



## QUALITY ASSURANCE IN NIGERIAN PUBLIC HIGHER INSTITUTIONS: CHALLENGES AND WAY FORWARD

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### Abstract

The quality of higher education in Nigeria is falling and this is affecting the social, economic and technological development of the country because the higher institutions are saddled with the responsibilities of manpower development of the country. In order to address this problem, there are various agencies designed to ensure quality assurance in the various higher institutions. These agencies are being confronted with many challenges. This paper is aimed to examine the problems preventing quality assurance programme in Nigerian public higher institutions from achieving their goals. To achieve this, the researchers employed secondary data to justify the various points raised in the paper. Print materials and online publication were sorted and used in the paper. This paper identified; inadequate funding, shortage of academic staff, poor implementation of quality assurance policies, inadequate infrastructural facilities, brain-drain, strike Actions, corruption, weak supervision, poor staff development as problems preventing quality assurance in the Nigerian higher institutions. To ensure quality in the Nigerian higher institutions, the following have been suggested: adequate funding, employment of adequate academic staff, provision of adequate infrastructural facilities, fight all forms of corruption practices, implement all agreement reached with the different union groups, motivate academic staff, effective supervision, effective staff development.

**Keyword:** Higher education, Quality Assurance, problems, Universities



## Introduction

The first higher education was established in 1932 in Lagos (Noun, 2009, Jubril, 2003). From 1932 till date, the number of higher institutions have been increasing in Nigeria. According to National policy on education (FGN, 2013), Higher Education is the Post -Secondary Section of the National education system, which is given by Universities, Polytechnics and Colleges of Technology including courses as are given by the Colleges of Education, Advanced Teachers Training colleges, Correspondence Colleges and such Institutions as may be allied to them. The objectives of higher education in Nigeria includes: 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; the acquisition of both physical and intellectual skills which will enable individuals to develop into useful members of the community; the acquisition of an overview of the local and external environments (FGN, 2013). The National Policy on Education again stated that higher educational institutions should pursue these goals through: Teaching, Research, the dissemination of existing and new information, the pursuit of service to the community; and by being a store- house knowledge (FGN, 2013).

One of the challenges facing the higher education in Nigeria is falling in the standard education at the higher education level. There is a problem of poor quality of education in the system. NOUN (2009) 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. Punch, (2021) reported that Afe Babalola (SAN), the founder of Afe Babalola University, Ado Ekiti, has observed that, the quality of education in Nigeria had degenerated to the extent that, many graduates cannot defend their certificates. Babalola, who expressed displeasure at the growing declining standards of education, particularly university education while Guardian newspaper (2019) quoted the President and Chief Executive Officer, Postgraduate School of Credit and Financial Management, Chris in 2019 who expressed concern over the quality of Nigerian graduates, saying about 95 percent of them are not employable. He lamented that our present crops of graduates do not meet the need of the reality in the workplace and called for an urgent attention from all concerned to address the trend. It was observed that graduates from Nigerian universities are faced with problem of unemployment upon graduation (John, 2018).





Megbo, and Ahaotu, (2015), noted that Nigerian Universities over the years have lagged behind in the performance of its formidable task due to the nature and dynamics of leadership as well as the political and economic environment of these institutions. Babalola (2007) reported that in 2006, the Federal Ministry of Education conducted a large survey involving more than 10,000 online participants to track the products of Nigeria's educational sector. The survey clearly showed a disturbing trend that over 60% of participants were unemployed or under-employed. This could be attributed to their poor quality as well as mismatch between labour market and higher education curriculum. Mohammed and Gbenu (2007) and Obayan (1999) observed that the quality of education offered by higher education institutions in the recent times has deteriorated substantially. Babalola (2007) opined that the situation in our tertiary institutions as "institutional failure" because of skill mismatch. He said skill mismatch is a major concern in Nigeria where tertiary education graduates acquire skills that are not demanded by the labour market. Saint, Hartmet and Strassner (2003) lamented that the Nigerian university system is performing poorly in the area of teaching and learning in terms of labour market absorption and employers' assessment of graduates. Based on this submission, this article discusses the challenges preventing quality assurance programme from realizing its objectives in the Nigerian public higher institutions.

