The Humanities and Utilitarian Conception of Development in Africa: Issues and Contentions

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Section One

Introduction: The Challenge of Development in Africa and the Role of Education

At a public presentation by Julius K. Nyerere, Tanzanian president at the opening of the General Assembly of the World University Service at the University College, Dar-es-salam on Monday, June 27, 1966, he reacted to the whole problem of what a University could, and should do in a developing society thus:

> For I believe that the pursuit of pure learning can be a luxury in society; whether it is or not depends upon the conditions on which the society lives. Perhaps I am being foolhardy in making such a statement at a university gathering, but I am going to repeat it; when people are dying because existing knowledge is not applied, when the very basic social and public services are not available to all members of a society, then that society is misusing its resources if it pursues learning for its own sake. (Nyerere, 1967:4)

I have started with this excerpt from Nyerere, one of the most distinguished African leaders, to draw our attention to the role of education in human society in general and the role of humanities, in particular towards engendering sustainable development in any society.

Implicated in the above excerpt by Nyerere include the following: people's poverty; learning for learning sake; society misusing its resources on unproductive learning, pursuit of pure learning as luxury among others.

My role today as a lead paper presenter at this International Conference organized by the faculty of Arts, Delta State University is to contribute to the theme of the Conference- Rethinking the Humanities and Development in Africa. My topic is: "The Humanities and Utilitarian Conception of Development in Africa: Issues and Contentions." As a philosopher, and a young one indeed, I want to provoke my colleagues, students and participants to reflect on the key issues that are domiciled in my topic. In other words, I hope at the end I would have provided some questions that will make us re-examine our position as scholars in the humanities.

As is characteristic of any academic disquisition, my treatise is divided into the following: One, the challenge of Development in Africa and the role of education; two, what type of Education: the "Useless" Disciplines and visible and invisible developments; three, Beyond Apologia; four, Humanities, Methodologies and subject matter of Research; five, the imperative of Developmental humanities in Africa, which is the conclusion. Let me quickly go back to the issue of challenge of Development in Africa and the role of Education.

The fact cannot be overstated that Africa's state of development is that of underdevelopment. To claim this is not to imply the conclusion that Africa is not developing. Rather the emphasis is that given the human and material resources which the African continent possesses, the state of development is still a far cry from her actual potentialities. This predicament seems to be understandable considering the economic, political, moral, religious and scientific crises which confront Africa on a perennial basis. Although it cannot be said that Africans are a distinct species who does not bother about development or are averse to development, however, the calamity that befalls Africa seems to give credence to the "underdeveloping" African environment. The usual imperialist/colonial argument constantly held responsible for Africa's underdevelopment seems to have lost its bite since Africans, wittingly and unwittingly, now manage their own affairs (Oyeshile 2004:99-100). The emphasis is now on how Africans have contributed to Africa's underdevelopment.

So with hunger, political instability manifested in civil wars across Africa, poverty in unprecedented form, drop in life expectancy, bad leadership, economic downturn, religious violence and dearth of hope in all ramifications, there is therefore the urgent need to look for solution from various dimensions. One such attempt at managing the human flux of experience is education. In other words, education is a major tool of development.

There is no gainsaying the fact that education is central to the holistic development of man and society. Whether as black people, white people or colour of any sort, we all need education not only to adapt to our being-in-the-world, as a result of what Martin Heidegger regards as our "fallenness", but also to organize our flux of experience in order to survive and live a happy life. According to Max Black, "all serious discussions of educational problems, no matter how specific, leads to a consideration of educational aims, and becomes a conversation about the good life, the nature of man, the varieties of experiences" (Black, 1969:11). Going by Max Black's position, there are concomitant problems which form the content of education in its various dimensions and juxtapositions and which also indicate that the drive towards the essence of life, which is happiness, cannot be attained unless the existential dimension of human life is given adequate attention.

It is therefore not surprising that for most of us, who are self-professed existentialists, "existence precedes essence" (See Sartre, 1958; 1976). The reason for these proclamations would be clear to us as this lecture progresses, but suffice to note at the outset that education constitutes the main basis for addressing our existential imperatives and our ability to establish this intervention of education in our existential sphere will certainly help to address our quest for development, especially sustainable development not only in Nigeria, but also in many countries in Africa (Oyeshile, 2014:163).

