

ISLAMICS, SCHOLARSHIP AND SERVICE TO SOCIETY:

A FESTSCHRIFT FOR IS-HAQ OLANREWAJU OLOYEDE



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CHAPTER THREE

CULTURAL RECLAMATION IN HIGHER INSTITUTION: ROLE OF EFFECTIVE LEADERSHIP

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Abstract

This paper explores how the media shapes sociopolitical environments especially in post-colonial Africa. It emphasises its role in cultural reclamation by challenging colonial narratives and amplifying authentic African voices. In so doing, it highlights the efforts of Professor Is-haq Oloyede, who exemplifies effective leadership in this area through his support for mother-tongue education and intellectual independence. By examining the connection between the media and academia, the paper emphasizes the significance of intellectual leadership in fostering meaningful change and creating a more just and culturally relevant future.

Introduction

The media plays an indisputable role in the sociopolitical transformation of any society. With its capacity to disseminate information and amplify diverse voices and perspectives in shaping public opinion (Couldry, 2020), the media has the power to challenge existing power structures, and hold those in positions of authority accountable (Schudson, 1995; McNair, 2005). These inherent functions have historically conferred legitimacy to the activities of the media and their status as the Fourth Estate across various geographical and geopolitical divides. As the Fourth Power, the media is crucial in safeguarding the populace against executive, legislative, and judicial abuses (Debatin, 2016). Constitutionally these branches establish 'good governance' system by mutually monitoring and controlling one another. Nevertheless, in a democratic society, blind trust in the government is unwarranted, merely because the governing body possesses greater power than the governed. Hence, the media has been indispensable entity responsible for monitoring and maintaining balance, serving as the voice of the people.

The media's role in Africa goes beyond traditional functions. Here, it grapples with the long shadow of colonialism and the enduring influence of neo-colonialism. In many former colonial countries, such as Niger, Burkina Faso, and Mali, issues stemming from colonialism remain, including economic dependency, political instability, and persistent cultural dominance. The internal struggle for true independence and reforming government compounds these challenges. Thus, the media plays a critical role in reclaiming cultural identity in Africa and promoting authentic narratives to counter misrepresentations internally and externally.

The purpose of this chapter is to recognize Professor Is-haq Oloyede and his leadership in higher education as an example of effective cultural reclamation leadership. His advocacy for mother tongue education and intellectual independence underscores the importance of an educational system that empowers African voices and preserves cultural heritage. His work illustrates the powerful intersection of academia and media studies in driving meaningful change. Through a detailed examination of media's influence on African sociopolitical dynamics, this chapter aims to illuminate the critical role of media in cultural reclamation. In exploring the intersection of media and effective leadership, it emphasizes

the importance of intellectual stewardship to shape a more just and culturally resonant future.

Shaping Public Perception through Media Influence and Hegemony

McCombs (2014) observed that the media's agenda-setting function not only places them at the forefront of determining the issues that deserve public attention but also, in line with Lippman (1922), underscore their pivotal role in constructing our collective understanding of reality. In other words, our perception of the global landscape is significantly shaped by how the media portrays events, individuals, places and abstract concepts. This portrayal becomes readily accepted as true mirror of the actual world. More significantly is the decline of communal solidarity once fostered by traditional sources of identity, such as religious affiliation, national and ethno-cultural allegiances, which have been greatly compromised in recent years due to the influential agency of the media in reshaping the social fabric of society (Nikunen, 2019).

Within the context of media, the concept of hegemony is instrumental as it helps to explain how a dominant social group uses media representations to shape the way people perceive and evaluate social reality, wherein, people are encouraged to see an idea or ideology as common sense, even if it conflicts with their own experiences. In coverage and selection of news, studies have shown that the media does not convey an objective reality that is value-free or free of ideology. Instead, media content and representations are inherently influenced by various factors including the values, beliefs and ideologies of the individuals and institutions involved in producing and disseminating media content. The strategy employed by the media in selecting and interpreting events, what they focus on and what they omit, plays a significant role in defining and constructing public knowledge. These influences shape how events are framed, how stories are told, and how information is disseminated to various intended audiences. It is however important to note here that this hegemonic system is not all-powerful. 'It must be maintained, repeated, reinforced, and modified to respond to and overcome the forms that challenge it' (Dow, 1996, p.14).

