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# DETERMINANTS OF THE FUTURE OF VISION 10:2022 OF COVENANT UNIVERSITY, NIGERIA

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## Abstract

Covenant University (CU), Nigeria, has achieved a number of feats since its inception in 2002. Currently, it occupies the first position in both Nigeria and West Africa and the fifteenth in Africa in the January 2015 edition of the Web metrics ranking of Universities. In a bid to continue to excel, the University, has set out to achieve the vision of becoming one of the best ten universities in the world by the year, 2022 (otherwise known as Vision 10:2022). The vision is considered important when viewed in the context of the current state of tertiary education across the whole of the African continent where most graduates have been observed to lack appropriate skills needed for employment. A vision of this magnitude engaged in by CU could hardly be achieved without appropriate knowledge of key factors that could drive it. Thus, the objective of this study is to determine the factors that could significantly influence the realization of the vision. The study utilized data collected from a randomly selected sample of both Management and other academic and administrative employees of the university. The prime factors required to fulfill the future of vision 10:2022 include participative management, belief in the vision, clear duties and responsibilities, funding adequacy, respect for regulatory authorities and faithfulness in communicating the core values. It is recommended that these variables be strengthened in order to realize the vision within the set time frame.

Keywords: Covenant university, employees, management, vision10:2022.

## 1 INTRODUCTION

There is no doubt that education is important to the welfare of human beings. It is even more important in the case of tertiary education that enables complex issues and developmental challenges to be handled. It is in this connection that it has been asserted that education "breeds persons who are intelligent, behave rationally, able and willing to solve problems regarding their own existence as well as that of the groups and organizations to which they belong" [1]. The question that arises at this juncture is: Are tertiary institutions in Nigerian and Africa able to meet the demand of solving problems and attending to developmental issues? The answer is probably not in the affirmative. In solving complex problems and attending to developmental issues, tertiary education in Nigeria as well as in other African countries face three major challenges- access, cost and quality (Bamiro, 2012). It is in a bid to address the identified challenges that Covenant University (CU) has set out to turnaround university education in Nigeria through the mechanism, christened "Vision 10:2022". The vision which is already in its second year has a maximum of eight more years to achieve the desired end. To this end, CU is working assiduously to have the needed requirements in place. Though the University may not be able to tackle fully, the issues of access and cost, however, the question of quality of products is being adequately attended to. This is considered imperative given a situation where graduates have been observed to be 'half-baked' in all of African countries. To buttress this assertion, a recent study undertaken by the Inter-University Council for East Africa reported that the quality of graduates in many African countries including Burundi, Kenya, Rwanda, Tanzania and Uganda, were found to be 'half-baked' (Mohamedbhai 2014).

Based on the above scenario, we believe that it is appropriate to explore the CU vision. Though the vision is theoretically sound and laudable, its success would no doubt be determined by a number of factors. The objective of this study is, therefore, to address, from the perspective of the employees of Covenant University, the questions: What are the factors that would determine the future of vision 10:2022 of Covenant University? Do the factors rank equally in terms of importance to the success of the vision?

The paper is structured as follows- Section 2 presents CU in context. Section 3 presents the review of related literature, and sections 4 and 5 present the research methods, results and interpretations respectively. The final section concludes the paper.



## 2 COVENANT UNIVERSITY (CU) IN CONTEXT

Covenant University is a Christian Mission based University which was founded on October 21, 2002. The main aim of establishing the University is to give fresh impetus to education in Nigeria as well as on the continent of Africa. This is emphasized in the vision of the University, which according to Oyedepo (2002), is to be a "leading world class Christian Mission University committed to raising a new generation of leaders in all fields of human endeavour." The vision is anchored on a set of Core Values which include: Spirituality, Possibility Mentality, Integrity, Responsibility, Capacity Building, Diligence and Sacrifice. Of the core values, Spirituality is the anchor point and a major determinant in the admission of students and employment of staff.