Let me also note that there is a nexus between education and the human mind. The human mind plays a central role in the cognition of reality and its development through education cannot be over-emphasized. The human mind, according to Oyeshile (2000: 105-106), plays a central role in organizing all that can be predicated of the person. Infact, our minds, so it is said, seem to be the major determinant of all our actions. Many western philosophers identify the mind with

consciousness as can be gleaned from Rene Descartes' *Meditations*. Descartes (1596-1650) the French philosopher, appropriately regarded as the father of modern philosophy, asserts that the mind is the only substance that confers reality on man which is beyond doubt. The development of this mind is mainly the task of the humanities. To Descartes therefore, "I think therefore I am" or "I think therefore I exist" (*cogito ergo sum*). The more we try to doubt the fact of thinking, the more we establish our existence. It was on this Cartesian pedigree that modern philosophy laid its foundation (See Descartes, 1960: 68-85).

Earlier, the great Greek philosopher, Plato had argued that it is only the mind; we may call it soul, that can contemplate perfect or real objects in the world of forms or ideas. The mind also helps in the self-mastery of the environment and educational concepts. If this is the case, it can be asserted, without contradiction, that "the mind serves as the mirror of knowledge and reality" (Oyeshile, 2000: 105). The place of mind has assumed a preeminent position in both the understanding of nature and society. In his seminal work, *The Adventures of Ideas*(1964), Alfred North Whitehead insists that the mind not only serves as the master key to our understanding of nature and human society, it is also the basis of the sense of criticism which is the gadfly of civilization (Whitehead, 1964:19). The logical implication of Whitehead's position, according to Olusegun Oladipo, is that: "If what has been said on the place of the mind in the process of social transformation is correct, then the need for the development of a rational outlook on life in Africa cannot be over-emphasized" (Oladipo, 2002:163). It is in this similar vein that J. N. Omatseye draws a nexus between education and state of mind in addressing human insecurity. He opines that "although one's sense of insecurity may vary with his situation in life-be it social, economic, cultural etcetera- his level of education and state of mind are a key factor in how he handles his life's challenges" (Omatseye, 2003: 7)

Having adumbrated on what education is, it is also germane to state that education could be formal or informal, scientific and humanistic. While scientific education has been given a pride of place in our national life, the humanities are regarded as appendages to other disciplines. This trend has provoked a lot of issues which I regard as contentious on the role of the humanities. The humanities include disciplines in the Arts, Social Sciences, Education and Law. But the

mistaken assumption is that only the courses in the Arts - based disciplines are humanities. I want to propose that there should be a summit on which disciplines constitute the humanities.

In the last few years, quite a lot of work has been written in defending the Arts - based disciplines. See the following works for instance: J.P. Clark (2000), *A peculiar faculty*; Ayo Bamgbose (2008), *Language and Good Governance*; Moses Akin Makinde (2009), *Humanities and Good Governance: A Philosophical Approach*; Yomi Akinleye (2016), *The Humanities and Technological Changes: Past Experience, Present Realities and Future Prospects*; Akachi T. Ezeigbo (2016), *The Humanities as Change Agent: A literary Perspective*; Ishaq Oloyede (2016), *Utilizing Religion for National Integration and Development*; Kofi Anyidoho (2000), *Culture : The Human factor in African Development*; Rolando M. Gripaldo (1997), *Knowledge, Education and the Development of the Mind*; Dan Izevbaye (2008), *The Humanities and the Re-birth of Knowledge: A Nigerian Situation Report*; Anthony A. Akinwale (2008), *The Marginalization of the Humanities in our Educational System;* C .Maduka (2008), *How do the Liberal Arts liberate?*; Fareed Zakaria(2018), *In Defence of Liberal Education*; Toyin Falola (2015), *Humanities and Humanism: Secular Vocations and their Public Outcomes.* Some conferences include: Sixtieth Anniversary of University of Ibadan, Faculty of Arts Conference; December 3-4, 2008 with the theme: "The Humanities and Social Transformation in Africa"; An International Conference by Department of History, University of Ibadan; July, 2017 with the theme: "The Humanities and Development in Africa". The theme of DELSU conference, though a challenge to the Humanities, is not a departure from providing justification for the Humanities.

