
Introduction and Background

Women leadership in higher education has been implicated as imperative and alternative in the development of higher education in Nigeria (Akudo and Okenwa 2015). Women are virtually absent from leadership positions in Nigerian universities. The absence of women leaders in Nigerian universities is a result of the patriarchal values and practices in the larger society which Nigerian universities have imbibed. These patriarchal tendencies manifest in teaching, learning and aspirations for leadership positions. In the hidden curriculum, Mejuini (2013) pointed out that the nature of education received in higher education can even dis-empower women and that a combination of this learning process, religion and other socializations determine who women eventually become. Moreover, the micro-politics (networking, coalitions and other informal interactions) in higher education tend to exclude women (Morley 2006). Consequently, many senior academic women do not even think of vying for leadership positions. This is in addition to the fact that women are under-represented in enrolment, employment and decision-making in the universities (Afonja 2002). With this low level of representation, it is difficult for women to attain leadership positions in universities. The situation in the university is akin to what obtains in the larger society.

Historically, women were not socialized to become leaders at any point in their lives and women were not only perceived as inferior but are marginalized and are denied equal opportunity (Nwosu 2012). Leadership positions and other public spaces are the prerogative of men. Generally, the prevailing division of labour between the sexes has led to men and women assuming unequal positions in terms of power, prestige and wealth (Ogene 2011). In pre-colonial Nigeria, there were pockets of women such as Amina of Zaria and Moremi of Ile-Ife but these women were regarded as exceptional and extraordinary. As such, they were not regarded as normal because normal women are meant to be at home taking care of the children and husbands' needs (Nwosu 2012). As noted by Bier (1968 cited in Abduraheem 1996), under the customary law, women were generally regarded as beasts of burden: hewers of wood, carriers of water and baby making machines. It

was their childbearing that won them the closest attachment to their husbands. During the colonial dispensation, the Nigerian patriarchal tendencies then mingled with the stiffer patriarchal tendencies of the colonial administrators to edge Nigerian women completely out of public spaces. After independence in 1960, the Nigerians that took over from the colonial administrators continued in the same stead in both army and civilian regimes. This same tendency was carried into education, particularly at the university level as this space was meant for males. Subsequently, women were absent in Nigerian universities. When women entered the education space as students, they were mainly found in education and nursing; an extension of what they did at home (Muoghalu 2004). In the same vein, when women entered the university workforce, they were mainly typists and clerks (Afinja 2002).

In 1962 when Obafemi Awolowo University (OAU) was established, the workforce was mainly men. Eventually, the university felt the need to stabilize their staff to reduce the attrition rate. The university did this by employing the wives of staff who were privileged to have an education. These women were employed as clerks, typists, executive officers, assistant administrators and bursary officers. Since 1962, there has not been any female vice chancellor in OAU owing to the patriarchal nature of the university. As documented by Afonja (2002), women are missing in every facet of the university; in terms of enrolment, employment and decision-making. This has made women voiceless in the university. The focus here is on women and the difference it can make if they are brought into university leadership.

There are very few women in the professorial cadre making it difficult for women to have a critical mass from which to catapult themselves into leadership positions in Nigerian universities. It is noteworthy that there is no law that exclude women from the university space in Nigeria, however, there are unpronounced discriminations that tend to edge out women from university space Morley (2006). In the hidden transcript, Morley (2006), described the subtle discriminatory practices against women in higher educational institutions such as not nominating women to head committees, holding nocturnal meetings to select leaders, taking decisions in the staff club when women are at home cooking and looking after the children, not projecting the good academic achievements of women instead such women are given names that will discourage other women and unethical remarks. In-fact, a male colleague once told me that it was greed that troubled those of us who were both wives and lecturers. He believed that we should be contented and satisfied with having husbands and children and nothing more.

Importantly, OAU is the first Nigerian university to have a gender policy in place. However, the presence of this policy has not resulted in women occupying leadership positions in the University. The gender policy is a reformatory tool

but it has failed to bring about any transformation in the University in terms of women in leadership in the University. An indication that the University is paying lip service to the issue of gender equity. The absence of women in leadership positions in Nigerian universities provided a framework for this study. The study proposed that the absence of women leadership in the university resulted in the incessant crises in many universities.

At this juncture, it is important to identify the important positions that constitute the leadership of universities. These positions include the Pro-Chancellor, Vice Chancellor, the Deputy Vice chancellors (academic and administrative), the Registrar and the Bursar. These positions are achieved through elections and appointments. Interestingly, there is no written law that prevents women from attaining these positions. However, the hidden transcript and the hidden curriculum operates and debars women from attaining these positions. The fact that university leadership consists of mainly men is an indication that it is one model of leadership that is being used to administer these universities. This makes women's leadership in these universities imperative.

Table 1.1: Principal officers in four federal universities in South west Nigeria

University	Vice Chancellor	DVC Academic	DVC Administration	Registrar	Bursar
Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife	Male	Male	Male	Male	Female
University of Ibadan	Male	Female	Male	Male	Male
Federal University, OyeEkiti	Male	Male	Male	Male	Male
Federal University of technology, Akure	Male	Male	Male	Female	Male

Source: Muoghalu 2016.

The information in Table 1.1 was generated from the planning and budgeting units of the various universities. This has substantiated the claim that university leadership is still the domain of men. In OAU, the per centage of females in academia is 18 per cent and in University of Ibadan, females also constitute 18 per cent of those in academia (OAU Budgeting Unit (2016). As such, women in university leadership remains tokenistic, sometimes by chance and sometimes by hard work. The fact is that those cultural factors that debar women from university management in the 1960s are still there in 2017. For instance, a respondent in a study by Eboiyehi *et al.* (2016) said:

Here, women are under-represented in senior management positions, out of the four principal officers, none is a woman. There is no female provost, no female

dean, and no female director except one female HOD in the faculty of education. If women are put in such sensitive position[s], they will not perform. Some of them reject such positions because they feel such positions are meant for men. This may be due to the way society socializes male and female children (Eboiyehi *et al.* 2016:192).

