

# EDUCATION

## Prof. Olatunbosun: Our Research Targeted at Developing Business of Our Host Community

The Vice-Chancellor of Kola Daisi University, Ibadan, Prof. Adeniyi Olatunbosun, speaks about how the university is championing scholarship and research and what the government can do to stop young Nigerians taking to crime. **Uchechukwu Nnaike** presents excerpts:

**H**ow has it been since you assumed office as the vice-chancellor?

It's been interesting and also challenging because the role of the vice-chancellor is to drive the system. The university was established in 2016. It commenced academic activities in 2017, and we had the first set of graduates on November 4, 2021, and the Vice President (Prof.) Yemi Osinbajo delivered the convocation lecture. We graduated 52 candidates from various disciplines, from the two faculties that were in existence as at the commencement of the programme of the university, that's the Faculty of Arts, Faculty of Management and Social Sciences and Faculty of Applied Sciences, but now the university has also been given the approval to run law by the NUC and the Council of Legal Education. So, hopefully, in some time to come, we'll start graduating students from the Faculty of Law.

The university is also projecting towards expanding the number of disciplines and programmes that we are running here. We intend to have nursing science, medical laboratory science, public health, pharmacy and medicine and dentistry, so those are the priorities that the founder of the university, Bashorun Kola Daisi, so much believes in and is passionate about. We have set up committees and invited experts that are helping us to develop the academic brief and other requirements documentation for the purpose of ensuring that.

Presently, our students are doing well; we also have students in the various programmes that we have. Currently, we have 12 programmes that we are running in the university.

**What is the unique selling proposition of KDUI?**

The unique selling point of the university is that the vision of the university is to ensure that we produce graduates who are employable. So, with the various aspects of the programmes that we are running, we ensure that we also have the practical experience and we also expose them to IT for those disciplines that require that. Also, we ensure that they are well placed in industries for the purpose of acquiring practical knowledge for their programmes, and also we are planning to have a focus on some specific disciplines like computer science, law and medical sciences and we try as much as possible to be unique in those areas so that people will know us for that.

Our mass communication is also outstanding in terms of the quality of staff, studios that we have, both for the radio and television as well as our facilities for the print media. We are also developing towards that to make sure that we are recognised in that area. We're trying to unbundle mass communication to have a faculty or a college of its own. So many disciplines are coming out; advertisement, broadcasting and other stuff so as to project us to a very advantageous position. The university also has a very unique environment; very serene.

We have on this present campus about a hundred hectares of land, which the founder has acquired for us. We also have on the other side of the road about one hundred and fifty hectares of land on which we plan to build mainly Faculty of Health Sciences, and we intend to have a state-of-the-art hospital, about 250-bed teaching hospital for the purpose of giving our students the practical experience and the better idea of running the place. So, this will help our university be unique amongst the universities in Nigeria.

We have also acquired good staff, most of our staff have their PhD already, and we are also ensuring that we meet up with what operates in the federal universities. In terms of remuneration, salaries and emoluments, we ensure that we have the same standard as what operates in the federal universities so as to attract good hands to help us build the



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university. We are also giving lecturers opportunities to attend conferences. We also sponsor them for conferences both locally and internationally.

We have had some collaborations with some universities in the US, Ohio State University, the University of Indiana and a couple of other universities. We have signed MoU with some of the universities for the purpose of ensuring that we have a kind of working relationship; some of them have also assisted us in terms of giving us some books to support our programmes, especially for Mass Communication, English and Literary Studies and some aspects of Law and other related aspects. We also have a working relationship with some organisations and institutions. We signed an MoU with them. They're already here trying to help us offer some technical knowledge to our students in the area of ICT, artificial intelligence and other forms of certificates so that even when they graduate from the university, they still have another certificate which will help them compete very well with their colleagues from other universities. So, in that area, we are working very well.

**In the past five years, how has the university contributed to knowledge?**

Well, in the past five years, the university has been contributing to knowledge because of an ongoing achievement and target. We have assisted in giving access to higher education to many students who would have been deprived of the opportunity of

university education because of the place that we are in.

We are also working to ensure that we have vocational training in various fields that will be of interest to them. We also are putting up an entrepreneurship sector in the university; we believe that our graduates should not just be job seekers but job creators. What we have in line is that apart from vocational training, we also want them to be global entrepreneurs in their various disciplines. In the field of sports, we have provided and we are still doing more; our students have competed with their colleagues in other universities especially from our enclave here. We are also making them to also unleash their potential in those areas for those who have an interest. We are grooming them to be responsible future leaders in the various disciplines; we have encouraged them to have associations for them to have leadership training skills so that when they graduate from the university, they can also compete in politics, governance and other public sectors.

On the religious side, the university is a non-faith-based university but we allow our students to congregate for the purpose of worship and serving God. We have a chapel for Christian students; we also have a mosque for Muslim students and we encourage them to form associations because the impact of religion is important. We cannot focus only on academics; as we are doing academics, we are doing social and religious activities that will make them

to be complete graduates and students while they're here.

In terms of research, we are trying to engage in some research and trying to get awards and grants from available granting bodies. For instance, there is an ongoing project that we are trying to do; we have identified that we have two groups in our environment here, we have the abattoirs for the cattle and also we have the new Shasha market for the tomatoes and pepper, so we are working, trying to pick up what will be relevant to them so that when they put it their market will also expand and we hope that we'll be able to develop something that will work for them and improve their business.

Recently, our founder and Chancellor, Chief Kola Daisi gave us a N1 billion endowment to sustain the university and we believe this money will help us to expand our research profile for the purpose of managing the university in a sustainable manner and also to give us leverage to make sure there's continuity in research and teaching. Other partners and friends of our founder are also supporting us, especially in terms of giving prizes and awards to the best students in various disciplines. Many of them engaged us in the first convocation and we also believe that they'll engage us in the second convocation by November 2022. The number of prizes and awards will also increase which will also motivate our students. We believe in that area that the university will also do more to get the best for our students.

**Most parents are of the view that private universities are too expensive. Is that the case with KDUI?**

That is the mindset of every parent but if you want to quantify the cost of training an undergraduate every year in a university, what we are charging is below what it'll take to train a child every year. Our fees are moderate and we also encourage those who may not be able to pay once to pay in instalments and we also give some kind of scholarship to the best students in various disciplines every year. So, we believe that we can work in that regard. Our fees are reasonable compared with other universities that we are in the same space with. I just want to encourage our parents that what is more important is access to education, so the parents should thrive to train their children because at the end of the day, whatever they have spent will amount to the potential and the gains that will eventually come out if they train their children. What we are charging is moderate and we are cautious because of the economy of the country and we don't want to overburden our parents in terms of school fees and other charges.

**One of the reasons parents send their children to private universities is to prevent them from engaging in cultism and the like. Do you have the challenge of cultism in your university?**

No. We don't have that challenge here. We have put in place an internal mechanism to ensure that we are able to evaluate our students regularly. We have an internal security mechanism. We also have CCTV cameras that cover specific aspects of our university campus and we give our students training to let them know that we have zero tolerance for drug abuse, cultism and other vices which are very common among youths. We have also put in place student disciplinary measures, whereby if any student is caught either in examination malpractice or other misconduct, they're given appropriate punishment.

As far as we are concerned, our students are law-abiding and they keep to the rules and regulations of the university.

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