From the listing done above, one can say that the scholars in the humanities, especially the Arts-based humanities, have always defended their disciplines and have also shown ways in which their disciplines can contribute to national development. Then we may raise the question, why do the humanities scholars need to be apologetic and be on the defensive about the relevance of their disciplines always? I try to provide answers to this question in the next section. Again, going beyond government's unrealistic and unpragmatic approach to the nature and relevance of the humanities (See Oyeshile, 2007a). I strongly believe that theArts based humanities must modify their approach to research by understanding and incorporating common scientific paradigms in their researches, where

necessary, to make their research findings accessible to as many people as possible.

In concluding this introductory section, let me quickly note that the denigration of the humanities is not peculiar to Africa. This trend is also noticeable in other parts of the world as Fareed Zakaria notes:

> In an age defined by technology and globalization, everyone is talking about skills-based learning. Politicians, business people, and even many educators see it as the only way to stay competitive. They urge students to stop dreaming and start thinking practically about the skills they will need in the workplace. An open-minded exploration of knowledge is seen as a road to nowhere (Zakaria, 2015:16).

Section Two

What Type of Education? The "Useless" Disciplines and Visible and Invisible Development

The main issue here has to do with the type of education that will be the basis of social order thereby leading to sustainable development in our society. Education, as it is generally deciphered, is the key to real regeneration and meaningful development and a crucial tool for social transformation. And, according to Nduka, education is the most sensitive instrument not only for effecting but also for monitoring progress in the realization of the nation's goals and objectives; education helps individuals to acquire literacy and technical know-how and constitutes the vehicle for the diffusion of culture and ideas (Nduka, 2006).

If our pre-suppositions about education above are anything to reckon with, what has been the state of education in Nigeria, a country which deeply reflects many parts of the African experience? We have to take off from the challenges confronting education from the primary level of education to the tertiary level. At both the primary and secondary levels, the major problems of funding issues, expertise, curriculum, commitment and the problem of language have been the recurring issues to which numerous education experts have produced numerous books. Yet, we cannot say that all is well at these levels. The most pathetic aspect of these problems is that the primary and secondary levels of education

determine and quality of product at the tertiary level. The major tragedy however is that people have almost lost confidence in the public schools thereby leaving important sector of human development in the hands of private proprietors. The tertiary education is almost suffering similar fate with the neglect of public polytechnics and universities.

The domain of the humanities covers courses that have to do with the Culture, History and Arts of a people. Such courses include but are not limited to Literature, Languages, History, Classics, Religion and Philosophy. These course hardly use the methodology of the natural sciences. They depend mostly on rationalization, evaluation and arguments mostly done from the background of culture and human interest. It is often ridiculously claimed that these disciplines in the humanities do not readily place 'bread and butter' on the table. In other words, their utility cannot easily be quantified, unlike what obtains in applied sciences. Thus many African leaders believe that these disciplines are not relevant to the present developmental process. According to Sogolo, Herbert Spencer was one of the early critics of the humanities in his classification of areas of activities as the following statements show:

> First, those activities which directly minister to self-preservation; second, those activities which, securing the necessities of life, indirectly minister the self-preservation; third, those activities which have as their end the rearing and discipline of offspring; fourth, those activities which are involved in the maintenance of proper social and political relations; and fifth, those miscellaneous activities which make up the leisure part of life, devoted to the gratification of tastes and feelings. (Spencer, cited by Sogolo, 1981: 108)

The fifth of the activities is where Spencer thinks the humanities belong. He could not be totally right for two reasons: First, the preoccupation of the humanities certainly involves more than the satisfying of taste and feelings, as they constitute the pivot on which culture and civilization are based. Secondly, all disciplines whether in the sciences or humanities try at one point or the other to satisfy human feelings and tastes. It, therefore, means that the humanities themselves are only fulfilling some of the imperative of the product of human intellectual enterprise, which

is the satisfaction of tastes and feelings. Perhaps, this function falls within the purview of the intrinsic function of education.

