

Benefits of Funding Tertiary Education in Nigeria

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Abstract: This paper discussed the benefits of funding tertiary education adequately in Nigeria. Secondary data collected from print and online publications were used for the paper. The paper concluded that adequate funding of tertiary institutions in Nigeria will lead to sufficient funds in the various higher institutions, development of infrastructural facilities, employment of adequate staff, increment in salaries and welfares packages of staffs, reduction in brain-drain problems, prevention of strike actions in the institutions, attraction of international lecturers, research development, improvement in international ranking and attainment of an effective staff training programme. The paper suggested increasing investment in tertiary education. Tertiary institutions should be allowed to charge tuition fees within the parameters set by the government, but the Education Bank needs to be established to offer federal government-backed loans to students who may require them. Federal, state and institutional scholarship awards to help indigent students to pay tuition. Government institutionalized endowment funds for universities to expand their pool of funds. Tertiary institution should use their alumni to generate more revenue and give them incentives to contribute to their university endowment programmes. The government should institutionalize a new model of funding for tertiary education that needs to be developed in a way that will set objective parameters for the allocation of funds from the tertiary education trust fund (TETFUND) based on verified outputs in teaching, research and community service,

Keywords: Funding, Community Development, Tertiary Education, Research, Teaching.



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Introduction

The National Policy on Education (2013) viewed tertiary education as the Post-Secondary Section of the National education system, which is given by Universities, Polytechnics and Colleges of Technology including courses that are given by the Colleges of Education, Correspondence Colleges and such institutions as may be allied to them. For Adeyemi (2001), higher education is a system which embraces much of the country's research capacity and reproduces the majority of the skilled professionals that are required in the labour market.

Obanya (1999) disclosed that higher education includes all forms of professional institutions drawing from the pool of persons who have completed various forms of secondary school education: Institutions of the military, the police, nurses, agriculture, forestry, veterinary workers,

catering services, tourism, secretarial services and other combinations of programmes. 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; development of the intellectual capacities of individuals to understand and appreciate environment; 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 (National Policy on Education, 2013).

Nigerian tertiary education is plagued with many challenges such as a shortage of infrastructure facilities, poor quality of education, corruption, brain-drain, strike actions and poor funding. According to Adetunji, & Ogunleye (2015) and Ahmed & Dantata (2016), tertiary education is grossly underfunded and government needs enough money to inject into the system. The underfunding is one of the banes of education development which has contributed to the low standard of education in the country. There is an urgent need to invest in tertiary education, hence federal, state and private sectors are enjoined to invest in the sector for national development.

Gambo et al. (2019) acknowledged that most crises in Nigerian Universities are traceable to funding issues. Many universities have been under lock and key, at one time or the other because of agitations on issues bordering on money. While some were shut down on account of non-payment of allowance of workers, some others are as a result of issues concerning poor welfare services of students. The problem of insufficient buildings, under-equipped laboratories and facilities in Nigerian universities can be traced to inadequate funding. The point here is that both federal and state governments in Nigeria have not provided adequate funds for the public universities to pursue their programme and developmental plans. Also, some university administrators have not looked outside the box to seek alternative means to increase their internally generated revenue.

Tertiary education in Nigeria is collapsing, there is a need for huge investment both from the government and private sector (Abubakar, 2016; Ifeanyi, Ogunode, & Ajape, 2021; Ogunode, Onyekachi, & Ayoko, 2023). Tertiary education in Nigeria is starved of funds and this is responsible for the poor development of the system. Higher education in Nigeria is characterized by different challenges and only adequate funding can restore its development and its glory (Abdull, 2015; Ndubuisi & Ogunode 2021; Ogunode, Lawan & Solomon, 2021; Ogunode & Onize (2022) Ogunode, Olaoye, & Yakubu, 2023; Ogunode, Onyekachi, & Ayoko, 2023). The Nigerian education system is in crisis due to poor investments in education (Ogunode Attah, & Ebute, 2023; Ogunode, Johnson, & Olatunde-Aiyedun, 2022). Recently, the Executive Secretary of, the National University Commission (NUC), Prof. Abubakar Rasheed called on the federal government to fund tertiary education adequately in Nigeria. The NUC boss noted that funding University education is a huge task which government and stakeholders in the sector must expedite actions to rescue the sector from imminent collapse. Also, NewsDirect (2023) pleaded with the federal and state government to increase investment in tertiary education in the Country. Based on this submission, the paper discussed the benefits of funding tertiary education adequately in Nigeria.