### **Concept of Quality Assurance**

Obadara and Alaka (2013) viewed quality as "fitness for purpose". It encapsulates the concept of meeting commonly agreed precepts or standards. Such standards may be defined by law, an institution, a coordinating body or a professional society. In the diverse arena of higher education, fitness for purpose varies tremendously by field and programme. Quality refers to the standard of a phenomenon when it is compared to other things like it: how good or bad something is, that is, to be of good/poor/top quality or of a high standard. In this context, it is associated with the 'monitoring and evaluation component of education' to see whether the outcome is good and of the intended standard. Quality is the ability or degree with which a product, service, or phenomenon conforms, to an established standard, and which makes it to be relatively superior to others. With respect to education, this implies the ability or degree with which an educational system conforms to the established standard and appropriateness, of the inputs available for the delivery of the system (Obadara & Alaka 2013, Fadipe, 1999).





Obadara & Alaka (2013) sees quality in education therefore means the relevance and appropriateness of the education programme to the needs of the community for which it is provided. According to UNESCO (cited in Uvah, 2005), quality in higher education is multi-dimensional and embraces all functions and activities of a university including teaching, academic programmes, research and scholarship, staffing, students, buildings, facilities, equipment, services to the community and the academic environment.

Obadara and Alaka (2013) defined quality assurance (QA) as the set of planned and systematic actions necessary to provide appropriate confidence that a product or service will satisfy the requirements for quality. Also an important part of defining the end-product of any educational system is the specification of its quality related features - which the system must then aim to deliver. Quality assurance is a global term used to incorporate the quality policy, quality management and quality control functions, which combine to assure the client that the product will be consistently manufactured to the required condition. Its aim is to achieve and assure quality through the adoption of a cost effective quality control system and through external inspections and audits. Quality assurance is a way of measuring, improving, and maintaining the quality of any human activity that has a value. It may be academic, sports performance, business, or economy. Quality assurance is a means of ensuring that the best practices are encouraged in a social system (Obadara & Alaka, 2013).

Babalola, (2004) observed that quality assurance deals with the practice of preventive achievements of students and the environment before things get out of hand while Obadara and Alaka (2013) and Kisailowska (2002) opined that quality assurance principles are a certain form of naming and ordering the actions that are necessary for assuring the quality, for instance of teaching, it is internally measured and evaluated at a given university, and also externally, during an accreditation process. As a result of this, quality assurance principles are to be used as indicators to ensure compliance. It is noteworthy that quality assurance principles regulate both the external and internal activities of an educational institution. Assuring quality means:

1. pointing to and naming the elements that are decisive to the evaluation of an educational process or other assessable elements;
2. defining the procedures for acting, appointing person and working out the documents necessary for the correct execution of tasks relating to a given entity;
3. setting quality indicators; and
4. analysing quality on a regular basis with the use of appropriate tools.





Obadara and Alaka (2013) submitted that tertiary institution is only as good as the quality of its teaching staff, they are the heart of the institution that produces its graduates, its research products, and its service to the institution, community, and nation. Every nation and its university graduates are competing in an environment shaped by its own local and national needs, as well as international expectations and standards. The impact of the latter is increasing. As a result, the success and competitiveness of graduates in tertiary institutions will be affected by those standards and expectations.