Also, in the same study another male respondent indicated that

There are many obstacles working against women's career advancement in the university. The major one is the socio-cultural belief that men are born leaders and women are their subordinates. This is why most women shy away from leadership positions. Furthermore, no one wants to work under a woman (Eboiyehi *et al.* 2016:192).

There is a need to explore the injecting of women into leadership of Nigerian universities. This generated the research interest to examine the stakeholders view of the question: Can women make a difference. It is believed that female leadership of universities can make a positive difference and reduce crises.

Over the years especially in recent times, leadership in Nigerian universities has been contending with crises. There are one hundred and twenty-four universities in Nigeria (Ogunraku) and most of these institutions have had crisis of one sort or the other. To give an idea of the magnitude of the problem, many of these universities have student population of 40, 000. One can then imagine the number of lives and the quantity of properties that are destroyed whenever there is a crisis. These crises are usually in the form of student riots and strike actions by staff. They often result in the closure of universities and the low quality of education and graduates. The problem of governance which Nigerians encounter in the wider society to some extent filters into university leadership.

The crises in Nigerian universities have made it almost impossible for these institutions to achieve their objectives (producing quality graduates, research, and academic excellence for development of Nigeria) and reach their full potentials. Crises in Nigerian universities mean the disruption of academic activities by student unrest/demonstrations or strike actions by the members of staff of Nigerian universities. University leadership is battling with these crises in the face of other pressures from within (the task of internally generated revenue) and outside (the global mandate to produce standard graduates that can compete effectively). However, it is believed that men's style of leadership which is autocratic, transactional and highhanded constitute a push to this problem. For instance, the University of Ilorin crisis that turned into a national crisis and the University of Port Harcourt crisis in August 2012 were all caused by autocratic leaderships. As such, bringing women as leaders in universities was proposed by this author as an alternative model. The leadership of women would make a difference and would result in attaining the desired change and bring about reduction in the incidents of crises in Nigerian universities. The leadership of

Professor Aize Obayan, former Vice-chancellor at Covenant University between 2005 and 2012 represents a model of female leadership and points to the fact that, if given the opportunity and an enabling environment women can actually make difference in leadership. When women are made Vice Chancellors, Deputy Vice Chancellors and Registrars of universities, they will bring their listening ears and participatory leadership qualities to bear on universities. It is believed that this model could bring the transformation necessary for Nigerian universities to achieve their objectives.

The situation in Nigerian universities is such that between 1995 and the present day, there is hardly any university among the one hundred and twenty-four universities in the country that has not had a serious crisis. This situation still holds true even now. Ajayi and Ayodele (2002) submitted that higher education in Nigeria is in travail, the system is riddled with crises of various dimensions and magnitude. Several problems have inhibited goal attainment and are raising questions, doubts and fears, all of which combine to suggest that the system is at the crossroads. The nature of these crises is diverse. It can take the form of demonstrations by staff or students, strikes by university staff, lock ups of university offices to debar others from working, write-ups in the form of leaflets and name calling and verbal and physical assaults on management personnel. Unrests could be between the university management and students, between academic or non-academic staff and university management. It could also be between the university administration or university staff/students and state or federal government of Nigeria. In fact, Alabi (2003) demonstrated that between 1995 and 2001, as much as 40 per cent of the crises in Nigerian universities were between the students/staff and federal government while the rest of the crises were between the students/staff and the university administration. For instance, between June and August, 2012, academic activities were paralyzed at OAU because of the strike action and antagonisms against university management by non-academic staff.

The crises prone nature of Nigerian universities reflects the challenges faced in the political and economic situations in Nigeria. The crises interlock with issues of globalization and the recent culture of materialism to create tension and conflict among stakeholders in tertiary education in Nigeria. Currently, there is revenue generation drive in universities which has resulted in increased school fees and increased cost of education for students and which has contributed to the crises in universities. Many factors and issues have been identified as the causes of these crises.

As per Sanda (1991), the goal of quality university education can be attained only when the following spheres have been satisfied: finances, students, academic programmes, committee systems, personnel, welfare, reward systems and physical facilities. Any lapse in any of these might lead to conflict. Furthermore, politics

on campus relating to appointments of key officers such as the Vice Chancellors can result in conflict (Alabi 2003). In fact, in August 2012, the academic staff union of Nigerian universities declared a nationwide strike action to sympathize with colleagues at the River State University of Technology who were on strike over the appointment of a new Vice Chancellor who they did not approve of. Additionally, funding of universities and curtailing the autonomy of the university constitute sources of conflict (Ekundayo and Ajayi 2009).

It is significant that much of these crises are caused by the government and the university leaderships. There are indications that many of these crises are caused by lack of amenities, welfare packages and highhandedness of the university leadership and the government (University of Ibadan-Guardian, April 29, 2012, Obafemi Awolow University – Guardian, November, 25, 2012). In Nigeria, there had been situations where students took to the streets due to lack of water and electricity, study facilities or an increase in school fees. Sometimes, when these students complained about these things, the response they got from the university management or government resulted in crises.

