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NIGERIA AND THE OPEN UNIVERSITY SYSTEM

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Thesis submitted to the Faculty of Social Sciences
in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the
degree of Doctor of Philosophy

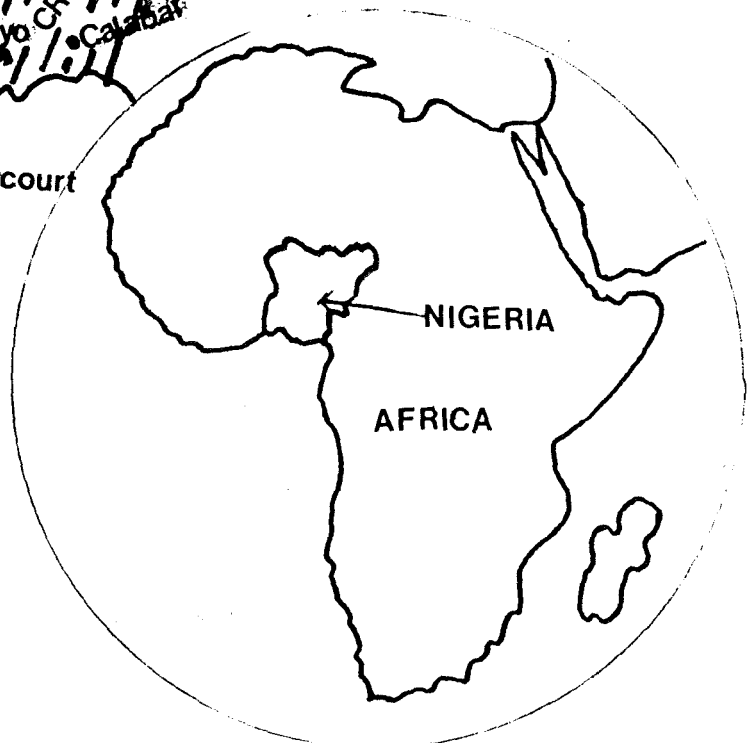
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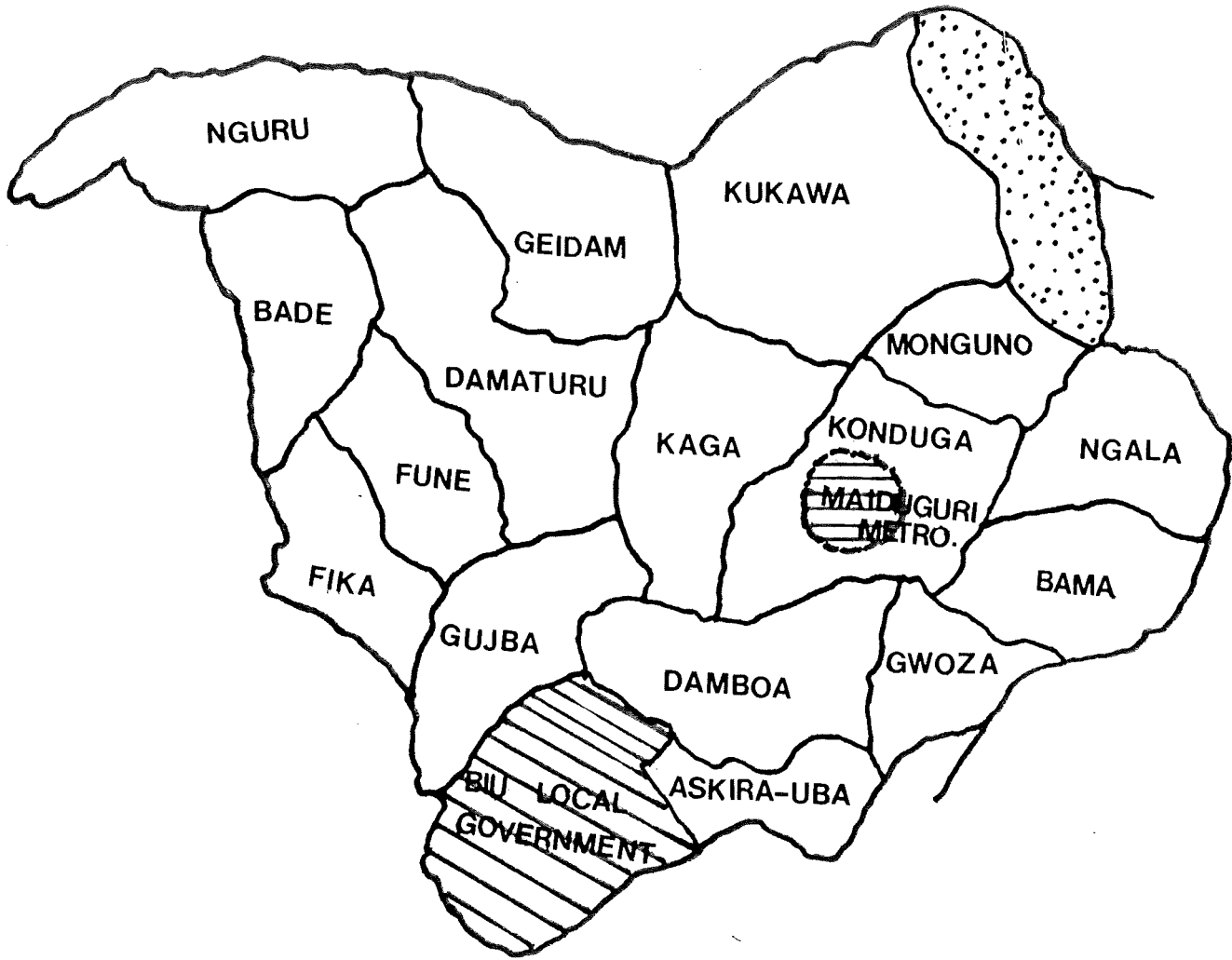
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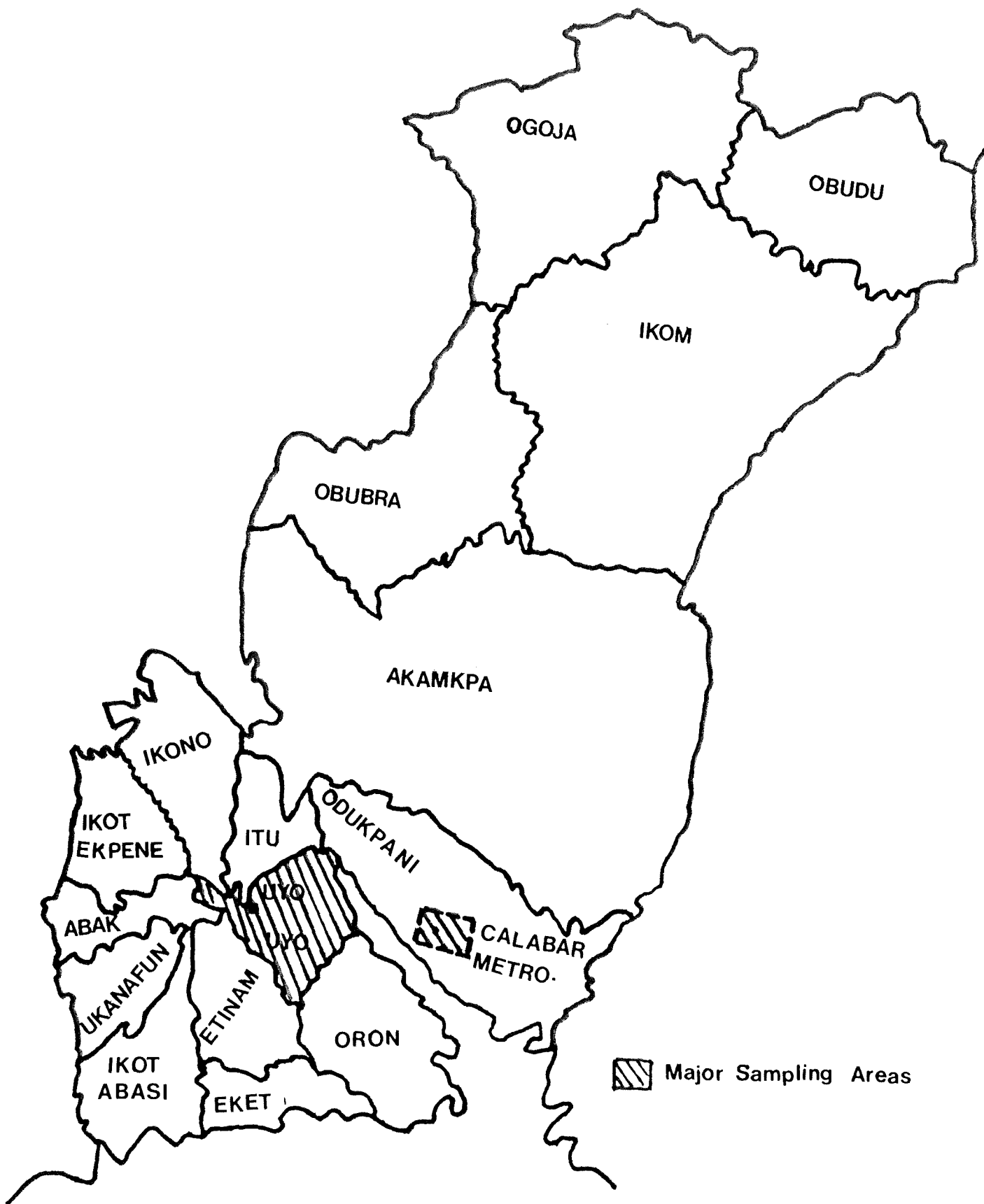
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•	State Capitals
■	Federal Capital

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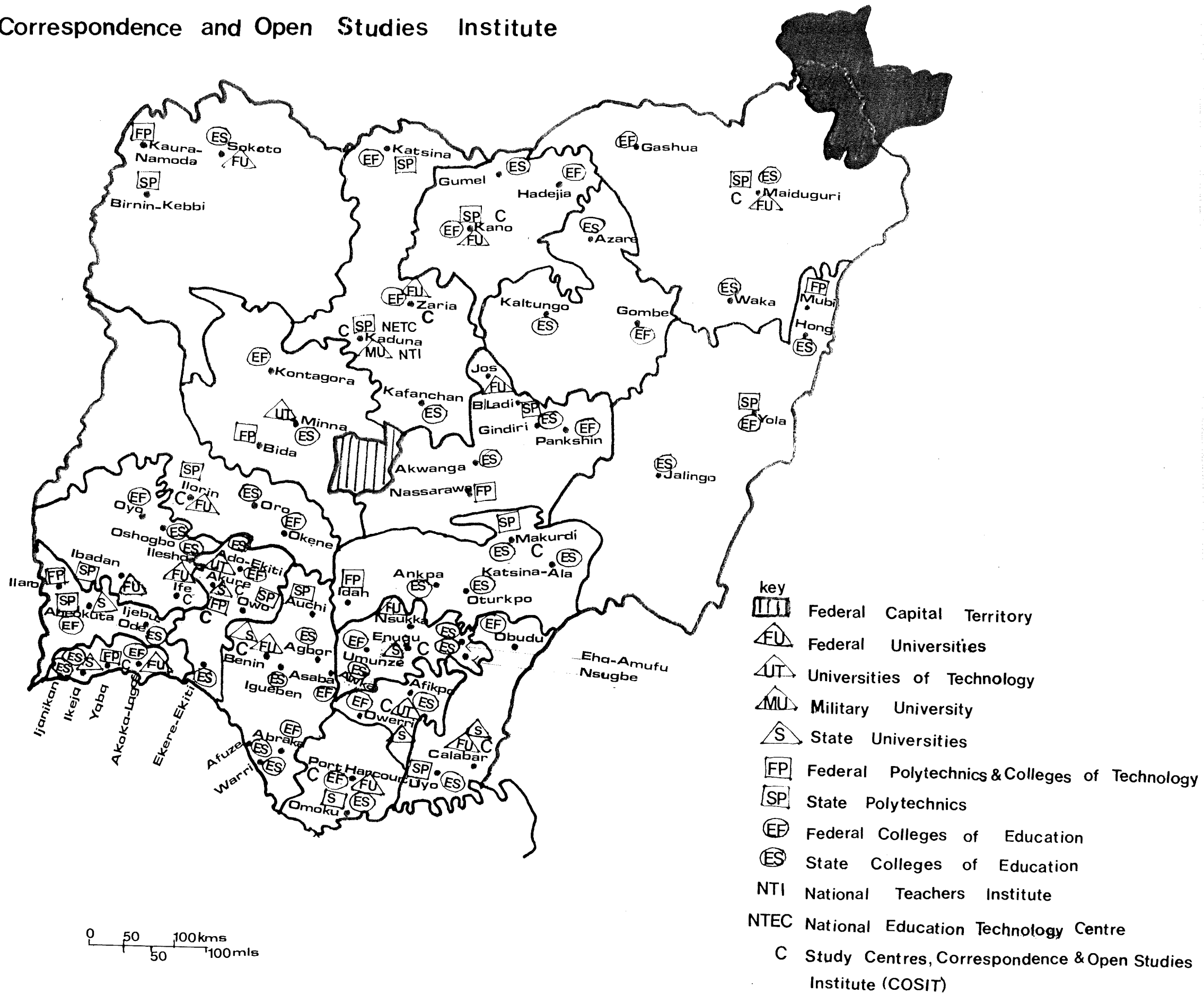


Major Sampling Areas

CROSS RIVER STATE LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREAS 1985



NIGERIA 1985: Location of Higher Educational Institutions and Study Centres of the Correspondence and Open Studies Institute



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SUMMARY

This study sets out to: (i) explore the open university concept and its application in various parts of the world; and (ii) investigate the problems and prospects for an open university in Nigeria.

The term "open university" is defined as distance teaching university systems created to offer programmes of study exclusively to external students. The concepts of "distance education" and "open learning" are examined and their precise usage in this thesis clarified. A distinction is also drawn between Western, indigenous and Koranic education.

The thesis is divided into three parts. The first part (Chapters 1 - 3), examines the concepts and the methodologies chosen for the study and provides a political, economic and educational background to Nigeria, with emphasis on the problems of higher education.

Part two (Chapters 4, 5 and 6), provides a general illumination to the particular problems of the open university system and current trends in established open university institutions. In Chapter 4, a review is made of the distance education provision in Nigeria while Chapter 5 is devoted to a review of the literature. Chapter 6 is concerned with the Open University of the United Kingdom (OU-UK), especially its original concept, practices in the institution and the implications of applying the British experience elsewhere.

The third part of the thesis (Chapters 7 and 8), investigates the particular problems and prospects for an open university system in Nigeria, through a study of the perceptions of a cross-section of the country's policy-makers and potential open university candidates. Chapter 7 focuses principally on the analysis of the collected empirical data on policy-makers while Chapter 8 is concerned with the personal characteristics of potential open university candidates, interpretations of their personal circumstances, their perceptions and the implications for university level home-study.

The last Chapter (9) is concerned with conclusions on the findings of the thesis, their policy implications, suggested open university models for Nigeria and fruitful areas for further research.

Findings

Of the open university idea and current practices in established systems, the literature review and the case study on the Open University of the United Kingdom resulted in these findings:

1. An open university offers the chance to meet particular educational needs of a society at a lower cost than conventional university by taking education (through print, radio, television, tapes and occasional face-to-face sessions) to large numbers of

people. However, the cost-advantages of the system depends to a greater degree on the enrolment of large numbers of students on relevant courses who would also stay on to a successful completion of their study.

2. In most open university systems, there is an emphasis on the teaching of specific techniques needed for the economic expansion of their country, such as up-grading the qualifications of practising school teachers and designing courses which are closely related to jobs and national needs for high-level manpower.

3. With careful guidance, it is possible to dispense with rigid university entry requirements and still have students reach acceptable degree standard at the end of their studies. In most established open universities, foundation-level courses are built into the structure to open-up higher education for more people while allowing for the proper screening of the ability of students to face the demands of degree-level studies.

4. It is the richness and the multiplicity of distance teaching/learning provision (printed tuition, broadcasts, narrow-casts, home experiment kits, occasional tutorial and counselling, periodic residential sessions and learning opportunities provided in students' locality), which attract and sustain distance learners and also leads to the achievement of acceptable academic standards.

5. Often, open universities are very complex systems which could not be transplanted from one society to another largely

because of differences in social and cultural circumstances. Therefore, there could be problems in applying the experience of systems such as the Open University of the United Kingdom, whose success story is rooted in luxurious provision, e.g. the weight and professionalism of the BBC and of major publishing houses, well-established universities, distinguished academics, authors and actors - assets which were scarce in emergent nations like Nigeria.

6. A national consensus was a crucial factor for removing political clouds and the general problems of suspicion or hostility which often greet open university and other distance education ventures.

As regards the major focus of the study - the relevance and feasibility of an open university system in Nigeria, evaluation of the perceptions and personal characteristics of policy-makers and potential open university candidates resulted in these findings:

1. The open university idea had a very strong support among the two sample groups. 80% of the policy-makers and 89% of the potential open university candidates perceived an open university as a desirable innovation in expanding the scope and function of higher education in Nigeria. The majority in both sample groups also perceived an open university as an important phenomenon which links studies with productive work; feasible and worthwhile in promoting the educational well-being of the community for the benefit of the country and in helping to reduce elitism in higher education.

2. Two-thirds of the policy-makers and over a third of the potential open university candidates were unhappy with the existing system of higher education in Nigeria. 66% of the policy-makers felt that the conventional university system was not adequately responding to the country's needs for higher education while 41% of the potential candidates gave the same negative answers on the existing system.

3. Over 80% of both sample groups perceived the open university idea as an acceptable alternative provision for people unable to attend full-time institutions.

4. A substantial proportion of the policy-makers (29%) had direct experience of correspondence education while over a quarter of the potential candidates had taken correspondence tuition after their formal education.

5. The quality of the potential open university candidates was higher than most people would expect: 83% had school certificate and more advanced educational qualifications; 95% had access to essential communication facilities such as electricity, radio, television, postal and library services; 89% read a newspaper every day while two-thirds read widely already.

6. Constraints of space and noise at home were among the major obstacles to home-study in Nigeria. For example, whereas more than half of the potential candidates (52%) had large numbers of family dependents, most of them were living in single-room or two-room accommodation.

7. Open university academic credibility and the employment of open university graduates was a matter for serious concern among the two sample groups. Over 40% expressed doubts on open university degrees gaining acceptance from employers and the community at large. Fears for poor rating of open university academic standards centred on limited exposure of distance learners to intensive face-to-face teaching; lack of effective supervision and intellectual dialogue with teachers and fellow students. Other reasons for doubts over academic credibility concerned inadequate infrastructure in Nigeria for effective distance teaching, poor energy and communication services, lack of financial and human resources as well as societal distractions.

8. Women were less keen on open university studies than men. They also had a lower rate of participation in correspondence education. There is a growing trend for married women living in university towns to study for degrees from the home.

9. More policy-makers from the educationally disadvantaged Northern States of Nigeria were hostile to the open university idea than their counterparts from the educationally more advanced states in the Southern part.

10. The inter-linking of in-service training and education with promotion, especially in the Northern States where it is more institutionalised, tends to dampen enthusiasm for part-time studies. Teachers, clerical, executive officers and other

categories of public employees tended to be less keen on studying privately to improve their educational qualifications because they knew from their career structure that they would eventually have access to publicly-funded full-time education.

Conclusions

Interpretations drawn from the findings were:

1. Nigeria needs an open university as one of the solutions to the country's complex educational problems;
and
2. The feasibility of an open university in Nigeria depends to a greater degree, on conscious support from the government, the conventional universities and the media. This is why the preferred open university model (Chapter 9) is closely linked with the existing Nigerian universities.

However, the point must be made that the proposed open university should be a mere Resource Centre or a Switchboard for external degrees. We are envisaging an open university within the National Universities Commission with its own academic staff, strong commitment to research, having its own disciplines (although not necessarily all the disciplines of the traditional universities) and in a position to attract competent academic staff as well as to award its own degrees. Furthermore, it is expected that such an open university would use its access to the media and to the resources of the conventional universities to make university education more accessible to the wider community for social, economic, political and cultural development of Nigeria.

My own view is that the current financial constraints in Nigeria suggests that greater consideration should now be given to educational alternatives such as an open university since the conventional ones have proved too expensive and inadequate for the country's higher educational needs. Given the right government priority, an open university could be funded from the subsidy withdrawn on petroleum or from company profits.

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I N T R O D U C T I O N

The purpose of this Chapter is :

- i to state the research problem and why it is considered important ;
- ii to state the research methodology employed for the collection of empirical data and for the study as a whole; and
- iii to define the important concepts and terms so as to make them clear in the research context.

1.1 The research problem and its importance

Expressed as a question, the problem is, does Nigeria need an open university? Is the system relevant to the higher education needs of Nigeria, and is an open university feasible in Nigeria?

That this problem exists was first hinted in 1976 when the Nigerian National Universities Commission (NUC) expressed the need for an autonomous national open university institution for the country. The second hint was given by the 1977 National Policy on Education which identified access to higher education as a national problem. The problem was re-echoed in the report of the Presidential Planning Committee on a open university system in Nigeria in 1981.

These were assertions by informed policy-makers. This study aims to give more empirical answers based on data collected during the field-work displayed and analysed in Chapters 7 and 8.

1.2 Research Objectives

The overall aims of the research are threefold :

- 1 To examine the open university concept and its application in various parts of the world ;
- 2 To assess its relevance to the higher education needs of Nigeria; and
- 3 To assess and test the feasibility of an open university system in Nigeria through a study of the perceptions of policy-makers and potential open university candidates.

Specifically, the research sets out to :

- 1 undertake a comprehensive study of open university systems for an understanding of the justification, problems and practices in alternative higher education institutions in both the developed and the developing countries ;
- 2 establish a historical account of the development of Western education and distance education in Nigeria ;
- 3 survey existing provisions for higher education in Nigeria to determine met and unmet educational needs (if any) ;
- 4 ascertain the way in which an open university system was perceived and evaluated by policy-makers in Nigeria to test the feasibility and acceptability of such an alternative form of higher education ; and
- 5 ascertain the way in which policy-makers and potential open university candidates evaluated the country's communications media, especially broadcasting, to establish the implications of an open

university for the media.

1.3 Definition of important concepts and terms

The meaning of such key terms as "distance education", "open learning", "open university", "correspondence education", "untrained and under qualified teachers", "Western education", "indigenous education", and "Koranic education", repeatedly used in this thesis calls for an early clarification.

1.3.1 What is distance education?

Sewart (1983) has defined distance education as :

'the form of study not led by teachers present in classroom, but supported by tutors and an organisation at a distance from the student'. (Sewart, 1983 : 1)

This definition recognises three essential elements of distance education namely :

- 1 separation of teacher and student;
- 2 use of appropriate teaching methods to take education to students where they live ; and
- 3 existence of an educational organisation for planning, preparing and administering instructional materials.

Also, to reflect recent advances in science and technology as well as other important elements of distance education, the German scholar and the first Vice-Chancellor of the Open University in West Germany, Professor Otto Peters has defined this form of education as an industrialisation of the educational process. As he wrote :

'Distance education is a method of imparting knowledge, skills and attitudes which is rationalised by the application of division of labour and organised principles as well as the extensive high quality teaching material which makes it possible to instruct great numbers of students at the same time wherever they live. It is an industrialised form of teaching and learning' (Peters, 1983 : 110).

From the two definitions above, it is clear that there are five important features of distance education. These are :

1. use of multi-media teaching methods including the provision of advice and support services for face-to-face tuition to overcome the problems of students isolated from teachers;
2. use of appropriate strategies to reach and teach large numbers of people in different locations for the cost-effectiveness and relevance of distance education to society;
3. presence of two-way communication to facilitate effective learning over a distance;
4. existence of an educational organisation ; and
5. business-like operation of educational provision, based on the division of labour and the use of technical equipment to convey the knowledge, ability and skills of a relatively few university lecturers to large numbers of students, regardless of the economic inequalities among learners.

Fundamentally, therefore, distance education is a means of educational delivery outside the conventional forms of education which makes lesser use of face-to-face tuition.

Given the diversity in the programmes which fall under this system of

education, this study uses the term distance education to refer to what Rumble and Keegan (1982) have defined as :

'the range of teaching / learning strategies variously referred to as correspondence education or correspondence study in both developed and developing countries, as home study or independent study in the United States of America ; external studies in Australia ; télé-enseignement in France ; Fernstudium or Fernunterricht in Germany ; educación a distancia or enseñanza in Spanish-speaking countries and telecação in Portuguese.' (Rumble and Keegan, 1982 : 11 - 12)

This definition seems acceptable as it is not limited in scope, but recognises the diverse teaching methods, systems and varieties of distance education programmes world-wide.

1.3.2 Open learning

Open learning refers to the concept of removing barriers to education for the opening of access to learning in addition to face-to-face tuition. Often, the ground work for distance education is laid by open learning through greater concern and attention to learners' needs, teaching and learning methods such as the use of printed lectures and broadcasts to overcome geographical remoteness from educational institutions. The provision of part-time learning opportunities and the application of concessional entry qualifications for mature students are among other important open learning concepts, employed to remove social barriers for those unable to study in residential institutions due to job or family obligations or lack of formal educational qualifications. In other words, open learning can either take place away from educational institutions or at residential universities or colleges as part-time or evening programmes or partly over a distance and partly through occasional face-to-face tuition at centres accessible to learners.

1.3.3 Open university (also called distance teaching university, University Without Walls, University of the Air, Correspondence University, Media University, Broadcasting, Radio or Television University).

The term open university denotes a system within distance education. It is meant to designate the cluster of distance teaching institutions 'created in the 1970's and 1980's to offer programmes of study exclusively to students at a distance.' (Dodd and Rumble, 1984 : 231). The term 'open' was not formally applied to any school or University until May 1969 when the British Monarch granted a royal charter to a new open university of the United Kingdom (OU - UK).

Other descriptive names used in the various parts of the world, such as University of the Air (Japan), University Without Walls (USA), Correspondence University (USSR), Television University (China) and others such as Media University 'depict the nature of the system as being not limited by space, not dependent on one method of teaching, not inflexible, and not unresponsive to change'. (Presidential Planning Committee, 1981a : 9).

1.3.4 Untrained teachers

Untrained teachers are pupil teachers with no teacher training (mainly primary and secondary school leavers) while the term under-qualified teachers refers to those teachers who have had some teacher training, but failed to attain Grade II certificate. In the Nigerian context, under-qualified teachers are Grade II or Grade III referred teachers.

1.3.5 Western education (also formal and conventional education)

is used in the study to mean the educational system introduced to Nigeria by Christian missionaries and the former British Colonial administration. The distinction is necessary in order not to confuse it with indigenous education or Koranic education. For instance, indigenous Nigerian education which in a variety of forms is as old as the different societies that make up the country, is often ignored in the literature. In this context, Western (formal) education is used to refer to what Coombs defines as:

'the hierarchically structured, chronologically graded educational systems, running from primary school through the university, and including, in addition to general academic studies, a variety of organised programmes and institutions for full-time technical and professional training' (Coombs, 1973 : 11).

1.3.6 Indigenous Education

Indigenous education refers to Nigerian and indeed African education which was associated with pre-colonial, non-Western social institutions. Sometimes it has been affected by the implantation of other types of education, e.g. Islamic or Western and sometimes its curriculum includes new technologies (e.g. indigenous apprenticeship systems now operate to teach bicycle and motor car repair). Its general character is informal, without constraints of time, place or admission. Much education of the young involves the entire community in socialising them into accepted ways of behaviour (e.g. deference to elders) and into generally used skills, e.g. farming, hunting, housewifery. Additionally, there are mechanisms for training of specialists such as weavers, carvers and blacksmiths and also for lifelong learning by the whole community, sometimes even through recreation, to uphold its traditions and culture.

Many Nigerians regard it as very important that those traditions and cultures are taught through Western institutions as well, including universities.

1.3.7 Koranic education : Koranic education refers to Islamic religious education introduced to Nigeria by Arab Muslim scholars in the 11th century. The main objective of this system of education is the teaching of the Holy

Koran or Koranic education - hence the schools are called Koranic Schools.

Three phases of Islamic education are provided through the Koranic Schools. At the basic level, Islamic religious knowledge is taught namely, memorization of the Holy Koran, ethics, Arabic language and the values of the society. The second level is a more advanced study of the Holy Koran, with emphasis on reading and writing Arabic.

The third stage is really Islamic higher education and at this level, the curriculum is much wider, including grammatical inflexion, syntax, arithmetic, algebra, scholastic theology, jurisprudence and the interpretation of the laws of Islam.

Unlike western-type schools, Koranic schools are informal and usually one-teacher schools where a Malam (Muslim teacher/preacher) taught his Almajiri (pupils) either under a tree-shade, in his porch or in the open air.

In the Islamic Northern States of Nigeria, this system of education has been the source of training Islamic teachers, staffing the judiciary and for producing court scribes, preachers, theologians, lecturers and psychologists.

1.4 Scope of Enquiry and Research Methodology

Recognizing that the aims and objectives of the research required both quantitative and qualitative information, the study has used a combination of three main enquiries. First, an understanding of current trends in distance education at the tertiary level was derived

from library research ; consultations with academics ; officials of the Open University of the United Kingdom (OU -UK) and of open learning institutions in England and Scotland ; as well as study of press reports and materials from Nigeria.

The second enquiry was an examination of the current performance of the OU - UK undertaken as a case study, together with reading of documents, articles, etc., produced at the Open University and by others. The case study on the OU - UK was considered important for identifying the critical factors behind the establishment of the University ; its primary objectives ; organisational structure, programmes, teaching and learning systems, student characteristics etc., and what lessons, (if any), countries like Nigeria might learn from the British experience.

The third enquiry related to the mood in the country about an open university system. This was undertaken through extensive fieldwork in Nigeria from November 1983 to July 1984. Empirical data was collected by questionnaire and structured interviews. A major consideration of the fieldwork was obtaining objective view on the problems and prospects for an open university as conceived by experts and potential users of alternative forms of higher education.

1.5 Assembly of Background Data and Case Study Material

Chapters 4 and 6 are the result of library research at the Universities of Glasgow, Birmingham, Manchester and London, together with extensive personal consultations, informal discussions and observations conducted before the fieldwork (October 1982 - October 1983) and afterwards (July 1984 - June 1985). The University

libraries at Edinburgh, Birmingham, Manchester and London were consulted because they are among the main libraries with documented research in education and because of their Centres for African Studies or commitment to education and development in emergent nations. I also interviewed twelve senior academic staff of the universities listed above on trends in higher education and attended seminars conducted by some of them while others provided me with ample information for the study.

My key resource contacts were eight academic staff of the Open University. Four were based at the Milton Keynes Headquarters and four at the Open University in Scotland - two each at the Regional Office in Edinburgh and the Strathclyde office in Glasgow. They provided new insights into the Open University system and valuable information on the University.

In addition, informal discussions were held with six experts in distance education and open learning as well as with eight educational broadcasters - four with the BBC, Langham Place, London and BBC Scotland ; and two with the Scottish Television, Glasgow ; to fully explore concepts, practices and problems of the open university system.

1.6 Sampling method

The most critical problem regarding the selection of an appropriate sampling method for the fieldwork was posed by the absence of a data bank and the general dearth of statistical data, especially up-to-date information on population in Nigeria. Precisely how many Nigerians there are, no one knows. This is because no accurate and acceptable

census has been held in Nigeria for more than two decades. Some commentators have interpreted the consequence of this as 'Planning Without Facts' (Stolper, 1966 : 6).

Current population estimates are based on the 1963 census which was the last acceptable census held in the country but more importantly on the work of demographers mainly at Ibadan and Lagos who have used other indicators such as school enrolments and election registration. Initially, Nigeria's population growth rate was calculated at 2.5% ; but more recently it has been projected at the rate of between 3 and 3.35% a year. The main obstacle to an accurate census has always been political because power and the division of the country's wealth has historically been based on population. Because so many political factors affect statistics on population in Nigeria, censuses have usually been unreliable.

For example, for the general elections in 1979, 49 million Nigerians over the age of 18 were registered. Four years later, 65.3 million people over the age of 18 were on the Voters' List for the 1983 elections (West Africa, 1983 : 1993). Given that slightly more than half the country's population (as in many other developing countries), were under 18, Nigeria's population could well be between 100 - 150 million. However, according to the latest official estimates, Nigeria's population has grown from 55.7 million in 1963 to 95.6 million in 1984 (National Manpower Board Report 1984).

The dearth of basic statistical data is a major constraint to obtaining reliable figures on population composition : sex, age, education, occupation, ethnic groups, religion and state of origin which are important variables for this survey.

In view of these constraints, a mixture of Stratified Random and Clusters Sampling methods were employed by the survey (Peil, Mitchell and Rimmer, 1982 : 27 - 46). Using knowledge of the country, the population was divided into strata and samples were taken in each stratum to reflect in particular, ethnic groups, states of origin, religion and occupation etc. Particular attention was paid to variations within the groups e.g. factors of homogeneity or heterogeneity to show important differences, notably between the northern and southern areas of the country ; between ethnic groups - north / south ; major and minority ethnic groups as well as urban and rural differences in the distinct geographical zones in the country.

In addition to social stratification of the population, institutional classification was also made. In this way, the survey was able to sample representatives of all the sectors of the population in Nigeria which an open university must reach if it is to have credibility.

Furthermore, both the stratified and the clusters were taken in sufficient numbers so that responses can be compared. (See Chapters 7 and 8)

1.7 Number of policy-makers sampled

The number sampled for the opinion of policy-makers in the total population was obtained after listing from National and State Governments Telephone Directories and other sources, the names and positions held by people who headed units, divisions, departments, corporations, ministries in the public and the private sectors of the economy as well traditional rulers and leaders of voluntary organisations across the country. The comprehensive listing showed

that there were about 200,000 Nigerians who either contributed to policy-formulation or participated in their implementation in their various establishments. However, the real policy-makers are the people at the very top of key public and private institutions, in top academic, managerial and professional positions and leaders of communities, voluntary or religious bodies etc.

By this measurement, just about 400 people qualified as the real policy-makers. In other words, only 1 out of 500 people in the broad policy-making group was a policy-maker.

Considering the vast size of Nigeria (nearly one million square kilometres) and the cost in time and travel, it was decided to use clusters of areas for homogeneous groups rather than the sampling of the whole population of 400 policy-makers in all the 19 states in the Nigerian Federation. The use of clusters of urban and rural centres with common features and the selection of key institutions instead of sampling across the whole country, further pruned down the size of the policy-makers for the survey to 315 at three levels - Federal, State and Local Government.

In order to reflect the Federal character and the multi-ethnic nature of Nigeria, the study first distributed the 315 policy-makers for sampling among those based at Federal, Northern and Southern areas on the basis of estimated population distribution as follows:

Federal policy-makers	(70)
Northern-based policy-makers	(145)
Southern-based policy-makers	(100)

Although there are over '395 linguistic groups in Nigeria' (Barbour, Oguntoyinbo and others, 1982 : 47), there are essentially five distinct features of homogeneity and geographical zones in the country. These are :

<u>Ethnic groups</u>	<u>Geographic Zones</u>
1 Hausa/Fulani and related groups	North
2 Igbo	East
3 Yoruba	West
4 Northern minority groups	Middle) N minority) areas
5 Southern minority groups	Belt) S minority) areas

On the basis of the distinct homogeneous and geographical groups, it was evident that 10 out of the 19 states in the country (5 in the northern and 5 in the southern areas) could adequately reflect the opinion of national policy-makers and state as well as local government policy-makers in the northern and southern states. The states are Bauchi, Borno, Kaduna, Kano and Plateau in the northern part, and Bendel, Cross River, Imo, Lagos and Oyo in the southern area. (See map 1)

As far as key institutions were concerned, the following had the most influential policy-makers in the country :

- 1 Federal and State Ministries
- 2 National / State Assemblies and Political Parties (now disbanded)
- 3 Armed and Security Services
- 4 Traditional and Chieftaincy Institutions
- 5 National Universities Commission, Universities and Educational Institutions

- 6 Agricultural and Rural Development Authorities and Research Institutes
- 7 National Electric Power Authority
- 8 Postal and Telecommunication Services
- 9 Radio and Television Authorities and National Newspapers
- 10 Examinations, Joint Admissions and Matriculation Boards (e.g. West African Examinations Council and Joint Admissions and Matriculation Board)
- 11 Banking, commerce and industry
- 12 Trades Unions
- 13 Women's groups
- 14 Religious organisations
- 15 Voluntary bodies

The study considered the 15 types of institution as those which an open university in Nigeria must reach and co-operate with for its credibility and viability. To have a balanced category of policy-makers, the sample size of 315 was then proportionately distributed among the people who headed the most important establishments in the 15 institutions listed above, namely :

<u>Category of Policy-makers</u>	<u>No. sampled</u>
1 Ministers and Commissioners	35
2 Legislators	35
3 Vice-Chancellors, Professors, Registrars and Senior Academics	35
4 Permanent Secretaries, Directors and Heads of Departments	35
5 Heads of Communications media establishments	35
6 Chairmen and Directors of Government Corporations	20
7 Chief Executives of Government Corporations and Parastatals	20
8 Leaders of Women's Associations	20
9 Private Sector Chief Executives and Proprietors	20

10	Secretaries of State Governments and Heads of Service	10
11	Traditional Rulers and Religious Leaders	10
12	Heads of Armed and Security Services	10
13	Leaders of Trades Unions	10
14	Local Government Sole Administrators	10
15	Local Government Education Secretaries and School Managers	10

Subsequently, the responses collected from the policy-makers (displayed in Chapter 7), were classified and analysed under the following main occupations :

- 1 Public sector administrators and managers
- 2 Private sector administrators and managers
- 3 Education (not administrative)
- 4 Armed and Security Services
- 5 Communications media
- 6 Women leaders
- 7 Others (mainly retired)

In all, sampling for the 315 policy-makers was carried out in the 10 states which had distinct features of related states while extensive sampling was taken in Borno and Cross River States to reflect the opinion of urban and rural policy-makers in the northern and southern parts of the country respectively.

Several factors influenced the choice of Borno and Cross River States as the primary research areas for the study. First, both states are nationally recognised to be among the educationally backward and least-advancing states. Second, both Borno and Cross River States

have vast land areas ; are geographically remotely located in the extreme north and south-eastern corners of Nigeria and are economically backward, compared with more strategically located states in the country. Third, both states suffer from inadequate infrastructures of communication; media, postal, telephone and electricity services - all basic to the successful implementation of an open university system. Fourth, both Borno and Cross River, although educationally backward, contain groups which are well known for their keen participation in education e.g. Bura from the Biu area in Borno, and the Ibibio people from Uyo in Cross River.

Essentially, the two States were chosen because they contain a high degree of problems and aspirations which an open university in Nigeria must meet in order to be viable. Additionally, the value of choosing Borno was that, being the home state of the researcher, it made access easier to respondents and to facilities.

1.8 The major considerations in sampling potential open university candidates

In estimating the size of sample for potential candidates of an open university in Nigeria, consideration was first given to the fact that users of the system should be people with some basic education, preferably secondary-level education, its equivalent or people who may not possess formal educational qualifications but have up-graded their knowledge out of the classroom sufficiently to benefit from university level courses. Another consideration was that, open universities generally served mature people instead of young school leavers. Since many people in Nigerian conventional universities are over 21, the study decided to sample mostly people over 21 on grounds that the

minimum age of open university candidates should be 25 years. This is to ensure that they had the maturity and the discipline to face the challenges of home-based studies. On this basis, it was felt that open university potential students are adults of all ages who are normally working and whose study is expected to be part-time.

As there have been no studies commissioned to estimate the potential pool of adults in Nigeria who are capable of and interested in up-grading their qualifications through part-time university studies, the study first examined the population of the country's labour force. According to the latest National Manpower Board Report (1984), there are about 36 million Nigerians employed in agriculture (57%); mining and quarrying (0.8%); manufacturing and processing (18.2%); building and construction (1.2%); electricity, gas and water (0.2%); distribution (16%); transport and communications (0.6%); and services (5.6%). However, the figure is considered to be an unreliable index for measuring the number of potential candidates for an open university, since by its nature, the labour force in Nigeria consists largely of people with the lowest educational background and others with no formal education at all. For example, the same Manpower Board indicated that only 4.3% of the labour force have had any secondary schooling. Based on the official statistics, not more than 1,548,000 of the active labour force have had any secondary schooling.

For a more realistic estimate of the potential users of alternative form of higher education, the study has had to rely on Federal Ministry of Education figures and statistics obtained from the National Universities Commission on yearly out-put from all phases of secondary education as well as yearly enrolments into Nigerian

universities, polytechnics and other tertiary institutions between 1975/76 - 1980/81. 1975/76 is used as the base year, because people who left secondary schools in that year at the age of 16 years have now attained the age of 25 years, considered by the study as the minimum age for potential candidates of an open university. Similarly, those who left secondary education in 1980/81 would reach the age of 25 years by 1990, hence the study classifies those just attaining the age of 25 in 1985 and those who would reach that maturity age in 1990 as the first category of identifiable short-term potential candidates for an open university in Nigeria.

Table 1.1 gives an indication of the size of the first group of potential open university candidates (short-term) estimated from available official statistics.

The 545,440 identified in table 1.1 as the immediate potential users of an open university system could be a conservative estimate, particularly as the number of yearly admissions into tertiary institutions reflect the places available - hence some non-Nigerians are included.

Assuming that just 1% of students admitted into higher education during the period were non-Nigerians, another 1193 will be added to the last column, raising the number to 546,633. More significant perhaps is the statistical evidence to the effect that in a period of six years (1975/76 - 1980/81), increased out-put from secondary education has sent over half a million young people into the labour market with little prospects for formal higher education.

Table 1.1

Transition From Secondary Education in Nigeria 1975/76 - 1980/81
and Estimate of Potential Open University Candidates (Short-term)

Year	Total Secondary Enrolments	Total Annual Secondary Output	Total Student Places				Total Going to Labour Market (Potential OU Candidates)
			No. staying in secondary for 'A' level	No. of yearly Admissions to Universities	No. Yearly Admitted to Polytechnics and Colleges	Yearly Admissions	
1975/76	854,785	76,759	11,513	9,113	5,892	26,518	50,241 (65%)
1976/77	1,009,724	94,647	14,197	9,213	6,000	29,410	65,237 (68%)
1977/78	1,231,103	109,077	16,361	7,779	9,520	33,660	75,417 (69%)
1978/79	1,418,873	125,812	18,871	14,417	8,220	41,508	84,304 (67%)
1979/80	1,875,290	161,242	24,186	17,729	6,694	48,609	112,633 (69%)
1980/81	2,463,369	214,452	32,167	20,429	4,248	56,844	157,608 (73%)
TOTAL	-	781,989	117,295	78,680	40,574	236,549	545,440 (70%)

Source : Computed from educational statistics supplied by the Statistics Division, Federal Ministry of Education and by the Academic Planning Division, National Universities Commission, Lagos.

But more important is the second category of potential users of an open university. This consists of more mature Nigerians who left formal education prematurely in the 1950's, 1960's and in the early 1970's. These are people who have the educational background required to benefit from university level courses but have so far not studied with private correspondence institutions or taken advantage of the few existing distance education courses. Whereas available statistics show that 50,000 Nigerians enrol into private correspondence courses each year, these are mainly the most determined group of people who are ready to make personal sacrifices for their educational improvement. From available evidence, this group represents just about one quarter of people in this category. In other words, for every 50,000 who registered each year, there were at least 150,000 others who could benefit from further studies but did not register either because they lacked the initiative, resources or the discipline to face the rigours and frustration of studying with private correspondence institutions.

On this basis, it is estimated that in the first 15 years of Nigeria's independence, that is 1960-1975 before the base year used in Table 1.1 to estimate maturing potential open university candidates, there were roughly 2,250,000 more mature people with the educational background required to benefit from university level distance education other than those offered by private correspondence institutions. Put together, the overall size of immediate potential students for an open university in Nigeria totalled nearly 2.8 million as follows:

- | | | |
|----|--|-----------|
| a. | Estimated number of already mature people who
left school before 1975 | 2,250,000 |
| b. | Estimated number of people who left secondary | |

education between 1975/76 - 1980/81 already mature or would reach 25 years by 1990	545,440
	<hr/>
c Total size of immediate potential open university candidates	2,795,440

Considering the increased annual out-put from secondary level education in the period since 1980/81, the potential candidates for an open university would be much higher than the estimated numbers, particularly from 1991. Moreover, once an open university was in place, it might well generate more clients even outside the two groups identified in the foregoing pages.

1.9 Long-term potential candidates

The long-term potential candidates of an open university in Nigeria (1996 - 2000's) was also estimated, on the basis of 1984/85 enrolment figures and projections by the Federal Ministry of Education as well as those of the National Universities Commission.

Since 1981/82, total yearly enrolments and out-put from all phases of secondary education have exceeded 2 million candidates. In the current session, the out-put from the secondary level was approximately 2.48 million. On the other hand, all Nigerian universities, polytechnics, colleges of technology, education and others, offered admissions to about 25,000 students or 1% of the annual out-put. In effect, 2,458,369 young people were sent to the labour market. By 1994, this group would be 25 years and potential candidates for an open university.

Also, according to the Federal Ministry of Education, 16,798,750

pupils were enrolled into primary education in 1984/85. Based on the projected transition rate of about 80% from primary to junior secondary schools, in 1990/91, some 13,439,000 should be in secondary education. By 1993/94, 40% of the number or 5,375,600 should move into senior secondary schools and eventually compete for places in the universities. The majority - 8,063,400 will be expected to proceed from junior secondary to teacher training (30%), technical education (20%) and vocational education (10%) under the country's new education system of 6 - 3 - 3 - 4. Admitted that not all the 5,375,600 going into senior secondary schools would want to go to university and not all of them would be of a university quality, we can project that by 1996/97, if even one-tenth will go on, that means at least half a million young people would want to have university education a year.

At present, there are no plans to establish new universities while the existing conventional ones have been expanding at a slower pace than the projections of the National Universities Commission. Since there are no plans for new universities, no dramatic intake increases are envisaged in the immediate future. The big question then is, what will happen in ten or fifteen years from now when several million people become qualified and willing to have university education?

The long-term potential candidates of an open university in Nigeria are therefore likely to be more than a million people since out-put from today's secondary education going into the labour market would reach the age of 25 in the mid-1990's and might also want to improve themselves educationally while still working.

1.10 Method and size of potential candidates sampled

The same stratified random sampling method was adopted to survey potential open university candidates in Nigeria. However, samples were taken in only four centres in two states of the country - Borno State in the northern areas and Cross River state in the south, as against ten states for the sample of policy-makers. In Borno, the State Capital, Maiduguri, was sampled to represent urban prospective candidates in the northern states while Biu, the hometown of the researcher, represented rural potential candidates in the northern areas of the country. For the southern states, the capital of the Cross River state - Calabar was sampled for urban residents while Uyo represented the rural candidates in the southern areas of the country.

The two states were chosen for the same reasons which justified them for the sampling of policy-makers. On the other hand, Biu and Uyo were selected because they encompass quite large concentrations of rural population and educational activities in Borno and Cross River states respectively.

The study decided to restrict the sampling of prospective open university candidates to only four centres in two states largely because as a group, the potential candidates were more homogeneous, compared to that of the policy-makers. For example, whereas it was deemed politically desirable to distinguish between policy-makers based at Federal, State and Local Government levels, in the case of prospective open university students such a distinction was considered unnecessary since the study was not out to assess their opinion on policy issues.

As far as the sampling of potential candidates was concerned, the emphasis centred around people who were: i) mature; ii) with the educational background required to benefit from home-based studies; iii) normally working or home-bound; iv) urban or rural residents; and v) northern or southern-based. In general, the single most important factor concerned occupations that will have people with the minimum education for open university studies based either in the northern or the southern areas of the country.

Having identified the kinds of people to be sampled as prospective students and where they were to be found, it was decided that the total size should be similar to that of policy-makers, but equally divisible between the two main levels - northern and southern areas of Nigeria. On this basis, 400 was adopted as the maximum figure so that 200 prospective candidates were sampled in Borno and Cross River States respectively.

Using the researcher's knowledge of Nigeria, and based on available evidence from telephone directories and other published reports, 11 main occupations that usually had people with the minimum education for open university studies were identified. Also, based on available evidence on the strength of the main occupations, the following number of respondents were allocated to each occupation for sampling to ensure a balanced category of potential candidates:

1	Teaching	95
2	Clerical and office workers	55
3	Administrative, executive and managerial	55
4	Armed and security services	35
5	Communications media	35

6	Agricultural and extension services	25
7	Housewives	40
8	Nursing and health services	15
9	Sales and distribution services	15
10	Technical personnel	15
11	Unemployed or retired	10

In addition, since in virtually every society there are always people confined to hospitals, prisons and other institutions, the opportunity was therefore taken to get information from a few prison in-mates about their perception of the relevance and feasibility of an open university in Nigeria. The responses are presented and analysed in Chapter 8.

1.11 Fieldwork techniques

The fieldwork was carried out using a variety of research techniques involving the use of questionnaires, observation and other more informal discussions together with reading of relevant documents and articles as well as collection of data produced by Federal and State Governments in Nigeria and by others. The fieldwork was based at three centres - the University of Maiduguri in Borno State, the University of Calabar in Cross River State, and at the headquarters of the Nigerian Television Authority in Lagos - the employers of the researcher who also sponsored the study. All generously provided essential facilities which enhanced the research. Further, the Universities of Maiduguri and Calabar accorded the researcher the status of a Visiting Scholar throughout the nine months fieldwork.

1.12 Questionnaires

Two sets of questionnaires were used for the sampling : schedule I was administered on policy-makers and schedule II on prospective open university candidates. Both contained many identical questions designed to assess and test the relevance and the feasibility of an open university system in Nigeria (See Appendices 1.1.and 1.2) as perceived by the respondents. However, the questionnaires differed significantly in several areas. For instance, there were questions designed to assess policy-makers' preparedness to secure financial support for an open university in their personal and official capacities; their opinion on possible sources of funding an open university and the implications of the system for the country's uneven development of education. In contrast, the questionnaire for potential candidates focused on their motivation for home-based university level studies, their educational standard, income, housing, access to communication facilities, non-work activities and their preparedness to pay for open university studies - all designed to assess the availability of really capable students for the system.

