

Shortage of Academic Staff in the Higher Institution of Learning in Nigeria

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Abstract: *This paper discussed the problems of shortage of academic staff in the higher institution in Nigerian. Secondary data were used in the paper. The secondary data were sourced from online and print resources. The article identified; inadequate funding, lack of strategic manpower planning, brain-drain, poor motivation, unconducive working environment and corruption as the reasons for shortage of academic staff in the Nigerian higher institutions. The paper also identified; low productivities, poor quality of teaching, overcrowdings, poor quality of education as the effects of shortage of academic staff in the Nigerian public higher institutions. In order to solve this problem identified. There two ways of solving them. Short term solution and long-term solutions. The short time solution includes: more funds should be release for higher institutions in the country for recruitment of academic staff, manpower planning for higher institutions, increase in the salaries and welfare packages of academic staff, provision of conducive working environment (constant supply of electricity and water, adequate teaching and research materials, and Internet connectivity with subscription to online journals and e-resources) and security. The long term solutions include: developing strategic manpower planning for higher institutions, in-service and staff development programme, post-graduate education should be limited to only academicians first and establishment of more post-graduate programme in the Nigerian universities as well as sponsorship of academic graduate assistant to PhD*

Keywords: *Academic Staff, Higher Institution, Shortage*

1. Introduction

Public educational institutions are government owned educational institutions. They include all the forms of education owned by the government. Public educational institutions are

established to provide educational services to the public. The objectives of establishing them is not to make profit but to provide public service for the citizens. The examples of public educational institutions include; the public early child education centres, the primary schools, the junior secondary schools, the senior secondary school and the higher institutions (Ogunode, Ahmed, Gregory, & Abubakar 2020). However, one of the objective is desired as they are often there to profit making rather than providing services to the citizen.

Higher education is an organized education for the production of manpower for the social, economic and technological development of the country. Higher education is the post-secondary school education. Higher education is an advance education that deals with teaching, research and provision of community services. The National Policy on Education (2014) defines Higher Education as the Post -Secondary Section of the National education system, which is Universities, Polytechnics and Colleges of Technology including courses as 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), the 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.

The objectives of higher education according to National policy (2014) includes: 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; and the acquisition of an overview of the local and external environments.

To ensure effective administration of higher institutions in Nigeria, the federal government established some commissions and agencies for the external administration and supervision. The commissions include National Universities Commission (NUC) for universities, National Commission of Colleges of Education (NCCE) for Colleges of education and National Board for Technical Education (NBTE) for the administration of Poly-technique education.

This higher education is designed and structured to function with human and materials resources. The materials resources include; administrative blocks, offices, ICT facilities, libraries, water, electricity, internet services, classrooms, instructional materials etc while the human resource include the teaching and non-teaching staff. The teaching staff which are called academic staff.

The public higher institutions in Nigeria are plagued with many challenges. One of such crucial challenges include the shortage of academic staff. Ogunode & Abubakar (2020) observed that there are many problems facing universities administration in Nigeria. Some of these problems include; inadequate lecturers, inadequate funding, inadequate infrastructural facilities, brain-drain, incessant strike actions by the universities unions, institutional corruption, insecurity problems, weak administrators and poor capacity development lecturer, political interference in the universities administration, indiscriminate issuance of licenses for establishing new universities, universities autonomy dilemma and poor Internally Generated Revenue (IGR). This paper is aimed to discuss the problem of shortage of academic staff in Nigeria. Among things to

examine is: causes of shortage of academics, effects and solutions in the Nigerian public higher institutions.

2.0 Concept Clarification

Shortage: refers to a shortfall in the total number of individuals in the labor force, and sometimes denotes the possible mismatch between workers and jobs in the economy. It can also be said to be the amount of labor that workers are willing to supply is less than employers are willing to buy at the prevailing wage. If the quantity of labor offered exceeds the quantity that firms wish to purchase, there is a surplus, and if the quantity of labor desired by firms exceeds the amount workers offer at the prevailing price, there is a shortage

Academic Staff: Staff who are engaged to undertake teaching research and scholarship and/or related academic duties. It can also be said to be a member of staff of a higher education provider who is appointed wholly or principally to undertake a teaching and/or research function.