Many university properties have been damaged because of these crises. The lives of many students and staff have also been lost in such situations. In the face of serious protests, the university authorities usually bring in the police or army to quell the riots. The loss of lives result from police and soldiers shooting at protesters. The crises have escalated in recent times. In fact, in 2012 alone, there were several crises in these universities. There were crises in OAU, University of Ilorin, University of Port Harcourt, University of Lagos, Ebonyi State University, Abakaliki, Rivers State University of Science and Technology and many others. For instance, the most recent crisis in OAU (May to July 2016) was between the University staff and University management over non payment of arrears. The management insisted that there was no money to pay the workers' arrears and the workers insisted that there was money and accused the management of corruption. This resulted in demonstrations, disruptions in academic activities and attacks on some of the members of University management team. Also, the academic staff of Universities of the University of Ibadan is started an industrial action on 6 April 2017 over payment of half salaries instead of full salaries. In the same vein, the non academic staff of Federal University of Technology, Akure, Ondo State were on strike from December, 2016 untill mid-2017 over the Vice Chancellors corrupt practices. Thus, there is a high incidence of these crises in Nigeria universities and this disrupts the academic calendar and results in destruction of lives and properties. Alabi (2003), stated that conflict in universities usually results in the disruption of university programmes, boycotting of lectures, loss of lives and properties and the closing down of institutions. These activities have resulted in truncated academic programmes, leading to elongated university calendars. During these periods, academic activities are suspended, sometimes

for as long as a year. When the university reopens, the lecturers would struggle to finish their syllabus. This has serious implications for the quality of teaching and learning and often results in the low quality of education which produces half-baked graduates who do not have the skills to compete in the global labour market or carry out their duties without supervision.

Whatever the form of the crises, they are generally an indication that leadership in Nigerian universities needs to be revisited and re-engineered. According to Alabi (2003), though a university is an academic enterprise, consistent academic effectiveness rests on administrative machinery. Hence the management competencies of university managers greatly determine the severity of conflict within the university, whether internal or external. Leadership style can therefore determine, to some extent, the level of crisis in universities. Mgbekem (2007) suggested that university administration should avoid highhandedness. This style of leadership is associated with men.

In Nigerian universities, there have been several crises which can be attributed to highhandedness which had been men's leadership style. For instance, in August, 2012, the academic staff of Rivers State University of Science and Technology, Port Harcourt branch, went on strike to protest the imposition of Vice Chancellor, Professor Barikeme Faka, without consulting the staff and other stakeholders. That strike lasted for several weeks and the academic union members throughout the federation threatened to join their Port Harcourt counterparts in protest if the matter was not resolved amicably. In the process, the chairman of the branch's academic staff union of universities was manhandled by the university management and was hospitalized. The Academic Staff Union of Universities' (ASUU) lawyer, Barrister Ken Arsuete described this situation as barbaric. In the same vein, it was highhandedness that made University of Ilorin to fire more than 49 lecturers from the University for participating in a national strike embarked upon by the Academic Staff Union of Nigerian Universities (Agbonna, Yusuf and Onifade 2009). All the Academic Staff of Nigerian universities went on rampage. This generated a national crisis in which all the universities in Nigeria were shut down for eight months. To buttress my point, that it was a result of highhandedness, the supreme court of Nigeria later restored the lecturers' appointments and awarded damages to them. Also, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria witnessed serious crisis during the tenure of Professor Ango Abdulahi in 1986. In May, 2012, students of University of Lagos started a protest over the changing of the name of their University to Moshood Abiola University by the federal government without due consultation with stakeholders (Punch, 29 May 2012). During that same time, students of Adeyemi College of Education began destroying properties worth millions of dollars over the mysterious death of some staff and students of the institution (Guardian, 15 May 2012). These incidents and many more paint the picture of the situation in most Nigerian universities.

The federal government takes major decisions on how Nigerian universities are administered and their decisions and actions often infringe on the university autonomy. This often makes the university administrators, lecturers and students react negatively, thereby creating crises.

The Longe commission of enquiry reported on the actual uses and misuse of power by the visitor (the president of the Federal Republic of Nigeria), the relation between the state and the university, and the absence of a democratic culture even under civilian rule. Directives come from the visitor to the university council, thereby eroding the university autonomy and unnecessarily interfering in the affairs of the university often creating crises. As the leadership of impunity has been instituted at the wider society level, in the same way, it continues at the university level; as the visitor does things that he is not empowered by the law to do in the universities (for instance, imposing a new Vice Chancellor on a university against the wish of staff and students), so does the university management do to the committee system, thereby rendering the committees powerless. This neutralizes the checks and balances mechanism and the democratic principles which the committee system represents.

Furthermore, of great importance is the role of government in creating these crises. Many of the crises in Nigerian universities were caused by reactions to the government's unpopular policies and decisions. Friction between universities and government is also a factor. For instance, the federal government established the national university commission to oversee the activities of the universities in terms of regulation of academic programmes through accreditation, streamlining of the minimum qualification for academic staff, and regulation of the number of academic staff required by a department. Also, it is the government that pays university staff salaries and pensions and other benefits. As such, tensions and conflicts ensue between the government and the universities. Moreover, it is important to note that some of the crises were caused by government trying to curtail the autonomy of universities and ASUU usually resists this with all their power, also resulting in crises (Ojeifo 2014).

