



LEGAL HISTORY OF NIGERIA

Muhammad T Ladan
Adebambo Adewopo



NIGERIAN INSTITUTE OF ADVANCED LEGAL STUDIES

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Edited by

**Muhammad T Ladan
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AN OVERVIEW OF LEGAL EDUCATION IN NIGERIA: CHALLENGES & PROSPECTS

By

Hameenat Bukola Ojibara

Introduction

The role of lawyers and the quality of the justice system is important to the economic, social and political development of the country. While there is a need for an efficient and effective system to uphold the standard of legal education in Nigeria, there is also the need for a system to produce lawyers with necessary training and skills to meet up with the challenges of the globalised world. This amongst other reasons is a cause for concern to the stakeholders of the legal educational system and the legal profession.

The first part of this chapter gives a brief historical development of legal education in Nigeria, which is discussed under two different significant stages, i.e. the Precolonial/Colonial era and the Post colonial era. The second part is on the requirements obtainable in acquiring a degree and professional certificate to practise as a Barrister and Solicitor. It therefore gives a perusal of the secondary school education system and the qualifications required as prescribed by the functional educational bodies most especially the National Education Research and Development Council

(NERDC). Also, it accesses the higher institutional structure with the dual role of the Universities and the other supporting bodies like the Joint Admissions Matriculation Board (JAMB) and the Unified Tertiary Matriculation Examination (UTME) in admitting prospective students to obtain a first degree in law (LL B). This chapter further examines the strengths and weaknesses of the Universities curricula and that of the Nigerian Law School and the influence of the National Universities Commission (NUC) and Council of Legal Education (CLE) in prescribing a uniform standard to that effect. The post University education which is of utmost importance is also discussed in line with the need for a continuing legal education for advancement in standard to meet up with societal and international growing demands. In light of this, various issues and challenges faced by the regulatory bodies, institutions, the students etc mainly in respect of the quality of legal education in Nigeria is discussed and propositions made.

Brief History of Legal Education

The history of legal education in Nigeria cannot be discussed without inference from the history of education in general. Before the colonial intrusion, the educational system in Nigeria was not structured and there was no chronological order for learning. Islam was deeply rooted in the North and was the basis for their religious and educational belief.¹ In the Southern part and other parts of the country; the educational

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1. A Ozigi & L Ocho, Education in Northern Nigeria, George Allen and Unwin Publishers Ltd, London, 1981, cited in H. Imam, Educational Policy in Nigeria from the Colonial Era to the Post-Independence Period *Italian Journal of Sociology of Education*, 1, 2012, p186.

system was based on its culture and tradition.² As a result, there was no legal education before the British rule. The system of instituting justice was primarily dependant on the practices of the people in the different kingdoms, empires and semi-autonomous communities, which became norms learnt and adopted from time to time.

Legal education emerged during the British rule in the 1860s with the introduction of English law and courts into the Colony of Lagos. However, the profession itself bearing a semblance of the English type of law came into being in 1863.³ The major essence of the legal profession at the onset was to run the Courts and the government departments. The intrusion of the colonialists brought with it enormous changes in the socio-economic and political realm and structure. For example, the presence of the British marked the introduction of a different form of trade introduced from which disputes emanated. There was a need to put in place rules/laws as well as a court system, to guide the nature of contracts and resolve related disputes which were complicated and less acquiescent to the cultural and traditional method of solving disputes.⁴ Also, the structure of the functional system of the government

2. C Taiwo, *The Nigerian Educational System*, Thomas Nelson Nigeria Ltd, Lagos, 1980, cited in H. Imam, *Educational Policy in Nigeria from the Colonial Era to the Post-Independence Period* *Italian Journal of Sociology of Education*, 1, 2012, p 186.
3. A Obilade, *Nigerian Legal System*, Ibadan, Spectrum Books Limited, 1999, p270.
4. M Onolaja, 'Problem of Legal Education in Nigeria'
<<http://www.alimiandco.com/publications/ACCREDITATION%20AND%20LEGAL%20EDUCATION%20IN%20NIGERIA.pdf>> (accessed 1st November, 2019).

was such that the demand for persons specialised in the area of law was increasing.

