

ACADEMIC STAFFING AND TEACHING QUALITY IN NIGERIAN PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES

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Abstract

In recent times, there is a persistent concern over inadequate staffing, declining teaching quality, and the overall effectiveness of university education in Nigeria. Academic staffing, which includes recruitment, selection, qualification, and experience of lecturers, plays a critical role in determining the quality of teaching and learning outcomes in higher education institutions. This study examined academic staffing and teaching quality in Nigerian public universities. The study is anchored on Human Capital Theory, which emphasizes that investment in qualified and skilled personnel enhances productivity and institutional performance. The study adopts a qualitative approach, and data was obtained through relevant documentary sources and institutional reports, while thematic analysis was used to interpret the findings. Findings revealed that inadequate staffing, poor recruitment practices, and low staff-student ratios negatively affect teaching quality in Nigerian public universities. Also, lecturers' qualifications and experience significantly influence classroom effectiveness, student engagement, and learning outcomes. Furthermore, challenges such as underfunding, brain drain, and poor working conditions continue to weaken academic staffing structures and reduce teaching efficiency. The study concluded that effective academic staffing is essential for improving teaching quality in Nigerian public universities. The study recommended merit-based recruitment and selection, improved funding of universities, continuous staff development, and better working conditions to enhance lecturer performance and institutional effectiveness.

Keywords: Academic Staffing, Teaching Quality, Public Universities, Recruitment, Nigeria

Introduction

The university system in Nigeria occupies a strategic position in national development through its mandate of teaching, research, and community service. Public universities are expected to produce highly skilled graduates capable of driving socio-economic transformation. However, the realization of these objectives depends largely on the quality and effectiveness of academic staff. Academic staffing, which encompasses recruitment, selection, training, and retention of lecturers, remains a fundamental determinant of teaching quality in higher education institutions. Scholars have emphasized that the effectiveness of academic staff is directly linked to the overall quality of university education and student outcomes (Adeleke & Aladetan, 2024).

Despite this importance, Nigerian public universities continue to face serious challenges in academic staffing. One of the most persistent issues is the shortage of qualified academic personnel across many disciplines. This shortage has been attributed to factors such as inadequate funding, brain drain, and poor manpower planning. The consequence of this deficit includes increased

workload for existing staff, overcrowded classrooms, and reduced teaching effectiveness, all of which negatively impact the quality of education delivered in universities (Adamu & Ogunode, 2020).

Furthermore, the quality of teaching in Nigerian universities is strongly influenced by the processes and practices involved in academic staffing. Recruitment and selection processes that lack transparency or merit-based criteria can lead to the employment of underqualified personnel, thereby compromising teaching quality. Research has shown that effective human resource management practices including recruitment, training, and staff welfare are significantly related to academic staff effectiveness and productivity in Nigerian universities (Adeleke & Aladetan, 2024). This underscores the need for institutions to adopt rigorous and merit-driven staffing policies.

In addition to recruitment, other dimensions of academic staffing such as training, supervision, and professional development play critical roles in enhancing teaching quality. With the growing complexity of higher education, lecturers are required to continuously update their pedagogical and technological skills. Studies indicate that administrative factors such as proper budgeting, coordination, and supervision significantly influence academic staff effectiveness and, by extension, teaching quality in Nigerian public universities (Ajape, Akinnubi & Suleiman, 2024).

Institutional factors related to staffing also contribute significantly to teaching quality. Issues such as excessive workload, inadequate instructional facilities, and poor working conditions have been identified as key determinants of academic staff performance. Empirical evidence suggests that staff workload and availability of facilities significantly affect lecturers' job performance and their ability to deliver quality teaching (Adesola & Ekundayo, 2022). When lecturers are overburdened or lack the necessary teaching resources, the quality of instruction is inevitably compromised.