Also of great importance in the issue of crises in universities is statutes or legal instruments and structures of the university system. The leadership structures of these universities is made up of the Chancellor who is a ceremonial head, who only comes during convocation and other ceremonies, the Pro Chancellor who is usually the chairman of the council and is always there for the council to take important decisions. He is the employer of everybody in the university including the Vice Chancellor. The Vice Chancellor oversees the day to day operations of the university and delegates academic and administrative duties to the deputy Vice Chancellors, (academic and administrative), the Registrar takes care of all secretarial duties delegating duties to secretaries in the day to day running of the university. The Bursar oversees financial matters in the university and the Librarian

takes care of the library. All the people mentioned above are called the principal officers of the university. The University is governed through the committee system. The committee system is a strategy through which leadership in the university is democratized. There are different committees for different aspects of the university operation. For instance, there is, among other committees, an examination committee, a postgraduate committee, a ceremonial committee, and a disciplinary committee. The committee system makes it possible for power to be decentralized and ensures checks and balances. The committees use the university statutes as framework for every operation in the university including disciplinary actions against erring staff and students. However, like other forms of governance in Nigeria, there are times when Vice Chancellors and other senior management members disregard the statutes and the committees and do things with impunity even to the extent of disobeying court injunctions. This shows that university governance is not different from the politics of intimidation, thuggery and violence that obtains in the Nigerian political space. This has caused many crises in many Nigerian universities. In many of these situations, it had been an all men affair making it important to bring in women with the view that they would make a difference.

Women have been associated with leadership of enabling others to act in ways that offer a feasible solution to the crises in Nigerian universities (Akudo and Okenwa 2015). This brings in the issue of women and leadership in Nigerian universities. Firstly, there are very few female professors in these universities (Pereira 2002). This problem stems from the fact that throughout the Sub Saharan African region of which Nigeria is a part of, it took women several years to enter higher education. Kwesiga (2002) documented the long trek Ugandan women had to make before they entered higher education even at the student level. The same thing applies to women in most African countries including Nigeria. The same factors that debar women from entering as students also debar them from becoming leaders in higher education. The permeation of hegemonic patriarchal values into the university culture and administration has made it very difficult for women to be in leadership positions in these universities. At the time of my research, there was only one female Vice Chancellor in Nigeria. The vice chancellors of most universities in Nigeria have always been men, while women are relegated to the background.

The first female vice chancellor was Professor Grace Alele Williams who was the vice chancellor of University of Benin from 1985 to 1991. She was the first person to show that a woman can be a leader in a Nigerian university. Another female Vice chancellor was Professor Aize Obayan who became the Vice Chancellor of Covenant University, Ota in 2005 till 2012. Under her leadership, the university was crisis free and made tremendous progress. These two women's performances indicated that if given the opportunity of university leadership,

women can make a difference.

Writing on higher education in Nigeria, Pereira (2002) observed that much of the literature has focused on issues at institutional, societal and family levels, ignoring the very important contextual and systemic issues. This has affected how the business of gender equity is pursued. As Morley *et al.* (2001) states, gender equity is frequently reduced to strategies for transforming quantitative representation and participation rather than an engagement with processes, power and dominant values. They emphasise the point that women's lack of access to power in higher education is a result of dominant patriarchal values. Bringing women into leadership in higher education can be a starting point for both addressing gender and development issues and neutralizing the male style of power domination which they bring to bear on the leadership of Nigerian universities.

Relying on the political economy and feminist perspectives, I argue that crises in Nigerian universities are caused by men's autocratic leadership and government interventions. I suggest that bringing women into these leadership positions would make a difference because women's style of leadership, both accommodating and participatory in nature, would produce a neutralizing effect and reduce these crises. This study aims to answer the following research questions: What are the causes of crises in Nigerian universities and Can women make a difference? In the same vein, the main objective of this study is to examine crises in Nigerian universities and the potential role of women's leadership and their qualities in minimizing these crises. Therefore, the following objectives were pursued: to examine the incidence and extent of crises in Nigerian universities; to examine the causes of these crises; understand the role of federal government in these crises, to examine whether women leadership in these universities can bring the desired change, to identify the women's qualities that can bring about this difference, to examine the two Universities statutes and governance structures.

Conceptual/Theoretical and Methodological Orientations

The concept of leadership in Nigerian universities connotes people being at the helm of affairs to direct others and direct the affairs of the university. University leadership is not a one-person affair. It is a team work performed by the principal officers of the university which includes the pro-chancellor, the vice chancellor, the Deputy vice chancellors- academic and administration, the registrar, the bursar and the librarian. These people coordinate different aspects of university life while the Vice Chancellor coordinates all of them in the daily operations of the university. The Pro Chancellor is the overall boss and the chairman of the university council. Women's leadership in higher education, therefore, is the issue of seeing women occupy the above positions in Nigerian universities. In this study, the problem of female leadership of universities is looked at from the angle of the absence of women in higher education leadership. The study will show that

the explanations for this absence was located in feminism.

Feminism, as a theoretical framework, was employed in this study to illuminate the path through which women and leadership in higher education was examined. Examining women and higher education in Nigeria is located in the patriarchal gender relations which denies women access to education generally and higher education in particular. Permit me to use my personal experience to situate the absence of women in higher education management in its origin. This is significant because it is the lived experiences of females and education in Nigeria. When I was in primary two, my mother gave birth to another child. The family held a meeting and agreed that I should drop out of school to help carry the baby while my mother continued her business. I dropped out of school and looked after the baby for three years. By the time I went back to school, all my mates had become my seniors. However, this was not the problem, the problem was that many girls that dropped out the way I did never went back to school. More importantly, after primary six, my father felt I now had enough education and was ready to get married. Consequently, my father refused to pay for my common entrance examination. At this point, my teacher, Barster Ben Muoghalu, (my teachers real name with his permission) played a significant role in my life. He paid for my common entrance examination. As such, women's absence in higher education management started from absence in primary, secondary and then to university. The higher the level of education, the fewer the women. This explains the pyramid being the global symbol for women.