Higher Education: is tertiary education leading to award of an academic degree. Higher education, also called post-secondary education, third-level or tertiary education, is an optional final stage of formal learning that occurs after completion of secondary education. It represents levels 6, 7 and 8 of the 2011 version of the International Standard Classification of Education structure. Tertiary education at a non-degree level is sometimes referred to as further education or continuing education as distinct from higher education.

2.1 Concept of Academic Staff

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 e.g. Boko haram and food security, COVID 19 and the economy.

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 contribute to the development of knowledge in the higher institutions.

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 (Ogunode, Jegede & Abubakar, 2020)

The quality of any higher institutions depends on the quality of academic staff its possessed 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.

Ogunode & Abubakar (2020a) 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. The shortage of lecturer is responsible for the poor quality of teaching and learning in most Nigerian higher institutions. Ogunode, Ahmed, Gregory, & Abubakar (2020) also observed that teachers are fundamental to effective delivering of teaching programme in the educational institutions. The teachers' place in the educational institutions cannot be replaced. Teachers are the implementer of the curricular. The teacher plans the lesson, organizes the instructional resources and deliver the lesson. The teachers ensures the students learn the right knowledge and skills through the process of teaching and learning. Teachers are found in all the educational institutions. It is unfortunate that as important as the teachers to the development of education, in Nigeria, the professional teachers are not adequate in all the forms of educational institutions particularly the higher institution of learning which produce the teachers.

2.2 Level of Availability of Academic staff in Nigerian Higher Institutions

The most recent assessment of manpower needs of Nigerian public universities was conducted in 2012 by an interministerial committee set up by the Federal Government. The purpose of the assessment was to elicit information on issues of concern to university education in order to formulate policies and take decisions for addressing such issues. The exercise was conducted to determine, among other issues, the quantity and quality of academic staff required for effective teaching and learning in Nigerian universities. It was intended to be an appraisal of the existing situation in the university subsector with a view to determining what was needed for revitalization and transformation (NEEDS,2014).

The report indicated that as at November 2012, there were 37,504 academic staff in 74 public universities in Nigeria. Considering the number of staff vis-à-vis the student population, the report revealed an unmanageable lecturer-to-student ratio. For example, at the National Open University the academic staff-to-student ratio was 1:363, at Lagos State University the ratio was 1:144, and at the University of Abuja the ratio was 1:122. Kano State University, which was 11 years old at the time of the needs assessment period, had one professor and 25 lecturers with PhD degrees, while Kebbi State University had two professors and five lecturers with doctorate degrees. These statistics revealed wide disparities between Nigerian universities and their counterparts in other parts of the world. For instance, the staff-to-student ratio in Harvard University is 1:4, Massachusetts Institute of Technology has 1:9 ratio and the University of Cambridge has 1:3 (NEEDS,2014).

Table 1.1: Number and composition of personnel in the education sector

Sector and subsector	Number of schools	Student enrolment	Teaching Staff			Teacher-to-student ratio	Non Teaching Staff			Total
			Male	Female	Total		Male	Female	Total	
COE	95	338,237	11,656 (76.0%)	3,688 (24.0%)	15,344	1:22	14,063 (59.2%)	9,699 (40.8%)	23,762	39,106
Poly	45	166,121	4,721 (84.0%)	915 (16.0%)	5,636	1:30	-	-	-	5,636
Univer	79	1,252,913	31,128 (83.0%)	6,376 (17.0%)	37,504	1:33	-	-	77,511	115,015

The data also reveals an acute teacher shortage at the tertiary level. At the Colleges of education, 95 public colleges of education with population of students of 338,237 and teaching staff of 15,344 and teacher-students ratio of 1:22. For Polytechniques, there 45 public polytechniques with students enrolment of 166,121 and teaching staff of 5,636 while there are 37,504 teachers in the nation's public universities with a student enrolment of 1,252,913, representing a teacher-to-student ratio of 1:33. The shortage of academic staff in the Nigerian institutions in Nigeria is responsible for the faculty-to-student ratio that is very low. 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 (NEEDS,2014).

The data in Table 1.1 also reveals some facts about the composition of personnel in the education sector. As shown in the table, there is more support or non-teaching staff than lecturers in the tertiary education subsector. Gender disparities in favour of male teachers are more pronounced in tertiary education, as only 24 per cent and 17 per cent of lecturers in colleges of education and universities, respectively, are female teachers.