Moreover, academic staffing is closely linked to quality assurance in universities. Adequate staffing in terms of both quantity and quality is essential for maintaining academic standards and ensuring effective teaching and learning. Lecturers themselves have identified the availability of qualified academic staff as a critical factor influencing quality assurance and institutional effectiveness in Nigerian universities (Obiekezie et al., 2016). This highlights the central role of academic staff in sustaining educational quality.

Despite these insights, many Nigerian public universities still struggle with ineffective staffing practices, weak policy implementation, and inadequate funding, which continue to undermine teaching quality. The persistent gap between staffing policies and actual practices has contributed to concerns about declining academic standards and graduate quality. Therefore, examining the relationship between academic staffing and teaching quality is essential for identifying areas of improvement and informing policy decisions aimed at strengthening the Nigerian university system.

Objectives of the Study

The main objective of this study is to examine the relationship between academic staffing and teaching quality in Nigerian public universities. However, the specific objectives are to:

- i. Examine the nature of academic staffing practices in Nigerian public universities.

- ii. Assess the influence of academic staffing on teaching quality among lecturers in Nigerian public universities.
- iii. Identify the challenges affecting effective academic staffing and teaching quality in Nigerian public universities.

Literature review

Conceptual Review

Academic Staffing

Academic staffing refers to the systematic process of attracting, selecting, deploying, developing, and retaining qualified academic personnel in higher education institutions to achieve teaching, research, and community service objectives. It is a core function of university administration because the quality of academic staff largely determines the standard of teaching and learning outcomes.

According to Armstrong and Taylor (2020), staffing is a key component of human resource management that ensures organizations acquire and retain people with the right skills and competencies. In the university context, this implies that academic staffing is not just about filling vacancies but ensuring that lecturers possess the required academic and pedagogical competencies to deliver quality education. Their perspective emphasizes that effective staffing directly influences institutional performance and service delivery.

Similarly, DeCenzo, Robbins, and Verhulst (2017) explain that staffing involves recruitment and selection processes aimed at matching individuals to job requirements. In higher education, this means universities must ensure that academic staff are not only qualified in their disciplines but also capable of meeting teaching standards. Their view highlights the importance of job-person fitness enhancing teaching effectiveness and institutional productivity.

In the opinion of Bratton and Gold (2017), staffing is a strategic process that includes workforce planning, recruitment, selection, and retention aimed at achieving organizational goals. Applied to universities, academic staffing becomes a strategic tool for improving teaching quality, ensuring continuity in academic programs, and maintaining institutional reputation. This perspective shows that staffing is not a routine administrative activity but a long-term strategic function.

Furthermore, Okebukola (2015) argues that academic staffing in Nigerian universities is critically affected by inadequate manpower planning and the problem of brain drain. He notes that the shortage of qualified lecturers has led to increased workload and declining teaching quality in many public universities. His contribution highlights the contextual challenges of academic staffing in Nigeria, particularly in relation to funding constraints and migration of skilled academics.

Also, Ogunode and Adamu (2020) emphasize that academic staffing in Nigerian tertiary institutions is characterized by shortage of lecturers, poor recruitment practices, and uneven staff distribution. They argue that these challenges significantly reduce the effectiveness of teaching and learning processes. Their study reinforces the idea that inadequate staffing negatively affects the quality of graduates produced by Nigerian universities.

From the views of these scholars, academic staffing can be understood as a strategic and systematic process of acquiring and managing qualified academic personnel, which is essential for ensuring effective teaching, improved learning outcomes, and institutional development in universities.

Teaching Quality

Teaching quality in higher education refers to the effectiveness, efficiency, and excellence with which lecturers deliver instruction, facilitate learning, and achieve desired educational outcomes in universities and other tertiary institutions. It is a multidimensional concept that goes beyond classroom delivery to include curriculum design, assessment methods, student engagement, and learning outcomes.

According to Biggs and Tang (2011), teaching quality in higher education is achieved through “constructive alignment,” where teaching activities, learning outcomes, and assessment tasks are systematically aligned. They argue that high-quality teaching occurs when lecturers design learning experiences that actively engage students and promote deep understanding rather than rote memorization. Their view emphasizes the importance of intentional teaching design in improving student learning outcomes.