The laws adopted were the English laws like the Supreme Court Ordinance 1876⁵ and the Supreme Court (Civil Procedure) Rules.⁶ The Ordinance empowered the Chief Justice to approve, admit and enrol persons who had been admitted as solicitors in any Courts of England, Ireland and Scotland as barristers and solicitors in the Nigerian Courts.⁷ Consequently, writing clerks as persons with basic qualifications and knowledge of law were appointed attorneys and granted license to practise. The number of appointed attorneys remained insufficient. The deficiency of qualified persons compelled the fusion of the duties of barristers and solicitors and this marked the beginning of the fused system of legal profession in Nigeria and is still practised today.⁸

As a result, the first generation of Nigerian lawyers were trained in the United Kingdom and called to the English Bar or enrolled as a solicitor in England, Northern Ireland and Scotland.⁹ The major problem identified was that the foreign trained lawyers lacked a requisite knowledge in the indigenous laws of the people, reflected in the Nigerian Legal System.¹⁰

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5. No 4 of 1876.
 6. CAP 211, NL 1948.
 7. Under S 56 of the Supreme Court Ordinance 1876.
 8. A Obilade, *Nigerian Legal System*, Ibadan, Spectrum Books Limited, 1999, p 271.
 9. R Wockocha, 'The Challenges of Legal Education in Nigeria: The Way Forward' (2008) 3 WebJCLI. Before the setting up of the Nigeria Law School, all the persons enrolled to practice law in Nigeria were trained in England mostly as Barristers at the various Inns of Court having passed the English, Scottish or Irish Bar or the Solicitor's Final Examinations of England, Scotland or Ireland.
 10. A Oba, Lawyers, 'Legal Education and The Shari'ah Courts in Nigeria', *Journal of Legal Pluralism* 2004 - nr 49 at 113-115 <<http://jlp.bham.ac.uk/volumes/49/oba-art.pdf> accessed > (10th November, 2019).

The 1954 Constitution gave each region the power of making laws for its territory and citizens as well as its own educational policies. The regions in exercising this authority promulgated the Education Law of 1955 in the Western Region,¹¹ the Education Laws of 1956 in the Eastern and Northern Regions and the Lagos Education Ordinance in 1957.¹² These various regional policies helped boost the educational sector and also exposed the need for higher educational structure.

The federal government of Nigeria also intervened and sought to proffer solutions to some core issues specific to the legal profession. One of the efforts was the setting up of the Unsworth Committee in 1958.¹³ Some of the problems to be addressed were the need for legal education to be provided locally to suit the indigenous requirements, establishment of law faculties to offer degrees in law, the need for a Law School, setting up a Council of the Nigerian Bar, the institution of a Code of Conduct.¹⁴

11. M Fabunmi, 'Historical Analysis of Educational Policy Formulation in Nigeria: Implications for Educational Planning and policy', *International Journal of African and African American Studies*, Vol. IV, no 2, July 2005, pp 1-7.
12. These educational policies were derived from a common source which is the Education Act 1944, of Wales and England'. See also, C Taiwo, *The Nigerian Educational System*, Lagos, Thomas Nelson Nigeria Limited, 1980, p 121.
13. This Commission was known as 'the Committee on the Future of the Nigerian Legal Profession' or the 'Unsworth Committee' headed by the then Attorney-General, an Englishman and trained lawyer in England by name, Mr E T C Unsworth.
14. A Egbewole & Y Arowosaiye, 'Legal Education in Nigeria in the 21st Century: Challenges and Prospects', in J Okojie *et al* (ed), *50 Years of University Education in Nigeria: Evolution, Achievements and Future Decisions*, University of Ilorin and National Universities Commission, 2010, p 362.

