

COLLEGIATE SYSTEM AND UNIVERSITY ADMINISTRATION IN NIGERIA: A CASE STUDY OF EKITI STATE UNIVERSITY

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Abstract:

It has been observed that the organization and management of collegiate system in Nigerian University administration is not properly situated to give room for efficiency of purpose and the goals that it is expected to serve.¹ The cause could often be traced to an increasing demand for effective, accountable leadership and responsibility in state owned institutions² just as it exist in public sector organizations or the misconception and regular demand by constituted authorities in the Universities to place premium on the centralization of power.³ Whatever is the cause, it is obvious that a dialectical wide gap or poor understanding exist on what collegiate system represent or intended to serve in the University. Hence, it has not justified its purpose when applying theories of public administration viz. inter-governmental administrative systems and decentralization to University administration.

The chances and prospects of maintaining proper mechanism for the centralization or decentralization of powers and in falling short of transiting powers from centralization to over-centralization do come to the fore, since the need to situate organization behaviour and administrative system is absent or lacking in university leadership and administration. Hence, this paper helps to document observations and practical experience as a University professional Administrator in the collegiate system in order to advocate reforms and suggest solutions that can give room for better appreciation and implementation of the collegiate system so as to reduce controversies or eliminate misconception that surrounds it.

¹ Araoye, Mathew (Emeritus Professor), Provost, College of Medicine, Ekiti State University, Ado-Ekiti, May, 2014.

² Ajayi, Alex (Chief), Former Ag. Registrar, University of Ife (now OAU) and 1st Nigerian Registrar of WAEC, Ado-Ekiti, August, 2014.

³ Adegbite, JGO, Pioneer Registrar, Ondo State University (Now Ekiti State University, Ado-Ekiti), August, 2014.

Introduction:

The effective running and operational efficiency of the Collegiate System has dwindled and fast becoming a foregone story in the effective management of important structures in the Nigerian University system for awhile. The original intent and necessity for collegiate system is often misconstrued and jettisoned by University Managers whose hands are on every aspect of the University life to maximize their authority and gains, whereas the proponents of the collegiate system are considered to be actors of bad faith, rebels or indiscrete and divisive leaders whose goals are to usurp the powers of the Chief Executive and Academic Officers alongside their Chief Administrative Officers in the Universities wherever the collegiate system is conceived and adopted.

Indeed, it has become a matter of struggle for institutional heads to either work towards eliminating the inclusion of collegiate system in their Universities or in reviewing and whittling down the powers and relevance of its proponents. The overall implication is that Universities nowadays are more centralized rather than operating as a decentralized structure in the academic community. The over-centralization of university administration on the other hand with its negative tendencies continue to promote high handedness and less participatory process in decision making and democratization of university education.

In developing climes, misconception and conflict is often observed in the breaking-down of institutional authorities and powers and in spreading the limits and bounds of governing process. This is because power brokers and occupiers of political position particularly the Chief Executives and the Management prefers a good grasp of authority and its exercise in various government and political institutions. However, the mistakes that they often make by holding to power as a measure of security and accountability is often in losing the key-players and major stakeholders required to hold unto same power.⁴

What quickly comes to mind is either the fear of the unknown, poor spirit of tolerance and accommodation, bad faith or lack of goodwill to share power with eminent colleagues or the lack of organizational attributes and administrative expertise among some leaders and managers in our University system. Otherwise, the template of power sharing

⁴ Kolawole, Dipo, Former Vice-Chancellor of University of Ado-Ekiti (now Ekiti State University, Ado-Ekiti), addressing a Group of UNAD Alumni Stakeholders in May, 2009

and leadership coordination is faulty in the process of decentralization of powers or the management process for decision making. Other reasons behind concentration of powers could be need for resource control in proper management of university economy and a centralized budget due to lack of adequate funding, fear of abuse or arbitrary reactions to possibility of the existence of parallel or co-equal power allocation between the higher authorities in the University and their subordinates in the Colleges/campuses.

Montesquieu had asserted that power corrupts and absolute powers corrupt absolutely. The growth and expansion of any ideal organization should not be merely in asserting tradition of authorities and centralization of powers, but in engaging the executives and managers in organization interplay and discuss to share responsibilities, garner experience and expertise. This will enable policy formulators and decision makers to have proper understanding of the needs of various academic discipline and effectively participate in the overall framework of the University management using the limited resources in the organization and management to sustain the University ethos in an open, transparent and dynamic process accessible for all stakeholders and far off the display of showmanship and building of personal empires and legacies.