According to Oyedepo (2002), the core values are "universal, not culturally, socially or religion specific and can be applied in any context and have the potential to address the demand to depart from dogmatism to dynamism in the educational system, particularly in Africa." The selection of the core values is informed by two factors: (i) the religious disposition of the university and (ii) a conviction that skills and knowledge acquired in higher education can only be sustained by the right values and attitude since the core values aim at accessing man in total - 'spirit, soul and body.' This is regarded as a novel paradigm in curriculum development in African universities. Consequently, the University has as its Mission Statement, the:

*Creating of knowledge and restoration of the dignity of the black man via a human development and 'Total Man Concept' driven curriculum, employing innovative, leading edge teaching and learning methods, research and professional services that promote integrated life applicable and life transforming education relevant to the context of science, technology and human capacity building Oyedepo (2002).*

The realization of the vision 10:2022 is phased. In the last two academic sessions, the emphasis has been on an 8-point agenda which is being driven tenaciously in order to be on target. The items on the 8-point agenda include- (i) Disciplined atmosphere for learning, (ii) Research: volume, income and reputation, (iii) Citations, (iv) Teaching, (v) International Outlook: Linkages and Collaboration, (vi) Industry income: Robust Consult, (vii) Robust alumni base and (viii) Presentation series on being a Nobel Laureate. Pursued with vigour and determination, the vision of becoming one of the best ten universities in the world within the next eight years shall be a reality.

## 3 REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

The vision which CU has set out to achieve within the next eight years is already redefining educational landscape of Nigeria. For instance, Okebukola (2014), noted that the coming into being of CU is "one of the most remarkable events in the 64-year history of the Nigerian university system." In a further remark, he asserts that CU is 'one of the most-decorated universities' in Nigeria, through number and quality of national and global laurels as well as setting academic and physical development reference points for many of the universities in Nigeria. This is an attestation of the need to depart from dogmatism to realism. Earlier, Okebukola (2012) asserts as follows:

CU, among the 129 universities in Nigeria has the highest per capita rate of investment in education and training. In 12 years, an estimated N70 billion (\$438) has been spent on facilities and training of about 13,000 graduates. An index of this performance is the number of CU graduates relative to graduates of other universities that are employed by blue-chip companies in oil and gas, services and top-rate global consulting firms (p.41).

Considering that public spending on education in Nigeria has been very poor (around 8%) of national budget as against an average of 18 percent in South Africa (Osinbanjo, 2014), the CU spending profile is a feat.

## 4 LEADERSHIP FEATURES

Participative management which is one of the features of management is a type in which employees at all levels are encouraged to contribute ideas towards identifying and setting organizational –goals, problem solving, and other decisions that may directly affect them. It is also referred to as consultative management. Four processes influence participation. These processes create employee involvement as they are pushed down to the lowest levels in an organization. The farther down these processes move, the higher the level of involvement by employees. The four processes include:



1. Information sharing, which is concerned with keeping employees informed about the economic status of the company.
2. Training, which involves raising the skill levels of employees and offering development opportunities that allow them to apply new skills to make effective decisions regarding the organization as a whole.
3. Employee decision making, which can take many forms, from determining work schedules to deciding on budgets or processes.
4. Rewards, which should be tied to suggestions and ideas as well as performance (Coye and Belohlav, 1995, p.5)

## 5 DATA AND METHOD

This is a descriptive and a pilot study in which questionnaire was used to collect data from a sample of 340 staff (academic and non-teaching) of Covenant University. The simple random sampling technique was used. A 4-point Likert scale type questionnaire was used in soliciting the required information. Following Mulinge and Munyae (2008), the scores are rated as follows: 1.00-1.59 =low, 1.60-2.79 = moderate, 2.80-4.00 =high. Evidence in the literature indicates that such scales have been used by Firer and Meth (1986), Courtis (1992) and Myburgh (2001) and were found suitable. To obtain a score for these questions, the mean score was calculated. In order to have a reasonable response rate, the staff (respondents) was assured of the confidentiality of the information. This was achieved by not requiring the names of the respondents. The response was considered fair as useable response was 270. This gave a response rate of 79% which is considered adequate for the purpose of the study.