Reclaiming the Narrative

Nowhere is this more pronounced than in the global south where there has been a tendency to underestimate the profound impact of colonialism on Africa. For instance, former colonies in the West of Africa, and especially in francophone West Africa such as Niger, Burkina Faso, and Mali, have suffered the effects of neo-colonialism marked by economic dependency, political instability and undue external influence, perpetuating struggles for meaningful independence and unfettered democratic governance while leaving them vulnerable to foreign exploitation (Jibrin, 2023). The missionaries in the colony were not always innocent intermediaries, as they acted as covert agents for the colonial authorities, according to Oyowe (2019). In his words: "It has been shown that they were Janus-faced. On the one hand, they portrayed themselves to the local people in the colonies as 'friends' and 'allies' and, on the other, participated actively in enabling colonial regimes in the annexation and eventual conquest of the local population Oyowe" (2019, p.254).

Within these dynamics, the West and mainly, European colonial powers were able to perpetuate dominance in various aspects, including media representation, economic influence, and cultural hegemony. The West has been at the forefront of technological innovation, including in communication media, and information technology. This technological superiority enabled Western countries to consistently control the means of information dissemination and shape narratives on a global scale.

The erosion of spatial boundaries brought about by globalisation has significantly impacted the media landscape in Africa. Regrettably, this phenomenon has deepened the divide between economically advanced nations in the Global North and their less developed counterparts in the Global South, resulting in an imbalance of power. Yanacopulos (2022)

argues that within the realm of humanitarianism, a hierarchical dynamic exists between northern publics and southern publics. This dynamic perpetuates a paradigm through which those in the global south are 'looked upon with pity,' thereby reinforcing the historical dichotomy of victimised global south and benevolent north. It is also noteworthy that journalistic traditions in the West have historically influenced journalistic traditions in Africa in terms of form and content.

This has been consequential for the African continent and her people, as they are not accurately represented in the media. In spite of several reports highlighting the use of negative stereotypes and an emphasis on negative stories- such as 'conflicts or wars, poverty, slums, corruption, famine, droughts, floods, kidnappings, irregular migration and xenophobia, among others' there have been little change in terms of media coverage. Media scholar, Ellard Manjawira argues that Africa is portrayed negatively in the media because journalists take lead from negative reporting by the Western media. He further states that, 'Western media set the agenda in their reporting, and African journalists think that is the best approach' (2023).

Owusu-Ampomah (2004, p.28) describes the African media as a western controlled platform for serving assorted delicacies of African despondency; 'high-risk investment area,' 'write off continent,' 'basket case,' 'beggarly nations,' 'hungry and diseased continent,' 'conflict prone,' 'war plagued,' 'corruption ridden,' and 'wretched of the earth.' In collaboration with the Western media, the African media perpetuates age-old stereotypes and negative portrayals of the continent, as highlighted by Isike & Omotoso (2017, p.214). The enduring impact of colonialism on African societies has resulted in a predominant adherence to Western frameworks, leading to the marginalisation of traditional African communication modalities such as dance, drama, song and ritual in favour of Westernised modes of entertainment.

Within this context, there is a pressing need to mobilise media intellectuals towards reclaiming and reshaping the African media landscape, fostering an authentic African narrative. In their scholarly discourse, Moyo and Mutsavairo (2018) contend that the indispensability of communication in society necessitates African researchers to assume intellectual leadership 'in critical thinking about their media sphere in ways that reflect an awareness of their social location and epistemic location.' To them, this intellectual leadership entails the development of communication studies as an academic experience that draws inspiration from African history and experiences and engages in a critical dialogue with prevailing Anglo-American epistemologies. As they put it:

As scholars in communication studies research, we are all situated thinkers and not caged parrots that must dutifully mimic the master's ways of seeing and reading the life world...Thinking outside one's locus of enunciation, especially by those who sit on the 'darker side of Western modernity' is self-alienating and potentially schizophrenic, and may only serve to advance research that promotes subservience to the colonial modernity (Moyo and Mutsavairo, 2018, pp.21-22).

The Present Study

This call for intellectual leadership in the media sphere aligns with the earlier plea made by Professor Is-haq Oloyede, a former Vice-Chancellor of the University of Ilorin, Nigeria, a decade and half ago, for a holistic approach to education that includes research, community service and the mother tongue education. As an academic, Oloyede believes that the university system as a critical component of the education system in Nigeria has to rise to the task of exploring opportunities and vast possibilities in the delivery of higher education especially in the age of globalisation in reclaiming our cultural identity.

