

# Problems Facing Academic Staff of Nigerian Universities and the Way Forward

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## ABSTRACT

*The article discussed the problems facing the academic staff of Nigerian universities. Secondary data was used to support the points raised in the article. The secondary data were sourced from print material and online publications by recognized institutions and individual authors. The article identified the following as the problems facing the academic staff of Nigerian universities to include; poor motivation, teaching of large class, poor staff development programme, inadequate infrastructural facilities, strike actions, insecurity, poor computer literacy and poor research funding. To solve these challenges, this article recommends: that government should increase the funding of university education, increase the funding of research programme, motivate the academic staff, provision of effective staff development programme, provision of infrastructural facilities, implementation of union agreement, provision of adequate security and ensure effective capacity development programme on ICT.*

**Keywords:** *Problems, academic staff, Nigerian Universities*

## 1.0 Introduction

The National Policy on Education (FGN, 2004), defines Higher Education as the Post - Secondary Section of the National education system, which is given by Universities, Polytechnics and Colleges of Technology including courses as are given by the Colleges of Education, Advanced Teachers Training colleges, Correspondence Colleges and such Institutions as may be allied to them. According to Adeyemi (2001), Higher Education refers to a system which embraces much of the country's research capacity and reproduces majority of the skilled professionals that are required in the labour market. Peretomode (2007) sees higher education as the facilitator, the bed rock, the power house and the driving force for the strong socio-economic, political, cultural, health and industrial development of a nation as higher education institutions are key mechanisms increasingly recognized as wealth and human capital producing industries. Obanya, (1999) views higher education to embody all organized learning and training activities at the tertiary level. This includes conventional universities, those with the conventional arts, humanities and science faculties as well as specialized universities like institutions specializing in agriculture, engineering, science, and technology. It also includes post-secondary institutions such as the polytechnics and colleges of education. "Higher Education" includes all forms of professional institutions drawing from the available pool of persons who have completed a various forms of secondary school education: Institution of the military, the police, nurses, agriculture, forestry, veterinary workers, catering services, tourism, secretarial services and other possible combinations of programmes. Even this wide spectrum does not exhaust the possibilities of forms of Higher Education such as non formal higher education. Indeed, any situations in which mature persons are organized for building up their knowledge and skills, to apply knowledge to the analysis and search for solutions to life problems." The Nigerian higher education system is comprised of Universities, Polytechnics and Colleges of Education offering programs in areas such as teacher education and agriculture. It is

the largest and most complex higher education system on the continent. Bennett (1997) defines higher educational institutions as unique institutions which is differentiated from others in terms of research and its managers are designated as Provost, Rector, and Vice chancellor. Higher education is the education for the production of manpower and for aiding social, economic and technological development of a country. The university is the apex of all tertiary institutions. It is expected to make optimum contribution to national development by:

- (a) Intensifying and diversifying its programmes for the development of high level manpower within the context of the needs of national requirements.
- (b) Making professional course content to reflect our national requirements.
- (c) Making all students, as part of a general programme of all-round improvement in university education, to offer general study courses such as history of ideas, philosophy of knowledge and nationalism.

For the university education to make significant impact on national development, its research has to be relevant to the national development and its results disseminated to both government and industries. The goals of tertiary education, according to the National Policy on Education (2004) are as follows:

- (a) contribute to national development through high level relevant manpower training.
- (b) develop and inculcate proper values for the survival of the individual and society.
- (c) develop the intellectual capability of individuals to understand and appreciate their local and external environments.
- (d) acquire both physical and intellectual skills which will enable individuals to be self-reliant and useful members of the society.
- (e) promote and encourage scholarship and community service.
- (f) forge and cement national unity, and to
- (g) promote national and international understanding and interaction.