In-fact, women's access to higher education in Nigerian is akin to Kwesiga's (2002) description of the trek Ugandan women had to make before they had access to higher education. As women entered higher education in Nigeria, they were confronted with exclusions, marginalization and intimidation. In a study of the University of Ibadan, Odejide *et al.* (2006) concluded that while gender is not explicit in the University agenda, university life is a gendered experience. The same thing applies to OAU. Acker (2012) reached similar conclusions that every aspect of university life is gendered. Though this gendered nature of universities is not written, it is very powerful and tends to determine women's lived experiences in higher education. Importantly, this gendered nature of universities did not begin at the leadership level. It generally starts from the first day a female enters the university as a student. Indeed, Odejide *et al.* (2013) captured the situation as they noted that while Nigerian society recognizes that higher education is the surest way to attain social mobility, it is also wary of the de-traditionalizing effect of further education on female staff and students. Mejuini (Mejuini is the surname) hidden curriculum (2013) is very relevant here as it explains the dis-empowering nature of the teaching/learning process and other forms of socialization that tend to exert influence on women's lives in the university. During the teaching process, the teacher gives more encouragement to males to answer questions and

express themselves over females and most class representatives are males. Also, the teaching itself sometimes, in subtle ways, borders on sex roles and what is expected of a good woman. All these combine to make many female students withdraw from active roles in (higher) education.

Liberal feminists have long argued for equal participation of women in public spaces (Ray 2012). This equal participation eludes women in higher education, particularly higher education leadership in Nigeria in general, and OAU and UI in particular, which at the time of my research, had not had a female Vice Chancellor since its inception in 1962. The scenario looks like what Morley (1999) cited in Odejide *et al.* (2006) referred to as the hidden transcripts; the hidden subterranean ways in which power is relayed in everyday practices within institutions. The power relations in OAU have been that men aspire to key positions, while women are mere supporters who rarely contest. This could be a result of the lack of support from the family and the institution. Infact, in OAU, some husbands asked their wives to choose between public office in the university and their marriages. This has been the surest way to curb women's leadership ambition because most women would not want to sacrifice their family on the altar of leadership position.

Furthermore, the micro-politics that Morley wrote about in the hidden transcripts (2006) operates in every university in Nigeria. Women hardly go to the staff club to be involved in networking and coalitions. After work, most men go to the staff club to drink and socialize. It is during this period that many important decisions (such as membership of committees, who should be the vice chancellor and other positions) in the university are taken. These processes tend to exclude women from higher education leadership.

Importantly, there is no law against women participation in leadership of the university but there are subtle ways of discriminating, excluding, blackmailing and intimidating, that are not blatant but are there just the same. This could explain why Friedan (1963) called it a problem without a name. Mejuini (2013) named this problem, the hidden curriculum and Morley (2006) named it the hidden transcript. This problem tends to make women's reluctance to participate in leadership in higher education look natural.

The barriers listed above result in university leadership being an all men affair. As noted by Adu-Oppong and Arthur (2015), there are several factors at the institutional level preventing qualified women from ascending to senior positions in higher education. They also observed that inspite of the policies aimed at increasing women's participation in university leadership, the position of women has made little change (2015). This is particularly true of OAU, the first university in Nigeria to put in place a gender policy. It has been more than seven years now since the university council approved the gender policy. At the time of my research, there had not been any visible impact of the policy. In terms of females in leadership positions in the University, it seems to be getting worse.

This kind of outcome makes one question the real intentions of the Universities' managements when they approve such documents.

Excluding women from leadership in universities is tantamount to losing half of the ideas that can lead to effective university organization. As noted by Akudo and Okenwa (2015), the application of more sustainable leadership styles would change educational leadership in Nigeria. They also found that female leaders are more assertive, persuasive, empathic and flexible, and are willing to take risks (2015). Fukuyama (1998) (cited in Hunt 2007) corroborated this by stating that women in leadership would bring about a more corporative and less conflict-prone world. Many male leaders do not have some of these traits. This is an indication that women can bring a different and more effective approach to University leadership and that women can make a difference in reducing crises in the universities.

In spite of empirical findings such as this, the general feeling and perception among men and women in OAU is that women may not be able to perform well in the role Vice Chancellor. As noted by Adu-Oppong and Arthur (2015), descriptive and prescriptive stereotyping exerts significant impact on men's and women's organizational experiences. If a woman exhibits any of the traits that male leaders are applauded for, she is punished with discrimination or negative evaluation (Adu-Okpong and Arhtur 2015). For instance, women who fail to exhibit the nurturing qualities associated with their gender prescription also face formal discrimination (Adu-Oppong and Arthur (2015)). There is therefore a need for stakeholders to get rid of this mindset and give women a chance in Obafemi Awolowo University and the University of Ibadan. Akudo and Okenwa (2015), observed that the issue of gender equality in the domain of management has been neglected particularly in Nigeria. This neglect may not be as a result of lack of research funding in leadership but due to the fact that many Nigerians, including women, do not see the absence of women in leadership in higher institutions as problematic. Generally, the patriarchal gender roles, values and practices prescribe that men are the leaders and women are the followers and should be good followers lest the society punish them with stigma or discrimination. Challenging this stereotype constitutes an uphill task.

Gender and development and gender mainstreaming represent the call for action and change. Gender and development theorists believe that the unequal relationship between the sexes hinders development. They seek to change the structure of power into a long-term goal whereby all decision-making and benefits of development are distributed on an equal basis (Collins 2013). The fact that women are virtually absent in university leadership constitutes a hindrance to the development of these universities because the incessant crises in these universities makes it difficult for them to record tangible development. As such, for these universities to make progress and be able to compete favourably with

their counterparts globally, the university leadership structure will have to change by allowing women to participate.