The Nigerian government in order to guarantee quality of education and quality assurance in the Nigerian higher education, the Federal government established different agencies and commissions to supervise the activities of higher institutions in the country. The commissions include; National Universities Commission [NUC], National Commission for Colleges of Education [NCCE] and the National Board for Technical Education [NBTE]

### **National Board for Technical Education [NBTE]**

The National Board for Technical Education was firstly established by Decree No.7 of 1977 but it was later reconstituted by way of amendment Decree No.8 of 1993. It was established to develop and manage technical and technological education in Nigeria. This board was one of the agencies of the Federal Ministry of Education to oversee institutions offering technical and technology related courses in Nigeria. National Universities Commission (NUC) was put in a place to monitor teaching and learning activities in Nigerian Universities, National Commission for Colleges of Education (NCCE) monitors teaching and learning in the Colleges of Education. National Board for Technical Education (NBTE) was however established to monitor teaching and learning in Polytechnics and Technical institutions in Nigeria.

The functions of National Board for Technical Education (NBTE) was established to perform some statutory roles, among which we are to:

- (i) Coordinate all aspects of technical and vocational education outside the universities in Nigeria;
- (ii) Make recommendations on the national policy necessary for the training of craftsman and skilled manpower in technical and vocational courses;
- (iii) Advise the federal government on issues relating to all aspects of technical and vocational education outside the University;
- (iv) Set minimum bench mark for Nigerian Polytechnics;





- (v) Make recommendation based on the available data on the need to establish new polytechnics or expand facilities in the existing polytechnics;
- (vi) Review the terms and conditions of service of personnel in polytechnics and make recommendation to the federal Government;
- (vii) Assess the financial needs of polytechnics and technical institutions and advise the government appropriately; and
- (viii) Act as channeling agents by channeling all external aids to polytechnics.

### **National Commission for Colleges of Education [NCCE]**

National Commission for Colleges of Education as one of the agencies under the Federal Ministry of Education in 1989 by Act No.3 of the constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria.

The following are among the functions of the National Commission for Colleges of Education (NCCE):

- (i) To coordinate the activities of all Colleges of Education and other institution of higher learning offering teachers education other than universities;
- (ii) To advise the federal government through the Minister of Education on all the aspects of teacher education outside the Universities and Polytechnics;
- (iii) To make recommendations to the government on matters affecting teachers education;
- (iv) To manage the financial affairs of the colleges of education;
- (v) To develop scheme of National Certification for the various products of Colleges of Education;
- (vi) To collect, analyse and publish information relating to teacher's education;
- (vii) To set bench mark for Colleges of Education;
- (viii) To accredit courses in Nigeria Colleges of Education; and
- (ix) Receive grants from the federal government and allocate them to colleges of education according to the laid down formula.

### **National Universities Commission [NUC]**

The National Universities Commission was established in 1962 and the functions of the NUC:

- (i) Coordinating the entire activities in all Nigeria universities;
- (ii) Harmonizing and co-ordinating the development of Nigeria universities to meet the national goals;
- (iii) Advising the government on the financial needs of the universities;





- (iv) Distribution of fund to the Universities when such is made available by the government;
- (v) Setting the minimum, benchmark for Nigerian universities;
- (vi) Ensuring compliance of the Universities to the minimum bench mark set;
- (vii) Collecting, collating, analysing and storing data collected from Nigerian Universities for use in advising the government on the need to expand the existing universities or establish new ones;
- (viii) Setting standards to be followed in establishing universities in Nigeria;
- (ix) Issue operating license to Nigerian universities;
- (x) Accrediting courses in Nigerian universities;
- (xi) Participating in universities annual estimate hearings to determine the financial need of the universities; and
- (xii) Keeping of accurate and up-to-date financial records for all local and foreign transactions.