In the final part, the questionnaires required both categories of respondents to evaluate broadcasting standards in Nigeria ; indicate their experience in correspondence education and to supply information on their personal background.

Also, both contained 'open' and 'closed' questions. The 'open-ended and closed' questions were for respondents to provide their own opinion in depth or to choose one of the answers listed which best met their opinion on such issues as appropriateness of open university models, description of distance education, technical problems for

university distance teaching and the basis for deciding beneficiaries of open university courses.

I appreciate the limitations of attitudes surveys particularly the possibility that some respondents with-hold certain facts or evade certain questions for one reason or another. It is in order to check such limitations that the questionnaires for the two sample groups included follow-up questions to ascertain the reasonableness of the reaction of the respondents.

1.13 Sampling for the questionnaires

Although sampling for the two sets of questionnaires was based on people that are literate, virtually all respondents had to be personally contacted. The more economic and convenient use of postal questionnaires for such a fairly large-scale survey was considered unwise and unrealistic in a country where postal services are unreliable. Most significant perhaps is that as a people, Nigerians attach great importance to personal contact. In consequence, people generally tended not to attend to written requests. The general attitude seems to be that important matters are normally taken up personally.

As the researcher found out during the fieldwork, even busy officials who had previously failed to respond to questionnaires left in their offices or home because they were out when first approached, usually made time available to participate in the survey in face-to-face situation. Therefore, given such circumstances, personal contact although costly and time-consuming, is probably the most appropriate basis for social survey research in Nigeria.

From the outset, the researcher decided to carry out the sampling of the policy-makers himself while the sampling of potential open university candidates was initially to be carried out by hired interviewers.

Subsequently, 15 students drawn from the Departments of Accountancy, Business Administration, English, Geography and Sociology at the University of Maiduguri were recruited and trained by the researcher on how to administer the interview questionnaires on prospective open university students. It became evident, however, in the second month of the sampling that most of the student interviewers were not dedicated. Only one of them was efficient, committed and following the guidelines for the categories of people to be sampled.

Beginning in January 1984 and for the rest of the fieldwork only the efficient student was retained while the services of the other 14 students were disposed of. Working virtually day and night, the researcher was able to sample all the policy-makers and a substantial proportion of the prospective students.

1.14 Strengths of the research

The researcher's own knowledge of Nigeria and experience in broadcasting proved most valuable to the research. For instance, awareness about the importance which the country attached to personal contacts enabled the researcher to adopt a business-like approach to the respondents, notably the policy-makers. Moreover, because of media exposure, most policy-makers knew the researcher either in person or by name. The major research advantage of this was ease of access to influential people in the country. In most cases, respondents agreed to see the researcher as soon as his complimentary card was shown or when told by their secretaries that he was personally around to see them.

Furthermore, to facilitate the research, formal procedures were adopted. Usually the researcher first telephoned to book an appointment where possible, or called at the policy-maker's office or home to ask personally for their participation in the survey. This necessitated keeping a diary of interview schedules stating dates, time and place of interview as well as the names of respondents. Interview appointments were religiously honoured by the researcher since he was fully aware that lateness or failure to do so could adversely affect the participation of policy-makers in the survey. Whenever there were going to be delays because a particular interview was running behind schedule or if changes had to be made due to some unforeseen circumstances, the researcher normally phoned the next respondent or sent a message to that effect. Additionally, care was always taken to ensure that at least three hours was allocated to each interview. The interview diary was always checked before entering new appointments and when there were going to be conflicts, the researcher explained this to the respondent. In practice, policy-makers were always willing to be interviewed at mutually agreed time in order not to disrupt appointments which had been entered in the diary.

Another interesting fieldwork experience was that most respondents did not object to the use of a tape recorder for accurate record of their response to the questionnaire. Again, as a routine, the researcher always carried spare copies of questionnaires to replace copies misplaced by respondents. Another useful fieldwork routine was to keep a list of respondents who had been given questionnaires for completion in their own time (self-interview), stating the date and the time to call again for collection. Although time-consuming, personal collection of completed questionnaires had several advantages. First, it ensured early returns. Secondly, it was

possible to check returns on-the-spot to ensure that all questions had been answered. For some, stamped envelopes ready-addressed to the researcher were provided to enable them to post the completed questionnaire as promised when they were contacted for participation in the survey. In contrast, the sampling of prospective students was less demanding. Basically, it involved visits to offices and residences (especially for housewives). Usually, when first approached, prospective students agreed to be interviewed on-the-spot. Some took the questionnaires home for self-interview and either returned them themselves or posted them in stamped envelopes ready-addressed to the researcher.

On the whole, the federal character and the diverse nature of the Nigerian society had one major advantage for the research. In reality, many states in the country are mini-Nigeria, particularly the northern states where people from virtually all states are to be found. In most of the key Federal Government establishments in the northern states, the majority of their staff are people from the educationally more advanced states in the southern part of the country - postal, electricity, railways, research institutes, Federal colleges, and universities are some of such establishments. Workers in the public and private sectors of the economy in many of the states also consist of Nigerians from most states in the Federation. This cross-fertilisation of the society enabled the survey to sample the opinion of Nigerians from all the 19 states without the researcher having to travel to every state in the country.

Nevertheless, to obtain the sample of policy-makers and potential open university candidates required for the survey, it was still necessary for the researcher to travel quite extensively in order to contact,

interview, hand over questionnaires for completion or to collect returns. Both proper organisation and patience is essential for fieldwork on this scale. But more than that, such research demands persistence and flexibility, particularly the readiness to carry out face-to-face interviews even at night, as was often required by some busy policy-makers.

1.15 Limitations of the study

The major limitations of the research are traceable to the period during which the fieldwork was carried out. For instance, the first phase of the research started shortly after the then ruling party in Nigeria - the National Party of Nigeria (NPN) which initiated the ill-fated National Open University of Nigeria had just won a landslide victory at the polls for a second term in office. During that period, there was a lot of political excitement in the country. For some people, the future of the NPN and its programmes, including the National Open University, seemed secure, at least for another four years before another general election. The implications of the political euphoria at the time are two-fold: respondents who either belonged to or supported the ruling party might have based their perception of the relevance and the feasibility of an open university on political grounds rather than their own views about the system. It was, therefore, possible that some of the respondents sampled in November and December 1983, were probably less critical in their assessment of perceived need and problems of an open university due to the political climate at the time.

On the other hand, some opponents of the ruling party might have responded negatively because they perceived the open university as a

partisan programme by their political rivals.

Another possible limitation during the initial stages of the research might result from the scepticism or the enthusiasm which normally accompany new projects. Because the fieldwork started just as the ill-fated National Open University had been officially recognized and was beginning to recruit its first intake of students, some of the respondents might have been either over enthusiastic in their perception or considered that it was premature to offer any informed opinion on a scheme which had not yet taken off.

The second and final part of the fieldwork (January - July 1984) also had limitations. This was the period after the military had taken over power from the political administration that established the Open University system. In addition, the new military administration were reviewing all on-going federal projects - hence the fate of the National Open University became uncertain right from January 1984. The research implication was that during this period, some respondents might have adopted a 'wait-and-see' attitude. In other words, it was likely that the change in government and the subsequent austerity measures introduced to rehabilitate the economy, could have led some respondents to be uncertain or reluctant in commenting on an open university in Nigeria. An indication of this was given by three policy-makers who, after accepting the questionnaires and promising to complete and post to the researcher, later returned them uncompleted, stating that the issue had been over-taken by events. One other limitation was that the whole project was the work of a single researcher and only one effective research assistant.

Finally, the cluster sampling method used could also have its limitations for the research as it is somewhat biased compared to a pure random sample but which was virtually impossible given the vast distances involved and the expensive costs in time and travel.

1.16 Data Consideration

Little or no previous research of this nature and scale is known to have been carried out in Nigeria. It is hoped that the results obtained from the survey (in Chapters 7 and 8) will form the basis of more studies to enhance the scope and relevance of university distance education in Nigeria.

It should be emphasized that this study is about the teaching role of the universities and of an open university in Nigeria. It is fully accepted, however, that universities have other roles in society besides their formal teaching functions. Hence, it is envisaged that an open university in Nigeria would make the maximum use of its diversity to be of benefit to the society other than through teaching. For example, its access to the media could be used not only to teach home-based learners who enrolled for open university programmes but also for the intellectual upliftment of the society as a whole. The society could also get more from an open university through research.

In this study it is not our intention to enter into a discussion about the curriculum of an open university in Nigeria but we are aware that the relevance of such a system and also its future success largely depended on its concern for the values and the needs of the society. In essence, an open university in Nigeria should strive to be a purveyor of indigenous values. Therefore, it is expected that its curriculum and research activities would reflect the people's cultural and religious ways of life including Islamic education.

CHAPTER 2NIGERIA: A POLITICAL, ECONOMIC AND EDUCATIONAL OUTLINE

This chapter is concerned with the social, economic and logistical factors which could foster or hinder an open university system in Nigeria. In order, therefore, to understand the context within which an open university would operate, we shall attempt first to give a general picture of Nigeria (including a picture of the educational position), then enquire into the following:

- (a) What factors have led, and may continue to lead to Federal Government control over education?
- (b) What are the factors behind disparities in the development of education in Nigeria?; and
- (c) What are the major challenges to Western education in traditional societies such as Borno and Cross River states of Nigeria?

The analysis of these and related issues will proceed from three viewpoints. In the first part of the chapter an attempt will be made to relate the general background of the country with the educational system. Part 2 will be concerned with the general background of Borno State and forces in the society which militate against effective expansion and provision of relevant educational services. The third part will focus on the social, economic and educational position in the Cross River State and the implications for an open university system.

1.1 The General Background to Nigeria and its educational system

With a land area of about 924,000 square kilometres (357,669 square miles), Nigeria is the twelfth largest country in Africa and one-tenth the size of the United States of America. The country lies within the tropics between latitudes 4° and 14° north of the Equator and longitudes 3° and 14° east of the Greenwich Meridian. (Nigeria: 1982:1)

Geographically, the land area of Nigeria encompasses all the major climatic conditions on the African continent. These are the mangrove swamp and rain forest of the Southern riverain areas; the grassland in the more temperate uplands of the central plateaux; and the dry steppes and desert conditions in the far northern areas.

As a political entity, Nigeria came into formal existence in 1914 with the amalgamation of the British-ruled Northern Protectorate and Southern Colony and Protectorates. The country became independent on 1 October, 1960 and became a Federal Republic on 1 October, 1963.

The Nigerian Federation of 19 States (see Map 1), is currently ruled by a military administration. Before the military intervention on 31 December, 1983, the country's constitution was a Presidential democracy, patterned after the American model. Previously from 1960 to 1980 there had been 6 years of civilian government on a "Westminster" model and 14 years of military rule.

Nigeria is a multi-ethnic society containing about 395 cultural and linguistic groups (Barbour, Oguntinyinbo, et. al. 1982: 47). There are, however, three main cultural and linguistic groups: Hausa-Fulani

concentrated in the north; Igbo in the south-east and Yoruba in the south-west respectively. Of these, the Hausa-Fulani within the borders of Nigeria number very substantially over 20 million.

Because none of the Nigerian languages has as yet emerged as a lingua franca, English is still the country's official language. It is also the language of instruction in all post-primary educational institutions throughout the country. In all, 40 Nigerian languages are used for broadcasting - 12 at the national and zonal levels, while 28 are used on State radio and television stations namely:

<u>National Radio/Television</u>	<u>Zonal Radio</u>	<u>State Radio/Television</u>
(Lagos):	(Enugu Zone):	(51 Stations in 19 States each using the major languages in their area):
Hausa	Igbo, Izon,	Angas, Ankwai, Annang,
Igbo	Efik and Tiv.	Babur-Bura, Bachama, Bade,
Yoruba	(Ibadan Zone):	Berom, Chamba, Chibok,
	Yoruba, Edo,	Ebira, Edo, Efik, Egon,
	Igala and Urhobo	Ekoi, Fulfulde, Gwari,
	(Kaduna Zone):	Hausa, Ibibio, Idoma,
	Hausa, Fulfulde,	Igala, Igbo, Ijaw, Ika
	Kanuri and Nupe.	(Agbor), Isoko, Itsekiri,
		Izon, Jukun, Kanuri, Karai-
		Karai, Kilba, Marghi,
		Ngizim, Nupe, Oron,
		Shuwa-Arab, Tera, Tiv,
		Urhobo, Yalla and Yoruba.

Source: Compiled from Federal Republic of Nigeria, Supplement to Official Gazette No. 12, Vol. 66, Part A46, Schedule 2, 8 March 1979. Lagos: Federal Government Printer; and from data obtained from radio and television stations throughout Nigeria.

1.2 Religion

Islam and Christianity are the main religions in Nigeria. There are no up-to-date figures on the adherents of the two religions but it is estimated that currently Muslims form about 60% of the total population. Within both religions there are sectarian divisions. The Catholic and a number of Protestant churches are active, as well as several syncretistic groups which mingle Christianity with indigenous religions. The main Islamic influence is Sunni, through the Maliki school, but there are adherents of the Tijjanniya Movement (especially in Kano) and some fundamentalist groups; the Ahmadiyya mission also has a presence.

1.3 Population

According to official projections, the population of Nigeria currently stands at above 97 million (Federal Office of Statistics 1981: 35). In 1981, roughly one in every five Africans was a Nigerian since it was estimated that there were then 485 million people on the African continent.

The actual size of the Nigerian population is, however, uncertain as there has been no acceptable census in the country since 1963. The current estimate is the result of extensive work by the National Population Bureau with offices throughout the country and by demographers based at Ibadan and Lagos, using the 1963 census result of 55.67 million and other indicators including school enrolments and election registration figures. Their estimates can be taken as reliable. According to these experts, the current annual population growth rate in Nigeria is between

2.8% and 3.7% (Mabogunje, 1985: 797). At this growth rate, Nigeria's population would be about 190 million by the year 2000, rising to 380 million by 2020 (Ibid).

Also, as in most developing countries, the largest proportion of the population in Nigeria consists of young people. For example, the estimated population for 1984 included almost 50% under the age of 18, while about 43% was believed to be under 15 years of age. Table 2.1 illustrates the predominance of young people in the Nigerian population and rural-urban distribution.

Table 2.1

Nigeria: Estimated Population By Age Group and
Rural-Urban Distribution, 1984

<u>Age Group</u>	<u>Total Both Sexes</u>	<u>%</u>
All Ages	95.6 million	100%
Under 6 years	19.6 million	20%
6 - 11 years	15.8 million	17%
12 - 17 years	11.7 million	12%
18 years and above	48.5 million	51%

Rural-Urban Population

Rural	80.2 million	84%
Urban	15.4 million	16%

Source: Federal Office of Statistics (1981): Digest of Statistics,
Vol. 28, Lagos: Federal Government Printer.

From the foregoing, it is clear that the population explosion and the predominance of young people in the society could have serious

implications for the future socio-economic development of Nigeria. One problem could be that, faced with declining financial resources on the one hand, and population explosion on the other, the government might find it difficult to provide adequate opportunities to cope with the number of people who should be undertaking higher education.

1.4 The Economy

Nigeria has abundant natural and mineral resources thus fundamentally, the economy is strong in terms of its potential. The country has rich agricultural land which supports a wide variety of crops and agriculture has always been the most important single activity in the Nigerian economy. In 1985, official Nigerian statistics showed that about 70% of the labour force was engaged in agriculture producing cattle, goats, poultry, fish and a variety of food and cash crops such as maize, guinea-corn, yam, cassava, plantains, rice, beans, sugar-cane and citrus fruits as well as cocoa, oil palm and kernels, groundnuts, cotton, rubber, tobacco, hides and skins and timber as materials for local industries and for export.

As Nigeria has a wide range of minerals, mining plays an increasingly important role in the country's economy. Among the mineral resources already in production are petroleum oil, iron, tin, columbite, limestone and coal. Industrial development has also been rapid and at present, there are well over 2,000 industrial establishments in the country.

In the 1970's, Nigeria enjoyed relative economic buoyancy when Federal and State budgets were greatly expanded. During the period, oil revenues increased significantly and thus replaced agriculture and other sources of revenue. For instance, oil revenues rose from 0.08%

of the country's total earnings in 1958-59 to 13.9% in 1967-68. By 1976-77, oil earnings had risen to 87.23%. In the period since 1980 when Nigeria started to accept less for its oil because of the glut in the world market, the export of crude petroleum has accounted for less foreign exchange earnings and Federally collected revenues because of the effect on customs and excise duties, profit tax and other sources of revenue. For example, in 1981, oil earnings dropped to 71.4%, in 1983 it was down to 62.4% and in 1985, government income from oil was 'only 60% of its total revenues' (Adigun, 1985:797).

Given Nigeria's great dependence on oil since the advent of the oil boom in the 1970's, the pace of development (including expansion of higher education), has been adversely affected by the sharp decline in national revenues from that source.

1.5 Beginnings of Western Education

Unlike indigenous Nigerian education which in a variety of forms is as old as the different societies that make up the country, or Islamic education which dates back to the eleventh century, Western-type education is a fairly recent phenomenon: it has existed in the country for only a little over 140 years. It was first introduced at Badagry, near Lagos on the western coast in southern Nigeria by Christian Missionaries, almost simultaneously with Christianity in the nineteenth century.

The early beginning of Western education and Christianity are summed up in these words by Fajana:

'Christianity was first introduced to Nigeria in response to the invitation of some Yoruba immigrants who wanted Missionaries to come and instruct them. Thomas Birch Freeman of the Wesleyan Methodist Missionary

Society landed in Badagry from the Gold Coast (now Ghana) in 1842 and immediately established a Mission. The enthusiasm with which he was received encouraged another Mission, the Church Missionary Society, to send a party the same year. By 1846 Christianity had been planted also in Abeokuta and between 1842 and 1900, attempts had been made by various other Missions to establish themselves in various parts of the country including parts of Northern Nigeria.

With the introduction of Christianity, Western-type of education naturally followed as it was a common strategy that as soon as a station was established, one of the first facilities to be provided was a school to which they tried to recruit young ones who, it was believed, would be more easily attracted...

Parents favoured the schools more than the religion because of the opportunity of learning useful skills, such as reading and writing of English and Portuguese, Arithmetic, which the schools provided. These skills were very useful in the trading activities with Europeans' (Fajana, 1976: 19-20).

Like the Yoruba people of Badagry, Lagos and Abeokuta in the West, the people of Calabar and other Eastern parts of Nigeria showed enthusiasm for Western education when the Missionaries pioneered schools in their areas in the 1840's: they saw modern education as something which could promote their business.

The warm reception given to the Missionaries in the Southern areas and the people's perception of education as something useful for their well-being, enabled Western education to progress rapidly in southern Nigeria. For forty years (1842-1882), school education in Nigeria was the monopoly of the Missionaries.

Because the aim of early western education was religious, it was 'intensely denominational and shallow in content. For the children the system emphasized proficiency in reading and writing while adult converts were taught to read the Bible, the prayer book and to sing hymns'. (Taiwo, 1980: 11).

However, from all indications, it would appear that in the first four decades, both the Missionaries and the Colonial government which gave grants for schools, were contented with the products of the system. They served the missionaries as an instrument of evangelism (teachers and preachers in the church) while the Colonial government employed them as clerks, interpreters and in other minor posts to consolidate their administration in the Delta area, Lagos and Yorubaland. The products later became notable leaders in various fields among their people and nationally.

It should be observed, however, that the impact of missionary education in Nigeria was not uniform but somewhat divided. They came from a variety of churches, Catholic, Protestants of varying types, with different educational theories and these had different impacts on curriculum (e.g. different standard spelling systems for the same language).

The following section traces the major factors which led to State intervention in Nigerian education and the subsequent development and organisation of the system.

1.6 State intervention, organisation and administration of Education in Nigeria

The first state intervention in education in Nigeria occurred in 1882 when an Ordinance for the Promotion and Assistance of Education was promulgated by the Colonial administration. (Taiwo, Ibid: 11). The major objectives of the government intervention were two-fold; response to public criticism of missionary schools and education; and fulfilment of a promise to provide effective education for the people. As well documented by scholars such as Ajayi (1965); Graham (1966); and Ogunsola (1974), complaints about deficiencies in early missionary education were voiced from various groups in the society. For example, traders were critical of the narrow and extremely religious education given by the missionaries. Some pressure groups felt concerned that the schools, often the same buildings as the churches, were 'ill-equipped and that the bulk of their teachers were untrained. The nationalists were also critical of the relevance and quality of missionary education to the African.

One of the first actions on the 1882 Education Ordinance was the classification of schools into:

- (i) Government schools (maintained entirely by public funds; and
- (ii) Assisted schools (established by private or voluntary agencies and aided from public funds).

Also, for the first time, the government accepted responsibility for curriculum, schools inspection, examination and issuance of certificates.

Subsequently, various laws were enacted giving government

more powers to control the development of education, including the Education Ordinance No. 3 of 1887 for the promotion of education in the Colony of Lagos and Education Proclamation, No. 19 of 1903 in respect of Southern Nigeria which led to the introduction of Secondary, teacher training and vocational institutions.

Because of the people's enthusiasm for education and the government's participation, Western education found a fertile soil in Southern Nigeria from which it progressed rapidly. On the other hand, in the predominantly Islamic northern parts of Nigeria, Western education started rather later than in the Southern areas and its progress was impeded largely due to religious and cultural resistance to the system. This emanated from fears among some Muslim communities who viewed western education as an encroachment of Nasaranci (Christianity and Western values) upon their religion and way of life. Thus, although Holy Trinity School was established in Lokoja, Northern Nigeria by the Church Missionary Society as early as 1865 and was followed much later by Saint John's School, Bida in 1904 (Intelligencer, cited in Ogunlade, 1982), few western type schools were opened in the North in the first seventy years of the development of formal education in Nigeria. For British security reasons, the Colonial Government initially forbade the activities of Christian Missionaries in the Islamic parts of Northern Nigeria. The Colonial Governor-General, Sir Frederick Lugard had pledged at the time that the Government would not allow any interference with the religion of the people. Instead, Lugard promised that he would 'use the existing institutions and improve them in the government of the people'. (Waniko, 1961: 4).

It was only in 1910 that the Government established a Department of Education for Northern Nigeria while in the national context, the first legislation on education in the north was the Education Ordinance of 1916 which introduced a dual system by which the Government gave full co-operation to the missions, increased its financial support and exercised a measure of control over education as a whole' (Taiwo, 1980: 4). In spite of these measures, however, the progress of Western type education in the north was very limited, compared with the Southern areas. Apart from the late start, the Colonial Government's ban on missionary activities in the North was interpreted as a confirmation of the suspicion among Muslims that Western education was un-Islamic. Hence, when Christian missionaries were later allowed to operate in non-Islamic areas in the North while Government and Local Authorities assumed responsibility for running schools in the predominantly Islamic areas, 'many parents could not be convinced that absorption of Western education would not automatically lead to conversion from Islam to Christianity'. (Osuntokun, 1982: 1). This antipathy to Western education in the North and the head start by the South were the main factors which led to, and continues to lead to uneven development of education in Nigeria.

As time went on, successive Governments in Nigeria assumed greater control over education. Gradually, responsibility for all the tiers of education (primary, secondary, higher/further education) became a tripartite partnership of the three tiers of Government (Federal, State and Local Authorities). However, as Figure 2.1 shows, it is the Federal Government that bears most of the responsibility for setting

educational policy and also for finance, curriculum and inspection. Figure 2.2 shows the structure of formal education evolved during the Colonial period and which is just being replaced by a new 6-3-3-4 system of education (see Figure 2.3), which will be fully explored in the next chapter.

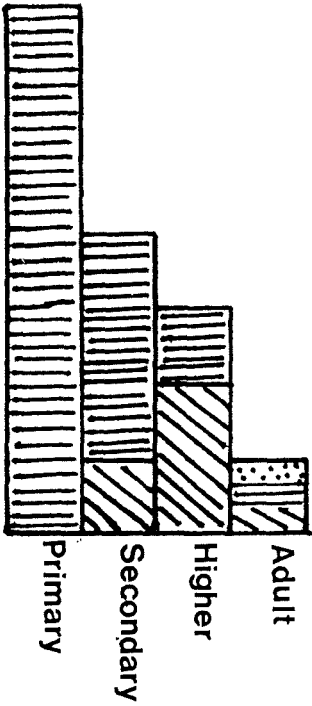
More recently, various Nigerian Government administrations felt increasingly compelled to control public financing, planning and development of education with the belief that well balanced programmes of education are vital to meaningful progress and national unity in a culturally-diverse society. It is this belief that led to the introduction of the Universal Primary Education (UPE) Scheme in 1976 and the subsequent large-scale expansion in secondary and higher education in the country. These developments will be fully explored in Chapter 3.

In addition, successive Nigerian Governments recognised that the imbalances in the development of education in the country was a serious matter which is fraught with dangers for national unity and stability, if allowed to persist (e.g. regional domination by the more developed Southern States). To reduce the gap between the educationally more advanced Southern States and the educationally backward States (mostly located in the North), special attention was given to broadening access to higher education for people from the backward areas to reduce the existing gaps.

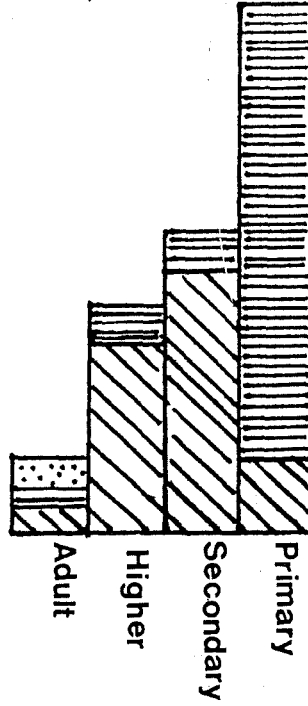
For example, the response by the oldest northern based University - Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria was to pioneer a pre-degree institution: School of Basic Studies in 1970, devoted to the preparation of more students from the educationally disadvantaged states to qualify for

Control, Finance and Management of Education in Nigeria

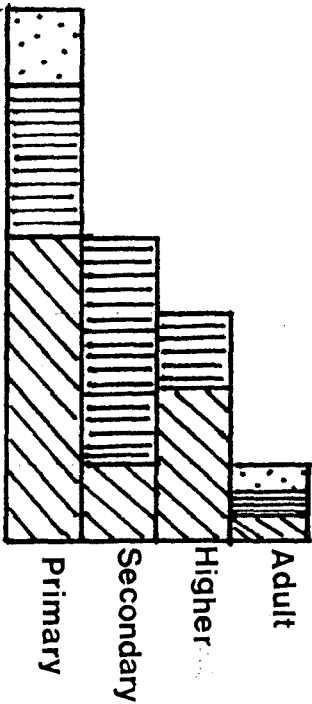
INSPECTION



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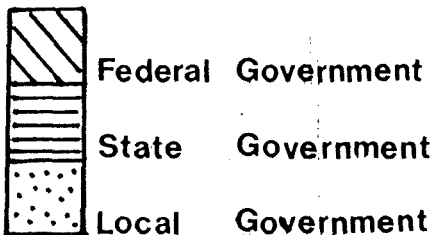
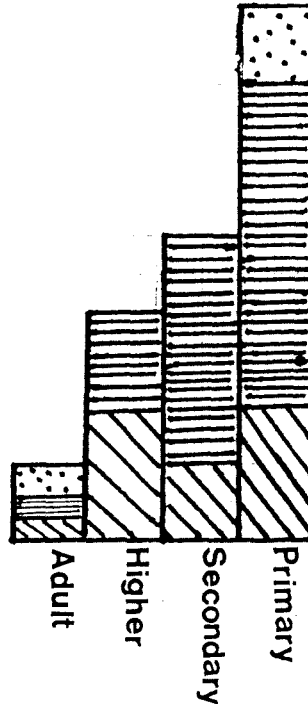


Figure 2.2

OLD STRUCTURE OF FORMAL EDUCATION SYSTEM IN NIGERIA, 1972.

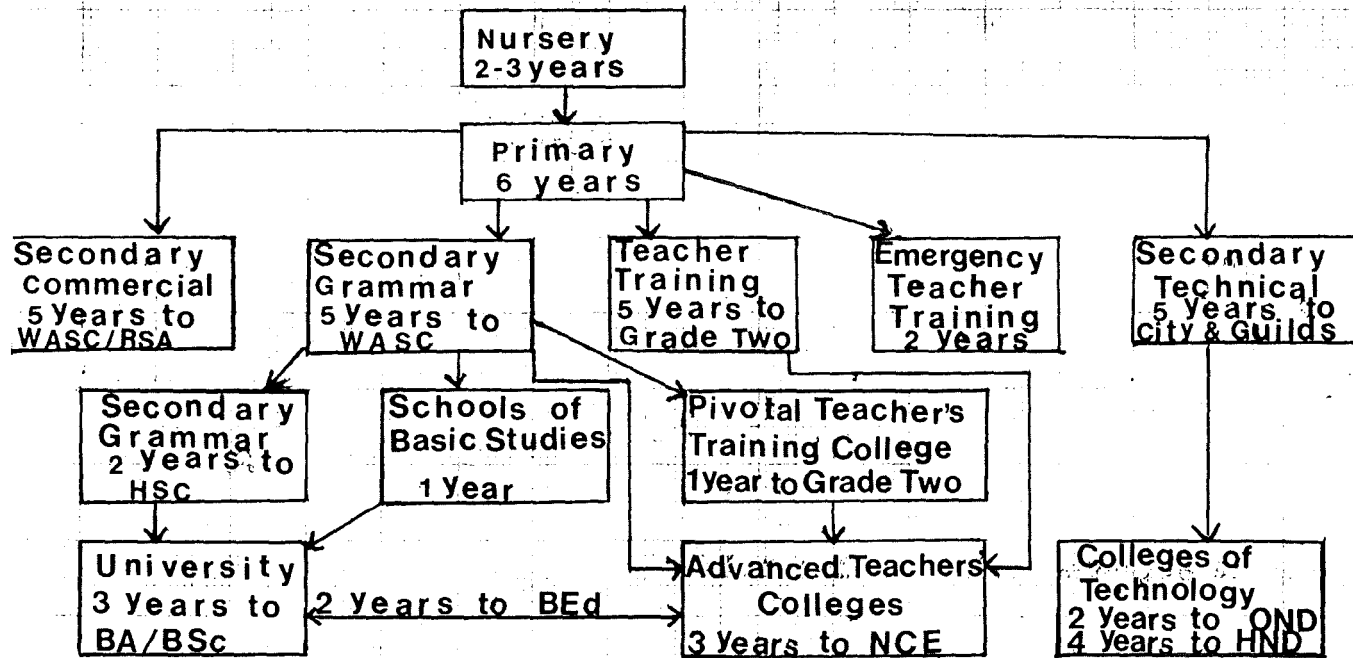
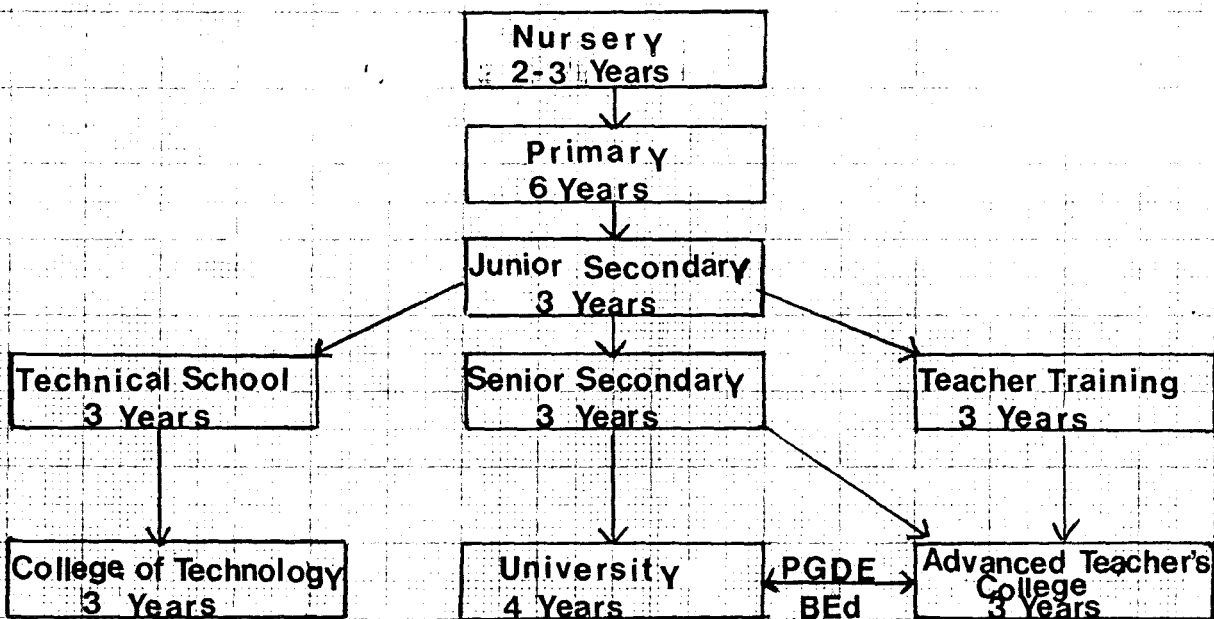


Figure 2.3

NEW STRUCTURE FOR THE FORMAL EDUCATION SYSTEM IN NIGERIA, 1982.



In September, 1976, the Federal Government launched a programme of Universal Primary Education (UPE) in Nigeria. The new structure was designed to take-off in September, 1982 with the first out-put from the UPE Scheme. One of the key elements in the new structure is the extension of the secondary level to enable children to remain in the system for longer and thus acquire more knowledge and greater maturity to be more employable. It was also designed to enable students to make more mature decisions on their future course of study.

admission into degree courses. The programme consists of 18 to 24 months leading to a nationally recognised examination (i.e. Higher Joint Matriculation Examinations). From all indications, the Basic Studies programme has had a great impact on Nigerian education, particularly in the disadvantaged States as it helped to open university education to a lot of people who might otherwise not have access to higher education mainly due to poor performance in school certificate examinations.

By 1977, eleven other Schools of Basic Studies had been opened for the educationally backward states. Nine of the pre-degree institutions were located in the Northern States and two in educationally disadvantaged Southern States (Cross River and Rivers). Although funded by the Federal Government, the schools are controlled by the State Governments which also controlled their admissions policy. More recently, four-year degree programmes were introduced by Ahmadu Bello University and other universities in the educationally disadvantaged States, also to open up university education for more candidates lacking qualifications for direct entry to the normal three-year degree programmes.

In spite of all these efforts, however, the educational imbalance among the States has shown no sign of abating. While the imbalances largely result from the historical developments outlined in the preceding pages, part of the cause could be traced to inadequacies in secondary schools in the disadvantaged areas. Often, these are too few, poorly staffed and ill-equipped.

From the foregoing background, it could be argued that since the imbalance in Nigerian education is recognised as a danger to national unity, innovative alternatives to the formal system such as an open university provision of education might help to ameliorate the situation. For example, an open university might help people who do not even apply to conventional universities from the Northern States because of physical distances. Alternatively, an open university might be used for basic studies as a way of helping to up-grade more candidates from the disadvantaged areas to qualify for full-time degree programmes.

One other important argument for using an open university provision for basic studies relates to the fact that such programmes could be undertaken by either Federal or State Governments or both, since (as indicated in Figure 2.1) responsibility for higher education in Nigeria is constitutionally vested in both Federal and State authorities despite previous attempts to keep Federal control over tertiary education. Prior to the country's independence in 1960, university education was Federally-controlled. Shortly after independence, however, and following political pressure, the former Eastern, Northern and Western Regions were allowed to establish their own Universities (Nsukka, Zaria and Ife) to cater for their needs. During the mid-seventies, the military authorities of the time once more placed university education under Federal control, but the position was again reversed in 1981, during the country's brief experiment with the multi-party system of Presidential democracy, to allow State Governments to establish their own universities and other

tertiary institutions.

In the next chapter we shall focus on the expansion of higher education and the challenges of the complex social, economic and cultural characteristics of Nigeria. As what follows on Borno and Cross River States will show, there are also regional and state peculiarities which present different demand and problems for broadening access to higher education in the country.

2.1 The General Background to Borno State and the educational position

Borno State occupies the greater part of the Chad Basin in the north-eastern corner of Nigeria (see Map 2). The State shares borders with the Republics of Niger in the North; Chad to the north-east and Cameroon in the East. The State was created in 1975 when the old North-Eastern State of Nigeria was divided into Borno, Bauchi and Gongola States. There are 18 Local Government areas in the State (see Map 2).

Borno has a long tradition of culture and also of contacts with Eastern Civilization. For instance, Borno was the gateway for the introduction of Islam to Nigeria in the 11th Century (Fafunwa, 1974: 54), just as Badagry was for the introduction of Christianity during the 19th Century. In other words, Islam reached Borno some 750 years before Christianity reached the West Coast of Nigeria and about 800 years before Western education reached the Northern part of Nigeria.

Borno is an ancient Kingdom which in one form or another, has maintained its existence for more than one thousand years. As a

Kingdom its boundaries are not coterminous with the present state boundaries; special problems are caused because there are Borno people in Niger and Chad republics.

In land area, Borno is the largest of all the 19 States in Nigeria. It comprises about 117,000 square kilometres, representing about 13% of the land area of Nigeria. At present, the population of Borno State is estimated at between 4.1 million (Federal Office of Statistics, 1982: 35) and 5.9 million (Borno State Statistics Division, 1982: 65).

The population of Borno is predominantly rural: 78% live in rural areas, compared with 22% urban population. Maiduguri, the State capital is now believed to contain 7% of the urban population; in 1980, the State Executive Council accepted a report from the State Statistics Division that the population of Maiduguri Metropolitan was 700,000 rather than the previous estimate of about half a million.

Culturally, Borno State has a variety of linguistic groups, of which the largest are the Kanuri, Shuwa-Arab, Babur-Bura, Karai-Karai, Bolewa and Bade. Others include Marghi, Ngizim and Hausa-Fulani. The people of Borno State are predominantly Muslims, though there are quite a number of Christians, mostly from the Southern areas of the State, including Biu Local Government Area, where rural respondents were sampled for this study. (Map 2).

Biu in the South-western corner of Borno State, has an estimated population of 455,988 while Biu town, the Headquarters of the Local Government Area, has a population of about 54,000. In terms of educational development, Biu is the second most important area in Borno

State after Maiduguri - the State Capital. It is also strategically located with a number of major roads crossing at the Local Government Headquarters, including the Calabar - Maiduguri road which is part of the proposed Trans-African Highway.

2.2 Occupations and the Economy

Borno is an agriculture State, hence the majority of the people are farmers, herdsman and fishermen, producing cattle, camels, goats, sheep, fish, poultry and a variety of food and cash crops. The main agricultural products are beans, maize, guinea-corn, rice, wheat and cassava. Cash crops produced in the State are mainly groundnuts and cotton.

The State has the largest animal population in Nigeria and contributes about N140 million annually to the national income of the country through production, supply and export of livestock by-products such as hides and skins (Borno State Fourth National Development Plan, 1981-85: 29). A variety of animal products are also produced and sold within and outside the State, such as milk, butter and leather.

Furthermore, gum arabic is tapped in the Northern parts of the State for export.

On the whole, about 70% of the population live by subsistence agriculture or, in the Northern parts of Borno, as pastoralists and fishermen, under harsh natural conditions. This is mainly because the Northern areas of Borno lie within the Sahel Belt where the rainy season is usually only three months (July to September). Apart from frequent droughts, conditions in these areas are exacerbated by desert-

like terrain and sand dunes. In contrast, the southern part of the State is largely upland, well-watered and fertile. Here, the rains usually start in April and end in October.

Traditional manufacturing is an important economical activity in Borno State, especially leather and feather work, cap-making, weaving, pottery and burntbrick-making. The major traditional products - shoes, fancy sandals and slippers, leather pouffes and cushions, leather mats, handbags, wallets and decorated caps are sold all over Nigeria for daily wear, decorations or for gifts.

Borno has a major role as a trading centre for the Chad Basin area. Thus for long, trading has been a major occupation. There are, therefore, well-established markets in Maiduguri and around the State, built around goods and products that are unique to Borno such as smoked fish, calabash and water melon from the Lake Chad; salt, potash, leather goods and livestock. For example, Maiduguri has one of the largest cattle markets in Nigeria from where they are transported to the Southern States.

Additionally, the State capital - Maiduguri has a key role as a rail-head, an international airport and the junction for major road networks to neighbouring countries and also to important centres in Nigeria. As a rail-head, Maiduguri handles the transportation of livestock, animal by-products, processed fish, food and cash crops as well as traditionally manufactured products from the North-eastern zone to other parts of Nigeria. Similarly, imported goods for the far Northern areas and for neighbouring land-locked Republic of Chad, and

export commodities from these areas are usually transported through Borno.

In relation to air transport, Maiduguri International Airport provides the main link between the States in the north-eastern corner and the rest of Nigeria. It is also used for the airlift of people from the North-Eastern States to Saudi Arabia for the annual pilgrimage. Postal and telecommunications, electricity and electronic media networks are also fairly developed in the State.

Other modern sector occupations include persons in civil, State and Local Government services, armed forces, university and State branches of Federal institutions (e.g. teaching hospital, agricultural and research institutes, airports authority, Nigeria Airways, power and telecommunications, postal services, customs and excise and Nigerian Television Authority which is also the Zonal Headquarters for the North-eastern areas). Most of the occupations in these institutions require at least secondary education - hence they could be some of the likely clients for an open university system in the State. There are also a number of modern industries and services: cement and burnt bricks factories; door and window frames; nail and wire; and furniture. Others include food processing and manufacturing industries such as bakeries; corn, rice and flour mills; fruit and soft drinks factories as well as hotels and catering rest houses, where most of the jobs also require secondary-level education.

2.3 Western education in Borno State

Borno State in the extreme north-eastern corner of Nigeria is over 1500 kilometres from the western coast where Western-type of

education was first introduced to the country in 1842. Because the system spread from the coast to the upland, Borno State was one of the last areas of Nigeria to have access to Western education.

Taking Nigeria as a whole, Borno State has been and is still the least prosperous of all the States in the development of education. For example, the first post-primary institution in Borno (Waka Teachers College), was established in the non-Islamic southern part of the State by the Church of the Brethren Mission, only in 1952 while the first publicly funded secondary school - Government Girls Secondary School, Maiduguri was established in 1963 (Directory of Post Primary Institutions, 1983:19-54). As will be seen in the section which follows, Borno State was nearly 60 years behind Southern States such as the Cross River in the development of post-primary education.

Within the State, educational gaps exist between the southern areas which are predominantly non-Islamic and educationally more conscious and the predominantly Islamic northern areas of Borno where 70% of the population live. Nationally, Borno State suffers two types of educational backwardness: first, it lags behind virtually all the educationally backward Northern States; and secondly, it lags behind all States in the country in terms of absolute and percentage enrolment in primary, secondary, teacher training and higher education. The position will become clear in the next chapter when statistical evidence will be displayed on the performance of the States in higher education.

While the position of Borno is partly the result of historical development, part of the cause could be due to geographical, cultural,

economic and religious factors. Geographically, Borno State is the most sparsely populated in the country: a population density of only 40 per square kilometre, compared with 846 in Lagos State; 485 in Imo; 318 in Anambra and 208 in Kano. Obviously, for a State as vast and sparsely populated as Borno, adequate provision of educational facilities could be a complex and expensive matter. So far, in spite of the alleged introduction of Universal Primary Education (UPE), only 45% out of an estimated primary school age population (6 - 11 years) of about 1 million are enrolled into primary schools, while just 3.8% of all Nigerian students in university education are from Borno State although it is the 8th most populous state in the country.

Another important obstacle to effective expansion and relevant educational provision concerns the entrenchment of Islam in Borno since the 11th century as well as the economic circumstances of many people who live in the northern areas of the State by subsistence agriculture or as pastoralists and fishermen under harsh natural conditions outlined at the beginning of this section). For example, it has been established that:

The prevailing natural conditions in Northern Borno, coupled with Islamic religious beliefs made the majority of the population to be "anti-Western education". This has affected grassroot population's concern for school education... There is evidence of sub-terranean campaign against Western-type education by some Koranic Malams (teachers). It is being alleged that these Koranic Malams entertain the fear of being swallowed by the school system!

(Report of Panel on Education, 1984: 6).

In addition, some resist Western education due to reasons of plain self-sufficiency. For instance, some parents prevent their children

from attending schools in order to use child labour for the well-being of their family (e.g. fetching water from distant sources, tending animals, working on the farms, fishing or processing fish). Another aspect of the resistance is rooted in strong cultural beliefs such as withdrawal of girls from secondary schools or teacher training colleges to give out in arranged marriages.

The official reaction to the disadvantaged position of Borno State and the adverse effects of meaningful socio-economic progress, has been to give priority attention to educational development. For instance, Borno's educational strategy during the 3rd National Development Plan, 1975-80, centred on the reduction of the educational gap between Borno and other States in Nigeria. Some of the set educational targets during the Plan periods were:

1. The establishment of 100 secondary schools so that a transition rate of 70% from primary into all phases of secondary education would be attained under the new national education system of 6-3-3-4 (see Figure 2.2). However, to date, the State has a transition rate of 42% from primary to post-primary.
2. The production of 300 trained middle level manpower (technicians) annually to be achieved by expanding and establishing post junior secondary technical colleges to complement the training of the State's Polytechnic; and
3. The training of adequate indigenous teachers for primary and secondary levels through expansion of

teacher training colleges, expansion of the State College of Education and the establishment of new Colleges of Education.

In sheer numbers, Borno has made large strides of expansion and intake increases, particularly in the last one decade and a half since reducing the educational gap between it and other States became the educational strategy. Table 2.2 illustrates the numerical expansion in education in Borno State:

Table 2.2

Educational Institutions and Enrolments
in Borno State 1976-84

Level	1976/77		1980/81		1983/84	
	No. of Schools	Enrolment	No. of Schools	Enrolment	No. of Schools	Enrolment
Primary	1,578	221,760	1,785	338,230	1,874	398,327
Secondary (All phases)	33	13,366	73	39,120	107	98,660
Tertiary/Polytechnic and Colleges of Education, Basic Studies (Islamic & Legal Studies)	-	-	3	3,000	4	4,750

- Sources: 1. Education in Borno State: A Brief (1983): Maiduguri: Ministry of Education pp 10-20.
2. Report of Panel on Education(1984), Maiduguri: Government Printer, pp 47-58.

In addition, the number of Borno State students awarded scholarships for various courses in higher education in Nigerian Universities and

overseas institutions, increased from 1,557 in 1979, to 6,496 in 1983 (Education in Borno State, 1983: 25).

However, the seemingly large strides of expansion and intake increases were apparently inadequate for Borno State to catch up with other States in Nigeria because as will be shown in the subsequent chapter, increases in education in other States were far ahead of the achievements made by Borno State. Furthermore, Borno's position was weakened by high rates of failure by its candidates in school certificate and other national examinations which determine access to higher education. For some time the overall pass rate for Borno State candidates in the school certificate examinations has not exceeded 20% which is extremely poor compared with success rates of between 85% - 95% by candidates from the educationally more advanced States such as Imo.

On the whole, available evidence shows that, over the last five years, education in Borno State had actually declined due to the kinds of religious, cultural and economic factors mentioned earlier, and also because of financial constraints such as under-provision of funds, inadequate infrastructural and instructional facilities - a phenomenon which seems common in Nigerian education and largely the result of the recession.

From the foregoing, it seems clear that to catch up educationally with the rest of Nigeria, Borno State would have to pay more attention to the elimination of the socio-economic and religious factors in the society which militate against educational development. It would also

appear that massive remedial educational programmes such as basic studies provided through an open university system might be useful in up-grading those leaving secondary schools with poor results - thus increase the number of Borno State candidates in university education.

We can now turn to an examination of the characteristics of Cross River State and its educational position to shed some light on the general problems of education in Nigeria.

3.1 The General Background to Cross River State and the educational position

The Cross River State is situated between latitude $4^{\circ}30'$ and $7^{\circ}.00'$ north and longitude $7^{\circ}.30'$ and $8^{\circ}.30'$ on the southern end and $8^{\circ}.15'$ and $9^{\circ}.30'$ on the northern end, thereby resembling a twisted oblong. (Statistical Digest, 1984: 1). The administrative areas of the State and the sampling areas for this study are shown in Map 3.

The State was first created in 1967 as the South-Eastern State out of the old Eastern Region of Nigeria. In 1975, it was renamed the Cross River State after the Cross River which is the most important geographical feature in the area.

Cross River State and in particular, Calabar, the Capital - has a long tradition of culture and also of contacts with Western civilization. It is widely believed that the joint estuaries of Calabar River and Cross River, being a natural waterway, encouraged early trade with Europeans.

The Calabar River, reputed for its calm waters around Duke Town

and Diamond Hill, offered a good natural harbour to Portuguese traders who are believed to have started trading with the peoples of the area as early as the 15th century. With the contact came some knowledge of European languages and some literacy. It is known, for instance, that there were some Calabar traders who could write in English as early as the 18th century (Forde 1956: 79-115). In addition, a number of distinguished scholars have established that the merchant kings of Calabar kept diaries of important state occasions in "good English" and that they were Westernised enough to employ Europeans as clerks to organise their business accounts (MacFarlane, 1946: 98-109; Ajayi, 1965: 133, and Latham, 1973: 107). Since then, there has been continued European and Indian influence in Cross River State.

In land area, the Cross River State is about 17,800 square kilometres, thus representing about 5% of the land area of the Nigerian Federation. Currently, the population of the Cross River State is estimated at 5.7 million which is roughly 6% of the population of Nigeria.