However, it was based on the Unsworth Committee that the federal government implemented policies targeted at the legal profession. Other successful outcomes of the Unsworth Committee are the Legal Education Act 1962¹⁵ and the Legal Practitioners Act 1962,¹⁶ these statutes especially the Legal Practitioners Act was an improvement of the Legal Practitioners Ordinance.¹⁷ This also led to the establishment of some Universities, which were the first to offer law degree programmes; University of Nigeria, Nsukka (1960), University of Ibadan, University of Lagos (1962), Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria (1962), Obafemi Awolowo University (1962).¹⁸ With the creation of the Mid Western Region in 1963, the Institute of Technology was established in 1970 (now University of Benin). And since then, there has been a phenomenal increase in the number of Universities in Nigeria.¹⁹

On the other hand, the formation of the Committee on Legal Education for African Students²⁰ by the British Government also contributed to the development of the system of legal education in Nigeria and Africa generally. The Committee in recognition of the need to integrate received English Laws with indigenous cultures recommended local training in addition to the British qualification obtained. The

15. No 12 of 1962.

16. No 33 of 1962.

17. CAP 110, NL 1948.

18. Formerly University of Ife.

19. With over forty of them with a law faculty; See, Universities in Nigeria that have Law faculties, < <http://www.nigeria-law.org/UniversitiesWithLawFaculties.htm>, > (accessed 26th November, 2019).

20. Headed by Lord Denning in 1960

adoption of the Committee's recommendation led to the establishment of local training facilities.²¹

In 1959 the Federal Government set up a Commission under the leadership of Sir Eric Ashby. The purpose of the Commission was to identify the high-level manpower needs of the country, based on a twenty year plan.²² One major achievement of the Commission which made it a landmark in the history of the Nigerian educational system was that it allowed Nigerians to participate in the deliberations that culminated the report.²³ This was the first official comprehensive review of higher education in general, and it served as reinforcement for the continuous development of legal education in the country.

The efforts of the government and the Committees have helped in the development of legal education generally. Lawyers are now vast in their own legal systems as they now take courses in related areas like customary law and Islamic

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21. S Manteaw, 'Legal Education in Africa: What Type of Lawyer Does Africa Need?' An inquiry into the development, structure, and reform needs of African legal education curricula. Research commissioned and funded by University of the Pacific, McGeorge School of Law, for the purpose of assisting the development of international legal education, *McGeorge Law Review*, vol. 39, 2008, p 918.
 22. H Imam, 'Educational Policy in Nigeria from the Colonial Era to the Post-Independence Period' *Italian Journal of Sociology of Education*, vol. 1, 2012, p 186.
 23. Y Aliu, Introduction to Manual on University Management, Abuja: National University Commission, 1997 cited in H Imam, *Educational Policy in Nigeria from the Colonial Era to the Post-Independence Period* *Italian Journal of Sociology of Education*, 1, 2012, p.186. Also, A Wokocha (1997) 'The Menace of Secret Cult Activities in the Nigerian School System' *Delta Journal of Educational Development*, vol. 5, no 1 & 2, pp 72-83.

law. Also, the laws and judgements now reflect the customs of the people it seeks to serve and protect. In the past, judgments and decisions were based on precedents and the practices of the English people and so most African and Nigerian practices were said to be repugnant to natural justice, equity and good conscience. The cases of *Edet v Essien*,²⁴ *Dawodu v Danmole*²⁵ and *Mariyamo v Sadiku Ejo*²⁶ are notorious cases that are often referred to show inadequacies or the *lacuna* created in the Nigerian legal system as a result of subjecting the Nigerian customs to the English rules and laws which are a reflection of the English customs. However, this position has changed over the years with locally trained lawyers who also end up as judges and as such judgments now have an air of the indigenous custom of the people.²⁷

Requirements for the Study of Law

The study of law has its foundation in the secondary school education. In which, students having completed the Junior Secondary Education;²⁸ proceed to senior classes for further education in subjects related to their intended field of study.

In terms of the school curricula design, the responsibility for basic education and senior secondary school rests with the National Education Research and Development Council

24. (1932) 11 NLR 47.

25. (1962) 1 WLR 1053.

26. (1961) NNLR 81.

27. S 26 (1) High Court Law of Lagos State & also the proviso to S. 14 (3) Evidence Act Cap 112 Laws of the Federation 1990. Therefore, the High Court shall observe, and enforce the observance of every native law and custom which is not repugnant to natural justice, equity and good conscience, nor incompatible either directly or by implication with any law in force...