Overview of Collegiate System in World-Class Institutions

The collegiate systems in Universities or Collegiate universities are regarded as higher education institutions that consist of and divided up into a series of colleges with different degree of academic discipline and specialization.⁵ The role of these colleges varies from one university to the other. Some of these colleges exist and operate as ‘mini university’ within a university⁶ in directing the learning of students, in providing accommodation for them and in offering pastoral (parental) care, while others maybe more or less operating as campuses or halls of residence.⁷

Another equally acceptable definition of a collegiate system or universal concept of a collegiate university describes a major University as a federal university or affiliating university whose several colleges or higher education institutions are linked together and

⁵ <https://www.allaboutcareers.com/careers-advice/choosing-a-university/collegiate-universities>. Accessed 8th March, 2017

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Ibid.

bounded as part and parcel of the main/single university with its governing authority and functions divided between the central administration and those constituent colleges.⁸ It is therefore instructive to suggest that a University system where the college is an institutional arm with some degree of regulated independence or administrative autonomy, the college is referred to as a Collegiate System. Such colleges are to operate in the University with separate, distinct and autonomous administrative structure and should possess statutory rights to determine some of their policies in taking decisions to sustain traditions relevant to their professions or other issues that may be required in the University system.⁹

The committee system would remain a part and parcel of the collegiate system with its extensive linkage to the University which it replicates in the college administration. College administration are to retain relevant institutional arms of Units, Departments and Faculties encompassing College structure,¹⁰ as an all inclusive entity, though not parallel or equal to those of the mother institution (University).¹¹ The college would exercise the degree of powers granted to it for the purpose of specialized capacity building and semi-independence in handling vital aspects of its institutional governance without recurrence to the University, except as may be requires in view of its status and activities.¹²

A brief insight into the institutional framework and traditions of major British Universities where collegiate system is practiced¹³ subsist here. This is necessary in order to suggest a comparative analysis of the British University model of collegiate system at the initial stages of the conceptualization of higher education in Nigeria with the remodelled Nigerian University system using the original concept as a benchmark for practice and tradition as affordable in Universities of British Commonwealth.

A tabularized framework is therefore presented below for ease of reference.¹⁴

⁸ Wikipedia, Collegiate university, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Collegiate_university. Accessed 7th March, 2017

⁹ Babatola, J.E.T. Memo of the College Secretary on College Administration and Linkages with Faculties addressed to all Faculty Officers in the College of Medicine, Ekiti State University, Ado-Ekiti in July, 2014

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Ibid.

¹³ <https://www.allaboutcareers.com/careers-advice/choosing-a-university/collegiate-universities>

¹⁴ Ibid.

<i>S/No.</i>	<i>Name of selected British Universities</i>	<i>University Status and Role of the Colleges</i>	<i>General Observations on Collegiate System</i>
1	OXFORD UNIVERSITY	One of the most famous collegiate universities in the world. Most undergraduate students apply to the university through a college. The Colleges play a huge role in university life. They are financially independent from the university and consequently have their own unique ethos and environment.	Many of the students spend their entire years at university living in their college or in a college-owned property. Much of the social life revolves around the colleges, as most have their own societies and sports teams. Each college is also partly responsible for teaching, with tutorials and supervisions taking place in college.
2	UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE	Another famous collegiate university in the world. Most undergraduate students apply to the university through a college. The Colleges play a huge role in university life. They are financially independent from the university and consequently have their own unique ethos and environment.	Many of the students spend their entire years in the college or college-owned property. The social life revolves around the colleges as they have their own societies and sports teams. The college is partly responsible for teaching, tutorials and supervisions. For example, King's College, Cambridge is known to be slightly more left-wing and alternative, while Caius College is more conservative and traditional.
3	DURHAM UNIVERSITY	The college structure is a little bit different. Though, the students apply to the university through the college system, the colleges are not financially independent of the University neither do they possess separate teaching duties in the University, except for three colleges namely: St. Chad's College, St John's College and Ushaw College.	The Colleges in Durham however play an active role in student pastoral care. Each of them has its own unique atmosphere.
4	LANCASTER UNIVERSITY	The collegiate system was watered down a little bit further. Essentially, all students are just members of different colleges and live in on-campus accommodation that is linked to their college.	The Colleges however runs as glorified student halls. The students all play a strong part in the University social lives with their own bars and JCRs. It would be wrong to call them semi-independent or autonomous (statutory) college with decentralized or devolved administration.

5	UNIVERSITY OF YORK	The collegiate system was watered down a little bit further. Essentially, all students are just members of different colleges and live in on-campus accommodation that is linked to their college.	The Colleges however runs as glorified student halls. The students all play a strong part in the University social lives with their own bars and JCRs. It would be wrong to call them semi-independent or autonomous (statutory) college with decentralized or devolved administration.
6	UNIVERSITY OF KENT	The collegiate system was watered down a little bit further. Essentially, all students are just members of different colleges and live in on-campus accommodation that is linked to their college.	The Colleges however runs as glorified student halls. The students all play a strong part in the University social lives with their own bars and JCRs. It would be wrong to call them semi-independent or autonomous (statutory) college with decentralized or devolved administration.
7	UNIVERSITY OF LONDON	<p>The University of London is a totally different example of a collegiate university. It exists and runs like a federal university comprising of twenty constituent colleges, such as Birkbeck and UCL in United States.</p> <p>It is about the most universal template for running a Collegiate University or a Collegiate system in world-class universities of British tradition.</p>	All the colleges perform most of all the duties of a University. They are almost completely self-governed; although some of the colleges don't have degree awarding powers.

