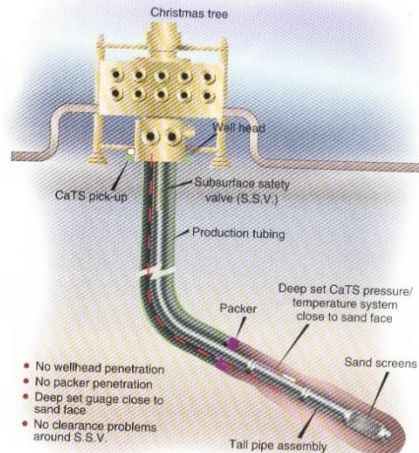


Figure 3: Oilfield Christmas tree (wet, subsea)

What is a Festival, a Harvest Festival without beautiful music? Harvest Festivals are celebrated in various cultures and religions. The Harvest Festival is celebrated in gratitude for the bountiful harvest, we enjoy through the Creation Law of Sowing and Reaping. We should never take the harvest for granted. People who experience famine understand the importance of this festival. The parable of the harvest also teaches us that the ripe good fruits are separated from the rotten fruits. Thus, we must strive to have good ripe fruits. More importantly, we ourselves should be good fruits of Creation in the Divine Harvest now raging on earth.

Introduction

The university, is a place of knowledge creation, utilisation and dissemination for the benefit of society. The university is where people come and are transformed into professionals. The university is a place of diversity of peoples and thoughts; a think-tank of ideas and a universe of opportunities to develop our talents for creativity and innovation. The university, a city

in the universe, is where the Universe of the Creator is studied to gain insights and enlightenment about the universality of the Perfect Laws of the Universe, of the Eternal Creation Laws out of which we observe and recognise the Living Laws of Nature we study in our various disciplines. In these studies, we discover the amazing beauty and perfection of the wonderful Universe which should inspire faint perception and joyful recognition of the Greatness of the Creator and thus reverence and humble worship of Him.

The University Poet, the first in Nigeria I was guided to appoint, Professor Martin Adiyi Bestman in his Inaugural Lecture at the Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife in 1995 entitled ‘The Semiotic Triangle’ gave a deep creative insight to the ever-evolving material universe as the ‘Archetypal Text’. He described the universe as the Macro Book, the **Uni-verse** of creativity out of which all texts or verses of the literary cosmos are derived. I believe he has in mind the Universal Verse of the Living Word, that mediates the Language of Creation. This produces the beautiful chord of harmony that resonates in creatures such that our joyful activity forms itself into verses of hymns of praise in honour and glory of the Creator of the Universe.

These insights of deep recognitions should guide the mission of the university on the path of creativity and innovations.

In a presentation at a Workshop on Building an Innovation and Entrepreneurial Ecosystem for a Sustainable Development of the University of Port Harcourt in November 2022, our quintessential 5th VC, Professor Emeritus Nimi Briggs clearly drew our attention to the overriding mission of the university as *the pursuit of Truth*. This was a very exciting and profound

statement. In illustrating it, he drew our attention to the Motto of Harvard University which is simply ‘**Truth**’ and that of his Alma Mater, the University of Lagos (Unilag) ‘**In deed and in Truth**’ (Figure 4).



Figure 4: University Motto: Harvard and University of Lagos (Briggs, 2022)

Also, a line in the second stanza of the recently changed Nigerian National Anthem, states ***Help our youth the Truth to know.*** And going further, it says ***..And living just and true..*** The current Anthem also reminds us that ‘Truth and Justice’ should reign in Nigeria.

These are recognitions that should guide the purpose of higher education. Who teaches the Truth? How do we recognise Truth? What is Truth? Pontious Pilate also asked the Lord Christ, this very important question when He said He came to bear witness to the Truth (John 18³⁷⁻³⁸).

Asked more succinctly Who is the Truth? The profound recognition is that The Almighty, The Creator of the Universe, is The Truth Himself. He is the Eternal Unchangeable Truth. All that we strive to learn in every discipline is about His

Perfect Work, the Universe, and the manifestations we see and observe in Nature. Thus, our study in every discipline is aimed at understanding the manifestations of His Will in the Universe; understanding Nature and discovering the Divine Power behind the Natural Laws of Creation that vibrate and move in Nature; thus, we discover The Truth and recognise with some depth of conviction, the Greatness of The Creator. This enables total comprehensive education of man, within and without. It leads to the enlightenment of the intellect and strengthens the intuition of the spirit so much so that we dedicate ourselves to the service of The Eternal Truth, the service of The Almighty.

Therefore, we are admonished in a very comprehensive way: ***Seek and ye shall find!*** We are to seek The Truth. And we are assured of finding joyfully if we seek earnestly and in humility. The purpose of education goes beyond just intellectual training in the acquisition of knowledge, skills and attitude. It includes the right emphasis on Values Education. This is about the values and virtues that make us genuine human beings, the values we respect and hold dear and the value addition and the benefits we bring to others and our environment. Real education and thus enlightenment goes beyond earthly schooling to spiritual development and maturity in the School of Life. It involves knowledge of what makes us real human beings (and being human), responsible for all our activities in society. This demands an understanding of the purpose of life during the short existence on earth and in Creation in general. A deeper understanding of this purpose guides us onto the path of responsible and ethical behaviour; and motivates us to ask ourselves fundamental questions of life and existence. These questions should guide us in our studies, activities, and our path through earth life. Nature Study, the study of the nature of things and the beings of nature helps us

to these important recognitions and convictions. The knowledge of the perfection, simplicity, absolute logic and naturalness of the living Laws of Nature and of Creation, enables us to recognise that we can never escape the consequences of all our thoughts, words and actions. These are the real harvests of our activities.

Values Education and the ensuing enlightenment teaches us to accept personal responsibility for all our thoughts, words and activities. It teaches us through the living Laws of Creation; one of which is the Law of Sowing and Reaping, which Isaac Newton recognised as the third Law of Motion that ‘Actions and Reactions are equal and opposite!’ This Law is not very different from the infallible Creation Law that our forefathers recognised in farming, as the Law of Harvest that whatever a man sows that shall he also reap and reap in multiples. No one will reap for another no matter how we deceive ourselves. Through the uniformity and consistency of what they observed, our forefathers taught us this as a proverb. The limitation in Newton’s third Law of Motion is that in human affairs actions and reactions are opposite but not equal. Those who contemplate the action do not at the same time contemplate the reaction, the consequences.

When we sow corn, we reap cobs of corn at the time of harvest. Isaac Newton born 4th January 1643 only “discovered” through his three Laws of Motion, what is proclaimed in the proverbs and in the Scriptures in the simple incorruptible Primordial Law of Creation that whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap (Galatians 6:7). Here is also another hint. Newton’s three Laws are called Laws of Motion. Movement is a fundamental Law of Creation. For us human beings there must be harmonious motion within and without, in spirit and in the body, to be healthy, hearty and happy. We

see the motions of rotation and revolution of the earth and the consequences. We experience motion in the pumping of the heart, of blood circulation; in concepts of upbuilding, progress, retrogression etc. This Law is also instructive about what we call retirement. A man can retire from paid employment to have time for other joyful activities in life.

In the new Age of Knowledge, lifelong learning and activity are now recognised as vital for healthy living. This is why I advocate that true professors should not retire but be engaged in other activities as Professor Emeritus E J Alagoa has taught us. He published more and even won the Nigerian National Merit Award after his retirement.

Let it be emphasised again and again that the overriding purpose of university education is the pursuit of Truth. The American President John F. Kenedy said:

The goal of education is the advancement of knowledge and the dissemination of truth'

With the knowledge of the Truth comes the ray of enlightenment. In a lecture I delivered in 2023 to the Fellows of the Society of Chemical Engineers in Port Harcourt, on Professional Ethics in Training and Practice, I dwelt extensively on proper education and the value of enlightenment (Ajienska, 2023).

Education for enlightenment born out of the pursuit of The Truth is wholistic and comprehensive. It gives knowledge, skills, attitude and values that enlighten the intellect and the spirit. It helps to reboot the two parts of the brain to work harmoniously. Through Nature Study and Art, through the pursuit of The Truth that clarifies religious recognitions, through the proper understanding of culture, the back brain is stimulated to be active and draw pictures through the intuition of the spirit such that the intellect now begins to work

illuminated like a lamp with oil.

In the word ‘enlightenment’ lies a golden key. In this word is light. We are to light up the soul so that striving to fulfil the mission of the university, we should let the light so shine through our good works that men will recognise the Goodness, Guidance and Grace of the Creator through our activities and give thanks to Him.

Again and again we should remember the admonition: *‘let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in Heaven’*. Good works make the light of the soul radiant and shine bright and help us to reclaim our humanity. Conversely evil works make the soul dark, dehumanise us and do not stimulate and inspire gratitude to The Creator.

Reclaiming our humanity... It is in this sense that I was fascinated by the name of one of our Faculties. Faculty of Humanities. What a beautiful name. In some universities it is called Faculty of Arts. In our University, our founding fathers wanted us to study what makes us human beings and what should humanise us. In this Faculty of Humanities are also the Art Disciplines. Art is born of the intuitive perception. And we should all strive to be creative and artistic as the olden day scientists. The new Knowledge reminds us that civilisations rise and fall but the art of the people survives. Through the creative artists, we also learn about their muse that inspires them. Unknown to us, we all have our muse that inspires us.

After this digression to stimulate deep thinking, let us ask, what are the works of the University that we produce? Works that benefit school and society, discoveries and works that

bring honour and glory to the Holy Name of the Creator. What is the portfolio of the harvest of the University we are to be proud of? What are the products of the Mission and Vision of the University, the products of our scholarship?

A Valedictory Lecture is an opportunity for reminiscence. Reminiscence about one's experiences in the service of an institution or organisation; to share experiences with those left behind on how to further the mission and vision of the institution. In structure and content, a Valedictory Lecture is expected to be brief and sometimes an emotional farewell. This Valedictory Lecture could have been the shortest you have heard. It could simply have been just a few words of gratitude but this Valedictory Lecture is a Celebration of Harvest. As I said earlier, Harvest Festivals are important Festivals in all cultures and jurisdictions. They are Festivals of Thanksgiving. We celebrate Harvest Thanksgiving Festivals in our churches. Americans celebrate national Thanksgiving in November. This University even celebrates a University Thanksgiving Ceremony.