28. After six years elementary school, and three years Junior Secondary School, which usually determines the category of class a student should specialise, depending on the outcome of the results and area of interest. The student then proceeds to the Senior Secondary School for another three years.

(NERDC).²⁹ The NERDC is an agency of the Federal Government that prepares curriculum³⁰ for secondary schools for fulfilling the respective universities requirements. There are distinctive fields of study at the Secondary Education Level in which the curriculum is aligned. Thus, a prospective law student falls in the humanities category and offers in addition to the general core subjects,³¹ specialised subjects to include Literature in English, Government, and Religious Knowledge.³² Candidates opting for the Common & Islamic Law programme must have knowledge of Arabic or Islamic Studies.³³

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29. NERDC was established in 1988 and was formed from a merger of four Educational & Research Development bodies (Nigerian Educational Research Council, Comparative Education Study and Adaptation Centre, Nigerian Book Development Council & Nigerian Language Centre) into one organisation. www.nerdc.ng, (accessed 28. November, 2014).
 30. It recommends text books for secondary school students in preparation for exams by the West African Examination Council (WAEC), the National Examinations Council (NECO), the Nigerian Board of Technical Education (NABTEB), and the Joint Admissions & Matriculation Board (JAMB) which are examination bodies for fulfilling the respective Universities requirement. See L Sote, 'Winking in the dark' *Punch Newspaper*, 5 August 2014, <<http://www.punchng.com/opinion/nerdc-winking-in-the-dark/>> (accessed 17th November, 2019).
 31. English Language, General Mathematics, Civic Education, One Trade Entrepreneurship Studies.
 32. Islamic Studies or Christian Religious Knowledge. And in addition options in Geography, History, Economics, Visual Arts, Music, French, Arabic, Economics, Nigerian languages. See, Omosewo, O & Akanmu, M Alex, 'Evolution of Functional Basic and Senior Secondary Education Curriculum in Nigeria: Implications for Effective Implementation', *Journal of Education and Practice*, vol.4, no 22, 2013, pp 75-76.
 33. <<http://www.law.unilorin.edu.ng/index.php/component/content/article/79-faculty-of-law/faculty-of-law/95-programmes>> (accessed 11th November, 2019).

There is still a doubt as to whether the specific subjects in the secondary school curriculum are relevant to the study of law in the university. In developed countries, the focus is more on the assessment of students based on writing, oratory and logical skills. For example in the United Kingdom (UK), there are no specific requirements for Secondary Education but it is highly recommended that students should offer subjects which show an aptitude for writing, research and logical thought. The requirement to study law depends basically on the institution and some universities require applicants to take an aptitude test based on essay skills and reasoning i.e the National Admissions Test for Law.³⁴

Also in the United States (US), there is no formalised law program at the undergraduate level and so there are no pre requisites at the high school level. This affords students the prospect to study any subject of their choice before deciding a career in law which is at the latter stage after obtaining a bachelor's degree in any field. And so, just like in the UK, students are expected to focus on building their written, oratory, logical and decisive thinking skills.³⁵

University Education

The voyage of a Nigerian lawyer takes a major upturn after gaining entrance into the Faculty of Law by the requirements as coordinated by the Joint Admissions and Matriculation Board (JAMB).³⁶ The mode of entry into the University is either through University Matriculation Entry (UME) or the

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34. International Bar Association (IBA),
< http://www.ibanet.org/PPID/Constituent/Student_Committee/qualify_lawyer_EnglandWales.aspx, > (assessed 21st November, 2019).
35. Legal Education System, < <http://www.internationalstudent.com/study-law/legal-education-system/>, > (accessed 27th October, 2019).
36. Joint Admissions and Matriculation Board Act 1978.

direct entry (DE) mode.³⁷ The UME candidates spend five (5) years with two (2) semesters to make a whole session while the Direct Entry candidates are permitted to join in year two of the programme and so they also spend a total of 4 years to attain the law degree.