Thus, he maintains that higher education should not be stereotyped or straightjacketed but inclusive, offering all alternatives: 'While we emphasize research, we should not in any way undermine community service. Likewise, when we advocate science

and technology, we must not weaken the humanities because without humanities, humanity as a whole is lost' he asserted. In the context of higher education institutions in Nigeria, the leadership provided by vice-chancellors plays a crucial role in determining performance and trajectory. Thus, Oloyede, who served as the Vice-Chancellor of the University of Ilorin from 2007 to 2012, and to whom this festschrift is dedicated, offers a compelling case study of effective leadership and transformative impact. A critical component of effective higher education leadership is the ability to synergize with the media to reclaim cultural identity and empower marginalized voices within African communities. Educators can promote marginalized voices, share diverse narratives, and challenge stereotypes perpetuated by mainstream media through strategic partnerships with the media.

In subsequent sections of this chapter, we will be drawing from the nucleus of a feature news article, published in one of Nigeria's elite newspapers, *The Guardian* on Saturday, September 4, 2010, as well as other publications, where the present researcher, a young graduate at that time, not only highlighted the remarkable achievements of Professor Oloyede, but also sought to explore his life and character through the perspectives of his colleagues. This exploration aims to inspire African scholars. This presupposes an undertaking of research and development initiatives that can contribute to the cultivating a robust African ideological philosophy. This should be specifically tailored to address the unique needs of African society, and in the present study with Professor Oloyede serves as a remarkable role model.

Exploring the Nexus between Cultural Identity and Educational Challenges

Oloyede argues that despite the evidence supporting mother tongue education and the warnings of figures like Professor Babs Fafunwa and Tai Solarin, Nigeria continues to ignore its policies and undermine its own laws in the field of education. His words: 'While people like Professor Babs Fafunwa would clamour for mother tongue education, backing such calls with results of practical experiments like the Ife Project, and like the late Tai Solarin, emphasizing as far back as 1965, that the Nigerian child will never imbibe to the fullest every strand of education as long as the medium of instruction is a foreign language', the reality of our education is that we do not implement our own policies and we undermine our own laws.'

'While the policy that children should be taught through the indigenous languages of their immediate environment remains extant, how many schools implement it? How many university students are literate in their native tongues? We have a big problem with us because the educational system we run seem to be ultimately de-Africanising and de-Nigerianising our children, making them Euro-American in thinking, tongue and taste. This should not be the case' Oloyede argued. His efforts at University of Ilorin, such as expanding the Department of Linguistics and Nigerian Languages, demonstrate his commitment to addressing this issue.

Reflecting on the plummeting fortunes of the nation's once vibrant education sector, Oloyede observed that lack of commitment has been largely responsible for the rot that has crept into the sector. 'With due respect to our education managers, policy makers and implementers, I think the efforts channelled to the development of our education system for the most part of the last fifty years have been like the efforts of the six blind men of Hindustan in describing the elephant. Each effort appears to be partly in the right but ultimately it appears that 'all were in the wrong', a situation reflecting in the state of education in Nigeria today.

'This is why it is increasingly becoming fashionable in some quarters for Nigerians to see University education in neighbouring countries like Togo, Mali, Ghana and other Asian, European and North American countries. But while I do not think we lack the power of ideas as a nation, it is apparent that we lack the power of commitment. The ideas that will transform the sector are there in the files but the political will to synthesize and translate

them to reality is missing. Everybody seems to do what he likes and nobody seems to care, with some people partly in the right but the system at large, partly, in the wrong. There is no doubt that a crucial component of developing this country lies essentially in reengineering our ways of doing things.'

Speaking on the importance of collaboration in the academic community, Professor Oloyede explains that one of the implications of the dotcom burst and globalisation is that one cannot just sit in a corner and think he is making progress. 'We have to collaborate, network, interface and cooperate with others. We cannot just cuddle up in our cocoons and think we are the best, there is nothing stopping collaborations between a lecturer in the Department of Religious Studies and another in the Department of Chemistry in the uses and study of water'.