Appropriate administrative mechanism of a University in running Collegiate System

Universally acceptable administrative practice and culture are conceived on the acronym 'POSDCORB' which implies PLANNING, ORGANIZING, STAFFING, DIRECTING, COORDINATING, REPORTING and BUDGETING. Administrative organizations on the other part is directed at facilitating efficient work relations, hitch-free and effective work process governed by certain bureaucratic principles that exhibits a

centralized authority and hierarchically coordinated process.¹⁵ It starts from the lines of operation to the functions of office and its relevance to the organization. Administrative practice expects activities to be coordinated and to follow approving and reporting lines within each group of operations through the chains of command and unity of purpose where status and seniority interchangeably correlates.¹⁶ This is because each Staff within each arm of administration must work together under supervision of Schedule/Reporting Officers, Desk/Sectional/Unit Supervisors, Superior Officers, Heads of Units/ Departments/Divisions and the Principal Officers, in order to achieve harmonious and well organized administration.¹⁷

Administrative Officers are guided by specific regulations, conditions of service and other rules of work activity with reference to division of labour, departmentalization and work specialization within defined territories/directorates so as to appreciate the use of reporting lines to harmonize administrative work process. Administrative practice requires that where Division or Directorate (*intermediate or coordinating office*) exist between a Unit (*lower or specialized office*) and a highest office (*Department or Ministry*), the Officers of each Unit, irrespective of their status or responsibility should report through intermediate or coordinating lines to Chief Administrative Officer on administrative issues.

A good rider is this fact is that the Registrar is the (**Head of Department of Registry in the University**) and the Chief Administrative Officer of the University responsible to the Vice-Chancellor for the administration in the various arms, except in financial matters. The role of the Registrar as the Head of Department of the Registry does not remove the fact that the Registry is divided into different arms for work specialization, operational activities and coordination since the University consists of different offices.¹⁸

The Heads of Department (*in charge of Administration*) in each Unit or Division of the Registry are referred to as Heads of Department within each Department or Unit, though each of them report to the Registrar while observing and applying the governance of the Directorate System to their work process as adopted in the case of Ekiti State University,

¹⁵ Babatola, J.E.T. Memo of the College Secretary on College Administration and Linkages with Faculties addressed to all Faculty Officers in the College of Medicine, Ekiti State University, Ado-Ekiti in July, 2014

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Ibid.

Ado-Ekiti. For instance, the Director (Council & Gen. Admin.), Director (Academic Affairs) and Director (Personnel) are expected under the Registrar to oversee specific Divisions/Units and to be assisted by Administrative Officers in the Directorates who are designated as either Heads of Departments/Units or Schedule Officers in their various beats. Programme Secretaries and Faculty Officers in the institutional arms (*Colleges, Faculties, Schools, Directorates and Academic Programmes of the University*) ordinarily reports to Registrar as the most Senior Administrative Officer in their Faculties while assisting the Provosts/Deans/Directors in administrative matters and in servicing the respective Boards. None of these Administrative Officers irrespective of their posting are not independent of the Registrar neither should they fail to report to the Head of their institutional arms in observing the reporting lines that guides their operational activities.¹⁹

Suffice is the attendant implication where Heads of Department in administrative units of the Registry reports through their Directors to the Registrar on administrative matters despite their autonomy or work specialization. A pointer to this fact is replicated in the University by extant practice as follows:

- a. Deputy Registrar (Admissions) - *Admissions Officer*, Principal Assistant Registrar (Senate and Academic Affairs) and Principal Assistant Registrar (Examinations and Records) reports through Director (Academic Affairs) to the Registrar on administrative matters.
- b. Principal Assistant Registrar (General Administration); Principal Assistant Registrar (Council Affairs) and Principal Assistant Registrar (Management Services) reports through Director (Council Affairs) to the Registrar on administrative matters.
- c. Principal Assistant Registrar (Establishment Academic) and Principal Assistant Registrar (Establishment Non-Teaching) reports through Director (Personnel) to the Registrar on administrative matters.
- d. Principal Assistant Registrar (Student Affairs) – *Students Affairs Officer* - reports to the Registrar on administrative matters and to Vice Chancellor through Dean (Students) on students' matters.

¹⁹ Ibid.

- e. College Secretary in the Collegiate System reports directly to the Registrar on administrative matters and assist the Provost in College administration, while coordinating the College administration and services.
- f. Faculty Officers within the Collegiate System reports through the College Secretary to the Registrar on administrative matters and assist their Deans in Faculty administration and servicing of the Faculty Board.
- g. Programme Secretaries and Faculty Officers outside the Collegiate System reports directly to the Registrar on administrative matters and assist their Deans in Faculty administration and servicing of the Faculty Board.