Theoretical Framework

The system theory was propounded by David Easton (1953). He asserted that a system is like a model developed which starts with the input, which is processed over different stages until the output is obtained. A feedback process delivers reports both on the propriety of the system and its environment exert a reciprocal influence on one another. According to Nwankwo as cited by Enyi in Mgbodile (2004) a system is a unit with a series of interrelated and interdependent parts, such that the inter-play of any part affects the whole. A system can therefore be regarded as a structure with interdependent parts. There is a recent trend among administrative theorists to view an

organization as a social system of interrelated parts. There is the belief that the only meaningful way to study an organization is to study it as a system.

The term system has been used to describe the working of almost everything. This explains the universality of the concept. Consequently, people talk of a car system, a human body system, an electrical system an economic system, an educational system, etc. The basic idea in a system is that the parts of anything are so related and dependent that the interference of any part affects the whole. This theory is related to the tertiary institution because institutions need different resources like funds, facilities, staff, plants, supervision, administration and materials resources. Funds are one of the resources that are needed to implement the tertiary education programme with other resources. Any shortage of funds as resources will definitively affect the other resources because they are inter-depend and needs one another to succeed as a system.

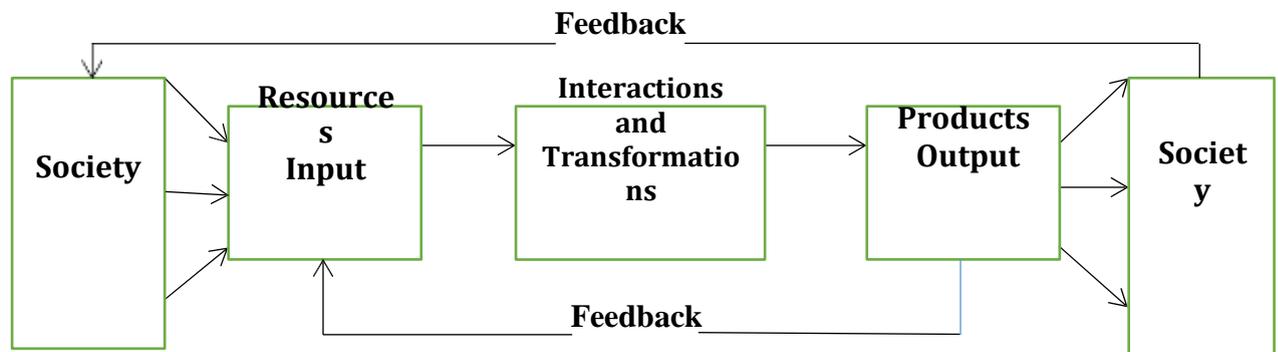


Figure 1: Open System Model of the University Administration
Source: Ogunode, Emmanuel & Ayoko (2023)

Methodology

This paper looked at the benefits of funding tertiary education adequately 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.

Benefits of Funding Tertiary Education in Nigeria

Adequate funding of tertiary institutions will lead to sufficient funds in the various higher institutions, development of infrastructure facilities, employment of adequate staff, increment in salaries and welfares packages, reduction in brain-drain problem, prevention of strike actions in the institutions, attraction of international lecturers, research development, improvement in international ranking and effective staff training.

Sufficient Funds in the System

The availability of funds plays a significant role in determining the provision of quality higher education. The quantity of funds made available during budgeting will go a long way in improving the quality of higher education in Nigeria. Adequate funding of tertiary education in Nigeria will lead to adequate funds in the various higher institutions' systems. This will help to ensure the effective administration and management of each institution. Higher institution managers will have access to adequate funds to implement the various programme of the institutions. Administrators of tertiary institutions will have enough money to spend on the provision of quality infrastructural facilities in various higher institutions. Nwafor, Uchendu, & Akani (2015); Obadara, & Alaka (2013) and Nakpodia & Obielumani (2011) opined that adequate funding of tertiary institutions will help to enable the institutions to carry out their cardinal programme of teaching, researching and community service programme. The problems of shortage of funds in the system can be solved through adequate budgetary allocation of funds to the system (Obadara & Alaka, 2013; Ogunode, & Babatunde, 2021) and Ogunode & Ishaya, 2021).