Islamophobia as a Springboard

In Nigeria, it is not uncommon for the southern-dominated mainstream media outlets to employ rhetoric that consistently dehumanizes and disparages northern communities, culture, religion, and leadership (Yahaya, 1994, as cited in Jibrin, 1999, p. 14). This phenomenon has led to the perpetuation of misrepresentations of Hausa-Fulani Muslims and Muslims in general, particularly by influential media outlets in the southwest Yoruba region where key mainstream media outlets are based. For example, it was the southwest Yoruba media that propagated the notion and sustained the dominant narrative that Shehu Shagari's presidency was illegitimate, and only accorded him due respect when his Christian opponent, Obafemi Awolowo, intervened (Agbaje, 1990). In the context of this phenomenon, the mainstream press is not viewed as neutral; rather, it is distrusted and viewed as carrying a hidden agenda, particularly against the northern political establishment.

Relatedly, Oloyede's appointments as Vice-Chancellor of UNILORIN, and later as JAMB Registrar, were met with some initial criticisms that might have stemmed from possible Islamophobic prejudices or ideology. However, he defied those Islamophobic expectations, as his subsequent successes prove the importance of leadership that transcends such divisions. As he pointed out, 'many do not realise that our major religions of Islam and Christianity have more in common than in contrast, but due to a combination of open mischief, crass ignorance and sheer indiscretion, people do not seem to see these.'

'The contributions of religion to personal, social and national development are left untapped and what is often repeated by the intellectually lazy ones is the outdated song of Karl Marx- religion is the opium of the masses. Besides, whatever problem is associated with religion is not always religion but with people. This is why the deeper one is in religion, the more one comes to understand the others', Oloyede, a Professor of Islamic Jurisprudence explained.

In his submission at the 116th inaugural lecture of the University, he noted:

The world is fragile, and the nation is distressed because of the domineering discourse of the hate-mongers. We need to build bridges of mutual understanding and harmonious co-existence and shatter the walls of hatred. We must all realise that we share a common humanity, and we all originate from Adam and we shall all return to God, the Just Judge.

This is why at the end of his tenure as Vice-Chancellor, the then University Chaplin, Dr A.S. Idowu spoke of his achievements glowingly. As he notes: 'Professor Oloyede reconstituted the Interreligious Council as it should be and gave them the mandate to work well, that is why you have religious harmony on the campus. Yes, there may be some things that people may grumble about, but it was well and properly handled.'

Oloyede in the Eyes of the People

According to Charles Bodunde, former Dean of the Faculty of Arts, Professor Oloyede has demonstrated unwavering commitment to the Strategic Plan of the University of Ilorin. "There is virtually nothing left in the strategic plan that has not been attended to by his administration," Bodunde remarked. Former Dean of the Faculty of Law, Abdulqadir Abikan, echoed this sentiment, stating that Oloyede's actions show that he is completely devoted to the University of Ilorin. "Some of us wonder if he ever sleeps," Abikan mused, emphasizing Oloyede's passion and his remarkable determination to execute his plans. As Professor John Olorunmaiye, former Dean of the Faculty of Engineering and Technology, affirms, Oloyede's vision, drive, and relentless work ethic have inspired others to emulate his dedication. In his words:

He has also kept faith with the tradition of the University of Ilorin that we don't have a history of abandoned projects. His efforts are really commendable in making the University of Ilorin visible in the world in terms of Webometric ranking.

The former Director of Computer Services and Information Technology (COMSIT), Professor Isaac Adimula, described Oloyede as having left in place several solid structures because he was developing institutions, not individuals, and for him, when institutions are developed, results are sustainable. According to Professor A.O. Omotesho, a former Dean of Agriculture and former Dean of Student Affairs, his association with Oloyede can be traced back to September 1976 at the University of Ibadan. He highlights Oloyede's extensive experience, including his tenure as President of the Alumni Association, Director of Academic Planning, Deputy Vice-Chancellor of Administration and Academic, which, he believed equipped Oloyede with the necessary skills to lead the University of Ilorin. In Omotesho's words:

That was a very good training ground for him and being an alumnus of the University, I think all these have helped him. He had a vision and it was as if God allowed him to actualise his dream for the University. I don't think there is any aspect of the University he has not touched. I will summarise it by saying he brought the University into the new millennium, especially in terms of ICT, in terms of exposure.

From my own micro-experience, it is not possible to govern so many intelligent people and have everything going your way. You have to step on some toes to get things done particularly when you are trying to move people away from the traditional ways of doing things. But like he himself has said, and I can attest to many instances, most times, he barks more than he bites. That was the way he put it in the Senate and I think I agree with him. When you have a passion about something, there is no way you will just be complacent about it.