Administration is coordinated (unified), whether in a centralized or decentralized atmosphere since administrative units are expected to work together, so that the centre can hold its reins.²⁰ If the College administration is bypassed by the Faculty administration in the same College, then administration at the College is of no relevance and would collapse. Another good point of reference here is to use the position of the Registrar as an example. For instance, the Registrar serves as the Secretary of Council, Congregation and Convocation; though the writing of minutes of such meetings is coordinated by Director (Council Affairs) just as Director (Academic Affairs) does same in Senate, despite their status as Other Officers of the University. The Registrar must keep the Vice-Chancellor well informed on all university matters including secretariat services of the Governing Council where the Pro-Chancellor is the Chairman as well as the Convocation where the President is the Chancellor, though the Vice-Chancellor is not chairman in both cases.

In effect, the role of all Administrative Officers is to support Registrar within the Administrative Structure and Directorate system, irrespective of their posting and to keep their immediate superior well informed of their activities.²¹ Even when Committees and panels of ad-hoc nature are set up in the University, the Registrar determines the secretaryship by devolving it on Administrative Staff. Hence, the role of the Registrar is enormous at the University level. At the administrative Directorates, the Directors perform similar roles while College Secretary will perform in same manner in the College. This also relates to the role of Faculty Officers in coordinating departmental activities in Universities where

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ Ibid.

Administrative or Executive Officers are designated as Departmental Secretaries of various academic departments in their Faculties.²²

In the case of a College, the reporting line becomes more elaborate and extended due to administrative expediency just as the Directorate system is a bridge gap between the Registrar and the Divisions of the Registry.²³ Faculty Officers posted to the College are not only responsible to their Deans, but they are also responsible to the Registrar through the College of Medicine that houses their Faculties as arms or schools of the College. To this end, the only means of ensuring that the College Administration is harmonised, effective and properly coordinated is to ensure that the Registry in the College including all its Administrative Officers in the various Faculties are properly coordinated and informed to work together towards meeting the needs and objectives of the College. For any avoidance of doubt, Faculty Officers in the College are expected to assist and report to their Dean on Faculty matters and to also assist and report to the Registrar through the College Secretary on administrative matters. This is owing to the College status and the structure of College administration.²⁴

In the College, the role of College Secretary as Secretary to Court of Governors, Finance and General Purpose Committee etc as stipulated by College Statutes, does not imply that he/she would service meetings alone or draft the minutes. Rather, it is an enormous responsibility that requires participation of all Administrative Staff in the College because they are part of the college administration headed by the College Secretary (*who reports to the Provost except in financial matters*).²⁵ Faculty Officers in the College are required to apply administrative principles to their job with respect to observing reporting lines in their work process, because their jobs are part of the College administration which should be properly coordinated as it affects the Faculties in the College and decision making in the College administrative structure.²⁶

Faculty Officers are part of College Secretariat since Faculties of the College cannot operate in isolation of it. Hence, they cannot exist or work unilaterally without reference to

²² Ibid.

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ Ibid.

College Secretariat on administrative matters in the College or as autonomous despite their co-equal status with other Faculties in the University. They will be required to assist in servicing committees of the College in ensuring that college activities are harmonized and do not run counter to College Statutes guiding their operations and administration.²⁷ Hence, the need to implore all administrative staff in the College whether in the Faculties or the college secretariat to report to the College Secretary on college matters and participate in the committee system of the College which will naturally affects their operational activities and management at collegiate and University level.²⁸

Faculty Officers in a collegiate system should understand that the nature of their functions and activities in relation to the College is different from what Faculty Officers could hold outside the Collegiate System. It is important for them to work out their task through cooperation and understanding of what the collegiate system requires for operational efficiency and effective administrative management. By implication, Faculty Officers of the College remains part of the hub of College Administration playing significant roles and handling specific responsibilities within the Collegiate System particularly when required to:

- a. Represent the College Secretary at meetings or functions of the College
- b. Service specific ad-hoc Committee(s) of the College including assisting College Secretariat in minutes writing, processing of notice of meetings and conveying decisions of meetings as directed
- c. Participate in meetings as members of the College Secretariat. *(Note that Faculty Officers, Programme Secretaries and selected Administrative Officers attend University meetings i.e. Senate to assist the Registrar. They also attend such meetings to be properly informed, guided and engaged in University policy activity and processes as Registry Staff, even if they do not have specific functions to carry out. By administrative practice, even when Registrar or Head of Department in Administration serves as Secretary of a Committee, it is the Officers assigned to a Department, Unit or Directorate that service his meetings).*

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ Ibid.