Legal education in Nigeria, leading to the award of a Bachelors of Law (LLB) degree is hinged on common law and Islamic law systems, providing degrees either in common law, Islamic law/ Shari'ah or a combination of both jurisprudence. Most faculties of law in the southern part of Nigeria provide education to their undergraduate law students focused on common law or civil law systems, although it has become common practice for some faculties to merge Islamic law into existing common law courses.³⁸ Some faculties in the North such as the University of Maiduguri³⁹ and Ahmadu Bello University⁴⁰ provide students with the opportunity to either study Islamic law as a distinct programme or combined with a subsequent award of a degree in Shari'ah Law or Combined Law. The Common & Islamic Law programme was first

37. University of Ilorin Academic Programmes (Undergraduates & Sub-degree) Published by the Senate Committee on Review of Academic programmes (2009-2013) 2009.

38. For example, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria,
<<http://www.abu.edu.ng/pages/mainpage.php?t=a&cid=8&cnm=Law>, >
(accessed 5th December, 2014).

39. University of Maiduguri, Faculty of Law, Maiduguri,
<http://www.unimaid.edu.ng/root/faculty_of_law.html, >
(accessed 12th November, 2019).

40. Ahmadu Bello University, Faculty of Law, Zaria,
<<http://www.abu.edu.ng/pages/vwprogdetail.php?pid=232&t=a&cid=8&cnm=Law&did=52&dnm=Civil%20Law>, > (accessed 12th December, 2014).

introduced in the mid 1970s in Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria and been adopted by some other Universities especially in the North.⁴¹ The provisions of an array of courses in both legal systems provide students with knowledge of both aspects.

A student shall qualify for the award of a degree when he/she has completed and passed all the courses he registered for, including all compulsory/required courses and other elective/optional courses as may be specified by the university/faculty.⁴² Also, each candidate must have earned the minimum graduating credit units and minimum Cumulative Grade Point Average (CGPA) specified by the university.⁴³

The law students are required to offer law-related courses supported by other non-law courses designed in the curriculum by the NUC⁴⁴ and CLE.⁴⁵ The set of courses are split into four (4) categories: compulsory law courses, optional law courses, compulsory non law courses, optional non law courses.⁴⁶

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41. A Oba, Lawyers, Legal Education and The Shari'ah Courts in Nigeria, *Journal of Legal Pluralism* 2004 – nr 49 at 124.
<http://jlp.bham.ac.uk/volumes/49/oba-art.pdf> (accessed 10th November, 2019).
 42. See also, National Universities Commission, 'Benchmark Minimum Academic Standards for Undergraduate Programmes in Nigerian Universities', Law, April 2007, < <http://www.nuc.edu.ng/nucsite/File/DASS/BMAS%20Law.pdf>, > (accessed 21st November, 2019).
 43. This is usually in accordance with the Universities Examination Regulations made pursuant to the provisions of their respective laws. For example: S 27 of the Obafemi Awolowo University Law, 1970 (as amended).
 44. Section 4 National Universities Commission Act, Cap N81 LFN 2004.
 45. The Council usually insists that the subjects taken must include Constitutional Law, Criminal Law, Law of Contract, Tort, Land Law, Equity & Trust, Commercial Law, and Law of Evidence,
< <http://www.nigeria-law.org/Legal%20Education.htm>, > (accessed 16th November, 2019).
 46. The compulsory and optional law courses vary, for example: general studies, History & Philosophy, Computer Application.

Table 1: Law Related Courses in the University Curriculum

Compulsory Law Courses	Optional Law Courses
Legal Methods	Administrative Law
Nigerian Legal System	Family Law
Constitutional Law	Intellectual Property
Law of Contract	Conveyancing Law
Criminal Law	Law of Succession
Law of Evidence	Law of Taxation
Law of Tort	Industrial or Labour Law
Law of Equity and Trust	Environmental or Planning Law
Laws of Jurisprudence	Insurance Law
Dissertation (Long Essay)	Law of Energy

There is also a long list of optional law courses prescribed by the NUC and such other ones as the faculty determines to be important, so that irrelevant ones would be eliminated and new ones added. The non law courses are also meant to widen the horizon of the students. The weighted points given to each course also determines the hours allotted to them; the essence of this curriculum is to ensure a standard, and uniformity in the various law faculties. The students are assessed through continuous assessment (tests, seminars, presentations, essays etc) and then examination ranging from thirty to sixty percent (30-60%).⁴⁷