To ensure that policies and programme of quality assurance are fully implemented in various higher institutions in the country especially in the universities, the National universities commission direct the establishment of quality assurance unit in all Universities across the country. The unit will serve as the monitoring and evaluation unit of the universities. The functions of Quality Assurance Unit shall include:

- a. Develop, apply and periodically review the quality benchmarks/parameters for various academic and administrative activities of the institution;
- b. Facilitate the creation of a learner-centred environment conducive to quality education and academic staff professional growth;
- c. Provide feedback mechanisms for students, parents, and other stakeholders on quality-related issues;
- d. Disseminate information on various quality parameters of education;
- e. Organise inter and intra institutional workshops, seminars on quality related themes;
- f. Document the various programmes/activities leading to quality improvement;
- g. Act as the nodal unit of the Institution for coordinating quality-related activities, including adoption and dissemination of best practices;
- h. Work closely with other academic departments and the institution's Management Information System (MIS) for the purpose of maintaining /enhancing the institutional quality;
- i. Promote and help sustain the culture of quality in the institution;
- j. Lead the Internal Self-assessment process and prepare and submit the Report to the Management of the National University Commission (NUC) annually;





- k. Coordinate logistics during external accreditation/ assessment;
- l. The achievement of accepted criteria of minimum standard of quality;
- m. Establish confidence in stakeholders that the inputs, processes and outputs of educational system fulfill the expectations or measure up to minimum standards; and
- n. Put in place a range of procedures designed to safeguard academic standards and which will promote learning opportunities of acceptable quality.

The above tasks will be achieved through the following areas of coverage:

### **Academic programme**

Teaching and learning, including entrepreneurial skill training and e-learning;  
Accreditation

### **Student motivation**

Staff/students relationship, Students' welfare e.g. access to utility, hostel and toilet and Unionism

### **Examination**

Manner of conduct e.g. invigilator/students ratio, capacity of the hall, sitting arrangement, examination time table, quality of examination questions, result feedback and certificate release.

### **Facilities**

Buildings – Lecture Theaters, Classrooms, Laboratories and Library, Workshop, Medical facilities, Sporting facilities, Toilet facilities

### **Teaching and Learning Environment**

Terrain, Structure, Security, etc.

**Gown/Town** relationship, cordiality.

### **Staffing**

Adequacy in terms of: Qualification, Relevance, Distributions and Motivation e.g. salary, allowances, promotion, training/development etc.

### **Quality Assurance Variables**

Quality assurance in higher education in Nigeria include internal and external mechanisms put in place by institutions and accreditation agencies respectively, to







ensure standard in all the functions of the institutions. Institutions of higher learning in Nigeria have employed various variables to determine the quality assurance of their programmes and institutions. They are:

- a) minimum academic standard
- b) carrying capacity and admission quota
- c) publications and research assessment
- d) Accreditation of programmes or institutions
- e) Monitoring, assessment and evaluation of existing staff strength, students and facilities
- f) Institutional ranking in terms of undergraduate and post graduate courses and programmes (Uniilorin website, 2019)

### **Challenges facing Quality Assurance in Nigerian higher institutions**

This paper identified the following as inadequate funding, shortage of academic staff, poor implementation of quality assurance policies, inadequate infrastructural facilities, brain-drain, strike Actions, corruption, weak Supervision, poor staff development as problems preventing quality assurance in the Nigerian higher institutions.

#### **3.1 Inadequate funding**

To ensure quality assurance in the higher institutions required high investment in both human and materials resources. There are a lot of resources needed to guarantee quality assurance in the higher institutions. It is unfortunate that the budgetary allocation for the higher institutions are inadequate and this is affecting the quality assurance in the system. Ogunode (2021) submitted that the budgetary allocation for the administration of higher institutions is inadequate. Due to this problem, many school administrators cannot procure the necessary human and materials resources needed to ensure quality assurance in their various institutions. Ahaotu and Ogunode (2021) observed that Government funding of higher education in the country have been inadequate for decades. The funding of education is shared among different levels of government and supplemented by funds from other sources such as business, community organizations and levies charged. The revenue collected through fees constitutes an insignificant proportion of the revenue of the institution. Fund allocation has not been much during the last decade. The poor funding of higher educational system in the country has rendered the higher education system incapacitated. The higher education system has not had the financial resources necessary to maintain educational quality in the midst of significant enrolment