My Practical Experience: A Case Study of Collegiate System at Ekiti State University

In 2014, I was deployed to the College of Medicine of Ekiti State University, Ado-Ekiti as the College Secretary (*while I was a Principal Assistant Registrar*). The short period of my posting to the College afforded me the opportunity of encountering the challenges involved in the administration of the Collegiate Structure in the University system. Indeed, I came into the realities and stark nakedness of the politics of running of Collegiate System alongside a University system. A critical aspect of the issues involved is the crux of management of the higher education sector wherever there are existence of any struggle for autonomy of a College and the administrative dynamics that surrounds it.

In the case of the College of Medicine, the laws of the University envisaged the creation of Colleges, Faculties and Institutes as may be recommended by the Senate while the Council will give concurrence in policy matters and finance among others. Moreover, the 2008 Statutes of Ekiti State University (EKSU) College of Medicine and the White Paper on the Report of 2009 Visitation Panel to the University expected the College of Medicine to exercise a degree of autonomy in the running of its affairs. However, the enabling Laws of the University gave no specific latitude to the management of any College to the exception of the Council, the Senate and the Principal Officers of the University.²⁹

The powers of the College by Statutes were subsumed by Laws of the University as all powers derived from one subset of a whole cannot be more than the whole. Any exercise of powers without concurrence to existing laws and traditions of the University may be invalid or invalidated to the extent of its inconsistency or inoperativeness. The implication of the above is that all powers conferred on the Provost of the College and its Management were subject to control and censure of the Vice-Chancellor, being the Chief Academic and Executive Officer of the University, of which the College is a part and parcel.³⁰

Beyond these laws and regulations exists other ideals and models for operating the collegiate system in the Nigeria University system. These were derived from the National Universities Commission (NUC) circulars and the Medical and Dental Council of Nigeria (MDCN) Accreditation requirements for the running of Colleges of Medicine.³¹ Hence, the

²⁹ Esan, GJF (Professor), Provost, College of Medicine, Ekiti State University, Ado-Ekiti, October, 2014.

³⁰ Akinleye, I.O., Deputy Registrar, Ekiti State University, Ado-Ekiti, November, 2015.

³¹ Araoye, Mathew (Emeritus Professor), Provost, College of Medicine, Ekiti State University, Ado-Ekiti, July, 2014.

persistent demand of the then Provost to reel out NUC circulars and MDCN directives for adoption of appropriate models in the implementation of Collegiate System as existent in some Colleges of Medicine. No doubt, the nature of medical profession and criteria governing the management of Medical School made it imperative for a College of Medicine to run seemingly parallel organization structure with the University for the purpose of superintending and controlling its profession, and in providing leadership and curricular direction like what obtains in conventional system, where powers resides in the Vice-Chancellor and the Senate.³² Moreover, the role of Medical School as a specialized institution compels the need for it to operate a high degree of autonomy separate from what is experienced among other academic disciplines in the University system.

Nonetheless, the funding and administration of the Medical School were it does not have a separate budget or line charge from the proprietor (the government) and under the control of the Vice-Chancellor and the Council leaves much to be desired other than for the mother institution – the University to be more instructive, assertive and interested in its building process to ensure that who pays the piper dictates the tune.³³ The struggle for institutionalizing the ideals and injection of the realities often breeds suspicion and near usurpation of powers, if not checked or properly addressed.

The budget and day to day needs of the College may be very high in comparison with the University's income and what is allocated to other Faculties in terms of the personnel cost and overheads. The College is a major fund sucker with limited potentials for income generation or financial returns to the University. The Ekiti State University Teaching Hospital (EKSUTH) operates under a separate Governing Board supervised by Ekiti State Ministry of Health and members of the College are largely EKSUTH clinicians and consultants. The University desire to admit medical students and produce medical personnel was a major motivation for creating the College, yet it was undesirable for the University to lose control of the College from its grip.

As the College Secretary, I needed to find a proper direction in ensuring a hitch free and effective College administration and the process of reporting and coordinating Registry activities in the College. I was forced to make two separate visits to the Registrar and

³² Ibid.

³³ Akinleye, I.O., Deputy Registrar, Ekiti State University, Ado-Ekiti, November, 2015.

another visit to the Director of Personnel for either clarifications or updating of my challenges. Each situation met either resistance or less cooperative attitude and understanding of my predicaments. The Vice-Chancellor was unapproachable too either to state the facts of the case or to secure his personal assurances in order to avoid breaking the ranks or by-passing the administrative hierarchy. Moreover, I was working with an elderly man, a world-class Medical Teacher and highly influential personality who is an EMERITUS PROFESSOR!

