

Investigation into Causes of Inadequate Academic Staff in Public Universities in North-Central Nigeria

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Anatatsiya: The study investigated causes of inadequate academic staff in Public Universities in North-Central, Nigeria. The researchers used descriptive research survey design for the study. The study comprised a population of two hundred (200) respondents which was made up of academic staff selected from four public universities in North-central, Nigeria. Purposive, Stratified and systematic sampling technique was used to select the sample population from the all the public universities in the region. A structured questionnaire, titled the 'Investigation into causes of Inadequate Academic Staff Questionnaire' (ICIASQ) was used in collecting information for the study. The questionnaire contains 14 sub-question items, and the response options with values assigned to them are: YES and NO options. The reliability of the instrument was determined through the test re-test method. The scores of the first and second administrations were correlated using Pearson Product moment Correlation Co-efficient statistic and the correlation co-efficient value stood at 0.88 which was considered high enough to confirm the instrument is reliable. Data was collected by the questionnaire and were analyzed using percentage and chi-square. The study concludes that underfunding, poor manpower planning, poor motivation, government policy on embargo, corruption (Ghost worker) and strike action problems are the causes of inadequate academic staff in the public universities in North-central Nigeria and the implications of shortage of academic staff in public universities include poor implementation of teaching programme, high student-lecturers ratio, heavy workload for lecturers, poor local and international ranking, bad international image, poor coverage of scheme of work and poor academic programme accreditation. The study established there is significance relationship between inadequate academic staff and public universities performance in North-Central, Nigeria. The study recommended that the federal and state government should increase the funding of public universities in the region.

Kalit so'zlar: Academic staff, Higher Institutions, Public Universities.

Introduction

Ogunode (2020) defined Public universities as universities owned by the government. Public universities are universities established to provide post-secondary schools for Nigerian. Public universities are universities established by act of parliament to serve the interest of the general public. Public universities deal with the provision of teaching, research and communities services. The objectives of the universities in Nigerian higher education, including professional education has the following aims: the acquisition, development and inculcation of the proper value orientation for the survival of the individual and societies; the development of the intellectual capacities of individuals to understand and appreciate environment; the acquisition of both physical and intellectual skills which will enable individuals to develop into useful members of the community; the acquisition of an overview of the local and external environments (FGN, 2014). Public universities in Nigeria are grouped into federal and state owned universities.

The federal universities are owned by the federal government of Nigeria while the state universities are owned by the state government. The total number of federal and state public universities are 59 and 49 across the country (NUC, 2022). The realization of the universities' goals and objective depends on availability of quality human and materials resources. Ogunode & Adamu (2021) submitted that the quality of any higher institutions depends on the quality of academic staff its 'possesses for delivering of teaching and providing other academic services. The quality and quantities of academic staff higher institutions have are used to assess the quality of the higher institutions.

Academic staff are the teaching staff in the higher institutions. Academic staff are the implementer of the school curriculum and lecture presenter. Academic staff are the teachers and deliver of instruction in the higher institutions. Academic staff are the knowledge and character builders imparter in the higher institution. The academic staff are the engine room of the higher institutions. They are the pillar and foundation of the higher institutions. The academic staff determines the quality of the higher institutions as well as proper solutions to Nation Economic and social problems (Ogunode, Garba, Ajape 2021; Ogunode & Adamu 2021).

The functions of the academic staff include to lecture, to prepare the lecture note, to prepare the lesson note, source for instruction materials, gives assignment to students, to assess the students through continuous assessment and examination, set exams questions, marks the answer sheet, supervise students research work especially projects, theses and dissertation and prepares the students grade points. The academic staff conducts different levels of research, presents their findings and

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contribute to the development of knowledge in the higher institutions (Ogunode, Garba, Ajape 2021; Ogunode 2020; Ogunode & Adamu 2021).

Public universities in Nigeria are faced with the problems of shortage of academic staff (NEEDS, 2014; Ogunode, Ahmed, Gregory, & Abubakar 2020; Ogunode, Ezema & Olugbenga 2022; Ogunode & Ndayebom 2022; Ogunode, Akin-Ibidiran & Ibidiran 2022; **Tolu-Kolawole, 2021**).