The policy document added that, tertiary institutions shall pursue these goals through: Teaching; Research and development and Community services

The realization of the goals of universities education depend among other thing on the availability and motivated academic staff and non-academic staff. The academic staff are key member of the universities system. The roles of the academic staff in the actualization of the university programme cannot be underestimated. The academic staff are the engine room of the university system. They determines the quality of the system. The academic staff are the implementer of the school curriculum. They plan the lesson, organizes the instructional resources, prepare the note and deliver the lecture.

The academic staff are also builder of manpower or producers of manpower for the country. Folunso, Adewale and Abodunde (2014) have asserted that job performance of academic staff is important because good quality tertiary education is an important avenue towards nurturing the teachers needed for Universal Primary Education; the experienced doctors, nurses and community workers needed for better welfare and health facilities, the accountants, economists and journalists required for better private business and better governance. They also maintained that for higher education to develop the capacities mentioned, it must ensure that their staff are well motivated in order to contribute to the quality needed for socio-economic and political development.

The achievement of the higher education goals depends on the quality of educational resources available to the various institutions and the conducive of the working environment. Human resources function well in an atmosphere that is conducive. Adetoro (2009) and Charles, (2012) classifies educational resources into human, physical and financial resources. These are potential inputs of the institution that enable the institution to achieve its objectives if they are effectively managed. They are the pre-conditions for successful implementation of school programmes and whenever this condition is not fulfilled, the ability of the teaching staff to perform his/her task will be

greatly hampered. In view of the above, the researchers were motivated to discuss the challenges facing the academic staff of Nigerian universities.

## 2.0 Concept of Academic Staff

Academic staff also known as faculty members are key component of higher institutions especially the universities. Academic staff as the name implies are professional that handles the teaching, research programme of the higher institutions and also perform other academic services. The role of academic staff in the development of higher institutions cannot be underestimated because the academic staff are the implementer of the instruction in the educational institutions. Academic staff as a professional personnel in charge of teaching or lecturing in the higher institutions. The Academic staff members are the teaching staff of the tertiary institutions. They are called lecturers. They are involved in three major functions in the institutions which are teaching and researching and community services. The academic staff are categorized into Graduate Assistant, Assistant Lecturer, Lecturer II, Lecturer I, senior Lecturer, Associate professor/Reader and Professors. Academic staff are critical factors in the higher education goals attainment. Without them, the goals of higher education in the country cannot be achieved. Teachers are the main determinant of quality education; if they are apathetic, uncommitted, uninspired, lazy, unmotivated, immoral, anti-social, the whole nation is doomed. If they are ignorant in their disciplines and impart wrong information, they are not only useless but dangerous. The kind of teachers trained and posted to the schools may well determine what the next generation will be ((NERC, 1980).

The professional qualities of the academic staff includes; commitment to academic research, commitment to high quality teaching and fostering a positive learning environment for students, commitment to continuous professional development and commitment to public communication. The professional skills of academic staff also include; excellent interpersonal, oral and written communication skills; ability to conduct high quality research which is reflected in the authorship of high quality; publications, or other research outputs, in the areas of computer science; ability to manage time and work to strict deadlines and ability to teach and to supervise academic work by undergraduates, masters and doctoral students. The main duties and responsibilities of academic staff in the higher institutions include:

- (a) to teach at undergraduate and graduate level in areas allocated by the Head of Department and reviewed from time to time by the Head of Department;
- (b) to carry out research and produce publications, or other research outputs, in line with personal objectives agreed in the Staff review process;
- (c) to obtain research funding support;
- (d) to engage with the broader scholarly and professional communities;
- (e) to supervise or assist with supervision of undergraduate, taught graduate (Masters) or research graduate (MPhil/PhD) students;
- (f) to contribute to the development, planning and implementation of a high quality curriculum.
- (g) to assist in the development of learning materials, preparing schemes of work and maintaining records to monitor student progress, achievement and attendance;