explosion. A breakdown of budgetary allocation for the ministry of education for one decade shows that the budgetary allocation for the entire ministry of education has been below the recommended UNESCO 26% of the total annual budget for a year. Ogunode and Ahaotu (2020) observed that the low budgetary provision for the entire educational system also affects other agencies under the ministry that were created for particular functions like planning, inspection and monitoring. Inadequate funding is responsible for many challenges in the Nigerian educational system. The shortage of professional teachers in all the Nigerian institutions is link to poor funding, the infrastructural facilities gap in the system cannot be isolated from the problem of inadequate funding while the ineffective quality assurance and quality control can also be associated with poor funding of the institutions preventing them from be proactive and active in their duties and functions of ensuring quality assurance and quality control. The annual allocation for the educational sector is not adequate enough to provide the needed infrastructural facilities and employ professional teachers that will make it possible to achieve the prescribed students-teachers ratio in all the Nigerian schools.

### **3.2 Shortage of Academic Staff**

Another major problem preventing quality assurance attainment in most Nigerian higher institutions is the issues of shortage of academic staff. NEEDS, (2014) observed that inadequate lecturers is a serious problem facing all the higher institutions in Nigeria. Ahaotu and Ogunode (2021) opines that 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. Another issue is the qualification, how many of the academic staff are qualified to lecture in the higher institutions. According to the National Universities Commission policies on recruitment into the universities, the policies regarding qualifications of academic staff are stated below. The minimum entry qualification of a teaching staff into polytechnic is Bachelor's degree in relevant field. In Colleges of Education, the National Commission for Colleges of Education (NCCE) requires that candidates to be considered for appointment should have, besides first degree, acquire some qualification in education. This means that they have to be certified as professional teachers. The minimum academic qualification required for appointing a university teacher in Nigeria is Master's Degree. Occasionally, "those who have Second Class (Honours) Upper Division are given the job of a Graduate Assistant" (Mgbekem, 2004). Mgbekem further noted that those appointed without the doctoral degree are expected to work and grow through promotions and





acquisition of Master's and Doctoral Degrees in their areas of specialization. For university lectureship, there is an emphasis by the NUC that the minimum requirement should be a doctoral degree. Ogunode, Ajape, and Jegede (2020) and NEEDS (2014) submitted that many lecturers in the Nigerian higher institutions are not professional teachers. The NEEDS (2014) confirms that teachers in colleges of education were perceived to be deficient in evaluation skills, pedagogical and ICT competencies, with less than 50 percent of them being competent in these areas. Over 50 percent of university teachers did not have pedagogical skills, counseling and ICT competencies required for efficient service delivery in tertiary institutions. The numbers of lecturers with PhD in the higher institutions are few and inadequate. According to NEEDS (2014) only about 43 percent of university lecturers have PhD qualifications. The remaining 57 percent have qualifications below PhD. Only seven universities have up to 60 percent of their teaching staff with PhD qualifications. This has implication on the quality of higher education in the country.

### **3.3 Poor implementation of Quality Assurance Policies**

Poor implementation of quality assurance policies in majority of higher institutions in the country is another major problem preventing quality assurance attainment in the various institutions across the country. The various regulatory agencies are up with policies and standard to ensure quality assurance in the Nigerian higher institutions but the poor implementation of the policies is responsible for the poor quality of higher education in the country. For instance a policy of teacher-student per programme in the various higher institutions was designed to ensure quality of teaching and learning but failure to implement the policies in the universities have led to high teacher-student ratio. According to Alechenu (2012) that the National Universities Commission Benchmark Minimum Academic Standards (BMAS) of 2007 stipulated the following teacher/students ratio: 1:20 in science; 1:15 in Engineering and technology; 1:10 in medicine, veterinary medicine and pharmacy, 1:15 in agricultural and environmental sciences and 1:30 in education, management science, social sciences, law and arts. In the universities, the reality was observed by NEEDS, (2014) who submitted that at the National Open University of Nigeria (NOUN), 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. Ogunode (2020) observed that even though these teaching staff/student 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.