The urge to promote scientific and technological development became an inescapable one for most African countries, especially Nigeria in the third quarter of the 20th century. This prompted Nigerian government in the 1980s to adopt a policy which favours the increase enrolment of science-related courses to the disadvantage of the humanities-based disciplines on 60% to 40% basis. This policy almost led to the strangulation of the humanistic disciplines which provided the value orientation for education. Yet, we cannot say that several years after, this policy has led to the breakthrough much needed in science and technology.

While nobody can contest the claim that science and technology constitute a very important basis for the development of man, neglecting the humanistic education is counterproductive to the development of science and technology. The reason for this is not farfetched. According to AbiolaIrele:

> What we now recognize as the scientific spirit is the product of a whole movement of ideas by which what we now refer to as the West sought to understand man and the universe; the ground for modern science was a matter of historical fact prepared by the development of Western philosophy. (Irele, 1982: 26)

The emphasis above is that development in science and technology needs to be well grounded on a system of ideas which, for now, is absent in Africa. The West got to this present enviable stage of scientific development, because their *value system* was grounded in philosophical and other general ideas that are conducive to the emergence of a scientific and technological culture.

A major importance of education in the humanities lies in the fact that it satisfies certain needs of a man which are beyond the physical and material needs which science and technology are concerned with. According to Sogolo:

> The satisfaction of such needs is beyond the reach of science because these have to do with phenomena which are not explicable in terms of some laws of natural

> processes. The sciences seek through the formulation of
> law and theories, to create order and uniformity out of
> apparent diversity, to apply such laws in adapting the
> environment to suit man's needs. Paradoxically, however,
> in doing all this for man, science seems to stand
> indifferent to the fate of this very object it purports to
> serve. This aspect, according to the history of education,
> has long been assigned to the humanities. (Sogolo, 1981:
> 111-112)

The extensive quotation from Sogolo is important because it shows that there are fundamental aspects of man that cannot be grasped by natural science. Such aspects include the human mind, human values, culture, happiness, the goals of scientific innovations and the place of man in the universe. The most fundamental question about man is man, and therefore a naturalistic method cannot fully grasp the dimension of this phenomenon. Perhaps, this is why J. S. Mill suggested that "men are men before they are lawyers, or physicians or merchants, or manufacturers (Mill cited Sogolo, 1981: 112).

Let us note that the preceding argument is not to undermine the relevance and utility of science. To the contrary, it is to suggest that the goals of science are better achieved from a complementarist approach. For instance, other intellectual approaches in the humanities are obviously needed by any nation in order to provide sustainable answers to the question of man's flux of experience and the problem of the meaning of existence. According to Stanley Macebuh, a major problem in contemporary Nigerian education, as fostered by the tilt towards *total* science education is lack of grounding in conceptual paradigms which the discipline in the humanities provide. This has resulted in the "deterioration in the commitment to intellectual life of all in the name of functional education which is thought to hold the key to our rapid development (Macebuh, 2002: 6).

Macebuh notes that a one-sided pursuit of mechanistic and science education, popularly tagged utilitarian disciplines, all in the name of relevance and development, may result in lack of consideration for the human condition. Thus, according to him, such issues as development, environment and other related issues are tasks not solely for the sciences and the so called utilitarian disciplines, but can only "be understood

within the perspective of some moral and philosophical discrimination of some knowledge of man's history and the lessons that may usefully be learned from that history (Macebuh, 2002: 7).

From the above, we can say that the humanities have a special task of humanizing in a naturalistic setting, because through imagination , they put the scholar in contact with what may be referred to as the storehouse of values, out of which he chooses which of them to live by. The humanities, through the varieties of experience which they provide, serve to enrich the lives of the individuals and deepen also their sense of community and duty to the group to which they belong (Sogolo, 1981: 119). Therefore, tagging the humanities as 'useless' disciplines, based on the mistaken assumption that it does not put bread and butter directly on the table, is a misconception. This misconception is based on illogicality and lack of understanding and appreciation of the critical roles the humanities play in organizing the human persons and providing the framework through which all human activities are valourized and how values, be it scientific or otherwise, can be put to the service of humanity.