Fix Infrastructural Facilities Gap

Adequate funding of tertiary institutions in Nigeria will help to fix the infrastructural facilities gap in the various institutions. Ogunode (2020) defined educational infrastructure as facilities that are aiding the smooth delivery of academic and non-academic services in educational institutions. Educational infrastructural facilities include; libraries, laboratories, halls, offices, administrative blocks, hostels, road network, 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 effective administration of educational institutions. Infrastructural facilities have been described by Otokunfer (2015) as one of the major components of the university system that support the implementation of teaching, researching and provision of community service. A report by Punch (2020) stated that the entire higher education system is putrefying with a lack of basic facilities like; libraries, laboratories, hostel accommodation and lecture halls are in the worst form of degradation. Electricity and water facilities are epileptic in most universities, and in some others, non-existent, forcing students to occasionally spill into the streets in violent demonstrations. Ogunode, Jegede (2021) and Ishaya & Ogunode (2021) concluded that poor investment in higher institutions is a major cause of the shortage of infrastructure facilities in Nigeria. This problem can be solved through adequate funding of various higher institutions in Nigeria. Also, Nwafor, Uchendu, & Akani, (2015) submitted that the availability of funds is very important in the provision of school infrastructures. More funding will help the higher institutions' management in providing more facilities such as hall halls, classrooms, laboratories, libraries and instructional materials. This means that the higher the level of funding, the more the infrastructures that will be provided for teaching and learning. Ebehikhalu & Dawam (2017); Daniel (2019); Emamoke & Agabi (2021) suggested that adequate provision of funds in Nigerian tertiary institutions will help to address the challenges of shortage of facilities.

Employment of Adequate Staff

Adequate funding of tertiary education in Nigeria will lead to the employment of adequate academic and non-academic staff in various higher institutions across the country. Ogunode & Adamu (2021) viewed Academic staff as the implementer of the school curriculum and lecture presenters. Academic staffs are the teachers and deliverer of instruction in the higher institutions. Academic staffs are the knowledge and character builders in the higher institution. The academic staffs are the engine room of the higher institutions. Ogunode & Babatunde (2021) and Ogunode, Jegede & Musa (2021) outlined functions of the academic staff to include lecturing, preparing the lecture note, preparing the lesson note, giving assignments to students, assessing the students through continuous assessment and examination, setting exams questions, marking the answer sheet, supervising students research work especially projects, theses and dissertation and prepare the students' grade points. NEEDS (2014) and Ogunode & Abubakar (2020a) attested to the problem of shortage of academic staff in Nigerian higher institutions. They further remarked that inadequate lecturers are 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 lecturers is responsible for the poor quality of teaching and learning in most Nigerian higher institutions. Nwafor, et al (2015) stated that the availability of funds is very crucial in the employment of qualified personnel in educational institutions. Studies have shown that the funding level is a factor that is used to attract quality personnel. It is, therefore, necessary that funds should be provided to acquire this crucial human resource in educational institutions. This is because the presence of qualified personnel will help in transmitting quality knowledge to the students. Tunde & Issa (2013); Ogunode, Ajape & Jegede (2020) and Ogunode, Jegede & Musa (2021)

recommended that the government and private sector should intervene in the funding of public universities for the development of facilities and employment of adequate lecturers. Adequate funding of higher institutions is the key to attracting the best brain into the system, training them and retaining them in the system

Increment in Salaries

Adequate funding of the tertiary institutions in Nigeria will also guarantee improvement in the welfare packages of staff and increase in their salaries. All the unions in the tertiary institutions have been agitating for salaries increment and increments in other benefits they are entitled. University workers are often underpaid and most times the Government pays part salaries to lecturers. Lecturers are not happy because many politicians go home with bags of money even when such politicians are not as educated as they are. According to Amadi & Urho (2015), the underpayment of university staff vis-à-vis their counterparts in other economic sectors and the discriminating salary structure between the Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU) and the Non-Academic Staff Union of Universities (NASU) have been a major cause of their dissatisfaction. Ademola, Ogundipe, & Babatunde (2014) and Adio (2022) recommended the increment in the higher institution investment to cater for salaries and staff welfare packages.