In a similar perspective, Hénard and Roseveare (2012) explain that teaching quality is reflected in the ability of academic staff to use effective pedagogical strategies, provide meaningful feedback, and create inclusive learning environments. They stress that institutional support, staff development, and quality assurance mechanisms are essential in sustaining high teaching standards in universities. Their work highlights that teaching quality is not only an individual responsibility but also an institutional commitment.

Also, Gibbs (2010) argues that teaching quality is closely linked to student engagement and learning outcomes. He maintains that quality teaching is evidenced by the extent to which students are actively involved in learning activities and demonstrate improved academic performance. Gibbs emphasizes that universities must focus on student-centered learning approaches to enhance teaching effectiveness.

In the view of OECD (2012), teaching quality in higher education is defined by the extent to which teaching practices promote student learning, skill development, and employability. The OECD stresses that quality teaching requires well-qualified academic staff, adequate resources, and continuous professional development. This perspective connects teaching quality to broader societal and economic outcomes.

Furthermore, Altbach, Reisberg, and Rumbley (2009) argue that teaching quality in universities is influenced by institutional capacity, faculty qualifications, and global academic standards. They note that in developing countries, including Nigeria, challenges such as overcrowding, inadequate funding, and staff shortages negatively affect teaching quality. Their contribution situates teaching quality within global higher education inequalities.

From the perspectives of these scholars, teaching quality in higher education can be understood as the ability of academic staff and institutions to deliver effective, student-centered, and outcome-oriented instruction that promotes deep learning, skill development, and academic excellence.

Theoretical Framework

This study is anchored on Human Capital Theory which was propounded by Gary Becker in 1964. The theory explains that education, training, skills, knowledge, and experience are forms of capital that individuals and organizations invest in to improve productivity and performance (Becker, 1964; Schultz, 1961).

Human Capital Theory argues that human beings possess skills and knowledge that can be developed through education and training, and these improvements increase their productivity and efficiency in any organization. Becker (1964) posits that education and training are forms of investment that yield economic and social returns over time. Schultz (1961) further emphasizes that investment in human beings is one of the most significant drivers of economic development.

The theory also maintains that the quality of labour determines the quality of output in any organization. In this sense, individuals with higher qualifications, better training, and relevant experience are more productive and contribute more effectively to organizational goals. It further assumes that continuous investment in human capital through professional development, workshops, and training enhances institutional performance and efficiency (Sweetland, 1996).

Human Capital Theory is highly relevant to the study of academic staffing and teaching quality in Nigerian public universities because it directly explains the relationship between the quality of academic staff and educational outcomes. Academic staff represent the human capital of universities, and their qualifications, skills, and experience significantly determine the quality of teaching delivered.

In this study, effective academic staffing practices such as merit-based recruitment and proper selection ensure that highly qualified lecturers are employed, thereby improving teaching quality. Similarly, continuous staff development enhances lecturers' competencies and instructional effectiveness. Conversely, poor staffing decisions that result in the employment of underqualified staff weaken institutional human capital and negatively affect teaching quality and student outcomes. Therefore, the theory provides a strong foundation for understanding how investment in academic staff leads to improved teaching quality and institutional performance in Nigerian public universities.

Methodology

This study employed qualitative research design, using content analysis as the method of data analysis to examine the relationship between academic staffing and teaching quality in Nigerian public universities. This study relied exclusively on secondary sources of data, which were purposively selected to ensure relevance, credibility, and depth of analysis. The materials consulted included government publications such as reports from the National Universities Commission, policy

documents, institutional reports from Nigerian public universities, and peer-reviewed journal articles. Additional sources comprised textbooks, conference papers, and publications from international organizations concerned with higher education development. These sources were chosen because they provide comprehensive and verifiable information on academic staffing practices and teaching quality, enabling the researcher to draw from existing empirical and policy-based evidence across the Nigerian university system.