(Ogunode & Abubakar 2020; Ogunode, Olugbenga, & Ezema, 2022; Ogunode & Chijindu, 2022; Ogunode, Ugochukwu & Iroegbu, 2022) submitted that inadequate lecturers is a serious problem facing all the higher institutions in Nigeria. Many higher institutions do not have adequate lecturers to deploy for teaching in the various institutions.

(Ogunode, 2020; Ogunode, & Isaac, 2021; Ogunode Akinjobi. & Musa, 2022) observed that inadequate academic staff is another major problem facing the administration of public universities in Nigeria. Many public universities in Nigeria are understaffed and lack the financial capacity to employ adequate staff. The Nigerian universities are faced with the problem of shortage of lecturers in many departments and faculties especially in programme like the sciences (Ogunode & Abubakar, 2020).

The Federal Government's needs assessment of Nigerian public universities carried out in (2012) articulated the shortage of qualified teachers in Nigerian universities. According to the reports, only about 43 percent of university lecturers have PhD qualifications. The remaining 57 percent have qualifications below PhD. Only seven universities have up to 60 percent of their teaching staff with PhD qualifications. There are universities with fewer than five professors. For instance, the Kano State University of Science and Technology, Wudil, established 11 years ago and has been turning out graduates, has only one teaching staff with a professor ranking and 25 lecturers who are PhD degree holders. Similarly, the Kebbi State University of Science and Technology, established in 2006, has only two teaching staff in the professor category and five lecturers who have PhD qualifications. (NEEDS, 2014, Federal Ministry of Education, 2012; Ogunode & Adamu 2021).

Recently, the (National Universities Commission 2022) submitted that 100,000 academic staff members were attending to 2.1 million students in Nigerian universities. The NUC disclosed that the commission is supervising over 200 universities consisting of 49 belonging to the Federal Government; 58 states and 99 private institutions. He said, "The entire system has about 2.1 million students and staff strength of about 170,000 non-teaching and 100,000 academic staff. "Some of the problems facing the system include increased running cost, meagre budgetary allocations, issue of power shortages and shortages of manpower (**Tolu-Kolawole, 2022**).

There are many factors responsible for shortage of academic staff in Nigerian public universities. Some of the factors according to (Ogunode 2020; Ogunode & Adamu, 2021; Aiyedun, Olatunde-Aiyedun, & Ogunode 2021) underfunding of the universities, corruptions, brain-drain, poor motivation, uncondusive working environment and lack of manpower planning.

(Ololube, 2016; Ogunode, Josiah, & Ajape (2021) observed that another causes of shortage of academic is corruption in the university administration. Because of the corruption practices in the recruitment processes in the Nigerian public universities, this result to the employment of unqualified staff resulting to shortage of professional teachers in the system. The problems of ghost workers in many public universities have also led to the shortage of staff in the system. (Dawood 2012) opines that the senior staffs such as the Head Teachers, Principals, Rectors, Provost and Vice-chancellors who are in charge of their institutions' funds do transferring these funds to their personal bank account for their personal use. They are also involved in placing ghost workers on salaries and over invoicing of given contracts.

Inadequate funding was identified as another causes of shortage of academic staff in Nigerian public universities by (Okoli, Ogbondah & Ewor 2016; Ogunode 2020; Ogunode & Onyekachi 2021; Ogunode, Abubakar & Ajape, 2021; Ifeanyi, Ogunode, & Ajape 2021; OhiareUdebu, Sarafadeen, & Abashi, 2022)

Strike actions was also identified as causes of shortage of lectures in the Nigerian public universities by (Ogunode, Ugochukwu, & Jegede, 2022; Lawal & Ogunode (2021); Ogunode 2020;)

(Ogunode, & Ajape 2021) observed that poor manpower planning is responsible for the shortage of lecturers in Nigerian higher institutions.

On implication of inadequate of academic staff in public universities, (Ogunode, 2020; Ogunode & Adamu 2021) submitted the implication of shortage of academic staff in the Nigerian public universities include high student –teacher ratio, poor learning, poor delivery of teaching, low productivities and poor quality of education.

(NEEDS 2014) opined that the shortage of lecturers in many departments and faculties is responsible for high teacher-student ratio in the Nigerian universities. The inadequate academic staff is preventing effective administration of public universities in Nigeria.