### 5.1 Summary of Demographic Data

The table below presents the demographic details of the employees.

Table 1: Demographic Data

Variable	No	Percent	Mean	Range
<b>Staff:</b> Academic	161	59.63		
Administrative	109	40.37		
<b>Gender:</b> Male	141	52.22		
Female	129	47.78		
<b>Qualification:</b> Masters and above	172	63.71		
Others	98	36.29		
<b>Tenure:</b> Full time	236	87.4		
Others	34	12.60		
Age (years)			37	21-72
Work experience in CU (years)			4.85	1- 12.5
Work experience Overall (years)			9.3	1-41

The table above shows that the staffs are young with age ranging from 21 to 72 with a mean of 37. The table also indicates that the pioneer staffs have spent a maximum of 12.5 years while the overall mean work experience is 9.3years with a range of 1 to 41 years. A large proportion of the staff (63.71%) have Masters' degree and above. Similarly, the gender position indicates that males are 52.22 percent of the total respondents while the females represent 47.78percent. This is considered a good mix in an environment in which men are considered dominant, especially in a work environment.

The main constructs representing the determinants of the success of the vision 10:2022 included in the study are: leadership, employee features, job security, facilities/resources, and work atmosphere and core values. Under leadership, the following factors were considered: trust in management,

participative management, satisfaction with management, clear decision criteria and calmness under severe stress. Employee features has the following variable: endurance, enthusiasm, risk taking, desire to remain on the job, desire to resign from the job and belief in vision 10:2022. Under job security are the following variables: job skill alignment, promotion prospect, peaceful conflict resolution, well defined duties and responsibilities and defined staff regulation. For facilities and resources, the following were the variables considered: Building adequacy, availability of relevant laboratory equipment, funding adequacy, high quality staff, transparency in financial management and quality teaching and research. The variables considered under work atmosphere were: congenial work environment, timeliness in communication, cordial worker relationship, respect for dissenting views and respect for regulatory authorities. Finally, the variables under Core values include: core value orientation, belief in core values and faithfulness in communicating core values.

## 5.2 Survey Results and Discussions

Tables 2 through 7 present the mean scores and the ranking of the determinants of the future of vision 10:2022.

The results presented in table 2 below relate to the leadership features that could determine the future of the vision.

Table 2: Leadership Features

		N= 270	
		Mean	Rank
1	Trust in management	3.0	2
2	Participative Management	2.52	1
3	Satisfaction with management	2.90	3
4	Clear decision criteria	2.43	5
5	Management calmness under stress	2.70	4

The results show that of the five elements of leadership features, participative management is ranked first. This is not surprising given the administration at Covenant University is based on the committee system. This gives almost everyone a say in the 'how' of administration in the University. This next following factor is trust in management, satisfaction with management and clear decision making. That calmness under stress is ranked fourth is also not surprising given that calmness is one of the virtues espoused in CU as a Christian based university. Based on these findings, management is advised to strengthen the committee system that is already in place.

The next factors considered are employ features. Employees are critical components of the running of a university. They translate the policies into effect. The results are as indicated below.

Table 3: Employee Features

		N= 270	
		Mean	Rank
1	Endurance	3.20	3
2	Enthusiasm	3.40	2
3	Appropriate Risk taking	3.0	4
4	Desire to remain and retire	2.60	5
5	Belief in Vision 10:2022	3.60	1

The results in table three indicate that belief in the vision is ranked first. This is important because employees would only be willing to be part of the vision if they believe in it. Besides, belief in the vision, employees should also be enthusiastic about the vision and this is ranked second. The desire



to remain is ranked least (fifth). This is not surprising in that the vision has not been realized. At full realization, the desire of the employees to remain on the job might be high. Currently, they will not be willing to take any risk on behalf of the university; hence risk taking is ranked fourth. It is expected that this will change as positive signs of the realization of the vision start to manifest. Based on the need to actualize the vision within the set time, management should engage measures that would compel the employees to believe in the vision.