I was therefore at a crossroad between joining forces with the University to build a faculty run-Collegiate system or to follow the Provost behind in building his ideal College of Medicine in line with his propagation. To run an administrative system that secures existing University traditions, would limit the degree of authority and autonomy exercisable by a College as envisaged by the then College Statutes. I therefore tried initially to give advice to the Provost in line with expectations of the University Management whenever I have the opportunity to do so and whenever he sounds me out. I always made sure to advise him to liaise with the Vice-Chancellor and the Registrar and to carry his Deans along so that he could have a hitch-free administration. However, he was always very insistent on his views about Collegiate system and the need for the College to engage the Visitor and other stakeholders of the University directly in order to attract adequate attention to the College for the quick development and expansion of the College in securing its accreditation as a world standard Medical School and in running it rightly.

A major set-back for the Provost however came from the way and manner in which he takes certain decisions or address memos to his colleagues, particularly the Dean of the Basic Medical Sciences who feels that he's equal to the Provost since they were both brilliant Professors of many years of academic standing in their fields of specialization before they retired to take the contract job. To stand against each other and to propound theories may cause headaches for others, but it had no meaning to either as they both decided to stand their grounds until they leave the system or was relieved of same. They were both pensioners already. Nonetheless, other Deans often comments that democratic tenets of the collegiate system are being set aside, absent or abused in the way and manner

that issues were handled on several matters without due and proper consultations or due to the way and manner authority was exercised in the college affairs.

Indeed, the Provost believes that the leadership of the College belongs to medical practitioners while other medical scientist in the college are academic subordinates, which those in the non-clinical sciences regard as insult, since the basis of medicine starts in Basic Medical Sciences. On a personal note, both the Provost and the Dean in question were age-mates, classmates in high school and one of the most brilliant members of their set in high school and the university. One of them specialised in Medicine while the other in Physiology. The overall experience was that the College administration became a tent pitched against itself on one side and against the University Management on the other, just as Provost of the College neither trusts his academic and non-teaching subordinates. Only those who were ready to stick out their necks with him to accomplish the type of collegiate system that he advocated for the College of Medicine in the University were his partners.

Observations

In the adoption of collegiate system and its implementation process as the nitty-gritty for the decentralization of powers in the University system, the University is bound to address and cater for its diverse and specific academic specializations while building enduring management dynamics around it. To therefore misconstrue the purpose that it serves is not only to truncate the entire concept of collegiate system, but to make its practicability antithetical, inconceivable and controversial in institutional management. Notwithstanding the failures of a dwindling tradition often unnoticed in the University system, a gradual assimilation of the culture of centralization of power would result to developing a new culture of impunity, intolerance or high-handedness. This would gradually lead the University organization and policy process far away from its basic tenets of driving at institutional autonomy and committee democracy as it ebbs away from the original intent and goal of attaining efficient and total quality management as a benchmark for world class standards and academic references.

In performing my roles as a College Secretary, I could easily deduce the following facts from the mental approach and behavioural attitude of the then Vice-Chancellor and his Registrar. Both of them were neither medical practitioners/professionals well informed

about running typical collegiate system required by a College of Medicine as anticipated by the then Provost. The Principal Officers were neither experts/specialists or knowledgeable in the field of public administration beyond the experience they garnered over the years in different positions as Provost of a College running a Faculty System or as Registry official heading certain Faculties, Division or Directorates. However, the way and manner they wanted the College to run was certainly different from the way the Provost wanted the College to run as anticipated in the laws of the College which he was one of the craftsmen.

It was clear therefore from the interactions, the body language and official policy statements of the Management that the College of Medicine was not only an appendage of the University, but it was regarded as a mere combination of multi-faceted Faculties or specialized medical science programmes elevated to special status with decorated leadership main their affairs with access to the Vice-Chancellor and its Management. The College was never seen as an autonomous arm of the University more than any other Faculty. It was just a super-structure of an enhanced Faculty system operating without any need for a special warrant or exercise of powers of a collegiate autonomy as granted by its secondary laws.

To the University Management, any attempt to give special attention to the College or to grant it collegiate autonomy that would either affect the University Management or the role of its Principal Officers and the tradition of its order of precedence, which to them is an aberration. It was even an effrontery on authority of the Vice-Chancellor or his subordinates (Registrar, Bursar and University Librarian) to equate or superimpose the Provost on any of them or for the Provost to supervise the non-teaching staff redeployed to the College contrary to existing regulations of the University. Such an attempt to give collegiate autonomy would rock the boat of the University governance, which should be checked and clipped in wings before it festers out of control.

Moreover, the pioneering Provost who headed the College was never assertive or demanding unlike the new Provost since he came from retirement to do the job. He rather saw the job as a mere daily body exercise for which he finds no imperative to seek for a special attention or drive home the desire for autonomy and the basic needs of the College in diverting University investments to building its structures or in acquiring powers to recruit staff or purchase equipments.

When the new Provost therefore began to seek for special status as envisaged by the College statutes, the University - the duo of its Principal Officers expects the College to remain an extension of the University with an enhanced administrative structure to coordinate the group of specialized Faculties/departments that forms the College without any special attention or authority. Hence, the Management was not warm to a collegiate autonomy, owing to the fact that such attempt would truncate the practicality of University traditions that many have been used to, for over three decades.