We celebrate New Yam Festivals. I recently learnt of an Igbo proverb that says in place of the yam (which is also called food), cassava came as a standby but has now taken the seat of yam. But there is no Cassava Festival. Like a parallel, our communities and universities left what we should plant and celebrate; we went after the substitutes and are now completely impoverished.

The Parable of the Harvest teaches us a lot about the Will of the Creator. In the Parable, we learn about the Creation Law of Reciprocal Action which manifests and teaches us about the Natural Law of Sowing and Reaping. When we sow, we take it for granted that the elements will not fail to ensure germination, growth and fruiting. We take it for granted that

whatever we sow we must reap. We sow seeds and must reap fruits in multiples. Creation adds and multiplies. Thus, the Law teaches us about the Love, Justice and Perfection of the Will of the Almighty Creator. Beyond the physical seeds, we also sow in our thoughts, words and deeds and reap the consequences, good or evil.

My experience of over 42 years in the university since April 1982, has been diverse. I have been a lecturer, a professor, pioneer Director of the Institute of Petroleum Studies, (IPS), a university administrator having served as the 7th Vice-Chancellor (VC) between 2010 and 2015, and thereafter served the university in many other ways. I also served at the National Universities Commission (NUC), other national and international institutions.

The IPS is a game changer as the first example of an institution in the practice of the Triple Helix of partnership between Government, Academia and Industry. In addition to international collaboration between two schools in different jurisdictions and academic cultures, IPS is also an entrepreneurial Institute focused on internationalisation of higher education at home, and professionalism to grow our timbers. At IPS, now Institute of Petroleum and Energy Studies (IPES), we deepened the practice of Triple Helix to Triple Helix Plus by collaborating with professional bodies and other stakeholders. This is one of the harvests of the Christmas Tree.

Let me say something about the change of name to IPES. The world in facing the challenge of climate change, a transition, energy transition. The use of oil is implicated in contributing to global warming and so the world has been looking for alternative and renewable sources of energy. The global

Conference of Parties (COP) conferences have been warning of the impending climate disaster. Natural gas is seen as a transition fuel. Stanford University had the foresight long ago to change the focus of their Petroleum Engineering Department to become an Energy Department and some universities followed the change. We have been considering the future of Petroleum Engineering and the Petroleum Engineering of the Future. Oil companies are changing to become energy companies e.g. the sponsor of IPS, Total E & P is now Total Energies. And so IPS also changed to IPES but very conscious of the brand IPS.

As Director of IPS, I accompanied VC Nimi Briggs to South Africa on a mission of fostering collaboration with universities. It was in that trip at the University of Potchefstroom that my eyes were opened to the need to protect intellectual property. During lunch, I sat by the Registrar of the University, a Professor of Law who asked me who was in-charge of patents in our university. I told him there was no one in particular. And he told me that in their university, nobody published a paper without passing it through his office to evaluate discovery of new knowledge that needs to be protected. On return, I made contact with lawyers who advised on intellectual property law and the process of filing for patents and copyrights.

And so, when the opportunity came for me to become Vice-Chancellor, I immediately decided to protect intellectual property and apply the concept of Triple Helix to transform the university into an entrepreneurial university. In the process of preparing my Inaugural Address, Dr Henry Njoku (now Professor) gave me a publication on entrepreneurial university by the doyen of Triple Helix, Henry Etzkowitz. That paper focused my attention properly.

As an Engineer, the first Petroleum Engineer to be appointed Vice-Chancellor, I called for a New Upbuilding to engineer an Entrepreneurial University in my Inaugural Address to Congregation in 2010. In that Inaugural Address, I invited the university community to **'imagine'**. To imagine an entrepreneurial university. But I wanted more. I wanted to fire the intuition of our spirits to picture a glorious future. As the leader, I knew of the significance of true leadership, encapsulated in the long- forgotten compound word priest-king. A leader is first and foremost a priest of the Will of the Creator and only then a king to serve his people. Thus, I led you in prayers for Guidance and Grace of the Almighty Creator Who in His Goodness saves a city if there is but just one good person to be saved. I realised clearly that that good person may be a cleaner or clerk who is honest and sincere and sees his work as prayer, as genuine worship. I was guided by the Knowledge of the New Upbuilding that progress comes through upward development and improvement of what we have and not through borrowing and adopting foreign ideas; that Sustainable Development comes through being indigenous. I was very conscious of this as Director of IPS not to adopt the foreign opinions and ideas of IFP School Paris but to develop completely home-grown solutions which are unique in the deeper consciousness of unique UniPort. Solutions which the parent institutions of IPS, our University and IFP School and indeed other universities learnt from.

In recent times, as I deepen my knowledge on the making of an entrepreneurial university, I have had to reflect on how best to develop innovation ecosystems and community service. I have found great value in the apprenticeship culture in the indigenous Business School of Trading among the Ibos very fascinating. I wondered why our Nigerian Universities have not built upon the successful practice which leads to business

incubation and startup that does not lack venture capital. (I understand Harvard Business School had come here to study the Igba-boi culture). How do we expand this indigenous Business School beyond trading to other areas of business such Agriculture, Fisheries, etc. The relationship between the PhD student, the apprentice, and the professor, the mentor, ought to develop and follow this best practice only if we the professors understand and imbibe the indigenous knowledge and practice.

On community service, universities are proving their social relevance through contributing to social innovations and impactful development of communities.

The founding fathers of the University of Port Harcourt made deliberate efforts at community service. To the best of my knowledge, the University was the first to institute novel courses on Community Service whereby students went to the communities to practice their future professions by interacting with the communities and bringing back to the university the lessons learnt. It is like industrial training where students undergo internship with companies to be trained on professional practice. In the case of community service programmes, the students learnt about community development, community history, art and culture, indigenous knowledge and technologies through the lens of their disciplines. They learnt through community elders, leaders of thought, who taught them.

Now in the Age of Sustainable Development, it has also become necessary to enlighten our communities on the new global realities and monitor the commitment to the attainment of the SDGs at the community level. Thus, I have advocated the use of Heritage Centres as veritable tools for celebrating the achievements of our people in our cultures, customs and traditions to stimulate the appetite for progress. Cultures are

not intended to be rigid but progressive, uplifting and upbuilding. The Heritage Centres in the communities are to be used as Centres for Creativity and Innovation; for entrepreneurial skills training and empowerment of youths and women to develop entrepreneurial ecosystems as well as for **leadership training**. We have realised that more than business managers and so business schools, the world needs leaders, transformational leaders and so the need for leadership schools. Heritage Centres could also be used to promote art and culture industries and tourism in the communities. We shall then celebrate annual Heritage Weeks where through collaboration, co-operation and partnership with the community we focus on specific themes to inspire development. The intellectual harvest of the celebration would echo and reflect in the communities for the benefit of all. In this way the university would contribute to community service, and thus deliberately contribute to the Sustainable Future of Society. The Institute of Niger Delta Studies, in collaboration with the Centre for Heritage Studies under the Cookey Institute (now being established) and the Centre for Community Service could anchor the Programme of Heritage Centres.

By the time we celebrated UniPort @ 40 in 2015, our university had achieved remarkable harvest of opportunities. During my tenure, I introduced a work plan which I executed faithfully and introduced many legacy programmes and attracted many capital projects; many innovative policies and customs that deepened the university culture. These novel achievements are documented in my end of tenure report as milestones and monuments; legacies and landmarks.

As we prepare to celebrate UniPort at 50 this year we need to take stock, count our blessings one by one and thank The Good Lord for His Mercies. May our 50th Anniversary become not just an intellectual Harvest but a Harvest of Values. May our 50th Anniversary become a celebration of our

Gratitude for the Goodness, Guidance and Grace of The Almighty, a University Harvest Thanksgiving.

Growing up in academics, I was guided and blessed to learn from eminent scholars on whose broad shoulders I stood to survey the academic horizon. Professor Emeritus Gabriel Kayode Falade of the University of Ibadan who supervised my Bachelor's Thesis; Prof Chi Ikoku an international Scholar who once described himself as 'Jack of all trades in Engineering and Master of some'. He had a Bachelor's degree in Mechanical Engineering, Master's degree in Chemical Engineering, Industrial Engineering and Petroleum Engineering and a PhD in Petroleum Engineering. He specialised and practised in different branches of Petroleum Engineering, published books used internationally. He supervised my Master's Thesis and Doctoral Dissertation; Dr E, my teacher at the University of Ibadan, a great mentor and benefactor who donated the Emerald Energy Institute building, endowed the Emmanuel Egbogah Chair of Petroleum Engineering and insisted that I be appointed to occupy it. There were other mentors like Professor Emeritus Nimi Briggs under whom I was appointed pioneer Director of IPS and Professor Emeritus Emmanuel O. Anosike, whose inaugural lecture, 'In Praise of Enzymes' I enjoyed very specially. As mentioned earlier, I have learnt from a great scholar like Professor Emeritus E. J. Alagoa who inspired me to realise that true scholars and professors do not really retire. And so, in this lecture I shall also inform you in advance of my activities after statutory retirement.

Forsaking the better conditions of service in the oil and gas industry, I joined the services of the University of Port Harcourt on April 1, 1982 as a Graduate Assistant. I was very happy and proud to be a lecturer. It was a deep longing fulfilled. I had one genuine ambition. To work hard to become

a professor. Happily, I rose through the ranks from Graduate Assistant to become Professor in 2001. I was appointed pioneer Director of the IPS in 2002 and developed the Institute to enviable height. I was afraid of failure else the industry gave the excuse that they could not work with Nigerian universities. Although in true service our best may not be good enough, I believe I tried and my performance at IPS encouraged my colleagues to urge me to contest for Vice-Chancellorship. I was appointed the 7th VC in 2010 and ended my tenure successfully in 2015 during which we had the milestone 40th Anniversary of the founding of this University. I have served this university for over 42 years out of which I served as Professor for over 23 years. What many may not know was that when I joined the University, we were only two lecturers on ground with the pioneer students. Mr Godwin Chukwu (now retired professor) and myself. We were operating the School System and the Dean of the School of Physical Sciences, Prof Andrew Ewwaraye was the Acting Dean of Engineering.