Like the rest of the country, the population in the Cross River is predominantly rural: 86% live in rural areas (i.e. a greater proportion than in Borno State), compared with an urban population of 14%. There are 17 Local Government Areas in Cross River, as against 18 in Borno State.

Also, like Borno State, the Cross River State consists of diverse cultural and linguistic groups. The main groups are Ibibio, Annang, Ekoi, Efik, Andoni, Yalla, Ukelle and Ejagham.

the State is strongly Christian as Borno is Moslem and has been a centre for Christian activity since the influence of missionaries reached the area in 1846.

Calabar, the State Capital, has since the nineteenth century been one of the most important cosmopolitan centres for commerce and western education in West Africa. Administratively, Calabar enjoyed prominence going back to the middle of the nineteenth century when a British Consul, Commander John Beecroft, made it a base taking care of British commercial interests, and more so between 1849-1906 when it was the capital of Southern Nigeria (Umozurike, 1984: 1), that is, long after Lagos was colonised in 1862.

Uyo Local Government area where the rural respondents for Cross River State were sampled for this study, lies in the South-West of the State (Map 3). Educationally and commercially, Uyo is the second most populous area in the State - a population of 377,000, compared with about 391,000 in and around the Calabar Metropolitan area.

Many key State institutions are located in Uyo, including the University of Cross River, State College of Education, Cross River state Television and Cross River Champion Breweries.

3.2 Occupations and the economy

Agriculture is the mainstay of the economy of the Cross River. The majority of the population is engaged in agriculture, producing plain-tains, yam, rice, maize, beans, palm oil, palm kernels, cocoa, benniseed, soya beans, groundnuts and cattle. Others are fish, poultry, pigs and goats. One of the largest cattle ranches in Nigeria is at Obudu in

the northern part of the State.

Cross River is one of the wettest places in Nigeria, with rainfall usually from February to November. Its forestry products include timber from various woods, rubber and also palm wine.

A substantial proportion of the population is engaged in traditional manufacturing and crafts such as boat and canoe-making. The people of Cross River are also widely known throughout Nigeria for raffia work, carving and weaving.

In the modern sector, there are four key employment areas in the Cross River State. These are:

1. Persons in civil, state and local government services, armed forces, police, customs and excise, gas, water, electricity and communication services where most of the occupations require secondary-level education.
2. Major manufacturing industries, plantations, mills and personal services namely:
 - (i) Cross River Champion Breweries;
 - (ii) Calabar Cement Company;
 - (iii) Serwood Industries (roofing sheets);
 - (iv) Pepper Manufacturing Company (soft drinks);
 - (v) Systems Metal Company (drain-pipes);
 - (vi) Paper Mill (timber); and
 - (vii) Calabar Forest Estate (Plantation); and
 - (viii) Metropolitan Hotel, Calabar.

Most of the products manufactured from the industries listed above,

especially Champion beer, soft drinks, timber, drain-pipes and roofing sheets are sold all over Nigeria. Most of the occupations in these industries and services require basic secondary education - hence they could be some of the likely users of an open university in the State.

3. Persons engaged in light industries mainly vegetable and oil milling, bakery, wooden furniture and fixtures, printing and rubber processing.

4. The docks are also among the key areas of modern-sector employment in the Cross State. Calabar now has a modern 8-berth harbour and is linked with the hinterland through a new road-bridge. At present, Calabar is the fourth most important port in Nigeria and handles most of the imports and exports of the Northern States in the eastern corner of the country.

3.3 The development of Western education in Cross River State

Cross River was among the first areas of Nigeria to have access to Western-type education. The Presbyterian Mission (United Free Church of Scotland), arrived in Calabar in 1846, just four years after Thomas Birch Freeman of the Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society reached Badagry on the West Coast of Nigeria.

The first primary school in the Cross River was established in Creek Town, Calabar in 1847, with others opened shortly afterwards in

Duke Town, Calabar and slightly further to the north of the Cross River.

Later, agitation by Calabar rulers, for better education to qualify their children for new positions in the Colonial administration and expanding commercial enterprises, led to the founding in 1895 of Hope Waddell Training Institution in Calabar as the first post-primary institution in Nigeria. Hope Waddell served the whole of West Africa, producing pastors, teachers, technicians and clerks. Many Nigerian leaders, including the first indigenous Governor-General and President (Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe), attended Hope Waddell before going abroad for university degrees. At the beginning of this century, 'Calabar had more than 700 pupils in schools making it the third most advanced area of Nigeria after Lagos and Abeokuta'. (Afigbo, 1968: 197-225).

Like other States in Nigeria, the most rapid growth in the number of educational institutions and student enrolments in Cross River took place after the creation of States in 1967 and during the oil boom of the 1970s. Today, the Cross River is one of eight states in Nigeria which have their own universities in addition to Federally-funded universities in their areas. Other State tertiary institutions in the Cross River are:

1. State Polytechnic
2. Hope Waddell Training Institution
3. College of Technology
4. Colleges of Education (2)
5. Institute of Accountancy and Business Management
6. School of Arts and Design

7. School of Arts and Science; and
8. Institute of Mass Communications and Technology.

However, from all indications, the majority of Cross River people who had an early exposure to Western education, were not quick to take advantage of going beyond the first two stages (primary and secondary education). A widely held view within the State attributed this state of affairs to the scope of education at the time. For example, because school education placed emphasis on the English language, most students acquired a reasonably good level of comprehension and spoken English even after the first stage. Consequently, in the period prior to the 1950s, most of those who received secondary education felt that they were well educated because they could command reasonably good jobs and had no need for higher education.

Survey research in the Cross River, clearly established that there is a lot of enthusiasm for part-time education in the State, particularly among people who realised in later years that they did not remain in school long enough during their youth.

Today, nearly one and a half centuries after the introduction of Western education in Cross River, the State is official recognised as one of twelve states in Nigeria which are educationally disadvantaged. Nine of such states are located in the northern areas of the country (Bauchi, Benue, Borno, Gongola, Kaduna, Kano, Niger, Plateau and Sokoto which had a late start in education). On the other hand, Cross River and the other disadvantaged states in the South (Lagos and Rivers) are all on the Coast and had early exposure to Western education. In

these areas, one important obstacle to educational development is rooted in their geographical situation. They are all riverain areas where most of the population live in small scattered fishing and island communities - many of them inaccessible by land. Therefore, despite its long exposure to Western education, many rural areas in the Cross River State do not have an easy access to secondary schools which are located mostly in urban centres.

Furthermore, as in Borno State, standards of education appear to have fallen in the Cross River State in recent years; their candidates do not seem to do well in the School Certificate examinations which determine access to higher education. For example, poor performance in the School Certificate examinations in the State, made it imperative for the University of Calabar to introduce Remedial (pre-degree) programmes. So far, the University of Calabar is the only Federally-funded Nigerian University located in the Southern parts of the country to have such a programme, compared to nearly all Federal universities in the Northern areas of the country.

From the evidence available, the main constraints on Cross River State candidates for University admission, are poor passes in English and Mathematics in the School Certificate and GCE Advanced Level examinations. If there are no credits in these subjects, candidates do not qualify for University admission; thus many candidates are each year rejected for admission to degree programmes.

Another major constraint on the efficacy of Western education, which is widely acknowledged by experts in the Cross River concerns lack of

trained and dedicated teachers. According to the Commissioner for Education at the time of the fieldwork for this study there were 13,163 unqualified teachers in the primary school system in the State during the 1984/85 session. (Henshaw, 1984:1). This means that 55% of the 24,000 primary school teachers in the State did not have the minimum teaching qualification in Nigeria, that is, Teachers' Grade II Certificate.

Table 2.3 below compares the educational position in Borno and Cross River States.

Table 2.3

Comparison of educational institutions and enrolments in Borno and Cross River States of Nigeria, 1983

State	Primary			Secondary		University Candidates (JAMB)	
	No. of Schools	No. of Classes	Enrolment	No. of Schools	Enrolment	No. of Applicants	No. offered University Places and % of applicants
Borno	1,874	12,522	398,327	107	98,660	1,117	237 (21%)
Cross River	1,660	22,474	868,484	305	191,246	11,084	1,360 (12%)

Source: Compiled from data obtained from the Ministries of Education in the two States and also from the Joint Admissions and Matriculation Board (JAMB), Lagos.

3.4 Conclusion

It can be seen from the above table that there is something wrong with the Western education provision in both Borno and Cross River States -

the more surprising in the case of Cross River because of its early contact with this type of education. Of the two, Borno State, however, fares considerably worse. With perhaps 5.9 million population, it has less than half the number of primary enrolments than the Cross River State, with perhaps 5.7 million. At secondary level, Borno still has nearly 50% less enrolments, although this represents a better transition rate than in Cross River. At University level, the success rate of Borno State candidates is a good deal better than that of Cross River State candidates, but the absolute number of Borno candidates offered university places is tiny in comparison with the absolute number of Cross River candidates offered entrance. Cross River candidates who qualify for university placement through Joint Admissions and Matriculation Board (JAMB) are six times as many as Borno State candidates who qualify.

Finally, the obstacles to effective expansion and provision of relevant educational services in Borno and Cross River, highlighted in the foregoing pages, are by no means confined to these States, but represent some of the common problems of education in Nigeria. In order, therefore, to minimise the constraints on the efficacy of education, a bold programme of alternative forms of educational provision is called for, especially for the educationally - disadvantaged States. One aim could be to open-up pre-degree courses in order to improve the qualifications of the high proportion of students who leave secondary schools with poor results. The second could be to focus on extending a second chance university education for people in paid - or self-employment to ensure that human potential was not wasted due to

constraints of conventional education. Similar provisions could also enable unqualified persons in certain occupations such as teachers (secondary and primary), to become qualified while still working.

In the chapter which follows, our attention will be focused on the expansion of higher education in Nigeria - the major achievements, problems and implications for national unity as well as nation-building.

CHAPTER 3THE EXPANSION OF HIGHER EDUCATION IN NIGERIA

This chapter is devoted to the development of higher education in Nigeria from the early 1930's to the 1980's. It focuses on: the link between education and national development; factors behind regional disparities in educational facilities and opportunities; evidence of growing demand for university education and the implications of these for the higher education needs of Nigeria.

3.1 Beginnings and reason for expansion

In Nigeria, the first major effort to establish a higher educational institution is considered as dating back to 1932 when Yaba Higher College started in temporary buildings in Lagos. The College was formally opened in January 1934 to provide courses leading to the award of diploma in medicine, engineering, education (secondary school teacher training), agriculture and surveying (Taiwo, 1980:8; and Osuntokun, 1982:5).

Previously, higher education in vocational and sub-professional studies had been provided in specialist institutions established in government technical departments, namely: survey (1908); medicine (1928); agriculture (1930); pharmacy (1930) and public works (1931). At the time and for more than a decade and a half later, Nigeria had no university institution and qualified Nigerians who had the resources travelled to Fourah Bay College in Sierra Leone (established in 1876), or to Britain, the United States of America and occasionally to other countries for university degree programmes.

The fact that Yaba Higher College did not provide university degree programmes was seized upon by nationalists and educated Lagosians to organise country-wide agitation for a proper university in Lagos and to challenge British presence in Nigeria. They found the Yaba Higher College unacceptable on the grounds that: it was inferior to a university; its diploma had no recognition outside the country; and the College diploma entitled its holders to only junior posts in the colonial civil service.

In 1943 (apparently in answer to criticisms of its education policy in the Colonies), the British Government appointed two Commissions (Asquith and Elliot), to enquire into the state of higher education in its dependent territories as a whole and in West Africa respectively. Both Commissions unanimously agreed that the need for the extension of higher education and of university development in the colonies was urgent, and that the time was ripe (Lewis, 1954).

Members of the Elliot Commission on Higher Education in West Africa, however, disagreed on the policy, in particular on how many universities should be set up and where, hence a majority and a minority reports were submitted. The majority report, mostly by members of the Conservative Party, recommended for instance, that:

'there should now be set up a university college in Nigeria, and a university college in the Gold Coast (now Ghana), and - certain reorganisations and new developments of higher education should be carried through in Sierra Leone, in close connection with Fourah Bay College'

(HMSO, 1945: 125).

In contrast, the minority group which consisted of members of the Labour and Liberal Parties, was opposed to the above recommendation

on grounds that there were inadequate potential students and resources in the territories to support more than one first class university institution. Instead, it recommended:

'the immediate establishment of only one institution of university rank, to serve the whole of British West Africa. This should be entitled the West African University College, and should be situated at Ibadan in Nigeria'

(Ibid., p. 126)

Obviously, the conflicting reports did not allow for speedy government action, hence it was only after the Labour Party won the July 1945 General Election that the reports were harmonized. In 1947, two University Colleges were approved for West Africa - one at Ibadan, and one at Achimota, provided the Gold Coast was able to raise the necessary funds.

In the same year, the colonial administration in Nigeria, initiated a Nigerianisation policy aimed at defusing the charged political atmosphere which followed the return of Nigerian soldiers from Burma where they fought the Second World War for Britain. The aim of the policy, which took off in 1948, was "to appoint Nigerians to posts in the Government Senior Service as fast as suitable candidates with the necessary qualifications came forward" (Onabamiro, 1983: 2).

Realising the immediate implications of the Nigerianisation policy, the country's nationalists intensified their campaign for the immediate establishment of the University College Ibadan; for a university in Lagos and for other higher educational institutions to be up-graded and expanded to enable Nigerians to possess the necessary

qualifications to make them suitable for absorption into the Government Senior Service. Yaba Higher College was to be developed to a university institution but the colonial government was not keen, partly due to the recession at that time. Furthermore, Yaba Higher College graduates were not getting higher pay. They were given middle grade positions despite the fact that the time required for obtaining its diploma was the same as or even longer than was required for obtaining a degree in the same field. All these fuelled agitation for university degrees.

Consequently, in September 1948, the Legislative Council passed the Act establishing the Ibadan University College, as Nigeria's first university. Shortly afterwards, the Federal School of Science was also established in Lagos to give intensive remedial courses and advanced level courses in science to enable students from poorly staffed secondary schools in the country to gain admission into the University College, Ibadan.

On the whole, the Nigerianisation policy helped to accelerate the pace of educational development in the country, particularly at the tertiary level. For example, in the educationally more conscious Southern areas, the policy led to greater agitation for higher education for more people to be enabled to possess the necessary qualifications for absorption into the Government Senior Service. It also encouraged the educationally-backward areas in the northern part of the country to give more attention to education in order not to be disadvantaged in the Federation.

The net effect of all these was the recognition by the governments and the people of Nigeria of education as a 'very

important and powerful instrument for political, economic and social changes in the society' (Baikie, 1982: 3). In other words, governments in Nigeria recognised education as the key to the promotion of national cohesion and for producing the high-level manpower required to accelerate the pace of economic progress, while to the people, education held the key to their well-being, especially participation in the modern economy.

With acceptance of the idea that the country's future depended on education, Nigerians began to press for more higher educational institutions. As 1960 (the year agreed upon for independence) drew near, they began to question the adequacy of University College, Ibadan for the higher education needs of Nigeria, since its total enrolment in 1959 was just 1,024 undergraduates and there were only 1,088 sub-degree students in the Nigerian Colleges of Arts, Science and Technology (Ibadan, Zaria and Enugu); i.e. there were altogether, 2112 students in higher education. The prevailing view at that time was that a single university could not cater for the interest of all Nigerians desirous of higher education. It was, therefore, felt that an ambitious programme of educational development was needed to meet the challenge which would face an independent Nigeria emerging into the international arena of diplomacy, of commerce as well as for the requirements of internal governance of the country.

It was in these circumstances that in April 1959, the Federal Government decided to appoint a commission to look into Nigeria's needs in the field of post-school certificate and higher education

over the next twenty years' (Ashby Report, 1960: 2). The Commission, named after its Chairman, Sir Eric Ashby, Master of Clare College Cambridge, submitted its report in September 1960, barely a month before Nigeria's independence. The main focus of the report was on investment in education. Noting the vast land area of the country, its large population, cultural and religious diversity, rich agricultural and mineral resources and the important role an independent Nigeria was expected to play in African and world affairs, the report called for massive expansion of the educational system which was considered to be grossly inadequate particularly at the secondary level, the main source of recruitment for high-level manpower training. For example in 1959, the total enrolment in secondary schools throughout the country stood at only 115,586 students (Taiwo 1980: 228). Education, as articulated by the report, had become an instrument for which financing must be sought from Nigerians as well as external sources. It was no longer a matter of budgeting on what the country could afford but on future needs of the country, which were so massive that the Nigerian resources alone would be inadequate to finance them. (Ibid.: 3).

Investment in education as the Ashby Commission called their report, emphasized two educational strategies for Nigeria:

1. 'to up-grade Nigerians who are already in employment but who need further education; and
2. to design a system of post-secondary education which will, as a first objective, produce before 1970, the flow of high-level manpower which Nigeria is estimated to need; and to design it in such a way that it can be enlarged, without being re-planned, to meet Nigeria's needs up to 1980'.

(Ibid: 3).

The Ashby report was broadly accepted and became the basis of educational development in independent Nigeria linked with manpower development and nation-building.

3.2 Post-Independence Expansion: first decade

The Ashby report and the enhanced acceptance of education as a form of investment in human beings which yields economic benefits for individual and national development, led to the establishment of four new universities in the first two years of Nigeria's independence. This raised to five the number of universities in the country in 1962. Table 3.1 provides a basic data on the five oldest Nigerian universities, including their subject matter emphasis.

Also in the period immediately after independence, the numbers of primary and secondary schools and their students were greatly increased as a form of investment in human beings and to make up for what was generally considered as slow progress of education during the colonial period. Table 3.2 illustrates the phenomenal increase at all levels of education in the first decade of Nigeria's independence.

Table 3.1

Basic data on the 5 oldest Nigerian Universities

Year Founded	Name of Institution	Location (Appropriate at date of foundation)	Special Emphasis
1 1948	University College, Ibadan (Initially affiliated to the University of London, became autonomous in 1964 as the University of Ibadan).	Western Region (Now Oyo State)	Classical and interest in research (e.g. Nigerian Institute for Social and Economic Research - NISER), Forestry, Medicine and Veterinary
2 1960	University of Nigeria, Nsukka	Former Eastern Region (now Anambra State)	Agriculture, Education, Journalism and Science
3 1962	Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria	Former Northern Region (now Kaduna State)	Engineering, Administration, Agriculture, Medicine, Veterinary, Education, and School of Basic Studies geared to high and middle-level manpower development for the whole Northern States. Also, four great Institutes: 1. Institute of Agricultural Research 2. Institute of Administration 3. Institute of Education, and 4. Institute of Health
4 1962	University of Ife, Ile-Ife	Former Western Region (now Oyo State)	African Studies, Agriculture, Administration, Economics, Education, Science and Engineering
5 1962	University of Lagos, Lagos.	Federal Capital	Commerce, Business Administration and Economics, Medicine, Law, Mass Communication, Education, Marine Biology, and Correspondence and Open Studies Institute (COSIT).

Sources: Compiled from data obtained from the Federal Ministry of Education and National Universities Commission, Lagos and also from the following:

1. The World of Learning 1983-84. London: Europa Publications
2. Commonwealth Universities Yearbook 1983-84
London: Association of Commonwealth Universities;
and
3. Taiwo, C.O. (1980) The Nigerian Education System: Past, Present and Future. Lagos: Thomas Nelson.

Table 3.2

Educational Expansion in Nigeria 1960-1970

Level and Type of Institution	No. of In-	Enrolment	No. of In-	Enrolment	No. of	Enrolment
	stitutions		stitut-		Instit-	
			ions		utions	
	1960		1964		1970	
Primary Schools	15,703	2,912,618	14,976	2,896,382	15,324	3,515,827
Secondary "	883	135,434	1,327	205,012	1,234	310,054
Universities	2	2,112	5	6,719	6	14,502

Sources: Compiled from statistics obtained from the Federal and State Ministries of Education; National Universities Commission; Third National Development Plan, 1975-80: Vol. 1, Lagos, 1975, pp. 25-240; and Taiwo, C.O., op. cit., p. 228.

It can be seen from the above table that there were fewer secondary schools in 1970 than in 1964. This was largely due to damage caused to educational institutions during the Nigerian civil war of 1967-70, fought to end an attempt by the former Eastern Region to secede from the Federation.

3.3 Decade of Unparalleled Educational Expansion and Reform

In the 1970's, Nigeria, which had just emerged re-united from a civil war, started to enjoy an economic boom from increased oil revenues. To accelerate the pace of national reconstruction, industrialisation and technological advancement, even more priority was given to education by central and state governments. "Education for all" was the new emphasis of the Federal Military Government at the time. In consequence, Nigeria became irrevocably committed to Universal Primary Education (UPE) which was launched in 1976, when primary education became free of charge and efforts were made to enrol as many children as possible, as an essential programme towards the eventual 'elimination of regional imbalances and to promote the intrinsic value of schooling' (Bray, 1981: 15).

Also, during the 1970's, the Federal Government became publicly committed to the idea of establishing a just and egalitarian society in Nigeria (Second National Development Plan, 1970-74). Subsequently, in all developmental planning, the crucial aims of the government centred on radical expansion and improvement of educational facilities so that as many people as possible could be given the opportunity to develop their intellectual and working capabilities, for the achievement of national goals.

In the second decade of independence, therefore, growth in educational institutions and students population was most dramatic. For instance, seven new universities were established in 1975 alone (at Kano, Jos, Maiduguri, Ilorin, Sokoto, Calabar and Port Harcourt), thus raising the number of Nigerian universities to thirteen (see Map 4).

Similarly, developments in the primary and secondary sectors were rapid. Partly due to the UPE, the primary enrolment in Nigeria rose from 2.9 million in 1960 to 13.7 million in 1980. Secondary level enrolment rose from just about 135,000 to almost 2.5 million, while the population of university students expanded from about 2,000 in 1960 to slightly over 70,000 in 1980. Table 3.3 illustrates the physical achievements in the three levels of education in the second decade of Nigeria's independence.

Table 3.3
Educational Enrolments in Nigeria, 1970-1980

Level	1973 Enrolment	1977 Enrolment	1980 Enrolment
Primary	4,746,808	9,848,957	13,787,736
Secondary	448,904	1,231,103	2,483,369
University	23,228	47,670	70,704

Source: Compiled from statistics obtained from the Federal Ministry of Education and the National Universities Commission, Lagos.

The recognition of the important contribution of education to desirable political, economic and social changes led various Federal and State Governments, during the 1970's, to devote increasingly large proportions of public funds to education and also to assume greater control over the content of education. One result of the link between education and nation-building was the virtual take-over of schools by State Governments from Christian Missionaries, Islamic organisations, voluntary organisations and private agencies as well as community schools during the early 1970's. The Government's ultimate objective was to make education free for all at all levels, for accelerated industrialisation and technological advancement.

In order to achieve these objectives, constitutional and structural reforms were adopted in the 1970's, aimed at transforming the country's entire educational system. The most radical policy changes were:

3.3.1 National Goals: For the first time in Nigeria's history, five national goals were adopted as the principal objective for development from the seventies. They are the building of:

- (i) a free and democratic society;
 - (ii) a just and egalitarian society;
 - (iii) a united, strong and self-reliant nation;
 - (iv) a great and dynamic economy; and
 - (v) a land of bright and full opportunities for all citizens
- (Second National Development Plan, 1970-74).

The above-listed national goals marked the beginning of the most ambitious plans and objectives, aimed at propelling Nigeria into modernity, largely through education.

3.3.2 New National Policy on Education: In 1977, a new National Policy on Education was adopted for the country. As stated in that policy:

'It is Government's wish that any existing contradictions, ambiguities, and lack of uniformity' in educational practices in different parts of the Federation should be removed to ensure an even and orderly development ...

Education in Nigeria is no more a private enterprise, but a huge government venture that has witnessed a progressive evolution of Government's complete and dynamic intervention and active participation. The Federal Government of Nigeria has adopted education as an instrument par excellence for effecting national development'

(National Policy on Education, 1977:1).

The main objective of education under the policy was the integration of the individual into a sound and effective citizen and also equal educational opportunities for all citizens at the primary, secondary and tertiary levels, both inside and outside the formal system. The Policy states that:

'Not only is education the greatest force that can be used to bring about redress, it is also the greatest investment that the nation can make for the quick development of its economic, political, sociological and human resources ... Education will continue to be highly rated in the national development plans, because education is the most important instrument of change as any fundamental change in the intellectual and social outlook of any society has to be preceded by an educational revolution.'

(National Policy on Education 1977, Section 1, paras 6 and 7(1)).

In the same policy document, Nigeria became formally committed to the idea of combining work with study. As enshrined in the policy 'the Federal Government shall undertake to make life-long education the basis for the nation's educational policies'. (Section 1, para 7 (2)).

With respect to the problem of access to higher education, the Federal Government, in the new policy on education, resolved that:

'Maximum effort will be made to enable those who can benefit from higher education to be given access to it. Such access may be through universities, correspondence courses, or open universities, or part-time and work-study programmes'.

(Section 5, para 40 (a)).

It may be noted that the need for an alternative form of education in Nigeria was first expressed by the Ashby Report (1960) which actually recommended the establishment of a Federal university at or

near Lagos, with special emphasis on evening studies and correspondence courses for degrees. The Lagos experiment with correspondence and open degree programmes will be fully explored in the next chapter on the state of distance education in Nigeria.

3.3.3 Constitutional provision for education: To enforce and promote the new philosophy of Nigerian education, the country's Constitution of 1979 has enshrined in Chapter 2, paragraph 18, Nigeria's all embracing educational object. It states that:

- (i) Government shall direct its policy towards ensuring that there are equal adequate educational opportunities at all levels; and
- (ii) Government shall strive to eradicate illiteracy and to this end, Government shall as and when practicable provide:
 - (a) free, compulsory and universal primary education;
 - (b) free secondary education;
 - (c) free university education; and
 - (d) free adult literacy programme. (The Nigerian constitution, 1979: 18).

Because of a long standing concern for adequate and relevant education, Nigeria has, since 1913, initiated over a dozen major conferences or commissions to examine education either in the country or in West Africa or in Africa as a whole, on the need to tailor education to the needs of Africans or Nigerians (Fagbulu, 1983: 1). It was, therefore, recognition of the important need to tailor education to be useful to the citizen as an individual and to his

society that motivated the formulation of the new national educational aims and objectives in 1977 and also the ambitious 1979 constitutional provision for education.

While the new policies outlined in the preceding pages are radical departures from previous educational practices, the real backbone of the new policies appears to be the new 6.3.3.4 educational structure. As what follows will show, the new structure aims chiefly at re-structuring and revolutionizing the entire Nigerian educational system.

3.3.4 New 6.3.3.4 Structure for Formal Education

Although the 6.3.3.4 new education structure was adopted as part of the 1977 new National Policy on Education, its implementation was delayed until September 1982, to coincide with the first output of Universal Primary Education (UPE). Under the new system, Nigeria operates a six year primary school course followed by six years of secondary divided into a three-year Junior Secondary and a three year senior secondary course, and lastly, a four-year university education - hence the 6.3.3.4 system (See Figure 2.3).

The junior secondary course has bias for pre-vocational subjects while the senior secondary course is for students with talents for academic education. The new system means that as from 1987, students would proceed to university from senior secondary schools to undergo four-year degree programmes. The 6.3.3.4 system, therefore, phases out secondary grammar school education under which the majority of the products had usually been unable to continue their education because they had failed to make the required papers needed for entry

into the comparatively limited places in higher education.

Furthermore, the new system seeks to disabuse the minds of the school pupils that they could only count success through achievement of examination passes, which had been the root cause of examination leakages in Nigeria. Through the 6.3.3.4 system, the incidence of drop-out is expected to be drastically minimised as it is designed to cater for varying aptitudes and capabilities of students. The aim is that after six years of primary education, the first three years in the junior secondary school would be used as a preparatory ground for all pupils in general secondary education as well as for pre-vocational subjects. The subjects at this level are made up of mathematics, English, two Nigerian languages, science, social studies, art and music, practical agriculture, religious knowledge and moral instruction, physical education and two prevocational subjects chosen from woodwork, metalwork, electronics, mechanics, local crafts, home economics, and business studies. Additionally, the junior secondary level would be a sorting ground for individual aptitudes and capabilities in all fields of endeavour.

Those pupils with an academic bent would pursue the different arts, science and business education subjects, while pupils who were either technically-minded or vocationally-inclined would be sorted out to follow courses in those fields. In this way, it is expected that students who leave school after the junior secondary stage would have the necessary background to go on to an apprenticeship programme or some other scheme for out-of-school vocational training.

Only a few States in Nigeria, however, have so far implemented the 6.3.3.4 system. According to the States, the large amount of capital outlay required to provide additional infrastructures, technical workshops and science equipment as well as adequate supply of trained teachers for technical subjects, for a successful implementation of the new system, was not available.

On the whole, although the second decade of Nigeria's independence brought unparalleled reforms and increases in primary, secondary and university institutions and students intake, some of the new policies, such as the 6.3.3.4 new educational system have so far failed to take off largely due to unfavourable political and economic climate. As will be shown in the next section, more ambitious programmes of expansion at the higher/further education level were attempted during the Second Republic when Nigeria experimented with the Presidential system of democracy.

3.4 Expansion of higher education during the Second Republic, 1979-83.

During the brief period of party politics from 1st October 1979 to 31st December 1983, the building of more colleges, polytechnics and universities was intensified. Several educational innovations emerged on the educational scene during this period including the establishment of an open university, Federal Universities of Technology, State Government Universities and private Universities.

As mentioned in the previous chapter, because of previous attempts to keep federal control over higher education, the 1977 National Policy on Education had vested the proprietorship and

administration of universities exclusively on the Federal Government. This policy was, however, amended by the civilian administration in 1981, to enable State Governments to establish their own universities. The result was a mushroom growth of higher educational institutions in the country.

Overall, there were three distinct types of educational expansion during the Second Republic, in which Federal and State Governments as well as private groups or individuals were engaged: (i) Universities; (ii) Polytechnics and Technical Colleges; and (iii) Colleges of Education and Basic Studies.

We shall begin with the role of the Federal Government in the expansion of higher education between 1979-83.

3.4.1 Federal Universities of Technology

To provide each of the 19 states in the country with a Federally-funded university and in order to promote the qualitative education policy of the civilian administration, the Federal Government established seven new Federal Universities of Technology (FUT) between 1979/80 and 1982/83. Three of these, the Federal Universities of Technology, Bauchi, Makurdi and Owerri, took off in the 1981/82 academic session. During the 1982/83 session, four more Federal Universities of Technology took off, at Akure, Abeokuta, Minna and Yola. All seven were to cater for the high-level technological manpower needs of Nigeria.

3.4.2 National Open University of Nigeria

After many years of political squabbles, particularly in the National Assembly (since disbanded) a Bill establishing a National Open University of Nigeria was finally passed in July 1983. The Bill was quickly assented to by former President Shehu Shagari and by December 1983, the National Open University of Nigeria was officially established at Abuja, the country's new Federal Capital Territory in Central Nigeria (see Map 1).

The open university idea was first floated by former President Shagari, who campaigned for the system during the 1979 General Elections on grounds that it was needed 'to open the door of educational opportunities to those millions who have missed formal education at the conventional universities' (Two Years of President Shehu Shagari's Administration, 1981:35). A full discussion of the issues and problems of the National Open University of Nigeria is left to Chapter 4.

3.4.3 Nigerian Military University

Also in 1983, the civilian administration decided to up-grade the Nigerian Defence Academy at Kaduna in central Nigeria, to a degree awarding military institution (see Map 4).

3.4.4 Federal Universities in 1983

In all, there were in 1983, twenty-two Federally-funded Nigerian Universities, namely:

Federal Universities, 1983

<u>Name of Institution</u>	<u>Location</u>
1. University of Ibadan	Ibadan, Oyo State
2. University of Lagos	Lagos, Federal Capital
3. University of Nigeria	Nsukka, Anambra State
4. Ahmadu Bello University	Zaria, Kaduna State
5. University of Ife	Ile-Ife, Oyo State
6. University of Benin	Benin, Bendel State
7. University of Jos	Jos, Plateau State
8. University of Calabar	Calabar, Cross River State
9. Bayero University, Kano	Kano, Kano State
10. University of Maiduguri	Maiduguri, Borno State
11. University of Sokoto	Sokoto, Sokoto State
12. University of Ilorin	Ilorin, Kwara State
13. University of Port Harcourt	Port Harcourt, Rivers State
14. Federal University of Technology, Bauchi, Bauchi, Bauchi State	
15. Federal University of Technology, Makurdi, Makurdi, Benue State	
16. Federal University of Technology, Owerri, Owerri, Imo State	
17. Federal University of Technology Akure, Akure, Ondo State	
18. Federal University of Technology Yola, Yola, Gongola State	
19. Federal University of Technology Abeokuta, Abeokuta, Ogun State	
20. Federal University of Technology Minna, Minna, Niger State	
21. National Open University, Abuja, Abuja, Federal Capital Territory	
22. Nigerian Defence Academy Kaduna, Kaduna, Kaduna State	

3.4.5 Federal Polytechnics and Colleges of Education

Between 1979-1983, Federal Polytechnics and colleges of education were greatly expanded. During this period, the number of Federal

polytechnics rose from 3 to 8 while Federal Colleges of Education increased from 7 to 17. Therefore, in 1983, there were altogether 25 Federal polytechnics and colleges of education, spread across the country. But as can be seen in Map 4, the concentration of tertiary educational institutions is in the educationally more advanced Southern States, because (as we shall see in the sections which follow) some of these States have twice the number of Federal Colleges in their area.

3.4.6 Growth in State Universities

While the Federal Government spent substantial proportions of national revenues to establish and run Federal universities in the different states of the country (roughly N500 million yearly or 5% of all Federal capital and recurrent spending), some of the States also established their own universities. For example, eight of the nine States in the Southern parts of the country have state-government universities, in addition to Federally-funded universities already established for them (Map 4).

The State universities which were founded between 1980-83 were:

1. Anambra State University of Technology, Enugu and Awka
2. Bendel State University, Ekpoma
3. Cross River State University, Uyo
4. Imo State University, Etiti and Aba
5. Obafemi Awolowo University, Ado-Ekiti, Ondo State
6. Ogun State University, Ago-Iwoye
7. Lagos State University, Ojo, Badagry Express Way; and
8. Rivers State University, Port Harcourt.

3.4.7 State Polytechnics, Colleges of Education and Basic Studies

In the Second Republic, State Governments, many of them controlled by parties other than the ruling party at the Federal level, also greatly expanded their polytechnics, colleges of education and of basic studies. At the end of 1983, there were:

- (i) 20 State polytechnics, colleges of technology and basic studies; and
- (ii) 37 State colleges of education (see Map 4).

The fact that this expansion in Federal and State universities and tertiary institutions was escalated during the brief period of party politics is not surprising. As Bray (1981) has rightly noted, 'education in certain parts of the country and among certain social groups is immensely popular, because parents realise its importance for the acquisition of jobs in the modern sector ... One result of the link between education and modern sector employment is that those sectors of the population which recognise the benefits of schooling are the ones most likely to secure influential positions'. (Bray, 1981: 14). Thus part of the reason for the 1979-83 growth in Federal and State higher educational institutions could be because some politicians probably saw such institutions as vote-winners.

As the next section will show, the link between education and politics in Nigeria was also one of the major factors behind the emergence of short-lived private universities.

3.4.8 Private Universities

For the first time in the history of higher education in Nigeria, private universities sprung up in the latter part of 1983. The first three were all located in Imo State, one of Nigeria's educationally most advanced states which already had a Federal University of Technology and a State University. The three pioneer private universities were:

1. Imo State Medical Academy, Imerienwe, Owerri
2. Imo Technical University, Imerienwe, Owerri; and
3. Pope John Paul University, Aba.

All three actually took off and were initially recognised. They had candidates examined and selected for them by the Joint Admissions and Matriculation Board (JAMB), the national body responsible for university admissions in the country and were listed among Nigerian universities recognised for degree programmes. (JAMB Brochure, 1984-85: 2-3).

Seeing that these private universities were tolerated, others followed in very quick succession. Within six months, nine private universities had been announced, all but one in the southern states - the exception was Plateau State in the northern part of the country. These were:

1. Holy of Holies Unification University, Umuahia, Imo State
2. World University, Owerri, Imo State
3. Ezena University, Ogueri, Imo State
4. Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Onitsha, Anambra State
5. Afeudomitrok University, Ikot-Ekpene, Cross River State
6. African Continental University, Lugard Avenue, Jos-Plateau State.

Judging from the general reaction in Nigeria in 1983, it is possible to conclude that the private universities were greeted with mixed feelings. Whereas some people welcomed the development as a healthy reflection of the country's thirst for higher education, others, in particular the guardians of qualitative education, saw the advent of private universities as a new threat to meaningful progress. In his reaction, for instance, the Executive Secretary of the National Universities Commission opposed the idea on grounds that:

'Private universities might train students who would graduate into unrecognised and unemployable status ... The proliferation of private universities is likely to introduce a lopsided university development unless there is co-ordination somewhere. It would be very easy for instance, for universities to produce more graduates in a given discipline than could be absorbed by the employment market or by self-employment, if the distribution of students into academic disciplines is not co-ordinated nationally.'

(New Nigerian, 9th November, 1983: 1).

Nevertheless, due largely to the fact that education is immensely popular in certain parts of the country, objections such as the above failed to stop the proliferation of private universities during the political period. It would appear that politicians could not resist private universities, for fear that such an action might cost them votes. Thus, six more private universities were planned (15 altogether), but early in 1984, shortly after the military took over from the politicians who allowed such institutions, the extant private universities were all abolished and plans for new ones aborted.

As will be shown later in this chapter, since the military intervention of 31st December 1983, expansion in higher and other levels of education has effectively been halted as part of the austerity measures aimed at rehabilitating the national economy. Before then, we

shall focus on the physical achievements and the implications of the developments in Nigerian education in the period up to 1983.

3.5 Major Educational Achievements and Problems of Regional Imbalance

In several respects, the massive programmes of educational expansion in the period since Nigeria's independence in 1960 have brought about great achievements, in both quantifiable and un-quantifiable terms. One of the most obvious results of the post-independence expansion, is the dramatic increase in educational institutions and students population at all levels of education. Table 3.4 gives an indication of the growth in educational enrolments since 1960.

Table 3.4

Educational Enrolments in Nigeria 1960-1985

Level	1960/61 Enrolment	1975/76 Enrolment	1984/85 Enrolment
Primary	2,912,618	6,165,547	16,798,750
Secondary	135,434	854,785	2,489,619
Polytechnics, Colleges of Education & Basic Studies	1,200	17,676	80,000
University (Federal and State)	2,112	32,286	147,710

Source: Computed from Statistics obtained from the Federal Ministry of Education and from the National Universities Commission, Lagos.

Most significant perhaps is the contribution of Nigerian education to the country's needs for high-level manpower in the last two and a half decades. Although not easily quantifiable, it is widely acknowledged

that the educational system, in particular higher education, has made important contributions to the training of indigenous high-level manpower - thus, the system has helped to accelerate the pace of the country's progress.

Additionally, education has been an important instrument for fostering national unity, national consciousness and new ways of life without abruptly breaking with indigenous patterns and traditions. For example, due largely to education, Nigerians are increasingly becoming more confident and desirous of making their mark in the world culturally and scientifically. Seen in this light, education in Nigeria has been an unqualified success.

Simultaneously, however, with the massive expansion, the allocation of large proportions of national revenues and the physical growth, came growing regional disparities in the development of education; soaring demand for university education; unbearable weight of educational financing; and a host of other issues, thus exacerbating the educational dilemma which has long existed in Nigeria. Regional disparities in education, for example, cause great concern because of a widely held view in the country that they comprise one of the greatest threats to national unity as they create political tension between the numerically and politically dominant northern states and the educationally and economically more advanced Southern States (with 53% and 47% of the total population respectively). Table 3.5 illustrates the continuing regional disparities in the number of candidates from the northern and the southern states of the country who apply and qualify for admission into university degree programmes through the Joint Admissions and Matriculation Board (JAMB). The differences are clearly disproportionate.

Table 3.5

JAMB Applications and Admissions to Nigerian Universities by Candidates
from Northern and Southern States, 1982/83

States	Population	% of Total Population of Nigeria	No. of Applic- ants	No. offered admissions and % of applicants	% Share of all admiss- ions
A. Northern States					
Bauchi	4.203million	4.3	1,943	294(15.1%)	1.3
Benue	4.196 "	4.3	5,865	789(13.4%)	3.5
Borno	5.182 "	5.3	1,117	237(21.2%)	1.1
Gongola	4.504 "	4.6	1,509	314(20.8%)	1.4
Kaduna	7.085 "	7.3	2,158	547(25.3%)	2.5
Kano	9.983 "	10.2	1,224	372(30.3%)	1.7
Kwara	2.964 "	3.0	8,368	1,446(17.2%)	6.6
Niger	2.065 "	2.1	1,064	288(27.0%)	1.3
Plateau	3.503 "	3.6	2,433	440(18.0%)	2.0
Sokoto	7.846 "	8.0	766	287(37.4%)	1.3
Total Northern States	51.531 "	53.0	26,447	5,014(19%)	22.7
B. Southern States					
Anambra	6.217	6.4	26,859	2,331(8.6%)	8.7
Benue	4.254	4.3	31,116	2,840(9.1%)	9.1
Cross River	6.013	6.1	11,089	1,360(12.1%)	6.2
Imo	6.349	6.5	38,141	2,800(7.3%)	12.6
Lagos	3.306	3.4	3,937	588(14.9%)	2.7
Ogun	2.681	2.7	14,521	1,503(10.3%)	6.9
Ondo	4.719	4.8	19,413	2,081(10.7%)	9.5
Oyo	9.005	9.2	25,332	2,658(10.4%)	12.1
Rivers	2.973	3.0	7,201	575(7.9%)	2.6
Total Southern States	45.517	47.0	177,638	16,763(9.4%)	76.1
c. Foreign	-	-	1,056	238	1.1
Grand Total	97,048million	-	205,112	22,015	100%

Source: Compiled from statistics obtained from Joint Admissions and Matriculation Board (JAMB), Lagos

The evidence in Table 3.5 presents a disheartening picture of the consequences of decades of lopsided development of educational facilities and opportunities in the two segments of the country (North/South). The fact that 76% of university places in 1983 went to candidates from the educationally more advanced Southern States, compared with just 23% from the Northern States is quite alarming since such a wide gap could lead to so many disadvantages in a culturally diverse Federation where positions of influence are usually associated with university education.

On the other hand, national policies designed at correcting regional imbalances through conventional education, such as the allocation of student places in Federal institutions to the States on the criteria of population, location, need, students enrolment and the availability of educational institutions (Oyovbaire, 1983:3), also pose enormous political problems, by what is seen as discrimination against the educationally-advanced states. For example, it can be seen in Table 3.5 that because of the quota system of admissions outlined above, 37% of the applicants from Sokoto; 30% of Kano and 25% of Kaduna States in the Northern area, were offered admission in 1983, compared with only 10% of the candidates from Oyo; 9% of Bendel and 7% of Imo States in the Southern part of the country.

The political injustice resulting from educational imbalance was also reflected in the admission figures for other academic sessions. In 1980/81 for instance, six of the Northern States had over 40% of their candidates offered admission: 47% of Kaduna and Sokoto applicants; 46% of Kano; 43% of Borno and 41% of Gongola and Niger applicants. In contrast, only 10% of Imo State applicants; 14% of

14% of Bendel and between 15%-18% of the applicants from the other educationally-advanced states in the South were offered admission.

Similar disproportionate pattern of admission was reflected in the figures for 1981/82 when over half of the applicants from two far Northern States were offered admission (58% of Sokoto applicants and 53% of Kano applicants) as against 7% of Imo applicants and 10% of those from Anambra.

As hinted in the previous chapter, the most serious bottleneck seems to be at the secondary level, both quantitatively and qualitatively. For example, in educationally-disadvantaged Borno State, even after recent strides of intake increases and expansion in secondary education, there were only 171.91 in secondary education per 10,000 of the population in 1983. This compares poorly with 324 per 10,000 in educationally-more advanced Kwara (the most southerly northern state), and about 500 per 10,000 in Imo, Bendel and Anambra States. Also, whereas there were more than 400 secondary schools in Imo State in 1983, Borno State had only a little over 70.

Over the years, the disadvantaged positions of the backward States was further compounded by the decline in the national economy resulting in serious inadequacies in trained teachers, infrastructural and instructional facilities as well as high failure rates in school certificate examinations. Borno State is also a typical example, for in 1982, only 7.6% of its candidates who sat for the School Certificate examinations obtained Division I or II grades of passes - which qualify school leavers to go straight to post-secondary

education (Vancheeswaran, 1984: 3). Again, this compares poorly with 75% success rate by candidates from Imo, Bendel and Ogun States in the south.

Table 3.6 gives a picture of primary and secondary enrolments in Nigeria and shows the disparity between the Northern and the Southern States in terms of primary enrolment ratios and national ranking in secondary education.

It is clear from this evidence that the North still has a great deal of ground to cover in order to catch up with the South, in Universal Primary Education (UPE) alone. Because the Southern States had experienced their first universal primary education scheme in the mid-1950's they made very good use of the Federally-sponsored UPE (launched in 1976), to enrol virtually all their school age children. As can be seen from Table 3.6, most of the Southern States achieved or are very close to 100% enrolment of the 6-11 years population, while the majority of the Northern States who experienced UPE for the first time in 1976, were still far from achieving universal primary education. In fact, some of the far Northern States had not even achieved 50% participation rate in primary education (Sokoto, 44%; and Borno, 46%) while three others were barely mid-way-58% in Bauchi; 63% in Kano and 66% in Gongola.

At the secondary level, the pattern of disparity between the Northern and Southern States is more pronounced. Again, from Table 3.6, it can be seen that in 1980/81, only three States in the Southern part of the country (Bendel, Imo and Oyo) had more students in secondary schools (831,033 students) than those enrolled in all the ten Northern States (610,584).

Table 3.6

Statistics of Primary and Secondary Education in Nigeria, 1980/81

States	Population (In Million)	% of Total Popul- ation	Primary Enrol- ment	% of School age popula- tion	% Share of Total Enrol- ment	Secondary Enrolment	% Share of Total En- rolment & National Ranking
A. Northern States							
Bauchi	4.203	4.3	394,703	58.1	2.9	30,106	1.2%(19th)
Benue	4.196	4.3	881,183	130	6.4	110,619	4.5 (9th)
Borno	5.182	5.3	388,230	46.4	2.8	39,120	1.6 (17th)
Gongola	4.504	4.6	486,943	66.9	3.5	43,495	1.8 (16th)
Kaduna	7.085	7.3	1,015,177	88.6	7.4	75,950	3.1 (12th)
Kano	9.983	10.2	1,026,430	63.5	7.4	59,559	2.4 (14th)
Kwara	2.964	3.0	740,247	154.6	5.4	103,191	4.2 (10th)
Niger	2.065	2.1	419,076	125.8	3.0	31,326	1.2 (18th)
Plateau	3.503	3.6	526,039	92.7	3.8	52,247	2.1 (15th)
Sokoto	7.846	8.0	564,129	44.5	4.1	64,971	2.6 (13th)
Total Northern States	51.531	53.0	6,442,157	87.1%	46.8%	610,584	24.8%
B. Southern States							
Anambra	6.217	6.4	983,274	97.8	7.1	208,181	8.5 (5th)
Bendel	4.254	4.3	878,951	128.1	6.4	284,100	11.5 (2nd)
Cross River	6.013	6.1	808,825	83.3	5.9	197,206	8.0 (6th)
Imo	6.349	6.5	1,183,300	115.3	8.6	294,031	11.9 (1st)
Lagos	3.306	3.4	523,236	113.7	3.8	170,714	6.9 (7th)
Ogun	2.681	2.7	353,495	93.0	2.6	119,372	4.9 (8th)
Ondo	4.719	4.8	628,939	82.6	4.6	234,568	9.5 (4th)
Oyo	9.005	9.2	1,463,516	100.5	10.6	252,902	10.3 (3rd)
Rivers	2.973	3.0	495,337	95.8	3.6	91,711	3.7 (11th)
Total Southern States	45.517	47.0	7,319,072	101.1	53.2	1,852,785	75.2%
All Nigeria	97.048	100%	13,761,229	100%	100%	2,463,369	100%

Source: Computed from statistics obtained from Federal and State Ministries of Education.

The exhaustive discussion of the lopsided development in Nigerian education and its implications is relevant to our main topic, Nigeria and the Open University System, because the perpetuation of regional imbalances despite deliberate government policies (intensified in the last decade), suggests that elimination of educational imbalances through conventional institutions might continue to be ineffective. In fact, the evidence in the foregoing pages suggests that regional disparities were widening at all levels instead of narrowing, in spite of large-scale expansion of conventional educational institutions, taking a very large proportion of national and state resources to education at the expense of other projects. Because of the diverse factors behind the problem of regional disparities in Nigerian education (e.g. slow pace of educational development; inadequate secondary schools; poor secondary educational background; poor performance in competitive examinations; disproportionate share of university admissions; and constraints of space in conventional institutions), it is considered that an alternative form of education such as university distance teaching, is inevitable if more people were to be helped to up-grade their qualifications for admission into full-time degree programmes or to have access to university education while still working.

Apart from the political implications of educational imbalance in Nigeria, there are other critical factors which point to the inevitability of educational innovations in order to narrow the existing regional disparities and to lessen social demand on the existing universities. It is to the other crucial factors behind arguments for alternative forms of higher education that we now turn.

3.6 Problems of funding and evidence of demand for university education out-stripping conventional facilities

At least N500 million a year is spent by the Nigerian Federal Government on the operational costs of the existing universities (Aliyu, quoted in West Africa, 22nd September, 1985, p. 1988). This represents about 5% of all yearly Federal spending.

In the period between 1981 and 1985, the Federal Government spent N1.7 billion on the recurrent expenses of Nigerian Universities, whose full-time students rose from 74,607 to the current figure of 130,910. On average, the yearly cost per enrolled student was about N3,350, while capital costs resulted in an additional burden of N757.59 million on the taxpayers, during the same period.