The new Provost of the College who was an Emeritus Professor of Medicine (*a highly respected Teacher in clinical sciences and a reputable Administrator of Medicine*) insisted on the need to operate as a viable collegiate system and he continuously agitated for the college autonomy. He was persistent through his personal statements at high policy making meetings and by his numerous writings to the Proprietor, the Council, the Vice-Chancellor, the Registrar and the University Management to demand for budgetary allocation and measures of financial control, extensive control over administrative matters and personnel management. He also insisted on the reordering of the arrangement for protocols and recognition of University officials at ceremonies and public functions and even in the direct control and day to day running of the College including the Faculties without direct reference to the University. This made the University gradually hostile to the College administration.

The unfortunate aspect of these developments was that the Provost was often very critical and unaccommodating of any steps taken by his subordinates whether it is a Dean, a Head of Department, College Secretary and other non-teaching officials, once it tends to negate his official expectations and personal standards of a collegiate system. All letters of request and recommendations were expected to pass through him and any failure to properly appropriate a position of Chief Executive to him in the College was met with stiff opposition and retaliations. He will always find opportunity or room to mention it and to criticise the persons involved without any concurrence of a previous private interactions or opportunity for an explanation and proper resolution of the issue.

Simultaneously, the Provost rather saw the College as truly transforming into a Collegiate System where he can act without recourse to the Vice-Chancellor or any other

Principal Officer, except as stipulated by the law with reference to the College Statutes, which is regarded as a secondary law in relation to University Law which is a primary law. He would often insist on adoption of the MDCN and NUC circulars as statutory guides for the administration of the Medical School as part of efforts to implement the collegiate system and professional requirements that must be sustained.

The outcome of these unfortunate developments resulted in the fact that the University Management took the following steps from year 2015 onward viz.

- a. The University through the Senate and Council gradually redefined its Collegiate System as envisaged and required by the University administration, irrespective of any NUC circulars or MDCN correspondence.
- b. The University upgraded the School of Postgraduate Studies into a College and the creation of the office of the Provost and Deputy Provost for the College to rank *pari pasu* with the Provost of the College of Medicine.
- c. The University used the same strategy to raise the status of the new College above those of College of Medicine which is an undergraduate medical school, while the new college handles postgraduate studies.
- d. The University reduced giving preference or special attention to the demands of the College of Medicine while the bickering arising from the status of a College Provost in relation to some Principal Officers was successfully discountenanced.
- e. Similarly, the University brought the tenure of the then Provost to an end at the expiration of his engagement as dictated by his letter of appointment as against the dictates of the University law.
- f. Gradually, all the old brigades were disengaged on contract appointments in the College were disengaged and relative peace returned to the College administration.
- g. A younger and more amenable competent medical expert and teacher was appointed as the new Provost of the College of Medicine to keep the flag flying in getting the college accreditation process addressed as and when appropriate.

Nonetheless, the expansion and development of the College infrastructure as well as the elaborate administrative system slowed down gradually and near to a halt.

Recommendations

There is an urgent need to therefore undertake a holistic appraisal of the roles, aims and objectives of various institutional organizations and administrative units in the University's colleges and campuses, Faculties and Schools, Institutes, Departments and academic programmes. This is essential in order for University managers to have a better grasp of issues of institutional management and administrative practice.

Thoughts and idea sharing usually form the basic ingredients of knowledge transformation and appreciation in studying the policy formulation processes and building administrative practice relevant to most modern organizations, of which the University system is no exception. Moreover, it would help institutional managers to understand and adopt a better premise of options and processes for handling the management and administration of Universities by allowing the use of autonomy as a form of decentralization of power in the University system to give room for participatory governance and accountability with existence and growth of collegiate system, campuses and academic programmes, wherever they exist.

The collegiate system adopted by each university would be determined by its fiscal resources and capacity to accommodate an extensive and specialized institutional structure. Budgetary allocation and fund release can still be under the Vice-Chancellor with a Provost being the source of request and monitoring of its utilization, even if the University is not ready to give fiscal autonomy to the College. Nonetheless, it need to be reemphasised here that the actual goals of cherished University traditions are founded on democratic tenets and Committee system aided by egalitarian and participatory democratic culture, objectivity and rationality, academic discipline and expertise, universality and ideal compromises, the gradual ebbing away of these ethos often promotes cabbalism and mob democracy.

This leads us to ask some pertinent questions. One of such is that, what could have influenced the departure of the University from an ideal arrangement for sustainable organization that can make a University system enviable in power sharing and decision making like a collegiate system? Are there no Regions/States/Provinces in a federating system to solidify a federating state just as academic discipline and professions are different and with varieties of professional benchmark and academic objectives? Should the

Universities run like unitary states where the Faculties/Institutes/Programmes are pooled together like Local Government systems with their Academic Departments functioning more or less like units of a Local Government system?