This would be made possible by taking concrete/practical steps, which is why gender mainstreaming is crucial. As noted by Afonja (2002), gender mainstreaming is the process of bringing gender issues into the mainstream of society. This was a global strategy for promoting gender equity in the platform of action adopted by the United Nations fourth world conference on women in 1995. It was a strategy used to bring the experience, knowledge and interest of men and women to the forefront of the development agenda (2002). In the same vein, the experience and knowledge of women should be brought into the university leadership in order to cancel out men's leadership shortcomings which is causing crises in the universities. For instance, the gender policy in Obafemi Awolowo University (OAU) was a way of mainstreaming gender into all facets of life throughout the university. As I mentioned elsewhere, the policy had not made tangible impact on the issue of gender equity, particularly in women and leadership in the university. Perhaps, close monitoring and implementation of the gender policy can yield more positive results. This again may be eaten or choked by Morley's hidden transcripts (2006).

Based on women's leadership qualities that have been indicated, it is argued that women can make a difference. As indicated by Bunwaree (2010), feminism is theory and method as well as advocacy and activism. Feminism, therefore, represent a clamour for change. As such, there is need to change the leadership terrain in Nigerian universities. Regarding female participation in university leadership in OAU and UI, my argument is that bringing women into leadership positions can actually make a difference. After all, Jadesola Akande (Dasan 2009), Obayan and Comfort Ekpo (Uyo Bulletin, 2010) all made a difference during their tenures as Vice Chancellors of their institutions. It is when this happens that Nigerian universities can begin to talk about making progress. In this study, I argue that crises in Nigerian universities is caused by government intervention/ political economy and by men's highhandedness, ego and corruption and that bringing in women into the leadership of Nigerian universities would make a difference.

Crises in Nigerian universities disrupt academic activities with unrests, strike actions and physical attacks on University management and Government officials by student and staff of Nigerian universities. Crises in Nigerian universities are usually triggered by feelings of anger, anxiety about the government's unpopular policies, disagreement between staff and government, disagreement between university management and staff and students, welfare matters, living conditions and salaries. In some cases, the university may be closed for a month, six months or even as long as one year. The crises in Nigerian universities was explained by the political economy of Nigeria. The wealth of the nation is in the hands of the

federal government and it is through this administration in which part of the wealth is allocated to universities that the federal government creates crises in Nigerian universities. University is a public service and the wealth of the nation should be used to fund it. The federal government is doing this but crises are usually generated when this objective interlocks with unfavourable decisions and policies, which are discountenanced by university teachers and students. According to Bullock (1993), the wealth of the nation is supposed to enable the members of the society to provide subsistence for themselves. At the time of my research, this could not be said to be true in Nigeria any more. This is because Nigerians were no longer able to provide for their own subsistence because there were many obstacles preventing people from providing their own subsistence. Many people were unemployed and this constituted a great burden on families. Nigerian government found it difficult to provide electricity, water and other social amenities for the people. As such, many people were not able to provide subsistence for themselves. To make matters worse, the distribution of wealth in the Nigerian society resulted in the rich getting richer and the poor getting poorer. Government policies tended towards a more capitalist economy in which user charges were paid in hospitals and school fees and other services were paid more than ever before. All these created tension and hardship for the people, which extended to the universities, ultimately generating crises. For instance, many parents found it difficult to pay school fees for their children in universities and this explained why there were usually demonstrations and destructions of lives and properties any time there was little increment in school fees. All these were issues in the political economy of Nigeria and they exerted a great influence on university leadership and the crises being experienced in Nigerian universities.

Crises in Nigerian universities was also explained by Marxian views. As noted by Marx (cited in Ritzer 1996), the increasing exploitation of the proletarians by the capitalists may cause the workers to become increasingly dissatisfied and more militant. This is the situation in Nigeria where the federal government has become the capitalist and the workers/students are the proletariats. As such university workers and students always look at the government with suspicion and tend to react to any unfavourable policy with violent protests.

Importantly, the federal government is also battling with external influences which tend to shape its policies. For instance, the Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP) of 1986 unleashed hardship on Nigerians and an unfavourable policy of removal of subsidy from education made life unbearable for Nigerians (Nwagbara 2011). The SAP of 1986 in Nigeria came about as part of the stringent conditions stipulated by the International Monetary Fund in order for Nigeria to be able to repay the loan borrowed from the institution. As such, subsidies were removed from education, health and other basic services and Government spending was reduced drastically which resulted in folding up of companies

and retrenchment of workers. As observed by Nwagbara (2011), part of the consequences of SAP was retrenchment of workers, high cost of living because of the removal of subsidies, unemployment and inflation. An increase in school fees coupled with the fact that many parents were out of jobs and unable to pay caused tension resulted in crises in universities.

In this study, political economic theory was used to explain the factors that generated conflict situations in Nigerian universities such as an increase in school fees, an increase in number of students, non-payment of benefits, inflations, clamour for salary increase due to the high cost of living and the dwindling funding of universities as well as some governmental policies. In recent times, the political economic situation in Nigeria was such that many people were retrenched from work due to austerity measures. Additionally, there was the removal of subsidies from essential services. This situation coupled with the high inflation rate in the country made it difficult for many families to meet their basic needs (Nwagbara 2011). According to Periera (2007), academic staff used to live in penury. This pushed workers to demand a salary increase. These issues created tensions for people, which tended to effect their employers and organizations.