The understaffing of universities in Nigeria has serious implications for quality instruction and academic productivity in the institutions. The situation has led to an increasing culture of visiting lecturers in the system. The few available qualified lecturers are recycled as visiting, adjunct, sabbatical and contract lecturers to work in many universities at the same time. Many of them are always on the road travelling from one university town to another and unable to meet their primary obligations with their tenure-employer (NEEDS, 2014, Federal Ministry of Education, 2012; Ogunode & Adamu 2021).

Statement of Problems

Public universities in Nigerian are facing the challenges of providing quality education because of shortage of academic staff. It have been observed that many public universities in North-Central Nigeria are understaffed and this problem is affecting the implementation of teaching programme and provision of academic services to the students. (NUC 2022) submitted that “The entire university system in Nigeria has about 2.1 million students and staff strength of about 170,000 non-teaching and 100,000 academic staff. (NUC 2022; **Tolu-Kolawole, 2022**) went further to stressed that “some of the problems facing the university system include increased running cost, meagre budgetary allocations, issue of power shortages and shortages of manpower. Based on this problem identified, this study is aimed to investigate causes of inadequate academic staff in public universities in North-central Nigeria.

Research Objectives

The objectives of this study is to investigate causes of inadequate academic staff in Public Universities in North-Central, Nigeria .The specific objectives;

1. Assess the causes of inadequate academic staff in Public Universities in North-Central;
2. Identify the implications of inadequate academic staff in public Universities in North-Central

Research Questions

The following questions were formulated for the study:

1. What is causes of inadequate academic staff in Public Universities in North-Central?
2. What is the implications of inadequate academic staff in public Universities in North-Central?

Research Hypothesis

Based on the research questions raised, two hypotheses were formulated:

H1: There is no significant relationship between inadequate academic staff and public Universities performance in North-Central

Methodology

This research was carried out in North-central, Nigeria. The researchers used descriptive research survey design for the study. The study comprised a population of two hundred (200) respondents which made up of academic staff selected from four public universities in North-central, Nigeria. The study decided to use the academic staff because they are in the universities system. (50) academic staff from each of the four [public universities were selected for the study. Purposive, Stratified and systematic sampling technique was used to select the sample population from the all the public universities in the region. A structured questionnaire, titled the ‘Investigation into causes of inadequate academic staff Questionnaire’ (ICIASQ) was used in collecting information for the study. It is an open item questionnaire and is made up of two sections ‘A and B’. Section (A) explained the rating scale and instructions to the respondents on how to fill the questionnaire, while section (B) was organized in line with the two research questions of the study. The questionnaire contains 14 sub-question items, and the response options with values assigned to them are: YES and NO. To ensure the face and content validity of the instrument, two experts in the Department of Educational administration and Planning Nasarawa state University were sent copies of the questionnaire along with copies of the research questions. The researchers scrutinized the items in the questionnaire in terms of clarity and adequacy in addressing the purposes and research questions. Their suggestions were used to produce the final draft of the questionnaire used in this study. The reliability of the instrument was determined through the test re-test method. Twenty academic staff in Kano state university were administered twenty (20) copies of the instrument closer to Abuja and after one week, the questionnaire was re-administered to the same staff. The scores of the first and second administrations were correlated using Pearson Product moment Correlation Co-efficient statistic and the correlation co-efficient value stood at 0.88 which was considered high enough to confirm the instrument is reliable. Data was collected by the questionnaire and were analyzed using percentage and chi-square.

Data Analysis

Research Question one: The following are the causes of inadequate academic staff in public universities in North-central Nigeria.

Table one:

S/N	Item	YES	NO	Decision
1.	Underfunding	180(90%)	20(10%)	Accepted
2.	Poor Manpower planning	200(100%)	20(10%)	Accepted
3.	Poor Motivation	167(83.5%)	-	Accepted
4.	Insecurity Problem	155(77.5%)	33(16.5%)	Accepted
5.	Government policy (Embargo)	191 (95.5%)	45(22.5%)	Accepted
6.	Corruption (Ghost Workers)	168 (84%)	9(4.5%)	Accepted
7.	Strike actions problems	142(71%)	58 (29%)	Accepted

The result obtained indicated that item one to seven had 90%, 100% ,83.5%,77.5% ,95.5%, 84% and 71% as agreement to the question meaning agreement that underfunding, poor manpower planning, poor motivation, government policy on embargo, corruption (Ghost worker) and strike action problems are the causes of inadequate academic staff in the public universities in North-central Nigeria. This result revealed that respondents believes that that underfunding, poor manpower planning, poor motivation, government policy on embargo, corruption (Ghost worker) and strike action problems are the causes of inadequate academic staff in the public universities in North-central Nigeria.