Professor A. S. Olorundare believes the appointment of Oloyede as Vice Chancellor has been a fortunate decision for the University:

He is a very intelligent individual, he has a great amount of administrative skills, he is energetic and very knowledgeable. By the grace of God, he has done very well and excellently. As a teacher, if I am supposed to give a grade, I will give him an excellent grade because of the way he has conducted the affairs of the University. He has been able to mobilise the workforce to a vision that he believes, and that vision is to make it a University that can compete well locally and internationally. By and large, he has been able to do that. You cannot achieve such things unless you are somebody that is very committed to scholarship, forthrightness, hard work and innovation. He has brought a lot of innovation into the system, for instance, the decentralisation of many services and at the same time bringing in a lot of cooperation, that is one of the things that has made the administration work very well. He also has fantastic lieutenants; former Deputy Vice-Chancellors, Profs.

Ayorinde and Olayemi as well as the current ones that are also working from where those people stopped.

Engr Mobolaji Sanni, former Director of Works, praised Oloyede for his exceptional planning and execution skills. He stated that a number of projects have been completed and commissioned, and that these projects are relevant not only to the University of Ilorin, not only to the university system, but also to the needs of the nation. 'You can see the beautiful serene environment and people from other universities come to study us, even our mother university, the University of Ibadan.'

Oloyede, according to Dr. Mary Ajiboye, former Director of UNILORIN Health Services, was a visionary leader who prioritized staff welfare and healthcare, resulting in improved quality of care and well-being. She pointed out:

If he sees something good, an innovation, he brings it to campus. There is peace on campus, it is not possible to have 30,000 people in a place and not have a sickler, a diabetic or have somebody with a chronic illness. And when people have chronic illnesses, with time, anything can happen. Peradventure something happens to students, they will be singing funeral dirge, and that has not happened these past five years. I give glory to God and I give credit to Oloyede.

His welfarist attitude to staff problems has encouraged an improvement in the healthcare of staff. He encouraged staff to embrace the National Health Insurance Scheme, so you can see that the quality of care has improved. Patients come, they get their drugs, whatever we say we require in the clinic, he just approves. He led us and he encouraged us, and ensured our success because somebody can appoint you and not give you the support to succeed.

According to Engr A.A. Adesiyun, the former Director of the Physical Planning Unit, it is evident that Oloyede carries out his duties with utmost passion and commitment, perhaps due to his status as an alumnus of the University. 'He goes about doing his work and giving leadership and commitment. Short of him dragging you along, he will bulldoze his way to make sure that what he believes in is done.' Adesiyun acknowledges that such resolute leadership may invite criticism, but believes that history will ultimately recognize Oloyede's remarkable accomplishments during his tenure as Vice-Chancellor.

He stated, 'I cannot begin to name all the projects that we were able to successfully implement during his tenure. However, just to mention a few, the issues of the Computer Based Training were all his ideas. We started with the twin buildings built by a mutual agreement with e-tranzact, and the University under him went on to construct double that number. We now have six halls altogether that can sit 1,500 students in an examination at the same time. Also, the ICT base of the University has improved tremendously. We now have a Network Operating Centre, and the University can now do inter-conferencing with people abroad. We have new buildings for the Faculties of Agriculture, Law, Professorial Suites, Geography, Communication, and Information Sciences and so on.'

According to Adesiyun, Oloyede has made substantial investments in the future including the establishment of a state-of-the-art international standard sports complex and a new pavilion: 'He has put in well over N400 million in sports development' adding that he demonstrated foresight through the implementation of sustainable practices such as the planting of economic trees. 'We have plantations and I am sure the generations yet to come will benefit from this. He has also developed other recreational facilities; we have the dam resort centre that is now the pride of the University. People come to have functions there, we have the zoo that is now attracting thousands of people every week and new animals are brought there. I am saying this so that you can know that there is an all-round development,' Adesiyun explained.

In the case of Prof. Saudat Salah Abdulbaqi of the Department of Mass Communication, who is also a Development expert, Oloyede encouraged staff members across cadres to pursue higher education: 'We have people going for their Masters, PhDs

and people who have received rapid promotion during his tenure. He even made the environment conducive for those who are doing their programmes internally.'