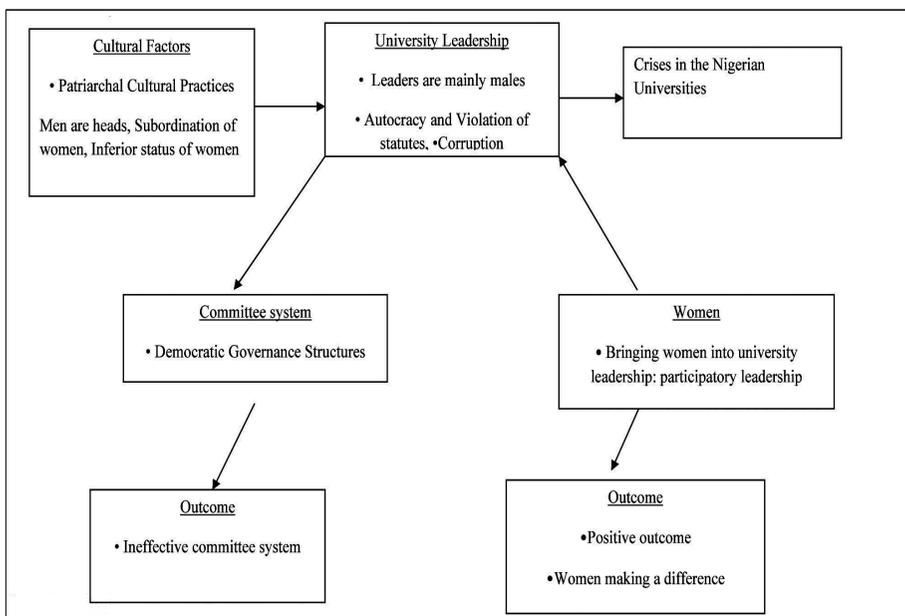


Figure 1.1: Conceptual Framework

Source: Muoghalu 2013

The conceptual framework drawn above describes the issues in the leadership and crises in Nigerian universities. The direction of the arrows indicates the direction of relationships between the variables.

The patriarchal cultural practices in Nigeria brought about the subordination of women. Women having inferior status while men are seen as the heads both in the home and in public places. This resulted in the absence of women in the university leadership. Owing to men's autocratic corruption and violation of university statutes, they render the committee's system (which is a democratic governance structure) ineffective. Men, therefore, brought their autocratic and corruptive tendencies to bear on university administration, which are capable of causing crises.

If women were brought into university administration, they would bring in their attributes of participatory, empathic and cooperative leadership which is likely to produce a favourable outcome in Nigerian universities.

From this theoretical and conceptual position, the following hypotheses were postulated.

Hypothesis 1

Null Hypothesis (Ho): There is no significant relationship between women Vice-chancellorship and crises in Nigerian universities.

Hypothesis 2:

Null Hypothesis (Ho): There is no significant relationship between federal government activities and crises in Nigerian universities.

Hypothesis 3:

Null Hypothesis (Ho): There is no significant relationship between men's leadership styles and the incessant crises in Nigerian universities.

Hypothesis 4:

Null Hypothesis (Ho): There is no significant relationship between democratization/ implementation of the universities legal statutes, governance structures and crises in Nigerian universities.

Methodology

Context

This study was carried out among students and staff of Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife and the University of Ibadan, Ibadan. Ile-Ife and Ibadan are both in South Western Nigeria. Yoruba is the national language. Much of the Yoruba land is on level plain terrain with thick vegetation, which is green all year round. As such, the people are traditionally farmers and fishermen, though some are civil servants while others belong to other professions. The Yoruba are known for their greetings/courtesy, hard work, and a strong belief in their cultural practices. It is therefore not surprising that this cultural orientation is carried into OAU and UI (Mejuini 2013). Obafemi Awolowo University has a population of thirty thousand students and one thousand, four hundred lecturers, administrators and other non-academic staff. The University is situated on a vast expanse of land totalling

11,861 hectares in Ile-Ife, Osun State, southwest of Nigeria. The University has a vibrant academic and social environment and a high international reputation. The University is known for its rich tradition of excellence, having produced several people of great importance including a nobel laureate, Professor Wole Soyinka. The University comprises the central campus, the student residential area, the staff quarters, a Teaching and Research Farm and a teaching hospital. The central campus comprises the academic, administrative units and service centres. OAU prides itself on learning culture. The slogan of staff and students is *Aluta Continua* meaning the struggle continues; a slogan that pushes the students and staff to action when issues or disagreements with university authority or the federal government arise. At the time of my research, this University had never had a female Vice Chancellor.

The UI was established in 1948 as an annex of university college, London. It is the first university in Nigeria and belongs to the first generation of Nigerian universities. The university boasts of a vast area of land with a large population of students, particularly postgraduate students. In fact, the university of Ibadan is known as a postgraduate university because it usually has large number of postgraduate students. The university of Ibadan has also had its fair share of crises. Like OAU, UI is a public institution that is being funded by the federal government of Nigeria. The leadership team of the university is made up of the Chancellor who is a ceremonial head and a Pro Chancellor who is usually the chairman of the council. The council is the highest governing body of the university. The Vice Chancellor oversees the day to day operations of the university and is answerable to the council because it is the council that usually employs the Vice Chancellor and all other staff in the university. The deputy vice chancellors (academic): oversees the academic operations and affairs of the university. The Vice Chancellor (administration) takes charge of administrative problems in the university). The Registrar is responsible for the secretariat of the University, the Bursar is in charge of the University accounts and the Librarian is the head of library services. The university is also governed through the committee system. Importantly, in both OAU and UI, no female had ever been the Vice Chancellor since their inception. Only very few women had held positions of Deputy Vice Chancellors and the same thing applies to Registrar, Bursar, Librarian and even chairpersons of committees.