### 3.4 Inadequate Infrastructural Facilities

Inadequate infrastructural facilities is another big problem hindering quality assurance programme in the Nigerian higher institutions. Ogunode and Nathan (2021) defined school infrastructural facilities as social capital within the school environment. They include school buildings/complexes such as classrooms, tables, exam hall, chairs, auditoria, desks, staff offices, seminar/conference/board rooms, laboratories, workshops, studios, farms, gymnasia, central libraries, specialized/professional libraries, faculty libraries, departmental libraries, etc., Institute/centers' specialized facilities e.g. ICT infrastructure, special laboratories, conference facilities, etc., and Boards e.g. interactive, magnetic, screen and chalk, etc., ICT that is computer laboratories and services, network connectivity, multi-media system, public address system, slide, and video projectors, and Ergonomics furnishing in laboratories, libraries, and lecture rooms/ theaters, moot courts, and studios, etc. Ogunode and Nathan (2021) observed that the importance of infrastructural facilities in educational institutions include: It aids effective delivery of administrative functions in schools; It makes the delivery of services fast and reliable; It enables teachers to deliver lessons fast; Infrastructural facilities provide a conducive working environment for both teachers and students; Infrastructural facilities enable learners to learn at ease and learn well; and Infrastructural facilities enable the teachers to teach well, prepare their lessons, and deliver them online (ICT). Ishaya and Ogunode, (2021) opines that Infrastructural facilities is a major resources the university system needs to realize its objective. Infrastructural facilities support effective delivery of teaching, researching and the provision of community services. Infrastructural facilities is one of the greatest materials resources that the universities system cannot do with them. The quality and quantities of infrastructural facilities available in the universities determines to some extent the level of quality of education outcome of the universities. NOUN (2007) observed that it is worrisome to note that higher educational institutions are fast decaying. All the required resources for education production process are in short supply. Lecture halls, laboratories, students' hostels, library space, books and journals, official spaces are all seriously inadequate. The equipment for teaching and learning are either lacking or very inadequately and in a bad shape to permit the higher educational systems the freedom to carry out the basic functions of academics. Poor academic performance of students in many Nigerian public universities have been linked to the problem of shortage of infrastructural facilities (Ishaya & Ogunode, 2021). Ishaya and Ogunode, (2021) cited Udida, Bassey, Udofia, and Egbona (2009) who submitted that the lack of adequate infrastructures







in our higher education has posed serious setback in the achievement of higher education goals. In institution where there are no adequate classrooms, resource rooms, staff rooms, lack of laboratory facilities, computers and the like; proper teaching and learning cannot be effective and efficient in the system. Ishaya and Ogunode, (2021) cited Salisu (2001) in her study of influence of school physical resources on students' academic performance concludes that, there is significant difference in the academic performance of students in institutions with adequate facilities and those with inadequate facilities. The lack of good buildings Or funds to rehabilitate collapsed structures poses threat to the system performance and its sustainability hence education to some extent is falling due to low standard. Ebehikhalu and Dawam (2016) concludes that inadequate resources and lack of physical facilities which consistently characterize the universities invariably affect the quality of output they produce. They are the factors that account for the decline in the quality of university output in Nigeria.

### **3.5 Corruption**

Corruption in the higher institutions is another big problem frustrating quality assurance. According to Ogunode (2020) corruption has penetrated the Nigerian higher institutions frustrating the activities and programme of quality assurance. Okobi, (1997) listed the following as forms of corruption in the Nigerian higher institutions: 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. The presences of corruption in the educational institutions is rendering the quality down. No any meaningful quality of education can be attained in the atmosphere filled with corruption practices.