The teaching role involves preparing and delivering of lectures, supervision of students in industrial training, final year project, post graduate students, marking assessments and grading of scripts. Other functions include development and promotion of innovative teaching methods, consultation with students and production of teaching materials for students. Research role involves carrying out investigations on identified problem(s), presentation of findings of such investigations in conferences/seminars and publishing the findings in journals and/or text books. The third role involves rendering services both to the school and the community at large. Such services include heading a department, faculty, committee, external supervisor, advisor of student societies, members of other recognized committees at departmental, faculty and university levels –example; sports, graduation, convocation etc (Uchenna, Maureen & Anthony, 2018). Teaching and research are the core functions of a lecturer and their quality can be improved by hiring the best scholars and empowering them with good incentives (Goodall, 2013).

The employment of teachers in different tertiary institutions takes different forms. Mgbekem, (2004) submitted that the minimum entry qualification of a teaching staff into polytechnic is Bachelor's degree in relevant field. In Colleges of Education, the National Commission for Colleges of Education (NCCE) requires that candidates to be considered for appointment should have, in addition to first degree, some qualification in education. This means that they have to be certified as professional teachers. The minimum academic qualification required for appointing a university teacher in Nigeria is Master's Degree. Occasionally, "persons who earned high quality Bachelor's degrees are given positions of Assistant Lecturer", while in some cases, "those who have Second Class (Honours) Upper Division are given the job of a Graduate Assistant". (Mgbekem 2004) Further noted that those appointed without the doctoral degree are expected to work and grow through promotions and acquisition of Master's and Doctoral Degrees in their areas of specialization. Nevertheless, for university lectureship, there is an emphasis by the NUC that the minimum requirement should be a doctoral degree. Government expects that "persons with Third Class (Honours) and Pass degrees are never considered for lectureship appointment (Mgbekem, 2004)). To demonstrate her keen interest in teachers' professionalism, government emphasized in the National Policy on Education, that all teachers in tertiary institutions shall be encouraged to undergo training in the methods and techniques of teaching". To this end, some of the teachers in the universities who are not certified teachers have enrolled for courses leading to the award of a Post Graduate Diploma in Education (PGDE) (Noun, 2008).

Yohanna& Simon (2013) submitted that the place of academic staff in any academic institution cannot be overemphasized. The academic staff of any University are equally the intellectual resource pool of the University. Of course, no University is superior to its teaching staff. The type, quality, and quantity of lecturers in the nation's University system for the achievement of its goals and objectives are very crucial to its success. In particular, the higher the quality, the better the graduates who are often than not better equipped and more likely to excel in their chosen careers. Akpotu, &Nwadiani, (2003) observed that the academic staff of universities contributes greatly to the work force of a country. They are academics that have acquired much education and are expected to give back to the society; by imparting acquired knowledge to the coming generation. In order for the goals of tertiary education to be effectively achieved, the National Universities Commission (NUC) 2014 made the Doctor of Philosophy (Ph. D) degree the minimum teaching qualification for academic staff in Nigeria universities.

### **3.0 Problems facing Academic Staff of Nigerian Universities**

The academic staff of universities are strong members of the universities' community. The place of the academic staff are irreplaceable. In Nigeria, these academic staff are facing many challenges and these challenges includes: poor motivation, teaching of large class, poor staff development programme, inadequate infrastructural facilities, strike actions, insecurity, poor computer literacy and poor research funding.

#### **3.1 Poor Motivation**

Motivation may be seen as the propelling force in the behaviour of individuals. It is believed that motivation is what makes people to undertake certain activities, persist in such activities and bring them to a conclusive end. According to Mullins (2007), motivation is the direction and persistence of actions of people over a long period of time and even in the face of challenges. Academic staff of Nigerian universities are poorly motivated. The salaries and other fringe benefits are not paid on time. Motivation goes with many things. One of the factors that motivate workers to work well is conducive working environment. Anna (2017) cited Handy (1997) stressed that comfortable workplace would lead workers to perform their jobs well. Handy listed the work environment that may inspire workers for job performance to include provision of adequate tools and equipment such as public address system, computer, resource materials for teaching and good offices. Handy also maintained that good working environment provides comfort to workers and boost their morale. On the other hand, bad working environment brings frustration and regret and it also negatively affects job performance of workers. Anna (2017) observed that in 2003, the



