

ISSN:3032-1123



## Issues in University Administration in Nigeria

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*Received: Nov 12, 2023; Accepted: Dec 13, 2023; Published: Jan 2, 2024;*

**Abstract:** University administration is the engine room of the universities that determines the university's development speed. University administration is the pillar that holds the universities and makes its function. This paper is a review research paper with the objective to examine issues hindering effective university administration in Nigeria. Relying on secondary data collected from print and online publications. Content analysis was adopted to scrutinize the data that gave the final data that were used in the paper. The paper concluded that poor funding, Integrated Personnel and Payroll Information System (IPPIS), corruption, lack of current data, inadequate staff, shortage of infrastructure facilities, brain-drain, political interferences and strike action are some of the problems hindering effective university administration in Nigeria. Based on these problems, the paper recommended that the government should increase the financial investment of university education. The government should remove universities from the Integrated Personnel and Payroll Information System (IPPIS) platform and employ more academic staff in all public universities in Nigeria. The government should direct all anti-corruption agencies to monitor all the funds released to the university administration and artificial intelligence should be deployed for effective fit against corruption in the system. The government should ensure current university data are generated annually for effective university planning.

**Keywords:** University administration, University.

### Introduction

The history of Nigerian universities is dated to 1948 when the first universities were established. University education has been defined in different ways by different scholars. According to Rashdoll University as an organization within a particular social, economic, political and cultural environment. Livingstone (1974) stated that the university is "a set of buildings, an idea, a concept or even a society". Fielding and Lockwood (1973); Lockwood and Davies (1985) and Sanda (1992) support the view that the university is an organization that is essentially, "a social grouping of human beings whose activities are coordinated and directed towards the achievement of specific goals". Traditionally, a University is not a business or profit-oriented organization because it differs from other forms of organizations. It is an academic community of students, teaching staff and non-teaching staff. It is an organization empowered by enabling law to manage its activities. Technically, the University enjoys a long-standing tradition of academic freedom and operational autonomy and its enabling law is structured to guarantee the same (Babatola, 2015).

In Nigeria, universities are classified into federal universities, state universities and private universities. Ogunode, (2020) submitted that the federal government of Nigeria established the National Universities Commission to oversee the external administration and supervision of all universities in Nigeria. The administration of public universities in Nigeria takes two dimensions: external administration and internal administration. The external administration is done through the

federal ministries and other regulatory agencies in the country. The external administration handles planning, policy formulation, programme accreditation, supervision, funding and quality control of the universities. The internal administration is headed by the school administrators and other principal managers within the universities. The function of internal administration is to ensure the implementation of policies, coordinate, supervise and organize the human and materials resources of the universities to accomplish the objectives of the universities. The realization of the universities' goals and objectives depends on effective administration and planning. Administration is key to the development of university education in Nigeria (Ogunode, 2020). It is based on this that this paper is aimed to examine issues indexing effective university administration in Nigeria.

## **Literature Review**

### **Concept of University Administration**

University administration refers to the application of the universities' resources to implement the programme of the universities with the aim of realizing the objectives of the universities. University administration is the mobilization and arrangement of both human and material resources for the achievement of the university's goals (Ogunode, 2020). University administration is the effective use of the resources of the university to implement the teaching programme, research programme and community service programme of the universities. University administration is the deployment of the universities' resources to accomplish the universities' programmes (Ogunode, 2020). Adeyemi (2013) posited that university administration deals with the practical management of university resources. The objectives of university administration according to Ogunode, (2020) include: implementing the programme of the universities as defined; allocating resources for the implementation of the university programme; ensuring implementation of the teaching programme, ensuring implementation of the research programme; ensuring delivery of quality community services programme, to ensure effective staff development, to ensure effective student administration, to ensure smooth implementation of academic calendar and to ensure quality education.

### **Method**

This paper looked at the examine issues hindering effective university administration in Nigeria.

A Content Analysis method was employed for the paper. For the purpose of this paper, we used both primary and secondary data. The data were collected from online and print materials. The data were collected from the following sources review of published articles from reputable international journals such as CEON, Elsevier, Hindawi, JSTOR, IEEE, Learn Techlib SAGE, Nebraska and Springer.

### **Discussion**

In this paper the discussion was based on the following factors; poor funding, Integrated Personnel and Payroll Information System (IPPIS), corruption, lack of current data, inadequate staff, shortage of infrastructure facilities, brain-drain, political interferences and strike action as problems hindering universities administration in Nigeria.