### **3.6 Strike Actions**

Strike actions by different union groups in the Nigerian higher institutions is contributing to poor quality of education and frustrating the objective of quality assurance programme of the higher institutions. Musa and Ogunode (2020) submitted that another negative effect of strike actions on the higher institutions is that it reduces the quality of education because at the end of the day scheme of work for that semester may not be covered and the students will be push forward to go and write exams. Romina (2013) observed that a big challenge to quality higher education







in Nigeria is the incessant staff union disputes and subsequent closures of the institutions. Closure of the institutions affects staff productivity and the realization of educational aim and objectives. Adeboye, (2003) in his study noted that the higher the level of crisis, disruptions and hostility, the lower the level of productivity, standard and quality of the products of the system. The situation was more vividly captured by Ahunanya and Ubabudu (2006) while citing Ayo-Shobowale noted: the perception of falling standards coupled with the escalating incidence of examination malpractices, low rate of completion of university programmes at the required time due to closures and strikes all confirm and provide bases for the fear of the public regarding the outputs of higher education and has cast serious doubts on the credibility of Nigeria's degrees and certificates both within and outside the country. Omotere (2014) concluded that an effective learning or an enhanced academic performance is achieved by successful covering of the course outline timely and before the examination. This is rarely achieved with strike action in place. Ehichoya and Ogunode (2020) The objective of teaching programme cannot be realized in an educational institution where academic calendar is not stable. Nigerian higher institutions are known for unstable academic programme due to strike by different unions in the various institutions across the country. Teaching is mostly affected whenever there is strike. It affects the implementation of teaching programme as planned.

### **3.7 Brain-drain**

NOUN (2009, p-142) brain drain refers to migration of academic staff from the institutions in the country to overseas institutions or equivalent institutions where their services are better rewarded. Institutional deterioration and salary erosion during the past decade have prompted substantial brain drain of academic staff and impeded new recruitment. The causes of these brain-drains can be attributed to: low level of academic salaries during the past decade; the declining financial attractions of higher education employment in and heavy workloads. Ehichoya and Ogunode (2020) Many experienced academic staff, professors especially, have been moving out of Nigerian higher institutions to developed countries like USA, Germany, UK etc. for better offer. This is affecting the quality of teaching in the higher institutions in the country. For effective teaching to take place, there is need for adequate professional and experienced lecturers in every higher institution. There are many factors responsible for brain drain in Nigeria and they include: poor motivation, unconducive working environment, poor working condition and unattractive salaries. Smah (2007) reports Professor Joseph Stiglitz, 2001 Nobel Prize winner in Economics, who, while





delivering a lecture at the first Dr. Pius Okadigbo memorial lecture series in Enugu, Nigeria, said that there is a particular university in the U.S. that has over 25 Nigerian professors. He submitted that the above pointer is instructive for any serious-minded government that wants to address the issue of brain-drain. The mass movement of these faculties from the higher institutions is another fundamental factors responsible for poor quality education in the various higher institutions in the country.

### **3.8 Weak Supervision**

Another problems responsible poor quality of education in the Nigerian higher institutions is that the various regulatory agencies both external and internal are weak in term of carrying out their responsibilities. Ogunode and Ahaotu (2020) submitted that Agencies of the various government established to ensure that both public and private schools compile with the educational policies in the country are weak. The ineffectiveness of these agencies and departments is responsible for the poor implementation of the policy in the country while Ehichoya and Ogunode (2020) observed that ineffective supervision is also responsible for poor teaching programme in higher institutions in Nigeria. The Nigerian government, in bid to ensure effective supervision of teaching programme in the higher institutions, established the following agencies: universities are supervised by the National Universities Commissions, while colleges of education are supervised by the National Commission for Colleges of Education (NCCE). The National Board for Technical Education (NBTE) oversees polytechnic education. These commissions are responsible for policy decisions affecting institutions under their supervision, maintenance of standards through a system of periodic accreditation of courses, distribution and monitoring of government funding, appointment of members of governing councils, and the day-to-day running of the institutions (NEEDS, 2014). These supervisory agencies of higher institutions have not been effective in supervision of teaching programme at the various higher institutions due to many challenges that include underfunding, shortage of staffers, weak leadership and internal problems. The inability of these supervisory agencies to effectively supervise the activities of the higher institutions is one of the factors responsible for poor teaching in the higher institutions in Nigeria.