chartered management institute of Nigeria carried out a study on United Kingdom's Managers' attitude to and experience of their physical environment. The study made use of a random sample of 4000 managers in all sectors and size of organization. The research addressed the layout of offices and use of modern technologies. Others include, underequipped meeting rooms and lack of adequate meeting space. The study found out that nearly 50% of those who participated in the investigation said, they would forgo one week annual leave in order to get better office. Many of the respondents also said, they would forgo £1,000 in salary in order to get upgraded workspace. This research has clearly revealed the importance workers attach to good working environment. Another strong component of motivation is salaries. Anna (2017) submitted that it is believed that regular payment of workers' salaries (in this case, lecturers), will enable them meet their needs and thus be stimulated to work harder. In the same vein, incentives (such as study leave with pay, Christmas bonus, housing/vehicle loans and health facilities) may make lecturers more comfortable, improve their lifestyles and encourage them to perform their duties better. Lunenburg and Omstein (2014) observed that some of the variables that motivate workers towards effective job performance are good salary, praise, promotion and job security. Anna (2017) did a study that investigated motivation and job performance of lecturers of tertiary institutions in Nigeria. In order to investigate the problem, three hypotheses were formulated to guide the study. Two instruments were used, namely, "Lecturers' Motivation scale" and "Lecturers' Job Performance Scale". The findings showed that there was no significant relationship between lecturers' work environment and their job performance; there was significant relationship between lecturers' salary/incentives and job performance; there was significant relationship between lecturers' promotion and job performance. Dauda and Mohammed (2012) opined that job performance of academic staff is not only a function of ability (qualification) but also of motivation. Ogunode (2020) submitted that Nigerian lecturers are poor motivated and this is affecting their performance.

### **3.2 Teaching of Large Class**

Class size as an educational tool that can be used to describe the average number of students per class in a school. The teacher who is the classroom manager should therefore, have the number of students he/she can effectively control, supervise and teach at any given period. For the Universities in Nigeria, Alechenu (2012) reports that the National Universities Commission Benchmark Minimum Academic Standards (BMAS) of 2007 stipulated the following teacher/students ratio: 1:20 in science; 1:15 in Engineering and technology; 1:10 in medicine, veterinary medicine and pharmacy, 1:15 in agricultural and environmental sciences and 1:30 in education, management science, social sciences, law and arts. Even though these teaching staff/students ratios are provided by the benchmark based on carrying capacity, some universities admit students above the carrying capacity, thereby increasing the teacher/student ratio. This has a negative effect on the quality of university education in Nigeria. According to NEEDS (2014), the faculty-to-student ratio is very low in many Nigerian universities. For instance, the National Open University of Nigeria was reported to have a faculty-to-student ratio of 1:363; the University of Abuja, 1:122; and Lagos State University, 1:114. When compared with the faculty-to-student ratio of some highly rated universities such as Harvard University (1:4), Massachusetts Institute of Technology (1:9), Yale University (1:4) and Cambridge University (1:3), the reports concluded that the majority of universities in Nigeria were grossly understaffed. Nigerian academic staff are teaching large classes and this is affecting their performance.