Table 1.2 On Proportion of Qualified and Unqualified Teachers in the Sector

Sub sector	With qualification lower than NCE	With NCE qualification	With HND	Bachelor's degree holder	Master's degree holder	PhD holder	Total
COE			969 (6.3%)	7,099 (46.2%)	6,048 (39.4%)	802 (5.2%)	15,344
POLY	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Universities					21,377 (57.0%)	16,126 (43.0%)	37,504

Sources: FME, 2011; NCCE, 2011. NEEDS,2014

Table 1.3 Distribution of Qualified and Unqualified Teachers

Sector and subsector	Number of students	Total number of teachers	Number of qualified teachers (%)	Number of unqualified teachers (%)
COE	338,237	15,344	6,850 (44.6%)	8,494 (55.4%)
Poly	-	-	-	-
Universities	1,252,913	37,504	16,126 (43.0%)	21,377 (57.0%)

Sources: FME, 2011; NCCE, 2011,NEEDS,2014.

The table 1.3 showed that 55.4% of teachers in the Nigerian Colleges of education are not qualified while at the public universities 57.0% of the teaching staff are not professional teachers. NEEDS, (2014) submitted that the proportion of unqualified teachers is higher in the tertiary level. More than 50 per cent of teachers in colleges of education and universities did not possess the minimum qualifications for teaching at these levels.

Federal Government's needs assessment of Nigerian public universities (2012) revealed only about 43 per cent of university lecturers have PhD qualifications. The remaining 57 per cent have qualifications below PhD. Only seven universities have up to 60 per cent 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).

Table 1.4 Qualitative Analysis of Extent and Areas of Teacher Shortage

Subsector	None	Mild	Acute	Very Acute
COE		Primary education, technical education, physical and health education, business studies, social science education, arts education, science education, vocational education	Computer education	Early childhood education, special education
POLY	Business studies, finance and related studies	Engineering technology, hospitality studies	Environmental design studies	Health and related technology
Universities	Administration, management, arts, education, social sciences	Agriculture, sciences, environmental sciences	Computer science, technology	Law, engineering, medicine, surgery

Source: NEEDS, 2014.

Table 1.4, disclosed that in the tertiary level, there was acute shortage of academic staff in disciplines such as special education and early childhood development, while the polytechnic subsector reported a very acute shortage of teaching staff in health technology. Data from the NUC revealed that universities experience an acute shortage of teaching staff in computer science and technology-based disciplines, but teaching staff shortage is very acute in disciplines such as law, engineering, medicine and surgery. These shortages are attributed to several reasons, such as poor incentives for serving teachers, inadequate turnout of teachers in these subjects by teacher-training institutions in the country, and the exodus of lecturers to Western countries in search of greener pastures (NEEDS,2014).

Table 1.5: Teacher Shortage in Nigeria

Sector and subsector	Number of students	Total number of available	Total number of teachers	Shortage
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		teachers	required	
COE	338,237	15,344	16,878	1,534
Poly	166,121	5,636	8,454	2,818
Universities	1,252,913	37,504	61,881	24,377

Source: NEEDS, 2014.

Table 1.5 showed that at colleges of education, there was teacher shortage of 1,534 and teacher, teachers available 15,344 and teachers required is 16,878. At the polytechniques, there was teacher shortage of 2,818, teachers available 5,636 and teachers required is 8,454 while at the public universities, teachers shortage is 24,377 and teachers available is 37,504. It has been estimated that additional 22,496 teachers will be required to improve quality of teaching and academic productivity in Nigerian universities (NEEDS, 2014). Findings from quantitative data and analysis of in-depth interviews with key informants reveal that in the majority of tertiary educational institutions in Nigeria there is a scarcity of qualified academic staff to undertake quality research and effective teaching. Skill gaps in this regard were more pronounced in science-based than humanity-based disciplines (NEEDS, 2014).

3.0 Causes of Shortage of Academic Staff in the Nigerian Higher Institutions

There are many factors responsible for shortage of professional teachers in higher institutions in Nigeria. Some of them include: inadequate funding, lack of strategic manpower planning, brain-drain, poor motivation, unconducive working environment and corruption.