47. National Universities Commission, 'Benchmark Minimum Academic Standards for Undergraduate Programmes in Nigerian Universities', Law, April 2007, <<http://www.nuc.edu.ng/nucsite/File/DASS/BMAS%20Law.pdf>>

education.⁶¹ Thus, degrees obtained through long distance learning or part time studies are not recognised for admission into the Nigerian Law School.⁶²

There is no doubt that the curriculum designed for the Nigerian Universities is sufficient and capable of delivering a sound academic legal education. The Universities now cover substantially, courses on substantial and procedural law. Some authors and researchers⁶³ are of the opinion that the Nigerian Law School seems to have outlived its existence, raising the question of whether the Nigerian Law School is still needed. This question is particularly relevant considering that the Council of Legal Education regulates the programmes the Law School and contributes significantly to the regulation of the programmes in the Faculty of Law of the Universities. Furthermore, the same calibre of lecturers- lawyers who have gone through the same process of training provide instructions in both institutions. Some others advocate that the law school trainings be merged with the faculties of law or that some other universities be granted permission to run the law school programme⁶⁴ in which a particular cadre of lecturers probably the Senior lecturers to Professors should lecture. The one year programme in the Law school is of great inconvenience for

61. 'How to qualify as a lawyer in Nigeria', International Bar Association http://www.ibanet.org/PPID/Constituent/Student_Committee/qualify_lawyer_Nigeria.aspx (accessed 20th November, 2019).

62. There are still controversies surrounding the National Open University of Nigeria (NOUN) operating Open, Distance, and E-Learning as approved by the NUC.

63. Madubuike-Ekwe, Challenges and Prospects of Legal Education in Nigeria: An Overview NAUJILJ 8 (1) 2017.

64. B Bukar, 'Legal Education and Challenges of Contemporary Developments in Nigeria' *International Journal of Clinical Legal Education*, Issue 20 p 600-601.

Open Society Foundations, MacArthur Foundation and European Union.⁵⁴

These practical aspects of legal education would be more wide spread if it is made a pre requisite for accreditation for faculties of law.

The Law School

The Nigerian Law School, one of the recommendations of the Unsworth Committee was established in 1962 by the Legal Education (Consolidation) Act.⁵⁵ The first Director of the Nigerian Law School is Mr G Rudd, an English man between the periods of 1962-1967. After this period, the reign was taken over by a Nigerian in 1968, Dr Olakunle Orojo and so the mantle of power has changed hands amongst Nigerians since then. Professor Isa Hayatu Ciroma, a former Deputy Director of the Nigerian Law School, Yola campus is the current Director General.⁵⁶

From 1962 to 1994, the Nigeria Law School had only one campus located in Lagos. The headquarters of the Nigerian Law School was moved from Lagos to Abuja following the relocation of the Capital of Nigeria from Lagos to Abuja.⁵⁷ The increase in higher institutions in tandem with faculties of law brought about the need to provide more law school campuses to cover the six (6) geo-political zones in Nigeria.⁵⁸

54. 'Inside the Network of University Legal Aid Institutions', <<http://www.nulai.org/>> (accessed 12th November, 2019).

55. CAP L10 Laws of the Federation of Nigeria, 2004 formerly the Legal Education Act 1962.

56. Nigerian Law School, <<http://www.nigerianlawschool.edu.ng/>> (accessed 25th November, 2019).

57. L Mitee, *Introduction to Nigerian Legal Education*, 2008.
<http://nigerianlawresources.com/2013/08/01/introduction_to_nigerian_legal_education_leesi_ebenezer_mitee/> (accessed 25th November, 2019).

58. Abuja (Bwari, Federal Capital Territory), Agbani (Enugu State),

Attending the Nigerian law school is a prerequisite for law graduates who wish to be enrolled in the Supreme Court as barristers and solicitors. A Law graduates who boycotts attending law schools remain only graduates of law. They are neither entitled to provide legal representation in any court, nor draft any form of legal documents.

The law school education can be viewed in two (2) phases- the Bar Part I and II and attachments (pupillage).