### **Poor Funding**

Funds are monies made available for carrying out transaction services. Funds are the sum of total financial resources. Funding refers to the provision of monies for the implementation of a programme and projects (Ohaeri, Olayinka, & Ogunode, 2023). Funding in education entails the provision of financial resources for the execution of education programme and projects. Ogunode, Olaoye, & Yakubu (2023) noted that funding of university education is very critical to the development of the universities. Bassey & Peter (2017); Omotor (2017); Offem, Aniah, Agunwa, & Owan (2017) and Odigwe & Owan (2019) established that there is a positive relationship between adequate funding of universities and university development. University administration depends on adequate funding to succeed. Funding of university education in Nigeria is described by Ogunode, Attah, & Ebute, (2023) as poor and unable to effect any impactful development in the universities. Udida, Bassey, Udofia, &

Egbona, in Ogunode (2023). Ogunode, Peter & Ayoko, (2023) noted that one of the most serious problems threatening the survival of the educational system is the dwindling level of public funding in the face of rising demands and hence the rising cost of higher education. This shortage of funds affects job performance and the growth of the institution. Higher educational institutions cannot perform optimally without funding. This situation calls for increased funding initiatives from both the government and educational stakeholders so as to sustain the tempo and growth of the education industry. The inability of the Nigerian government to objectively accept and implement the 15%-20% funding formula for education recommended by UNESCO impact negatively on the performance and sustainability of higher education. Thus, it has become obvious that Nigeria's neglect of the funding formula is detrimental to higher educational institution performance and development aspiration as quality performance is the veritable instrument for the sustenance of the education system. This neglect has further precipitated crises in the entire higher educational system as effective teaching, research and service are no longer taking place seriously. On this note, Atelhe, & Akande, (2018); and Akinola in Ogunode & Adihikon (2023) were worried about the funding situation and commented thus: "Our higher institution education systems are in dire need of money to cater for both their capital and recurrent needs. For a few years past, the budget has been cut back from year to year by the federal government. This cut back has affected both capital and recurrent expenditures. In many higher institutions capital projects embarked upon are few years ago, are yet to be completed due to lack of adequate funds". So, university administration in Nigeria is been frustrated by poor funding.

### **Integrated Personnel and Payroll Information System (IPPIS)**

Department of IPPIS, (2012) defined the Integrated Personnel and Payroll Information System (IPPIS) as a centralized system of payment designed by the federal government of Nigeria for the payment of all its employees except those exempted. Integrated Personnel and Payroll Information System is a centralized payment system that concentrates all salaries, allowances and benefits payments to employees on one central system. Integrated Personnel and Payroll Information System is a department within the office of the Accountant General of the Federation (AGF) of Nigeria which is responsible for the payment of salaries and wages directly to government employees" bank accounts with appropriate deductions and remittances of 3rd party payments such as Federal Inland Revenue Service, State Boards of Internal Revenue, National Health Insurance Scheme, Pension Fund, Cooperative Societies, National Housing Fund, Bank Loans and Associations Dues. Ogunode & Ahmed (2022) noted that all federal universities in Nigeria were directed to enrol into the Integrated Personnel and Payroll Information System (IPPIS). The enrolment of all federal universities into the platform has affected effective university administration and management. First, Ogunode & Garba, (2023) observed that the integration of the Nigerian federal public university system into the Integrated Personnel and Payroll Information System (IPPIS) has led to the termination of the appointment of contract staff in federal universities because the IPPIS is not designed to capture such contract staff that exists in federal universities (Ogunode et al 2023). Shortage of academic staff in the federal universities in Nigeria has been linked to the Integrated Personnel and Payroll Information System (IPPIS) that has led to the mass sacking of contract staff and prevented the university management from recruiting to fill up the manpower gap in the system. Before the introduction of the Integrated Personnel and Payroll Information System in the federal universities, the various university managements after being approved by the councils recruited to fill up the manpower shortage in the system. The integration of the federal universities into the Integrated Personnel and Payroll Information System (IPPIS) platform has led to the violation of the university autonomy of the federal universities (Ogunode et al 2023). Integrated Personnel and Payroll Information System (IPPIS) is slowing down university administration in Nigeria.