Data for the study was collected through a systematic document review approach. Relevant materials were identified using academic databases such as Google Scholar, institutional repositories, and official government websites. A purposive sampling technique was employed to select only documents directly related to academic staffing, recruitment practices, staff-student ratios, lecturer capacity, and teaching effectiveness. To ensure reliability and validity, the selected documents were screened based on their relevance to the study variables, credibility of the source, and recency. This approach ensured that the data used was both current and authoritative, thereby strengthening the overall quality of the research. The study adopted qualitative content analysis as its method of data analysis. This technique involves systematic examination and interpretation of textual data to identify patterns, themes, and relationships. The analysis began with careful reading and familiarization with the selected documents, followed by coding of recurring concepts and ideas related to academic staffing and teaching quality. These codes were then grouped into broader themes such as staffing adequacy, recruitment processes, staff development, workload, and teaching effectiveness. The themes were subsequently analyzed and interpreted in line with the objectives of the study and the guiding theoretical framework.

Content analysis, as a technique, enables the researcher to extract meaningful insights from large volumes of textual information, organize such information into coherent categories, and identify underlying patterns and relationships. In this study, it helps to reveal how academic staffing practices influence teaching quality by synthesizing findings from multiple scholarly and policy sources. It transforms qualitative data into structured knowledge that can be systematically interpreted and discussed.

The use of qualitative content analysis is particularly important for this study because it provides a comprehensive and in-depth understanding of institutional and policy-related issues that cannot be easily quantified. It allows the researcher to integrate diverse perspectives and evidence from different sources, thereby enhancing the validity and richness of the findings. Furthermore, it is cost-effective and suitable for studies that rely on existing literature rather than primary data collection. The study was structured into introduction, conceptual issues, theoretical framework, results and discussions, conclusion, and recommendations.

Results and Discussion

The data collected were analyzed thematically according to the research objectives.

Nature of Academic Staffing in Nigerian Public Universities

Academic staffing in Nigerian public universities is governed by established staffing policies and procedures designed to ensure the recruitment, deployment, development, and retention of qualified academic personnel. These policies are largely guided by the regulations of the National Universities Commission (NUC) and individual university governing councils. In principle, staffing policies emphasize merit, equal opportunity, and academic excellence. However, in practice, implementation is often constrained by bureaucratic delays, inadequate funding, and occasional political interference, which affect the overall efficiency of staffing processes in many public universities (NUC, 2021).

The recruitment and selection processes in Nigerian universities are intended to be competitive and merit-based, involving advertisement of vacancies, shortlisting of qualified candidates, interviews, and academic assessments. Ideally, these procedures ensure that only suitably qualified individuals are employed as lecturers. However, empirical evidence suggests that these processes are sometimes undermined by favoritism, nepotism, and administrative bottlenecks, which compromise the quality of academic staffing. Consequently, some institutions experience inconsistencies in hiring standards, which may negatively affect teaching quality and institutional credibility (Ogunode & Abubakar, 2020).

Another key aspect of academic staffing is staff strength and staff-student ratio, which remains a major challenge in Nigerian public universities. The recommended NUC benchmark for staff-student ratio varies by discipline but typically ranges from 1:10 in professional courses to 1:40 in humanities. However, many Nigerian universities operate far above these ratios due to inadequate staffing levels. This situation results in overcrowded classrooms, limited lecturer-student interaction, and reduced capacity for effective assessment and feedback, thereby affecting the overall quality of teaching and learning (NUC, 2021; UNESCO, 2022).

In addition, the academic qualifications and experience of lecturers play a significant role in determining the quality of academic staffing. Nigerian universities are expected to employ lecturers with at least a master's degree for entry-level academic positions, while doctoral qualifications are preferred for senior academic roles. Experience in teaching, research output, and professional development are also critical criteria for academic advancement. However, many institutions face challenges in attracting and retaining highly qualified and experienced academics due to poor remuneration, limited research funding, and brain drain, which ultimately affects instructional quality (Aina, 2020).