Research Method

This study was anchored in a feminist perspective and sought to examine the causes of crises in two universities and to explore whether stakeholders thought that women leadership of universities could potentially reduce these crises. The study employed both quantitative (questionnaires) and qualitative (interviews) research methods. The essence of using quantitative methodology is to be able to arrive at concrete evidenced data, interpretation and conclusions. Also, quantitative research is useful for testing feminist theory (Jaratne 1989). Furthermore, the interpretation

of qualitative data is subjective and therefore open to the bias inherent in subjective assessment (Leibow 1967). Thus, a quantitative method is used to strengthen the findings and complement the qualitative data. The qualitative interviews were also used to overcome the theoretical and methodological shortcomings of the androcentric concept of science (Huizer 1973). Qualitative data conveys a deeper understanding and closeness to the person studied than a research report that gives statistical evidence of the struggles of any group (Kroeber 1969). Combining quantitative and qualitative research methods (triangulation). In this study, allowed me to strengthen the data, the interpretations of such data and the conclusions.

The self-administered questionnaire had 34 questions and was used to elicit relevant information from university stakeholders: lecturers, non-academic staff and students. The interview schedule was used to gather data from top university administrators, professors, leaders of the academic staff union, non-academic staff union senior staff association and student leaders. The methods used in this study enhanced the collection of data making this study thorough and coherent. The theoretical frameworks in combination with these methodologies represented a solid base for this research. For ethical considerations, informed consent was sought and obtained from the respondents before the commencement of the study.

Participants

The participants were management staff, academic and non academic staff and technologists and students in the two universities. The management staff (deputy Vice chancellors, directors of institutes, deans and Heads of Departments), professors, other staff, leaders of academic, and non-academic staff and student union. Participants were selected for the administration of the questionnaires purposively as bona-fide (people that were confirmed to be authentic) staff and students fit the purpose of the study. In selecting participants to be interviewed, emphasis was laid on their positions. For instance, professors, academic staff executives, non-academic staff leaders, senior staff association leaders and student leaders were purposely selected as their opinions represented the opinion of others.

Also, to support the data from the quantitative method, reports from the in-depth interviews are presented in each theme. For the qualitative data, the staff and student respondents were drawn from student leaders and staff administrators and people in top university management. The qualitative data helped to explore the research questions in detail and gave the research participants freedom to express themselves and their views in detail. The students that were interviewed were between the ages of 22 and 24 and they were student leaders. Also, they were three boys and one girl and they were all Christians. The staff that were interviewed were university administrators and people in top university management. They include university management staff, professors, leaders of academic staff union, non-academic staff union and senior staff association. The

staff who participated were within the ages of 50 years and 63 years. This is because it takes years of training and moving through the ranks before a person can become a professor. The same thing applies to headship of departments and deanship of faculties. Also, there were twenty males and six females. There were nineteen Christians and seven Muslims. The qualitative data helped to explore the research questions in detail and which also gave the staff the freedom to express their views in detail.

Sample Size and Sample Size Determination

A total of 2000 questionnaires were distributed among the participants; 1000 for staff and another 1000 for students. For the staff, 600 (OAU) and 400 (UI) questionnaires were administered, respectively. For the students, 615 questionnaires in OAU and 385 in the UI were also administered. These figures were derived from proportions based on the number of staff and students in each institution. The sample size of 1000 was derived using Nachmias and Nachmias' (1992) formula for deriving sample size in a population comprising 10,000 or more people. The formula for the standard error of the mean was used:

$$S. E. = \frac{s}{\sqrt{n}}$$

The study also utilized the qualitative method of in-depth interview. Thirty in-depth interviews were conducted on opinion leaders between the two universities. Fifteen in-depth interviews were conducted in OAU and fifteen were conducted in UI. The participants included fifteen men and fifteen women. These were top university administrators (10), professors (10), leaders of academic staff union (2), non-academic staff union (2), senior staff association (2) and student leaders (4).

Data Collection

The participants were reached in their institutions. The staff were reached in their offices and the students were reached in their classrooms and hostels. The questionnaire was self-administered and several visits were made to the participants to see that the questionnaire was completed and reduce the rate of attrition. The questionnaire was administered in such a way that most departments were represented. For the qualitative data collection, two persons were always doing it together, while the researcher asked questions and had discussions with the interviewees. Additional notes were taken by the research assistant. All interview sessions were conducted in English and each interview was approximately 60 minutes in length. The discussions were also recorded with audio media which were later transcribed.

Data Analysis

Analyses of quantitative data were both descriptive and inferential using SPSS software version 11.1. Univariate analysis in the form of frequencies and percentages were generated and contributed to the understanding of the distribution of each variable across survey respondents. Bivariate analyses were conducted using cross tabulations/Chi-Square to explore relationships in testing the hypothesis. Furthermore, comparison of means and one way analysis of variance were conducted to test the hypotheses of the study.

The qualitative data were analysed in themes based on the objectives. Categories were built around objectives as each objective formed a theme. The political economy and feminist theories were employed in the interpretation of these data and in drawing conclusions.

This chapter on background and introduction has dealt with the abstract, which is a summary of the entire book, an introduction which states the problematic – the problem of crises in Nigerian universities and the proposition that bringing women into university leadership will make a difference in reducing these crises. Also, the objectives of the book which were to examine the level and causes of crises and whether women's leadership of universities can make a difference. Furthermore, the theoretical and methodological orientations which were political economy and feminism were employed to explain the absence of women in university management and the incessant crises in the universities. This has laid the platform on which the entire book was built. Details of the issues raised in this chapter will be discussed throughout the book. Based on this platform especially as it pertains to the objectives of the book, the following chapter two focused on the literature reviews in which what we already know about women and leadership globally, women and leadership in Africa and Nigeria and crises in Nigerian universities were reviewed. The rest of the book focused on results from the study, the interpretation, discussion of findings and conclusions.