### **3.3 Poor Staff Development Programme**

Poor capacity development is another problem facing majorities of the academic staff of Nigerian universities. Many lecturers in the Nigerian universities are not given the opportunities to access funds to develop themselves. Basil, Felix & Eno (2013) submitted that capacity building programmes have been adjudged to be critical factors in Nigerian universities, culminating in their positions as major determinants of lecturers' professional advancement. Apart from gaining pedagogical and content knowledge, lecturers' participation in the programmes enhances capacity building effectiveness in universities. It transforms role performance abilities and skills of lecturers in such a way and manner that they meet and fit adequately in the challenges of their jobs. Without

it, a missing gap evolves whereby universities become shadows of themselves. Capacity building has three different dimensions namely: building awareness, building analytical capacity and building decision-making capacity. Building awareness involves offering activities, presenting new topics or demonstrating new methods through workshops, seminars and conferences. The presentations are meant to create awareness about a particular activity, topic or method so as to enable beneficiaries apply them in performing assigned tasks. Building analytical capacity involves designing a capacity building programme using interactive style of presentation. It uses exercises, case studies, field visits and other elements of experiential learning, which promote critical thinking among the beneficiaries. Building decision-making capacity has to do with laying emphasis on learning-by-doing as well as formal education. The beneficiaries are exposed to professionals to receive training on project completion. By so doing, the beneficiaries acquire learning-by-doing experiences. These have different targets: human capacities and institutional capacities. Each one involves different stakeholder groups and requires a different strategy. A lot of capacity building activities that is currently offered through workshops, seminars and conferences remain at an awareness raising level. It is the analytical and decision-making capacities that are needed to sustain a constant process of change (United Nations Environment Programme, 2006). Basil, Felix & Eno (2013) did a study that examined university lecturers' participation in capacity building programmes in south-south Nigeria and its implication for sustainable development. It focuses on the extent of lecturers' participation in workshops, seminars, conferences, ICT training and mentoring aspects of capacity building programmes. One research question and two hypotheses were drawn to direct this investigation. Findings revealed that university lecturers participate mostly in conferences than any other capacity building programme. Lecturers' participation in capacity building programmes is significantly low with respect to workshops, seminars, conferences, ICT training and mentoring. There is no significant difference between male and female lecturers' participation in capacity building programmes. It was recommended that enabling environment should be provided whereby university lecturers are encouraged to participate fully in capacity building programmes. Udeaja (2005) described the reoccurring decimal especially since 1998, as a result of this, universities find it cumbersome to sponsor their lecturers to these programmes or even organize some themselves, with a consequence of low capacity building to universities. However, it is pertinent to point out that poor funding affects lecturers' participation in workshops, seminars, conferences and ICT training, and not mentoring.

### **3.4 Inadequate Infrastructural Facilities**

Inadequate infrastructural facilities is another fundamental challenge facing the academic staff of Nigerian universities. Infrastructural facilities refers to those social capital that aids delivering of teaching, researching and other academic services in the educational institutions. Infrastructural facilities includes classrooms, offices, lectures halls, sport ground, light, water, good roads, ICT facilities etc. Many academic and non-academic staff in the Nigerian universities do not have offices to discharge their academic services effectively due to inadequate infrastructural facilities in the many universities in the country. Many academic staff share offices and some do not even have while many non-teaching staff seat under the trees and roam about from one office to the other because they don't have office to sit. Many academic staff do not have constant light in their offices and internet services to support their online teaching programme. Obemeata (1991) submitted in his study that office spaces for academic staff and lecture rooms or halls are inadequate in our universities. Fatuzzo (2017) observed that the tertiary institutions in Nigeria seem to be grappling with the challenges of engaging their workforce especially the academic staff due to frustrating work conditions arising from inadequate or lack of teaching and research facilities, poor remuneration, unfavorable policies like high imposition of taxes, and poor job security with non pensionable salary. These challenges may have culminated into poor performance in the University ranking. The Nigerian universities lack of sufficient facilities and equipment to effectively deliver teaching and research programme. Nwagwu (1997) opined that our institutions of higher learning are characterized by under-funding, poor working environments, poor conditions of service, inadequate infrastructural facilities and ineffective management of financial resources. This

scenario could impact negatively on lecturers' jobs involvement and productivity.