The staff development programme abroad was a major attraction for young lecturers then. I was looking forward to it. My seniors from the University of Ibadan Petroleum Engineering Department- Michael Onyekonwu and Niyi Lawal had travelled to the United States by the time I joined the university. Unfortunately, the economic fortunes of the university dipped and staff development abroad became challenged. Fortunately, Prof Chi Ikoku was employed from the United States, and within the first year, he started the graduate programme in Petroleum Engineering and encouraged me to join the programme. Thus, I became the first MEng and PhD graduate of the Faculty of Engineering of this University and eventually the first Engineering Professor to be appointed VC of UniPort and the first Petroleum

Engineering Professor appointed VC in Nigeria. Completely made in Nigeria, hundred percent Nigerian content. Proudly Nigerian, I experienced the Guidance and Grace of the Almighty.

Thanks to Prof Chi Ikoku, who through the graduate programme, trained over 70 percent of higher degree graduates (PGD, MEng, PhD) in all branches of Petroleum Engineering in Nigeria during his life time. This is another important harvest of the Christmas Tree. Our graduates have made us proud.

Our 5th VC Professor Nimi Briggs was true to his name wise, visionary and transformational. He knew the importance of petroleum in the global economy and its contributions to the Nigerian economy. He knew the strategic location of the university in the hearth of the oil and gas industry in the Niger Delta. He took advantage of the opportunity. Thanks to scholars like Professor Vincent Idemyor, he locked in on McArthur Foundation. With the support of McArthur Foundation, he cultivated friends of the University, individuals and corporate friends. And so, the IPS was established as a game changer; a postgraduate institution of international standard which evolved from the collaboration between the University of Port Harcourt, Nigeria and IFP School, Paris, France.

The Institute is made up of Centres of Excellence covering the upstream, midstream and downstream sectors of the oil and gas industry as well as two general centres of excellence in Health, Safety and Environment, and Petroleum and Energy Economics, Policy and Management. These Centres have Governing Boards, collaborating national and international institutions and Industry partners from both Nigeria and abroad. Through IPS and our Department, the University of

Port Harcourt is now a Centre of Excellence in Petroleum Engineering and Petroleum Geosciences. In 2013, IPS won the World Bank Africa Centre of Excellence (ACE) grant in Oilfield Chemicals Research.

The Institute has a Research Advisory Board made up of top industry experts. I thank my successor as Director of IPS, Prof Mike Onyekonwu, for raising the bar with his entrepreneurial skills.

By making use of international and national experts, the Institute adopted a policy of internationalizing at home. This saves the industry and Government foreign earnings while at the same time developing internationally exposed and well-trained human capital. The IPS is founded on the tripod of

- (i) international and national academic collaborations and cooperation, exchange and linkages
- (ii) partnership with industry and
- (iii) collaboration with national and international professional bodies. Industry and professional bodies are actively involved in the programme life cycle from curriculum development to course delivery to joint project supervision/ internships.

Thus, we offer internationally recognised, industry-relevant and professionally sound and certified programmes.

Our graduates are employed by national and international oil producing and service companies both in Nigeria and overseas. Testimonials and feedback from industry Human Resources (HR) and Technical Managers confirm that our graduates are indeed operations-ready and thus do not require so much industry training, thus saving employers in-service training costs. Our graduates are recognised as industry leaders all over

the world.

With the huge hydrocarbon discoveries in the Gulf of Guinea, the Institute is actively engaged in building capacity in Africa. Apart from foreign students from Uganda and other countries in IPS, through the Institute's collaboration and exchange programmes, our lecturers visit and train students in Ghana (University of Mines Tarkwa) and South Africa (University of Wits). There were plans to develop training programmes for the Fourah Bay University Sierra Leone. Ghanaian students used to spend their summer vacation in industrial field trips.

IPS was the first institution to exhibit at the SPE Conference in Nigeria. Through IFP School, IPS introduced Field Development Studies in Nigeria. And many other remarkable innovations were introduced. The University of Port Harcourt led in the number of SPE Conference papers. At a stage our professors and UniPort graduates taught most of the SPE Short Courses. We won awards of excellence. We had the highest number of Petroleum Engineering Professors and Professorial Chairs in Africa. Many graduate programmes introduced under IPS were the first of their kind in Africa. These are Emerald Energy Institute for Petroleum & Energy Economics, Policy and Strategic Studies (EEI), Centre for Occupational Health, Safety and Environment (COHSE), Offshore Technology Institute (OTI), Centre for Gas, Refining & Petrochemicals (CGRP), Centre for Petroleum Geosciences (CPG), World Bank Africa Centre of Excellence in Oilfield Chemicals Research (ACE-CEFOR), Post Graduate Diploma in Petroleum Technology (PGDPT) for host communities of Total Energies, Energy Technology Institute (ETI). The foresight of Prof Nimi Briggs, our 5th VC was very great. A new Park, the IPS Park was established through the support of industry.

The IPS model was adopted by other Centres and Institutes in

the university CELTRAS, PUTOR, INRES, and other universities- Centre of Excellence (CoE) established by Shell at the University of Benin, Centre for Marine Engineering Rivers State University.

But let us not forget that IPS was established as an independent graduate school in partnership with industry. IPS reported directly to Senate through her Academic Board for many years. IPS is completely funded by industry and has her Governing Board and an industry Advisory Board chaired by industry experts. IPS was built on industry culture of efficiency, productivity and profitability; not the bureaucratic structure of Government institutions. Thus, we had something new to learn from. During my tenure as VC, we set up the College of Graduate Studies following the example of Obafemi Awolowo University. This was followed by the University of Ibadan headed by a Provost in the drive towards being a post graduate school. IPS was to be under the College and not necessarily become part of the old School of Graduate Studies that is bureaucratic. Many universities have different independent graduate schools. We can confirm this about many top-ranked universities. I am drawing attention to this to remind us of history so that we do not stifle growth.

During my Valedictory Lecture at the end of my tenure as VC, I did announce that I had forgiven all who crossed my path with intent to hurt and also apologised to all those who may have felt wronged in my line of duty. I assured you that such could not have been deliberate. I also did so on behalf of my wife who statutorily was President of the University of Port Harcourt Women Association (UPWA). A leader may not meet the expectations of all and satisfy everybody.

In an address on the occasion of launching the University of

Port Harcourt Petroleum Engineering Alumni Association, I also did apologise on behalf of myself and colleagues to students we may have hurt as a result of our strictness on the rules of engagement. When I joined the academic career at the age of 27, the average age difference between myself and the students was not much. We were literally in the same generation. The generational gap has become even narrower now between young lecturers and students. This is why it is recommended that professors teach first year students to lay a solid foundation in the discipline and final year students to give them confidence in their future careers.

I recall how I chaired a Faculty of Engineering Committee to investigate some critical situation in Chemical Engineering Department that threatened the life of a lecturer. The revelations made by students made me experience the pains and agonies some students endured as a result of high handedness of lecturers.

I had experienced first-hand how staff made business out of transcripts, how students made payments everywhere they went for registration and all sorts of infractions. As VC, I introduced centralised payment platform to correct these infractions. I hope we are able to maintain this. Those of us who are privileged to serve in a university must realise the enormity of the responsibility we bear in influencing the character of adolescents.

Today, at this Valedictory Lecture, let me once more and finally express my heartfelt apologies for any one who may have been hurt in the course of my service to this university community and also appeal for forgiveness just as I honestly forgive all who may have caused pains to me and my family so that we can go our several ways in peace.

The call I made to ‘imagine’ an entrepreneurial university as VC in my Inaugural Address in 2010 is now more urgent in the New Age of Knowledge. I have echoed it in some major lectures I had delivered. After my tenure as VC and sabbatical leave at the University of Abuja, I returned to the university to continue as lecturer. I accepted to be appointed Executive Chairman of the Technology Park to propagate the ideas of innovation, commercialisation and entrepreneurship. Unfortunately, not much has been achieved in the development of the Technology Park. With the help of my technical Assistant, a fine gentleman, Engineer Uduma Ikpa, I supported the World Bank Africa Centre of Excellence (ACE) on Oilfield Chemicals Research (CEFOR) by publishing quarterly Research Review, Creativity and Innovation Newsletter to stimulate the ACEs towards global best practices.

I developed interest on how to change our mindset towards creativity and innovation. I started teaching innovation management and technology transfer to graduate students of the IPS group of industry schools. I used graphic images such as the satellite picture of the world at night to prick their conscience on why Africa is in Darkness.



Figure 5: The World at Night!

https://www.bing.com/ck/a?!&&p=5273d977864292fdJmldHM9MTewODA0MTYwMCZpZ3VpZD0zMjFmZDUzYyIiNmVjLTZkODAtM2MwOC1jNGI3Yjc5MzZjYjMmaW5zaWQ9NTE0Ng&ptn=3&ver=2&hsh=3&fc_lid=321fd53c-b6ec-6d80-3c08-c4b7b7936cb3&u=a1L2tYWdley9zZWfY2g_cT1waWN0dXJK29mK3RoZSt5b3JsZthdCtuaWdodCZxcHZ0PVBPY3R1cmUrb2YrdGhIK3dvcmxkK2F0K05pZ2h0JkZPUk09SUdSRQ&ntb=1

The picture shows that Africa is almost engulfed in total darkness which agrees with the stigma of the description: Dark Continent. Dark continent not just because of the lack of energy security but this *darkness has a deeper origin* as I explained in the 2nd Alkebulan Lecture. The picture also shows the challenge of low creativity and innovation, of low productivity and poverty, thus groping in the dark. Consequently, unemployment has worsened the security challenge as crime wave is on the increase according to police reports. The picture supports the data of the world indices for poverty and development. Africa has the highest number of failing states steeped in lawlessness, impunity of recklessness of executive immunity. As endowed as we are, Nigeria is described as the poverty capital of the world. The places where we have abundance of light are also the places that have guaranteed energy security, the best entrepreneurial higher education institutions, the universities with the highest number of Nobel Prize winners and the richest men in the world. In those places, we have the universities with unicorn investments

of one billion dollars (Stanford University has over 40 while Nigeria, a country, has only 3). Africa enveloped by darkness is where we have the challenge of endemic corruption, debilitating poverty and the plague of plunder and wastage of resources. Unfortunately, we have also created a strong funeral economy in some parts of the country not because of the dead but to satisfy our craving for vanity, selfishness and pompousness. Paradoxically, it is in Africa, in particular Nigeria, we have the most prosperous religious economy as against the knowledge economy. However, it is good that many churches are investing in education. After all the oldest universities have religious origin and the primary objective of universities is the pursuit of Truth and the understanding of the Will of The Creator which religion teaches. Also, we have the expanding Nollywood film industry now rated as number three globally in terms of prolific productivity. This is evidence of African art and creativity. So how can we replicate the great feat and achievements in the creative industry in science and technology and above all achieve responsible and selfless governance?