On the whole, conventional universities in Nigeria are expensive to establish and maintain because conditions in the country meant that each university campus should operate a whole range of services in addition to academic activities. Such services include the construction and maintenance of housing for staff and students (the latter is being phased out); provision of water and sewage systems and generation of electricity independently because public services were often inadequate or unreliable. In addition, it had been the tradition for each Nigerian University to provide food catering services (also being phased out); primary and pre-primary schools for the university community as well as internal market, postal, police security, banking facilities and a local transport system.

The cost of such provision has increased, so that whereas in the 1970's, the National Universities Commission computed that it would cost government ₦350 million to build a university of 10,000 students enrolled in ten faculties (Law, Business Administration, Education, Natural Sciences, Engineering, Environmental Design, Agriculture, Veterinary Medicine, Human Medicine and Social Sciences), by 1981, the figure had almost doubled, to ₦677.325 million (largely due to inflation).

Also, figures for 1981 showed that in Nigeria as elsewhere, the main recurrent cost of universities was in staff salaries and fringe benefits. In all, 63% was spent on salaries and fringe benefits; 32.2% on goods and services, while teaching and research equipment took only 4.8%

In the current spate of austerity measures, especially the phasing out of on-campus students' living programmes since the 1984/85 session, the high cost of goods and services as well as the capital cost of universities should be substantially reduced. Over the years, the expensiveness of running conventional universities constrained many of them from providing enough facilities to cope with the soaring trends in the demand for higher education in the country.

For example, whereas the National Universities Commission had projected an optimum enrolment ceiling of 10,000 students for each of the seven universities established in the mid-1970s, to be obtained by 1980, today (ten years after the projection) none of those universities (Kano, Calabar, Port Harcourt, Jos, Sokoto, Ilorin

and Maiduguri) has hit the figure. In fact, three of them (Kano, Sokoto and Port Harcourt) are still just half way to the 10,000-student maximum.

The largest-sized Nigerian universities are the oldest ones - Ahmadu Bello, Ibadan, Lagos, Ife, Benin and Nsukka. In most of these institutions, the students population is in excess of 13,000, but (as can be seen in Table 3.7) they are also the most expensive for the government to maintain: in the 1982/83 session, the six oldest universities took 64.1% of the allocation of recurrent grants to all the twenty Federal Universities at that time.

The figures in Table 3.7 underline the expensive nature of formal education in Nigeria: on average the cost per enrolled student during the comparative years, was ₦3,350 which explains the difficulty in conventional expansion to open up higher education for the ever-growing number of Nigerians who should be undertaking university education. A good example is the University of Sokoto on which the Federal Government spent about ₦22.5 million (recurrent and capital) in 1982/83 while its total students population was just 2,150.

The point should be made that while in the past, the Federal Government was willing and able to fund Nigerian universities, in the presence of the rapidly falling revenue, funds have been inadequate, even for the maintenance of existing services. Thus, as the following statistics from the Joint Admissions and Matriculation

Costs of Nigerian Universities 1980/81 - 1982/83

University	1980/81			1981/82			1982/83		
	Recurrent Grant N000	Actual Enrolment	Cost per Enrolled Student N000	Recurrent Grant N000	Actual Enrolment	Cost per Enrolled Student N000	Recurrent Grant N000	Actual Enrolment	Cost per Enrolled Student N000
Ibadan	27,919	8,500	3.9	36,843	10,281	3.5	39,447	10,921	3.6
Lagos	24,775	8,690	2.8	32,990	8,741	3.7	37,145	10,245	3.6
Nsukka	25,534	8,410	3.0	33,769	11,308	2.9	37,441	11,740	3.1
Zaria	28,221	10,221	2.6	38,356	13,356	2.8	42,161	14,135	2.9
Ife	26,216	8,930	2.9	35,170	11,040	3.1	36,578	11,520	3.1
Benin	13,703	5,218	2.6	19,237	6,489	2.9	22,854	7,470	3.0
Jos	10,298	3,190	3.2	15,662	3,937	3.9	17,812	4,520	3.9
Calabar	9,493	3,030	3.1	13,971	4,129	3.3	15,847	4,927	3.2
Kano	8,833	2,555	3.4	12,882	2,997	4.2	14,188	4,550	3.1
Maiduguri	8,2677	2,677	3.0	12,766	3,298	3.8	16,403	4,230	3.8
Sokoto	5,828	912	6.3	8,521	1,366	6.2	10,468	2,150	4.8
Ilorin	8,108	2,034	3.9	12,354	2,803	4.4	15,372	3,960	3.8
Port Harcourt	6,573	1,406	4.6	9,996	2,406	4.1	12,791	2,832	4.5
Bauchi	1,000			1,841	312	5.9	4,457	650	6.8
Makurdi	1,000			1,809	195	9.2	4,806	450	10.6
Owerri	1,000			1,833	225	8.1	4,269	525	8.1
Akure							2,218	300	7.3
Yola							2,060	250	8.2
Abeokuta							2,000	-	-
Minna							2,000	-	-
TOTAL	206,850	66,007	3.1	288,000	82,952	3.4	336,317	95,375	3.5

Source: Compiled from Statistics obtained from the Planning Division, National Universities Commission, Lagos.

Board (JAMB.) show, the scarcity of funds, space and human resources, have constrained the conventional universities in Nigeria from coping with the soaring trend in the demand for university education.

Table 3.8

JAMB Statistics of Applications and Offers of Admission to First Degree Courses in Nigerian Universities 1978/79 - 1983/84

Year	No. of applicants	No. offered admission	% of Applicants Offered Admission
1978/79	114,816	14,417	12.5
1979/80	114,397	17,729	15.4
1980/81	114,945	20,429	17.7
1981/82	180,673	25,499	14.0
1982/83	205,112	22,015	10.7
1983/84	165,370	14,000	8.4

Source: Computed from statistics obtained from the Joint Admissions and Matriculation Board (JAMB) Lagos

The above table shows that in the period since 1981, the number of candidates offered admission into Nigerian universities has gradually declined from the all-time high of nearly 18% of the applicants in 1980, to under 10% in 1984. In 1984, when over 165,000 candidates sat the joint matriculation examinations conducted by JAMB, the aspirations of 91.6% of all the candidates would have been balked largely due to reduced student intake following the reduction in government funding. The problem of demand

for university education out-stripping conventional facilities is likely to worsen with increased output from secondary schools. It requires no magical insight, therefore, to see that when the crisis point starts in 1988 when the products of the Universal Primary Education (UPE) programme start seeking university admission, the social demand for increased access to higher education would probably be one of the toughest challenges to the country's leaders. Another challenge, as a former Executive Secretary of the National Universities Commission rightly put it, is that:

'A university system that is heavily subsidised by the public purse cannot by any reason or by matter of deliberate policy be limited to the few. Demands for university places would not be by students of school age only. There would be demands from interested adults, who earlier in their lives did not have the opportunities. It would be socially wrong to deny opportunities to such adults, because both the government and the private sector continue to advance or classify employees on the basis of educational qualifications.'

(Guobadia, 1980: 54).

With the gloomy prospects facing the Nigerian economy, the message of the challenge is clear: for some time, financial and material resources might not be available for conventional facilities on the scale required to cope with the country's growing demand for higher education. Apart from the current economic predicament, the existing higher educational institutions are yet to recover from the severe strains imposed on them by the 1979-83 expansion outlined in Section 3.4 of this chapter. For example, because 15 Federal and State universities as well as about 40 polytechnics, colleges of technology, education and basic studies were established within a period of only three years by rival political parties, the institutions were not properly co-ordinated - thus

the development worsened the acute problem of shortage of indigenous scholars to teach in the various establishments. It also had several academic and financial implications for the conventional system of higher education.

First, it was necessary for most universities to seek more assistance of expatriate teachers. Secondly, some courses suffered from shortage of qualified and dedicated teachers. Thirdly, the dissipation of resources made it difficult for the majority of Nigerian universities to operate at full capacity. The 95,375 students enrolled into 20 Federal universities in 1982/83 (Table 3.7) is just about the population in one American university (the University of California, Los Angeles). In general, the higher education system was adversely affected by the fragmentation of educational resources between 1979-83. It also escalated the capital and recurrent costs of education. One result of the escalating costs of education during the period was that Federal Government grants to universities jumped from N469.4 million in 1980/81 to N811.6 million (capital and recurrent including university teaching hospitals) in 1981/82. This represented 62% of all Federal spending on education in that year when education's share of the budget was 28% while the universities' share of the national budget was 6.4%.

More recently, education's share of the national budget has been reduced due to various factors (which will be examined in the next section). However, education in Nigeria is still a very expensive sector. In the 1985 Fiscal Year, for example, education received

₦816 million out of ₦11.269 billion recurrent and capital budget of the Federal Government (New Nigerian, 4th January 1985: 2), that is, 7.2% of all Federal spending. Of this, ₦512 million went to the Federal universities, representing 63% of all the expenditure on education or 4.5% of all Federal spending.

As indicated in Table 3.9 below, education was fifth out of the seven largest spending sectors in 1985, absorbing much less money than steel development and agriculture, but following closely after communications and defence. The allocations for education were nearly four times those for health services.

Table 3.9

Federal expenditure on education and other key sectors, 1985

Sector	Recurrent and Capital Allocation N'000	% Share of Total Allocation
1. Mines, Power and Steel Development	1,394,515	12.3
2. Agriculture, water resources and rural development	1,101,595	9.7
3. Communications and transport	888,931	7.8
4. Defence	884,649	7.8
5. Education (including National Universities Commission)	816,468	7.2
6. Information, Social Development, Culture & Sports	343,350	3.0
7. Health	223,879	1.9

Source: Computed from 'Details of the 1985 Budget', in New Nigerian 4th January 1985, p. 2.

Because education in Nigeria since independence was characterised by high-level expenditure, the system has grown into one of the largest industries in the country. However, structural and policy changes in education since 1984 suggest that the era of large-scale expansion might be over for the time being.

It should, however, be emphasized that in Nigeria, in contrast to other countries like Britain, there has been no controversy about the nature of higher education or serious agitation for a formalized binary system. This is mainly because Nigerian universities have always been looked upon as the responsible body for higher learning especially degree programmes geared to the country's needs for high-level manpower and for national unity. On the other hand, the polytechnics, colleges of technology and related institutions have evolved as post-secondary institutions which were different from the universities and devoted to courses in science, technical and commercial education at the intermediate level. Thus, although higher education has been the concurrent responsibility of both the Federal and the State Governments since 1981, the main provider of tertiary education is still the Federal Government which owns 17 out of the 25 universities in the country. On the other hand, the polytechnics have always been the power base of State Governments which now own 20 of the 28 polytechnics in Nigeria.

To close the chapter, we shall examine recent changes in the education system and their implications for the higher education needs of Nigeria.

3.7 General re-organisation of Nigerian education and the Streamlining of Universities

Since 1984, cutting down the cost of education and shifting the financial burden of education to parents and the community, have been the major objectives of educational reforms in Nigeria. Judging by official statements, the message of the new education policy of the military administration is that aspirations must be in line with reality. In the words of the Minister of Education in 1984:

'Education has become an expensive service,
therefore it cannot be totally free'

(Abdullahi, 1984: 2).

The major policy changes introduced so far are:

- (i) Beginning from the 1985/86 academic session, the Government would fund only Federal universities; Federal polytechnics; Federal Colleges of Technology and Education; Federal Government Colleges (Unity Secondary Schools); and Command Schools;
- (ii) In these institutions, tuition would continue to be free, but parents would buy books and pay for the feeding and accommodation of their children;
- (iii) From the 1985/86 Session, Universities were required to begin to phase out their on-campus living programmes, so that students would be responsible for their accommodation, feeding, laundry and other services which were hitherto freely provided by government;
- (iv) The Federal Government has left the entire burden of funding State universities, post-secondary and primary education (including the UPE scheme which it launched in 1976) to State and Local Government Authorities; and
- (v) The number of Federally-funded Nigerian Universities was reduced (in 1984) from twenty-two to seventeen (13 conventional universities, 3 universities of technology and 1 military university).

The five universities affected by the mergers and closures were:

3.7.1 National Open University of Nigeria It was suspended barely six months after it was officially recognised and established by the civilian government which was overthrown on 31st December 1983 on grounds that the country's economy and existing infrastructures could not support the system (Buhari, 1984). The full discussion of the National Open University of Nigeria and the position of distance education in the country, is left to the next chapter.

3.7.2 Federal Universities of Technology: In mid-1984, four out of the seven universities of technology established between 1979-83 (mentioned in Section 3.4.1) were scrapped and merged with the established conventional universities. Only three Federal universities of Technology, located at Akure (Ondo State in the South); Minna (Niger State in the North); and Owerri (Imo State in the South) were retained. The four which ceased to be Federal Universities of Technology, were turned into Colleges of the older universities as follows:

- (i) Federal University of Technology, Abeokuta:
merged with the University of Lagos;
- (ii) Federal University of Technology, Bauchi:
merged with Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria;
- (iii) Federal University of Technology, Makurdi:
merged with the University of Jos; and
- (iv) Federal University of Technology, Yola:
merged with the University of Maiduguri.

From the foregoing, it is clear that in addition to easing government's financial burden, the changes might yield some positive

results for the country. First, the fact that education is no longer totally free (students are now responsible for their accommodation, feeding and laundry) might lead to a better appreciation of the value of education. For example, parents would have to invest more into the education of their children, while the phasing-out of on-campus living would challenge students to make more personal sacrifices to obtain University degrees.

Secondly, the shortage of educational buildings, equipment, infrastructures as well as inadequate qualified teachers which was exacerbated by the massive but largely un-coordinated expansion between 1979-83 should be remedied since there are now fewer universities and colleges.

Thirdly, with the recent changes, higher educational institutions could consolidate, and thus enhance the efficiency of the educational system which suffered from the effects of the hurried expansion and the under-funding of education.

Fourthly, planned national strategy for both short and long-term development would be possible, particularly in higher educational institutions which could now direct their emphasis on the production of scientific, technical manpower needs and the provision of education for improved productivity as well as for meeting identified national needs, including training for self-employment, rather than indiscriminate mass production of graduates which appeared to be the case with the 1979-83 expansion.

Nevertheless, while the current re-organisation policies and cuts in public funds are likely to safeguard the quality of education in Nigeria, they could also seriously jeopardize one of the original objectives of accelerated expansion of education - that of correcting educational imbalances between the northern and the southern segments of the country. Unless there are special grants and deliberate national policies for overall educational development in the educationally disadvantaged areas, the existing gaps would most certainly be further widened. For example, it is widely known in Nigeria that whereas in the educationally more advanced southern States, people go as far as their purse could go to advance educational development, in the northern areas, the prevailing general uneasiness and suspicion of Western education, (discussed in Chapter 2), could result in yet another set-back for balanced development if the new policies are implemented without due consideration for the peculiar needs and problems of the educationally backward areas.

3.8 Conclusion

From the foregoing evidence, it is clear that education in Nigeria, particularly university education, has been a very expensive social sector. Whereas, roughly 5% of the national budget has been spent on Federal universities yearly in the last decade and a half, so far university education is reaching only 0.01% of the total population, while just 1.1% of the age-cohort (20-24 years) is in university education. Similarly, whereas between 15% and 28% of national budget was spent on education in the period prior to the

new education policies of 1984, minority provision and minority participation still persists at virtually all levels. At the same time, regional disparities in educational facilities and opportunities continue to widen between the northern and southern parts of the country, to the disadvantage of both segments for the kinds of reasons mentioned in Section 3.5. Also, as has been pointed out, one major problem centres on the expensive nature of conventional education in Nigeria.

With the declining financial resources, further high-level funding of the formal education system would have taken Nigeria to the point where any further increase in education's share would severely hamper the development of other vital sectors of the economy. It seems to me, however, that it would be suicidal for Nigeria, which is officially committed to building an egalitarian society - a land of bright and full opportunities for all citizens - to allow the current crises in education and the national economy, to curtail the provision of education to its citizens who hold the key to future stability and progress of the country.

Given the complexities of the challenge of education in Nigeria, an open university system has for some time been suggested as a possible alternative to conventional expansion, but how it should be introduced has not been determined. We shall examine the issues and problems of an open university system and other alternatives to the traditional system of education in the next chapter.

C H A P T E R 4THE STATE OF DISTANCE EDUCATION IN NIGERIA

With a population of over 97 million and vast land area of nearly one million square kilometres - over one thousand five hundred kilometres across and in length, Nigeria presents problems for nation-wide distance education provision. Apart from considerable variation in terrain and climate, over 80% of the population live in rural areas. This has implications for distance education because many rural communities are in extremely remote areas, sparsely populated and often inaccessible.

Another important demographic consideration relates to the high proportion of young people in the country's population. In 1985 for example, nearly 50% of the population is under 18 years while the labour force numbers slightly over 36% of the total population. The fact that the largest proportion of the population is young reflects a rate of growth which is much higher than previous projections allowed for. It also means that infrastructures for communication, energy and other services which are crucial for viable distance education schemes, are inadequate despite considerable expansion over the years, due largely to excessive demand brought about by the population explosion.

Education also presents another problem for distance education in that like most developing countries, Nigeria faces the problem of a large illiterate population. Adult literacy is extremely low - around 25%. Because of low participation until recently, in school education, only a small percentage of the working population have had formal

education. Furthermore, as in most emergent nations, scarce financial resources have to be thinly spread to provide for the basic needs of the people. There is therefore, no compulsory schooling while minority provision persists at all levels of education. To date, not more than 2% of the total population participate in secondary education. Again, only about 0.2% of the population can have access to full-time, post secondary and degree-level studies due to constraints of space in conventional institutions. The problem of demand for admission over-stripping available space in existing institutions is more evident in the southern states of Nigeria which had a head start in Western education.

The constraints of space apart, there has always existed a lot of people all over Nigeria who wanted university education but could not qualify because of poor results. Furthermore, growing needs of the country required intensified training in many disciplines including professional up-grading training opportunities for people in full-time employment, particularly unqualified and under-qualified teachers. The latter need has been more pressing in the educationally backward states in the northern part of the country.

Given these circumstances, ambitious Nigerians either educationally deprived or unable to attend conventional universities because of their jobs or other reasons, have for almost a century, taken to distance education in order to acquire external degrees, diplomas and professional certificates. Omolewa (1982 :7) and Ojo (1982 : 77) asserted that 'the yearnings of Nigerians to obtain higher degrees through external courses were sparked off by the University of London

which extended its facilities for external examinations at bachelor's, master's and doctoral levels to Nigeria in 1887'.

However, in offering facilities for external degree candidates in Nigeria and in the other former colonies, the University of London was actually responding to British needs in these countries. Nigeria was, therefore, an incidental beneficiary, but the facilities were important to Nigerians, Ghanaians and others who were enabled to study while still working.

There were also others who travelled abroad mostly to Britain and the United States of America in pursuit of university education because of inadequate provision of learning opportunities in formal post secondary institutions in Nigeria. Although not many people could travel abroad in the 19th century, when such people returned, they opened the eyes of others about options to formal educational opportunities. Subsequently, external studies became an important educational avenue for keeping pace with peers through professional diploma and certificates which enhanced job opportunities or upgrading of academic qualifications for admission to full-time degree programmes.

As far as Nigeria is concerned, distance education is still an open field. Not enough is known about the scene because, so far, the literature of distance education in the country is scarce. Therefore, in order to highlight and evaluate the role of this approach to education, case studies will be presented to see the main providers, the courses offered, organisation, teaching methods, students and

other major features in terms of : i) university-level programmes ; ii) programmes for professional up-grading ; and iii) general education courses.

The final part of this Chapter will focus on the suspended National Open University of Nigeria (NOU) to see what it was intended to do ; how it was to be organised, what courses were to be offered and why it failed to take-off the ground.

4.1 Historical Background

In Nigeria and Black Africa as a whole, the dissemination of essential information or instruction among people over a distance is not a new phenomenon. Indeed, in African pre-literate societies, the talking drum, trumpet, human couriers and other methods of communication were used to transmit information among members of one community or between communities. However, organised educational provision outside the formal face-to-face system is comparatively, a recent development, in particular, governmental involvement.

For example, whereas Nigerians had been taking and sitting external courses and examinations since 1887, the first time that a government in Nigeria allocated funds towards opening access to education was during the 1923/24 Fiscal Year. In that year, the colonial government granted '£200 (roughly N380) towards the cost of Evening Continuation Classes for workers and special classes for teachers in Lagos'. (Omolewa, op. cit.) The programme was based on face-to-face teaching for workers in the Federal Capital and was therefore, not a distance

education programme. It was however, an innovation which prepared workers for the London Matriculation examinations.

The idea spread to other major centres in Nigeria where evening schools were established. Some were partially funded by government while others were supported by voluntary agencies or organised through self-help efforts. Up to 1949, evening schools or correspondence courses from private overseas colleges were the only educational openings for Nigerians barred from ^{the} formal system by geographical remoteness or social factors such as work, family, or poor formal educational qualifications etc.

In 1949, opportunities for people precluded from formal education were enhanced following the establishment of a Department of Extra-Mural Studies at the University College Ibadan - Nigeria's premier University institution which came into being in 1948. The Department of Extra-Mural Studies was established to make the university facilities and education available to the public at large. This development marked the beginning of the opening of access to university-level education in Nigeria, although the programmes were somewhat limited because they were based on part-time face-to-face teaching on-campus or at Extra-Mural Centres based in the former regions (East, North and West). In other words, the beneficiaries of the university-level general and liberal education programmes of the Extra-Mural Department were mostly people resident in or around the headquarters at Ibadan or near to the Centres located in the major towns in the country.

In the early 1960's the University of Ibadan pioneered radio courses for teaching in such subjects as African Literature, combined with

face-to-face tutorial 'listening groups' which was similar to the 'tele-clubs' in France. It was the first experiment in Nigeria in radio discussion programmes and were designed to extend university education to wider groups in the society.

In the mid-sixties, the University of Ibadan's Department of Adult Education (successor to the old Extra-Mural Department), initiated a proposal for external degree programmes. It could have been Nigeria's first distance education degree programme. However, the idea did not materialize due to a number of factors notably lack of financial resources to fund the programme and reluctance or hostility to it among the academic community including those who questioned the wisdom of burdening the university with external degree programmes.

It was not until 1976 that the first multi-media distance education degree programme in Nigeria was launched by the University of Lagos. To date, Lagos is the only university in the country using multi-media teaching methods to offer degree courses at a distance. Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria also makes extensive use of distance teaching methods but for outside degree-level courses. (See Case Study 1). The off-campus degree programmes of Ahmadu Bello University, like those of other Nigerian Universities which offer courses to part-time students (Nsukka, Benin, Jos and Ilorin), use various forms of evening face-to-face and long vacation teaching for degree, diploma and certificate courses. In these universities, the external study courses are made to conform with those for full-time students.

Over the years and despite considerable pressure on conventional universities to open up access to higher education, most Nigerian universities have continued with the evening part-time and long

vacation on-campus teaching pattern for their external students. From the findings of this study (presented and analysed in Chapters 7 and 8), it would appear that the evening part-time teaching pattern remains the dominant feature of the off-campus degree programmes of Nigerian universities largely because many believe that the face-to-face teaching involved in this approach, leads to academic standards that are comparable to full-time on-campus university education. This suggests that most of the universities have so far not experimented with multi-media teaching methods for their external degree programmes because of a concern for academic standards which was believed to be largely dependent upon intensive face-to-face teaching and intellectual dialogues between teachers and students.

However, intensive interviews with policy-makers and potential candidates for distance education degree programmes in Nigeria (see Chapters 7 and 8), established that the majority of the respondents, including senior academics, believed that the use of multi-media teaching methods by a university specifically created to offer programmes of study to external students could also lead to academic standards that were comparable to those of the conventional universities. This finding suggests that because of their commitment to full-time on-campus students, conventional universities in Nigeria are either constrained from using multi-media distance teaching methods which were relatively new means of instruction or deliberately ignored them because the methods are seen as a potential rival to the traditional pattern based on face-to-face teaching.

4.2 University-level distance education

Given the situation described above, only two universities in Nigeria

are currently engaged in distance teaching (Ahmadu Bello and Lagos Universities). These are examined through four case studies: three on university based non-degree distance education programmes; and one of degree programmes for distance learners spread across Nigeria. These will be followed by two other case studies on distance education programmes outside Nigerian universities.

4.2.1 Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria

Since it was established in 1962, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria in Kaduna State (Central Nigeria), has offered a wide variety of distance education programmes characterised by an attempt to reach the widest population in the most educationally disadvantaged parts of Nigeria. Ahmadu Bello University has also been the only university in Nigeria to use all the mass media: radio, television and newspapers to extend university education and knowledge to the community at large. Such programmes ranging from agriculture, health to education for the benefit of the general public, are mostly to accelerate the pace of socio-economic development in the educationally backward Northern States which it was created to serve. For example, since the mid-1960's, the Institute for Agricultural Research at Ahmadu Bello University, working in collaboration with Radio-Television Kaduna runs twice weekly radio programmes for agricultural information to farmers in the northern areas of Nigeria. The programmes disseminate the latest research on agriculture to farmers listening groups and clubs. The broadcasts also contain questions and answers on issues such as soil protection, ridging and cropping, fertiliser application, pest control, crop preservation, mixed farming, storage, co-operatives and marketing as well as self-help: all aimed at agricultural and rural development.

Also in the 1970's, the Ahmadu Bello University Centre for Adult

Education and Extension Services and the Institute of Health of the University organised a series of radio and television programmes on health and family education for the benefit of the community at large. The programme topics included sanitation, personal hygiene, the dangers of self-medication, preventive and curative medicine, medical advice, pregnancy and birth, child-care etc.

In terms of opening access to university education, three major types of distance education programmes are offered by the University which are media based. They are :

- i) Teacher In-Service Education Project (TISEP)
- ii) Nigerian Certificate of Education (NCE) by Correspondence ; and
- iii) University of the Air programmes (for wider dissemination of university knowledge to the wider community.)

4.2.2 Case Study 1:

Teacher in-Service Education Project (TISEP)

TISEP was first initiated in 1966 by the former Northern Nigeria Ministry of Education. However, when the former Northern Region was split into six states in 1967, the Correspondence Unit of the Ministry was transferred to the Institute of Education at Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria. The Institute which has extensive responsibilities in research and training of teachers at all levels in the northern areas of the country, 'up-graded the original aims of TISEP in order to respond to acute shortage of trained teachers as a result of large-scale expansion of education at both the primary and post-primary levels.' (Hawes, Thompson and Aleyideino, 1970).

TISEP was launched in 1967 with the main objective of up-grading untrained and un-qualified school teachers in the northern areas of Nigeria through the use of correspondence courses, occasional residential (vacation) courses and radio / television broadcasts. The main teaching was done through correspondence course covering three years with examinations at the end of each year.

TISEP offered two types of courses. The main course, leading to the Grade II Teachers Certificate - the minimum qualification for teachers in Nigeria ; and a lower stage, designed to improve professional competence in teaching methods, English and Modern Mathematics. The lower stage courses were open to all teachers and made extensive use of broadcasting in the early 1970's. For example, between October 1972 and March 1973, three departments of Ahmadu Bello University - the Faculty of Education, the Institute of Education and the Centre for Adult Education and Extension Services, ran television series for teachers on audio-visual aids and radio series on new approaches to subject teaching, beamed at teachers all over the States in the northern areas of the country.

Institute of Education reports show that at its peak in the early 1970's, there were altogether 1,300 teachers taking TISEP courses. The number of students has gradually declined as more long-serving teachers became qualified through the project. An evaluation of the project in the mid-seventies showed that '105 out of 481 students successfully completed their courses every three years', (MacKenzie, 1976 : 5), representing a success rate of slightly under 22%.

On the whole, TISEP is widely regarded as an innovative and a successful project in several ways. It was Nigeria's first attempt at

a major public service correspondence-based teaching effort, but more importantly, it was a positive response to the acute shortage of qualified teachers which faced the northern areas in the 1960's and the 1970's. Whereas most primary school teachers were untrained or unqualified, they could not be released for full-time residential courses without worsening the staffing situation. Therefore, through TISEP teachers were retained in their schools and up-graded on the job.

The project was particularly relevant for long-serving teachers who had been teaching since the 1940's and 1950's without professional qualifications or training. Such teachers, who because of their poor educational background and large families, seized on the opportunity offered by TISEP and were groomed for the Grade II Teachers Certificate. Younger unqualified teachers tended to be less enthusiastic about TISEP courses and seemed to prefer full-time residential courses which increased with the creation of more states in 1975.

As the following project shows, the value of TISEP has encouraged the Institute of Education at Ahmadu Bello University to up-grade and concentrate on higher level in-service training programmes for teachers in the northern areas of Nigeria. Another reason for the phasing out of TISEP is the establishment of the National Teachers Institute in Kaduna in 1977 for the training of teachers all over Nigeria through distance teaching methods. (See Case Study 5).

4.2.3 Case Study 2:

Nigerian Certificate of Education (NCE) by Correspondence

Based on the experience gained from TISEP and the need for secondary-

level teachers in the northern areas of the country, the Institute of Education at Ahmadu Bello University launched a more advanced programme of distance education called the Nigerian Certificate of Education (NCE) by Correspondence in 1972. Its main objective was to up-grade the qualification of Grade II teachers (some of whom had qualified through TISEP), to the next level which is the Nigerian Certificate of Education or teachers diploma.

As was the case in TISEP, the academic and professional training is done through correspondence courses, supplemented with part-time, face-to-face teaching and practicals held during the University's long vacation (between July and September of each year).

Altogether, 3,019 Grade II teachers from the ten states in the northern part of Nigeria are currently enrolled into the NCE by correspondence programme. According to the University, 1,625 teachers had graduated from the Correspondence and part-time programme in the first twelve years. (Ango Abdullahi, 1983 : 1)

Over the years, the NCE by Correspondence has emerged as a viable alternative to the traditional system. The advantages are two-fold : for the students it afforded them the opportunity to remain in their employment while simultaneously pursuing their academic training. On the other hand, the scheme benefits state governments which would otherwise have been badly hit if the services of the affected teachers had been withdrawn for full-time study.

It is probably because of the relevance of teachers in-service programmes that State Governments in the northern areas of Nigeria have actively supported and encouraged both the TISEP and the NCE by

Correspondence courses of Ahmadu Bello University. An indication of Government support for the programmes was given during the 11th Graduation ceremony of the Correspondence and part-time students when the University was commended for 'evolving and adapting such a useful and noble programme'. (Mutuah, 1984 : 1)

4.2.4 Case Study 3 :

University of the Air, Ahmadu Bello University

The first attempt at a major public service university-level teaching in Nigeria was made by Ahmadu Bello University in 1973 when the Centre for Adult Education and General Extension Services Unit launched its 'University of the Air' courses. The major objective of 'University of the Air' was to extend university education through the media for the intellectual upliftment of the community at large.

University of the Air courses were non-credit radio and television programmes and occasional newspaper articles for 'the widest possible dissemination of useful ideas, new knowledge and information for public enlightenment'. (Adult Education and General Extension Services Unit, 1976 : 18). The programmes were produced and presented by staff of the Centre in conjunction with the various departments and faculties of the university and with the former Radio Television Kaduna, reputed to be the most powerful radio station in Africa, south of the Sahara. Its television service also had one of the widest television penetration in the country - reaching millions of viewers in Kaduna, Zaria, Kano and many nearby towns or villages provided with community viewing centres. (BCNN, 1972 : 4).

University of the Air courses were in batches of 13 weeks while the air time allocated for each programme was half an hour (25 minutes

duration). They were usually transmitted during peak viewing or listening period (between 6.30pm - 10.00pm) and repeated in the afternoon, roughly three days after the first broadcast.

Students registered for each course and received study materials to reinforce their understanding of the subject(s). Nearly all University of the Air programmes were produced in both English and Hausa for the widest possible penetration. Between 1973 - 77, a total of sixteen radio and television courses were provided for businessmen, housewives, farmers, health workers, teachers, trade unionists, illiterate adult groups (Literacy By Television) and a wide variety of general interest programmes for public enlightenment as well as to inform the public about research into the country's past. For example, there were series of courses on History of Nigeria ; History of Borno and the History of Niger-Benue Area of Nigeria which dealt with history, culture and customs of the people. These aimed at promoting better understanding and peaceful co-existence in a multi-ethnic society such as Nigeria.

Language programmes also featured prominently in University of Air programmes. For example, Hausa By Radio and Television encouraged non-Hausa speakers to learn and to communicate in the leading Nigerian language while English By Radio and Television, helped Nigerians to learn English, the official language. The language programmes were popular throughout Nigeria and the idea is now reflected in the National Television programme WAZOBIA, transmitted weekly to encourage Nigerians to learn basic communication skills in the country's three main languages - Hausa, Igbo and Yoruba.

Another successful University of the Air experiment in distance

teaching was Teaching Literacy By Television. It was mounted specifically to meet identified educational need in Kaduna and Kano states. The course took off in 1975 with the support of Kaduna and Kano State Governments as well as Radio Television Kaduna. The aim was to utilise existing Television Viewing Centres in the two states for the promotion of functional literacy among men and women who visit such centres nightly, largely for entertainment.

An important piece of evidence which emerged from the experiment was that Literacy by Television had four major advantages over face-to-face literacy classes in the area, namely that :

- 1 Television had the advantage of taking larger numbers of adult students than face-to-face classes without necessarily having any adverse effect on the overall performance.
- 2 Television classes appear more economical since with one television teacher 295 students were taught, whereas with the face-to-face classes, eight teachers were needed to teach only 125 students.
- 3 Television classes tended to favour the education of women more than the non-TV classes. In the TV classes, 26 out of 295 were women - representing 8.81% - whereas in the non-TV classes, only 3 women out of 128 were enrolled - representing only 2.34%.
- 4 In addition to the number of formally enrolled, many more people watched, followed and gained from the TV Literacy programmes in their homes which was impossible with face-to-face literacy classes. (Chollom, 1976 : 32)

In the period since 1977, University of the Air programmes were gradually phased out due to external and internal factors. One major

external factor was the re-structuring of broadcasting in Nigeria which transferred all radio and television stations including Radio Television Kaduna from States to the Federal Government in 1977. One important implication was that the re-structuring virtually centralized programming in the country. As a result, it became increasingly difficult for Radio Television Kaduna to continue to allocate air time for University of the Air programmes.

Secondly, one of the internal factors behind the phasing out of University of the Air programmes was the apparent feeling within the staff of the Centre and the University that Ahmadu Bello University should give greater attention to the training of adult education administrators from the northern states. Thus, it is not surprising that by the 1984/85 Session, the principal activities of the Centre had become : i) two year full-time Diploma programme in Adult Education ; and ii) one year Certificate course in Adult Education - both designed for adult education personnel in State Ministries and other organisations.

However, it may be noted that, another model of 'University of the Air' exists in Anambra State in the southern part of Nigeria for non-degree level courses. Known as the Anambra Broadcasting Corporation / Institute of Management and Technology University of the Air (ABC / IMT University of the Air, Enugu), the programme took off in April 1978. According to the joint sponsors (ABC / IMT), the University of the Air, Enugu aims at 'providing opportunities for post secondary education for adults who for one reason or the other failed to achieve their educational ambitions in formal institutions'. (Anambra Broadcasting Corporation, 1980 : 23).

Students of the project listen to lectures broadcast on the ABC, Enugu and attend tutorials at designated centres every fortnight, to progress from remedial courses through the General Certificate of Education (GCE 'O' Levels and 'A' Levels) to the National Diploma in Personal Management of the Institute of Management and Technology, Enugu. A Department of Distance Education established at the IMT for the project currently publishes and distributes the Enugu based University of the Air lectures in English, History, Economics and Government to support the broadcasts.

We can now go further to examine Nigeria's pioneer practitioner in the field of multi-media degree level distance education.

4.2.5 Case Study 4 : University of Lagos Correspondence and Open Studies Institute (COSIT)

Since Independence in 1960, the development of higher education in Nigeria has been influenced by two related features which are of relevance for putting the Correspondence and Open Studies Institute (COSIT) of the University of Lagos in context. First, at Independence, Nigeria's need for high level manpower was massive and urgent, but the number being produced was insufficient because of the few tertiary institutions in existence at the time. The second feature to note was the soaring desire for higher education and the trend of travelling abroad in pursuit of university education by Nigerians. The trend not only further reduced the available manpower, but also constituted a drain on scarce foreign exchange earnings.

To minimise these problems, the Ashby Report on Post School Certificate and Higher Education had two suggestions. The first was a

recommendation for the establishment of four more universities - one in Lagos and one each in the former three Regions (East, North and West). Secondly, it called Government's attention to the need to bring higher education nearer to Nigerians who were already in employment and unable to study as full regular students of conventional universities. Specifically, the Ashby Commission recommended that a Department for Correspondence Courses be associated within the University of Lagos because :

'University institutions with departments for correspondence courses have played a very useful part in helping to solve Russia's educational problems and are still an integral part of higher education in the United States'. (Ashby Report, 1960)

The Ashby recommendation and UNESCO, through its original plan for the University of Lagos, were believed to have been influential in selling the idea of providing facilities for external studies in the planning of a Federally funded University in Lagos. However, whereas the University of Lagos was founded in 1962, facilities for degree-level external studies were not provided until more than a decade later. This was largely because, initially, the University authorities felt that a Department of Correspondence courses as recommended by the Ashby Commission 'was not necessary since part-time evening studies in Business Administration and Law would adequately meet the needs of workers in the commercial environs of Lagos'. (Baiyelo, 1981 : 5). But as Baiyelo says :

'as time went on, it became obvious that some other more effective teaching strategy was needed to cope with the increasing demand for in-service training far beyond the initial catchment area of Lagos Commercial and industrial centres have increased with the increase in the number of States in Nigeria'. (Ibid : 5)

The decision for a more effective open studies strategy was made in the 1972/73 session when the Correspondence and Open Studies Unit - COSU (now COSIT for Correspondence and Open Studies Institute), was nominally established. It was formally launched in April 1976 and the objectives are as follows :

- a to organise the selection of suitable learners for open studies ;
- b to co-operate with other faculties of the University of Lagos (and other Universities when the need arises) in planning and developing the programmes of distance learning ;
- d to develop and apply teaching objectives suitable to bring university education in an effective manner, to distance learners ;
- d to produce suitable distance teaching media and make them suitable to distance learners ; and
- e to maintain administrative, academic and technical expertise at a level sufficiently efficient for the achievement of all COSU objectives.

4.2.6 The organisational method

Largely because of concern for academic parity, at the University of Lagos, distance education is integrated into the university system. In other words, distance education is faculty based and regarded as part of the obligations of the faculties to extend their programmes to those who are unable to study full-time.

In general, the Correspondence and Open Studies Institute at Lagos, represents the 'mixed mode, multi-departmental model.' (Keegan and Rumble, 1982 ; 29). It is a separate university department for open

studies, with a Director and its own staff. Although COSIT staff have responsibility for selecting students, preparing curricula, overseeing materials design and production and supervising the organization and running of study centres, the courses are faculty-based - hence the Institute works in collaboration with their colleagues from the faculties concerned.

In practice, the Faculty staff have responsibility both for conventional on-campus students and for external students. Similarly, although different learning materials and teaching methods are used for on-campus and external students, they are developed in close parallel, based on the same syllabus and virtually the same examinations, leading to the award of identical degrees for both. In effect, Lagos University distance education degree programmes derived strength from a uniform standard with established full-time degree courses.

2.7 Courses

Currently, three faculty-based degree courses, one post-graduate programme and one pre-degree programme are offered in Education, Science and Business Administration namely:

a Faculty of Education and Faculty of Science :

- i) BSc (Education combined with science teaching subjects) ;
- ii) Post-Graduate Diploma in Education (in science and arts teaching subjects) ;
- iii) Special Entry Preparatory Programmes for entry into BSc (Education);

b Faculty of Business Administration :

- i) BSc (Business Administration) ; and
- ii) BSc (Accounting)

In addition, the University Senate has approved two more distance education degree programmes in Law and Mass Communication, but it may be sometime before they can be offered. The inclusion of Law and Mass Communication degree programmes in the distance education courses, results from a decision by the University to phase out the part-time evening programmes which were initiated in its early years for the

Lagos catchment area.

In all, COSIT is charged with responsibility for seven distance education programmes - five at undergraduate level, one at post-graduate level and one pre-degree programme:

- 1 BSc (Education combined with either Pure Mathematics and Chemistry; Pure Mathematics and Applied Mathematics; Pure Mathematics and Physics; Physics and Chemistry; and Chemistry and Biology)
- 2 BSc (Business Administration)
- 3 BSc (Accounting)
- 4 LLB
- 5 BSc (Mass Communication)
- 6 Post-Graduate Diploma in Education (Science and Arts teaching subjects);
and
- 7 SEPP (Special Entry Preparatory Programmes for entry into BSc (Education)).

Judging from what was observed during the fieldwork, COSIT needs sometime to consolidate its existing programmes first before the newly approved programmes in Law and Mass Communication can be offered. At COSIT the policy is that at least 60% of course materials must be ready before a programme is started. Furthermore, COSIT insists on producing original materials for all its courses to ensure that study materials produced are not a copy of another distance teaching institution elsewhere. This process takes about two years - hence to be functionally ready and to ensure too that study materials of high quality are produced, probably more time may be needed for the new programmes.

.2.8 Entry requirement

COSIT maintains set entry requirements from its students. For example, all candidates for its degree programmes must not be less than 23 years. For candidates aged between 23 - 33 years, there is the same stringent admission requirement : they must fulfill the same university and faculty academic qualifications for admission as full-time students. Normally, the qualifications are 5 credits at School Certificate or GCE with at least 2 passes at GCE 'A' Level.

For mature and experienced candidates who are over 33 years, COSIT operates concessional entry qualifications (or Multiple Admissions System). The system allows mature people to be admitted into the Special Entry Preparatory Programme - SEPP) on the basis of associate-ship diploma, Grade II Teachers Certificate or equivalent qualifications. According to a former Director of COSIT, the concession for maturity and age followed 'a discovery of the existence of a large (educationally) disadvantaged group over 33 years, who are in the public and private sectors, and who provide the manpower on which the country so largely depends today'. (Olumide, 1982 ; 64).

Clearly, COSIT is committed to broadening access to higher education through the concession for maturity and age. However, the policy that all such candidates must first pass the SEPP or foundation level courses is a clear indication that COSIT is strongly committed to principles aimed at ensuring that academic standards of its external students are comparable with those of full-time on-campus students of the university.

4.2.9 The Teaching System

From the outset, COSIT has always aimed at a nation-wide coverage of Nigeria. Thus, COSIT uses multi-media distance teaching methods with correspondence texts as the main component of the teaching system, supported by radio broadcasts and cassetted programmes (narrowcasts) and highly structured occasional face-to-face tuition.

Currently, three types of face-to-face tuition are available for COSIT students. These are :

- i) Bi-monthly tutorials : These are held at Study Centres on Saturdays (called Study Centre Day) because at Lagos University, Saturday is teaching / lecture-free day for the full-time students. In all, there are 15 COSIT Study Centres strategically located in universities, polytechnics, colleges of education and other educational institutions throughout Nigeria for student support and tutorial services. However, as Map 4 shows, the Study Centres are not evenly distributed around the country. For example, nine such centres (60%) are located in the southern states while only six Study Centres are in the northern areas. But since Study Centres are established on the basis of students enrolment, the location suggests that COSIT students are concentrated in the States nearer to Lagos while relatively fewer students are taking courses of the Institute in the far northern States.

Significantly, four of the Study Centres are located in other universities (at Ife, Zaria, Maiduguri and Calabar). This not only shows that there is goodwill within the conventional

universities for university distance education programmes but also a high degree of willingness in the universities to support the opening of access to higher education to people who are unable to study full-time despite the fact that such institutions had limited resources.

Four other COSIT Study Centres are located in Polytechnics (at Enugu, Ilorin, Kaduna and Port Harcourt) ; and four are in Colleges of Education (Benin, Ondo, Owerri and Kano). Two other Study Centres are in secondary schools with Higher School Certificate (HSC) facilities (at Akure and Makurdi) while Lagos, COSIT Headquarters is also used as a Study Centre.

ii) Weekend Seminars : These are seminars held at selected zonal centres from time to time and give students the opportunity for intensive learning together with their tutors. The periodic seminars also provide the opportunity for intellectual dialogues and for social interaction among the students and between students and their tutors - all crucial factors for facilitating efficient learning over a distance.

iii) Annual Long Vacation Residential Courses : Each year, an intensive five week vacation course, followed by end of year examinations, is held at the University of Lagos - usually beginning in August, when COSIT students, lecturers, course writers and examiners are brought together. During these courses, science students carry out practical experiments in the university laboratories under the direction of their lecturers.

As a result of intensive interviews with the staff and fieldwork

observations, it would appear that the face-to-face teaching element is emphasised in COSIT distance education degree programmes for three main reasons. First, the contact sessions are encouraged because of the opportunity given distance learners to clarify their doubts in the learning process. Another concerns the confidence which distance learners are likely to gain through exposure to the academic environment, particularly from face-to-face seminars, tutorials and dialogues with the same examiners as the full-time on-campus students. More significantly perhaps, contact sessions not only expose distance students to the same facilities with residential students, but are also widely seen to prepare them to have the same academic standards with the full-time students with whom they have common syllabus and identical examinations.

.2.10 Students

During the 1984/85 session, there were about 3,500 registered COSIT students. In addition, there were about 3,000 others registered in the University's part-time face-to-face evening degree programmes which are separate from COSIT and gradually being phased out.

The COSIT finally registered students constituted about 28% of the total students population at University of Lagos which stood at 12,650. This represents a remarkable growth in distance education enrolments considering that COSIT was launched ten years earlier (1975/76 Session) with just 240 students.

The target is to have up to 10,000 distance degree students provided that funds are provided by government for the expansion of COSIT

programmes. The 10,000 target enrolment is the ultimate students population which the Institute believes the University can have facilities for in addition to its full-time students.

Judging from the three sets of COSIT students who graduated so far, the success rate on degree courses is just under 20%. For instance, in 1982/83 when the first batch of COSIT students graduated, only 24 from among the initial intake were successful - thus representing 10% of the 240 originally registered students in 1975/76. To date, about 100 graduates have been produced through the distance education programme of COSIT - on average under 35 graduates each year.

Furthermore, in the first six teaching years of COSIT (1976/81), 123 candidates qualified for the full-time degree programmes of the University through the Special Entry Preparatory Programme for distance learners (SEPP). This represents a pass rate of 37% among 335 SEPP candidates who were examined during the period.

As in most distance teaching institutions, one of the major difficulties which COSIT encounters is that of high rate of students dropping-out of courses or declining to take up places offered to them. For instance, figures produced by Ezeani (1982 :123), show that, whereas in the first six teaching years of COSIT (1976-81), a total of 4,398 candidates were offered places, the Institute had 2,983 finally registered students during the period while only 1,920 sat their first year examinations. In other words, 32% of those offered places turned them down while altogether, 56% dropped out of courses before the end of the first year.

From the findings of this study, it would appear that external factors

rather than personal or job circumstances account for the high drop-out from COSIT courses. Such factors ranged from extended family obligations, noisy and crowded accommodation, inadequate library facilities to lack of adequate study time because of problems of the environmental setting such as frequent interruption by people calling uninvited. These factors contrast sharply with findings at the Open University of the United Kingdom where '61% of students who dropped out of courses gave personal and job factors as the main problems for their withdrawal'. (Plythian and Clements, 1982 : 35 - 44)

Therefore, it would seem that, distance teaching institutions in Nigeria are likely to experience higher student drop-out rates, as there appear to be unavoidable societal circumstances which could lead to withdrawal despite adequate provision of students' support services.

However, from the foregoing findings, it is evident that the Correspondence and Open Studies Institute at Lagos, has been an innovative venture, founded with a clear vision of expanding the resources of a residential university to increase the scope and relevance of higher education.

One of the important features in the work of COSIT has been the widening of access to degree courses which are seen to be of special relevance to national development such as science education. Its whole policy of widening access to university education is geared towards courses which not only contribute to the democratisation of education in Nigeria but must also respond to critical areas of manpower needs such as science teachers, business administrators and qualified journalists and broadcasters. For example, the fact that

its education courses are tailored to up-grading existing teachers to become graduates in specialist teaching subjects such as chemistry, mathematics or geography at the secondary school level, suggest that such graduates would probably remain as teachers - skilled, experienced and academically qualified, but remaining as teachers as against opting out to other professions or jobs which is a common phenomenon among graduates produced through the formal system.

On the whole, COSIT has devised innovative university level distance teaching methods which could provide a viable alternative to the traditional university system, given the necessary attention and financial support in order to make its courses more accessible to distance learners all over Nigeria. Despite the very obvious shortcomings described in the short study, COSIT represents a practical approach to distance education. For example, it uses radio rather than television to reach its students in different locations in the country. Another striking feature of COSIT is its emphasis on providing learning opportunities and facilities for effective distance learning. In addition to locating its study centres in university towns, Lagos University has entered into agreements with the residential universities and other higher education institutions for their libraries and laboratories to be available to COSIT students across the country, for use on their study centre days. Also, COSIT was the first institution in Nigeria to overcome postal difficulties by the use of couriers.

4.3. Non-University based distance education programmes

Outside Nigeria's conventional universities and tertiary institutions, a variety of non-residential programmes exist for general education

and vocational training. For example, most State Ministries of Education have developed their own adult education and vocational training programmes for those who cannot study full-time in residential institutions. An interesting venture separate from Ministry provision, is the Abeokuta Continuing Education Centre (ABECEC) - which is worth mentioning as a successful example of privately owned part-time school for post secondary education. Since its inception in 1976, a total of 9,443 candidates have had their qualifications up-graded through the school. The majority of the students are candidates for GCE 'O' and 'A' Levels.