### **3.5 Strike Actions**

Strike actions by different union groups in the Nigerian universities is also frustrating the activities of academic staff of Nigerian universities. Many academic staff cannot function or discharge their responsibilities whenever there is strike actions either by the NASU or ASUU. Strike actions affects the teaching and research programme of academic staff. Strike actions caused unstable academic programme. Okoli, Ogbondah, & Ewor, (2016) observed that it has become a known fact that students across various universities in Nigeria are constantly faced with industrial actions embarked upon by the Academic and Non-Academic Staff Unions of various institutions. The disagreement or lack of understanding between government and unions arising from non-implementation of agreement reached, often results in deadlock that usually disrupts academic calendar. As academic activities are suspended for a long period, the students reading abilities fell. Even the previous knowledge acquired is even forgotten by some students. This mostly turns some students into certificates seekers than knowledge seekers. During the strike action, both the students, academic staff and non-academics staff are displaced from carrying out their functions. Students will not be learning and lecturers will not teach and all academic services are put to hold. The implication of strike actions on the academic staff is that they waste their academic time while on the students is prolong their academic programme.

### **3.6 Insecurity**

Insecurity problem is another problem facing many academic staff and non-academic staff of Nigerian universities. Many academic and non-academic staff have been killed and kidnapped by criminals especially the activities of the Islamic sect (Boko Haram) within the educational institutions where they are working. Insecurity have affected the entire education system in some part of the country. Many universities have been shut down in North-east part of Nigeria due to insecurity. Many higher institutions have also be closed down due to continuous attack on the school human and materials resources. Obi, (2015) observed that insecurity and terrorism has been a major challenge to the Nigerian government in recent times. The activities of the Islamic sect (Boko Haram) had led to loss of lives and properties in the country especially in the Northern part of Nigeria. Some of these activities include bombing, suicide bomb attacks, sporadic shooting of unarmed and innocent citizens, burning of police stations, churches, kidnapping of school girls and women, etc. Kidnapping, rape, armed robbery and political crises, murder, destruction of oil facilities by Niger Delta militants alongside the attacks carried out by Fulani Herdsmen on some communities in the North and South have been another major insecurity challenge facing the country. Nigeria has been included among one of the terrorist countries of the world. Many lives and properties have been lost and a large number of citizens rendered homeless. Families have lost their loved ones. Many women are now widows. Children become orphans with no hope of the future. This has implications for national development. The Police Command in Plateau has confirmed the killing of Nandi Drenkat, a lecturer with the University of Jos, by gunmen (Alafrica, 2020). International and local media reported that on January 16, 2017, two Boko Haram child suicide attackers detonated their devices at the University of Maiduguri, killing at least four people, including one professor, and injuring 15 more (Scholars at Risk Network, 2017)

### **3.7 Poor Computer Literacy**

Another problem the academic staff of the Nigerian universities are facing is the problem of inadequate ICT facilities. Adeyemi & Mary, (2013) observed that the information and Communications Technology (ICT) is the technology that has brought excitement to teaching, learning and research. It has become a major educational technology. In its simplest form, it can be used to prepare and reproduce handouts or make presentations of learning materials as slides in lecture rooms. At a higher level, ICT could be used in such instructional modes as e-learning. It is unfortunate that many lecturers in the Nigerian universities are not have adequate ICT facilities in their offices to be used for delivering of lecture or teaching. A research showed that access of staff to computers in a faculty of education within Nigerian tertiary institutions, specifically academic staff needs ICT for their numerous tasks which includes: students' assessments; exams and records,