3.1. Inadequate Funding

Inadequate funding of public higher institutions in Nigeria is responsible for the shortage of academic staff. The public higher institutions in Nigeria are underfunded. The inability of the government to implement the recommendation of the UNESCO 26% annual budget allocation for education for the developing countries like Nigeria is affecting the development of higher education. Due to inadequate funds in the system, the school administrators cannot employ adequate academic staff required to implement the teaching programme as expected. Ogunode, Ahmed, Gregory, & Abubakar (2020) concluded that the poor funding of education is responsible for the poor quality of the Universities education in Nigeria. The annual budget for the administration of universities in the country is not adequate to provide the needed infrastructural facilities and human resources that the various universities required to function properly. The underfunding of the university system in the country is also responsible for poor researching and ineffective teaching. Ogunode & Abubakar (2020), Okoli, Ogbondah, & Ewor, (2016), Ogbondah (2010) and Uzoka, (2007) all are in agreement that inadequate funding is a major problem facing the university education in Nigeria. This can be seen in the ASUU and other students union going on strike frequently on the issues of funding staff welfare and infrastructure.

3.2 Lack of Strategic Manpower Planning

The lack of sound strategic manpower planning for the production of manpower for the nation's higher institutions is another reason for the shortage of academic staff in the Nigerian higher institutions. The Nigerian government through the various commissions established to oversee the administration of higher institutions in the country have not designed an implementable road map for the production of adequate manpower for the higher institutions in the country. The inability of these agencies to draw the strategic plans of ensuring the production of the right manpower for the higher institutions is responsible for the shortage of academic staff in the Nigerian public higher institutions. Research findings have also shown that Nigerian teachers are almost always in short supply in schools, and their turnover is high because they tend to leave the teaching profession if and when more attractive jobs become available in government, politics or private enterprises (Aghenta, 2001; Adeyemi, 2008). Lack of manpower planning, Brain-drain and poor working environment in the higher institutions in the country responsible for inadequate lecturers (Ogunode, Ahmed, Gregory, & Abubakar (2020). The various government agencies responsible for this higher institution are only on paper, this may be due to political involvement of top politician of like and will.

3.3 Brain-Drain

Brain-drain problem is another major factor responsible for the challenge of inadequate academic staff in the Nigerian public higher institutions. Brain drain refers to massive movement of professional (academician) from developing countries to developed countries for a better employment opportunities and security. Hundreds of academician are leaving the Nigerian public higher institutions especially the universities leaving to the institutions starve of lecturers. The mass movement of lecturers to other sector of the economic like the banking sector and oil sector is responsible for the shortage of academic staff in the Nigerian public higher institutions. Ogunode & Abubakar (2020) opined that the massive movement of these lecturers is causing major lecturer gap in the Nigerian higher institutions especially the sciences programme. Bangura (1994) reveals that between 1988 and 1990, over 1000 lecturers left the federal university system in Nigeria. According to Saint et al. (2003), various factors have combined to cause these staffing difficulties. One has been the relatively low level of academic salaries during the past decade and the declining financial attractions of university employment in comparison to other opportunities. Another has been the rising workloads associated with deteriorating staff/student ratios. It must be emphasized that while the best brains are leaving the university system, the broad aim of producing high level manpower from the system for national development cannot be achieved. Many researchers like Odetunde (2004), Oni (2000) Akindutire (2004) also support this view that brain-drain is another major problem facing the administration and management of the universities.

3.4 Poor Motivation

Poor motivation is another fundamental reason for shortage of academic staff in the Nigerian public higher institutions. Academic staff working in the Nigerian higher institutions are poorly motivated. Their salaries are not good like other professionals, their working condition and welfare packages is poor and their salaries are not paid until. Many qualified trained teachers will

not want to work in the educational institutions in Nigeria because of the level of motivation they are getting from the government. Stakeholders attributed skill and personnel shortage to a number of factors, among which are poor salaries and low social prestige accorded teachers especially at the basic level of the education sector. Respondents expressed the view that teaching is generally viewed as the last resort of job-seekers because of the harsh economic realities and poor prestige accorded teachers in the society. Most newly recruited teachers would not mind leaving the profession if and when more attractive jobs become available in the public and private sectors (NEEDS,2014). Ogunode, Ahmed, Gregory, & Abubakar (2020) opined that there are many reasons responsible for shortage of academic staff in the Nigerian universities, some of the reasons include; low salaries and poor motivation compare to other institutions in the country where they pay high salaries and allowances.