### **Corruption**

Agbo (2017) defined corruption as the abandonment of expected standards of behaviour by staff and students' personnel as well as other educational authorities in and outside our tertiary institutions with the aim of getting undeserved advantages in the form of personal or material gains. Ahmodu, &

Sofoluwe, (2018) also saw corruption as the misuse or abuse of public office for private gains and a wide array of illicit behaviour e.g. bribery, extortion, fraud, nepotism, grafts, theft, embezzlement, falsification of academic records, kickbacks, influence peddling. Forms of corruption are in most tertiary institutions in Nigeria according to Okobi, in Agbo (2017): examination malpractice, admission racketeering, hostel profiteering, extortion of the students, abuse of office, sorting, forgery of certificates and statements of results, sexual harassment and immorality, embezzlement of funds, godfatherism, corruption in recruitment and promotion of staff, placing government's or management's machinery at the disposal of a particular student to win election during students' politics in the campus. On factors responsible for the high rate of financial corruption in Nigerian public universities, The Budget and Monitoring Committee (2016) Ajape Ogunode, Jegede (2020) and Ogunode, Ohunene & Olatunde-Aiyedun (2022) listed; corrupt school administrators, weak monitoring and evaluation system, weak trade unions, poor participation of university stakeholders' Weak preventive system and poor accountability system. Osipian, (2012); Ololube, (2016); Abdul (2017); Ola (2018); Peter, (2019); Ogunode & Abubakar (2020); Sunmonu Iyabo, Zhenseh & Ogunode, (2022) affirmed that funds released into the universities are mismanaged, looted, diverted, misappropriated and reduced to small amount. Also, Premium Time (2019) reported that Transparency International concluded that 66 per cent of the money Nigerian governments budgeted for education was stolen by corrupt officials. The group presented the report at its sub-regional meeting in Abuja as part of the policy papers on land corruption and corruption in education systems in West Africa. According to the report, "corruption is commonplace in education systems across the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). "This affects education access, quality, inclusion and learning outcomes with devastating consequences, not only for national economic growth but also for the life chances of children, their families and communities". The report highlighted Resource misallocation, corrupt procurement, exchange of sex for grades, examination malpractices, fake qualifications, teacher absenteeism, and corrupt recruitment practices as the various corruption risks and challenges facing education systems in all countries.

### **Lack of current data**

Borisade (2002) defined data as a set of raw or unrefined values collected for the response variables for which each of the elements belongs to the sample. Ogunode (2021) and Kolawole (2002) opined that numerical facts are called data and the study of data is called statistics. Statistics in this sense is defined as the science of collecting, classifying, analyzing, presenting and interpreting numerical data that is useful for human beings. Ogunode, Adah, Audu, and Musa (2021) listed types of data to include qualitative and quantitative. Osaretin (2013) states that retrieved data are useful for the following: reference, decision-making, planning budgeting purposes, evaluating the student's progress and determining the internal efficiency of the school. Azuh, Joshua, & Ibietan (2016) noted that the success of any system of education is hinged on proper planning through the use of data. The need for data-based policymaking in the national educational sector is more now than before particularly with the current revolution in information and communications technology which has made the world become a global village. The inconsistencies observed in most educational sector decisions might make one infer that these decisions were based on incomplete information, intuition or rule of thumb. Education data, like other social data, facilitates planning and constitutes invaluable inputs for computing important social indicators which are used to monitor trends in the quality leading to improvement in policy decisions of the sector and better impact. Discovery of where gaps are in education or where we need to concentrate more energy are all products of use and evaluation of data. Unfortunately, Nigeria's education system is in dire need of data-based policy formulation that will restore the ailing system. Ogunode (2022) asserted that the Nigerian educational system is faced with the problem of a shortage of current and reliable data for effective administration and management. The problems are more pronounced in the higher institutions in the country. The Nigerian higher institution is made up of universities, Colleges of education and polytechnic education. At the universities, the National Commission Universities (NUC) Boss, said, "I was totally disturbed that we could not lay our hand on verifiable statistics that would have to help us with our



plans for our universities. That made me spend my first year as NUC boss studying some obviously inaccurate statistics being brandished in different quarters regarding the current situation in our Nigerian universities (NUC, 2018). No, any meaning university administration and management can take place in the absence of current and reliable data. Current data is essential for effective university education planning. Ogunode (2022) concluded that effective data management in higher institutions will lead to effective planning of higher education, effective implementation of higher education, realization of the objective of higher education, reduction of wastage in higher education, effective decision making and attraction of international donors.