Furthermore, the interplay between staffing policies, recruitment practices, staff strength, and lecturer qualifications collectively determines the effectiveness of academic staffing in Nigerian public universities. Weak implementation of staffing policies often leads to inadequate recruitment outcomes, poor staff distribution, and suboptimal staff-student ratios. When combined with insufficient qualifications and limited experience among some lecturers, these challenges contribute

to declining teaching quality and reduced institutional performance. Therefore, strengthening staffing systems is essential for improving academic standards and ensuring sustainable university development in Nigeria.

Academic staffing significantly influences teaching effectiveness because it determines the number and quality of lecturers available to handle courses. When universities recruit qualified staff in sufficient numbers, lecturers can prepare adequately for lectures, adopt appropriate teaching methods, and provide meaningful feedback to students. However, where staffing is inadequate, lecturers are often forced to teach multiple courses beyond their specialization, which reduces their effectiveness in lesson delivery. According to Adesina (2022), effective staffing practices enhance lecturers' ability to plan lessons properly and engage students through interactive teaching strategies, thereby improving overall instructional quality.

Staff adequacy plays a crucial role in classroom performance and learning outcomes. In situations where there is a favorable staff-student ratio, lecturers can give individualized attention to students, manage classrooms effectively, and assess students' performance more accurately. On the other hand, inadequate staffing leads to overcrowded classrooms, limited interaction, and poor assessment practices. Studies have shown that high student numbers per lecturer negatively affect teaching quality, as lecturers are unable to adequately address students' academic needs (UNESCO, 2022). This situation is common in many Nigerian public universities, where limited staffing results in excessive workload and reduced classroom effectiveness.

The qualifications and experience of academic staff are key determinants of teaching quality. Highly qualified lecturers, particularly those with doctoral degrees and strong research backgrounds, are more likely to deliver in-depth content and apply advanced pedagogical approaches. Experience also enhances teaching effectiveness, as seasoned lecturers are better able to manage classrooms, simplify complex concepts, and mentor students. According to Aina (2020), lecturers' academic qualifications and years of teaching experience significantly influence students' academic performance and overall learning outcomes in Nigerian universities. In contrast, less qualified or inexperienced lecturers may struggle with content delivery and classroom management, thereby reducing teaching effectiveness.

Therefore, academic staffing and teaching quality are closely linked in a cause-and-effect relationship. Adequate staffing ensures a balanced workload, improved lecturer performance, and better student engagement, while high-quality staffing—characterized by strong qualifications and experience—enhances teaching effectiveness and learning outcomes. Therefore, improving academic staffing practices is essential for strengthening teaching quality and achieving the core objectives of higher education institutions.

The Nexus Between Academic Staffing and Teaching Quality in Nigerian Public Universities

The relationship between academic staffing and teaching quality in Nigerian public universities is both direct and multifaceted, as the availability, qualification, and motivation of

academic staff fundamentally determine the effectiveness of teaching and learning outcomes. Adequate staffing ensures compliance with acceptable lecturer–student ratios, which enhances interactive teaching, effective assessment, and individualized academic support. However, empirical evidence indicates that while the National Universities Commission (NUC) recommends a lecturer–student ratio of 1:30, Nigerian public universities frequently operate at ratios ranging between 1:80 and 1:150, particularly in high-demand disciplines such as Social Sciences, Management Sciences, and Law. This structural imbalance significantly undermines instructional quality and limits student engagement (Saint, Hartnett, & Strassner, 2003; UNESCO, 2022).