### **3.9 Poor Staff Development**

Training and development is the key to high performance of academic staff in most Universities of the world (Halidu, 2015). Chukwuma, and Japo (2015) examines staff development and the output of academic staff in the state universities in South-South Nigeria. An ex-post-facto survey design was used to conduct the research in three state





universities in the area. Three research hypotheses were formulated to guide the study. Data were collected from a sample of 402 academic staff. This was done using a questionnaire entitled “Academic Staff Development and Academic Staff Output Questionnaire”. One-way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was used to analyse the data. The findings were that significant relationship exists between staff development and the productivity of academic staff in terms of research, teaching and community service. Therefore, the study concluded that in-service training and attendance of conferences and workshops influence the output of academic staff. Accordingly, it is recommended that adequate funding towards staff development and policies that support staff development are imperative for improved performance.

### **Way Forward**

To ensure quality in the Nigerian higher institutions, the following have been suggested: Adequate funding, employment of adequate academic staff, provision of adequate infrastructural facilities, fight all forms of corruption practices, implement all agreement reached with the different union groups, motivate academic staff, effective supervision, effective staff development.

#### **4.1 Adequate funding**

The government should increase the funding of higher education in the country. There should be committed effort by the governments (federal and states) to promote education through prompt financing in order to meet UNESCO’s budgetary recommendation of 26% of annual budget.

#### **4.2 Employment of Adequate Academic Staff**

Federal and State Governments should embark on massive recruitment of academic staff in all the higher institutions in the country to cover up the gaps created in the teacher-students ratio.

#### **4.3 Provision of Adequate Infrastructural Facilities**

The federal government and state governments should provide adequate infrastructural facilities to all the higher institutions in the country especially the universities. There is need for adequate infrastructural facilities to ensure quality assurance





#### **4.4 Fight all Forms of Corruption Practices**

Government at all levels should intensify effort to fighting all forms of academic corruption in higher institutions in the country by ensuring that the school administrators and anti-corruption agencies are working in collaboration.

#### **4.5 Implementation of Agreement**

The government should implement all agreement reached with different union groups in the higher institutions. This will help to reduce the strike actions affecting the academic calendar of higher institutions in the country.

#### **4.6 Motivation of Academic Staff**

The government should motivate all academic staff in all the higher institutions in the country. There is need for the governments to improve the staff welfare and better working conditions of all personnel working in higher institutions in the country.

#### **4.7 Effective Supervision**

The government should strengthen all the agencies in charge of supervision of higher institutions in the country and ensure all the supervisory agencies are doing their job as mandated. This will help to improve the supervision of higher institutions. Higher institutions administrators should also put measures down to ensure internal supervision of teaching programme in their respective schools

#### **4.8 Effective Staff Development**

The government and higher institutions administrators should develop an in-service program for all the academic staff yet to be certified as professional teachers to go for compulsory educational programme to enable them to improve their capacity of teaching and classroom management.

### **Conclusion**

The importance of quality education cannot be underestimated in the higher institutions. Quality education determines the level of manpower available for the work force in the country. In Nigeria, the quality of higher education is falling. Many programmes have been designed to ensure quality assurance in the system but there are many factors preventing these quality assurance programme from realizing its mandate. This paper examined the factors preventing quality assurance programme from realizing its mandate. Inadequate funding, shortage of academic staff, poor implementation of quality assurance policies, inadequate infrastructural facilities,







brain-drain, strike actions, corruption, weak Supervision, poor staff development as problems preventing quality assurance in the Nigerian higher institutions. To ensure quality in the Nigerian public higher institutions, the following have been suggested: Adequate funding, employment of adequate academic staff, provision of adequate infrastructural facilities, fight all forms of corruption practices, implement all agreement reached with the different union groups, motivate academic staff, effective supervision, effective staff development.

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