I drew attention to Annual Reports of AUTM and Reports of Impacts of the top- ranked global UK universities. I observed how agitated and annoyed my students were that we did not teach them these before. They often asked me if my colleagues were aware of the benefits of what I was teaching them. We developed class strategic plans on innovation, commercialisation and entrepreneurship with Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) on number of patents, publications and products to be developed from the research. We posted this in the class for all to see as reminder. Some of my students graduated with startups.

In a Workshop organised by NUC and NESG in Lagos

attended by policy makers of higher education in Nigeria where we discussed the concept of entrepreneurial university and how to transform our universities into entrepreneurial universities, some advocated that a few universities in each geopolitical zone should be selected to be transformed into entrepreneurial universities. I argued that Entrepreneurial Centres which the NUC advised universities to establish for purposes of extracurricular skills acquisition were not the same as entrepreneurial education and innovation management. Entrepreneurial Education starts from research in every discipline of study by finding solutions to the problems of society particularly as now articulated by the SDGs; transforming these discovered solutions into innovations and then commercialisation and entrepreneurship for the benefit of school and society. I advocated that we learn from global best practices of the entrepreneurial universities of Stanford University and California Institute of Technology (CalTech) by the Silicon Valley in California; MIT and Harvard in Boston as well as the Universities of Cambridge and Oxford and others in the UK. We should learn from global best practices of professional bodies such as AUTM, UIIN and Innovate UK etc.

I gave seminars and lectures to colleagues to advocate new paradigms to stimulate interest. I advocated that we should change from publish or perish to patent, publish and produce for prosperity; I advocated Triple Helix plus+ and that we either collaborate or collapse. I advocated mainstreaming the SDGs into the curriculum and the research agenda such that we contribute towards the attainment of the global SDGs. I advocated new policies and developed templates with KPIs. I participated in University Retreats at UniPort and FUTMinna to advocate change of mindset and realised how difficult it is to change our mindset in a system in which even advocates of

critical thinking are rigid in their set ways.

Why is Change of Mindset so difficult?

It is difficult because we do not know the process of thinking and how thoughts develop and influence us and our environment. We do not know that when we think, we are using the neutral power of the Creator and thus depending on the volition behind our thoughts, we use, misuse and abuse Divine power with enormous consequences. Thoughts are like seeds we sow in the soil of this great Work of Creation which take on form and bear fruits which we must harvest. Thoughts are like deposits in a bank which yield compound interest. With our thoughts we build walls or bridges which influence our development and we reap bountiful harvest either good and beneficial or evil and ugly. The classical work by James Allen, 'As a man thinketh' could open our eyes but it does not ground us to know the tools for thinking and the Eternal Laws of Creation governing thinking. We do not really know how the two parts of the brain - the cerebellum and the cerebrum-function; which part is the seat of the intellect and in which part is the intuition (in-tuition) rooted; the process of inspiration and why the writers in particular speak of their muse. If we had known we should have taught our students the difference between thinking and intuition, between creativity and innovation. It was Professor Ebi Efebo of the Faculty of Education who drew my attention to the fact that we ought to start our courses with an introduction of the structure of the brain and the thinking faculty. After all we measure brilliance with Intelligence Quotient (IQ). Today we have also realised the importance of Emotional Intelligence (EQ or EI) which further underscores the importance of the knowledge of the brain and how it functions (Figure 6).

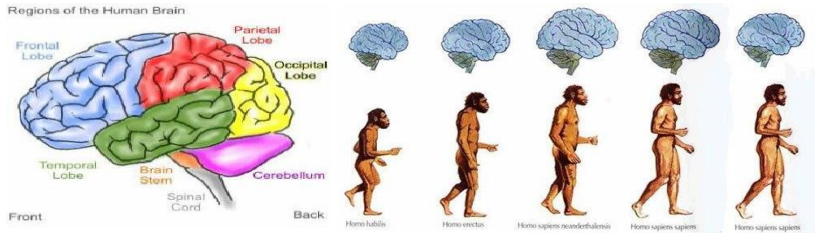


Figure 6: The one-sided development of the frontal brain, the seat of intellect

A university is expected to be the think-tank of society. A think-tank that understands the process of thinking; how thoughts take on form and influence society; how to be alert to interrogate our thought process to ensure it swings in the living Laws of Creation to produce beneficial effects that lead to harmony and happiness, to peace and beauty and to joyful upbuilding, sustainable development and progress; how through our thoughts we could become fruitful and multiply in creativity and innovation for the benefit of school and society and thus transform the earth into a paradise.

In George Orwell's *Animal Farm*, the pig drank milk because he was expected to think for the community. But here the pig is starved of milk and is dying. His productivity has declined to an unprecedented level. The pig does not even know how to adjust his thinking and change his mindset. Above all, we need the knowledge of Creation and our place therein to function properly.

On a false foundation, only a faulty structure could be erected which will not stand the storm. We can then not be able to engineer a true upbuilding and progress. The university that

trains and certifies the professionals for society adopted the wrong paradigm of publish or perish. This led to a scramble for publications and abuses. The teacher failed to teach himself; we failed to learn that every day, all roads lead to the market, the heartbeat of the community, where through voluntary exchange (trade by barter of old), everyone engages in transactions that ensure balance. We the lecturers do not go to the market, the new knowledge market, with any products. We waited for salaries at the end of the month that had become completely worthless. Today, a professor's salary in Nigeria cannot buy a return ticket from Port Harcourt to Abuja and other travel expenses. It is as pathetic as that. In a country where we are all sick, how do you then afford your medications and other needs. And so, some of us have been forced to degenerate into exploiting our students, into cash and carry academics. In a noble profession of teaching where our reward is in heaven.

If only we realised on time that the paradigm of publish or perish, we built upon was wrong and changed to the new paradigm of patent, publish and produce, we too would have products in the market place that would have made us receive part of our honourable reward on earth. In the new knowledge society, the professor who engages in research, who finds applications for the solutions to the problems of society and who packages these solutions as products for the beneficiaries would have many products with his students and would have lived a decent life like his colleagues in other climes. In this way, we take the bull by the horns and would not have declined into a state of hopelessness and despair, that leads to the fall of the ivory tower and collapse. Has the intellect failed us? Why is it so difficult to change our mindset in the right direction?

With the lack of the Knowledge of Creation and inability to think clearly, the Schools of Thought men developed did not survive the test of time and tide of sustainability. They failed because we developed the frontal brain, the seat of intellect, at the expense of the receptive back brain connected with the intuitive perception of the spirit. The spirit within the soul is the living core in man which could gain connection with the luminous realms to receive guidance therefrom. And so, with the over-developed intellect, we thought and thought but our thinking was full of assumptions and presumptions. It was all theory lacking in the knowledge of Truth. We speak of critical thinking, of thinking outside the box and came up with Schools of Thought based on philosophy. The highest degree of learning became the Doctor of Philosophy (PhD). But unknown to us the intellect was like a lamp without oil because the harmonious co-operation with the intuition connected with the back brain was distorted and diminished. Thus, the intellect lost the benefit of the enlightenment of the spirit through the intuition. Our thinking became empty and lost the jewel of creativity. We lost creative-thinking. Even the PhD lost the lustre of philosophy.

The early scientists had much better-balanced brains. They were vast in science and good in the arts. They were creative thinkers, better alert in spirit. Today we have lost the necessary connection and built silos of science and arts, religion and science; arts and culture. We built walls instead of the humble pursuit of Truth; the Truth which is visible in Nature and which we experience in the Natural Laws of the Universe. The Schools of Thought became lifeless and failed. If we had maintained earnest seeking for the Truth, we could have been creative thinkers with the two parts of the brain co-operating harmoniously and developed Schools of Nature Study in every discipline of study that could have led to

amazing discoveries; and lead us to the refreshing recognition of The Truth and thus conviction about the Source of All Knowledge, God, The Almighty!

This was what Albert Einstein, one of the most celebrated scientists, recognized when he made the profound statement: *Religion without science is blind; Science without religion is lame!* Religion without the understanding of scientific laws discovered through the study and careful observation of the Natural Laws of Creation is blind faith. Afterall, religion is about the striving to understand and live by the Will of the Creator anchored on the same Natural Laws of Creation, the perfect Laws of Nature. And, Science without Religion is lame. The challenge of lameness lies in men accepting the ready-made theories and views of others while ignoring the inherent capacity and capability for weighing and examining to get the necessary recognition and conviction of The Truth. This is why the Grail Message guides us to appreciate that the Philosophy of the Natural Sciences and the Philosophy of Religion must coincide in perfect clarity if both are to represent the Truth. Afterall, the Truth is expressed in the fundamental Laws of Nature which are the **foundation** for maintenance and sustenance of Creation and thus the guarantee of sustainability. Only upon this foundation can any structure endure.

In the 2nd Alekebulan Lecture I particularly called on African Scholars and Professors to truly profess and use the Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) to engineer the Upbuilding of Africa in the New Age of Sustainable Development, in the 4th Industrial Revolution, before we are completely left behind. In doing so, I advocated a New School of Thought, a School of Creative-Thought that aligns with the objectives of the Alkebulan Society of Environmental Sustainability (AKSES)

to conserve, preserve and sustain what is left of the continent; address Africa's developmental challenges within the context of the 17 SDGs and Africa Union's Agenda 2063 through the rebirth of cultural values and the embrace of indigenous knowledge and technology.

The Upbuilding of Society through a New School of Creative-Thought.