3.5 Unconducive Working Environment

Unconducive working environment is another strong reason responsible for the shortage of academic staff in the Nigerian higher institutions. The public higher institutions in the country do not have the adequate infrastructural facilities that attracts professional to work there. Many public higher institutions do not have adequate offices for both academic staff and non-academic staff to enable them carry out their functions. Many lecturers teaches without facilities to practical because of lack of laboratories and many academic staff cannot use electricity and internet services to carry out their work effectively because the services are poor and unstable. Many lecturers are leaving the public higher institutions because of the unconducive working environment causing shortage in the system. Udida, Bassey, Udofia, & Egbona.2009) cited Akuezilo, (2007) who notes that the root disturbing problems of performance and sustenance of higher education in the country could be related to environment. It has been observed that many academic staff has been employed without the adequate designed facilities to cope with and perform their job. This condition among others has resulted in systems poor performance and sustainability of the credible tempo of community service. This can be seen in many Universities as professor sit under trees to discuss with their project supervisee and other lecturer because office accommodation.

3.6 Corruption

Corruption is another factor responsible for shortage of academic staff in the Nigerian public higher institutions. The forms of corruption practices that responsible for shortage of academic staff in the higher institutions include; funds diversion, ghost workers and recruitment fraud. Funds released for the employment of academic staff are been looted by some administrators and principals officers of the institutions. Some school administrators are using fake names to collect salaries for people that are supposed to be employed in the system. The politician hacked recruitment process in the various higher institutions by sending their less qualified candidate for employment in the system. The high level of corruption in the administration of higher institutions in Nigeria also contributing to the shortage of academic staff in the various institutions of education. Ogunode, Ahmed, Gregory, & Abubakar (2020) submitted that corruption have penetrated all most all the public institutions in the country in including

education. Corruption is one of the major problem facing the educational institutions. Institutional corruption is the problem preventing effective administration of education in Nigeria because funds allocated for provision of infrastructural facilities and services in the management and implementation of educational programme are been diverted by officers or political office holder within the institutions. The common forms of corrupting in the Nigerian educational institutions is fund diversion. Corruption on fund diversion have been reported in all the forms of education in Nigeria. Ogunode, Ahmed, Gregory, & Abubakar (2020) observed that the implication of this is that education quality will not be assured since funds meant for services like recruitment of teachers, procurement of instructional materials and for supervision services are not delicious used for the purpose but been diverted to private. It will be difficult to achieve the objectives of education in the situation. Many researchers in their respective papers agreed that corruption is a challenge facing the higher institutions in Nigeria (Ogunode, Ahmed, Gregory, & Abubakar 2020, Ogunode,2020 & Abubakar, 2020, Ogbondah 2010 and Dare 2008).

4.0 Effects of Shortage of Academic Staff

The effects of shortage of professional teachers in the higher institutions include: low productivities, poor quality of teaching, overcrowdness and poor quality of education.

4.1 Low Productivities

The low productivities of many academic staff in the Nigerian public higher institutions is as result of shortage of academic staff. Many lecturers are performing below expectation because they are over used in the system. When a lecturers teaches more than three hundred students, supervises projects and perform other academic services within a shortage time. The lecturers productive will fall and be performing less. Some lecturers are to lecturers in post-graduate school, lecture undergraduate and still lecture in distance learning programme. 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 lecturership 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 (Federal Ministry of Education, 2012) now with the coming of IPPIS, the government is implementing and ASUU is disagreeing with the system may likely become worse than before because people may be running out of educational system to politics (Ogunode & Abubakar, 2020).

4.2 Poor Quality of Teaching

Understaffing problems of many public higher institutions is responsible for the poor quality of education. Lecturers cannot kill themselves for the failure of the government to employ adequate qualified lecturers. Many lecturers are teaching large numbers of students far above the stipulate number according to the National universities commission guideline which states teach-student ratio of the following programme as follows: 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. The high enrolment of students without a commensurate lecturers will lead to low quality of teaching because the lecturers is overworked and less student will only benefit from such lecture. Bruhwiler (2011) believes that students who were taught in smaller classes in their early elementary grades continue to have enhanced academic achievement even if they are in larger classes in upper elementary or middle school. The findings of this study show that large class size has a negative impact on the quality of interaction between teacher and students, teachers' teaching method, teachers' assessment of the students and students' learning.