### **Inadequate Academic staff**

Ogunode & Adamu (2021) viewed Academic staff as the implementers of the school curriculum and lecture presenters. Academic staff are the teachers and deliverers of instruction in the higher institutions. Academic staff are the knowledge and character builders in the higher institution. The academic staff are the engine room of the higher institutions. Also, Ogunode, Jegede & Musa (2021) outlined the functions of the academic staff to include lecturing, preparing lecture notes, preparing lesson notes, giving assignments to students, assessing the students through continuous assessment and examination, setting exam questions, marking the answer sheet, supervising students research work especially projects, theses and dissertation and prepare the students' grade points. Tunde, & Issa (2013); Ogunode, Lawan & Solomon (2021) and Ogunode & Idris (2023) submitted that academic staff are very important in the university administration. They are needed for the implementation of teaching, researching and provision of community services. No administrators can perform without adequate and qualified academic and non-academic staff in the universities. It is unfortunate that many universities in Nigeria are facing the problem of a shortage of academic staff and this has affected the smooth run-in of the universities. The report of Dateline (2022) as captured in National Universities Commission data indicated that federal universities in Nigeria suffer a shortage of full-time professors. According to the data, no federal university scored up to 50 per cent in the ranking of full professors. This implies that no federal university has the required number of full professors. Some of the federal universities ranked in the top 10 are the Usmanu Dan-Fodiyo University, Sokoto, with 36.44 per cent; Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile Ife, 35.80 per cent; the University of Ibadan, per cent; Federal University of Technology, Akure, 27.28 per cent; Federal University of Agriculture, Abeokuta, 27.25 per cent; the University of Abuja, 25.33 per cent; the University of Benin, 23.26 per cent; University of Port Harcourt, 21.26 percent; the University of Calabar, 21.20 per cent; and the University of Ilorin, 21.12 percent.

### **Shortage of Infrastructure Facilities**

Ogunode (2020) defined infrastructural facilities as those facilities aiding the delivery of academic and non-academic services in educational institutions. Infrastructural facilities include; libraries, laboratories, halls, offices, administrative blocks, hostels, road facilities, water, electricity, internet etc. The availability of infrastructural facilities in adequate quantities will support the effective administration of educational institutions and the inadequacies will prevent the effective administration of educational institutions. Abu (2018); Ehichoya & Ogunode (2020) and Ishaya & Ogunode (2021) asserted that many universities in Nigeria are facing the problems of inadequate infrastructure facilities. Daniel (2019) noted that the lack of adequate infrastructure in our higher education has posed serious setbacks in the achievement of higher education goals. According to the students Union president of Ahmadu Bello University, Mallam Rafindadi Abubakar Aliyu, the lack of basic facilities in Nigerian Universities is a great setback to conducive learning activities. Rafindadi said the main problem facing students in the universities is congestion in classrooms, dilapidated hostels and lack of modern laboratory equipment. You see a class that is meant to accommodate only 30 students in those days, over 200 students are using the class today. Many of us hang outside by the windows to receive lectures. In my department (Political Science), we sit on a bare floor to receive lectures in the lecture theatre. We are 312 in my class. You can imagine one lecture teaching 312 students, marking 312 scripts and each of the scripts, in an examination, none of them is less than 10 pages. Some students sit on the podium where the lecturer is standing. Most of the seats are broken so

you put your books on your lap to write. There are no fans in many of the classrooms and when it is hot, you will be using the same book to fan yourself and taking down notes at the same time. During the rainy season, the classrooms leak. You will see a large number of students lining up to use one microscope in the laboratories. Hostel accommodation is one of the biggest challenges facing the students in the institutions. He said there are no beds in the hostels and the students put mattresses to sleep on the floor. The hostels are overcrowded with more than eight students in a room that was initially meant for one or two persons. The students are exposed to all sorts of health problems because they also use the rooms for cooking and washing in front of their rooms as there is no laundry where they can wash. The toilets are bad, they have no doors and students have to queue to take their baths or ease themselves (Thisday, cited by Ebehikhalu & Dawam 2017; Ojo, 2018). Inadequate infrastructure facilities are hampering the effective university education system in Nigeria.