Reduction Brain-drain

Adequate investment in tertiary education in Nigeria will help to fix the problem of brain drain in the various higher institutions in Nigeria. 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. Ogiemwonyi (2022) have linked the factors responsible for higher brain drain in Nigeria to include; poor motivation, 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. Akinyemi & Bassey (2012); Bamiro (2012) and Ariikewuyo & Adegbesan (2008) recommended adequate funding to solve the problem of brain drain. Adequate funding is critical in the administration of higher institutions and it is one of the resources to deploy to fix various problems facing the institutions.

Prevention of Strike Actions

Adequate funding of higher institutions in Nigeria will also help to reduce the strike actions in the various institutions across the country. Chijioke (2013) defined a strike as an organized work stoppage by a body of workers to enforce compliance with demands made on an employer or a group of employers. It is an aspect of industrial conflict used by workers to express their grievances. Amadi & Urho (2015) viewed the 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 (2022) disclosed that the recent 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. 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

amenities or with poor facilities. ASUU's contention has been to refuse underfunding of the universities which undermines the capacity of universities to maintain standards at desirable levels. Underfunding has made staff and students not to have access to the latest books and journals in their libraries, lack of reagents and equipment in the laboratories, so experiments cannot be conducted and local research funds have virtually dried up (Pemedede, 2007). The budgetary allocation devoted to education has been considered to be grossly inadequate considering the phenomenon of an increase in student enrolment and increasing costs, which have been aggravated by inflation. A serious problem confronting Nigerian public university education today is the scarcity of funds (Ogunode, Ajape, & Jegede, 2020; Ogunode, Akinlade, & Musa, 2021; Ogunode, Ugochukwu, & Jegede 2022). Government financial policies on education have therefore been subjected to constant review to allocate more resources to university education. Ogunode, & Ahmed (2022); Ogunode (2020); and Kolade (2022) recommended adequate funding of the higher institutions to prevent strike actions.

The attraction of International Lecturers

Adequate funding of tertiary education in Nigeria will help to reposition the higher institutions in Nigeria to be attractive to international lecturers. The adequate funding of higher institutions will help to guarantee funds that can be used to pay lecturers based on global best practices. The mass movement of international lecturers from tertiary education in Nigeria was due to poor salaries. The budgetary allocation for the administration of public higher education in Nigeria is not adequate to expand and develop higher education to the level that the various higher institutions will have space to admit all the students (Ogunode, Johnson, & Olatunde-Aiyedun, 2022). The provision of adequate funds in the university system will lead to the expansion of the universities and the establishment of more universities in the country. The increment in the number of universities will provide more access to young Nigerians to apply and gain admission. The increment in the Number of universities in Nigeria will reduce the number of Nigerians seeking international education, especially university education. This will help to reduce the pressure in the demand for foreign education and help to improve the Nigerian economy. (Ohiare, Ogunode, & Rauf (2021); Okoli, Ogbondah, & Ewor (2016); Ogunode, Abubakar, & Ajape (2021) suggested that the government should increase the funding of higher education in Nigeria. This will help in the higher education expansion plans and programmes.

Research Development

Research is the second cardinal programme of higher institutions. Research is very important to the development of the society. Research is conducted mostly in the higher institutions' environment to solve problems affecting society. The academic staff is saddled with the responsibility of carrying out research in the universities. Conducting research is one criterion for measuring their performance. Ogunode, Jegede, Adah, Audu, & Ajape (2020) submitted that the conduct of research is one of the basic functions of tertiary institutions, which comprised Universities, Polytechnics, Monotechnics and Colleges of Education. The academic staffs of these institutions are compulsorily required to carry out research activities as their promotions are primarily based on their research outputs. Apart from the academic staff being promoted through research publications, research activities enhance their credibility, and status, and also add value both to their immediate community and the larger global community. Yusuf (2012) opined that the role of higher education research in national development cannot be overemphasized. Research programmes in higher institutions are faced with the problem of shortage of funds (Ogunode, & Ade, 2023; Ogunode, & Idris, 2023; Chikwe, et al 2015; Charles, Ijeoma & John 2009; Donwa, 2006). Inadequate research fund is a major problem facing research programme in Nigerian public

universities. The budgetary allocation for the administration of the research programme is not adequate (Otokunfer, 2015; Ojo, 2018; Olowonefa, Ogunode, & Ohibime 2022). Adequate funding of public universities in Nigeria will help to develop the research programme of the universities. Adequate funding will help to ensure the provision of modern laboratories, ICT facilities and staff development. Yusuf (2012); Ololube (2016); Okebukola (2018); Ohiare-Udebu, Sarafadeen, & Abashi (2022) recommended that the government should increase the funding of public universities in the country. This will enable the public universities to meet other pressing needs like developing the research programmes of the institutions.