4.3 Overcrowdness

Overcrowdness is another effects of shortage of lecturers in majorities of Nigerian higher institutions, 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. Ogunode, Ahmed, Gregory, & Abubakar (2020) argued that the Nigerian universities are faced with the problem of shortage of lecturers in many department and faculties especially in programme like the sciences. The shortage of lecturers in many department and faculties is responsible for high teacher-student ratio in the Nigerian universities. NEEDS (2014) observed that the shortage of the academic staff resulted to the high students-teacher ratio in most of the universities in the country. For instance, University of Abuja had staff to student ratio 1:122, Lagos state university had a ratio 1:144 and National Open University had a ratio 1:363.

4.4 Poor Quality of Education

Poor quality of education in the Nigerian higher institutions is also attributed to the problem of shortage of academic staff. Noun (2012) submitted that concern has been raised about the decline in the quality of education in Universities, Polytechnics and Colleges of Education. This is evident by the quality of graduates produced by these institutions. Mohammed & Gbenu (2007) and Obayan (1999) observe that the quality of education offered by higher education institutions in the recent times has deteriorated substantially. NEEDS, (2014) revealed that respondents were of the opinion that skill shortage, in whatever form, has a negative impact on the quality of education at all levels of schooling. If urgent actions are not taken, the Nigerian education sector might be heading for the worst as student enrolment continues to increase without a commensurate increase in manpower supply to the sector. Ogunode & Abubakar (2020A) submitted that shortage of lecturer is responsible for the poor quality of teaching and learning in most Nigerian higher institutions. Ogunode, Ahmed, Gregory, & Abubakar (2020) opined that the inadequate lecturers in majorities of the higher institutions in the country is responsible for the falling standard of higher education.

5.1 Conclusion

The survival of the higher institutions depends on the availability of academic staff in the institutions. The academic staff are regarded as one of the strongest factor in the administration of higher institutions. It is unfortunate that this academic staff are in shortage in most of the public higher institutions in Nigeria. This article discussed the problems of shortage of academic staff in the Nigerian public higher institutions. The article identified; inadequate funding, lack of strategic manpower planning, brain-drain, poor motivation, unconducive working environment and corruption as the reasons for shortage of academic staff in the Nigerian public higher institutions. The article also identified; low productivities, poor quality of teaching, overcrowdness and poor quality of education as the effects of shortage of academic staff in the Nigerian public higher institutions.

5.2 Recommendation

In order to solve this problems identified above. Two ways can solving them. Short term solution and long term solutions. The short time solution includes: more funds should be release for public higher institutions in the country for recruitment of more staff, manpower planning for higher institutions, increase in the salaries and welfare packages of academic staff, provision of conducive working environment (constant supply of electricity and water, adequate teaching and research materials, and Internet connectivity with subscription to online journals and e-resources) and security. The long term solutions also include: developing strategic manpower planning for higher institutions, in-service and staff development programme, post-graduate education should be limited to only academicians first and establishment of more post-graduate programme in the Nigerian public universities.

Short Terms Solutions

1. The government should increase the funding of higher education in the country. This will enable the higher institutions meet other pressing needs like developing the research programmes of the institutions.
2. The government should increase the salaries of lecturers and provide conducive working environment for them to prevent them from moving out to other countries to seek a better job.
3. The government should direct higher institutions in the country to employ more academic and non-academic staff to improve the quality of education in the Country.
4. The government and the various higher institutions management team should fight all the academic corruption and institutional corruption in the higher institutions across the country through the use of the anti-craft agencies.

Long Term Solutions

5. There is need for manpower planning for the higher institutions in the country. The manpower planning will help to solve the problem of shortage of academic staff in the Nigerian higher institutions in the country.

6. The government should direct all public higher institutions to start in-service training and effective staff development programme according to school teaching need;
7. The government should establish more post-graduate schools in the public universities to aid production of more qualified teachers for the higher institutions across the country.

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