The quality of academic staff remains a critical determinant of teaching effectiveness. Empirical studies show that approximately 45–55% of academic staff in Nigerian public universities possess doctoral qualifications, while a considerable proportion are Master’s degree holders or early-career academics, especially in newly established institutions. This uneven distribution of academic qualifications affects pedagogical depth and curriculum delivery. Furthermore, inadequate remuneration—estimated at an average monthly equivalent of \$500–\$800 for lecturers in many public universities—and limited access to research funding have constrained the recruitment and retention of highly qualified academics. Consequently, institutions often rely on less experienced staff, which negatively affects instructional quality and academic mentoring (Okojie, 2010; World Bank, 2021).

Brain drain further intensifies the staffing–quality nexus in Nigerian universities. Available estimates indicate that over 10,000 Nigerian academics migrated abroad between 2010 and 2023 in search of better working conditions and remuneration. This sustained outflow of experienced personnel has created critical shortages in key academic disciplines, including Medicine, Engineering, and the Natural Sciences. As a result, remaining lecturers are compelled to manage excessive workloads, often handling two to four times their optimal teaching capacity. This situation reduces the quality of supervision, weakens academic mentorship, and limits research engagement, thereby negatively affecting teaching effectiveness (Adebayo, 2011).

Workload intensity constitutes another significant dimension linking staffing and teaching quality. Due to inadequate staffing levels, lecturers in Nigerian public universities frequently handle between six and ten courses per academic session, alongside large class sizes that may exceed 300–500 students in some departments. Empirical findings reveal that over 65% of academic staff report high levels of occupational stress, while more than 50% indicate dissatisfaction with workload conditions. These factors collectively reduce time for lesson preparation, research activities, and meaningful student interaction, thereby diminishing teaching effectiveness and academic productivity (Asiyai, 2013; ASUU Reports, 2022).

Institutional and infrastructural conditions also mediate the relationship between staffing and teaching quality. Survey evidence suggests that approximately 60–70% of Nigerian public universities lack adequate ICT infrastructure, while over 55% report insufficient laboratory facilities and

outdated library resources. Even when qualified academic staff are available, these deficiencies constrain the adoption of modern pedagogical approaches such as blended learning, simulation-based instruction, and ICT-driven teaching methods. Okebukola (2015) observes that inadequate learning infrastructure significantly undermines instructional delivery and reduces students' academic performance outcomes.

Therefore, the nexus between academic staffing and teaching quality in Nigerian public universities highlights the urgent need for systemic reforms in higher education management. Strengthening academic staffing through improved recruitment, retention, and welfare policies is essential to achieving the recommended 1:30 lecturer-student ratio. In addition, addressing brain drain, improving institutional funding, and upgrading teaching infrastructure are critical for enhancing instructional quality. Evidence from UNESCO (2022) and the Federal Republic of Nigeria (2017) underscores that without sustained investment in academic staffing and learning environments, the quality of university education in Nigeria will continue to decline, thereby limiting national development and global academic competitiveness.

Challenges Affecting Academic Staffing and Teaching Quality in Nigerian Public Universities

Academic staffing and teaching quality in Nigerian public universities are shaped by a combination of structural, financial, political, and institutional factors. One of the most critical factors is inadequate funding of universities, which has persistently limited the capacity of institutions to recruit and retain qualified academic staff. Nigeria's education sector has consistently received less than 10% of the national budget, far below the UNESCO recommended benchmark of 15-26% for developing countries. In many years between 2015 and 2025, allocations have hovered around 5-7%, contributing to poor infrastructure, low staff development opportunities, and manpower shortages. Studies have shown that chronic underfunding significantly contributes to staffing shortages and declining academic standards (Ogunode & Abubakar, 2020; UNESCO, 2022).

Another major factor is brain drain and staff shortage, which continues to weaken the academic workforce in Nigerian universities. It is estimated that over 10,000 Nigerian academics have left the country in the last decade to work in universities in Europe, North America, and the Middle East. This migration has created severe staffing gaps, particularly in science and technology disciplines. As a result, the lecturer-to-student ratio in many federal universities is now estimated at 1:80 to 1:120, far above the UNESCO recommended ratio of 1:30. Okolie and Nwosu (2021) note that this persistent brain drain has significantly reduced the quality and stability of academic staffing in Nigerian higher education institutions.