The answers are left for stakeholders in the University system. An acceptable tradition in one clime could be a poison in another. University culture differs. Yet a well managed University can be sustained through providing proper and affordable structures with open access to administration for decision making and in an atmosphere that is not gagged to leave room for doubt and suspicion. Leadership is developed by mentoring and accessibility and not be competition and self-adulation, which is common in our clime.

It is therefore necessary to recommend that:

- a. Each University has the right/powers to determine the type of collegiate system which it could afford/run. It is obvious that an extensive collegiate system would be very expensive and difficult to run if there are no separate financial grants and budgetary lines to run such mini university within the university system.
- b. The University administration should be mindful of the features of a collegiate system and what is demanded for the accreditation of a College i.e. a College of Medicine before diverting its investment into such enterprise to attract expertise and students to it. The College would gulp more than return in fiscal terms, even if it would contribute positively to public life and the nation at large.
- c. In case of other colleges that exist in separate location as campuses, the university should understand that a measure of financial and administrative autonomy ought to be granted in such collegiate system since the colleges are not existing within the same campus and there would be need for effective management, academic leadership and policy directions for such colleges to run and retain its viable structures, staffing and students like a conventional institution.
- d. For a specialized College like a College of Medicine or a College of Technology, there is an urgent need to advocate for a percentage of the budget of the main University to be dedicated to its running and development in order to fulfil its professional and academic requirements, irrespective of the degree of autonomy granted to it.

Conclusion

As the College Secretary and a professional University administrator deployed to undertake the provision of support services to the Provost of the College (*being a Principal Assistant Registrar, due for appointment as a Deputy Registrar*), I was in a great dilemma/predicament that requires caution and exercise of care since I never wish to flout, disobey/contravene University laws (*whether primary or secondary laws or to incur the wrath of the Principal Officers by disobeying their unwritten codes or dictates*). However, it was also my responsibility to ensure that administrative process and practices by carrying out legitimate functions of my office in reporting to the Provost as the Chief Executive of the College as stipulated by the College Statutes.

A specific responsibility demanded of me as dictated by the College Statutes in line with the University laws/tradition is to perform my schedule of duties (job description). During the period of my posting as a College Secretary, I made every effort to comply with these dictates towards making all stakeholders to appreciate my role as a loyal subordinate attempting to midwife a harmonious and peaceful relationship. Even, in instances where the Provost, a Dean, a Director or a Faculty Officer attempted to put me in uncomfortable situation before the University management, I kept my head under waters and explained myself when called upon to do so, even when I had no reason to fret or answer queries in my own best knowledge of University tradition and administrative practice.

I did not work outside the schedule of duty of my office as a College Secretary, irrespective of any interpretation that may have been adduced to actions or the intent of my work activity by some of my superiors or colleagues who have other motives or perspectives about HEI administration. In the end, I was posted out of the college to a Faculty where I continue to serve the University. In every aspect of University administrations, professional administrators will continue to grow with the system and avoid being made a centre of controversy or object of Management or policy makers' discontentment. Where that is unavoidable, the professional administrators would do his best to be able to escape any censure or unnecessary name calling, in the end of the line of duty.

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ADDENDUM:

TYPICAL SCHEDULE OF A COLLEGE SECRETARY (COLLEGE OF MEDICINE)

- a. Reporting to Registrar as the College Secretary
- b. Responsible to the Provost for the day to day effective control and administration of the College.
- c. Serving as Secretary to the Court of Governors and other standing Committees of the College.
- d. Serving as member of statutory Committees of the College namely: Junior Staff (Appointments and Promotions) Committee, Physical Planning and Development Committee and the Appointments and Promotions Committee
- e. Providing secretariat services and administrative support to College Committees namely: Top Management Committee, College Accreditation Planning Committee, Curriculum Committee, Evaluation Committee, Research and Ethics Committee, Admissions Committee, COBES Committee, Medical Education Resources (MERU) Committee and College Prospectus Committee
- f. Providing administrative and support services for staff, students' welfare, research and training.
- g. Ensuring the custody and retrieval of all records of the College
- h. Observing University regulations (including College Statue) as required.
- i. Guiding Committees and the Provost on University administrative matters.
- j. Supervising non-teaching staff in the College
- k. Monitoring requisition and use of office materials, stationery, equipment, furniture.
- l. Assisting in the processing of College admission and examination of students.
- m. Attending Senate meetings to observe proceedings and take note of academic policies and other College matters
- n. Facilitating the meeting of Academic Assembly of the College for the preparation of accreditation exercise by MDCN and NUC respectively.
- o. Facilitating the conduct of the election of a new Provost for the College of Medicine and the election of new Deans of Faculties in the College presided over by the Vice-Chancellor and the Provost respectively