As Jeffery Sachs of Columbia University noted, we are now in a New Age of Sustainable Development. The old order passes away through Divine Intervention which brings the Divine Harvest that separates the sheep from the goat; those seeking The Truth and striving upwards towards The Light, from those striving downwards. And everything must become new. This is a Divine Command if we are to survive the approaching Cosmic Consequences that will sweep away all that is old. We are also in the Age of the 4th Industrial Revolution when the confluence of Big Data, Artificial Intelligence and Connectivity is giving birth to new industries out of old industries with precision science and technology and personalised medicine. This we are experiencing with FinTech out of the Banking and Finance industry, MedTech out of the medical industry, Digital Oilfield out of the Oil and Gas industry etc. We are in the Age of Knowledge and thus the evolution of a new Knowledge Society. Sustainability stands on four pillars of economic sustainability, social sustainability, cultural sustainability and environmental sustainability. Today people are focusing only on knowledge economy instead of the comprehensive knowledge society. The challenges to sustainability in the old Schools of Thought lie in the lack of the Knowledge of the Truth anchored in the Natural Laws of Creation. And so, the need for a New School of Creative-Thought which is about Nature Study for Sustainable Upbuilding of School and Society; the Study of the perfect

Natural Laws of Creation through which we recognise the Truth and become convinced of the Greatness, Goodness, Guidance and Grace of the Creator of all the Worlds. And so, I have been advocating a School of Nature Study in Pursuit of The Truth on the firm foundation of the development model of Triple Helix plus+. In terms of pedagogy, we have advocated that Professors teach philosophy and the fundamental principles; Government Technocrats teach Policies (policy formulation and implementation, political economy); Industry experts and professionals teach practice, professionalism and ethics, ESG to ensure sustainability, QHSE and SDG while the professional bodies are involved in professional certification and professional practice. There are also programmes for Experts-in-Residence involving the partners in the Triple Helix and Entrepreneurs-in-Residence to mentor and help in extra-curricular activities such as startup training.

Contradictions and Clarifications

Over the years we have observed that during inaugural lectures, the professors usually conclude with recommendations that the University should establish a Centre or Institute in their areas of research. We also expect the university to provide budget for the research centre or institute. How many of such recommendations have been implemented? The best practice under the entrepreneurial university template is that every professor or group of professors comes together to set up such research centres or institutes as quasi entrepreneurial units. The name is registered with the Centre for Research Management under the Office of the DVC R&D. The group applies for research grants to run their research function. Unfortunately, we completely misunderstood this and the change of mindset has become very herculean and elusive.

We also think of institutes in the framework of IPS which was a graduate school in partnership with industry. Fortunately, the World Bank Africa Centres of Excellence have taught us that these are purely Research Centres. And we are lucky to have two - Centre for Oilfield Chemical Research (CEFOR) and Centre for Public Health and Toxicological Research (PUTOR). We should learn from global best practices. Universities have as many research centres, institutes and Labs as are professors and experts with their graduate students and post- doctoral fellows. These are research centres through which we can mentor our graduate students and learn how to practice and improve on the indigenous apprenticeship system.

One contradiction we have lived with for so long is the fact that we established a College of Continuing Education (CCE) which with the Centre for Open and Distance Learning is like a **mini university** and called the Head of the CCE Director. What a misnomer! As VC, I wanted to deal with it but stopped short to avoid my intention being misunderstood. I hope this can be corrected.

We prepare strategic plans but fail to implement them. Without strategic plans, we cannot attract grants and cultivate valuable friends of the university. As Dr Tim Okon said during his lecture at the 13th Emmanuel Egbogah Legacy Lecture Series in 2024, strategy without strategic movements and directions will lead nowhere.

Let me now specifically address three important issues that are critical to secure the future of our universities.

- i. Developing an Innovation Ecosystem in the making of an entrepreneurial university: Change of paradigm from publish or perish to patent, publish and produce to ensure prosperity

- ii. University Advancement
- iii. Collaboration and Cooperation (SDG 17): Collaborate or Collapse, the new paradigm

(i) Developing Innovation, Commercialisation and Entrepreneurial Ecosystem

The university mission has evolved from teaching, research and community service to include academic entrepreneurship. The research agenda is focused on solving the problems of society and thus contributing to the attainment of the global Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Geoff Nicholson said **“Research is the transformation of Money into Knowledge while Innovation is the transformation of Knowledge into MONEY!”** Academic entrepreneurship is different from skills acquisition. Academic entrepreneurship starts from Innovation, which is the process of transformation of new knowledge derived from research into money. It involves the translation of the outcomes of research into new policies, technologies, software applications, goods and services for the benefit of school and society. Research must be globally recognised and locally relevant; it must be strategically sustainable and extensively collaborative.

We need to refocus our vision on deepening academic culture to follow international best practice.

While Faculties and Departments concentrate on effective teaching and learning, we need to establish research Institutes and Centres as *executing* arms of research and development established through research grants. Directors of research teams are nationally and globally recognised leaders of research in their disciplines and should not be tenured like Heads of Departments and Directors of Academic Institutes that run graduate programmes. What is being said is to make a

fine distinction between research teams, research centres, research institutes and research laboratories versus academic institutes and centres that offer degree programmes.

In 2012, Senate considered and approved the Professor Enuvie Akpokodje Report on how Research Centres and Institutes are set up and operate. But we have failed to implement that important report and learn from global best practice.

There are over 400 Professors in this University. I have been advocating that every Professor should form the nucleus of an entrepreneurial cell; form or join an interdisciplinary research team to compete for research grants. There are national and international grants waiting for winning research proposals. And there are many challenges begging for innovative solutions. Imagine multidisciplinary teams of 4 Professors in both basic research and applied research working with their graduate students, post-doctoral research fellows and industry partners, we would have at least 100 active research teams which then constitute research centres, institutes or laboratories, applying for grants, finding solutions to our several challenges which are transformed into products through startups or licensed to industries to produce.

We should adopt a strategy that every research team comes up with at least one product per year and every Department at least one startup per year. In this way we can easily develop an entrepreneurial ecosystem.

We should also encourage the culture of writing annual reports by Faculties, Departments, research centres and institutes. We should learn to practice Triple helix, have experts and entrepreneurs in residence as well as set up Industry Advisory committees. Table 1 is an example of Innovation Metrics that capture Key Performance Indicators (KPIs).

Table 1: Innovation Metrics

S/N	KPI	Quantity for Current Year	Cumulative from inception
1	Research Grant received (Million Naira)		
2	Contract Research (Million Naira)		
3	Number Companies/ Agencies sponsoring research		
4	Intellectual Property Disclosures		
5	Patents Issued		
6	Patents Pending		
7	Start-up Companies started		
8	Spin-off Companies		
9	Products to Market		
10	Licenses issued		
11	Jobs Created		
12	Royalty earned (Million Naira)		

(ii) University Advancement

During the tenure of our 5th VC Prof Nimi Briggs of blessed memory, this university through McArthur Foundation was one of the first universities to establish the University Advancement Centre (UAC) with well trained and exposed staff. The UAC trained the Obafemi Awolowo University (OAU) staff during the tenure of Prof SJS Cookey's Pro-chancellorship of OAU to establish their Advancement Centre. How we gradually allowed the UAC to die beats imagination. There was so much misunderstanding about University Advancement and University Foundation. Hard as I tried, I did not succeed in enlightening those who should take appropriate structural decisions.

Given the economic climate, several competing needs and

challenges of infrastructural development, it is obvious that Government is unable to fund Higher Education Institutions (HEIs). Thus, it is necessary to learn from global best practices to secure the future. Globally, highly ranked Universities have developed resilient strategies to ensure their financial independence through research, innovation and academic entrepreneurship as well as through university advancement strategies. In many Nigerian universities, we established ventures such as guest houses, water bottling plants, bakeries etc that are hardly competitive and sustainable and thus did not make reasonable contributions to the budget. Good as these ventures are, we failed to learn from global best practice of university advancement and developing innovation ecosystems through research and development.

Table 2 shows the income streams and percentage contributions to the budget of the university.

Although the Vice-Chancellor is also the Chief Advancement Officer of the University, many ranked universities have Principal Officers that drive the very important function of mobilizing resources to develop their universities. In most universities in the United States, this Principal Officer is called Vice- President Advancement or Vice-President Development. The Advancement or Development Offices are very elaborately developed with well- defined functions and strategic goals. Broadly, the functions of the University Advancement Office include **advancement** through the cultivation of prospective benefactors and **investment** of funds raised; development and implementation of strategic plan for sustainable development of the university, external (international) relations and community service.

University Advancement Officers are trained in fund-raising through cultivating alumni, individual and corporate Friends of

the University as well as national and international Charities, Trusts and Foundations. The investment arm is also run by professionals versed in investment portfolio management. Some of these ranked Universities have University Foundations and University Advancement Advisory Boards. Advancement Policies and Procedures are well-documented and published at the websites to encourage friends, parents, staff, students and Alumni to be active in university advancement strategies and initiatives and thus make university advancement systemic and well-entrenched. Most of these universities develop well-crafted University Advancement Strategic Plans and Implementation Plans with measurable Key Performance Indicators (KPIs). These universities also develop Marketing and Communication Plans to regularly inform and give Stewardship Reports to the various publics and stakeholders to ensure accountability and transparency.

Alumni Associations and Alumni Networks in many parts of the world are well- developed and well-informed of developments in their Alma Mater. There are even discipline-Specific Faculty/Departmental Networks/Platforms of the Alumni Associations working like the Age Grade System to attract resources for their Departments and Faculties. To secure the commitment of the future Alumni, universities organize Orientation Programmes for staff and students to ensure that students enjoy their stay in the University. Professor Briggs offered to speak on this during Orientation Programmes for new students.

Advisory Boards of Faculties, Colleges and Institutes are established to cultivate Alumni, high net-worth public-spirited individuals, generous benefactors and friends of the University. In some cases, Honorary Councils are set up to offer advice on advancement trajectory, dynamics of fund-raising and fund management.

Globally, university advancement has become a professional discipline and best practices are adopted according to the university's history, environment and culture. To secure the future, universities must train and retrain their staff to develop capacity for fund-raising and competence in university advancement strategies. In many universities, Advancement Offices develop and monitor the implementation of the Strategic Plans, Master Plans of campuses and other capital assets of the universities. Based on the Strategic Plans, universities launch Endowment Funds and organise Capital Campaigns within the university and among external stakeholders. Annual Stewardship Reports are published to promote transparency and accountability.

Some universities use investment management companies to manage their well-considered investments to grow their asset base while others have University Foundations to manage their investments to reduce their tax burden while operating according to extant Tax Laws and Regulations. For instance, Harvard University has a Management Company that manages its financial reserves. Some of these universities are richer than many developing countries. Harvard for instance has over \$40 billion reserve.

There are Advancement Conferences organized by Council for Advancement and Support of Education (CASE) USA to exchange knowledge and deepen the advancement practice.