According to Professor Musbau Akanji, former Director of Academic Planning, Oloyede has significantly advanced the University's academic programmes of the university, including creating numerous new departments and the restructuring existing ones to align with global standards. This dedication to academic excellence has contributed to the university's enhanced ranking. However, despite recognising his hard work, Professor Akanji, prefers that Oloyede take a well-deserved rest period to rejuvenate. In his opinion:

He should take some time to rest because in the last five years, he has worked very hard. God was and is very kind to him in terms of health. He has used that gift tremendously so he needs to do some rebooting by having some rest but what I foresee is that such people who are hyperactive find it difficult to rest; in fact, for such people, resting can bring sickness. So, I don't see him resting but he has earned a well-deserved rest.

Oloyede revitalized the university scholar program for students and introduced the Researcher of the Year award for academic staff, thereby enhancing the reward system for both faculty and students, according to Professor Adenike Oladiji, foundation Director of the Centre for Research Development and In-House Training (CREDIT). She described Oloyede as 'a dedicated scholar committed to personal growth, and an invaluable asset to the University.'

In the words of Professor A.A. Adesoye, former Director of the Sports Unit, 'There is no way the history of the development of sports in the University of Ilorin can be written without Oloyede's name appearing in gold. 'The Sports Unit has benefited tremendously during his tenure, even my Department- Human Kinetics. Sports owe Oloyede a lot of thanks and we will continue to remember him. He always allows us to go for sport meetings. Not all Vice-Chancellors can do that. Look at the Pavilion, the tartan track, the field, all these are the handiwork of the Vice-Chancellor.'

'I remember during the West African University Games (WAUG), weeks to the commencement of the games, he was virtually staying around the sporting arena; he virtually took over the office of the sports director. He would want to make sure that the facilities are on ground and in good time. He was always on the neck of the contractors. He is a workaholic, and he never compromises integrity and finesse; and you can see this in most of the infrastructures we have here. The All-Nigeria Basketball Competition was held here because of our new gym. When you get to the University of Ilorin Fitness Centre, you see equipment there. He would remain indelible in the minds of sports stakeholders in this University, in this state and beyond,' Professor Adesoye added.

Professor K. L. Ayorinde asserts that the significant advancements in the University of Ilorin's ranking can be primarily attributed to Oloyede's unwavering efforts, visionary leadership, and commitment. He pointed out that Oloyede 'has dedicated all his wisdom in ensuring that the University moves forward. So, whatever you see in the University in terms of development, be it infrastructure, be it ranking and the University's recognition, are largely due to his commitment and to his dedication to the University of Ilorin.'

Professor Wahab Egbewole, former Chairman of ASUU and current Vice-Chancellor of the University, believes Oloyede's work is visible 'even to the blind' because the university has undergone many fundamental changes. According to him, the transformative changes observed in the university are attributed not solely to the efforts of Professor Oloyede, but rather to the collective contributions of the academic and administrative staff of the University of Ilorin. 'But we must also acknowledge the fact that he provided the necessary leadership and enablement to ensure that all these things happened. At the level of the University rating, our University was number one consistently

for three years. At the level of infrastructure, a lot of things have sprung up within the University,' Egbewole added.

'But inspite of all these, you must also appreciate the fact that a lot of dynamics have been put in place, which have ensured that things are done in a more institutionalised fashion. We now know that our convocation will come up within a particular period of time; we now know that the last Senate will hold on a particular day; we now know that our orientation or resumption will hold on a particular day and that is best practices in the whole world.'

Professor Egbewole continued, 'Whether we like it or not, critics will say things, but as academics we must be confirmed at the whole picture and not just looking at the picture from just one corner, so he has discharged himself creditably well as Vice-Chancellor. The unions, especially ASUU, are doing well.' 'To our critics outside, they believe the administration has pocketed the union leadership. That is far from it. Unionism all over the world today is about development and that is what people don't realize. That we are not carrying placards, that we are not agitating, that we are not at loggerheads with the administration does not mean that we are not having disagreements with administration. We will have disagreement, we will resolve our disagreements and we must move on and all over the world, disagreements are settled around the table. They are not settled by carrying placards. There is a very cordial relationship between the administration and the union, and we are not having apology for anybody for that', Egbewole stated.

Conclusion

The testimonies provided by the University of Ilorin staff members offer a vivid depiction of Professor Oloyede's vice-chancellorship, characterized by visionary guidance, unwavering dedication to scholarly achievement, and a profound influence on institutional progression. Leaders like him make a big difference to academic excellence and institutional advancement in higher education. His commitment to staff empowerment, academic expansion and innovative initiatives has enhanced the university's reputation and fostered a culture of continuous learning and collaboration.

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