Research Question Two: The following are the implication of inadequate academic staff in public universities in North-central Nigeria.

Table Two:

S/N	Item	YES	NO	Decision
1.	Poor teaching	200(100%)	-	Accepted
2.	High student-lectures ratio	200(100%)	-	Accepted
3.	Heavy workload for lectures	200(100%)	-	Accepted
4.	Poor ranking	200(100%)	-	Accepted
5.	Bad international image	200(100%)	-	Accepted
6.	Poor coverage of scheme of work	200(100%)	-	Accepted
7.	Responsible for poor accreditation of academic programme	200(100%)	-	Accepted

The data collected from table two on item one to seven revealed that item one, two, three, four, five, six and seven had 100% agreement that the implications of inadequate academic staff include poor implementation of teaching programme, high student-lecturers ratio, heavy workload for lecturers, poor local and international ranking, bad international image, poor coverage of scheme of work and poor academic programme accreditation. This implies respondents agrees that the implications of shortage of academic staff in public universities include poor implementation of teaching programme, high student-lecturers ratio, heavy workload for lecturers, poor local and international ranking, bad international image, poor coverage of scheme of work and poor academic programme accreditation.

Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis One:

H1: There is no significant relationship between inadequate academic staff and public universities performance in North-Central, Nigeria.

Table 3

N		Inadequate academic staff	Public Universities performance	tcal.	tcrit.	Remarks
Inadequate academic staff	200	1	.528	1.99	1.96	
Public Universities performance	200	.528	1			Rejected

Data presented on table 3, the t-calculated value of 1.99 is greater than t-critical value of 1.96 at 0.05 level of significance and 528 degree of freedom. Thus, the null hypothesis is rejected. Thus, there is significance relationship between inadequate academic staff and public universities performance in North-Central, Nigeria. This implies that there is significance relationship between inadequate academic staff and public universities performance.

Discussion

Result from research one question showed that underfunding, poor manpower planning, poor motivation, government policy on embargo, corruption (Ghost worker) and strike action problems are the causes of inadequate academic staff in the public universities in North-central Nigeria. This result is in line with the submission of (Ogunode 2020) and (Ogunode & Adamu (2021) who identified underfunding of the universities, corruptions, brain-drain, poor motivation, unconducive working environment and lack of manpower planning as factors responsible for shortage of academic staff in Nigerian universities.

Also, result obtained from research two question disclosed that that the implications of shortage of academic staff in public universities include poor implementation of teaching programme, high student-lecturers ratio, heavy workload for lecturers, poor local and international ranking, bad international image, poor coverage of scheme of work and poor academic programme accreditation. This result supported the discovered of (Ogunode 2020) and (Ogunode & Adamu (2021); (NEEDS,2014) who concluded that the effects of shortage of lecturers in the public higher institutions as high students-lecturers ratio, low productivities, poor quality of teaching, overcrowdness and poor quality of education.

Conclusion

Public universities in Nigeria are faced with the problem of shortage of academic staff especially in the North-central Nigeria. This study was conducted to investigate the causes of inadequate academic staff in public universities in North-central, Nigeria.

The study concludes that underfunding, poor manpower planning, poor motivation, government policy on embargo, corruption (Ghost worker) and strike action problems are the causes of inadequate academic staff in the public universities in North-central Nigeria and the implications of shortage of academic staff in public universities include poor implementation of teaching programme, high student-lecturers ratio, heavy workload for lecturers, poor local and international ranking, bad international image, poor coverage of scheme of work and poor academic programme accreditation. The study established that there was significance relationship between inadequate academic staff and public universities performance in North-Central, Nigeria.

Recommendations

Based on this findings, the study hereby recommended the following:

1. Adequate funding of public universities in the region;
2. National universities commission should come up with plans for massive production of academic and non-academic staff for universities in Nigeria.
3. Universities should be directed to offer master and PhD admission to people who are interested in academic work in the higher institutions.
4. The government should expand the in-service training for academic staff to upgrade their qualification. TETFund should increase training funds for academic staff to further their education.
5. The government should carry out staff auditing of all public universities and direct all anti-corruption agencies to monitor recruitment exercise in all higher institutions across the country to prevent corruption of ghost workers in the system.

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