We can apply the inferences above on the role of science and humanistic education to African development by noting that development is a complex, multi-faceted enterprise. Oladipo puts this succinctly when he writes:

> The problem of development is a complex, many-sided problem. True, it has a technical side which we can tackle by developing the appropriate scientific and technical education for our people. It also involves the search for abiding values in terms of which we can make sense of our experiences and develop the right kind of attitudes in our society and its institutions. (Oladipo, 1991: 118)

The import of the above is that the Nigerian system of higher education should be understood in the context of society and culture. Although one is a firm believer in science education, moral and cultural education which the humanities champion is a basis for development. Hence, educational curricula should be framed given this in mind. Perhaps, what we have been trying to establish is that contemporary educational orientation lacks the human and cultural value basis; the absence of which social order and by extension, sustainable development cannot be

achieved. Let me also touch briefly on some other issues that border on values in our educational sphere especially at the tertiary level, which I believe would have been discussed extensively by other scholars.

It is worth noting that our various institutions have various mottos/mottoes describing their ideals. For instance, consider the following universities and their mottos:

i	University of Ibadan:	*Rectesaperefons* (For knowledge and Sound Judgment)
ii	University of Lagos:	In Deed and Truth
iii	University of Calabar:	Knowledge and Service
iv	Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka:	Discipline, Self-reliance, Excellence
v	Ambrose Alli University, Ekpoma:	Knowledge for Advancement
vi	Obafemi Awolowo University, Ife:	For Learning and Culture
vii	University of Nigeria, Nsukka:	To Restore the Dignity of Man
viii	Delta State University, Abraka:	Knowledge, Character, Service

One of the major inferences we can draw from these mottos is that education is primarily about culture and values, complemented by scientific and technological knowledge. It is in the pursuance of these laudable goals, as enunciated in the mottos of our educational institutions, that social order can be guaranteed. But the question that looms large is this: Are we still faithful to these goals? Of course, we have derailed from achieving these loft goals because of unguarded pursuit of mechanistic education and uncritical material advancement.

Related to the above neglect of values is what I call internal contradictions in our educational system. These include intellectual terrorism, materialization and commercialization of education and the dearth of academic culture. Intellectual terrorism occurs as a result of the tendency by African intellectuals in post-colonial African states to romance unduly with powers that be and thus providing intellectual

support for unpopular, undemocratic and repressive governments. This has made this brand of African scholars to abdicate their role as social critics responsible for the values of their society and have thus collaborated with unpopular governments in Africa in the destruction of their own people and environment (Oyeshile, 2007b: 130).

On the materialization and commercialization of education, the tendency has been to see education and learning as efforts directed solely at generation fund and not wealth. At both public and private levels, education is no longer pursued from the precinct of producing a man of culture, character and a universal person. Rather, the emphasis is on what profession will provide a lot of resources to enjoy material comfort at all cost. This approach has made many of our citizens to see education as a form of material investment and has encouraged not only the proliferation of sub-standard higher institutions but has also reduced the quality of graduates from many Nigerian educational institutions.

The most pathetic of these contradictions is the dearth of academic culture. There are many features of this. First, the main bug in our academic institution now is the pursuit of grants and fellowships with reckless abandon to the neglect of teaching. Also, there is a dearth of painstaking discourses among scholars. According to Lawuyi, "what marks a community of scholars is not the number of professors but the way imagination and idea act upon thoughts and bring into reality new structure, functionality and aesthetics of a culture" (Lawuyi, 2011: 8). Furthermore, most academic journals that flourished in Africa in the 1970s and 1980s have gone into oblivion in the1990s leaving young academics at the mercy of foreign academic outlets. Unfortunately too, most intellectual discussions about Africa take place outside Africa. The cause may trace to lack of commitment to our values and lack of belief in our framework.

Let me note here that my intervention here does not exhaust all that constitute educational problems. In fact, in the area of science and technological education there are myriad of problems bordering on finding and obsolete equipment and science infrastructure. My belief is that central to all these problems are the issue of values.