administration for managerial purposes, design and development of tertiary institutions website; and etc. (Umar, &Rosnaini 2018, Beda et al., 2012).The study was aimed to find out the staff/computer ratio. A total of five departments were considered. The number of staff with computers in their offices in four out of these five departments is quite low, as low as 1:5, that is one computer to five staff members. The ideal staff-computer ratio should be 1: 1 which will enable staff to use ICT as a tool for delivery of education. Sadly, no university in Nigeria, as at today, has this ideal ratio (Adeyemi& Mary, 2013).Many staff in the Nigerian tertiary institutions are not Computer literate and it is disappointing in this modern digital era (Umar &Rosnaini 2018, Idowu, Esere, &Iruloh, (2017). Another problem facing the academic staff in term of the application of ICT for delivering of lecture is the problem of poor ICT literacy rate among the academic staff. A study was also carried out to investigate computing skills and the areas of application of the computing systems for teaching. The results of the study indicated that only eight (8) of the users could operate the computer systems unaided. Twenty six (26) of them have been able to access relevant reference materials for paper publishing, while only four (4) have published internationally through the Internet. Majority of them have received and sent social and academic messages through the e-mail services. These results emphasize the need to train lecturers in the use of the internet for the accruable benefits of carrying out viable studies/researches and publishing with international outlets (Adeyemi& Mary, 2013).Many lecturers in Nigerian tertiary institutions have never use computers in their lives as such they are terribly shy when they are confronted with this new technology and the terminology related with using them (Umar &Rosnaini 2018, Ajegbelen, 2016).

### **3.8 Poor Research Programme**

One of the cardinal programme and core functions of the academic staff is carrying out research. Over the world, lecturers are known for carrying out research frequently, it is unfortunate that academic staff of many Nigerian universities are not carrying out research due to poor funding of research programme and lack of conducive environment. This is confirmed by Okoli, Ogbondah, and Ewor, (2016) who affirmed the poor attitude of governments towards research and inadequate funding of research programs. Mercy (2001) also pointed out that research programs in Nigerian Universities have not given enough priorities it deserves. One of the functions of the Universities is to engaged in research programs and solve the social, economic, and political challenges affecting the Nation through their findings. Due to the poor research programs and lack of research capital, many young researchers are discouraged to embark on researches. Donwa (2006) reports that the average annual allocation to federal universities for recurrent expenditure is 0.4% of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and 5% of this allocation, is to be used for research. This report shows that research funding by government is less than 1% GDP and this is grossly inadequate for meaningful research. Thus, the amount of research funding by government is a function of the total funding for recurrent expenditure in the Universities.

### **4.0 Ways Forward**

To solve these challenges, this article recommends: that the government should increase the funding universities education, increase the funding of research programme, motivate the academic staff, provide effective staff development programme, provide more infrastructural facilities, implement union agreement, provide adequate security and capacity development programme on ICT.

#### **4.1 Adequate Funding of Universities**

The government should increase the funding of the universities. This will enable universities administrators to provide adequate infrastructural facilities that will support delivering of teaching and researching. Basil, Felix &Eno (2013) submitted that funding of universities by government should be improved upon by meeting the UNESCO benchmark of 26 percent of annual budgets. This will place the universities on sound footing to successfully meet the present challenges without compromising that of the future. It should be realized that university education is capital intensive. Without adequate funding, universities will exist as shadows of what university education is all about. Not only that, we as a nation, will only succeed in churning out young men and women as



graduates who will not possess or possess poor communication skills, problem solving abilities and application of creativity in managing life situations – necessities relevant in the present world realities. University authorities should look inwards by sourcing for funds to organize workshops, seminars and conferences internally. This will enable lecturers who may not have the opportunity to participate in external ones to participate in the internal ones. As such, the benefits lecturers derive from participating in external capacity building programmes will be available internally. This will also enable them enhance their job performance capacity and also contribute towards the growth and development of universities. This will no doubt, go a long way in promoting the potential continuity of universities in this zone and other parts of Nigeria, and also give them the leverage to occupy a pride of place among their peers in the world.

#### **4.2 Adequate Funding of Research Programme**

Research programme is the second cardinal programme of the universities and it is use to rank the universities performance. Effective research development in the higher institutions is key to the development of the entire country. So, the government should increase the funding of research programme in the universities to allow more academic staff carry out researches in their various field.