However, most of the existing non-residential education services offered by State Ministries or privately, use part-time evening instruction as their teaching strategy. They are therefore, not considered as distance teaching programmes or institutions. The few available distance education programmes outside the universities will now be explored through two case studies on : i) professional up-grading programmes for teachers; and ii) general education programmes of private correspondence institutions.

4.3.1 Case Study 5 : National Teachers Institute (NTI) Kaduna

The Context

The National Teachers Institute (NTI) Kaduna is the first autonomous nation-wide government institution in Nigeria established specifically for teachers' education through distance teaching methods. NTI was founded by the Federal Government of Nigeria in 1977 in the wake of the introduction of the Universal Primary Education Scheme (UPE) which had two major challenges to the country's

educational system : i) astronomical increases in students population ; and ii) the recruitment of a large number of untrained and under qualified teachers.

Because it was impossible to withdraw large numbers of untrained and under qualified teachers from the school for any length of time for formal training without disrupting the education system, distance education appeared to be the most appropriate solution in that studies could be combined with work. Advice was sought from UNESCO, after which the Government established the NTI based at Kaduna in central Nigeria (Map 4).

The Decree formally establishing the Institute (NTI Decree, 1978) states that the objectives of the NTI shall be :

- a To organise and provide programmes for the training, development, up-grading and certification of teachers through the use of distance learning techniques ;
- b To formulate policies and initiate programmes to improve the teaching effectiveness of teachers in Nigeria ;
- c To conduct research in conjunction with other bodies aimed at improving teaching skills and learning processes in the country's educational system ; and
- d To conduct Teachers Grade II examinations and award Certificates to deserving candidates.

4.3.2. The Organisational Structure

The National Teachers Institute is an establishment under the Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Technology but is isolated from the

normal bureaucracy of government. Its grants are released en bloc, while its Board of Governors are responsible for managing the financial affairs of the Institute within the government grant allocation. In this way, its work is unlikely to suffer as those ministerial departments which normally queue up in the Treasury to collect their subventions. The executive head of the NTI is the Director while the Registrar supervises the administration.

Largely because of concern to reach and up-grade teachers where they live and work, the NTI has developed a network of three major departments. These are : i) Professional Operations ; ii) Facilities ; and iii) Field Services.

Professional operations : The Department is sub-divided into two - course writing and examinations. The course writing section deals with the writing of NTI instructional materials while the examinations section conducts the Teachers Grade II examinations.

Facilities department : This is made up of three sections namely, audio-visual, quality control and printing. This is the department responsible for the production of all NTI publications and other instructional materials. During the research interview, the Director explained that one of the main operational objectives of setting up the Institute was the need to produce educational materials in the form of textbooks, audio-visual materials, charts etc., designed to specifically help teachers in Nigerian schools to improve the quality and content of their teaching. Very often, young unqualified or under qualified teachers are posted to rural schools where proper educational materials are lacking - hence, they are usually left to fend for themselves. Given the general lack of qualification,

experience and proper educational materials in the country's primary schools, the NTI has already published 48 books written in distance education mode for self-study in English, Mathematics and Education, designed to help improve teaching competence and to up-grade the qualifications of teachers who enrol into NTI courses.

Field Services Department : This is the department which provides human linkage between the NTI and its students scattered all over Nigeria. It consists of two sections - Field Services Programmes and In-service Education, Research and Evaluation Units. The Field Services Programmes Unit distributes NTI materials, organises seminars and workshops while the In-service Education section is responsible for In-service courses for teachers and for research in teacher education. It is the arm of the Institute which has the responsibility of establishing and supervising a network of Field and Study centres in all the States in the country.

4.3.3. Students

One of the most striking features of the NTI is the extremely large student population it is expected to train. Available data shows that in the period since 1976 when the UPE scheme was launched, more than 50% of primary school teachers in Nigeria were unqualified and the situation seems to deteriorate each year. For example, when the NTI was established in 1977, there were about 175,000 primary school teachers in the country - 54% of them were unqualified (NTI, 1983). The deterioration in the situation is illustrated in table 4.1.

Whereas table 4.1 shows that the number of primary school teachers has more than doubled since 1976, the proportion of qualified teachers has

Table 4.1

Qualified and Unqualified Primary School Teachers in Nigeria 1983

States	Total Teaching Force	Total Qualified Teachers	Total Unqualified Teachers	% of Unqualified Teachers	Primary School Population	Pupil/Teacher Ratio
Anambra	36,910	16,216	20,694	56.07	1,005,487	27.24
Bauchi	10,463	1,204	9,259	88.49	220,860	21.97
Bendel	38,457	9,993	28,464	74.02	878,447	22.84
Benue	22,701	9,773	12,928	56.95	848,130	37.36
Borno	8,723	567	8,156	93.50	398,327	45.66
Cross River	24,170	10,247	13,923	57.60	820,130	33.93
Gongola	8,822	942	7,880	89.32	427,322	48.44
Imo	33,568	28,849	4,719	14.06	1,277,964	38.07
Kaduna	25,142	10,546	14,596	58.05	1,060,196	42.17
Kano	20,871	491	20,380	97.65	1,200,342	57.51
Kwara	11,369	1,883	9,486	83.44	463,752	75.97
Lagos	15,301	10,131	5,170	33.79	400,522	26.18
Niger	7,043	516	5,527	92.67	171,498	24.35
Ogun	12,060	6,574	5,486	45.49	466,294	38.66
Ondo	20,583	11,723	8,860	43.05	691,898	33.62
Oyo	40,568	24,049	16,519	40.72	1,877,380	46.28
Plateau	21,728	3,407	18,321	84.32	600,892	27.66
Rivers	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Sokoto	18,066	330	17,736	98.17	684,030	37.86
TOTAL	376,545	147,441	229,104	60.84	13,902,451	36.92

Source : Compiled from NTI data and statistics obtained from Federal and State Ministries of Education.

not improved despite the existence of the NTI. Taking Nigeria as a whole, about 61% of primary school teachers are currently unqualified. In about half the States in the country over 80% of the teachers are unqualified largely because of increased recruitment of untrained teachers to cope with large scale expansion of primary education.

More significantly perhaps, is that although the NTI was created in 1977, its up-grading courses for teachers (called Distance Learning System - DLS) started only in the middle of 1984 after seven years planning.

So far, Field Services Centres have been established in all the 19 State capitals in Nigeria to provide the necessary link between the NTI and its students. These are manned by State Co-ordinators seconded to the NTI by State Ministries of Education.

At the grassroots level, study centres are proposed which would serve as the places where the distance learner consults with and obtains face-to-face instruction from his course tutors and interacts with other students. In all, the NTI plans to establish about 500 study centres and to enrol a maximum of 100 students at each centre (NTI Planning and Development Committee, 1983 : 2)

At the time of the fieldwork, the NTI was admitting its first intake of students. The figure aimed at for the first phase was 1,900 students and perhaps slightly more.

From available evidence, it would seem that, on the whole, the NTI expects to reach and up-grade just about one-quarter of the 229,000 unqualified teachers in the country shown in table 4.1. This is

implied in its proposal for a maximum of 500 study centres and 100 field services centres which would serve 100 students each or a total of 60,000, that is roughly 26% of the unqualified teachers in services by 1983.

4.3.4. The Teaching System

As in most distance teaching institutions, the principal medium of instruction is correspondence material - in this case, modular and self-instructional tuition. Other media also utilized are audio-video cassettes, audio visuals such as flip charts, wall charts and transparencies. NTI students are required to maintain constant face-to-face contacts at study centres with their supervisors and tutors (one each for the three papers for the programme, namely, Principles and Practice of Education, Mathematics and English Language). For this purpose, the Field and Local Study Centres are equipped with audio and video tapes and other learning resources which students are expected to use.

Furthermore, regular face-to-face teachers' in-service education programmes are part of the teaching system. Organised on various aspects of education, the major objectives of the in-service programmes or seminars are three-fold : 'improve the efficiency and effectiveness of teachers ; provide for their professional growth ; and provide for the dissemination and institutionalisation of innovative ideas in teaching'. (NTI, 1984 :3).

As yet, the NTI has not incorporated the use of radio, television and newspapers into its distance teaching methods, but all available evidence suggests that there is a commitment to using the mass media

in the future.

Another interesting feature of the system is the provision for Tutor-Marked Assignments (TMAs) in each course. The students are required to do assignments from time to time. These are sent to their course tutors for marking, assessment and grading. The assessment and grades made as a result of this exercise form the cumulative records that determines success or failure in each cycle of programme. For the practical aspect of the course, each study centre supervisor is required to pay regular visits to students in their classes to watch them at work, give corrections and assess their ability to put into practice what they learn from the Institute.

NTI study materials are in modules. A module is divided into six units of study, representing a lesson topic which should take the average student about one hour's study to complete. There are 12 modules to a cycle of each course (English, Mathematics and Education). Altogether there are four cycles for the programmes of study and the Institute anticipates that any average student should complete the Grade II Teachers programmes of study in four years.

To encourage teachers who enrol and work hard, the Institute plans to issue a certificate of achievement to any student who completes each cycle of the course. Such certificates could enable the recipients to gain promotion or recognition in the teaching profession. At the end of the fourth cycle, candidates will be recommended to sit for the Teachers Grade II examinations which are also administered by the Institute.

4.3.5. The Future

It is too early to evaluate the success of the NTI as its distance learning programmes have just been launched. Since its inception in 1977, the Institute has devoted much of its attention to planning and preparations for its Distance Learning System (DLS) which eventually took off in 1984. It has therefore, just been able to establish 19 Field Services and local study centres in the State capitals and is recruiting its first batch of students.

The fact that the programmes are finally off the ground after seven years preparations suggests that the Institute, at last, feels confident that it was ready to fulfill its aims - that of improving the quality, content and effectiveness of teachers in Nigeria through in-service training. However, given the country's circumstances, in particular the large number of unqualified primary school teachers, it would appear that incorporating the use of radio, television and newspapers at an early stage could enhance the relevance of the NTI to those who should benefit from its programmes. Innovative use of radio and newspapers for example, could do more than just to supplement the teaching methods of the Institute. One potential advantage of using the mass media could be wider dissemination of useful ideas, new knowledge and new approaches to teaching. This could be particularly important for teachers' up-grading since it is conceivable that in addition to the 60,000 target enrolment, the NTI would almost certainly have a large body of teachers eavesdropping and learning from radio and television programmes or newspaper articles to improve their professional competence.

Finally, the fact that the NTI is the first public service distance

education programme involving a large scale participation by indigenes of the northern states of Nigeria suggests that it could foster research on distance education in this part of the country. For example, it could provide a clear picture about the social, economic and cultural factors responsible for the well known phenomenon that the majority of candidates who normally take distance education courses in the northern areas were not indigenes of the area but were Nigerians from the southern states living in the north. Currently, Exam Success figures show that of about 30,000 correspondence students enrolled into the College, just about 2,000 were based in the northern states and that the majority of these, were indigenes of the southern states living in the northern areas.

We can now turn to an examination of private correspondence colleges - the oldest form of distance education in Nigeria as in other parts of the world.

4.4 Case Study 6 : Private Correspondence Colleges, General Education and Specialist Courses

Beginning in the late 1880's when facilities for the London University external examinations were extended to Nigeria, until the mid-sixties, all the Correspondence Colleges which provided tuition for Nigerians were commercial concerns mostly based in the United Kingdom. Because of the demand in Nigeria for private tuition, some UK-based Correspondence Colleges found it worthwhile to establish bases in Nigeria and in Ghana e.g. British School of Careers, Rapid Results College, Wolsey Hall, GCE Tutorial College, Key to Success and Pitman College.

Most of these Correspondence Colleges offered courses in general education but there were others such as the London School of Salesmanship, Chartered Insurance Institute, Overseas Press, Royal Society of Arts, School of Accountancy and London Lingual Centre which offered specialist courses for people in salesmanship, accountancy banking, nursing, catering, secretarial studies and journalism etc. Some of these courses are now offered by Nigerian owned Correspondence Colleges, which first appeared on the scene in 1967. The establishment of Exam Success and other indigenous correspondence institutions attracted active private participation and by the mid-seventies, private correspondence colleges had sprouted up in virtually every direction.

4.4.1 Regulation of correspondence education

To check a mushrooming of private correspondence institutions and to safeguard students from the dangers of the commercialization of correspondence education, the Federal Government of Nigeria promulgated a decree in 1977 requiring such institutions to be properly accredited by the Federal Ministry of Education. (Correspondence Education Registration Decree, 1977)

Prior to the law regulating correspondence education, there had been public complaints that some correspondence institutions were maximizing their profits at the expense of the students. This is not surprising and is not peculiar to Nigeria for as Sir Walter Perry has rightly pointed out :

'... there were large numbers of correspondence colleges in many countries offering courses in almost every subject under the sun and at almost every intellectual level. On the whole, these were private mentors set up primarily to make a profit. There were, of course, honourable exceptions to the general rule, but many had little reason to try to ensure learning, since the higher the drop-out after the fees had been paid the higher the profit'.

(Perry, 1981 : 6)

In the Nigerian context, the major criticism of private correspondence colleges ranged from reckless advertisements which made false claims of status and facilities ; excessive enrolment of students - far in excess of available resources, to poor quality study materials - some simply duplicated for years without revision.

Since the promulgation of the Correspondence Education Registration Decree in 1977, about 150 indigenous correspondence colleges have applied for Federal Ministry of Education approval. To date, however,

only five such colleges have been approved. The approved correspondence colleges which received their certificates of accreditation in September 1982 are :

- 1 Exam Success, Lagos
- 2 Nigerian Technical Correspondence College, Lagos
- 3 Walton Solomon and Associates Tuition House, Lagos
- 4 Bosede Business Training College, Ibadan ; and
- 5 Pacific Correspondence College, Onitsha

The others remain unapproved and function while awaiting Federal Ministry of Education approval or are the positively unapproved. Sixty of the positively unapproved indigenous correspondence colleges had their premises sealed by the authorities in 1984 in order to safeguard students.

Over the years, the five approved institutions have formed themselves into the National Association of Approved Correspondence Colleges (NAAC), mainly to protect their business. For instance, they have been trying to convince the Federal Government to ban foreign correspondence colleges in Nigeria on the grounds that they constituted a serious drain on scarce foreign exchange earning. Early in 1985, the Nigerian Government banned the remittance of tuition fees to 40 foreign correspondence colleges (not the well known institutions) on the grounds that the courses offered e.g. hairdressing and photography were not relevant to national needs for education and training. Secondly, the indigenous correspondence colleges have also been campaigning for protection just as other businesses are protected industrially.

It is impossible to give the precise number of foreign correspondence colleges serving Nigerians because of the frequency and the diversity of advertisements. However, the major overseas correspondence institutions which have subsidiaries in Nigeria are mostly based in the UK. These are :

- 1 Bennet Correspondence College
- 2 GCE Tutorial College
- 3 International Correspondence College
- 4 Key to Success
- 5 Metropolitan College
- 6 National School of Accounting
- 7 National School of Salesmanship
- 8 Pitman College
- 9 Rapid Results College
- 10 Royal Society of Arts
- 11 School of Careers
- 12 Wolsey Hall

In addition to these, many more correspondence colleges in different parts of the world are known to have served or are still providing courses for Nigerians, mostly specialist courses for specific types of training e.g. telecommunications, accountancy and journalism. In the sample of the policy-makers interviewed for this study for example, the respondents listed twenty-four foreign correspondence colleges in the UK, the USA and Australia which offered varieties of courses for them including courses for university matriculation, professional diploma / certificate and higher degrees.

4.4.2 Correspondence Students

Currently, it is estimated that about 50,000 Nigerians take tuition by correspondence every year for general education (university matriculation courses for General Certificate of Education 'O' and 'A' Levels), and specialist courses as well as degree courses. In 1984, Exam Success claimed that it had about 30,000 students enrolled into GCE 'O' / 'A' Levels and specialist courses.

The findings of this study showed that the majority of correspondence students in Nigeria lived in the urban centres. For instance, 70% of the students registered with Exam Success, the largest indigenous correspondence college, were in Lagos. It was also established that in virtually every family in Lagos, there is at least a student studying by correspondence tuition.

By Exam Success records, Bendel State has the second largest concentration of correspondence students in Nigeria after Lagos while Anambra, Imo, Oyo, Ondo and Ogun tie for the third position. The Cross River State is rated fourth with about 1,000 students while the far Northern states have the least, ranging from 600 students in Kaduna to about 150 in Borno State.

4.4.3 The Teaching System

As in most distance teaching institutions, the principal means of instruction in Nigerian correspondence colleges is printed materials. Most correspondence courses are written with illustrations and usually require no reading other than the self-contained lectures or cram courses.

A few private colleges such as Exam Success and Wolsey Hall, give additional sketchy notes and list compulsory and optional readings for their students. So far, other media such as films and audio or video cassettes are not used except for language courses.

4.4.4 Strengths of private correspondence colleges

In Nigeria, as in Britain, private correspondence colleges owe much of their growth to the original concept of the University of London. Because the University offered no formal tuition for its external degree students (it only registered and examined them for accreditation), all tuition was left to private correspondence colleges. Various private concerns arose because of the demand for correspondence tuition. For example, the major correspondence institutions based in the UK had subsidiaries in Nigeria soon after the University of London extended facilities for its external examinations to the country in 1887 because of the demand for correspondence tuition.

Another important factor concerned the acceptance of part-time education as a credible alternative to full-time education. Although correspondence education is generally seen in Nigeria as a compensatory education for those not fortunate enough to attend formal institutions, certificates obtained through this method of study, have for long been recognised by government and employers in the private sector. The major advantage for private correspondence colleges has been that, with the expansion in the formal education system over the years, the demand for correspondence tuition increased among three distinct groups :

- i) those unable to go into secondary education due to limited access ;
- ii) those who drop-out or leave secondary education with poor results ; and
- iii) mature and working people who left school at an early age who are interested in up-grading their education while still earning a living.

For the ambitious among the first two groups listed above, correspondence tuition, is usually pursued with some degree of seriousness since they must first up-grade their educational qualifications to qualify for re-entry into formal education to catch up educationally. The third group also turned to correspondence tuition either to up-grade their education to qualify for admission into full-time higher education programmes to keep pace with their peers or to acquire additional qualifications in areas connected with their careers to enhance their employment.

Thirdly, the cost of correspondence tuition has tended to be attractive to large numbers of workers who find that they can afford to finance their own studies while still earning a living. Approximately, the cost of a correspondence course per student is N250 (£225) a year. The amount covers enrolment forms, lectures, postage and stationery. Little or no additional expenses are incurred in buying books as the most essential books are normally supplied along with the lectures on pre-payment of the prescribed fees.

Also, the capital outlay and operational costs of correspondence schools are usually low, compared to public service distance education institutions. In general, private correspondence institutions operate

in very modest accommodation ; use few course writers on part-time basis ; and courses, once written, are often used for years with little or no revision. Again, most private correspondence colleges use the public postal service in contrast to public service distance education institutions such as COSIT which use their own courier service to overcome postal difficulties in Nigeria.

4.4.5 The major problem areas

Leaving aside the common problems of distance learning such as isolation and inadequate interchange of thought with the teacher because of physical separation, in Nigeria there appear to be three major problems of private correspondence education and correspondence institutions. For instance, although correspondence colleges have been on the education scene for about a century, they still suffer from poor reputation. Being essentially profit making ventures, correspondence institutions are generally seen as bodies which exploited rather than being geared towards the educational development of the country and their students. Also, because their actual contribution is undermined by their profit motive, correspondence institutions are hardly consulted over national educational policies.

Another drawback of correspondence education results from Nigeria's cultural and environmental setting. From all indications, the real problem for home-based education in Nigeria is the poor condition under which students work. This is because the average Nigerian home is usually crowded due largely to the extended family system. Junior and intermediate workers in the towns who are mostly the people who study part-time, suffer most from the extended family system as their

one or two-room accommodation might house up to ten people, some of them distant relations. Under such conditions, it is often difficult to find a quiet place for study. Also, books could easily be damaged by children playing around or could be taken away by relations and their friends who could come in at any time.

The home problem is compounded by infrastructural constraints such as unreliable postal, telephone and electricity services. For instance, this study established that correspondence students in centres distant from Lagos, Ibadan and Onitsha where most of the correspondence institutions are based, did not receive study materials posted to them until after three or four weeks due to delays in the country's mailing system. It was also found that because the existing telephone system is limited and faulty, it was difficult to get anything done on the telephone even within Lagos.

Additionally, at present, the electric power generated is just 2,343 megawatts (39%) of the national requirement (NEPA, 1982 : 1). Consequently, in most towns, it is a miracle if all sections are supplied with electricity at any time. The implication is that the home-based student in Nigeria, often does not have light for study at night when he is free from work or when members of his extended family had gone to bed.

It is, therefore, likely that the cultural, environmental and infrastructural problems described above, discourage a lot of people from correspondence tuition. Similarly, there has been a high drop-out rate and low rate of success among correspondence students in the country. According to the findings of this study, just about half the number who register for correspondence courses, stay on to complete

their courses, while many re-sit the same papers several times. On the whole, it takes the average student five years to pass the GCE papers required for university admission.

Whereas the infrastructural constraints can be overcome with planning, the home is unlikely to be ideal for study since the obligations of the extended family system normally take precedence over individual consideration. This suggests that in Nigeria, the correspondence student needs more than postal tuition. Since most such students have crowded and noisy homes, study centres are needed to give them the ideal environment in which to read and do assignments.

4.4.6 A new approach

Interestingly, during the fieldwork it was observed that more recently, the largest indigenous correspondence college in Nigeria, Exam Success, established study rooms and libraries at its Lagos Headquarters to give better study conditions for its students, 70% of who live in the city. It was also designed to integrate occasional face-to-face teaching with printed tuition to ensure that more students passed their examinations.

For students outside Lagos, Exam Success gives detailed training through printed tutorial guidance geared to full preparation of students for success in their examinations.

4.5 Initial deductions

The six case studies on distance education programmes (four university based and two outside the formal university sector), for professional up-grading and for career-related courses as well as general

Table 4.2

Enrolments and Output from Part-time and Distance Education Credit Programmes in Nigeria

Programme	Total Participation	Yearly Output
1 Teachers In-Service Education Project (TISEP)	1,300	286
2 Nigerian Certificate of Education (NCE)	3,019	135
3 National Teachers Institute (NTI)	1,900	First intake in 1984/85
4 University of the Air, Enugu (UNIAIR)	2,000	250
5 Abeokuta Continuing Education Centre (ABECEC)	900	555
6 Private Correspondence Colleges	50,000	4,111
7 Lagos University Correspondence and Open Studies Institute (COSIT) and Part-time Degree Programmes	6,500	30
TOTAL	65,619	5,367

Source : Computed from field data statistics on the distance education and part-time programmes surveyed in this Chapter

education, show the diversity in the needs in Nigeria for education, and training which are not adequately met through the formal system of education. In practice, however, the contribution of distance education, particularly in opening access to degree level education, has so far, been slow and quite limited. For example, whereas field / data statistics show that, in all, about 65,600 learners have been or are participating in part-time and distance education programmes in Nigeria, the number of candidates who obtain credits from such programmes yearly, are only slightly over 5,300.

Table 4.2 illustrates this and compares places in all post secondary distance education programmes in Nigeria with the yearly out-put, based on empirical evidence that, course completion in most cases, take a minimum of four years.

In the area of degree level programmes, just about thirty Nigerians obtain their degrees through distance education courses each year. This is quite low considering evidence such as presented in Table 3.8. The fact that just about 12% of university candidates find admission suggests that the demand for university education has been far in excess of available space in the conventional universities. Because of the great diversity of groups who cannot attend conventional institutions e.g. workers, people with poor results or those who cannot afford the cost of full-time studies, it is clear that distance education does not, as yet, respond adequately to known needs in the society. Moreover apart from COSIT and NTI, the majority of the programmes currently available are not really distance education but essentially correspondence education. Most programmes rely on correspondence tuition and do not provide adequate student support services to sustain home-based learners.

It is important to note, however, that given Nigeria's circumstances, a full-fledged distance education institution committed to multi-media teaching methods is virtually beyond the scope of private organisations or individuals since huge capital outlay, adequate human and material resources are required to establish and successfully operate university level distance education institution with nation-wide coverage.

4.6 National Open University of Nigeria (NOU) : Its establishment and suspension.

In recent years, concern for an improved system of distance education to play a more significant role in meeting varied educational needs led to the initiative for a national open university. This section describes briefly the background to Nigeria's attempt to experiment with the open university system and the suspension of the programme early in 1984. It focuses particularly on the organisational model which had been adopted ; its programmes, teaching methods and their implications for university level distance education in Nigeria.

4.6.1 The Background

The need for an autonomous national open university was first felt in 1976 by the National Universities Commission (NUC) - the body responsible for the traditional university system in the country. Realizing that the conventional universities were increasingly becoming unable to meet the demands being made on them by the nation for more student places and for more diversified programmes, the NUC recommended to the Federal Government that an autonomous open university should be established for the country during the Fourth

National Development Plan (1981-85).

In 1977, Nigeria became formally committed to the open university system when the idea was enshrined in the National Policy on Education. For example, section one, paragraph 7 (10) of the new policy on education endorsed the philosophy of combining work with study stating that :

'At any stage of the educational process after primary education, an individual will be able to choose between continuing his full-time studies, combining work with study, or embarking on full-time employment without excluding the prospect of resuming studies later on'. (National Policy on Education 1981 : 9 revised)

Similarly, in section five of the same policy, the Federal government resolved that :

'Maximum efforts will be made to enable those who can benefit from higher education to be given access to it. Such access may be through universities or correspondence courses, or open universities, or part-time and work study programmes'. (paragraph 40, section A)

According to Federal Ministry of Education records, the Higher Education Division of the Ministry started planning how to integrate the open university system into Nigeria's educational system shortly after the National Policy on Education was adopted in 1977. This initial planning for the open university was not known to the public as it was left to a small committee of the Ministry's officials. Therefore, it was only during the 1979 general elections that the idea was first floated by one of the political parties (now disbanded National Party of Nigeria - NPN), which included the OU in its election manifesto.

The NPN won the election and in November 1979 barely one month after assuming office, the then President Shehu Shagari, appointed a Co-ordinating Committee to liaise with the Higher Education Division of the Federal Ministry of Education and to re-inforce the idea of the open university. Early in 1980, the whole OU scheme was removed from the Ministry of Education and placed directly under the office of the President. This action invariably isolated both the Federal Ministry of Education and the National Universities Commission (NUC), the two bodies responsible for the planning and co-ordination of university education in Nigeria from the OU scheme. Technically, the two bodies supervised the scheme, but as was found out during this study, even top officials who ought to be aware of what was happening with the OU claimed that they were kept in the dark. One top official commented :

'Personally, as a Federal Director of Education, I knew nothing about the scheme. The Federal Ministry of Education had little or nothing to do about the planning since early 1980. Everything was done in the office of the former President Shagari'. (Oral Information).

As it turned out later, the isolation of the Ministry of Education and the NUC was probably unwise since, long before the politicization of the OU, the Ministry had been working silently for the eventual establishment of the scheme in Nigeria.

4.6.2 Planning

The major political initiative for the establishment of an OU was made on 1 May 1980 when a three-man full-time Presidential Planning Committee was appointed - all three were drawn from the existing universities. The terms of reference of the Committee were as follows :

- a to work out the educational functions of the University and formulate proposals on the form that it should take ;
- b to draw up guidelines along which it would develop ;
- c to operate a plan of operation so that the University could reach an enrolment target of 100,000 students in five years ;
- d to examine ways in which radio, television, correspondence courses and face-to-face teaching could be used to attain the objectives of the Open University and make concrete suggestions ; and
- e to carry out any other assignments that would facilitate the discharge of its duties'. (Presidential Planning Committee, 1981a :5)

In October 1980, the Planning Committee after six months of dedicated work, submitted its report. Subsequently, the report was approved by the Government and the National Open University Bill was sent to the National Assembly in July 1981. The original aim of the Government was to launch the programme in 1981. However, it was in the National Assembly that the National Open University suffered its first set-back due largely to problems of internal political differences. For example, whereas the NOU Bill was unanimously passed by the House of Representatives (Lower House) on 16 July 1981 the Senate (Upper House) rejected the idea two months later, on 16 September 1981 on grounds that an open university system was not technically feasible given the erratic and unreliable performance of the country's postal, telephone, electricity, radio and television services.

While there is some truth in the infrastructural argument, there is probably no validity in the contention by the Senate that they must be faultless before an open university system could be successfully implemented. Moreover, the problems of infrastructural inadequacies

affect all organisations in Nigeria and progress continues to be made in other areas of economic, social and technological sectors including the field of education. In this regard, it can be argued that the infrastructural arguments were probably an excuse to conceal internal political differences over the National Open University.

From views expressed, it appeared that the NOU lacked national consensus. Due to political, cultural and social differences, the NOU was seen in different light by different groups in the country. To some people, it represented an attempt by the then ruling party to score a political point. To others, particularly those in the educationally disadvantaged areas, the NOU was treated with suspicion because it was seen as an attempt to create more higher educational opportunities for the educationally advanced southern states whose share of places in the conventional universities had been limited by the quota system of admission in the existing Federally-funded institutions. In other words, the NOU was seen by some, as an attempt to neutralise steps taken in the conventional universities to correct educational imbalances which for years, had favoured the States in the southern areas of the country.

On the other hand, there were others who argued strongly (mostly through newspaper articles and letters) that the time had come in Nigeria to make the open university system an integral part of the country's educational system to foster national progress and to meet the ever increasing demand of the people for education and training. This group included trade union leaders who argued that the system was in the national interest as it was related to the development of working people. In the words of the National President of the Nigerian Labour Congress (NLC), 'the open university system is a very

important phenomenon because education for people who have started work and cannot go into formal education is worthwhile since with increased education and training, people will improve on their jobs, at home, in the community and become more active and productive citizens'. (Oral Information)

In Nigeria, workers start raising family very early - some immediately after starting work - about the age of 20. Usually by the time such people had a sizeable family, they would want to improve their education, but without an open university most of them are precluded from higher education by social barriers such as work and family obligations or formal educational barriers of entry qualifications.

On 16 December 1981 the National Open University Bill was re-submitted to the National Assembly. During his address to the joint session of the National Assembly, the then President Shagari, said, on the question of the open university :

'If I may say it here, the issue of the open university is still very much in my mind in spite of the initial set-back it has suffered. I am convinced that such a university can offer immense opportunities to many of our citizens who may not have direct access to the traditional types of university education. I might remind you that there are many highly placed Nigerians in all walks of life, who have received university education by studying at home. In many developed countries, the system of education is operated and has been found to be extremely beneficial'. (Budget Speech, 1982)

Despite intensive lobbying, the NOU Bill was delayed in the National Assembly until 23 June 1983 when the Senate and the House of Representatives finally ratified it. One month later, on 22 July 1983, the NOU Act received Presidential Assent while the Act was gazetted on 27 July 1983. (National Open University Act, 1983)

4.6.3 Objectives

Section One, paragraph 3 of the NOU Act states that the objects of the University shall be :

- a to encourage the advancement of learning throughout Nigeria by means of tuition carried out mainly by correspondence and closely supplemented by lectures, broadcasts by radio and television as well as by occasional seminars, tutorials and counselling services organised through a network of local study centres and to hold out to all persons without distinction of race, creed, sex or political conviction the opportunity of acquiring a higher and liberal education ;
- b to provide courses of instruction and other facilities for the pursuit of learning in all its branches and to make those facilities available on proper terms to such persons as are equipped to benefit from them, especially those who may not, by nature of their special circumstances, enrol for residential full-time university education ;
- c to encourage and promote scholarship and conduct research in all fields of learning and human endeavour ;
- d to relate its activities to the social, cultural and economic needs of the people of Nigeria ; and
- e to undertake any other activities appropriate for a university of the highest standard'.

The NOU moved to its permanent site at Abuja, the new Federal Capital in central Nigeria in November 1983 so that it could begin to recruit students.

4.6.4 The System

Organisationally, many of the central features of the NOU were similar to the Open University of the United Kingdom, which is not altogether surprising given the close association which built up between the two institutions, fostered by the Presidential Planning Committee. For instance, the NOU was based on a three-tier administrative structure, planned to consist of Central Headquarters ; 19 regional campuses (offices) ; and 200 colleges (study centres) when fully operational. In all, the capital cost of the project was estimated at N295 million.

The planned facilities for the first five years of the University and estimated costs(Presidential Planning Committee, 1981a) were as follows :

a	Teaching and examinations space at headquarters and 19 Regional Centres	N43,200,000
b	Administrative and technical resources space at headquarters, 19 Regional Campuses and 200 Colleges	N73,200,000
c	Conference centre, Guest House and social services including catering and secretarial buildings	N27,000,000
d	Academic, administrative and technical senior staff residential accommodation at headquarters, 19 Regional Campuses and 200 Colleges	N80,500,000

e	Junior staff housing at headquarters	N2,000,000
f	Vice-chancellor and Pro-chancellor's lodges at headquarters	N850,000
g	Infrastructures	N10,000,000
h	Teaching, research and distance learning materials and equipment at the headquarters	N20,000,000
i	Distance learning materials and equipment at Regional Campuses and Colleges	N38,000,000
		<hr/>
	Grand Total	N294,750,000
		<hr/>

However, it was evident that the financial situation in Nigeria could not support even the N80 million required by the NOU for capital projects in its first year. Consequently, it was decided to launch the scheme with a two-tier organisational structure in the first instance, namely :

- a Abuja - the headquarters ; and
- b 6 Zonal Centres, located at Bauchi, Calabar, Enugu, Kaduna, Kano and Lagos. (See Map 4)

In view of the known inadequate infrastructure of communication and essential services, it was decided that the NOU would maintain its own courier service for the distribution of its printed teaching materials and for conveying to staff, the written assignments collected from the students. Also, Printing and Publications Department was to be set up to handle the printing of course materials, brochures and all other teaching aids.

As regards the use of the media, it was proposed that a Media Committee be set up by the government, comprising representatives of the NOU, the Nigerian Television Authority and the Federal Radio Corporation of Nigeria - all agencies of the Federal Government, to advise on the media needs and resources of the university especially

to :

- a 'delimit clearly areas of responsibility between the NOU and these media e.g. whether the university should build up its own independent production capability while going to the radio and television for air and viewing time or follow the British model of full dependence on the radio and television authorities ;
- b identify, purchase and install the necessary radio and television equipment ; and
- c arrange and run training workshops for the Open University and media men concerned on scripting, production and presentation'.

(Ibid. 25)

Furthermore, it was decided that from the outset, the University's business would be computerised, especially records of students - registration and performance in view of the considerable details of facts and figures to be kept on each student from the stage of admission to graduation. The NOU also planned eventual use of the computer for teaching purposes.

Also, as in the Open University of the United Kingdom, the NOU was committed to using a multi-media approach with the basic element of the teaching system - correspondence texts, supported by radio and television programmes as well as cassetted programmes. Also, as in the UK, the NOU was to offer a degree of personal contact through

seminars, tutorial and counselling sessions at regional offices and local study centres as well as yearly long vacation residential courses at the traditional universities.

The NOU was planned to be recognised and known to belong to the family of Nigerian universities. Essentially, it was to be different only in scale and types of functions and not in character.

4.6.5 Academic programmes

As far as academic standards are concerned, the NOU planned to achieve parity with the traditional Nigerian Universities. Although the University was suspended before the details of its academic programmes were worked out, available evidence shows that there was a deliberate attempt to look at the educational needs of working adults in Nigeria and to provide courses relevant to their experiences. Within the disciplinary areas, there was also an attempt to look at national manpower needs and to offer courses that responded to them.

In all, seven faculties were proposed for the NOU : i) Arts, ii) Business Studies, iii) Education, iv) Environmental Studies, v) Law, vi) Science and Technology, and vii) Social Sciences.

Table 4.3 shows that whereas the proposed courses of the NOU differed in emphasis from those of the traditional universities because of an attempt to meet the educational needs of working adults, they were clearly planned within the overall Nigerian higher educational framework.

Table 4.3

Proposed NOU faculties / courses and those of traditional Nigerian universities

National Open University		Traditional Universities	
Faculties	Courses	Faculties	Courses
Arts	Art and Cultural Administration	Arts and Social Sciences	Arabic and Islamic Studies, Archaeology, Anthropology and Sociology, Demography and Social Statistics, Drama, Economics, English, French, Geography, History, Mass Communication, Music, Nigerian Languages, Political Science, Psychology and Religious Studies
Social Sciences	Co-operative and Rural Development and Social Work		
Business Studies	Rural Arts and Technology ; Advertising and Salesmanship	Administration	Accounting, Administration, Business Administration and International Relations
Education	Instructional Technology and Library Education	Education	Education, Adult Education, Educational Administration, Guidance and Counselling, Creative Arts, Mathematics, Education, Business Education, Social Studies, Language Arts, Science Education, Library Science and Agricultural Education
Environmental Studies	Planning Sciences Environmental Management, Land Use and Resources	Environmental Design	Architecture, Building, Fine Arts, Industrial Design, Urban and Regional Planning
Law	Civil Law	Law	Civil Law and Islamic Law (Sharia)
Science and Technology	Crop Protection	Science	Biochemistry, Biological Sciences, Chemistry, Geography, Geology, Human Nutrition, Maths/Computer Science, Microbiology, Nursing, Physics, Textile Science and Technology

Agriculture	Agricultural Biochemistry, Agricultural Economics, Animal Science, Agricultural Extension, Crop Science, Soil Science, Forestry, Wildlife, Fisheries and Rural Sociology
Engineering	Civil Engineering, Electrical Engineering, Chemical Engineering, Mechanical Engineering, Quantity Surveying, Land Surveying and Petroleum Engineering
Medicine	Medicine and Surgery, Dental Surgery, Physiotherapy and Physiology
Pharmaceutical Sciences	Pharmacy
Veterinary Medicine	Veterinary Medicine

Source : Compiled from Joint Admissions and Matriculation Board (1984) JAMB Brochure 1984 - 85 Session, Lagos : Pacific Printers.

The details of the disciplines for NOU degree programmes were to be determined by the Senate of the University which could not function because of the suspension of the scheme. It had, however, been decided that in its first year (1984) the NOU was to give emphasis to Foundation level courses and enrichment lectures while under-graduate and higher degree programmes were to start in the second teaching year of the university. For 1984, two programmes were to be offered as follows :

- a Enrichment lectures : These were packages of radio and television lectures of a general nature covering the major fields of human intellectual interest and liberal education. They constituted the NOU's essentially non-certificate oriented programmes directed at the general public for the purpose of disseminating informed opinion and researched information, and raising the level of reasoned thinking. The enrichment lectures were in most fields of contemporary knowledge including agriculture, education, humanities, science and technology and social sciences. The themes for the first set of such lectures were :
- i) Agricultural Production in Nigeria ;
 - ii) Educational Innovations in Nigeria ;
 - iii) Nigerian Traditional Heritage ;
 - iv) Energy in National Development ;
 - v) Presidentialism in Nigeria 1979 - 83 (NOU, 1984 : 3 - 7)

The first in the series of Enrichment Programmes were broadcast on radio and television between February and April 1984 before the suspension of the NOU.

- b Foundation Level courses : The Foundation Year programme of the NOU was made up of a number of courses meant to provide a wide

ranging and introductory overview of an integrated body of knowledge deemed necessary for and preparatory to facing the demands of degree level studies. It was decided that all undergraduate students of the university not holding qualifications as high as Higher School Certificate (HSC) or General Certificate of Education (GCE) 'A' level or any of their equivalents, had to offer three courses at the Foundation Level.

Altogether, six Foundation level programmes were advertised in March 1984 for the first intake into the NOU (Daily Times, 1984 : 6) namely :

- a FYP001 - Communicating in English
- b FYP002 - African Civilisation
- c FYP003 - Man and Society
- d FYP004 - Man and Environment
- e FYP005 - Mathematics
- f FYP006 - Science and Technology

The course in Communicating in English was compulsory for all foundation level programme students - both in the Humanities and the Sciences. For students in the Sciences, Mathematics was also compulsory. Furthermore, students admitted into the foundation level programme were required to complete three appropriate courses at this level before proceeding to the degree programme.

Similarly, as in the Open University of the United Kingdom, provision was made for NOU students holding qualifications necessary for admission to a full-time degree course (such as the GCE 'A' level, National Certificate of Education, Ordinary

National Diploma or their equivalents) to be exempted from some of or all of the foundation courses. In this regard, the NOU admissions policy was planned to be flexible, but not wholly open to all comers since the foundation courses were intended to serve as a sorting-out machine, determining who was equipped to face the demands of degree level studies;

4.6.6 Students

A unique feature of the NOU, is that it was planned to enrol a large student population. This indication was given in paragraph 3 of the terms of reference of the preparatory group which called for :

'a plan of operation so that the university could reach an enrolment target of 100,000 students in five years'.
(Presidential Planning Committee, op.cit. : 5)

Subsequently, the strategy adopted was for the NOU to take off with between 10,000 to 15,000 students and its enrolments were to be doubled year by year until the maximum target of 100,000 students was achieved.

In the Nigerian context, a student population of 100,000 in a single university was generally seen to be extremely large, particularly as the number in all the country's 25 Federal and State Universities add up to 147,710 students altogether. Also, the projections appeared to be rather too ambitious as they were not based on firm evidence of demand for such an institution and availability of national resources to support this number of students. For example, although figures from the admissions body - the Joint Admissions and Matriculation Board (JAMB), had shown that, since the late 1970's, an average of

about 100,000 applicants seeking admission into Nigerian universities failed to obtain placement annually, the suitability and interest of such candidates for open university studies was not known as there had been no studies commissioned for realistic assessment.

The first firm evidence of demand for studies in the NOU was only given between March and April 1984 when 20,000 candidates paid a non-refundable fee of N10 each for application forms for places in the foundation level courses of the university. However, the students were never registered because on 7 May 1984 - barely a month before the university's students were to be matriculated, the Federal Military Government of Nigeria suspended the National Open University scheme. The justification for the suspension was made by the then Head of State, Major-General Muhammadu Buhari who stated that :

'The Government has given serious consideration to the National Open University programme and found that the infrastructures to make the programme succeed are not available and adequate. The Government has decided that in the present financial situation, Nigeria could not afford the Open University programme ... Existing universities with schemes for part-time students will be encouraged to expand their programmes to take in more students. This would provide university education for those who would have wished to avail themselves of the opportunity of the Open University programme'. (Budget of Revival, 1984)

Chapter 8 is devoted to field data findings on the potential pool of students for an open university system in Nigeria.

4.6.7 Major Problem Areas

It was not at all surprising to informed Nigerians that the National Open University was suspended for there had been many obstacles to the scheme long before the appointment of the Planning Committee in 1980.

For instance, as already said earlier, the inclusion of the open university system in the manifesto of the disbanded National Party of Nigeria in the 1979 general elections, was widely interpreted by other political parties as a stunt for catching votes - hence most rival political parties never supported the system. Some openly campaigned against the proposal which prevented the NOU from winning bi-partisan support and also jeopardized its chances for winning national acceptance.

Again, by removing the whole open university scheme from the Federal Ministry of Education and placing it directly under his office, the former President Shagari had clearly over-politicized the scheme. In doing so the NOU was increasingly seen to be more of a political party programme instead of an educational programme. It was also over publicized which appeared to have antagonised many key people and thereby made enemies all over the country including the academic community which felt that the NOU was too close to the former President and appeared to have been accorded preferential treatment over the conventional universities. Whilst the scheme needed the personal support of the President, it was probably unwise to allow it to be seen to be close to the extent that many legislators gave the NOU Bill a queer name by saying that it was a "Shagari Bill" while its detractors around the country referred to the NOU as "a baby" of the Shagari administration. The scheme would probably have succeeded if instead of being over politicized and over publicized, it had been given a low profile, started on a modest scale and allowed to develop slowly.

Moreover, the appointment of the Chairman of the Presidential Planning Committee as the Vice-Chancellor of the University long before the

scheme was ratified by the National Assembly appeared to have offended the legislators. This subsequently affected the fortunes of the NOU : apart from delaying the University Bill, the legislators emerged as the most vocal group which strongly expressed their scepticism and hostility for the scheme. The net effect of all these was that the NOU received adverse publicity between 1979 - 83 and delayed from being launched in 1981 when the economic climate was still favourable for major national projects.

Also, from views expressed by policy-makers during the fieldwork for this study, it appeared that several experts and specialist bodies with which the NOU would have to collaborate to ensure its successful operation, felt that they were slighted by the founders of the university. The general complaint was that the planners did not adequately consult them or keep them in touch about their role in ensuring a successful take off of the scheme.

Furthermore, the Planning Committee was made up of only three people, all drawn from the academic world. This appeared to have been too limited to reflect significant interest groups in the country whose co-operation was vital in mobilising nation-wide support necessary for the acceptance and successful implementation of the open university system. This line of argument seems to be valid since research on the experience of nearly all open universities established world wide since the 1970's show that distance teaching universities are not universally admired unless political leaders and the people understand and accept the concept. They 'are not the same as traditional universities : like all new and unfamiliar products they need to be positively marketed'. (Dodd and Rumble 1984 : 231 - 254)

It must be acknowledged that the planners of the NOU were a dedicated

group of people and respected academics who worked virtually day and night to produce the best educational innovation for Nigeria ; but the attempt in Nigeria to experiment with an open university system failed largely for political reasons. In the first place, the NOU clearly lacked a politically prestigious planning group. It also appeared to have suffered from political misjudgement by the preparatory group, of the political motives of the leaders at the time who allowed the NOU to be designed purely as an educational exercise without the vital political prestige of influential groups in the society. It is most likely that the political leaders concerned ignored to have the NOU positively marketed, especially in the educationally disadvantaged northern areas, because they had their own political motives. This lack of political prestige undermined chances of achieving a national consensus for the scheme since in any country, one cannot plan an educational system in isolation of the political factors of the society as they are bound to interest and offend certain groups and individuals.

Evidence from extensive survey research in the northern areas of Nigeria clearly established that many key people in that part of the country were sceptical about the open university system. Some strongly argued that they could not see how the NOU could contribute to their educational advancement, given their current educational backwardness. There were some who felt that the NOU was more likely to further widen the educational gap between the northern and southern areas in favour of the educationally more advanced southern states. Such people viewed the NOU to be detrimental to educational advancement in the northern areas as most of its students were likely to be from the southern areas which is already ahead and had surplus qualified university candidates. They were also of the opinion that

the NOU was more likely to serve people in the southern areas better as they had easier access to communication facilities such as television and postal services. Such views cannot be ignored since the real dilemma of education in Nigeria emanates from underlying issues in the society and part of the problem is brought about by the attitude of people in the areas of the country affected by the uneven expansion of education. This line of argument will become clearer in Chapter 7 which is devoted to the research findings on policy-makers perception of the relevance and feasibility of an open university system in Nigeria.

Finally, since the military intervention at the end of 1983, in particular its programmes for economic recovery, the costly structure of the NOU requiring nearly N300 million for its headquarters, 19 Regional Campuses, 200 Colleges, internal courier service etc., probably made it an easy prey for the panel appointed to review all on-going Federal projects. The aim was to either re-schedule, reduce or scrap ambitious or politically motivated projects. Subsequently, the NOU was judged to be too ambitious and therefore suspended.

4.7 Conclusion

This chapter has attempted to contrast the need that exists in Nigeria as a developing country, for relevant education with various attempts to broaden access to education and training for people who cannot study full-time in the residential institutions for job, family or other reasons. A careful consideration of the available distance education programmes surveyed reveals that so far, Nigeria has not really had an effective university-level distance education programme with a nation-wide spread. The existing private institutions in the

field which offer greater variety of courses and which enrol more candidates than the public service part-time programmes, are still, in all respects, only correspondence institutions and not distance education institutions since printed material is about the only medium used in the majority of cases to teach home-based learners.

On the other hand, the Correspondence and Open Studies Institute (COSIT) of the University of Lagos is clearly the country's most sophisticated university -level distance education institution, but lacks nation-wide coverage. Internally, COSIT suffers from lack of organisational autonomy due to its mixed mode, multi-departmental model. In practice, this requires COSIT to rely heavily on the faculties which offer the course and it is therefore limited in its commitment to external students since they are taught by the same staff who teach internal students. Externally, adequate library and study facilities are not available for COSIT students in all locations. This and enormous distances from study centres, tend to discourage a lot of potential students in locations distant from Lagos from enrolling into COSIT courses, thus effectively limiting its coverage to centres nearest to its headquarters.

As far as the open studies programmes of conventional Universities in Nigeria are concerned, they are so far, basically small-scale part-time evening courses for candidates in and around the university centres and are not really distance education programmes. In fact such programmes are not truly open but essentially organized on a rather formal manner in terms of their courses and methods of teaching which are made to conform more or less with those of full-time students within the same universities. Ideally, open educational institutions should take education to their students rather than take

the students to education as is now the case with most of the part-time degree programmes of the conventional universities in Nigeria namely Benin, Nsukka, Ilorin and Jos universities. Because in distance education, the students are non-residential, the usual face-to-face teaching techniques of conventional universities can only be used to a very limited extent.

In a fundamental sense, it is no longer adequate to simply expand conventional institutions to keep pace with the ever-growing need for education and training. As a nation, Nigeria must think of distance education innovations, but not introduce them piecemeal or just to meet a pressing manpower need e.g. for trained primary school teachers. Rather, the time has now come for distance education to be planned and provided as an integral part of the country's educational system, geared to training people for specific roles for nation-building and not just to give people degrees because it is fashionable or prestigious to have a degree. To be a meaningful innovation, distance education also needs to be fully committed to the basic strategies for effective teaching over a distance namely :i) Teaching by printed materials supplemented by either cassetted programmes, or by radio and television programmes or both (where available and affordable) ; and ii) occasional face-to-face tutorials and counselling at zonal and local study centres.

The next Chapter is devoted to a review of the literature for an appreciation of the state of knowledge about university-level distance education as well as to understand what is happening in alternative higher educational institutions in both the developed and the developing countries.