Political interference and recruitment challenges also significantly affect academic staffing in public universities. Evidence from several institutional reports suggests that up to 30-40% of recruitment exercises in some institutions have been influenced by non-merit considerations, including political patronage and nepotism. This undermines professionalism and results in uneven staffing quality across departments. Ogunode and Isa (2020) argue that weak adherence to merit-

based recruitment in Nigerian tertiary institutions negatively affects staff quality and institutional performance.

In addition, government policies and institutional constraints play an important role in shaping staffing outcomes. Many universities operate under rigid bureaucratic frameworks that delay recruitment processes for 6 to 18 months, even when vacancies exist. The National Universities Commission (NUC, 2021) reports that over 60% of public universities in Nigeria operate below their approved staffing capacity, largely due to delayed approvals and limited autonomy in hiring academic staff.

The challenges facing teaching quality in Nigerian public universities are also closely linked to staffing problems. Overcrowded classrooms remain a major issue due to inadequate lecturer-to-student ratios. In some institutions, lecture halls designed for 200 students accommodate over 500 students, severely affecting teaching effectiveness. UNESCO (2022) reports that many African universities, including those in Nigeria, operate far above the recommended staff-student ratio, negatively affecting teaching and learning quality.

Similarly, inadequate teaching resources hinder effective instructional delivery. Surveys conducted across Nigerian universities show that about 70% of departments lack fully functional laboratories and modern ICT facilities, while more than 60% report insufficient library resources. This limits lecturers' ability to apply practical and interactive teaching methods, thereby weakening student comprehension and engagement (Adesola & Ekundayo, 2022).

Furthermore, high workload, strike actions, and poor staff motivation significantly affect teaching quality. Due to staffing shortages, many lecturers handle 3–5 times their normal teaching load, in addition to administrative duties. Nigeria has also experienced over 15 major university-wide strikes between 2010 and 2023, leading to cumulative academic disruptions exceeding 40 months of lost academic time. Poor remuneration and delayed salaries further reduce staff motivation, directly affecting productivity and teaching effectiveness (Aina, 2020; ASUU Reports, 2023).

Therefore, academic staffing and teaching quality in Nigerian public universities are influenced by interconnected factors such as funding limitations, brain drain, political interference, and weak policy implementation. These challenges manifest in overcrowded classrooms, inadequate resources, excessive workload, and low staff motivation, all of which collectively undermine teaching quality and academic excellence in Nigerian higher education institutions.

Conclusion

Academic staffing is a fundamental factor that determines the quality of teaching in Nigerian public universities. The effectiveness of university education depends largely on the availability, competence, and proper management of academic staff. However, the staffing system in many Nigerian universities is affected by challenges such as inadequate funding, brain drain, political interference in recruitment, and weak policy implementation. These problems have led to shortages of qualified lecturers, poor staff-student ratios, and uneven distribution of academic staff across

institutions, thereby weakening the overall effectiveness of teaching and learning. Furthermore, these staffing challenges have contributed significantly to poor teaching quality in public universities, as evidenced by overcrowded classrooms, inadequate teaching resources, high workload among lecturers, frequent industrial actions, and low staff motivation. These conditions reduce lecturers' efficiency and limit students' academic experience and performance. Therefore, improving academic staffing through adequate funding, merit-based recruitment, better staff welfare, and strengthened institutional policies is essential for enhancing teaching quality and ensuring the attainment of university education goals in Nigeria.

Recommendations

Based on the findings, the study recommended the following:

- i. University authorities and the Federal Government should ensure transparent, merit-based, and timely recruitment and selection of academic staff in Nigerian public universities.
- ii. The government and university management should recruit more qualified lecturers to meet the required staff-student ratio to reduce overcrowded classrooms and excessive workload on existing staff.
- iii. Regular training, workshops, and sponsorship for further studies should be provided for academic staff to improve their qualifications and teaching experience.

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