### **Brain-drain**

Brain drain according to Ogunode (2020) refers to the movement of professionals from developing countries to developed countries for better job offers. Brain drain is a situation whereby professional individuals are migrating from their countries to another country to seek greener pastures. Many lecturers and researchers are leaving public universities in Nigeria for other parts of African countries and Europe for better job offers and a more conducive working environment. Otokunfer, (2015) and Ogiemwonyi (2022) list factors responsible for brain drain in Nigerian universities to include; poor motivation, an un-conducive working environment, insecurity, underfunding and political interferences. Atelhe, & Akande (2018); Akomolafe, & Ibijola (2014); Akpan (2011) agreed that poor funding of higher institutions is the major cause of problems in the universities such as brain drain. There is no meaningful university administration can take place when academic staff, non-academic staff and researchers are leaving the universities. The mass movement of these professionals from the universities has a negative impact on the universities' administration.

### **Political Interferences**

Political interference according to Ogunode & Musa (2022) be the act of influencing policies, programme and resources of institutions using political power and established laws. It is also the process of exercising influence using political power on matters directly or indirectly affecting the person. Ogunode, Atobauka & Ayoko (2023) opined that Nigerian universities are designed to be answerable to the government looking at the laws establishing them. For instance, Peter (2019); Ogunode & Omenuko (2021), Ogunode & Ajape (2021) and Ogunode & Emmanuel (2023) reported that political influence is a very serious problem facing the planning of university education, in recruitment in the universities. They influence recruitment, student admission, and appointment of academic leaders in the system. Emiko, (2023) reported Professor Emmanuel Osodeke, President Association of Staff Union of Universities (ASUU), recently noted that the National Assembly is distracting university vice-chancellors from carrying out their duties through incessant invitations to Abuja to face committees. He observed that undue interference with the autonomy of the university system by the federal government is affecting academic activities negatively. He maintained that most vice-chancellors are being distracted from carrying out their duties by Ministries and other government agencies who frequently invite them to Abuja to face committees. He concluded that no vice-chancellor will not be invited less than two or three times a month to come to Abuja and appear before a panel or committee in the National Assembly, House of Reps, Office of the Accountant-General. Political interferences in the administration and management of universities in Nigeria are affecting effective university administration.

### **Strike Actions**

Strike actions in the Nigerian universities as affected effective university administration. Amadi & Urho (2015) conceptualized strike as the collective, organized, cessation or slowdown of work by employees, to force acceptance of their demands by the employers. Nigerian higher institutions are known for strike actions, especially universities. Leadership Newspaper (2022) disclosed that the last lecturers' union strike of 2022 is the 16th since Nigeria's return to democracy in 1999, shutting down

academic activities in public universities for a cumulative period of more than four years within 23 years, a duration that is sufficient to complete a four-year degree programme, with some strikes lasting few weeks and others for several months. Odim, Annastashia & Solomon (2018) noted that during strike actions in Nigerian universities, teaching, research and communities activities are suspended. Ogunode & Ukozor (2023) asserted that strike action affects, students' graduation, staff welfare and host communities. Uzoh (2017) and Ogunode (2020) opined that the issues of funding and facilities have been the cause of friction between ASUU and the government in almost all instances. This is because the union at different periods has been finding it difficult to teach in an environment without the expected. Ogunode, Haliru, Shehu & Peter (2023) maintained that strikes in Nigerian universities are a major problem to effective university administration.

### Conclusion and Recommendations

University administration is the engine room of the universities that determines the university's speed of development. University administration is the pillar that holds the universities and makes its function. This paper is a review research paper with the objective to examine issues hindering effective university administration in Nigeria. Poor funding, Integrated Personnel and Payroll Information System (IPPIS), corruption, lack of current data, inadequate staff, shortage of infrastructure facilities, brain-drain, political interferences and strike action were identified as major factors hindering effective university administration in Nigeria. Based on these problems identified, the paper hereby puts forward the following recommendations;

- 1) Increase the financial investment of university education;
- 2) The government should remove universities from the Integrated Personnel and Payroll Information System (IPPIS) platform; Employ more academic staff in all public universities in Nigeria;
- 3) Government should direct all anti-corruption agencies to monitor all the funds released to the university administration and artificial intelligence should be deployed for effective fit against corruption in the system.
- 4) The government should ensure current university data are generated annually for effective university planning;
- 5) The government should direct the employment of both academic and non-academic staff in the universities;
- 6) The government should provide the universities with adequate infrastructural facilities;
- 7) Government should come with policies to motivate all the academic staff by increasing their salaries and welfare packages;
- 8) Grant autonomy to all the public universities in the country to eliminate political interferences;
- 9) The government should ensure agreements reached with different union groups in the public universities are implemented to avoid strike actions in the universities.

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