CHAPTER 5PROBLEMS AND PROSPECTS OF THE OPEN UNIVERSITY SYSTEM :A WORLD PERSPECTIVE5 The Origins

University open education which is still largely seen as a new concept in Nigeria is about three centuries old. The early examples of university open courses can be traced to the early 18th century. For example, since the early 18th century, the University of Glasgow Professor of Natural Philosophy was obliged by statute, to give at least one lecture series a year, open to anyone who cared to attend.

As regards external degree programmes, the first recorded example of an open university in the world dates back to '1836 with the establishment of the University of London which initially, simply registered and examined students for external degrees'. (Cosgrove, 1982 : 15). As shown in the previous chapter, the implication of the initial concept of the University of London was that, responsibility for teaching was left to approved colleges and private correspondence institutions. This 'paved the way for the growth of private correspondence colleges such as University Correspondence College and Wolsey Hall'. (Keegan and Rumble, 1982 :15). However, in 1858, the restriction on the University of London was removed and it was allowed to run its teaching programmes for external degrees.

In the United States of America, it was the Morrill Act, passed in 1862 ; the subsequent foundation of the Land Grant Universities ; and the University of Chicago programmes for urban adults which marked the

beginning of the idea of university extension. (Ibid. : 9 - 15). Since 1892, the idea of university extension 'quickly spread to Wisconsin, Oregon and Kansas, and by 1919, 73 institutions of college and university rank were offering distance education courses'. (Young, 1980 : 16)

Next, the idea of university distance teaching spread to the Soviet Union and Japan where it was recognised as a viable alternative to their traditional educational systems. For example, since the Second World War, about 45% of all university students in the Soviet Union are part-time. Also, as a national policy, about 40% of university engineering students in the Soviet Union are obliged to undertake half of their degree courses by distance education, supplemented by occasional practical work in factories and half by classroom study.

More recently, particularly since the 1970's, university-level distance education has emerged as 'valued component of many national educational systems in both developed and developing countries. The foundation of open universities, developments in communications technology and audio-video as well as computer based learning, a new sophistication in the design of print based materials, and better support systems for the student learning at a distance, have all contributed to the availability and quality of distance education programmes'. (Sewart, Keegan and Holmberg, 1983 : 1)

Behind all the moves to open studies, was a concern to break barriers to higher and further education which are numerous since in virtually every society, there are groups which live in isolated communities or suffer educational, financial or other disadvantages which tend to preclude them from full-time studies at residential institutions. In

'The evolution of distance and open learning'(1982), Duncan rightly listed the major barriers to learning for adults as 'geographical remoteness from existing educational institutions: they may be social such as work and family commitments ; or may be psychological such as dislike of formal and public class paced courses, or they may be formal educational barriers which require prior formal entry qualification for entry'. (Duncan, 1982 : 11). To these, must be added existing inadequate provision of learning opportunities in formal institutions which is a major barrier to university education in the developing countries - even for urban residents.

However, as what follows will attempt to show, concern to break barriers to higher education for adults, largely because of their personal circumstances, is just one of many factors behind the spread of open universities and open learning institutions to different parts of the world since the early seventies.

5.1 Justifications for distance education

From documentary evidence in the literature on distance education, the justifications for the opening of access to higher and further education can be traced to seven major factors. The following headings are by no means exhaustive, but would seem to cover some of the main justifications important for an understanding of the current state of knowledge about university distance teaching :

- a. Recognition of the important role of education as an instrument for fostering individual and societal development as well as democracy ;

- b. Concern for the democratisation of higher education, including the opening of access to disadvantaged groups ;
- c. The need to link studies with productive work to open up educational opportunities to groups who need to learn, but cannot study full-time ;
- d. The significance of continuing and up-dating education throughout life for effective performance in rapidly changing world ;
- e. The increasing cost of conventional education and pressure to reduce costs on the economics of scale i.e. more education at reduced costs. Also, the possibility of a small group of experts providing study materials for many learners as a way of dealing with educational shortages e.g. in countries where qualified teachers and resources are scarce.
- f. Concern for learner freedom e.g. part-time programmes for adults who do not participate in traditional forms of education for psychological reasons such as dislike for classroom based lectures ; and more recently,
- g. New techniques and international recognition of distance teaching fostered by advances in communications technology and experience in the field of individualised tuition.

In detail, what are the main arguments for the list given above?

5.1.1 Education as an instrument for societal progress and democracy

Essentially, arguments that education was an important instrument for fostering individual and societal progress including democracy, date back to the earliest times. For instance, Plato (427 - 347 BC) in his book, the Republic, recognised the need to make education accessible to all citizens when he asserted that 'the good life for the individual was dependent upon the good society'. (Nwagwu, 1978 : 4). Bearing in mind that a good society must be established and sustained by the people, the opening of access to education and gearing education to national needs become necessary means of laying a firm foundation for political, economic and social democracy in any society.

In modern times, it was acceptance of education as an important instrument for fostering the development of the people, their societies and international communities that influenced governments, particularly in the Western world to be committed to popular education policies. For example, in the United States of America, the Soviet Union, Britain, France, Germany, Canada, Japan and in many other industrialised countries, primary and some years of secondary education is free and compulsory. In addition, many such countries have integrated distance education into their educational systems in order to widen educational opportunities for those who left school at 15 or 16 and to provide a second chance for higher education to people in full-time employment to enhance the efficiency of education for both individual and national progress.

In Africa, the link between education and societal progress including democracy, was formally recognised in 1961 at a UNESCO-sponsored conference of African leaders and Ministers of Education held at Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. It was at that meeting that the leaders committed

themselves to massive programmes of educational expansion, including Universal Primary Education (UPE) and large scale expansion of higher education. As indicated in Chapter 3 (The Expansion of Higher Education in Nigeria), whilst considerable achievements have been recorded in all sectors, education in Black Africa as a whole, is still a minority provision as schools are inadequate and not evenly distributed. Nearly a quarter of a century after the endorsement of the Addis Ababa strategies for educational development in Africa, much of the objectives and programmes are far from being achieved due mainly to unforeseen circumstances such as population explosion, drought and economic decline. Paradoxically, while most African countries accept popular education as an essential foundation for desirable social progress and development, many are afraid to commit themselves to it because of the financial burden of large scale expansion of conventional education in recent years.

Over the years, recognition of the need to open up access to education has led to the establishment in Africa of a variety of distance education institutions within and outside the university sector. So far, seven major distance education institutions publicly funded outside the university sector offer education programmes on a nation-wide basis in Africa. These are :

- 1 Botswana : Botswana Extension College. This is a national centre for correspondence courses with radio support for adults and young people needing school qualifications and non-formal distance education for adults, geared to rural development.
- 2 Lesotho : Lesotho Distance Teaching Centre. The Centre runs correspondence courses for Junior Secondary and General

Certificate in Education (GCE) examinations.

- 3 Malawi : Malawi Correspondence College. The College provides secondary education through correspondence and radio courses supported by occasional face-to-face tuition for primary school leavers unable to get into secondary schools. It also runs in-service training for untrained primary school teachers.
- 4 Mauritius : Mauritius College of the Air. The College provides secondary education and teacher in-service training programmes through television, radio and correspondence tuition.
- 5 Namibian Correspondence Education Scheme. This is a correspondence system which provides secondary education for the very many Namibians who are living as refugees in Angola, Botswana, and Zambia because of the political situation in their country. Currently, over 31,000 Namibian refugees are taking their secondary education through the scheme which is widely recognised as one of the largest and the most efficient distance education programmes in Africa.
- 6 Nigerian National Teachers Institute. As shown in the previous Chapter, the NTI is a multi-media distance teaching institution which formally took off in 1984 with programmes for the upgrading of unqualified and untrained primary school teachers throughout Nigeria.
- 7 Tanzania : National Correspondence Institute. The Institute provides training in Management for the middle level cadre, basic and secondary education as well as teacher training through

correspondence tuition supported by radio programmes and periodic face-to-face teaching.

In addition, there are, in nearly every African country, small scale distance teaching projects and mass media campaign programmes for specific educational purposes such as functional literacy, health and agricultural education including the use of rural radio forums.

As regards university level distance education in Africa, there are altogether, nine open studies departments of conventional universities which currently offer degree programmes for external students. The Universities of Congo, Ghana, Ivory Coast, Kenya, Senegal and Zambia have one external studies department each while Nigeria has two such departments within Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria and Lagos University (See Chapter 4).

To date, the University of South Africa (UNISA) is the only university on the African continent which deals exclusively with external degree students. Since UNISA began teaching by correspondence in 1947, it has been a major route to university education for many blacks in South Africa who study while still working.

On the whole, distance education, particularly at the university level, has not yet effectively taken off in Africa. For example, so far, no country in Black Africa has experimented with the autonomous open university system. Similarly, only nine out of about one hundred universities on the continent provide external degree programmes.

The size of Africa and the diversity in economic, social, political and educational history make generalisations difficult. It is,

therefore, a matter for speculation that university level distance education has not as yet, taken off in Africa because the conventional universities - most of which were created in the last two decades, are under pressure to cope with full-time students. Furthermore, there appear to be gaps in the peoples understanding of the open university system. For instance, in Nigeria, the people are still debating whether they should or should not adopt the system, given the country's existing infrastructural constraints.

5.1.2 Social equality and democracy

In both the developed and the developing countries, concern for social equality has also been widely cited as a justification for distance education: The basic argument is that taking education to various groups in the society not only enhances its relevance to more people as individuals but that this in turn, enhances social progress and democracy.

In the main, the consideration for social equality is rooted in the philosophy that education should be a right and not a privilege. This liberal educational consideration is often criticised as impracticable. Nonetheless, there are important aspects of this argument which are worth considering as they have some bearing on distance education, particularly at the university level. For example, Wedemeyer (1974) believes that 'nobody should be denied the opportunity to learn because he or she is poor, geographically isolated, socially disadvantaged, in poor health, institutionalised or otherwise unable to place himself or herself within an institution or specific environment for learning'. (Wedemeyer, 1974 : 64). To him

distance education was a socially desirable provision because it allows people who study on part-time basis to pace their learning according to their individual circumstances and not to be bound by any mechanisms of the institution. For these reasons, he felt that, 'the student should be free to follow any of several channels for learning : the learner should have freedom in the selection of the goals he wishes to aim at, the activities that will lead to these goals and the evaluation of his achievements'. (Ibid : 64)

The essence of this argument is that, ideally distance education can make important contribution to equalising educational opportunities as it is usually entered into by the choice of the learner, on the basis of his own needs, concerns and aspirations. Also, that distance education normally employs non-traditional methods that affords opportunity and access irrespective of the learners location and situation.

However, there could be limitations to how far distance education could go in opening the doors to higher and further education. Part of the problem was highlighted in The Right to Learn (1976) which showed that in Britain, the public is generally indifferent to existing provisions for part-time studies because :

'adult education is not socially comprehensive. First, adult education is not good enough. Secondly, it is not comprehensive enough. Adult education has got to be made good and it has got to be made accessible to every one. Its about the whole life ... It appeals mainly to those who are already well educated and relatively sophisticated. Adult education should be for those who need it most'. (Rogers and Groombridge, 1976 : 27)

Looked at in another way, distance education, particularly the open university sytem is considered important in furthering social equality

in education from the point of view of its open teaching methods. Through the open university system, it is theoretically possible to spread education to as many people in a nation as possible, unlike the conventional institutions where teaching is restricted to previous educational qualifications, lecture rooms and campuses. Argues Otto, Peters of West Germany :

'Conventional lectures, seminars and practice sessions have changed little in their basic structure since the beginning of the 19th century ... They proved almost completely resistant to combination with technical support facilities. In this context, they can therefore be described as pre-industrial forms of study ... Academic teaching alone seems to have remained largely unscathed by industrialisation - with the exception of distance study, for this form of study is remarkably consistent with the principles and tendencies of industrialisation ...

If the number of students in a society outgrows the number of university teachers available, rational thinking should be able to find ways and means of changing teaching methods in such a way that the teaching resources of the university teachers available are used to the best effect, quantitatively as well as qualitatively. Distance education can be regarded as a necessity as a result of such endeavours ... Distance education is complementary to the rapidly developing world'. (Peters, 1983 : 95 - 9)

The fourth major argument for the use of distance education for fostering social equality emanates from the well known fact that in most countries, whether developed or developing, conventional higher education is characterized by what scholars such as Edwards (1982) have described as 'social apartheid for the extension of social patronage'. (Edwards, 1982 : 158)). Noting that throughout the world and throughout history, conventional university education has been the prerogative of the rich, Edwards argued that extending learning to many more people over larger places was 'an urgent necessity not only for future social stability, but for the survival of the best of the inheritance of culture and science'. (Ibid. : 12)

Apart from arguments for equity, there are other important considerations for the benefits of distance education to society. For example, Carter (1980) who sees education as a means of establishing and extending the general state of civilisation believes that distance education was beneficial to the society as a whole because through it, those willing and able to benefit from education can be reached. 'They will thus be enabled to be better citizens and live fuller lives, with benefits to all of us and especially to the next generation of children'. (Carter, 1980 : 34)

As regards Africa and the benefits of distance education, Ansere of Ghana has rightly concluded that the system was inevitable because :

'So far, African countries' large dependence upon the formal educational system have not led to the achievement of national goals (to rapidly develop their economies and improve the standards of living of the people). They have devoted increasing amounts of their wealth towards that end. The returns, however, have not been commensurate with the expenditures ... All have agreed that the formal education system alone could not possibly solve the problem and that some other system of education should be employed in addition'. (Ansere, 1982 : 53 - 7)

But all these, true as they may be, are not the only solution for reducing 'inequalities or failure of education to aid development in most societies, especially in the developing countries'. (Harrison, 1981 : 306). They are just part of the answer. Whereas it is important to expand educational opportunities to reach people belonging to a wide range of socio-economic groups, the provision of relevant education is probably more important than a mere expansion of opportunities. The dilemma has been well-stated by Dore (1976b) who has demonstrated that formal education in most countries, has moved from learning to credentialism - that is the 'diploma disease'.

But more importantly, as commentators such as Jencks (1972), Bell (1977) and Husen (1979) have rightly argued, changes in educational policy or methods without concomitant changes in other areas of political and public policy will not in themselves, substantially reduce social inequality.

5.1.3 Concern for the democratisation of higher education including opening of access to groups who may never undertake full-time study

Here, the main arguments for distance education are for enlargement and diversification of opportunities to meet exceptional situations to enhance the benefits of education to society. In other words, adoption of educational innovations to reach groups who for one reason or another, were excluded from full-time institutions. In this regard, the essence of distance education is 'to take education through print, radio, or television to thousands and thousands who would never get to school or college'. (Perraton, 1983 : 34)

Available evidence shows that in most countries, whether developed or developing, there are some groups whose circumstances prevent them from attending residential schools, colleges, or universities. There are also others who are precluded from full-time education because of in-built injustices in the formal system such as rigid selection systems and limitations of space which are to a large extent responsible for elitism in university education.

Basically, there are five groups in virtually every society who are normally disadvantaged by the formal system of education. These are :

- i) people in full employment. It is pertinent to observe here that in

the context of Nigeria, the important difficulty relates to barriers to full-time education and not that people in full-time employment are socially disadvantaged. Bearing in mind that nearly 60% of the labour force are engaged in subsistence agriculture while many others are under-employed or unemployed, the small proportion who are in paid employment are in effect, a socially advantaged group.

Other groups in society who usually find it difficult to study full-time at residential institutions are: ii) housewives; women caring for young children and as in the Northern States of Nigeria, women in purdah (religious seclusion of women in Muslim communities); iii) people in small isolated rural communities far from educational institutions ; iv) those in institutions - the disabled, infirm, hospitalised or those in prison; and v) those in certain occupations such as shift workers, the army, navy and people whose jobs involve much travelling e.g. salesmen.

It is because such groups cannot go to education that distance education can come to the rescue since through it education can be taken to people where they live and work. As one UNESCO report concluded :

'It is, in part, a social change, permitting access to post secondary education for groups outside the scope of formal full-time teaching. It is, too, a change in the methods of teaching, using modern methods of communication to overcome the problems of distance, or to satisfy the need for part-time study. And it is also a change in educational assumptions, depending upon new styles of curriculum development, student learning and assessment. The combination of these three factors leads us to believe that it is a substantial and soundly based innovation which will have enduring and far-reaching effects on systems of higher education.

... open learning, moreover, may prove to be more flexible, able to adapt to new needs in the working population and to the personal requirements and capabilities of students, encouraging greater self-dependence and more independent learning'. (MacKenzie, Postgate and Scupham, 1975 : 190)

For these reasons, the justifications for distance education in this regard are two-fold : the first concerns innovations capable of crossing into new territories and thus open up higher educational opportunities for groups barred from it ; and the other, to link studies with work to respond to national needs and for economic benefits since people can continue working, earning a living and contributing their quota to the economy of their country at the same time as they pursue their studies.

5.1.4 The significance of continuing and up-dating education

Although throughout history, mankind has always faced a succession of challenges, the significance of continuing or life-long education has recently been enhanced and entered into public awareness. The concept of life-long learning was internationally recognised in the early seventies after UNESCO's Learning to Be (1972), proved more than ever before, that continuous learning was necessary for effective performance in the rapidly changing modern world. The International Commission on the Development of Education which produced Learning to Be made three major recommendations in respect of life-long education which guides educational development in all countries. They are :

- a Every individual must be in a position to keep learning throughout his life. The idea of life-long education is the keystone of a learning society ...
- b The dimensions of living experience must be restored to education by redistributing teaching in time and space...
- c Education should be dispensed and acquired through a multiplicity of means. The important thing is not the path an individual has

followed, but what he has learned and acquired. (UNESCO, 1972 : 181-8)

These arguments in the words of Dore, 'reflect the great educational manifesto which was supposed to help mankind gird up its loins and march head high into the twenty-first century'. (Dore, 1976b : 188-9). For example, to justify the implicit importance of continuing education (also called recurrent education and education permanente), Learning to Be stated that :

'Once education becomes continual, ideas as to what constitutes success and failure will change. An individual who fails at a given age and level in the course of his educational career will have other opportunities. He will no longer be relegated for life to the ghetto of his own failure'. (UNESCO, 1972 : 77)

Fundamentally, the attribution of significance to continuing education is based on recognition of about a dozen major challenges of the modern world namely :

- 1 Acceleration of socio-economic change ;
- 2 Population explosion ;
- 3 Evolution of scientific knowledge and technology ;
- 4 Modern democracy in its political, social, economic and cultural aspects ;
- 5 Formidable development of the mass media of communication ;
- 6 Increase in leisure time and changing and growing needs of human beings ;
- 7 New patterns of relationships ;
- 8 Needs for education to harmonise bodily needs, desires and current philosophy / beliefs ;
- 9 Crisis of ideologies and increasing need to find one's own truth ;
- 10 Obligation to freedom ;

- 11 New innovations ; and
- 12 New patterns of production.

Commenting on the totality of such new challenges, Lengrand says :

'A man who does not keep up to date is condemned to be overtaken and let it not be thought that this rule applies only to scholars or the higher technologists. In numberless sectors of industry or agriculture, the need for constant renewal of concepts and techniques dominates at every level of production ... It is clear that education in all its forms has the primary responsibility for lessening the harmful effects of this phenomenon and for extracting from it every thing that will help men to lead a more harmonious and full life in greater accord with the truths of being. (Lengrand, 1970 : 15 - 25)

This observation encapsulates the essence of continuing education and a growing recognition that in modern time, many forms of self education are necessary to keep pace with new challenges. More detailed implications was spelt out by the first Vice Chancellor of the Open University of the United Kingdom when he said :

'the rate of acquisition of new knowledge is now so fast ... and it is still accelerating ... that the idea that a man, during his initial education, can be so fully educated that he can cope successfully with his chosen career throughout his working life is no longer tenable.

The rate at which jobs become obsolescent because of new technological developments is now such that an increasing proportion of adults have to change from their chosen careers to new ones. Thus re-education becomes an increasing need'. (Perry, 1974 : 26)

In virtually every society, advances in science and technology as well as changes in economic, social and other fields are occurring at a very fast rate. It is therefore, generally accepted that even highly trained professionals need continuous education if they are to adapt

successfully for effective performance as initial education could no longer fit a man to practice his profession for the whole of this career. AS Wedemeyer (1981) put it :

'Life-long learning, more and more accepted as a concept and a new societal imperative, is the process by which individuals continue to develop their knowledge, skills and interests throughout their lifetimes ... life-long learning is about re-shaping both formal and informal learning opportunities so that they meet the needs of individuals and families at each stage of the life cycle'. (Wedemeyer, 1981 : 163 - 4)

Thus in many respects, distance education has a central role in continuing education. In the first place, the clientele is essentially adults and secondly, distance education is widely considered to be more appropriate for adults who can combine work with study while remaining with their family. The link between distance education and continuing education was succinctly stated by McClusky (1971) when he said :

'In a rapidly changing society an adult, to survive and develop, must continue to learn. What he learns, and how he does so, depends upon the stage he occupies in his life cycle and upon the suitability of the learning situation to the learning potentialities and learning handicaps he has at that state ... The strategies for learning (and for teaching) in the adult years requires consideration for the individuality of adults, for their life commitments which may aid or obstruct learning, for their adult time perspective, for their transition through critical periods of life, for their acquired sets and roles which may aid or obstruct learning, and for their adult requirement that the learning be relevant to their problems'. (McClusky, 1971 : 514)

Overall, it has become plain that continuing education is the product of modernisation. It is also becoming increasingly desirable for people to solve the problems they face in life and often distance education methods are considered more appropriate for crossing barriers to higher and further education for adults.

5.1.5 Potentials for more education at reduced costs

Essentially, the claim that the open university system and distance education generally, can provide more education at cut prices is based on its flexibility ; potentials for nation-wide educational coverage and for maximising the use of limited space and facilities for educational purposes. In general, the in-built flexibility in the open university system has had a universal appeal largely because of the opportunity to take education to people where they live.

In practice, however, there are several limitations on flexibility in university distance teaching institutions such as the open university system, particularly the control of learning. For example, in the Open University of the United Kingdom, registration for courses is once a year, usually in January. The fact that access to courses is not open all the year round is in itself inflexible, compared with open learning systems where new students can enrol for courses at any time they decide to study. Also, students of the open university system are required to follow particular radio and television programmes transmitted at times fixed by the university and the relevant broadcasting organisation.

Again, due to constraints imposed by distance, the isolated open university student does not have control over the content and the presentation of courses provided by a far away teacher. This compares unfavourably with full-time university education where the student can question the relevance of the course content and the presentation of the teacher to respond to his needs. All these are limitations on flexibility in distance education.

On the whole, it would appear that the distance learner really has control only over the time and pace of his learning since he initiates when to study printed materials or do assignments and for how long to study, during the day or at night.

Nonetheless, for Africa and developing countries, the in-built flexibility in distance education, in particular taking education to the people where they are, can also be an important development strategy for rural-urban migration. It has been argued, for example, that :

'the fact that people can study anywhere augurs well for rural development. One of the reasons why middle school leavers desert the rural areas for the urban areas is lack of educational facilities in the former. If the middle school leavers resident in the rural areas can obtain education through distance education, they may stay in the the rural areas and help develop the areas. Perhaps of more significance is the fact that under distance education, the learner develops a sense of maturity. This is made possible by the discipline he had to impose upon himself in order to succeed in learning and his ability to choose between competing claims on his time and energy'. (Ansere, op. cit. : 60)

Because distance education is essentially home based and the students are normally workers in paid or gainful self employment, it is generally believed that this method of education can be many times cheaper than the formal educational institutions in producing graduates and training students generally because of the economic benefits derived from earning a living, paying taxes and contributing to the national economy while studying.

There is also another consideration. Distance education can mean more education at reduced costs because courses can be used over and over again. Similarly , in distance education study materials can easily

be kept up to date especially through the radio, television and newspapers.

Perhaps of more significance is the fact that distance education can be cost-effective if operated on the economies of scale. Essentially cost effectiveness of distance education can be achieved by enrolling large numbers of students into a few courses and not into too many courses since each new course involves expense in respect of infrastructures and extra staff for teaching as well as administration.

The Open University of the United Kingdom demonstrates the cost-effectiveness of distance education very clearly. For example, the cost per arts graduate in the Open University is roughly 60% of the cost of equivalent graduate in other forms of higher education in the UK. The actual cost per arts graduate in the Open University is put at £7,157, compared with £11,786 in the Polytechnics (OU, 1984) or £11,541 in the conventional Universities. (Wagner, 1977 : 359 - 81)

Two recent studies of distance education projects in nine countries in Africa, Asia and Latin America showed that even in the developing countries where infrastructural facilities and communication services are usually inadequate (e.g. road and air networks, postal, telephone, electricity, radio and television services), distance education was on the whole, cheaper than conventional institutions. For instance, a World Bank research team which evaluated 14 distance education institutions in Brazil, China, Dominican Republic, Israel, Kenya, Malawi, Mauritius, Mexico and South Korea found that :

'Out of school projects are highly cost-effective so long as they enrol sufficient numbers of students to share the fixed costs. The decisive change lies in capital - labour substitution'. (Orivel and Jamison, 1982 : 133)

Also, after evaluating eight distance teaching institutions for secondary, teacher training and higher education in Brazil, Canary Islands, Colombia, Dominican Republic, Kenya, Malawi, South Korea and the United Kingdom, Perraton (1982) concluded that :

'The evidence on costs is mixed... It clearly established that there are circumstances in which distance teaching will prove cheaper than the alternative. It does not always do so, and it is rare for it to work out at less than half the cost of the alternative'. (Perraton, 1982 : 17 - 18)

In five of the eight projects surveyed, Perraton found that the costs were cheaper than in conventional education. All had high levels of course enrolment, ranging from 20,000 - 70,000. In the three institutions where the cost per successful student was dearer than for formal schools the student populations were low - only between 2,000 - 8,000. It is therefore, clear that the enrolment of a large student population is an important factor for the cost-effectiveness of distance teaching institutions. Equally important is the ability to reduce the rate of students drop-out from distance education courses to minimum levels because as Rumble (1983) had rightly noted :

'It is not only the number of students but more correctly, the number of students staying a course that is, the number of courses on offer, which produces the significant cost variables. Furthermore, the cost of the chosen media and the relative effectiveness of this choice is also significant'. (Rumble, 1983 : 425 - 38)

In essence, the cost effectiveness of distance education must be measured by its effectiveness to society. In other words, a distance education programme can be judged to be effective in responding to

the needs of society if a large number of students enrolled and stayed on. But more importantly, if large numbers succeeded in the end. Another important factor for the cost-effectiveness of distance teaching institutions over formal institutions can be traced to the costly nature of conventional teaching. The basic difference, as Sewart (1983) has argued, is that 'traditional higher education is very labour intensive and economies of scale, at least in relation to the major on-going cost of staff time, are minimal. In distance education, the teaching system is not labour intensive and costs per student is not so fixed, but vary very significantly in accordance with student numbers'. (Sewart, 1983 ; 370)

The cost advantages described above and the growing inability of governments to finance increasing costs of conventional education, account in part, for the spread of distance teaching institutions in both the developed and the developing countries, particularly since the seventies.

5.1.6 Communications technology and the enhancement of distance teaching techniques

From available evidence, at least two other justifications for distance education are associated with advances in mass communication and the experience gained in the field in recent years. First, through correspondence tuition, radio and television lectures, it has been established that a small number of experts can teach a large group of students across vast distances. In countries where the supply of trained manpower is restricted, distance education can come to the rescue because 'teaching at a distance materials can be produced by a small skilled group of experts to set a standard of

excellence for wide dissemination'. (Keegan, 1983 : 123). Examples of the use of a small number of experts to teach large groups can be seen in Africa, Asia, the Middle East, Central and South America, where the services of a few competent teachers, agriculturalists or health workers etc., have for long been employed for teacher in-service training, rural radio forums or radio / television schools - thus crossing barriers of space and inadequate supply of trained manpower, to impart knowledge as well as skills to large groups of learners.

Also, as a result of advances in communications technology and the experience gained in the last one and a half decades, distance teaching techniques have been able to minimize the problems of home-based learners. The universal respect which the Open University of the United Kingdom enjoys and the growing number of universities established specifically for distance learners are among instances quoted in the literature as examples of international recognition and justification for distance education as a credible alternative to formal education.

5.1.7 Concern for learner freedom

Whereas, it has been established that in distance education the control over content and teaching lies with the far-away teacher, the flexibility in the system which gives the learner a greater control over time and space is recognised as an important variable which respects learners freedom. In other words, distance education is based on the recognition that unlike formal education, learning is largely on one's own and motivated by the learners own aims to learn.

Due to this fundamental difference, some commentators have argued for the justification of distance education on grounds that it liberates the learner and the teacher from the straitjacket of the lecture hall.

In Quest for Quality (1960), Baskin rightly argued that concern for learner freedom was important because in distance education, 'learners are physically independent of the need to be resident on a campus, and they are independent of the control of their learning by teacher dominated or regular scheduled class meetings'. (Baskin, 1960: 3)

Also in On Theory of Independent Study (1983) Moore felt that the constraints imposed by distance and study in isolation justified the creation of courses which would not only guide the individuals activity, but also encourage and instigate it. As he rightly observed, these are important justifications for distance education because, 'the student may learn when he wants, whatever the hour of the day or night. Because of this freedom allowed to the student learning at a distance, teaching at a distance is inherently a more individualised system than the conventional face-to-face method as far as the student is concerned'. (Moore, 1983 : 68)

Over the years, a number of distance educators have argued strongly that acceptance of distance education as a full partner in the educational system would shed off its marginality, make it more open and allow the system to offer a great deal to formal education (Pagney, 1983 ; and McIntosh, et. al., 1980). Among their proposals for change have been the following suggestions :

- those who provide for education in a national system by distributing tax-payers' monies to educational institutions are required to make provision for education at a distance. Distance teaching is in fact the only appropriate means at our disposal to

complete and enrich the range of educational programmes of formal teaching, to meet these requirements while keeping within the inevitable budgetary limits. (Pagney, 1983 : 158)

- concentrate efforts on becoming more 'open'. (McIntosh et.al., 1980 : 60)

The justifications described above, all highlight a new thinking about greater functions for distance education, particularly at the university level to respond to national needs. Taken together, the arguments illustrate a shift of emphasis towards the pedagogical and cost advantages of distance education. In a nut-shell, the above represents a growing consensus that since techniques in the field of individualised tuition have now been improved, distance education needs no longer to be assigned the role of filling gaps. In other words, it has emerged as an indispensable part of the educational system in countries which are genuinely committed to broadening educational opportunities for all citizens who can or should benefit from higher or further education. As what follows will show, the ultimate rationale for distance teaching is provided by the growth world wide, of distance teaching universities.

5.2 Growth of Open University Institutions

In the twentieth century, the emergence of distance teaching universities created specifically to offer programmes of study exclusively to off-campus students can be traced to the Soviet Union. Since the late 1920's, Russia has organised correspondence and evening teaching universities as a state policy to link productive work with studies.

The major objectives of distance education in the Soviet Union are two-fold : the democratisation of the educational process and to enable students to continue to contribute to the Gross National Product of their country's economy during the length of their study'. (Gorochov, 1979 : 14). There are now 14 Distance Teaching Universities in the Soviet Union.

On the other hand, the new concept of autonomous multi-media open university system emerged only in 1969 when the Open University of the United Kingdom was granted its royal charter (Hill, 1984 : 143). The British initiative was quickly followed by other countries and as table 5.1 shows, 16 autonomous open universities were established between 1969 - 1983 while there are proposals for eight new ones.

Basic statistics on autonomous open universities established during the 1970's including their enrolment figures for 1983/84 are contained in Appendix 5.1. 2

Given the earlier development of distance teaching universities in the Soviet Union and the new multi-media institutions established during the 1970's and the 1980's there are at present, 30 open universities in operation in both developed and developing countries. 21 such universities are in the developed countries (Canada, Denmark, Federal Republic of Germany, Japan, Netherlands, Spain, UK and the USSR). The next concentration of open universities is in Asia and the Middle East, one each in China, Israel, India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka and Thailand. There are two autonomous open universities in Central and South America (in Costa Rica and Venezuela) while in the continent of Africa, the University of South Africa (UNISA) is the only university institution dealing exclusively with external degree students.

Table 5.1

Growth of Autonomous Multi-media Open Universities 1969 - 83¹

	Country	Name of Institution	Date of Incorporation
1	United Kingdom	Open University (OU - UK)	1969
2	Spain	Universidad Nacional de Educacion a Distancia (UNED)	1972
3	Iran	Free University of Iran (FUI)	1973
4	West Germany	Fern Universität (FeU)	1974
5	Israel	Everyman's University (EU)	1974
6	Pakistan	Allama Iqbal Open University (AIOU)	1974
7	Canada	Athabasca University (AU)	1975
8	Venezuela	Universidad Nacional Abierta (UNA)	1977
9	Costa Rica	Universidad Estatal a Distancia (UNED)	1977
10	Thailand	Sukhothai Thammathirat Open University (STOU)	1978
11	China	Central Broadcasting and Television University and 28 Local Television Universities (CCTU)	1978
12	Sri Lanka	Open University of Sri Lanka (OUSL)	1981
13	Netherlands	Open Universiteit (OU Netherlands)	1981
14	Japan	Hoso Daigaku ('University of the Air')	1981
15	India	Andhra Pradesh (State) Open University (APOU)	1982
16	Nigeria	National Open University (NOU)	1983
17	India	Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU)	Proposed
18	India	West Bengal (State) Open University (WBOU)	Proposed
19	Egypt	Open University of Egypt (OUE)	Proposed
20	Indonesia	Open University of Indonesia (OUI)	Proposed
21	Italy	Italian Open University (IOU)	Proposed
22	Peru	Open University of Peru (OUP)	Proposed
23	Poland	Polish Open University (POU)	Proposed
24	Portugal	Portuguese Open University (POU)	Proposed

5.3 External Studies Departments Within Traditional Universities

As regards distance teaching within conventional universities, there are currently, 528 external studies or open university departments operating in 51 countries around the world.³ These represent the oldest form of university provision for off-campus degree students, dating back to the mid-19th century. External studies university institutions, unlike autonomous open universities, exist in all the continents and are to date, the most dominant feature of university level distance teaching.

Approaches to distance education degree programmes differ among the various external studies departments. But on the whole, there appear to be three distinct types of degree programmes offered to off-campus students by the external studies departments of conventional universities. These are :

- i) A degree programme open to both on-campus and off-campus students, with tuition provided ;
- ii) A special degree programme for off-campus students (different from the offerings to on-campus students), with tuition provided ; and
- iii) The offering of an opportunity to take a degree of some kind, with no tuition provided.

The first can be described as an open access programme, while the latter two are external degree offerings in a real sense.

At the time of writing this study, the majority of external studies university institutions were to be found in the economically and technologically advanced nations of Europe, North America, the USSR, Japan and Australasia. Altogether, there are 418 universities in the industrialised countries which offer degree programmes to external students in addition to their internal students - thus constituting about 80% of all off-campus degree programmes of conventional universities in the world.

The leaders in this field are the United States of America and the Soviet Union. For instance, in the United States, about 4 million of the 7 million students in higher education study part-time. In 1978, 183 college and university degree programmes were classified as external by the American Department of Health, Education and Welfare.

Similarly, in the Soviet Union, over 100 evening and distance teaching departments of conventional universities offer higher education programmes to 2.23 million part-time students, that is about 44% of the 5 million people in higher education. 4 Other countries which make extensive use of conventional university facilities for distance education are East Germany (30 conventional university external studies institutions), India (26), Canada (20), France (18), Australia (15 external studies institutions - 8 in universities and 7 in institutions of advanced education), Mexico (13), and Japan (10) including the External Degree Department of the United Nations University. Figures 5.1 and 5.2 show the world distribution of both autonomous open universities and external studies departments operating within conventional universities. 5

From the foregoing figures, it would appear that there is a direct relationship between effective university distance teaching and economic as well as technological development, in particular, adequate communications media such as postal, radio and television services.

This probably explains why Africa and the emergent nations have so little to show for open universities and university external studies departments which have been spreading throughout the world. It would appear that countries with poorly developed infrastructures of communication either lack the confidence to mount alternative higher educational institutions like the open university system or they genuinely lack the basic facilities for effective higher education open learning services or both. In many such countries, it is not possible to apply full combination of distance teaching methods because most of the modern communication services, especially postal, telephone, radio and television services as well as electricity supply, are still marginal. Because of these limitations and the fact that scarce financial resources have to be thinly spread to provide or maintain basic services for the people, university-level distance teaching is still a novelty. It is also possible that the pressure on human resources in the university sector is so great in African and other emergent nations that there is little spare human capacity for open learning services. An example from Nigeria is the resistance of University of Ibadan staff to a proposal for distance education degree programmes in the sixties and the early seventies, (discussed in the previous chapter), who felt that they were already overburdened in coping with their full-time students.

In Nigeria, however, the existence of several external studies university departments and the earlier unsuccessful attempt to establish an autonomous open university are indications that there is

Figure 5.1 World distribution of autonomous open universities

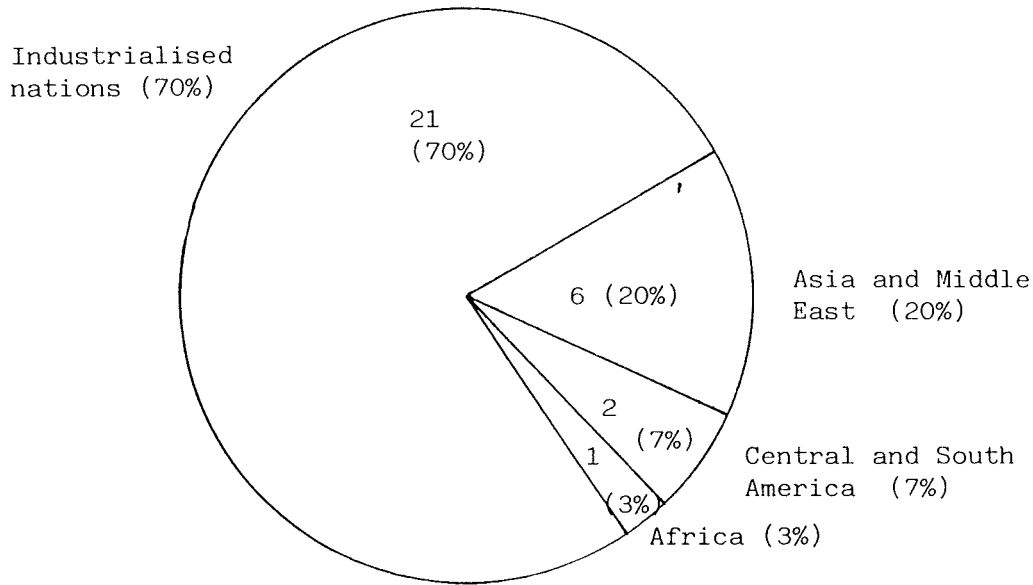
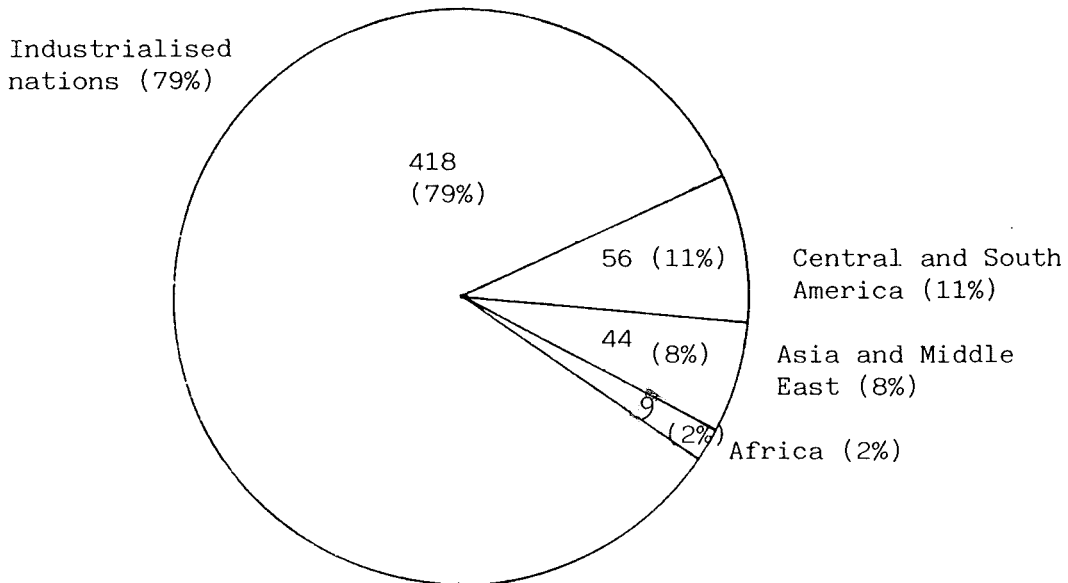


Figure 5.2 World distribution of external studies departments of conventional universities



already the confidence that the country's level of technological development can probably support such innovations in higher education. Again, the fact that Egypt(which is fairly developed in the context of the Third World), emerged as the second country in Africa to commit itself to the autonomous open university system further suggests that apart from considerations for the democratisation of higher education, reasonable technological base, is an important incentive for the new revolution in alternative higher education.

The link between distance education and the technical media is not surprising. In fact it can be argued that it is dictated by the nature of distance learning, particularly the physical separation between the teacher and the learner. Clearly, it was the dependence of distance education on the technical media for teaching effectiveness, and the industrial process involved in the production and distribution of study materials that led Professor Otto Peters, the first Vice-Chancellor of the West German Open University (Fern Universitat), to the conclusion that'distance education is an industrialised form of teaching and learning'. (Peters, 1983 : 97)

Furthermore, the argument that distance education is an industrial process appears to be consistent with the principles and tendencies of the technological age. This is basically a recent concept of distance education and reflects the spread of autonomous open universities which usually use industrial principles for the mass production and distribution of their study materials. They also make substantial use of modern means of communication for their teaching effectiveness. In contrast, the conventional university external studies system which is by far much more widely practised, tends to be less industrialised form of teaching and learning. Although many distance teaching wings

of conventional universities use a combination of the modern media to extend degree programmes to external students, they normally placed more emphasis on occasional face-to-face tuition, thus playing down the role of the technical media in their teaching functions.

5.4 Advantages and disadvantages of autonomous open university and conventional university-based distance teaching systems

Clearly, both autonomous independent open university institutions and the conventional university-based distance teaching institutions, have their unique advantages and disadvantages. As in Neil(1981 : 127 - 9), there are seven major characteristics associated with each system. The first concerns their inevitable dependence upon other conventional higher educational organisations for the effective performance of their teaching programmes. From available evidence, virtually all autonomous open universities depend upon conventional higher educational institutions for staff, tutor-counsellors, examiners, for accommodation, laboratory and other facilities for their tutorial functions.

On the other hand, distance teaching wings of conventional universities, also depend upon the faculties and departments of their parent institutions for their teaching functions. In practice, usually, external study departments are inhibited by the inward looking and overly centralized characteristics of their parent institutions.

Secondly, experience has shown that although it is generally easier to start up a distance teaching department of an established conventional university than it is to establish an autonomous open university, the

opposite is usually the case as far as nation-wide distance teaching systems are concerned. This is because singling out a particular university for building a nation-wide external study system normally provokes intense opposition from other established higher educational institutions.

Thirdly, both the independent autonomous open universities and the external study wings of existing universities, are known to experience difficulties in attracting and retaining good experienced academic staff. The autonomous universities in general have tended to attract younger, abler and more committed staff while the morale of staff in the autonomous distance teaching universities is usually higher than of corresponding staff in external study wings of conventional universities. Further, staff drawn to external study departments are usually less committed to distance teaching and often retreat back into conventional departments when the problems and pressures of distance learning mount. Often, distance teaching wings of conventional universities face considerable opposition from core of staff opposed to distance education and who tend to regard staff of external study wings as second class citizens.

Fourthly, each set-up has advantages and disadvantages for the teaching materials used and the academic status for their students. For example, the teaching materials of autonomous open universities, have tended to be more carefully designed and of higher quality than those of external study departments. In practice, autonomous institutions created solely to offer programmes of study to distance learners, usually appear to adopt a student centred outlook and to give considerable attention to minimising the problems of studying at a distance. As regards academic qualifications however, students of

autonomous distance teaching institutions, are often less advantaged. For example, students of external studies departments normally have ease of credit transfer and inherit the prestige of the parent universities which are not readily available in the case of autonomous open university institutions.

Fifthly, whereas external studies departments have ease of access to the network of contacts established by existing universities, autonomous institutions usually have to build up their networks.

Sixthly, both set-ups usually face stiff competition for finance. In practice, however, autonomous open universities tend to enjoy more adequate allocation of funds than external studies departments which are known to suffer more in comparison with the conventional areas of their parent institutions.

Finally, research. The evidence in this regards suggests that on the whole, the academic staff of external studies departments, tend to benefit more from established research programmes and traditions in conventional universities. On the other hand, autonomous open universities particularly in their formative years, are inhibited in academic research by the pressures to produce sufficient learning materials of high quality on tight schedules and on tight budgets.

In the final analysis, both systems have their strengths and weaknesses. Ultimately, the decision as to the appropriate university distance teaching model is usually determined by existing political climate in the society as well as available human and material resources.

5.5 Existing Models and Functions of University Distance Teaching Systems

From the two distinct approaches described above, various models of university distance teaching institutions have evolved around the world. Today, seven major models or categories of university level institutions can be distinguished in the field of distance education with some variants within certain models, notably the organisations which operate in conventional universities.

Bearing in mind the categories of distance teaching systems identified by Neil (Ibid. : 131) and more recently those developed by Keegan and Rumble (1982 : 28) and on the basis of my review of university distance teaching institutions, the existing models can be simplified and classified as follows :

5.5.1 Autonomous independent centrally controlled open universities

These are universities created specifically to offer programmes of study to distance learners and have nation-wide or regional spread. The institutional autonomy of such models are seen in four key areas of control described in the literature as finance ; examination and accreditation ; curriculum and materials ; and delivery and student support systems (Neil, Ibid. : 140). This model represents the latest innovation in university distance teaching institutions which are characterised by total commitment to teaching external students and clear responsibility for the accreditation of their students. Further, as the name implies, most autonomous open universities

operate open or flexible admissions policy and use multi-media skills to make their teaching open to more people in their area of coverage.

A well known example of this model is the Open University of the United Kingdom. Other examples of this model are Everyman's University in Israel, Athabasca University in Alberta Province of Canada and the Open University in Costa Rica (UNED).

5.5.2 Autonomous decentralised open universities

Such institutions have many of the characteristics of the model above except that they are decentralised. In other words, they exercise less control over their teaching and student support services which are handled by sister institutions or centres. Examples of this model include the Central Broadcasting and Television University in the People's Republic of China (CCTU) which has 28 Local Television Universities and the Open University in Spain which has 52 centres spread across the country.

5.5.3 Independent External Studies Institutions of Conventional Universities

Essentially, institutions in this model are autonomous mini-open universities operating within federated conventional university structures. They usually provide programmes of study for both internal and external students although their primary responsibility is for distance learners. Such institutions have clear powers over academic and administrative matters as well as reasonable degree of financial autonomy. The Tele-universite in Quebec, Canada falls within this category.

5.5.4 Semi-independent External Studies Institutions of Conventional Universities (called the Integrated mode model)

This model refers to external studies departments established within conventional universities to extend study programmes to off-campus students. This model is the most widely practised system around the world. The University of Wisconsin in the United States of America and the University of Queensland in Australia are well known examples. Such institutions bear special responsibility for external students and have powers to administer the system and teach the courses within their university structures.

5.5.5 Non self-governing External Studies Departments of Conventional Universities (or Mixed mode, multi-departments) Model

In this model, the External Studies Department has administrative responsibility for distance study, but is required to work in collaboration with the faculties and departments of the parent conventional university which actually offer the degree programmes. In such universities, distance education degree programmes are faculty based and regarded as part of the obligations of the faculties to extend their courses to those who are unable to enrol as full-time students. Also, in this model, conventional university academic staff are responsible for teaching both internal and external students based on the same syllabus and similar examinations for identical degrees. The University of New England in Australia, the University of Zambia and the University of Lagos, Correspondence and Open Studies Institute (COSIT) in Nigeria are of this kind.

5.5.6 Central Government Autonomous Centres for University Distance Education

In this model, distance study programmes are provided through national centres for distance education. Such centres are normally controlled by the Ministry of Education and are empowered to use the facilities based in conventional universities. Clearly, this model can only operate where universities are directly controlled by the State.

In this model also, the registration of distance students, their study programmes, examination and academic qualifications are identical with those of traditional universities. France offers the best example of this model, particularly the Centre National d'Enseignement par Correspondence (formerly the Centre National de Tele-enseignement)-that is University Centre for Distance Learning which operates under the Ministry of Education with full responsibility for distance education at all levels, including university degrees. Poland, Hungary and many East European countries favour this distance teaching institutional model. For example, the Polish Television Agricultural High School (TTR) has 75 Regional Centres for higher education through distance teaching methods. There are also University Distance Education Centres for Science, technology and teachers education - all controlled by the Ministry of Education. The Allama Iqbal Open University in Pakistan has many of the features of this model and is to date, one of the most diversified of all open universities, offering 'courses spread over four broad areas - degree programmes, teacher education, general education and functional education'.
(Carr, 1982 : 20)

5.5.7 Collaborative Multi-Institutional Model (also variously referred to as Switchboard, Network Schemes, Learning Contract, University Consortium or regional open universities)

This model is a fairly new phenomenon in university distance teaching. As the name(s) suggest, it is the coming together of a number of different institutions of higher education (in some cases including broadcasting organisations) in order to pool their resources so that a single body provides study materials and teaching facilities for distance students in a given state or region. In New Zealand, for example, Massey University provides distance education to all external students in all other universities in that country. Similar collaborative schemes exist in the United States of America, Canada, France, West Germany and Norway, where resources are shared on national or regional basis for the provision of high quality university programmes of study from a network service for students of the member organisations of the co-operative. In the United States for instance, about 27 universities have formed the International University Consortium - IUC (formerly the National University Consortium - NUC) within the University of Maryland College Park which is a distance teaching venture for University Without Walls (UWW). In essence, such institutions operate a 'learning contract' for distance students. In other words, they exchange and share study materials for the benefit of external students virtually all over the United States. Another example was the ill-fated UMA/SUN - (University of Mid-American and State University of Nebraska) Regional Open University Association. It was established in 1980 by nine universities in the mid-American States of Iowa, Kansas, Missouri and Nebraska but was closed down in 1982 because as Wedemeyer has stated : 'traditional

academics, professional associations and accrediting agencies have adopted rules that in many instances prohibit credit or any other recognition for courses taken by correspondence, radio and television' (Wedemeyer, 1981 : 215).