Bar Part I & II

The Nigerian law School accepts students who have successfully completed their university programmes and obtained their LLB certificate with at least a pass degree in Nigeria. Persons educated in foreign countries can only practice law in Nigeria after being trained at the Nigeria Law School. For this purpose, the study in the Law school is broken into two parts. The first part referred to as 'Bar Part I' is designed for persons educated in foreign countries. The essence of the Bar Part I is to enable them have a foundation of the Nigerian Legal System and also the principles and laws as embedded in the statute books as opposed to the foreign laws with which they were taught. Having successfully passed, they can then proceed to join students trained in Nigerian universities for the second part.

Bar Part II is for all students both foreign and Nigerian trained. The Bar Part I and Bar Part II courses are taught by

Bagauda (Kano State), Lagos (Victoria Island, Lagos State),

Yenagoa (Bayelsa State), Yola (Adamawa State).

< www.nigerianlawschool.edu.ng > accessed 21st November, 2019.

the academic staff of the Nigeria Law School. Experts external to the school including senior lawyers, judges, and some other professionals like accountants are invited in to deliver lectures from time to time.

Table 2: Courses Offered in the Nigerian School

Bar Part I Courses	Bar Part II Courses
Constitutional Law	Civil Litigation
Criminal Law	Criminal Litigation
Nigerian Legal System	Property Law Practice
Nigerian Land Law	Corporate Law Practice
Administrative Law	Law in Practice (Ethics & Skills)

The student who passes the final Bar Part II examinations after fulfilling all the other requirements at the Nigeria Law School like the compulsory dinners and portrayed himself to be fit and proper, receives a certificate from the Council of Legal Education and is then called to the Bar by the Body of Benchers⁵⁹ as provided by the Legal Practitioners Act. This is followed by enrolment as a Legal Practitioner at the Supreme Court of Nigeria.⁶⁰

In the past, part time law degrees were recognised and this was obtainable in some universities. These programmes were eventually jettisoned, in a bid to improve the quality of legal

59. Section 7 (1) of the same Act states further that a person shall be entitled to have his name placed on the Roll of Legal Practitioners if, and only if, he has been called to the Nigerian Bar by the Body of Benchers, and he produces a Certificate of Call to the Bar to the Chief Registrar.

60. Section 2(1) of the Legal Practitioners Act stipulates that a person shall be entitled to practice as a barrister and solicitor in Nigeria if his name is on the Roll of Legal Practitioners maintained by the Chief Registrar of the Supreme Court of Nigeria.

education.⁶¹ Thus, degrees obtained through long distance learning or part time studies are not recognised for admission into the Nigerian Law School.⁶²

There is no doubt that the curriculum designed for the Nigerian Universities is sufficient and capable of delivering a sound academic legal education. The Universities now cover substantially, courses on substantial and procedural law. Some authors and researchers⁶³ are of the opinion that the Nigerian Law School seems to have outlived its existence, raising the question of whether the Nigerian Law School is still needed. This question is particularly relevant considering that the Council of Legal Education regulates the programmes the Law School and contributes significantly to the regulation of the programmes in the Faculty of Law of the Universities. Furthermore, the same calibre of lecturers- lawyers who have gone through the same process of training provide instructions in both institutions. Some others advocate that the law school trainings be merged with the faculties of law or that some other universities be granted permission to run the law school programme⁶⁴ in which a particular cadre of lecturers probably the Senior lecturers to Professors should lecture. The one year programme in the Law school is of great inconvenience for

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61. 'How to qualify as a lawyer in Nigeria', International Bar Association http://www.ibanet.org/PPID/Constituent/Student_Committee/qualify_lawyer_Nigeria.aspx (accessed 20th November, 2019).
 62. There are still controversies surrounding the National Open University of Nigeria (NOUN) operating Open, Distance, and E-Learning as approved by the NUC.
 63. Madubuike-Ekwe, Challenges and Prospects of Legal Education in Nigeria: An Overview NAUJILJ 8 (1) 2017.
 64. B Bukar, 'Legal Education and Challenges of Contemporary Developments in Nigeria' *International Journal of Clinical Legal Education*, Issue 20 p 600-601.