Table 2: Comparison of contributions of income streams

	International Entrepreneurial University		Nigerian University	
Income stream	Description	Approximate % Contribution	Source	Approximate % Contribution
1	Government subsidy for teaching, learning and research	40	FGN TETFund	65 10
2	Students' fees for academic programmes, and auxiliary services such as accommodation, transport and services	20	Internally Generated Revenue (IGR)	13
3	Research Grants and Contract Research	25	Partnerships	10
4	income from university advancement strategies	5	Other Sources e.g. Alumni Support	2
5	Investment income from innovation, commercialization and entrepreneurship, technology & knowledge transfer, professional short courses etc.	10		0
	Total	100		100

Suggestions

- i. University Advancement Policies and Procedures should be well developed and published at the website to inform Alumni and Friends of the University.
- ii. The Vice-Chancellor as the Chief Advancement Officer of the University should take the mobilization of resources as a primary responsibility. Where possible a DVC should be appointed as DVC Advancement otherwise, the DVC Administration should become DVC Administration & Advancement.

- iii. There should be University Advancement Advisory Board
- iv. Develop University Strategic Plan according to best practices with a well-crafted Implementation Plan.
- v. Professionals should be engaged for investment management of endowments
- vi. Faculty Advancement Officers should be appointed and well-trained on strategies and initiatives for effective university advancement. The University should encourage participation in CASE Conferences as an avenue to gain knowledge and experience.
- vii. Improving marketing and communication with inspirational stories of our aspirations and achievements will bolster donor confidence, stakeholder trust and boost Alumni pride and commitment; it will inform all stakeholders of developments in the university. Publish Alumni Newsletter online. Publish Annual Stewardship Report and circulate to all stakeholders for transparency and accountability. Table 3 is an example of University Advancement Metrics.

Table 3: University Advancement Metrics

S/N	KPI (Millions of Naira)	Amount for Current Year	Cumulative
	Advancement		
1	Capital Campaign-Staff		
2	Capital Campaign-Alumni		
3	Capital Campaign-Friends		
4	Development Fund Students		
5	Endowment Fund		
6	Annual Giving		
7	Gifts Foundations- National		

8	Gifts Foundations- International		
	Investment (FIRE)		
9	Investment Dividends- Stocks and Shares		
10	Treasury Bills		
11	Investment Dividends Others: Finance (Public Equities, Credit, and Hedge Funds.)		
12	Dividends: Insurance, Real Estate etc.		

FIRE=Finance, Insurance and Real Estate

I suggest that Every Faculty should have an Associate Dean for Research & Innovation and an Associate Dean for Faculty Advancement. The Faculty Advancement Committee should have Department Advancement Officers to cultivate Alumni and Friends of the Department. The faculty Research and Innovation Committee should have Department representatives to implement action plans.

(iii) **Partnership for the Goals (SDG-17): Universities should Collaborate and Cooperate or Collapse.**

We should encourage collaborative research and properly reward academic progression. The world has moved away from single authored papers. Today the ranking agencies are rewarding multiple authored papers called Kilo Papers because the problems of the world are better solved through multidisciplinary research. Particularly when such papers are published by the globally recognised top tier journals like Nature, Science etc.

For us to collaborate with reputable universities and industries in the spirit of Triple Helix, we must have what it takes. Collaborating partners must see values in us to woo us. The Legal Unit must not be a stumbling block for collaborations and partnerships.

The State of the Department of Petroleum & Gas Engineering

My Department once the pride of the University that attracted so much from industry is suffering from ‘crew change’ and is top heavy. There was a time we had the highest number of Professors and Professorial Chairs in Petroleum Engineering in Nigeria and perhaps Africa. We had experts in every specialty.

And gradually through deaths, retirement and migration to foreign lands (japa syndrome/brain drain) and to industry, we are now lagging behind. Through retirement, we have lost very experienced hands who need to be replaced with young smart scholars. That is the crew change we need. Lecturers are being overworked and stressed. I fear that many young lecturers may leave for greener pastures. What I have said of my Department unfortunately applies to all Departments in Engineering. We need Lecturers and of course facility upgrade.

UniPort @ 50 Celebration in 2025

Let me make a few remarks on the celebration of UniPort @ 50 this year. This Valedictory Lecture is to kick-start the milestone celebration of the harvest of the tree planted 50 years ago. The university history is made by people: staff and students engaged in active scholarship and even other stakeholders. History is not made only by Vice-Chancellors and Professors. History is not only made by the pioneers but by a cast of characters in time and space, ranging from students' union leaders, staff union leaders, community leaders, reputable contractors and consultants and friends of the university - individuals and corporate friends and foundations like MacArthur Foundation. History is made by our proud alumni among whom is President Goodluck Jonathan, Governors Timipre Sylva, Rotimi Chibuike Amaechi, Nyesom Wike, Alex Otti etc... History is made by Alumni who are Senators, Politicians, Archbishops, Ambassadors and VCs. History is not made only by the big men and women but by simple ordinary people who did extraordinary things. I wanted to redefine the honorary degree by honouring such people with Bachelors, Masters degrees. This was approved by the Council/Senate Joint Committee on Honorary Degrees but those recommended then were still in

service and so were not awarded. Experiences shaped the academic customs and culture of the university.

History is made through exciting and painful experiences and events. There was a time cultism was a major challenge for my predecessors. One painful event which almost defined my tenure was the mob lynching of the Aluu 4 on that Black Friday which caused global outrage. It weighed heavily on my conscience and conviction to the extent that I almost resigned as VC. But I realised it happened off-campus and I only heard about it on Saturday morning; and so I could not establish culpability. Many well-meaning people stood by me and encouraged me to remain calm. I wanted to build a monument to remind future generations that such barbaric actions should not be associated with our university. These stressful moments took a toll on me.

We had dreams of becoming a world-class entrepreneurial university. Many people contributed to giving us the oxygen of publicity. I remember Mr. Ikechi Ibeji, a veteran journalist who was a beneficial influence. Many Professors from the Diaspora made their mark. I had acknowledged them in my Valedictory Address to Congregation. Through Mr Ibeji, we published our experiences of internationalisation of higher education at home in a landmark book that was well received by the NUC. I appointed an Alumnus Prof Nimi Wariboko as UniPort Ambassador in the Diaspora who made very valuable contributions.

During my tenure, we had the good fortune of participating in the Garden City Literary Festival which Governor Amaechi started. And Port Harcourt became the World Book Capital in 2014. A very significant global achievement for Port Harcourt. We wanted to have Goodluck Jonathan Presidential

Library/Museum as well as Alumni Museum to celebrate the legacies of our Alumni.

I remember the joys of staff when we instituted the PH Factor and giving of Christmas Rice to all staff. I thank my successors for continuing the tradition in these difficult times.

A university is not made by beautiful buildings that define the landscape. We certainly need more iconic buildings. A university is made by people with pioneering spirit, by valuable friends, by ground breaking research, by unique academic programmes and projects. As we celebrate UniPort @50, may we celebrate these people, programmes and projects that define us; may we celebrate legacies of service and use the opportunity for progressive university advancement by launching an Endowment Fund for sustainable development of the University.

Conclusion

I am an advocate of Nature Study, as a veritable pathway to the discovery of the Laws of Nature we study in every Discipline and thus to the recognition of The Truth. Maria Mitchell said *'every formula which expresses a law of nature is a hymn of praise to God'*. Nature is evergreen because Nature as the product of the Will of the Creator swings perfectly with the Natural Laws that bear the Will of God. And so, it is said why look so far when the Truth is so near! Let us look deeply into Evergreen Nature, and we can glean the Truth in the simple Primordial Laws of Creation. Thus, I advocate a School of Creative-Thought of Nature Study in all disciplines of study with a curriculum that will not burden the frontal brain and intellect but will stimulate the growth of the receptive hind brain so that both parts of the brain work co-operatively with the intuition guiding the intellect to enlighten our thoughts to

be creative and innovative. Thus, to train reasonable and responsible human beings balanced in their IQ and EQ.

One of the initiatives that gave me real joy, was the publication of some of Ikoli Harcourt Whyte's choral compositions by Dr Achinivu who I appointed as Harcourt Whyte Chair of Choral Music with a mandate to collect the complete works of the music genius who demonstrated that there is ability in disability. Through global philanthropic foundations two editions of Harcourt Whyte's compositions have been published with musical notations such that these choral pieces can be played and sung anywhere in the world. Every Nigerian and indeed every Ibo man should be proud of this. But the job is unfinished. Dr Achinivu is not getting younger. I am worried that we have not achieved our goal of the complete works of Harcourt Whyte.

I am hoping that we can also be a repository of the complete works of Rex Lawson, Adam Fiberesima and other musicians and have a museum of their works.

The other harvest that made me happy was that I was able to secure funding through CEFOR to publish the book on Ernest Ikoli by Professors E. J. Alagoa and Enemugwem. Professor Alagoa had been very worried and lamented that this very important book on another great Nigerian that chronicles educational history and the history of journalism in Nigeria had not been published due to lack of funds.

These important harvests of creativity could place our university on the global map and attract mileage of community service in global ranking.

I must say that I am unusually proud of the creative harvests of

our scholars. And these are the collections I intend to take to my family Library to deepen my quest for creative endeavours. People perish for lack of knowledge. Now that the Knowledge of The Truth, has been mercifully mediated to mankind, may we not perish in our unwillingness and stubborn volition of thinking we know better.

Gifts

Having come this far, I have some gifts for you and the University.