Improvement in International Ranking

The poor ranking of public universities in Nigerian by international organizations like Time higher education (THE) has been linked to the poor funding of both the federal and state universities across the country. In the 2023 THE ranking only twelve Nigerian universities were ranked out of 220 as listed by NUC (2022). Out of these twelve, only four occupied 350 to 450 positions in the ranking. West Africa's best university came from Ghana while the African best university came from South Africa. Though the 2023 ranking saw improvement in some of the Nigerian universities, adequate provision and proper use of funds in the administration and management of universities in Nigeria will help to improve the number of Nigerian universities in the international ranking and better position them in strategic positions. Ohiare-Udebu, et al (2022) stated that funding is a prerequisite to the sustainable development of higher education. Adequate funding is the key to the implementation of higher education programmes. There cannot be any meaningful development in the higher education sector without adequate funding. The government and institutions saddled with the responsibilities of supervision and ensuring quality standards in higher institutions in Nigeria should wake up and ensure every higher institution in the country is adequately funded (Ogunode, Akin-Ibidiran & Ibidiran 2022; Ogunode, Akinjobi, & Musa, 2022; Ogunode, Ukozor & Iroegbu, 2022).

Effective Staff Training

Adequate funding of higher education in Nigeria will guarantee effective staff development. Staff training is an integral part of the higher institutions' system. Kulkarni (2013) stated that training and development programs were necessary to improved employees' performance at work, updating their knowledge and improving their skills and development. Ukaegbu (2017) and Acheaw (2011) insisted that the purpose of training and development is to increase knowledge, skills and changing the attitude of a person. This would result in several potential benefits for the individual and their employer. Furthermore, Acheaw (2011) noted that training also increases the confidence, motivation and commitment of staff, provides recognition, encourages responsibility, and enhances the possibility of a pay rise and promotion. Ogunode & Jegede (2020) posited that Inadequate funding of Nigerian higher education institutions is a major problem facing the administration of professional development programs for employees across higher education institutions. Adequate funding is vital for the implementation of the professional development program. Without adequate funding, no professional development program can be fully implemented as planned. Inadequate funding has been a major challenge to the development of higher education institutions in Nigeria. Many programs for higher education institutions, such as the teaching program, research program and the community service program have not developed due to poor funding. The professional capacity development program for higher education institutions is not effectively implemented in many higher education institutions across the country due to the poor funding of higher education in Nigeria. Adequate funding of the higher institutions will help to ensure a sustainable staff training programme in Nigerian higher institutions.

(Ogunode, & Ahmed, 2022; Ogunode, & Oluseun 2020). Also, Ogunode, & Abubakar (2020); Ogunode, Yiolokun, & Akeredolu (2019) submitted that only adequate funding of the institutions will guarantee human resources development.

Conclusion and Suggestions

This paper discussed the benefits of funding tertiary education adequately in Nigeria. The paper concluded that adequate funding of tertiary institutions in Nigeria will lead to sufficient funds in the various higher institutions, development of infrastructure facilities, employment of adequate staff, increment in salaries and welfares packages of staff, reduction in brain-drain problems, prevention of strike actions in the institutions, attraction of international lecturers, research development, improvement in international ranking and attainment of an effective staff training programme. The paper suggested:

1. Increase investment in tertiary education. Tertiary institutions should be allowed to charge tuition fees within the parameters set by the government, but the Education Bank needs to be established to offer federal government-backed loans to students who may require them. Federal, state and institutional scholarship awards should be made available to help indigent students to pay tuition.
2. Government institutionalized endowment funds for universities to expand their pool of funds. Tertiary institution should use their alumni to generate more revenue and give them incentives to contribute to their university endowment programmes.
3. The government should institutionalize a new model of funding for tertiary education that needs to be developed in a way that will set objective parameters for the allocation of funds from the TETFUND based on verified outputs in teaching, research and community service.
4. Government should grant full autonomy to tertiary institutions with less government interference.
5. Funds released to the tertiary institutions in the country should be tracked and monitored by the various anti-corruption agencies in the country.

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