In Eastern France, seven universities (Dijon, Nancy II, Strasbourg II, Besancon, Reims, Metz and Mulhouse) have a 'learning contract' for the purpose of distance education called Entente Universitaire de l'Est (Inter University Confederation of Distance Learning in the East). In West Germany, collaborative open university is typified by the FunkKoleg (Radio College of Germany) which, with neither premises nor full-time staff of its own, provides university level distance education to hundreds of thousands of people through a very close working relationship with the German Institute of Distance Education (Deutsches Institut fur Fernstudien - DIFF) ; state authorities, autonomous public service broadcasting organisations, universities, private computer firms and several adult education organisations. In South America, about 20 universities near the Tropic of Capricorn (Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Paraguay and Peru) have formed a co-operative venture - the CAPRICORR Inter University programme (PIUTEC) for the promotion and development of distance education among the member universities.

5.6 Teaching Media

The teaching media of distance education institutions are essentially determined by their primary objectives, organisational structure and available national human and technical resources. Given the various institutional models surveyed above, it is hardly surprising that a

variety of teaching media are currently used in the field of university level distance teaching. In most cases, a combination of media are used to offer degree programmes at a distance e.g. printed materials together with cassetted lectures. At present, the media characteristics of the distance education institutions can be classified as follows :

5.6.1 Print-based : In most of the existing distance teaching universities and external studies wings of traditional universities, the principal medium of instruction is printed materials or correspondence texts. In the majority of cases, other media such as broadcasting and face-to-face seminars and periodic residential schools hardly constitute more than 30% of the teaching bases in university distance teaching institution. In the case of the Open University of the United Kingdom for example, the teaching bases are roughly 80% print-based, 10% broadcasting and 10% face-to-face seminars and summer schools.

5.6.2 Video-computer-based distance teaching is a recent development mostly in the United States of America where some universities broadcast the basic educational content of distance study programmes on television or provide most of the course on video cassettes. In such institutions, printed materials are often supplementary to the course and carry mainly course background, further reading and assessment procedures. The Independent Study Division of the University of Minnesota is an example of this teaching system. More recently, video based distance teaching has been spreading in the industrialised countries, particularly in the USA. The reasons are three-fold ; the growth of cable television ; home video ownership ; and the popular interest of Americans in technology

in comparison to their dislike for correspondence study which according to Wedemeyer (Ibid. : 215) explains 'why the USA which leads the world in the communications revolution, has had little success in distance education'.

5.6.3 Newspaper-based education is another interesting feature of university distance teaching which was pioneered by the Centre for Continuing Education, Makerere University, Uganda in the 1960's. The Makerere newspaper courses consisted of a four-page supplement containing lessons for correspondence students and was published as part of a weekly paper the 'People'. The newspaper lessons were supported by radio and television programmes, centred on student problems.

At present, an example of a large scale use of newspaper for opening access to university education is the University of California, San Diego. In contrast to posted correspondence texts, in newspaper based distance teaching, the courses are carried by local and national newspapers. Another example is the Deutsches Institut fur Fernstudien (DIFF) at Tubingen in West Germany.

5.6.4 Audio-based distance teaching institutions carry the basic content of their courses by audio-cassettes and supported by radio programmes while printed materials play only a minor or no role at all. The major consideration for this teaching system is usually to reduce the costs of distance education since the method virtually eliminates the industrialised process of mass production and distribution of study materials which characterises print-based teaching. The University of Waterloo in Ontario, Canada is an audio-based distance teaching institution.

It is pertinent to observe here that not all open universities use the electronic media for distance teaching purposes. For example, Fern Universitat (FeU) in West Germany and Universidad Estatal a Distancia (UNED) in Spain, do not use television at all. At FeU, the emphasis is on correspondence tuition and the use of audio-cassettes while at UNED (Spain) the principal teaching media are correspondence materials, radio, cassettes and transparencies. Also, Allama Iqbal Open University (AIOU) in Pakistan carries out most of its teaching by correspondence texts, supported by radio and makes less frequent use of television programmes. In general, therefore, print remains the principal means of instruction supplemented by either multi-media learning systems as is the case in most autonomous open universities or by a range of audio visual media as in Spain. However, in all cases, emphasis is given to student support services for occasional face-to-face tuition and for access to learning resources.

It is the strong contention of the writer that, given the existing electronic and communications technology in developing countries like Nigeria, a combination of correspondence texts supported by radio programmes and cassetted lectures would be more realistic distance teaching media at the university level. Radio for instance, is widely accessible and cheaper than other more sophisticated media such as television, video and computer which are not only costly but limited in their penetration. Such media, notably television could be used less frequently for general interest open university programmes and for public announcements to students about, for example, examination time tables.

5.7 Common characteristics and major problems of the open university system

With the rapid growth in electronic and communications media and the experience gained in the field of individualised tuition in the twentieth century, the possibilities for university distance teaching are clearly enormous. It should be observed, however, that opportunities offered by technological advancement and enhancement of distance teaching techniques over the years, should not be taken to suggest that this method of educational delivery is fast becoming a problem-free system or that distance education can be a complete substitute for formal education.

From our review of the literature so far, it has become apparent that, like any other man-made enterprise, the open university system has its advantages and disadvantages. In terms of common characteristics of advantage, the most significant seems to be the commitment of both autonomous open universities and conventional university distance teaching wings, to give a second-chance university education to groups in society who for social, economic and geographical reasons cannot study full-time in residential institutions. Such opportunities are usually extended through flexibility in teaching methods which take education to students in their own homes. In this way, people in full-time employment or with family commitments or physical disabilities can study in their local environment.

Another important characteristic concerns the open or flexible admissions policy which often distinguishes open universities from traditional universities. Whereas, the Open University of the United Kingdom is about the only university which does not require formal

educational qualification of applicants, several others - UNED in Spain, STOU in Thailand and similar institutions, operate flexible concessional entry requirements for mature students. Fundamentally, open universities recognise that relevant learning can take place outside the formal school system and experience gained while working, can enable people to benefit from degree courses. Such innovations are recognised in the literature as the most striking development in higher education in recent decades and probably the most radical challenge yet to the traditional concept of a university (Perry, 1978) and Afigbo, 1983).

My own view is that de-emphasizing the importance of paper qualifications without lowering academic standards is terribly important for both individuals and their society. As Dore has rightly pointed out, the 'ill effects of self-regarding qualification-seeking learning is the chief source of educational iniquity' (Dore, 1976b : 138). Instead of simply widening access to education to enable more people to acquire paper qualification because it is fashionable to have university degrees for example, education could be made more relevant to individuals and their society when studies are linked with work for achievement learning.

In this regard, the adoption of broader curricula and combinations of courses practised in open universities, is seen as another positive characteristic feature of the system. A major effect of this phenomenon is that courses are related to work in order to suit the needs of people already in full-time employment and also, to respond to societal needs. In other words, open universities generally strive to be relevant to their society and can enhance the quality of education.

Since most of the students are people who are also working, they are given the opportunity to practically test the validity of new theories at every stage of their learning. In the process, they could learn among other things, the virtues of initiatives, imagination, curiosity and originality. All these could enable them to increase their mastery on their environment and could prove valuable to them throughout life. Equally important is the fact that unlike in formal higher education, open universities have no campuses - hence their students are not isolated from the society. Looked at in another way, the system could be a useful instrument for dismantling the ill-effects of the social apartheid which dominates higher education virtually all over the world. On the other hand, the open university system could also be used negatively by countries which find it politically expedient to keep students off campuses.

Finally, as mentioned earlier, the openness of open universities to people and places have cost and teaching advantages. For example, the practice in most open universities of enrolling large numbers of students into socially relevant courses is widely acknowledged as an important factor for cost effectiveness. Similarly, the multi-media distance teaching methods employed, allow for the services of the best and the most experience teachers, course writers, actors etc. to be used at a low unit cost. Since few available experts can teach a very large number of students, there can be a smaller expenditure on books which decreases with increased enrolment. For instance, one specialist in economics or English Language, can prepare and present a course to teach virtually all those who are interested in the topic or at least a ratio of 1:1000 compared to formal tuition, since printed lectures or broadcasts can be taken to students wherever they live.

This is not possible in conventional university tuition which is restricted to classrooms or campuses.

However, the many features of educational advantage should not hide the many problems which are unique to the open university system. We must now turn the other side of the coin to see what the common limitations of the system are, compared to traditional universities.

Essentially, the major problems of the system are linked with institutional obstacles and student related issues. Despite the world-widespread of open university institutions in the period since the 1970's, the system is still a new phenomenon in higher education. Consequently, some gaps presently persist in people's understanding of this alternative approach to university education. To many, it is still a new thing and whether in the technologically advanced or the less advanced nations, people are generally suspicious of new things. The most important implication of the lack of appreciation for the system is that, in most societies, open universities are generally treated as poor relations of the established formal educational institutions. The major drawback of institutional obstacles to open universities seems to be that when it comes to sharing out scarce financial resources to education, the formal system always comes first while open universities are made to operate on much tighter budgets. The basic reason has been outlined by Ruddock (1980) :

'The established systems of school and higher education have secured for themselves a very large proportion of public funds. It is unlikely that much can be made available anywhere for an alternative system. The formal institutions have great influence and powers of resistance, which they will use to the full. The protagonists of non-formal education, widely dispersed and thin on the ground, do not command a corporate mass to be marshalled into a pressure group and they work with the least influential people'. (Ruddock, 1980 : 10)

The essence of this argument here is that, although the open university system is recognised world-wide to hold a great promise for providing wider access to higher education and is often publicly financed, the institutional obstacles in the way of implementation are formidable.

Another major problem relates to the nature of open universities. Usually, such universities are not self-sufficient. In order therefore, for them to have nation-wide coverage and to be cost effective as well as academically credible, they inevitably depend on the goodwill, staff and facilities of conventional higher educational institutions. Obviously, such dependency does not allow for the self-sufficiency needed to stand on equal footing with the conventional universities. For example, efficient performance and self respect are bound to suffer since the first loyalty of conventional university academic staff must be to their own universities. Availability of facilities also depends on the spare capacity of the providing institutions since their own services come first.

On the other hand, few open universities can afford to establish and maintain all the study centres, laboratories, equipment and independent capability for radio and television services as well as employ all the fieldwork staff required for nation-wide coverage. Clearly, self-sufficiency would be unwise as the cost would be so prohibitive and probably remove all prospects for the cost effectiveness of the system.

Herein lies the problem of the technical feasibility of open universities in countries with low level of technological advancement. In such countries, the public services necessary for effective

university distance teaching are often, not widely available. For instance, postal, telephone, public electricity supply, radio and television services which are taken for granted in the industrialised countries, are usually not constant and are limited to urban centres. In order for an open university in such countries to provide nation-wide programmes, independent capabilities in mailing, energy and broadcasting services are usually postulated but in practice these are almost impossible given the costs involved.

The fourth problem concerns the difficulties which most open universities face in the use of the mass media for teaching purposes. In most countries, the media, especially broadcasting, are controlled by independent authorities or by Ministries not directly concerned with education. The implication of the separate control and orientation of broadcasting is that in most cases, the media are not easily accessible to open universities even where they are owned by the same government. The basic problem is, because broadcasting organisations are generally more interested in attracting large audiences through entertainmnet and other mass appeal programmes, they tend to be less keen on educational programmes which normally appeal to comparatively smaller audiences.

From available evidence, inadequate slots are usually allocated to open university programmes which are mostly transmitted outside prime broadcasting time. In general, open university programmes are restricted to early morning and late night slots - periods often described by some academics and students as "anti-social hours". However, for workers, the "anti-social hours" may be the most appropriate given their job and family obligations during the day and early evenings. Furthermore, broadcasting organisations, especially

public service national radio and television stations are obliged to cater for the interests of various groups in the society. They, therefore, deserve some sympathy for allocating slots to open university programmes since some of such programmes may be aimed at only several hundred students on a particular course, compared with popular national programmes which may have a target audience of millions of people. Moreover, students of an open university should be prepared to study whenever programmes of their university are transmitted if the broadcasts are judged to be relevant to their learning.

The review of the literature has also established that although broadcasting has been politically attractive in helping open universities to win the support of planners and policy-makers at the national level, it is increasingly becoming more difficult to use successfully for educational purposes. For example, television is considered to be too expensive given the dwindling funding level of the universities in recent years. Other related problems include shortage of skilled broadcasting staff, lack of control by academics over production material and arguments that, pedagogically, broadcasting is ineffective means of instruction at the university level, which explains the increasing use of audio-video media (described in the earlier section on teaching systems) in the field of distance education. On the whole, there is a general movement away from the use of broadcasting in distance teaching. AS Bates (1982) has put it :

'There are several reasons why audio cassettes are so popular now... The academics like them, because they feel they have more control over their use, and can integrate cassettes more tightly into course design. Cassettes can be used in a variety of ways - for mastering learning, for commenting on diagrams, charts, tables or text, for backing up or commenting on other media, as

resource material (bringing recordings of real-life situations, conversation, interview etc., which are then analysed), or for specialist lectures to explore the wider significance of the course subject...

Students like audio cassettes. In a majority of courses, they are ranked as the most useful component after the correspondence texts... The features that appeal to students are their convenience (they can use cassettes whenever they wish to study), the control students have over them, and their informality'. (Bates, 1982 : 11)

The convenience and the informality of narrowcasting (audio-video cassetted lectures) are features which could lead to increased use of this non broadcast medium for reinforcing learning. For developing countries like Nigeria however, video cassettes are not yet as widely accessible as the radio. In contrast to the position in the developed countries, the majority of homes lack cassette machines or find the cost of cassettes expensive since they are still imported or are affected by inadequate distribution. Given these limitations, broadcasting, particularly radio must necessarily be utilised for open university programmes despite the many difficulties outlined above.

In Nigeria, for example, Multiplexing the FM signal of existing network of satellite and radio links could be attempted. By boosting the existing facilities, channels could be provided for open university programmes without having to establish a separate broadcasting station for an open university system.

We shall discuss one more important problem associated with the open university system. This is the fact that most open universities suffer from fairly high rate of student drop-out. On average, about one-third of finally registered students do not stay on to complete their courses. For instance, in a recent survey of open university

institutions in Canada, Norway, West Germany, the UK and the USA, Thorpe (1983) found that :

- In the British Open University, nearly three out of every ten new students did not complete their course (30% drop-out rate which is one of the lowest in the world of distance education) ;
- In Athabasca Open University in Canada, the average wastage rate was about 42% ;
- In Norway, between 65% - 80% of the students of the Norwegian Institute of Distance Education (Norsk Korresponanseskole Institute - NKI), complete their courses ; and
- In West Germany's Open University (Fern Universitat), the drop - out rate was about 47% (Thorpe, 1983 : 100).

The principal factors which cause or contribute to students drop-out from open university courses in the global context, can be summarised as follows :

- i) Personal factors of family, health, bereavement or work pressures ;
- ii) Poor home study environment ;
- iii) Lack of financial support or co-operation from employers ;
- iv) Frustration from late mailing of courses or long distance from library facilities and student support services ;

- v) Tutors uncontactable, unhelpful or persistent poor grades ;
- vi) Something better has come up e.g. promotion or admission on full-time course ;
- vii) Movement away from centres of library, facilities and support services ; and
- viii)(Women), recently married, had a baby or nobody to look after the children.

Recent research has pointed to the importance of a variety of forms of distance learners' support services to minimise students drop-out, which taken universally, are overwhelmingly caused by personal and less by course-caused factors. As shown in the previous chapter, this contrasts sharply with causes for students drop-out in distance education courses in Nigeria which are overwhelmingly caused by external factors such as poor study environment, unreliable electricity supply, postal delays, inadequate library facilities, etc. In general, four distance learning support services and facilities are now recognised worldwide as the best hope for minimising students drop-out from home based learning. These are :

- i) Occasional contact sessions at study centres for face-to-face tuition, guidance, counselling, social and intellectual dialogues to facilitate two-way communication for feedback to reduce students feeling of isolation ;
- ii) Periodic residential sessions e.g. long vacation schools for intensive lectures, tutorials and practical demonstration as well

as experiments for deeper understanding of learning and for performance skills ;

iii) Provision of adequate library facilities and efficient distribution of study materials, and where necessary, the use of courier services and mobile libraries to reach students in remote locations ;

iv) Radio, television and audio-video cassettes and newspaper supplements as well as publication of house magazines to help keep distance learners in touch with their university and to foster understanding of what they learn from printed texts.

However, as imaginative as the use of a wide variety of mass media and teaching support services described above might appear, they do not by themselves, totally eliminate the distance learners' isolation and the attendant problems. The major student problem, which persists regardless of the strength of innovative distance teaching methods and support services, appears to concern the fact that the bulk of the learning has to be done by the student alone. Thus, because of family, work pressures and problems of the environmental setting in most cases, self-learning takes place under extremely difficult conditions. Under such conditions, even minor problems such as loss of study package in the post can become very frustrating with devastating consequences, including withdrawal from the course. Because of its very demanding nature, the distance learner requires courage and determination for staying power to complete his course. Also, in home-based study, the time taken to complete a course could sometimes be twice the period for full-time programmes. We can therefore, conclude that although innovative use of electronic and

communications technology adequately backed up with teaching support services can convert distance learning into a positive factor for the learner, the open university system is probably the most difficult way of getting a degree.

Finally, in developing countries, one very important obstacle to distance education is the home which is usually not an ideal place for study. It can, therefore, be argued that the widely acknowledged advantages of home-based study may not apply if the home is noisy, crowded and without electricity. It is for these and similar reasons that the need for study centres becomes more important for open university students in countries like Nigeria than for those in Britain. For example, whereas under 50% of Open University students in Britain use study centres because they find the place and the facilities to work at home, in Nigeria, it is likely that 90% or more such students may use study centre facilities because they do not have the ideal home environment to read, view/listen to taped lectures and to do assignments.

5.8 Conclusion

This review of the literature has been able to show that the open university system, like any other modern organisation invented by the wit of a man, is characterised by a curious mixture of potentials and problems. Taken as a whole, it is evident that success in distance teaching at the university level is largely dependent upon thoughtful planning, imaginative use of available resources and more importantly perhaps, genuine commitment and determination by the responsible bodies to ensure that the system succeeds in meeting clearly defined national needs for education and training. In other words, a will to

be innovative and a belief that success is attainable through alternative distance learning.

Another important piece of evidence to emerge from this study is that despite the many similarities in the open universities surveyed, differences exist in their primary objectives, entry requirements, modes of operation and teaching media, due largely to the special circumstances of the societies in which they are located. We have seen, for instance, that while the autonomous multi-media open university model is emphasised in the United Kingdom, West Germany and Pakistan, in other countries, particularly the United States of America, Australia, New Zealand and Africa, the predominant feature of university distance teaching is through the integrated mode i.e. semi-independent external studies departments operating within conventional universities.

Another striking difference can be traced to the educational objectives of distance teaching institutions. For example, whereas in Britain, the primary objective of the Open University is to offer a second chance university education to adults, in Pakistan, the major objective is to provide educational opportunities at virtually all levels of education with substantial commitment to general and mass functional education, in-service teacher training and vocational training for skilled labour, technicians and other occupations in business, industry and agriculture to meet the demands of the internal economy.

Furthermore, whilst only a few open universities (in UK and Spain) operate open or flexible admissions policy, the majority of universities notably the open university in West Germany (Fern

Universitat), Athabasca in Canada, Everyman's in Israel, the Sri Lanka Open University, and External Studies Departments of Australian traditional universities, insist on the same conventional university entrance qualifications for their students. All these point to the importance of integrating this new system of educational delivery with existing traditional systems as a complementary alternative. Similarly, it is significant that in nearly all the countries surveyed, the open university system has been evolved to provide felt national needs within available resources.

Needless to say, awareness about global trends is useful, and this is why we have considered it worthwhile to approach the open university system from a broad perspective. On the other hand, it is equally important to recognise that a country or a region can only overcome its own problems by finding its own way to solving, among other things, new needs for education and training based on its own traditions, institutions and resource base.

On the basis that such an approach is necessary we shall present in the next chapter a case study on the Open University of the United Kingdom, to investigate factors responsible for its emergence as probably the most successful alternative higher educational institution in the world. The aim is to discover what lessons (if any) an open university system in other countries like Nigeria could learn from accumulated experience elsewhere. The issues and problems of the open university system which are specific to Nigeria are left to chapters 7 and 8 when the fieldwork findings of this study will be presented and analysed.

Notes

1 Compiled from data contained in the following publications :

Carr, R. J. (1983). 'Distance Education in Universities in Asia',
Media in Education and Development, Vol. 16, 4.

Dodd, J. and Rumble, G. (1984). 'Planning New Distance Teaching
Universities', Higher Education, 13. Amsterdam : Elsevier
Science Publishers.

MacKenzie, N., Postgate, R., and Scupham, J. (1975). Open
Learning : Systems and Problems in Post-secondary education.
Paris : The UNESCO Press.

Presidential Planning Committee (1981a). Report of the
Presidential Planning Committee on an Open University
System in Nigeria. Lagos : National Assembly Press.

The Indira Gandhi National Open University Bill (1985). Bill No.
XVII. New Delhi : Ministry of Education.

Rumble, G. and Harry, K. (1982). The Distance Teaching
Universities. London : Croom Helm.

Young, M., Perraton, H., Jenkins, J. and Dodds, T. (1980).
Distance Teaching for the Third World. The Lion and the
Clockwork Mouse. London : Routledge and Kegan Paul.

Worldwide Inventory of Non-Traditional Post Secondary Educational
Institutions (1980). Paris : The UNESCO Press.

Two national open universities are no longer in operation - that of Iran was closed down in 1979 after the revolution which overthrew the late Shah's regime and the National Open University of Nigeria which was suspended in 1984 after a military intervention.

- 2 Compiled from information contained in the following publications :

Higher Education : International Trends (1975). Paris : The UNESCO Press.

Hill, J. (1984). ' Comparing Open Universities', Adult Education, 57, 2. Leicester: NIACE.

The World of Learning 1984 - 85, 35th Edition (1984). London : Europa Publications.

- 3 I have had to rely on published reports and current literature of distance education to account for all functioning external studies departments of conventional universities in the world. Although the most up-to-date information has been used, some might be out-of-date due to changes in this field of education.
- 4 Oral information obtained in research interview with Professor Nigel Grant, Chairman, Board of Educational Studies, Institute of Education, University of Glasgow.

5 Computed from data contained in the publications listed in (1) above, and also from the following ;

The World of Learning 1984 - 85. London : Europa.

Commonwealth Universities Yearbook of 1983 - 84. London :
Association of Commonwealth Universities.,

CHAPTER 6The Open University of the United Kingdom : A Case StudyIntroduction

Although it can be asserted that the Open University of the United Kingdom (OU - UK) inspired many nations around the world to experiment with university level distance education because of its openness in extending higher education to a large segment of the population, there is a consensus that the OU - UK is universally admired mostly for its academic success. Since 1972 when the first set of OU - UK graduates obtained their degrees, the university has increasingly demonstrated that, through innovative use of multi-media teaching methods, motivated adults and working people can study successfully at a distance, for respectable university degrees in a cost effective way.

Scholars such as Perry (1976) ; Venables, (1976) ; Wagner, (1977) ; Keegan, (1980) ; Pagny, (1980) ; Escotet, (1980) ; McIntosh, Woodley and Morrison, (1980) ; Holmberg, (1981) ; Wedemeyer, (1981) ; Rande, (1982) ; Singh, (1982) ; Sewart, (1983) ; Carr, (1983) ; Perraton, (1983) ; and Whitehead, (1984), have shown that the academic success of the OU - UK has been unique in many respects. For example, its high graduation rate of about 70% and students drop-out rate of only 30% is without parallel in the world of distance education.

What is attempted here is an investigation of the development of the OU - UK, particularly its concept, organisational structure, teaching strategy and practice as well as the characteristics of the students. The basic aim is to shed some light on the more general issues in

expanding educational opportunities for adults through the open university system.

The study is relevant to our main topic - Nigeria and the Open University system - as it focuses on the procedures and practice in one of the world's well established distance teaching universities. Furthermore, the study highlights the advantages, limitations and implications of the OU - UK experience for countries like Nigeria where doubts persist about the viability of the open university system as a credible alternative to the conventional system of higher education.

6.1 Country Profile

With a population of around 56 million, of whom 91% live in urban areas, and with one dominant language, the United Kingdom presents an ideal environment for viable alternatives to the traditional system of education, in that the majority of the people can be easily reached and communicated with. Also, the size of the country - 244,108 square kilometres means that no vast distances are involved in land, sea or air travel. Similarly, the fact that the working population numbers nearly 50% of the total population offer the possibility of substantial enrolment essential for the economic viability of an open university system. Moreover, the fact that 64% of the population in the UK are between 15 and 64 years is an indication that a large potential pool of people exists, since people in full-time employment needing part-time study have had some years of compulsory secondary education, as secondary education is compulsory to the age of 16.

Most significant, perhaps, is the highly developed communication and energy systems in the UK. For example, the total road mileage in the UK is about 300,000 ; British Rail has about 28,000 miles of track, while there are approximately 170 airports. Furthermore, there is almost universal broadcast transmission coverage and most homes have television receivers. Other relevant institutions, facilities and manpower which are nationally available include telephones (roughly 27 million) and efficient postal services. For instance, the post office delivers over 20 million letters and parcels on every working day.

Britain's well developed system of higher education also allows alternative institutions such as the Open University to rely on the spare capacity of educational institutions for part-time staff and facilities for student services. Altogether, the UK has 46 universities, 30 polytechnics and about 600 other colleges. During the 1984/85 academic session, there were about 565,000 students in higher education in the UK, while the Government spent £700 million on grants to the 46 universities and the polytechnics. 1.

6.2 Background History

The Open University of the United Kingdom, officially came into existence on 30th May 1969 when the Queen granted a Royal Charter to the new university. However, teaching did not start until early in 1971 following nearly twenty months of preparation which the founders had insisted upon to ensure that it took off on a sound footing.

The Open University itself was adopted after six years of national debate about the pros and cons of creating a national institution

specifically for distance teaching at the tertiary level. The idea that Britain should have a distance teaching university was first floated by Harold Wilson, then leader of the British Opposition in a political speech in Glasgow in September 1963 in the build up to the 1964 General Election. His proposal was for a 'University of the Air', so that electronic technologies could be skilfully used to open the doors of university education for working men and women, who for one reason or the other, were unable to study full-time at residential universities. This generated intense nation-wide debate.

When the Labour Party gained office in 1964, the idea was pursued. In February 1966 the Labour Government published its White Paper on 'A University of the Air' (HMSO, 1966). As the nation-wide debate on the feasibility and desirability of a 'University of the Air' continued, Harold Wilson as Prime Minister put the whole project into the hands of Miss Jennie Lee (now Baroness Lee of Ashridge) who in her capacity as Minister of Arts and because of her strong personal and political influence, could be relied upon to bring the institution into being in spite of the widespread scepticism and hostility which greeted the proposal. It is now widely admitted that strong political support of government leaders is a crucial factor in the planning and introduction of any innovations in the educational system. Available evidence indicates that unless the political leaders understand, accept and positively market educational innovations, any efforts to put into practice educational changes, particularly the open university system, may be futile. (Dodd and Rumble 1984 : 231 - 254)

Prime Minister Wilson had therefore demonstrated political foresight since he knew that by selecting Jennie Lee 'he had chosen a politician

of steely impervious will, coupled both with tenacity and charm, who was no respecter of protocol and who would refuse to be defeated or frustrated by the scepticism about the university which persisted not only in the Department of Education and Science, but also in the universities, among members of Parliament and among the community of adult education'. (Tunstall, 1974 : 5)

Actual planning began in 1967 when a Planning Committee was set up for the re-named Open University under Sir Peter Venables. The Planning Committee published its report in January 1969 (HMSO, 1969). It had worked part-time instead of full-time probably because 'in developed countries, things tend to happen at a more leisurely pace than they do in the developing countries, where leaders are suffering from a raging fever known as closing the developing gap' (Afigbo, 1983 : 28). Most significant perhaps is the fact that the preparatory group for the Open University of the United Kingdom consisted of people who had other jobs and were not employed full-time on the Planning Committee as was, for instance, the case with those who planned the ill-fated National Open University of Nigeria.

At the beginning, the scepticism in Britain about the University of the Air or the Open University system as it later became, was shared by a wide range of educationalists, politicians of both the ruling and opposition parties and informed commentators. Among many, the scepticism was accompanied by hostility, clearly documented by Perry in his account of the University's early years (Perry, 1976). Typical of the scepticism about the OU - UK which incidentally was similar to that which greeted the proposal for the National Open University in Nigeria between 1979 - 83, was that : i) demand for the system was not

proven ; ii) students success rates and adherence rates to their courses would be extremely low ; iii) degree level education could not be taught in such a way ; iv) there was adequate existing educational opportunities in the conventional institutions, and v) the innovation was cumbersome, unworkable and costly etc. (McIntosh, et. al., 1980, and Whitehead, 1984)

For example, the Times Educational Supplement of 7th June 1968 made the following criticism of the proposal to establish an open university in the UK :

'It has been called the University "of the second chance", "the rural university" for those who live miles from the nearest extra mural centre, and a therapy centre for "intellectual cripples"... No formal academic qualifications will be required for enrolment. The University will stay true to Mr Wilson's and Miss Lee's prototype - a super W.E.A. adjusted to an acknowledged, though hardly proven, thirst for knowledge of this type ... Is there a demand for the service?

The Committee - as yet - have no answer. The Open University is to begin early in 1971 but we still have no consumer research. This can often mislead but data from other countries show the obstinacy of the 'highbrow' viewing figures. In Chicago in 1962, it was estimated that over an eight year programme directed towards a degree only 20,000 of a total population of 8 million had participated : of these only 95 gained some kind of credit. (The name of the institutions referred to was not mentioned) ...

Another question must be answered. Has the budget been accurately and honestly forecast by the Government ? ... We shall need to be very sure that it is necessary before we commit ourselves to the expense'. (The Times Educational Supplement, 1968, : 1915)

To some, the Open University idea was a political gimmick and not a respectable and credible academic proposal. For many in this group,

the scepticism had arisen out of the initial idea of the University of the Air which suggested taking degrees by watching television. The criticisms were numerous and so strongly argued that even Sir Walter Perry and other founders felt that the Open University idea was a gigantic gamble. Reflecting the mood in Britain at that time, the first Vice-Chancellor said :

'This decision was received with scepticism, indeed with scorn and ridicule by virtually the whole of the academic establishment, by almost the whole of the national press, and by at least half of the political world. Indeed, even many supporters of the Labour government which funded the University had their doubts about the wisdom of the move. And the biggest cause of that scepticism was the belief in academic circles that higher education was critically dependent on face-to-face tuition'. (Perry, 1981 : 7)

On the other hand, there were others who opposed the open university idea because they saw it as a competitor for scarce financial resources, particularly teachers in the traditional universities (Robinson, 1972 : 285). However, in many respects, the initial hostility to the proposal can be regarded as a blessing in disguise since it influenced the planners to discard the original concept of a 'University of the Air' in favour of an innovative distance teaching university capable of awarding degrees in the same way as other universities. From the debate which ensued, they knew that the Open University could not afford to look as if its teaching was second rate. This means that 'academic excellence had to be there from the start since respect for its teaching methods could also win respect for the products of the university' (Whitehead, Ibid.: 7) Thus the shift from the original concept of 'University of the Air' to the Open University was a reflection of a re-orientation of the objectives and the teaching media of the institution. As documented by the first

Vice-Chancellor in his account of the formative years, initially the objective was orientated towards university extension and the main media were to be radio and television, but as the idea of the university began to crystalize, emphasis shifted to establishing a university of the second-chance, promoting equality of educational opportunities and using all communication media. (Perry, op. cit.).

6.3 Justification for the open university system

The shift also reflected other significant developments at the time both in Britain and elsewhere, which tended to justify the need for innovative but viable alternatives to the traditional system of higher education. For instance, there was a growing feeling that despite large scale post-war expansion in higher education only a relatively small percentage of the age group of school leavers were being admitted to university each year. In other words, the traditional higher education system was still one of the most elitist in the world despite the post-war expansion which increased the number of universities in Britain from 17 in 1945 to more than 40 in the 1960's, in addition to 30 polytechnics in England and Wales, 1 in Northern Ireland and 14 equivalent institutions in Scotland as well as 600 other institutions of higher education. Keith Harry asserted that :

'In the early 1960's, only 6 - 7 % of school leavers each year progressed to any form of higher education (including teacher training and technical education), a proportion which compared unfavourably with other developed countries'. (Harry, 1982 : 170)

A major pressure for broadening access to university education and to continuing education was the Robbins Report on Higher Education (HMSO,

1963) which revealed that there existed in the population, a large untapped pool of able adults denied the opportunity of higher education, and that the United Kingdom could ill-afford this neglect of its potential intellectual resources. To remedy the situation, the Report recommended that :

'If, as we believe, a highly educated population is essential to meet competitive pressures in the modern world, a much greater effort is necessary if we are to hold our own'. (Robbins, 1963)

Subsequently, there was a great upsurge of interest in innovative changes in education to foster social justice and technological developments. Awareness also grew about the importance of continuing education in equipping more people to cope with the challenges of a rapidly changing world. In other words, there emerged a new principle that higher and continuing education should be available for everyone with the ability and the interest. One of the protagonists of educational reform in Britain since the early 1960's, Professor Edwards, (who was Vice-Chancellor, University of Bradford from 1966 - 1978) asserted that higher educational innovations are necessary, not merely to extend social justice to the individual, but, equally important, to meet society's own needs. In his view :

'Higher education revolution is a practical necessity because in the post-industrial, knowledge dominated society, international economic leadership will go to the countries with the most highly educated population, and democracy itself will only be effective in proportion to the extension of higher education among the majority of the population'. (Edwards, 1982 : 11 - 12)

Arguing in the same vein, Caroline Benn said :

'I have no doubt that what is wrong is not people's ambition,

interest or capacity, but society's agreement to encourage that ambition, cater for that interest, and provide for that capacity to be realised through a new radical development of our educational service'. (Benn, 1982 : 9 - 10)

Elsewhere in Europe, there were strong arguments in favour of equalising educational opportunities. In West Germany, the case for broadening access to higher and continuing education was initiated by the National Committee on Education which argued that educational innovations were in the overall interest of mankind. It summed up the global educational situation and the tasks ahead as follows :

'Persons desiring to become not a victim but rather the citizens of modern society must constantly seek to achieve better understanding of both themselves and the world around them. The extent to which they succeed, whether or not they become 'educated' in this sense, depends on their own scales of values. The democratic way of life and indeed the future of mankind depends in turn upon the ability of a sufficiently large number of people to adequately succeed in this effort.' (German Committee on Education 1960 Declaration quoted by Joachim Dikau, 1982 ; 12 - 15)

As the realization of the challenges of the modern society grew, it was increasingly becoming clear that education of mature people who cannot study full-time was an indispensable pre-requisite for the continued existence of mankind. Viewed in this way, distance education was not only necessary for improving efficiency in the working world, but also, a crucial factor in correcting educational disadvantages, socialization problems and motivation shortcomings which lead to continuing inequalities in income level, participation opportunities, and learning opportunities.

In addition, to the debate on the link between educational expansion and social justice, democracy and economic progress, there emerged in

the 1960's some scientific research evidence around the world which argued that distance teaching incorporating broadcasting could maximise education. For example, after comparison of radio, print and television, Trenaman (1967 : 43) found that 'the three media communicate a wide variety of material with roughly equivalent efficiency'.

Similarly, Chu and Schramm who compared teaching by television with face-to-face teaching, found that there were 'no significant differences between them in their educational effectiveness'. (Chu and Schramm, 1968)

More recent studies have confirmed the earlier findings. For instance after very extensive study, Schramm found that :

'People can learn from any medium, and variations in learning are as likely to be dependent on how a medium is used as much from a communication medium used for classroom instruction as from classroom teaching. What is more, there is no general learning superiority for high cost media, such as television and computers, over low-cost media, such as radio, films and audio-cassettes. And there is no subject matter or content area which communication media used as educational technology cannot effectively teach'. (Schramm, 1973)

From accumulating research evidence, it was increasingly becoming clear that broadcasting could be an effective means of distance teaching. In other words, 'broadcasting, when supported by other media and skilfully used can be an effective tool for extending education outside the conventional system on a national scale'. (Campeau, 1972 and Van der Voort, 1975)

From available evidence, the arguments and the developments described

above, had profound effect on the founders of the Open University of the United Kingdom who became more convinced that using innovative multi-media skills could open the doors of university education to a larger segment of the population. Most significant perhaps was that by the mid-sixties, experimental work carried out by the National Extension College (NEC) at Cambridge in conjunction with conventional universities in Britain had shown that broadcasting and correspondence materials could be combined with face-to-face teaching to enhance learning over a distance. The NEC experiments are widely regarded as a very important part of the groundwork for the open university particularly the integrated distance learning packages and occasional face-to-face tuition at study centres which are among the unique features of the OU - UK's teaching system.

Another potent influence at the time can be traced to a four-year experiment in the opening of higher education to persons excluded from it which was carried out by the University of Wisconsin in the United States of America between 1964 - 68. The experiment, called AIM (for Articulated Instructional Media) was led by the American scholar, Professor Charles Wedemeyer who is well known for his philosophy of distance education as a democratic ideal. According to Professor Wedemeyer, 'AIM laid the theoretical, academic, technological and operational basis for the creation of new institutions of open distance and independent learning and the principles it established were almost immediately applied in the new Open University of the United Kingdom'. (Wedemeyer and Najem, 1969). The fact that Professor Wedemeyer was a consultant in the establishment of the OU - UK lends some credence to the claim that AIM made an important contribution to the emergence of university level distance teaching institutions.

However, it can be argued that the single most important factor in the development of the OU-UK was the courage, faith, imagination and dedication of the founders as well as the strong support of the Labour Government. As the first ever large-scale autonomous distance teaching university, it was clearly a gigantic gamble, but there was courage and the determination to experiment and the commitment to innovations. From the outset, therefore, the open university had to strive to prove to be academically beyond reproach and operationally competent in full view of the public and its scholastic rivals.

It was in the foregoing overall educational situation that the Open University of the United Kingdom was conceived and established. It is now worth looking in detail at the main areas in which the open university has evolved as a leading world model for distance teaching at the tertiary level.

6.4 Objectives of the OU-UK

According to the Charter of the Open University (HMSO, 1969), the major objectives of the institution are three-fold :

- i) 'the advancement and dissemination of learning and knowledge by teaching and research by a diversity of means such as broadcasting and technological devices appropriate to higher education, by correspondence tuition, residential courses and seminars, and in other relevant ways ;
- ii) to provide education of university and professional standards for its students ; and
- iii) to promote the educational well-being of the community generally (OU Charter, HMSO 1969, Paragraph 3) .

A more elaborate set of objectives for the Open University, succinctly stated in the Planning Committee's Report and endorsed by the Council and the Senate said:

'In summary, the objectives of the Open University are to provide opportunities at both undergraduate and postgraduate level of higher education to all those who, for any reason have been or are being precluded from achieving their aims through an existing institution of higher education. This does not imply competition with existing institutions, but rather an attempt on a national scale, to complement their efforts, an attempt which may well increase the demands upon existing institutions as students stimulated by the experience of part-time study, increasingly come to want the opportunity for full-time study'

(Planning Committee's Report, Paragraph 18,
HMSO, 1969) .

From the objectives, it becomes clear that the Open University was set up in an effort to correct imbalances in higher education by expanding educational opportunity for those excluded from full-time study at the residential universities and colleges. The basic belief held by the OU's founders was that there would prove to be a great demand for degree level studies among the working adult population. Consequently, the original concept was to establish a university of the second chance to provide mainly courses leading to first degrees for those adults whose initial education had been cut short, to enable the people to raise their educational standards in response to the needs of an increasingly complex society. Initially, the educational opportunities of the OU-UK were provided at degree level only. Since 1976, however, continuing education has witnessed greater emphasis and growth largely due to the Venables Report on Continuing Education for the Open University (1976). The Report forcefully argued that the University's Charter (quoted above), laid on the institution 'wider obligations than the provision of undergraduate courses' (Venables, 1976: 18). It, therefore, recommended various kinds of continuing education courses 'to promote people's ability to respond to and participate in meeting

the changing needs of the whole community ... affected by rapid technological and social changes' (Ibid.: 23) .

Recently, Continuing Education has emerged as one of the economically most viable sectors in the OU-UP. For example in 1983, continuing education programmes were used by 47,000 people as associate students, on special short courses and through 26,214 PICKUP learning materials sold to independent learners. (OU Figures 1984) Superficially, the new emphasis on continuing education could be taken to mean new commitment to up-dating education in response to the needs of the modern world.

In reality, however, the growth in continuing education programmes since 1980, might have been influenced largely by the Government. After progressively harsher cuts in the level of funding to the Open University, the Government appointed a Visiting Committee to review the courses of the University after complaints about Marxist bias.² In addition, the university was told that 'it must meet national needs in science and technology, and in continuing education' (Whitehead, 1984) . These factors, particularly the consistent cuts in the level of government funding, left the OU with no alternative but to search for revenue generating programmes which were best provided through courses for scientific and management education upon which the government places so much emphasis.

However, since most of the demand for vocational updating is in commerce and industry, and since the orientation is geared towards revenue-generation, commercial fees are charged for the continuing education courses. This effectively favours the financially well-off and candidates sponsored by their employers. In other words, there now seems to be less emphasis on social concern to open up university education to people who are disadvantaged. In consequence, there is a

gradual shift in the OU from its original concept of a university of a second chance. Instead, the Open University is fast becoming one of the biggest business schools in Europe (Briefing Note, 1984). More will be said on this when we come to examine students' demand and progress as well as funding in the Open University.

6.5 The Organisational Structure

The Open University of the United Kingdom operates a three-tier organisational structure. These are the headquarters, regional offices and local study centres.

The headquarters of the University is located at Milton Keynes in Buckinghamshire, England, 50 miles north of London. It is the University's nerve centre. It houses the principal officers of the University, the Deans and Programme Co-ordinators as well as the facilities for the primary functions of the University. These include office space for academic, administrative and technical staff, libraries, computer services, resource centre, printing press, radio / tv production centre and regional academic services unit (RAS).

The second tier consists of 13 Regional Offices covering the whole of the United Kingdom (see Map 5). Ten Regional Offices are in England (located in London, Oxford, Bristol, Birmingham, Nottingham, Cambridge, Leeds, Manchester, Newcastle - Upon - Tyne and East Grinstead in Sussex. Administratively, the regions are known as London, the South, the South-West, West Midlands, East Midlands, East Anglia, Yorkshire, the North-West, North and South-East. Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales have one Regional Office each (located in Belfast, Edinburgh and Cardiff respectively).

Regional Offices are headed by Regional Directors, who together with their staff tutors and senior counsellors, are responsible for ensuring that effective distance teaching and learning takes place. In other words, the Regional Offices are responsible for the resources /facilities, staffing and financial management needed to sustain work; protecting the quality of tuition and counselling undergraduates as well as meeting the requirements of continuing education programmes in their regions (Horlock, 1983 : 25)

In practice, Regional Offices supervise local study centres, select and supervise part-time academic staff and allocate students to tutor-counsellors. They also respond to enquiries from prospective students or from the public at large.

Local Study Centres are the lowest units of administration in the OU - UK, but are in fact the major centres for students' activities. It is at the local study centres where students go into personal contact with the University through the part-time tutoring and counselling. Most facilities for distance learning - libraries / reading rooms, viewing and listening studios, cassette and video library, tutorial rooms and computer terminals are provided in the local study centres.

In all, the OU - UK has 265 local study centres (258 with computing facilities, spread across the British Isles. (Pocket Guide, 1984)

Structurally, the OU - UK is an autonomous nation-wide institution set up and financed directly by the Department of Education and Science (DES) with specific responsibility for the education of adults at a

distance. The main advantages of its autonomy and organisational structure are three-fold : nation-wide coverage without being unduly accused of trespassing ; freedom from traditional constraints associated with open study institutions operating within conventional universities ; and special responsibility for appropriate methods and facilities for teaching over a distance. Also, as an independent institution, the OU - UK is not constrained from developing relationships with other universities, colleges and institutions for use of their facilities to enhance its programmes. Again, this is an area where open study departments within traditional universities are constrained from initiating any action on their own.

But in terms of academic structure, the OU - UK is similar to other British Universities. For instance, there are three honorary posts " Chancellor, Pro-Chancellor and Treasurer, while the executive head of the University is the Vice-Chancellor. He is assisted by Pro-Vice-Chancellors who deal with specific policy areas, while the administration of the University is supervised by the Secretary. Similarly, the Council, Senate, the Academic and Planning Boards are the University's major policy-making bodies.

Altogether, there are six faculties in the Open University. These are :

- 1 Arts
- 2 Social Sciences
- 3 Educational Studies / School of Education
- 4 Mathematics
- 5 Science ; and
- 6 Technology

All six faculties are headed by Deans who are also the Directors of Study of the Faculties. Three other establishments which are also headed by Academic Directors are :

- 1 Regional Academic Services
- 2 Institute of Educational Technology ; and
- 3 Centre for Continuing Education which has responsibility for the Open Business School of the University.

In recent years, the OU - UK was engaged in a fundamental review of its government structure largely in order to do more with less human and material resources. For example, since the period of severe financial constraints set in at the beginning of the eighties, it was evident that there was a wider range of regional tasks confronting a smaller corps of full-time staff. Progressively harsher cuts in its budget over the years meant that the university could no longer afford separate counsellors - hence the functions of counselling and tutoring were amalgamated while the Regional Tutorial Services (R.T.S.) was renamed Regional Academic Services (R.A.S.) to reflect the new emphasis on efficiency and improve leadership.

Also, to respond to growing emphasis on re-training and up-grading of professionals in industry and commerce to meet the new requirements of continuing education in general, the management structure for Continuing Education, has been redefined and strengthened. In consequence, the posts of Pro Vice-Chancellor and the Director for Continuing Education, formerly held by one person were separated and two persons now perform roles previously carried out by one person. The Pro Vice-Chancellor is in charge of co-ordination while the

Director is responsible for academic matters. In addition, six sector programme boards were established for the major areas of current continuing education activity : Personal and Cultural Education ; Community Education, Health and Social Welfare ; Professional Development in Education ; Management Education ; and Scientific and Technological Updating.

6.6 Finance

The Open University like other universities in the UK is financed mainly from public funds. However, it is funded directly from the Department of Education and Science (DES) while all conventional universities are funded through the University Grants Committee (UGC). The Open University's governing bodies are responsible for managing and accounting for the financial affairs of the institution.

Another unique feature of the Open University is that its planning cycle is on a triennial basis (three yearly) rather than a quinquennial (every five years). Also, its financial year end is 31st December instead of 31st July.

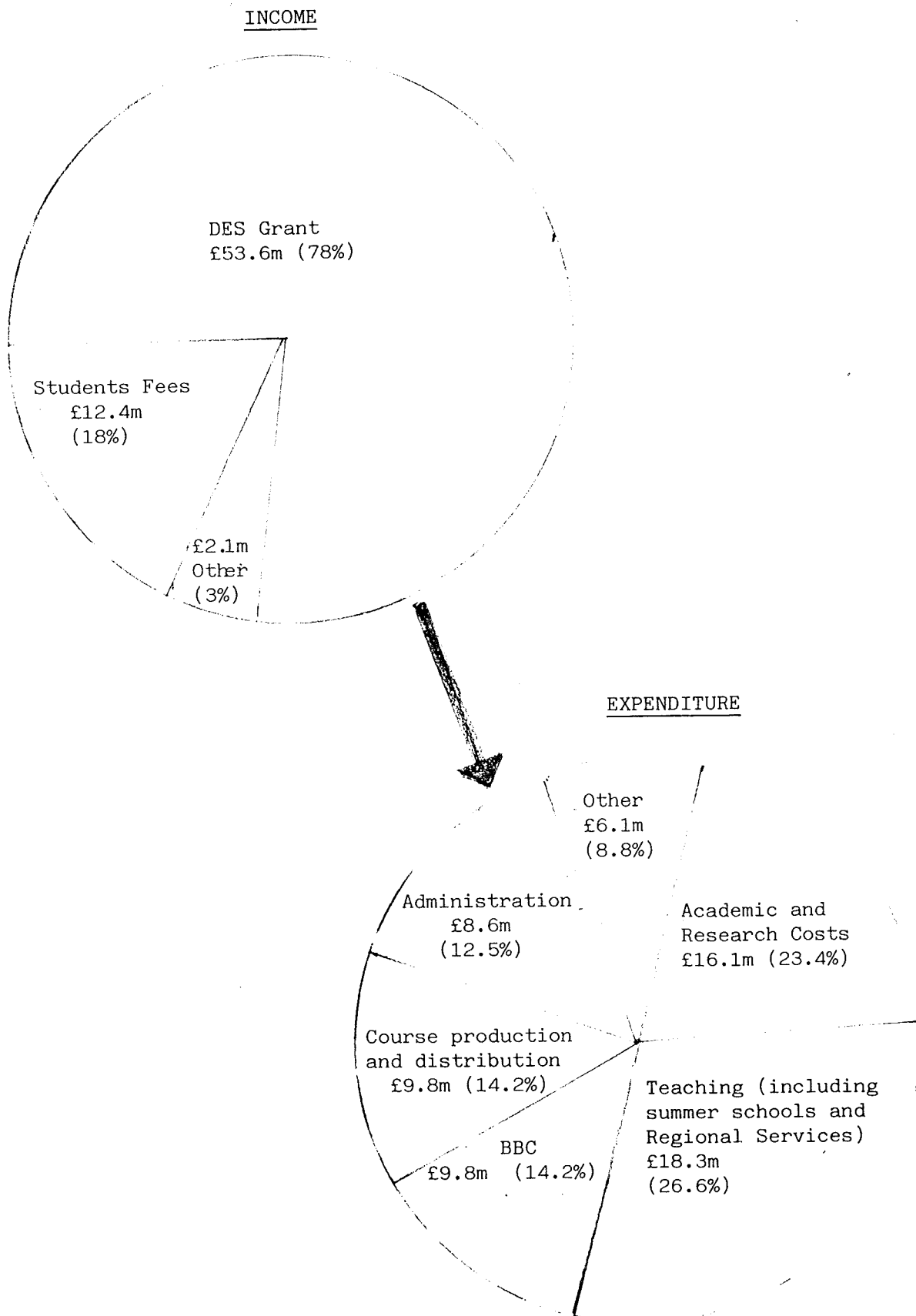
In the first ten years of the University, its capital cost amounted to about £26 million. Of this amount, nearly £12 million was expended on buildings at the Walton Hall Headquarters in Milton Keynes together with ancillary warehouse, overflow office accommodation in nearby Bletchley and 13 Regional Offices. The balance was principally spent to computerise the university's business (admissions, students and staff records, finance and the mailing schedule which rose from 3.8 million study packages despatched in 1976 to the present level of 3.98

million packages). Other items included furniture and equipment while £2.4 million went to the BBC for the first phase of BBC's Open University Production Centre (called BBC-OU Production Centre).