Section Three

Beyond Apologia

The theme of this international conference is: Rethinking the Humanities and Development in Africa. The theme presupposes, among other things that, one, the humanities, whether arts-based or not, have important roles to play in the development of Africa. Two, that the humanities themselves need critical re-appraisal in order to be able to contribute to the development of Africa and three, that Africa is in dire need of development. Some of these presuppositions have been addressed directly and indirectly from my analysis so far. Let me quickly make some disclaimers here. One, it is not the case that the humanities have not been contributing to development in Africa in both qualitative and quantitative terms, that is, both theoretical and practical terms (see Messay Kebede, 1999).

Perhaps, the problem with humanities today is that they have not been as visible in contemporary developmental efforts as one would have expected. To deny that the humanities have contributed to development in Africa is to deny our being and the great works of past masters in the humanities, politics, industry and religion who have championed great causes and on whose shoulders the architecture of modern societies rest. The second disclaimer is that given a thorough philosophical analysis of the concept of development, the humanities have been in the forefront because holistic and sustainable development involves the development of the human person, the human mind. Material development can only be sustained if such is predicated on positive values championed by the human person. Little wonder then that in contemporary human relations, the emphasis is on the human person, his values, his beliefs, and his ethical predispositions which make all the disciplines in arts-based humanities very crucial to the survival of any society. Recently, January 2018, to be precise, I was at Georgetown University, Doha, Qatar, with other scholars across the world to present papers on the theme: Learning to be Human. This conference underscores the fact that the contemporary world, inundated with motley values, some benign, some destructive, needs to be saved from itself. The humanities are very prominent stakeholders in this process.

Having made these observations, one begins to wonder why contemporary humanities scholars have not been able to live up to their callings. I want to hazard some reasons. It is not my duty as such to tell humanities scholars what and what to do to be relevant and be joint-stakeholders in the development enterprise. In fact, the list of researches earlier presented indicated relevant concerns of the scholars in humanities to development. Rather, I am more interested in pointing up certain attitudes that may not help scholars in the humanities to achieve their optimal level. Knowing these factors would help to redirect the efforts of the scholars in the humanities.

In contemporary period in Nigerian Universities, scholars in the humanities are very apologetic about the role of their disciplines such that they are always defending what and what their disciplines stand for. This attitude has not encouraged pro-active attitude towards breaking new grounds in researches. Both the lecturers and students are always managing their disciplines and envious of what goes on in other disciplines. While the humanities promote the dictum that "anything that is worth doing at all is worth doing well," the scholars in the humanities are busy defending their disciplines without probing into how their researches can resolve certain human problems. The pathetic aspect of it is that courses that have generic basis in the humanities are being taken over by academic quacks. For instance, why should an Ethics Centre be domiciled in the sciences and colleges of medicine without much input from the humanities? In most cases, these other disciplines outside academic humanities invite one or two scholars from the relevant disciplines in the humanities to give legitimacy to their centres. Of course, I am not averse to inter-disciplinary approach. In fact, all disciplines in arts and sciences and applied sciences are humanities because they are concerned with human problems from one perspective or the other. This is a food for thought for all scholars in the humanities-based disciplines.

Another major problem with humanities in today's academia is isolation and alienation among the disciplines in the humanities. I term it 'malady of compartmentalization.' Scholars of humanities hardly engage in interdisciplinary researches that will make their research findings more

robust and relevant. Why will a philosopher not know about religious theories and linguistic problems? Or why will somebody in English department avoid taking a leap into findings in philosophy or communication arts or linguistics as close as they are. This is a recent trend and it ought to be reversed. Some decades ago, a graduate with B.A degree in any discipline was as vast as possible and could be relied on to grapple meaningfully with societal problems.

The next issue is what I regard as the perceived inferiority complex of scholars in the humanities. Our scholars always believe that others are superior to them, especially in this part of the world. Some years ago, an American philosopher, Professor John Martin Fischer won a grant of five million dollars to research on the phenomenon of immortality. He enlisted scholars from medicine, social sciences and other disciplines to execute the research. The research grant is one of the biggest in recent years in any discipline. Yet in this part of the world, we believe that we have to be at the mercy of other disciplines. Humanities disciplines are called liberal arts because the scholars in the humanities know something about every other thing. The solution I believe is to rethink our situation by putting on our thinking caps again and live to the true callings of our profession. So, I am suggesting that we should re-invigorate inter-disciplinary approach to addressing research problems.