I give you a Supplement, a poetic-prose of what I have summarised as **‘The New School of Thought, the School of Creative-Thought’**, the School of Nature Study in Pursuit of Truth in every field of Study that can guarantee sustainability. Not just Environmental Sustainability but the comprehensive and complete sustainability on all the four Pillars of Sustainability in the Knowledge of Truth. I give it to you as a gift to enjoy with an inspiring music of your choice. The University Librarian will make this available online for download. You can also download from the website of Emmanuel Egbogah Foundation and on the IPES website. Just a fore taste from one of the verses:

*The true Professor
Must have understood
The purpose of higher education
As the pursuit of Truth
Through Nature Study
The true Professor
Must be an earnest seeker
Of The Eternal Truth*

*The Professor of Nature Study Who
has discovered
The Living Laws of Nature
The Primordial Laws of Creation
In the great Book of Creation And
recognised the Will of God With
confidence and conviction Is ready
to look up to God
And serve His Perfect Will Is
ready to serve The Truth And
matured to be a true teacher*

*The Professor of Nature Study Who
has discovered
The Natural Laws of Nature
The Divine Laws of Creation
In the great Book of Creation
And recognised the Living Source
of Power that drives Creation
Is ready to unfold the wings of his
spirit For jubilant flight to the
heights of real existence
To draw inspiration there from
and from Nature*

*Then shall the Professor truly
profess
His recognitions and conviction
And reap a bountiful harvest
Of creativity and innovations
An intellectual harvest
Of patents, publications and
products*

*Then shall the Professor profess
And reap a beautiful harvest
A spiritual harvest
Of values, virtues, and valour*

*Then shall the Professor profess
And reap a rich harvest
Fruitful and multiplying Worthy of
a true humanity.....*

*Full of Gratitude
Nature Study blossoms and blooms
In the Emerald Tower
The new Sky Tower
The Pyramidal Tower
The radiant Light Tower
By the Safe Harbour*

*The Professor professes
Deep in Nature Study
Balanced in Art and Science
Philosopher, Poet and Professor
His voice resonates in the Senate
Chamber
The Hallowed Chamber of the
Intellect*

*The Professor professed
And celebrated a bountiful harvest
Of blessings of joyful activities
Pushing the frontiers of Knowledge
Exploring the horizon
Expanding the spheres*

*The Professor professed
And celebrated a bountiful harvest
Contributing to true humanity
To peace and progress
Spreading harmony and happiness
And rekindled hopes of Paradise ...*

*The Professor professed
Beyond statutory retirement
Not tired and never really retired
Like old vintage wine
He remains fresh
Prolific and prodigious
Productive and proactive*

*The Professor never retired
In the service of The Truth
Standing in selfless service
He serves and serves
To secure the master key
The promised reward
Of teachers in Heaven
The golden crown of Light*

*Let the chord of the sound
Of heavenly melody vibrate
And resonate in our souls
Let the Convocation
Become a Celebration of Harvest
Of Creativity and Innovation
A Festival of Thanksgiving
In gratitude for the Greatness
Goodness, Guidance and Grace
Of the Almighty, The Eternal Truth*

*And may the Light of Truth dawn
Upon us and upon our University*

Amazing Grace - André Rieu

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mn3liQwllc&list=RDv1mQT1u_45I&index=13

I shall donate all my VC Papers and Collections to the University Library to create a Vice-Chancellor Library & Museum. All former VCs are encouraged to send in their collections for posterity.

I shall donate my Petroleum Engineering Books, Publications, Notes and Collections to IPES as Joseph Ajenka Petroleum Engineering Collection

I will like to encourage retiring Professors to create such Professorial Collections in their Departmental Libraries to propagate knowledge. There is no benefit in keeping these valuable collections at home to gather dust and decay. The University Librarian Professor Helen Emasealu with whom I worked at IPS will develop a framework for their proper utilisation and ensure that there is no plagiarism, abuse and misuse.

I had established Book Series. I intend to work with the University Press and the University Librarian on these.

I will still be available to support the Technology Park and the University Advancement Centre to build capacity and develop these structures.

I believe an educated community can engage in meaningful and beneficial conversations, discussions, dialogues and debates. Education and enlightenment foster open-mindedness to accommodate diversity of views, new ideas and superior logic of arguments without recourse to violence. As VC I tried to encourage our colleagues to institutionalise the culture of Dialogue and Debates. My Friends and Family will donate a trophy and prizes for Annual Inter-Faculty Debate on topical issues to stimulate the power of discourse, as a veritable means of cross-fertilisation of ideas.

To support research, innovation, commercialisation and entrepreneurship, I shall mobilise friends (individual and corporate friends) and Triple Helix Nigeria, and work through the Office of DVC R&D to institute Annual Prizes for Creativity and Innovation for our staff and students to encourage them to contribute to public good and a better world. This is to encourage all to prepare for national and international innovation competitions. The prizes shall be awarded during the Annual Innovation Week. We shall encourage Students Pitching for Venture Capital.

Prizes & Awards

1. Joseph Ajenka Medal for Creativity & Innovation

Awarded to: Three most outstanding research breakthroughs/ discoveries of the year by faculties/ lecturers, staff of the university and post-doctoral research fellows.

Value of Award: Medal + Certificate + Cash Prize to be determined

Sponsors: Friends & Family or Institutional

Guideline: Outstanding research breakthrough/discovery with a potential to impact effectively on the university and society; research with a high potential for commercialisation and enterprise that restores hope in creativity and innovation.

2. Bene Willie Abbey Prize for PhD Research

Emeritus Professor of Biochemistry, first DVC R &D in Nigeria, an accomplished scholar and administrator. She was a great source of strength during my tenure.

Awarded to: 10 most outstanding completed PhD research studies for the year.

Value of Award: PhD: Certificate + Cash Prize to be determined.

Sponsors: Institutional

Guideline: Outstanding research breakthrough/discovery of students based on their PhD Dissertations, Presentations and Evaluations; Research outcomes that have potential to impact greatly on the university and society. Reports to be published in the Uniport Magazine on **Creativity & Innovation/Unique Entrepreneur**

NOTE: The PhD Dissertation should be selected for the NUC Awards Competition or any other competition.

3. Vincent Idemyor Prize for Master's Degree Research

Professor Vincent Idemyor, the ASHP 2023 Donald E. Francke Medal Award Recipient has done a lot to put the

University on the global map. He has served this university selflessly. He is the last of Experts from the Diaspora.

Awarded to: 10 most outstanding Masters research output for the year.

Value of Award: Certificate + Cash Prize to be determined

4. Eucharía Nwaichi Prize for Women in Science

Prof Eucharía Nwaichi is made in UniPort Nigeria but plays in the global arena, a multiple award winner who has made this university very proud.

Awarded to: 4 most outstanding female Lecturers and Doctoral/post-Doctoral Research Fellows for the year. (2 Senior academics and 2 junior academics and post- Doctoral Fellows

Value of Award: Senior Academics: Certificate + Cash Prize to be determined; Junior Academics: Certificate + Cash Prize to be determined

Sponsors: Friends

Guideline: Female research scholars in the University making outstanding breakthrough/discovery; Research outcomes that have potential to impact positively on the university and society.

NOTE: The Awardees to participate in L'Oreal type competitions

5. Industry Prize for Research (to be named after sponsors)

Awarded to: Most outstanding undergraduate research output for the year to catch them young.

Value of Award: Certificate + Cash Prize to be determined

Video Documentaries to be produced on these awardees and highlights published in **Uniport Research Review Bulletin**.



Speaking of harvest, I have gifts of seeds for you to plant to enjoy the harvest. With the expertise of the Faculty of Agriculture through the former Dean Professor Ibisime Etela, I have given them seeds of beneficial fruits (custard apple, sycamore fruit) to cultivate (check out for nutritional benefits). We inherited one of these fruits in our present house at No 2 Nembe Street Delta Park. A former staff in Abuja once advised me to encourage the Faculty of Agriculture to develop a soursop fruit farm and let the Faculty of Pharmaceutical Sciences study its therapeutic benefits. He even brought seedling for me to plant. I can testify to the benefits of these fruits.

Custard Apple: A Sweet and Nutritious Fruit

Custard apple is a tropical fruit with a **sweet and creamy flesh** that resembles custard.



Figure 7: Custard fruit



Figure 8: Sycamore fruit

Finally, as I promised, let me inform you about what I hope to be doing as I formally retire tomorrow. I shall be engaged in Education for Sustainable Development (ESD), build capacity in research and innovation management, to develop entrepreneurial ecosystems; I shall be engaged in university-industry collaborations and Triple Helix; university advancement, community service through Heritage and Legacy projects as well as be involved in leadership and development. I shall continue with the Book Series I started. Let me now conclude by quoting Socrates, the great philosopher who said:

'The secret of change is to focus all of your energy not on fighting the old but on building the new'.

And the powerful British Prime Minister Winston Churchill was also quoted to have said:

There is nothing wrong with change, if it is in the right direction.

Thus, there is no problem about change but the direction of

change. We change in an upward direction to freedom, peace and happiness or downward direction to perdition. I am advocating change in the upward direction, change for upbuilding of school and society. Only a courageous change of mindset and true humility can help us in the new Age of Knowledge, lead us into a sustainable future. And everything must become new if we are to survive the raging storms of the Divine Harvest.

Finally, let me close by thanking you for all your sacrifices and support and Thank the Almighty for His Guidance and Grace over our lives and this University. After formal retirement comes a new phase of life in the service of The Truth. And so nearer my God to Thee, nearer to Thee. Nearer today than yesterday; nearer tomorrow than today. Nearer, ever nearer to Him may I strive. Amen.

Nearer, My God, to Thee - André Rieu (live in Amsterdam)

Nomenclature

AUTM, Association of University Technology Managers

CEFOR, Centre for Oilfield Chemicals Research

CELTRAS, Centre for Logistics and Transport Studies

CGRP, Centre for Gas, Refining and Petrochemicals

CPG, Centre for Petroleum Geosciences

COHSE, Centre for Occupational Health Safety and Environment

EI, Emerald Energy Institute

ESG, Environment, Sustainability, Governance

ETI, Energy Technology Institute

INDES, Institute of Niger Delta Studies

INRES, Institute of Natural Resources and Sustainability

NESG, Nigerian Economic Summit Group

NUC, National Universities Commission

OTI, Offshore Technology Institute

PGDPT, Post Graduate Diploma in Petroleum Technology

PUTOR, Centre for Public Health and Toxicological Research

QHSE, Quality, Health, Safety and Environment

SDG, Sustainable Development Goals

UIIN, University Industry Innovation Network

Bibliography

- Alagoa, K. D. (2022): Scientific and Religious Thoughts in the Natural Laws of Nature, Valedictory Lecture, Niger Delta University, 29pp
- Allen, James (1902): As a Man thinketh, Wikipedea.org
- Ajienka, J. A. (2005): Christmas Tree: Tree of Life, Tree of Knowledge, 47th Inaugural Lecture, University of Port Harcourt, 15th December.
- Ajienka, J. A., (2014): University of Port Harcourt: From University to Entrepreneurial University, UniPort Governing Council Retreat, Ibom Hotel Resort, Uyo, Nigeria May.
- Ajienka, J. A. (2014); New Models for University- Industry-Community Relation, Case Study of the University of Port Harcourt, Conference of Committee of Pro-Chancellors of Nigerian Federal Universities, Shehu Musa Yar'Adua Centre Abuja, July 2
- Ajienka, J. A., (2014): University of Port Harcourt: From University to Entrepreneurial University, UniPort Governing Council Retreat, Ibom Hotel Resort, Uyo, Nigeria May.
- Ajienka, J. A. (2015): UniPort, The Making of an Entrepreneurial University, Landmarks & Legacies, Tenure Report, University of Port Harcourt Press, 226pp
- Ajienka, J.A. (2017), Research as Enterprise in the Knowledge Economy. World Bank ACE Workshop 22nd August.
- Ajienka, J. A., (2019): Blessed are the Teachers!..., 37th Convocation Lecture of Ignatius Ajuru University, Rumuolumeni, Port Harcourt, Rivers State, 62pp
- Ajienka, J. A., (2022): Nigerian Universities and Leadership Value Proposition: Having Graduates worthy in Character and Learning, 34th Convocation Lecture of