Initially, the direct funding of the OU from the DES appeared to be advantageous to the University. If anything, the Labour Government which established the University, guaranteed adequate funding for its development. However, more recently, the separation of the Open University from other universities has tended to make the University more vulnerable to the financial stringency of the Conservative Government. Under the present government's policy to keep down public expenditure in education and in other sectors of the economy, the Open University, left with no buffer body, has consistently suffered severe cuts in grants. Over the years, the proportion of Government funding of OU expenditure fell from about 87% in 1978 to 77% in 1984. In 1978, when government grant accounted for 86.9%, the operating budget of the University was £33.8 million. Students' fees and sales of course materials accounted for 10.5% while 2.6% came from research grants from industries and special grants from agencies who appreciate the part the University plays in the educational well-being of the UK.

However, since 1980, the level of government funding has gradually declined. For example, in 1981 when the University's operating budget was of the order of £60 million, Government grant accounted for 82%. In that year, 16% came from students' fees while 2% came from sales of course materials and special grants. In 1982 when the university's expenditure stood at £69.7 million, government funding dropped to 78% while increased students fees accounted for 18% of the costs. Figure 6.1 gives a picture of the income and operating costs of the university.

FIGURE 6.1 : OU - UK INCOME AND EXPENDITURE, 1982



Source : Report of the Vice-Chancellor (1983). Milton Keynes :
The Open University Press, p. 16.

In the period since 1980, funding from Government actually increased by 24%, but the operating costs of the university rose by 42% due to inflation, pay rises and other factors. Since 1983 when the effects of reduced funding became more severe, the University was compelled to make harsher cuts in its expenditure. For instance in 1984, the University reduced its budget by £3.5 million. Another £4.0 million cut was made in 1985 and the University calculates that a further £6.0 million cut in 1986 would have to be made. (Horlock, op.cit.,p.1.). This means a total cut of £13.5 million or a 20% reduction over the years.

In many respects, the current financial position of the Open University, has grave implications for the institution, particularly for its level of activities, its staff and students. Already, student fees have doubled in the last five years and they are likely to continue to rise. One important implication is that if the present level goes on, it could price out all but the well-off. Also, as a result of the cutback, the university has already made 250 cuts in its academic staff, including part-time tutor/counsellors as well as in its course range and their quality since as was earlier mentioned, OU courses are now revised after eight years instead of every four in the recent past. Furthermore, in 1986, the production of undergraduate programmes would be reduced by 50%. As regards its broadcast provision, BBC transmissions were cut by 25% in 1985 (Guardian, 1985) and more cuts are underway in facilities for student support services. To save money, it has been suggested that rural study centres used by a few students should be merged so that two dozen students would be the minimum size for a study centre.

The net effect on the Open University is that instead of expanding its services, it is actually shrinking.

6.7 Staff

The Open University employs about 8,000 full-time and part-time staff. The majority, slightly over 5,000 are part-time tutor-counsellors and course tutors while the total full-time staff number just under 3,000. Table 6.1 shows the categories of staff of the Open University.

When the university commenced teaching in 1971, there were about 300 full-time academics against 4,861 part-time tutor-counsellors (Perry, 1972). In 1980, the tenth year of its teaching, the University employed altogether 877 full-time academic staff compared with 5,211 part-time tutor-counsellors. At present, there are altogether 681 full-time Central and Regional academic staff compared with 5,254 part-time academic field staff.

Low full-time academic staffing level is one of the central features of the OU - UK which is not altogether surprising given its teaching strategy. As far as the OU is concerned, its central academics do not work individually (i.e. lecturing students as in conventional universities). Instead, they work as members of course teams : writing course units, helping to produce related television and radio broadcasts and in developing supplementary teaching materials as well as pursuing individual and group research. The course team system is fully discussed in the section on the teaching methods of the University.

Table 6.1OU - UK Staff by Category as at 31 December 1983

Category	Full-time	Part-time	Total
Central Academics	453	5	458
Regional Academics	228	3	231
Research Assistants	123	6	129
Administrative and related	302	5	307
Other related	162	3	165
Course Co-ordinators	129	1	130
Secretarial and Clerical	911	203	1,114
Library	20	--	20
Technical	149	2	151
Printing	18	--	18
Auxiliary	163	33	196
TOTALS	2,658	261	2,919
Part-time Tutorial and Counselling Staff			5,254
Total Full- and Part-time Staff			8,173

Source : Report of the Vice-Chancellor, 1983, Milton Keynes : The OU Press, p. 33)

In the Open University therefore, the field staff who perform most of the tutorial and counselling functions of the university are part-time staff, drawn mainly from the conventional universities. The field staff are supervised by regional full-time academic staff who are principally responsible for protecting the quality of the tuition and counselling of students.

Initially, the idea was to use secondary teachers for all the tutorial and counselling functions of the university, but in the face of the scepticism which greeted the OU idea, it was decided that, from the outset, all the part-time field staff had to be drawn from the established academic world. Again, in order to achieve academic credibility from the beginning, all the full-time academic staff first appointed were recruited from the established academic world and were of a quality that matched that of any other university. From all indications, this action made the rest of the academic world take the Open University more seriously. Most significant perhaps, the University progressively earned respect and was fully accepted in the community of universities and colleges. In this way, it achieved a high level of co-operation of the academic world. For example, conventional university buildings are used for the forty OU summer schools held in twenty locations each year. In addition to part-time tuition and counselling, conventional university and college lecturers have from the beginning, actively participated in the OU as consultants and external examiners.

It is now felt that it would have been disastrous if the Open University's early staffing policy had been to appoint those with broadcasting rather than conventional academic experience and

reputation, or secondary teachers for part-time tuition and counselling as such action might not have fostered its academic acceptability in the community of universities and colleges.

6.8 The teaching strategy

The teaching basis of the OU - UK is approximately 75% print based and 10% broadcasting / non-broadcasting audio visual study materials. Also, science kits / do-it-yourself home experiments, teleconferencing, computer terminals and telephone tuition by appointment etc. make up about 5% while face-to-face tuition at study centres and during summer schools represent about 10% of the overall teaching in the university.

This represents a major commitment to multi-media approach to distance teaching at tertiary level and underlines the philosophy of the university to make its courses truly open. But the very openness of the University courses via radio or television or printed materials which anyone who is interested can purchase in books has implications for the institution. The major implication is that the University's aims, courses, processes, materials, staff and evaluations are continually under broader public scrutiny than those of any traditional institution of higher education.

In sum, the multi-media approach required innovative use of different media skills capable of enhancing learning at a distance. Furthermore, to earn the required academic respectability, the university had to produce and present quality teaching materials.

These are some of the reasons which led the OU - UK to adopt innovative teaching strategy, which although not entirely new, was unique. Unlike many other distance teaching institutions before it, the OU -UK was unique in that it evolved in a single institution, a teaching strategy combining broadcasting, on radio and television, correspondence tuition, face-to-face tutorials and counselling support services.

This means that students of the Open University receive their course components from the post (correspondence tuition) and via their radio and television sets, backed up with occasional face-to-face tuition at study centres and one week yearly residential summer schools in conventional universities provided by full-time and part-time academic staff. For some courses, there are home experiment kits, access to computer terminals, records, audio video cassettes, film, slide sequences.

From its inception, printed materials (correspondence texts) have formed the major part of the course components in the Open University. They consist of set books (which the student must purchase and read) ; readers (collections of chapters or articles specially compiled for the course) ; correspondence texts and supplementary materials (e.g. broadcast notes which accompany radio and television programmes and reprints of required reading). They normally include student activities for self-assessment to provide the student with an immediate check on his progress.

A Unit is usually about 15,000 words. Under the course credit

structure which the OU - UK devised to allow students to study at their own pace and take as many years as they wanted to obtain a degree, the University's Ordinary BA degree is awarded to a student who obtained six appropriate full course credits. Similarly, the BA (Honours) degree is awarded to a student who obtains a total of eight appropriate course credits, at least two of these being at third or fourth level (i.e. higher levels of degree programmes).

Originally it was envisaged that each credit would require an average of 360 hours of study while a half credit course is half the amount. On this basis, it was anticipated that students who have not previously successfully completed other higher education courses to claim credit exemptions, would require an average of ten hours study a week for 35 weeks of the year to earn a full course credit. Roughly, it was expected that it would take the average student six years of work to earn the Ordinary degree or eight years for the Honours degree. In reality, it takes much longer. As McIntosh and others found out :

'In practice, it is now generally agreed that most courses require, and most students spend, twelve to fourteen hours a week on each full credit course, and many other courses now run for 32 to 34 weeks' (McIntosh et. al, 1983 : 171)

It is therefore, not surprising that 298 of OU - UK students who graduated in January 1984, were in the cohort of those who registered in 1971, (that is, they graduated after fourteen years (Horlock, op. cit. p. 9)

6.9 Broadcasts, non-broadcast materials and learning support services

In the OU, broadcasts are designed as an integral part of the University's courses and are produced emphasising the particular learning needs of each faculty. For example, science and technology programmes demonstrate practical work and are virtually essential to the course. Social sciences and educational studies use case studies on television to illustrate concepts dramatically. The arts faculty includes plays and reading in its broadcast out-put, while mathematics have developed animation techniques for diagrams and graphs.

Each undergraduate course has a weekly television and radio programme while other full length courses usually have fewer broadcasts. The programmes are produced in partnership with the BBC at the BBC - OU Production Centre in Milton Keynes. Although the BBC - OU Production has a labour force of 400, it does not have its own transmitters - hence the University's programmes are transmitted nationally from London on BBC Television (BBC 1 and BBC 2) and on VHF Radios 3 and 4.

In any one year, the BBC produces an average of 250 television and 400 radio and audio cassetted programmes for the Open University. The broadcasts, normally of 25minute television and 20 minute radio programmes, amount to about 1,200 transmission hours (TV) in any academic year, representing some 12% of all transmitted programmes on BBC 1 and BBC 2 networks.

From the beginning, it was decided that since the Open University student is normally at work during the day, the television programmes

would be transmitted late at night and early in the morning on Mondays to Fridays and in the mornings and early afternoons of Saturdays and Sundays which are work free days. The radio programmes also are generally transmitted in the early morning and late at night.

Initially, the early morning or late night transmission hours required by the Open University suited both the BBC and OU. As an open broadcasting network, the BBC had to compete for audiences with the independent broadcasting stations, especially during peak viewing hours through mass appeal programmes which normally exclude serious teaching programmes. The number of actual transmission hours per week are negotiated annually between the BBC and the University under an Educational Partnership Agreement which the two organisations entered into in 1969. Widely seen as an effort to overcome conflicts and misunderstanding which often occur among academics and broadcasters while using the media for educational purposes, the agreement covers such important issues as production, staffing, resources, copyright ownership, costs and who has the final say in educational programming.

On the crucial issue of educational responsibility, the agreement said :

- i) 'The radio and television programmes required by the University and provided by the BBC, are to be planned on the basis of an educational partnership between the University and BBC staff. In practice, this partnership will extend over the whole range from the conception of the courses to the final production of the programmes. The success of this partnership rests on the recognition by both parties that, while effective education is the overriding objective, and the ultimate responsibility of the University under its Charter, each has a specific professional role to play.

- ii) The University will prescribe the academic objectives and general character of the broadcasts, in relation to the other component parts of each course, while the BBC will provide the necessary presentation and production skills.

- iii) In the overlapping area, where the interrelationship of content and presentation is worked out, a reasonable degree of flexibility on both sides is essential in order to secure the proper concern of the academic staff and the fullest use of the experience of the broadcasting staff'. (OU Charter, HMSO, 1969)

The problem is that over the years, broadcasting hours have not expanded in line with the course out-put of the Open University. For example, since the introduction of Breakfast Television in 1983, the early morning air time allocated to Open University programmes has sharply declined or programmes have been pushed to more anti-social hours which tends to discourage many students from effective use of broadcasting.

Behind the use of broadcasting in the Open University lie three important concerns. The first aims at strengthening the learning experiences of isolated learners. By providing additional factual information, demonstration and case studies etc. broadcasts can take learners to where they have not been (intellectually) and thereby add a step to their knowledge of the subject. One of the academic values of broadcasts in Open University systems is that they enable students to listen to very distinguished academics otherwise inaccessible to them.

Secondly, broadcasts are often used to advertise courses to potential Open University students. Similarly, broadcasts could serve as a pacer for the due dates for assignments or used for making public

announcements to students about examination timetables, long vacation residential course dates and as a link between the distant learner and his tutor and his University. Broadcasts can, therefore, be valuable in maintaining motivation without which many students might drop-out of distance education programmes.

Thirdly, broadcasts enable the Open University system to provide an educational service to the society at large. Through radio and television, anybody interested in enriching his knowledge could do so from the comfort of his home without formal enrolment or payment for university courses. In other words, broadcasts make university level education available to the wider community who have access to radio or television sets.

6.10 Multi-Media Teaching / Learning Package

In addition, telephone-linked services are used in the OU - UK to enable students to receive immediate response to study problems. This is part of the University's attempt to provide comprehensive distance learning support services to complement correspondence tuition, occasional face-to-face tutorials at study centres and summer schools. The most recent innovations to the multi-media teaching / learning package of the University are :

- i) Telephone tuition (known as teleconferencing) : Teleconferencing links the distant student with his tutor over the telephone. Diagrams and charts are normally circulated to students in advance of telephone tuition, but these have been found to be difficult and tedious to use during teleconferencing.

ii) Cyclops : These are interactive audio - visual aids developed by the OU after the introduction of teleconferencing and enable students and tutors to write electronically to each other over the telephone and have their words and pictures reproduced at the other end on a television screen. With the aid of cyclops, OU students scattered hundreds of kilometres apart, can be tutored simultaneously, sharing a common picture display and linked by voice through loud speaking telephones.

Nevertheless, useful as these innovations might be in distance learning, they are limited by time, space and cost, since the students and the tutors must have their interchange at the same time and depend on the availability of sets and the ability to pay the cost of the link. Hence in the OU, telephone tutorials are among the optional support services which are available at a student's initiative. Discussions with some staff and students of the University, have already indicated several areas of concern over the effectiveness of using such technologies in distance learning. These are :

- i) Many students are put off by the high cost of teleconferencing and cyclops. Also, cyclops seems to have been overtaken by the rapid growth in video machines in the UK which are relatively cheaper and more convenient ;
- ii) The failure to link cyclops to the use of video cassettes ;
- iii) There is still need to train tutors and students in the effective use of the system including overcoming user resistance and facilitation of group interaction ; and

iv) the provision of more effective teleconferencing service and efficient back-up facilities for both systems.

On the whole, it is worth noting that although the OU - UK, has probably done more than most distance education institutions in using innovative multi-media skills, correspondence tuition is still the most important element in the students' courses. Whereas the mass media can be harnessed to the service of education at a distance, for example, broadcasts can help the student to achieve new insights and could present some aspects of the course most effectively, they could never assume the leading role. It is therefore, not surprising that in spite of the Open University's public declaration and enthusiasm for the multi-media educational approach, the contribution of radio and television broadcasts, originally put at 10% of the University's learning, may have declined as low as 5% and might suffer further cuts to save money as already indicated in the section on finance.

Interviews with academics, media experts and Open University students clearly established that in recent years, broadcasting has been gradually down-graded in the University. Instead, there is a growing emphasis on narrowcasting, that is, audio-video cassettes and other non-broadcast materials which are believed to be cheaper and which give the academics greater control since most of these are produced at the OU's own systems video unit within the Faculty of Technology. More importantly, the non-broadcast materials are said to be more popular with students than broadcast programmes. Whereas about 14% of the University's grant goes to the BBC - OU Production Centre for broadcast programmes especially television, it has been established that only a small number of students actually tune in to watch the programmes. Some of the academics interviewed by the writer claimed

that in one television course for 4,000 students, only 80 students actually watched. Although thousands of others (non-students) may have eavesdropped, such a small student audience meant that in actual teaching, the use of broadcasting is a waste. Furthermore, my informal interviews at the OU established that in general, academics prefer to use scarce funds on face-to-face teaching instead of broadcasting.

However, the OU - UK is not alone in the movement away from broadcasting in distance teaching. Similar trends have been reported in several other distance teaching institutions in both the developed and the developing countries. For instance, a recent survey of twelve distance institutions stretching from Brazil to Sri Lanka established that in most countries there was a movement away from broadcasting mainly because of distrust among academics and broadcasters (Bates, 1982 : 10). In most countries, broadcasting organisations are unwilling to make available peak viewing times to serious teaching programmes because such programmes are rarely aimed at mass audiences. On the other hand, distance teaching institutions are often dissatisfied with the quality and quantity of transmission times available for broadcast aimed at adults.

While the arguments about contribution of broadcasting in the teaching components of OU courses continue to be debated, it is nevertheless admitted that the multi-media approach to distance learning is one of the most revolutionary innovations which the Open University system has brought to higher education this century. Previously, university education was restricted to students in classrooms, campuses or to

those who formally registered with correspondence colleges. But by using innovative multi-media methods, especially radio and television, university level courses became widely available to people regardless of their status, and sometimes, irrespective of their locations. Additionally, the use of broadcasting helped to make the Open University attractive to policy-makers and students. It has also contributed to the academic success of the OU by throwing off the correspondence image. Furthermore, as the section which follows shows, incorporating broadcasting into university level distance teaching has led to innovative approaches to courses and course design.

6.11 Course design teams

One of the important innovations developed by the OU - UK is its system of course design teams i.e. courses are produced by course teams. Essentially, it is a system based on a highly structured educational package combining correspondence texts and broadcasts. Specifically designed for distance students, the packages control in varying degrees, the learning of the individual learner regardless of previous educational qualifications.

Under the system, very little is left to chance, hence the emphasis is on the production and presentation of high quality study materials. Each course is produced by a team of experts headed by an experienced academic, with an author who is usually an outside consultant of distinction, as the main course writer. Other course team members usually include a staff tutor representing the interests of students

and who may also write part of the course ; an expert in teaching method ; and a course manager.

Responsibility for particular sections of the course is allocated to the course author who could be an OU staff member or an outside consultant. Harry, (1982 : 17) has stated that usually, course authors are also responsible for 'planning and presentation of broadcasts in conjunction with the BBC - OU Production Centre producers ; deciding on set books and recommended readings ; designing tests and exercises ; developing home experiments ; writing supplementary materials including notes for tutors and reading and commenting on drafts written by other course team members'. (Harry, op. cit.)

In practice, course materials are subjected to constructive criticism and intensive redrafting to ensure a high academic quality. Furthermore, eminent academics from other universities assess the material before printing. The justification for the course team approach was made by the first Vice-Chancellor of the OU - UK when he asserted that 'a course produced by this method will inevitably tend to be superior in quality to any course produced by an individual... It is a very expensive way of writing courses, that can be justified only if the course materials are used for a very large number of students'. (Perry, 1976 : 91)

From the little evidence presented, it is clear that OU - UK learning packages are not limited to teaching from the stand point of the university. Rather, the packages are more concerned with providing

the distant learner with the required information and knowledge (subject matter), backed with local advice and support (intellectual dialogue) at study centres, in order to fit knowledge to the student's own framework and everyday life. It is due largely to this concern for learning rather than just teaching, that the course team approach is seen as an important factor in the OU - UK's success in effective university level distance teaching.

On the other hand, where learning packages are offered from the standpoint of the institution teaching at a distance, there is a tendency for them to fall short of providing the home-based learner with both knowledge and the intellectual stimulation considered necessary for effective distance education. The problem with institutions totally concerned with teaching rather than the students learning is that :

'The response to the individual needs of the student learning alone and at a distance has often become lost in the overriding requirement to produce a grandiose package of materials'.
(Sewart, op. cit., p. 50)

Finally, the method of course preparation in the OU - UK has been seen as a unique development and a major contributory factor to the university's academic reputation because under the course team approach, staff are appointed from other universities (usually eminent academics) to assess OU courses at the design stage and to moderate the standards of performance of the students in terminal examinations. In the final analysis, it can be argued that it is the combination of these factors on which the academic credibility of OU - UK is based.

6.12 Courses and Assessment Methods

The Open University offer three programmes of study, spread over three broad areas - Undergraduate, Continuing Education and Higher Degrees programmes.

The Undergraduate programme leads to the degree of Bachelor of Arts (with 6 credits) or further to a BA with honours (8 credits).

The Continuing Education programme offers four areas of study ranging from degree-level single courses ; specialised professional courses and scientific / technological updating and general interest courses on personal, cultural and community education ; to self-contained learning materials (study packs) covering vocational and professional subjects for management training without any tuition or assessment.

The Higher Degree programme provides opportunities for both taught and research-based postgraduate study. At present, the research higher degrees are the Bachelor of Philosophy (BPhil) ; the Master of Philosophy (MPhil) and Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) . Also there are interdisciplinary two year taught higher degree programmes (part-time), leading to a Master of Science Degree (MSc) and Master of Science in Advanced Education and Social Research Methods (MSc).

At the beginning of this year OU - UK presented about 270 different undergraduate and non-degree level courses as follows :

- 82 full credit equivalent courses (FCE) in undergraduate programme ;

- 121 degree-level single courses for students who prefer to take individual courses instead of signing on for a degree (i.e. credit type associate students) ; and
education
- 67 continuing/courses and self-contained learning materials (study packs) for undergraduate courses in the OU.

A detailed list of the OU - UK undergraduate, associate courses and study packs is given in Appendix 6.1 and Appendix 6.2.

The study packages and learning materials are short courses on matters of everyday concern which were developed recently by the University to meet direct requirements for professional and vocational updating on subjects such as microprocessors, biotechnology, medicine and nursing, data processing, electronics, management education, agriculture and engineering. Twenty such short courses were launched in 1984 by the OU in collaboration with industry and other universities and polytechnics to update engineers, scientists and managers, in the latest developments in manufacturing and the industrial application of computers. The OU is also pioneering a new method of open learning for the use in companies' own training programmes called 'contact training' (Open House 1985 :). Under the scheme, the OU enters into service contracts with companies in order to adapt its material for use within companies.

In the OU degree programme, courses are offered at four levels - Foundation, Second, Third and Fourth. Most students start with a foundation course - a broadly based course which assumes no prior knowledge of the subject. After the foundation level, students can

make up their own programme of study by taking virtually any combination of courses to meet their felt needs or in relation to present day manpower requirements.

All OU courses are designed to last four years after which they are revised or withdrawn if found to be inappropriate. However, 'to save money, the OU has been extending the life of its courses from four to eight years, and limiting the amount of revision for others'. (Whitehead, 1984 : 8) Also, in the period since 1982 when the government appointed a Visiting Committee to review OU courses, a number of courses in the university have been dropped while others in preparation were aborted (e.g. Religion in Mid-Victorian England), on grounds that they were either not relevant to the careers and social needs of large sections of the population or on grounds of Marxist bias.

6.13 Assessment

In the Open University, student performance is measured by : i) continuous assessment ; and ii) an examination. Each of these receive equal consideration in the award of students' grades. There are both Tutor Marked Assignments (TMA's) and Computer Marked Assignments (CMA's).

Tutor Marked Assignment (TMA's) are mainly written work and range from a series of short answers to medium length essays. There is also a trend in high level courses to project type assignments which involve experimental or research work and collection and analysis of data.

The policy in the OU - UK is that students' assignments are marked by part-time tutor/counsellors in their locality. The immediate implication is that a large number of part-time academic staff have to be employed. Another is that the university is obliged to ensure that reasonably consistent standards are maintained by all tutors.

On the other hand, Computer Marked Assignments (CMA's) consist of multiple choice questions. Students complete and return these to the university's headquarters in Milton Keynes where they are marked by computers.

Overall grades from both types of assignments are reported back to the students, usually within two or three weeks. Tutors add their comments and detailed notes to the marked scripts and this dialogue with the student is seen as a valuable part of effective distance learning.

A three hour written examination is taken at the end of each course - usually held at the end of October and in early November.

A unique characteristic of the OU - UK is that despite the limitations of distance teaching, its courses cover most subjects ranging from Philosophy to Physics, from geography to geology, and from economics to electronics (OU Information, 1984 : 2). Another interesting feature is that science based courses had always comprised a high percentage of courses in the University. For instance, in 1984, about 50% of the finally registered students were science-based (Mathematics, Science and Technology) while art-based students (Arts,

Social Sciences, Education and others) constituted the other 50% (Pocket Guide, 1984).

In the final analysis, the OU - UK's success in overcoming the apparent difficulties associated with distance education, in particular teaching science and technology, can be traced to the University's carefully prepared teaching package which includes home experiment kit for do-it yourself experiments in science subjects. The home experiment kit used in the Open University is quite sophisticated. For example, the kit for the science foundation course consists of 279 items of equipment including chemicals, and a miniature microscope specially designed for the University to provide a complete home laboratory. Since the inception of the OU, about fifty different types of home experiment kits have been developed and range in cost from £2 to £250. Altogether, 37,393 home experiment kits were distributed in the first thirteen teaching years of the University (Ibid.).

It is important to observe that although the experiment kits are integral part of many Open University courses, they are not freely distributed to students. Because of their value, students are asked to sign an indemnity form at the beginning of the course. If at the end of the course they fail to return the non-consumable items of the kits, they are charged for them. Also, failure to return kits precludes the award of a credit certificate or degree.

A related issue which deserves a mention because of its revenue earning role is the fact that the OU - UK owns the copyright in all

its course materials including the audio-video and film components produced by staff of the BBC - OU Production Centre. Additionally, while students are free to record the university's broadcasts for study purposes, in all other uses, recordings must be licensed and payment made through the Guild of Licence Department (called Guild Sound and Vision Limited). Copies of selected programmes of the University are also sold through the Open University Educational Enterprises Limited (OUEE). In this way, substantial revenues are generated by the University each year. For example, in 1983, the OUEE had a turnover of about £1.5 million from the sale of course materials, royalty income, broadcasts sales, press titles and video / film sales. (Horlock, 1983 : 44)

6.14 Students' demands and key characteristics

To date, more than a quarter of a million people have studied with the Open University, as undergraduates, postgraduate students or as associate students and clients. Associate students are those who decide to take individual degree level courses instead of signing on to study for a degree. A second category of associate students are people who register for short general interest non-credit courses to up-grade themselves intellectually in their everyday lives as parents, consumers, workers etc, purely out of interest. Some associate students sit examinations for the award of certificate of satisfactory course completion while those who do not sit examinations receive letter of course completion.

Clients for Continuing Education programmes are individuals or organisations (mostly employers) who purchase the University's self-contained learning packages (study packs) either for management

training or professional and vocational up-dating. These do not involve tuition or assessment - hence the users are basically customers of the University's learning materials.

Commenting on the growing importance of continuing education programmes in the Open University, Dr Horlock, recently asserted that the University is now 'Britain's biggest training agency ... The University would like to think of itself as the leader in the updating area and expect to remain in that position providing both education and training for British industry and commerce'. (Open House, 1985 : 1) One factor for the emphasis on continuing education is believed to be the University's policy that programmes of the Centre for Continuing Education are to be self-financing.

Nevertheless, it has to be remembered that the University's first mission is the provision of degree programmes to offer a second chance for higher education to working adults. Moreover, it is mainly the Open University's success in degree-level distance teaching which has brought it an international reputation. Hence, in the fifteen years of teaching life of the University, undergraduates have always formed the largest proportion of the student body.

In 1971, when the OU commenced teaching, there were 19,615 finally registered students. Apart from 34 postgraduate students, the first intake were virtually undergraduates. When continuing education programmes were first introduced in 1976, a total of 4,696 registered as associate students. The majority - 4,578 (97%) registered for degree-level short courses while 118 enrolled for general interest short courses.

Altogether, there are now 114,528 students and clients studying courses offered by the University. Of that number, 66,403 or 58% are undergraduate students while slightly under 50,000 are associate students and clients of the University's courses and study packs.

Table 6.2 gives an indication of the students' demand and graduation patterns over the years.

Between 1971 - 84, the University received about half a million applications and registered a total of 210,000 for undergraduate study. The target of the University is to have 100,000 graduates by 1990. In addition, between 70,000 and 80,000 others should achieve on average, two full credits - the equivalent of a year's full-time higher education.

Judging by the yearly intake and graduation patterns so far, the OU could well exceed its targets if these trends are maintained. As Table 6.2 shows, each year, between six and seven thousand new student graduates are added to the total and as at the beginning of 1985, over 80,500 students had graduated from the Open University. Well over 11,000 of the graduates obtained the BA (Honours) degree. Tables 6.3 and 6.4 illustrate the high proportion of OU students who eventually graduate.

One interesting feature of academic progress in the University is the students' staying power to successful completion of their courses. For example, tables 6.3 and 6.4 show that as at January 1984, 14,054 of the first intake of 19581 in 1971 had graduated - 11,198 with BA(O)

Table 6.2

OU - UK Students and Clients Statistics, 1971 - 83

	1971	1976	1981	1982	1983
<u>Undergraduates</u>					
Applicants	40,800	51,500	42,300	45,600	43,300
Yearly intake (finally registered)	19,581	12,231	14,410	17,772	17,627
Total undergraduate students	19,581	50,994	59,968	63,119	66,403
Yearly graduating students :					
BA (Ordinary)		6,007	6,515	6,444	5,380
BA (Honours)		782	1,242	1,246	1,757
Cumulative BA(0) and BA(Hons) Graduates		22,682	58,130	65,811	72,511
<u>Postgraduate Students</u>					
Total students	34	414	711	749	765
Cumulative awards		24	149	197	243
<u>Associate Students (Degree-level courses)</u>					
Applicants		6,245	10,492	10,812	10,891
Yearly intakes (finally registered)		4,578	7,078	7,150	7,367
<u>Associate Students (Short Courses)</u>					
Short-course population		118	15,752	16,420	12,805
Specialised short courses (SACS)		-	-	-	974
<u>Learning Material Packs</u>					
Total packs sold to clients			2,755	13,735	26,214
Total Undergraduates, Postgraduates, Associate students, SACS, Short courses and Clients	19,615	56,104	86,264	101,166	114,528

Source : Computed from the Report of the Vice-Chancellor, (1983) : Open University Information Services and Academic Planning Figures (1984). Open University Digest of Statistics 1971 - 80 Vol. 1: and Open University Digest of Statistics 1971 - 75. Milton Keynes : The Open University Press.

Table 6.3

OU - UK BA (Ordinary) Graduates by Cohort 1971 - 84

Year of starting (cohort)	No. of finally reg. students in cohort	Number of Graduates in :													Total of Graduates by 30 January 1984	
		1972	1973	1974	1975	1976	1977	1978	1979	1980	1981	1982	1983	No.	As % of finally reg. students in cohort.	
1971	19581	898	3318	2636	1649	1259	561	323	198	127	88	82	56	11198	57.1	
1972	15716		322	2292	1743	1349	1123	549	285	207	145	99	88	8202	52.1	
1973	12680			252	1859	1495	1066	881	449	303	171	127	96	6699	52.8	
1974	11336				217	1693	1251	790	833	463	228	158	110	5743	50.6	
1975	14830				1	229	1814	1365	1083	1110	573	365	209	6749	45.5	
1976	12231					2	177	1423	1102	904	1031	536	322	5497	44.9	
1977	15146						5	193	1707	1261	1076	1208	627	6077	40.1	
1978	15622							10	161	1536	1238	1038	1131	5114	32.7	
1979	14854								17	176	1731	1207	927	4058	27.3	
1980	14022									5	203	1469	954	2636	18.8	
1981	14410										26	125	771	922	6.4	
1982	17772											27	84	111	0.6	
1983	17627												5	5	0.03	
TOTALS		898	3640	5180	5469	6027	5997	5534	5835	6092	6515	6444	5380	63011		

Source : Report of the Vice - Chancellor (1983). Milton Keynes : The OU Press, p. 9.

Table 6.4

OU - UK BA (Honours) Graduates by Cohort 1971 - 1984

Year of starting (cohort)	No. of finally reg. students in cohort	Number of Graduates in :											Total of Graduates by 30 January 1984	
		1973	1974	1975	1976	1977	1978	1979	1980	1981	1982	1983	No.	As % of finally reg. students in cohort.
1971	19581	14	218	371	501	436	334	278	219	154	89	242	2856	14.5
1972	15716		6	71	205	300	266	238	214	179	90	164	1733	11.0
1973	12680			6	70	165	228	203	219	171	106	176	1344	10.6
1974	11336				5	47	143	162	210	157	150	196	1070	9.4
1975	14830				1	3	56	145	211	197	224	259	1094	7.3
1976	12231					1	3	37	106	190	174	237	748	6.1
1977	15146						1	7	46	146	223	158	581	3.8
1978	15622								9	37	129	164	339	2.1
1979	14854								2	7	45	101	155	1.0
1980	14022									4	13	44	61	0.4
1981	14410										3	14	17	0.1
1982	17772											2	2	0.01
TOTALS		14	224	448	782	952	1031	1068	1236	1242	1246	1751	10000	

Source : Report of the Vice - Chancellor (1983). Milton Keynes : The OU Press, p.9.

and 2,856 with BA(Honours). This represents about 72% graduation rate over 14 years of study. Even by 1978 when the first intake was expected to graduate, 12,518 or about 64% had obtained a degree - 10,644 BA(O) and 1,874 BA(Honours).

Because the University's credit system allowed students to take as many years as they wanted to obtain a degree, many from among the first intake are still taking courses. Ultimately, most students might graduate especially since Open University students have been found to be 'a group with particularly high motivation to succeed'. (McIntosh, Woodley and Morrison, 1983 : 186)

6.15 Key characteristics of OU students

From available research evidence and reports from the Open University, several factors have emerged over the years which can be regarded as the key characteristics of students in the institution. These are :

- i) Most of the students are people in full-time employment. They therefore, study part-time. The majority of the students are resident in the UK, but there are some who live overseas. These are mostly merchant seamen and British servicemen in the Falklands, Germany and Cyprus.
- ii) Most OU - UK students belong to the new 'middle class'. To date, there is relatively low participation in the OU by working class occupations, especially partly skilled or unskilled manual workers who constitute just about 13% of the students. Furthermore, manual workers who study in the University usually find the courses harder and take longer to graduate.

- iii) The previous educational qualifications of OU students vary widely, largely because of the University's admissions policy which requires no formal qualifications for entry. However, since the University took off in 1971, only about 10% of its students have no formal educational qualifications. This is not surprising when it is remembered that in the UK secondary schooling is compulsory to the age of 16. Students without formal qualifications usually find it more difficult to cope with demands of studying in the University, as the highly structured correspondence-based system in the OU makes distance education at degree-level difficult for the educationally disadvantaged groups who lack the educational qualification to deal with such an approach to learning'. (Fielder and Richmond, 1978)
- iv) Wide age range is reflected in the student population, from 21 - 70 years. In the early years, the median age was 35 but has declined to 32 in the period since 1976.
- v) Career enhancement is the single most important motivation factor for students who study in the Open University.
- vi) The most dominant occupational groups have always been teachers and housewives. Initially, the two groups formed about a half of the student population, but currently constitute about 36% (teachers 18.4% and housewives 17.3%). The fact that housewives have always been a significant group in the Open University, is an indication that demand for such a distance learning system has not been restricted to working adults. The University has had a

wider appeal particularly among housewives who often work very hard but not necessarily in paid employment. Also, it has to be remembered that as in most adult education programmes, some people enrol for courses purely out of interest rather than for career enhancement.

vii) The proportion of female students has steadily increased over the years, compared with that of male students, rising from 27% in 1971 to 45% at present while the percentage of male students has declined from 73% to 55%.

viii) The system of three months trial period for new students (February - April) has proved to be an effective machine for sorting out genuine students. Each year between 25% - 28% of provisionally registered students who start in February, decide not to continue in April.

ix) Students who use study centre learning opportunities and attend summer schools always do best. From all indications the face-to-face element of open university teaching: occasional tuition conducted at study centres and yearly summer schools, is a very important feature of distance learning. The summer schools held on the campuses of residential universities between mid-July and early September are compulsory for all students on foundation courses and some higher level courses such as science and technology. The one week of full-time study has proved to be particularly important in exposing distance students to arguments and dialogue and in giving them a taste of university life, quite apart from providing an opportunity for intensive learning.

However in practice, many students do not use the study centre facilities as often as the University makes them available. Students take advantage whenever and as often as they feel the need. A large number of students either are not able or choose not to attend study centres. Tired manual workers and single parents are among students with the greatest learning difficulties and make the least use of distance support services in the system.

- x) Broadcasts do not score highly among OU students although 94% of the students can receive BBC television broadcasts on both channels (BBC 1 and BBC 2), while 87% have good VHF radio reception. Many students still face problems in adapting to the use of broadcasts as learning devices rather than as entertainment or relaxation. In the UK, the society sees broadcasting as an entertainment medium, hence most OU students do not treat broadcasts seriously (Bates, 1982a : 43 - 51). Instead, students of the OU rate audio and video cassettes to be of more than twice relevant, helpful and convenient than broadcasts. Part of the problem can be traced to the practice whereby broadcasts are usually watched two or three weeks before students covered those parts of the correspondence texts to which programmes were linked. Largely because of such lapses, for some students, broadcasts tend to be out of synchronisation with study of the textual material.

In general, under 60% of the students watched the television programmes designed for their course while the radio programmes

of the University were heard by about 47% of the target audience. (Charnley, Osborne and Withnall, 1981). The timing of television programmes was considered to be during 'anti-social hours' (i.e. before 7am or after midnight) while radio programmes were seen as more accessible and convenient but did not alleviate feelings of isolation.

- xi) Overall pass rate on degree courses is high - around 70% of Open University students who took examinations got credits.
- xii) By the same token, drop-out rates in the Open University are relatively low.

6.16 New Trends

More recently, several positive trends have emerged suggesting that studying in the Open University, however inappropriate or demanding it may seem, has clearly become a viable higher education alternative for many people who can only study part-time. One interesting new pattern shows that in the 1980's there has been a steady improvement in the proportion of students taking and passing their examinations than in the 1970's. For instance, in 1983, 77% of finally registered students took their examinations compared with around 70% in the late 1970's. Of these, over 70% gained credits, as opposed to about 68% in earlier years. This shows increased motivation among Open University students to complete their courses.

Another new trend is the decline in the percentage of teachers and an

increase in the number of students from other walks of life. Teachers are still the single largest occupational group, but their share has declined from 40.1% in 1971 to only 18.4%. During the same period, the share of housewives increased from 10.1% to 17.3% while the retired, unemployed or in institutions increased from 1.8% to 6.1% at present. The third largest group - technical / scientific, also declined from 18.5% to 16.7%. On the whole, the OU now claims that about half of its students come from 'blue collar' families, although the majority of such students have since lifted themselves out of manual trades largely through education. (Open House, op. cit., p.1)

Categorized by father's occupations, the social class of OU undergraduates is as follows :

Professional	11.9%
Intermediate	25.0%
Skilled non-manual	18.0%
Skilled manual	31.9%
Unskilled	5.5% (<u>OU Information</u> , 1984 : 2)

Recent intakes have tended to have lower qualifications than in earlier years. Now 44% of new intakes have less than two GCE Advanced level papers, compared with the 1970's when about 75% of OU students had qualifications necessary for admission to degree courses in conventional universities. One major factor for the increase in low educational qualifications of new intakes may have been the decline in the number of teachers who normally entered with fairly high educational qualifications.

On the other hand, there are new developments which if maintained could soon price OU courses beyond the reach of many people whom it was established to serve. The first of these concern sharp increase in tuition fees particularly for undergraduate programmes.

When the Open University first started, it was envisaged that fees for the Ordinary Bachelor's degree should be between £150 and £200 spread over roughly six years of study. On that basis, it was estimated that tuition fees would not exceed £45 a year. However, today the cost for one year alone is in excess of the £200 which was originally estimated the cost for entire degree programme. Table 6.5 gives an indication of the rising cost of OU studies.

Table 6.5

Increase in Undergraduate Tuition and Summer School fees in OU- UK

	1971	1976	1980	1981	1982	1983	1984
Tuition fees	£20	£40	£67	£98	£120	£127	£133
Summer School Fees	£25	£49	£55	£75	£77	£82	£88
Total	£45	£89	£122	£173	£197	£209	£221

Source : Compiled from statistics obtained from the Open University, Milton Keynes.

Since 1980, the OU has more than doubled its undergraduate tuition fees from £67 to £135 per full credit course which is more than twice the level of inflation. Already, fees for degree-level credit courses in the OU are higher than corresponding fees for part-time courses in other institutions. But in addition to tuition and summer school fees

there are other financial costs borne by OU students such as set books, course readers, travel to study centres, to summer schools and to day-schools, postage, stationery, telephone calls etc.

In 1984, the cost of tuition, set books, summer schools and miscellaneous expenses amounted to £271 for each credit course. To earn the BA Ordinary degree, students must gain 2 course credits at Foundation level and 4 post Foundation course credits. For BA(Honours), students must gain 2 credits at Foundation and 6 post Foundation course credits. Using the 1984 figures, the cost for 6 credit Ordinary Bachelors degree is £1,626 while the 8 credit Honours degree would cost £2,168.

Often students have to meet costs themselves since Education Authority grants are discretionary to part-time students, compared with full-time conventional university undergraduates who automatically become entitled. Given all these factors, it is not surprising that even the Vice-Chancellor of the OU admits that these increases have made the cost of studying in the University 'too high for many people'. (Horlock, 1982 : 3)

More recently, the cost of acquiring an Open University degree has been further complicated by the University's multi-media educational approach which encourages the students to invest in the capital cost of their education. In the last five years, home ownership of television, video cassette recording machine (VCR), telephone and other electronic gadgets has rapidly increased among OU students largely because these are considered as essential needs of distance learners which could also save them too many journeys to study centres. Currently, 45% of OU-UK students own VCR machines while the well-heeled student has up to £1,000's worth of equipment at home.

6.17 Conclusion and Policy Implications

The study has shown that obtaining a degree through the OU - UK is dearly bought. Students are made to work very hard which demands from them the qualities of motivation, determination and of unusual staying power. However demanding as it may seem, the OU has clearly become a viable alternative to the conventional system of higher education in Britain for a large number of people who would not have studied by any other means. The high rate of graduation and the relatively low rate of students drop-out (i.e. around 70% of students stay on to earn credits), is a great achievement for a distance teaching university. From available evidence, the major factor of the academic achievement of the OU rests on innovative use of multi-media skills with emphasis on carefully structured learning packages which are student-based, supplemented with broadcasts and occasional face-to-face tuition. The high quality of the learning packages and the wide variety of student advice and support services are known to attract and sustain the motivation of distance learners.

The study has also shown that although adults are easily accepted for registration regardless of their previous educational qualifications, most of its students were fairly qualified for university education. They were also mostly from the middle class. To date, only 10% of the students were people with no formal qualifications. This is largely due to the education system in Britain which makes secondary education compulsory to age 16. In countries like Nigeria, where there is no compulsory secondary education (or even compulsory primary education) and where English, the medium for instruction in university level

courses is not the mother tongue, Aptitude Tests or Essays and insistence on Foundation level courses would be wise both for the university's academic credibility and to ensure that the large pool of talents among people without formal secondary qualifications are not denied access simply because they missed the chance of secondary education.

Another interesting finding about the OU - UK is the fact although the University maintains an open admissions policy, it operates a trial period of three months at the beginning of its session and this and the Foundation level courses serve as effective machinery for weeding out doubtful candidates and for upgrading candidates with low educational qualifications.

Also, it has been shown that strong political support by government leaders, the appointment of a prestigious planning committee and the personal commitment as well as the dedication of the group of planners played a crucial factor in winning bi-partisan support for the Open University. However, the fact that the University came into being as a baby of the Labour Government, in particular Harold Wilson, tends to deny the OU - UK a national consensus especially from those opposed to the socialist principles of the Labour movement. This line of argument is supported by the covert hostility to the University since the Conservatives came to power in 1979. For example, the OU - UK has not only suffered from harsher cuts in the level of government funding, but has had its courses placed under review by a Visiting Committee. As a result, there has been a change in the method of funding the University - the government now gives the Open University

loans rather than grants. An immediate consequence of the change in the method of funding has been sharp increases in fees over the years. In turn, the rising cost of Open University studies has acted as a severe disincentive to applicants and if unchecked it could defeat the original concept of the OU - that of a university open to all people.

The lesson from the British experience seems to be that in a multi-party democracy, an open university system will stand a better chance of enjoying a national consensus provided it was not marketed by a single political party.

This study has also shown that the national autonomous structure of the OU - UK has been advantageous in enabling the University to extend higher educational opportunities on a nation-wide scale without being unduly accused of trespassing. In this way, it has been possible for the OU to be cost effective, since large numbers of students are enrolled in wide ranging courses.

Another inherent advantage of the structure is the freedom for the institution to be more adventurous in its course offering and teaching methods to respond to the needs of external students which it was specifically established to serve.

It is also significant that the OU - UK has not only been successful in attracting large numbers of students but also in controlling students drop-out to a minimum level and reaching a high graduation rate. Clearly, the quality of teaching packages and the rich variety of student support services is a unique development and major

contributory factor to the academic credibility of the OU - UK. However, the success of the University does not rest wholly on the resourcefulness and the University's continuous efforts for academic relevance and excellence. It rests rather on the combination of the imagination of the founders; the University's innovative use of multi-media skills ; and the availability of the relevant institutions, facilities and manpower, nationally. In the final analysis, the OU - UK has proved successful due in addition, to national assets that are technically and culturally specific to the UK which are still developing in emergent nations like Nigeria. Among the abundant human and technical resources which have been crucial to the Open University are Britain's effective postal and telephone system ; almost universal broadcast transmission coverage and the fact that most homes have television receivers and enjoy constant supply of electricity. The OU - UK also, can rely on the spare capacity of other educational institutions for study centres and summer schools ; draw on the full-time staff of other institutions of higher education for its tutorial and counselling functions ; and on Britain's well established book printing , publishing and selling trade.

It may be said therefore, that although successful, the OU - UK model is a very complex system which cannot be expected to work if transplanted to countries like Nigeria due to differences in social and cultural circumstances as well as in national assets. For these reasons, even the much acclaimed educational packages of the OU - UK could be inappropriate for transplantation since the courses are culturally specific to Britain. Apart from these considerations, Nigeria and other countries could learn in several ways from the

British experience. For example, the principle behind establishing the OU - that of a university of the second chance is important in any country that is genuinely interested in progress in the knowledge dominated modern world as there are always groups in society who cannot study by any other means. In other words, an OU may in fact be the only university chance for many. These include people in full-time employment ; those who are geographically isolated ; disabled or mobile people, who because of their jobs and other circumstances cannot guarantee to stay in the same place long enough to complete a course of study in a conventional institution. There is a lot to learn from OU - UK's commitment to innovations, its dedication to academic excellence and determination for expanding higher educational opportunities in a cost effective way.

Another is its course team approach to course preparation, in particular the emphasis on linking learning packages with occasional face-to-face tuition and counselling to enhance the quality of distance education.

Thirdly, the OU - UK has from the outset, charged competitive fees for its courses. This has several advantages : the University is not seen as education on the cheap and contributes to the cost effectiveness of the system. Most important of all, is the evidence that when reasonable fees are charged, it increases the motivation of students to complete their courses.

In the final analysis, each country will have to devise its own model in accordance with its culture, existing educational system, infrastructures of communication, energy and other national assets.

A fuller discussion of possible open university models for Nigeria is left to Chapter 9 which is devoted to the conclusions of this study and their policy implications.

Overall, my own view is that although the mail system, telephone, electricity, radio, television, transport and distribution services in Nigeria are deficient in contrast to the British system, an open university institution must use existing national services for teaching and distribution of its study materials. With dedication and resourcefulness, making use of the most efficient available services could make an even greater contribution to the cost effectiveness of an open university system in Nigeria. For example, if during the pilot scheme for an open university system, it was established that the national postal system might not improve its service to handle the millions of study packages for home-based students across the country, other alternatives such as the distribution network of daily newspapers, soft drinks or even private courier services might prove more efficient and cheaper than the other alternative of maintaining a courier service within an open university system.

Notes

- 1 Figures given by Britain's Secretary of State for Education and Science, Sir Keith Joseph in ITN News on 21st May, 1985.
- 2 The Open University Visiting Committee's report was released on 27 February 1985 and stated among other things : 'We believe the University has been a national and international success and its achievements merit national recognition'. (The Guardian, Manchester, 28th February 1985, p.2)