The problems of the humanities-based disciplines start from entry into the university. Many of the courses the students choose in the humanities are courses of last resort when admission into "highly marketable" courses fail. You hear such statements from parents as: "My ward is just managing course X – philosophy. She hopes to change to another course in year two." The student on her part "manages" the course and ends up performing below expectation whether she changes the course or not. Again, scholars in the humanities treat their disciplines in casual manner. They lack the conviction to make the necessary breakthrough. For instance, how many of our scholars in the humanities today put in as much passion into their disciplines like J. P. Clark, F. Ade-Ajayi, Wole Soyinka, Chinua Achebe, Femi Osofisan, P. O. Bodunrin, Sam Ukala, to mention a few. Scholars in the humanities have to earn their respect through their works. They should stop being apologetic.

Section Four

Humanities, Methodology and Subject Matter of Research

The demands of today dictate that the humanities must modify their methods of research where and when necessary. The humanities must embrace interdisciplinary approach as much as possible. According to William A Sadler, Jr., "an interdisciplinary method is not merely interesting and relevant but is also intrinsically important and necessary when it comes to understanding man" (Sadler, Jr., 1969: xi).While imaginative perspectives are very important for describing reality in the humanities, the actual state of affairs should form the muse for the imagination so that the humanistic scholar is not overly idealistic. In fact, I will recommend an imaginative interpretive approach to research.

Interdisciplinary approach should also lead to collaborative researches with colleagues within and outside the humanities. Colleagues in the humanities should disseminate their research findings in publications. These should be reputable outlets. Although the determination of reputable journals and outlets has constituted a major problem in our university. I believe that individual scholars know what a reputable outlet means. After all, you can deceive others but you cannot deceive yourself about yourself - deception. It entails some sacrifice to get your works published in reputable outlets but the gains are everlasting. This is one of the best ways the humanities can contribute to development in qualitative and quantitative terms.

Our colleagues should try to embrace some common scientific methods. At least, they should understand them. Gone are the days a scholar will sit in the closet of his study and draw generalizations. We have to be sure of our facts, even when we are imagining situations. For instance, a scholar in the humanities in contemporary period needs some knowledge of statistics. I don't want to call it mathematics. Researches these days are premised on some generalizations about a culture, a people or social institution. Hence, a little knowledge or statistics will help us to do this well. I have examined some theses in the humanities at the PhD level where some statistical analysis were used. I must confess that many of these were not properly done. Even calculating simple percentages was problematic. Yet, the findings and recommendation were based on this wrong statistics. Now, even if the PhD thesis passes or is passed, it

would be difficult for any paper to be published from such a thesis in any reputable journal as it would not contribute to the development of society.

Section Five

Conclusion: The Imperative of Developmental Humanities in Africa

The attention of scholars in the humanities should be towards changing the human society for better. Thus, I noted, they have always done but this task needs to be re-invigorated in contemporary period in which there are so many developmental challenges such as poverty, war, population crisis, migration crisis, fertility problem, political and leadership challenges, economic downturn and problem of determining and retaining our identity as human persons since it is now possible to talk about trans-genderism, same sex marriage, surrogate motherhood and so forth. The humanities scholar cannot afford to engage in imagination for imagination sake. It should be imagination tailored towards resolving developmental challenges and engendering sustainable development. This we can only ignore at the peril of the humanistic disciplines.

Therefore, based on the issues and contentions I have grappled with in this paper, concerning the humanities and the utilitarian concept of scholarship, I recommend that we should now pursue developmental humanities. We all owe our society a duty of upholding values without losing touch with reality. Let me end this rather short lecture with this quotation from a respectable African statesman and philosopher, Julius Nyerere. He states thus:

> The role of a university in a Developing country is to contribute: to give ideas, manpower, and service for the furtherance of human equality, human dignity and human development. (Nyerere, 1967: 10)

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