- Rivers State University, Port Harcourt, Rivers State, December 8th, 36pp
- Ajienka, J. A., (2023): Professional Ethics in Training and Practice Keynote Address at the 2023 Conference of the Board of Fellows of the Nigerian Society of Chemical Engineers, p40, Thursday October 5, 2023, at Novotel Port Harcourt.
- Ajienka, J. A. (2024): The Fall of The Ivory Tower: Foundation for a New School of Thought for Africa's Sustainability, The Second Alkebulan Lecture of the Alkebulan Society of Environmental Sustainability, Tuesday 26th March
- Bestman. Martin Adiyi (1995): The Semiotic Triangle, Inaugural Lecture, Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife in 1995
- Bindir, U. B. (2013): Research and Innovation in Nigerian Universities, Paper Presentation, at the NUC Retreat for Newly Inaugurated Governing Council of Nigerian Universities, by the Director General/CEO, National Office for Technology Acquisition and Promotion (NOTAP), Federal Ministry of Science and Technology, 10th July 2013, 19pp
- Briggs, N. D. (2022): Global University Ranking and University Advancement. Is There a Correlation Between Them? Presentation at the Workshop on Building an Innovation and Entrepreneurial Ecosystem for a Sustainable Development of the University, University of Port Harcourt, November 11
- Essien, O. E. (2013): Overview of University Intellectual Property (IP) Policy by Executive Chairman, Gabent Technology & Intellectual Property Consultants Limited Abuja Organized by, the NUC, Abuja, 9th – 10th, July 2013, 20 slides
- Etzkowitz, H. (2008). The Triple Helix. University-Industry-

- Government in Action. New York, NY: Routledge Taylor & Francis Group, DOI:
- Etzkowitz, H and Leydesdorff, L (1998). The Endless Transition: A “Triple Helix” of University-Industry-Government Relations. *Minerva* 36(8): 203– 208.
- Faborode, M. O. (2018). Cracking the code of industry-academia partnership in Nigeria: Challenge to Knowledge Academies, Nigerian Academy of Engineering Technology Lecture, Lagos June 20, 2018. 52p.
- Faborode, M. (2023): The State of the CCMAS, Sensitisation and Implementation, NUC CCMAS Colloquium, Idris Abdulkadir Auditorium, NUC, ABUJA, August 23.
- Faborode, M and Ajienka, J. (2023): An Advisory on Transforming Nigerian Universities into Entrepreneurial Universities for Sustainable National Development
- Okebukola, P. A. (2022): Nigeria in 2050 and the Future of Work: Blending Humanities with Science in University Education, keynote address presented at the International Colloquium to Celebrate Emeritus Professor Ayo Banjo at 88, May 2
- Sachs, Jeffrey D. (2015): The Age of Sustainable Development, Columbia University Press, New York, 543pp
- Shevel, J. (2014): Global Best Practices in the Management of Tertiary Institutions, ICPC Conference, Abuja, May
- West, D. M. (2012): Performance Improving university technology transfer and commercialization. *Issues in Technology Innovation*, No. 20, 1-15
- Vollmann, Herbert (1995): A Gate Opens, Stiftung Gralsbotschaft Publishing Co. Stuttgart, Composite Volume.
- Survey of Commercialization Companies in Israel 2010-2011;

Reports on Inventions, Patents and Start-up Companies; www.cbs.gov.il info@cbs.gov.il; Jerusalem; July 24, 2013

Times Higher Education Newsletter, Coursera for Campus, March 3, 2022 UK University Technology Transfer - SlideShare <https://www.slideshare.net/tseitlin/uk-university-technology-transfer>

Global Ranking (2016),
<http://www.timeshighereducation.com/news/ranking-methodology>

Improving University Technology Transfer and Commercialization,
<https://www.brookings.edu/.../improving-university-technology-transfer-and-commercialisation..>



Joseph Atubokiki Ajienska

*PhD, Hon. Degree, IFP School Paris
FAEng, FNSE, FNIPetE, FIPS, FNIM, FISPON, FNES RE (COREN,
Nigeria), SPE, REP (USA)*

Joseph Atubokiki Ajienska is Emmanuel Egbogah Chair/Professor of Petroleum Engineering and University Administrator. He was the 7th Vice-Chancellor (2010-2015) of the University of Port Harcourt. He was the pioneer Director of the Institute of Petroleum Studies (2003-2010), an international collaborative graduate school between the University of Port Harcourt and the IFP School Paris in partnership with NNPC/TOTAL Joint Venture, the first example of a Triple Helix institution. He was Head of the Department of Petroleum Engineering (1995-1997); he worked as a Senior Production Technologist with Shell Petroleum Development Company Port Harcourt (1993-1995) on Leave of Absence.

He was a member Governing Board of African Virtual University (AVU) Kenya (2013-2015). In 2014/2015, he was Chairman, Committee of Vice-Chancellors (CVC) of Federal Universities and Chairman Association of Vice-Chancellors of Nigerian Universities (AVCNU) and represented CVC on the NYSC National Governing Board. He is currently a member

of the Governing Council of Wigwe University Isiokpo.

He holds BSc Second Class Upper Honours from the University of Ibadan, MEng, PhD from the University of Port Harcourt, all in Petroleum Engineering. He was awarded Honorary Degree of the IFP School, Paris (2017).

A Registered Engineer (COREN), Registered Safety Practitioner (ISPON) and Registered Environmental Practitioner (NREP, USA), Professor Ajiienka is a Fellow of the Nigerian Academy of Engineering, Fellow Nigerian Society of Engineers and Fellow Nigerian Institution of Petroleum Engineers. He is a Fellow, Institute of Petroleum Studies, Fellow, Nigerian Environmental Society; Fellow Nigerian Institute of Management and Fellow Institute of Safety Professionals of Nigeria (ISPON). He is also a member of the Society of Petroleum Engineers.

He has authored/co-authored 202 journal publications, 14 chapters in books, over 40 Monographs, Books, Field Operations Manuals and Reports and received 5 patents; delivered over 100 lectures/presentations and webinars, developed/co-developed 6 software applications; founded/co-founded Startups, Research Institutes and Centres, and attracted over 10 national and international research grants. He developed the course on Production Enhancement and has supervised/ co-supervised 26 PhDs and over 100 Master's Degree, hundreds of Post-Graduate Diploma (PGD) and Bachelor's Degree graduates. One of his PhD graduates is a Professor and Dean at Abubakar Tafawa Balewa University (ATBU), some are Associate Professors.

He established the following Book Series: Chi Ikoku Petroleum Engineering Series, Fugro Environmental Management Series and Emmanuel Egbogah Petroleum & Energy Economics, Policy and Management Series.

He was a member of the Board of the National Universities Commission (NUC) and the Board of National Office of Technology Acquisition and Promotion (NOTAP); Chairman, National Advisory Committee on Universities of Technology, 2021; Member National University Ranking Advisory Committee (NURAC), 2022; Chairman, National Technical Committee on Oil & Gas, (Petroleum & Petrochemicals), Standards Organisation of Nigeria, SON, 2009-; Member, Advisory Board of “Deep Decarbonization Pathways in Nigeria Project (DDP- Nigeria Project; Long-Term Energy Scenarios/Modelling)”, Centre for Climate Change and Development, Alex Ekwueme Federal University Ndufu-Alike.

Professor Ajenka served as member and leader of Accreditation Teams of COREN and NUC as well as the National Accreditation Board of Ghana. In November 2007, he participated in the international Seminar on Education and Energy by TOTAL in Paris attended by 50 Professors from 21 countries.

He pioneered the development of entrepreneurial university in Nigeria and appointed the first Deputy VC for Research and Development, thus laying the foundation for transforming the University of Port Harcourt into an entrepreneurial university with many landmark development projects, programmes, Centres and Institutes (some of them were first in Africa and Nigeria; and Centres of Excellence such as the World Bank Africa Centre of Excellence in Oilfield Chemicals Research (CEFOR), first Nigerian Partner Institution with AVU, United Nations University Centre of Excellence (CoE) in Sustainable Development, IAAF Regional Centre for Sports. He established the first University Foundation to secure the future. During his tenure, the Times Higher Education (THE) Ranking

agency in 2015 ranked the University of Port Harcourt as the 1st in Nigeria, 6th in Africa and globally between 276-300 in Research Influence.

He is an advocate of Triple Helix plus, Education 4.0, Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) through Nature Study, University Advancement etc.

He is a member Board of Trustees of the Nigerian Society of Petroleum Engineers (SPE), member, SPE Africa Regional Advisory Board and chairman Board of Trustees of the Nigerian Institution of Petroleum Engineers. He was the chairman of the Technical Board of NEDDI Nnewi of NASENI; Director of PetroNet-Africa and Vice-Chairman Emmanuel Egbogah Foundation. He is the founder of Atubokiki Foundation.

He is a recipient of several awards such as SPE Nigeria Production Engineering Prize (1991), SPE African Regional Award for Production and Operations, 2008, NREP International Award for Professionalism in Higher Education, 2009, Nigerian Petroleum Golden Jubilee Award of Excellence (Who is Who in 50 years of Oil and Gas Production) and Lifetime Achievement Award by the University of Ibadan, 2018. His colleagues in academia and industry published Festschrifts in his honour, 2015 and 2024; and the publisher of Energy Chronicles, Ikechi Ibeji published a book in his honour entitled The Petroleum Engineer as University Administrator, Icons of the Nigerian Oil Industry Series

Professor Ajienka is married to Dr Mercy Finelady Ajienka and the marriage is blessed with three children Mrs Orabelema Kalamba Anene, Dr Nemitari Miebaka Ajienka and Miss Soala Lolia Ajienka and four grandchildren NuluonuNna Lolia Anene, NaefeNna Deinma Anene, SoluifeNna Ibinabo Anene and Atonye Ademide Amari Ajienka.