#### **4.3 Good Motivation Packages**

Motivation is key to the improvement of the performance of workers in any institutions. A motivated staff will perform more and produce more result than an unmotivated staff. The government should formulate good welfare packages for academic staff of Nigerian universities. This will prevent brain-drain in the system. Conducive working environment should be provided and salaries and other benefits should be paid on time. Academic staff need a conducive working environment with quality facilities that can facilitate teaching, research, knowledge creation and management. Providing functional and quality facilities and effectively managing them will boost lecturers' morale and increase their job involvement and productivity (Charles,2012).

#### **4.4 Effective Staff Development Programme**

The government should ensure adequate resources are provided for staff development programme to allow more lecturers enjoy the training. Basil, Felix & Eno (2013) submitted that enabling environment should be created in universities whereby lecturers are encouraged to participate massively in workshops, seminars and conferences organised externally. This will not only equip them with new skills, techniques, knowledge and experiences necessary to enhance or build their job performance capacity at the individual levels. The capacity derived from these programmes by lecturers can place them on a better pedestal to tackle present and future challenges in their jobs. For universities, lecturers' participation in these programmes will give them the enablement to be relevant in the present time as well as in the future - a measure that will enhance their rankings both within and outside the country.

#### **4.5 Adequate Infrastructural Facilities**

The government should provide more adequate infrastructural facilities in the universities. This will enable academic and non-academic staff have adequate offices. According to Sullivan and Sheffrin (2003) infrastructure is a term used to refer to products, services and facilities that are needed for an institution to function. It therefore means that the ability of the school system to achieve her objectives depends on the availability of these products. Infrastructures are very important for learning to take place in any educational institution. Eseyin, Okaforand Uchendu (2014) stated that "Infrastructures play a significant role in the provision of quality education in any nation". They aid in the dissemination, assimilation and transmission of knowledge. So, the government should provide adequate infrastructural facilities in all the higher institutions to enable academic and non-academic staff carry out their functions without any challenges.

#### **4.6 Implementation of Union Agreement**

To achieve a stable academic programme and calendar in the Nigerian universities, the government should implement all agreement signed with different union groups in the country. This will help to realize the stable academic programme in all the universities across the country.

#### **4.7 Adequate Security**

No any meaningful teaching and learning can take place in an insecure environment. For effective delivering of academic and non-academic service to be actualized in the Nigerian universities, there must be a secured learning environment. The government should provide adequate security in all the universities especially for those in the Northeast Nigeria. This will make academic staff discharge their functions very well.

#### **4.8 Capacity Development Programme on ICT**

The government through the National Universities Commission should develop policies and programme to ensure that training and retraining programme on ICT are provided for both academic and non-academic staff in the Universities. Basil, Felix & Eno (2013) recommended that ICT training of lecturers in universities should be accorded a top priority by university authorities. This should be done by providing ICT facilities as well as sponsoring lecturers to participate in the training both within and outside the campus. This has become necessary because ICT is relevant in virtually every academic work, ranging from classroom teaching and management of students' results to research productivity. Therefore, exposure to training in ICT on the part of lecturers will enable them carry out their job responsibilities uninterruptedly and without hindrance as well as sustain their interest in their respective university jobs. This will accord the universities the opportunity to function effectively, meet their present needs and that of the society without jeopardizing the future needs.

#### **5.0 Conclusion**

The academic staff are the engine room of the universities and they need to be motivated to work well. It is unfortunate that the academic staff of the Nigerian universities are facing many challenges. This article discussed the problems facing the academic staff of Nigerian universities. The following were identified as the problems facing the academic staff: poor motivation, teaching of large class, poor staff development programme, inadequate infrastructural facilities, strike actions, insecurity, poor computer literacy and poor research funding. To solve this challenges, this article recommends: that the government should increase the funding of university education, increase the funding of research programme, motivate the academic staff, provision of effective staff development programme, provision of infrastructural facilities, implementation of union agreement, provision of adequate security and capacity development programme on ICT.

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