The next factor considered is job security. The results are as presented in the table below

**Table 4: Job Security**

		N= 270	
		Mean	Rank
1	Skill-job alignment	2.80	2
2	Promotion prospects	2.70	4
3	Peaceful conflict resolution	2.50	5
4	Clear duties and responsibilities	3.25	1
5	Defined staff regulation	2.80	2

The issue of job security is considered quite critical in the realization of the vision. This is especially so that the demographic details show that the average age of the staff is thirty seven years. There is high job mobility among people within this age bracket. Therefore, there should be clear duties and responsibilities as this ranked first among the variables. There should also be a well defined staff regulation in which various aspects of the job contract are outlined. This ranked second. If it is in place, the issues of promotion prospects, conflict resolution and job-skill alignment will be addressed. This, therefore, calls for a revision of the extant staff regulation which has been in force since 2002 in order to address critical issues that have arisen since then.

The next essential issue is resources and facilities. There is no doubt that no matter how laudable the vision might be, resources and facilities are required to drive it. The details of the results are presented below.

**Table 5: Resources/ Facilities**

		N= 270	
		Mean	Rank
1	Adequacy of buildings	3.50	2
2	Availability of laboratory equipment	2.85	5
3	Funding adequacy	3.70	1
4	Personnel quality	3.20	6
5	Transparency in financial management	3.50	2
6	Quality of teaching, and research	3.50	2

The result indicates that adequate funding would be required to drive the vision, it ranked first. Currently, CU has the highest per capita rate of investment in education and training in Nigeria (Okebukola, 2014). This is closely followed by the need for transparency in the management of the funds. CU also excels in this area as the recurrent expenditure of the University is set at a third of total revenue, thus making the balance two-third available for investment and development facilities. Once the funds are available and transparently managed the provision of building and other facilities and equipment would be made easy and affordable.

The next issue of importance is the work environment. The environment (harsh or congenial) would no doubt have impact on the realization of the future of the vision. The details are as presented.

**Table 6: Work Environment**

		N= 270	
		Mean	Rank
1	Congenial work environment	3.0	2
2	Timely communication	2.83	5
3	Cordial worker relationship	3.0	2
4	Respect for regulatory authorities	3.50	1
5	Respect for dissenting views	2.90	4

The most important issue here by the ranking is respect for regulatory authorities. The regulatory authorities include the State and Federal Ministries of Education, the National Universities Commission (NUC). Other auxiliary bodies include the Joint Admission and Matriculation Board (JAMB), the National Youth Service Corps Scheme. Of particular importance is the NUC. The need for compliance with standards and instructions as dictated by this body cannot be overlooked. There is need for caution in this regard as any unfavourable policy could derail the future of the vision. The next item of importance is congenial work environment and this is ranked second. Currently, CU is one of the best maintained universities in Nigeria with constant water and electricity supply.

The next issue of importance is the core values of the University. The University is built on seven core values as have been identified. The place of core values in the life of the university cannot be overemphasized.

**Table 7: Core values**

		N= 270	
		Mean	Rank
1	Effective core value orientation	2.60	4
2	Belief in the core values	3.00	1
3	Faithfulness in communicating core values	3.00	1
4	Compliance with core values	2.90	3

The result in the table above indicates that belief in and the faithful communication of the core values would ensure the future of the vision. In communicating the vision, the Management should lead by example. This is important as it is not the theoretical communication of the vision that matters, but 'living the vision.' Therefore, Management of CU should 'live the vision' in order to get others to believe in it. Though orientating the employees into the vision is ranked least, this does not vitiate the importance of orientation. The employees will need to properly understand the vision in order to 'key in' to it and comply with it.

## 6 CONCLUSION

This study has provided evidence of the potential factors that could determine the future of the CU vision. Based on the evidence, there are clear indications that the University is on the part of progress toward the realization of the vision. This has been demonstrated in a number of feats in terms of facilities, resources and quality graduates required and what currently obtains in the University. This suggests that the hope of transforming education in Nigeria and Africa is not lost. Nonetheless, the University management should take proactive steps to address and sustain those factors that ranked highly and mitigate those that could constrain the effective implementation and actualization of the vision.



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