



Recruitment in Public Tertiary Education in Nigeria: Problems and Way Forward

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Abstract: Purpose: This paper examined the challenges faced by Nigerian tertiary institutions when conducting recruitment exercise to filling in staff into the various public tertiary institutions.

Methods: Content analysis was adopted for the paper. Both secondary and primary data were used in the paper to support points raised. The data were sources from national and international dailies, published, unpublished papers and articles and reference materials.

Conclusion: This paper concluded that inadequate funding, bureaucratic bottlenecks, federal character principals, political influence, corruption, embargo, strike actions and lack of professional individual and personnel are the challenges hindering effective recruitment exercise in the Nigerian tertiary institutions.

Recommendations: The government should increase the funding of all public tertiary institutions in Nigeria. This will help to recruit both academic and non-academic staff in right qualities and quantities at due time. Full autonomy status should be granted to all Nigerian tertiary institutions and should be practiced. This will help to stop politicians and public officers from influencing recruitment processes in the system. This will also help to remove the tertiary institutions from government policies of embargo on recruitment and recruitment based on federal character principles.

Keywords: Corruption, Embargo, Tertiary institutions, Recruitment, Public.

Introduction

Tertiary education as a concept is continually evolving; hence different experts and people view it differently. Harvey (2004) defines tertiary education as normally taken to include undergraduate and postgraduate education, as well as vocational education and training. He opined that colleges, universities, and institutes of technology are the main institutions that provide tertiary education (sometimes known collectively as tertiary institutions). He further gave a few examples of institutions that provide post-secondary education to include vocational schools, community colleges, independent colleges (e.g. institutes of technology), and universities, including institutes of technical and further education. Tertiary education is the teaching and learning or schooling, specifically for undergraduate/ graduate students, entered after successful completion of secondary education, which may include vocational post-secondary institution (leading to a certificate) and higher institution or education (leading to a degree), even though the designation is often used synonymously with higher education (Campbell and Rozsnyai, 2002). Campbell and Rozsnyai further posited that tertiary education is formal, non-compulsory, education that follows secondary education. They concludes that tertiary institution (education) is different from education or schooling at the primary and secondary levels. (Tewarie 1998) views tertiary education as the

teaching and learning process that occurs following completion of secondary education and provides credits and certificates, diplomas and degrees, from universities, university college, polytechnics, community colleges and similar institutions. He stressed that it may also include technical and vocational education. Tertiary education is the animator and the driver of national goals and objectives especially, when quality education is sustained. Tertiary education according to Federal Republic of Nigeria in her national policy on education (2013) as the education given after Post Basic Education in institutions such as Universities and Inter-University Centres such as the Nigeria French Language Village, Nigeria Arabic Language Village, National Institute of Nigerian Languages, institutions such as Innovation Enterprise Institutions (IEIs), and Colleges of Education, Mon technics, Polytechnics, and other specialized institutions such as Colleges of Agriculture, Schools of Health and Technology and the National Teachers' Institutes (NTI) (FRN, 2013). From the above, Tertiary education can be seen as an organized advance education that takes place after the completion of secondary school education and it meant programme are teaching, researching and provision of community services. Tertiary education is also a form of education that after completion leads to award of certificated that position an individual for career.

Public tertiary institutions are institutions established by the law of the parliament to provide a public higher education for the people within the country. The national policy (FRN, 2013) went further to outline the goals of Tertiary Education shall include: contribute to national development through high level manpower training; provide accessible and affordable quality learning opportunities in formal and informal education in response to the needs and interests of all Nigerians; provide high quality career counseling and lifelong learning programmes that prepare students with the knowledge and skills for self-reliance and the world of work; reduce skill shortages through the production of skilled manpower relevant to the needs of the labour market; promote and encourage scholarship, entrepreneurship and community service; forge and cement national unity; and promote national and international understanding and interaction (FRN, 2013).

The realization of these objectives are hinges on proper recruitment of human and materials resources into the system and effective administration. Recruitment is one of the core programme of tertiary institutions. Recruitment of staff are done regularly in the system to avoid shortage of staff. Otto (2021) asserts that the tertiary educational institutions, especially, the universities hold the ace in the scheme of things and that the peculiar nature of the university system makes it such that it attracts staff and students from a large diversity of backgrounds. In this regard, its recruitment and selection process must be in line with global standards and practices. It is owing to the reality that high and quality manpower is an essential feature that ensures that the quality of services rendered in an organization is achieved. The human resource of an organisation is an essential factor that helps organisation achieve its goals and objectives. The university system has two categories of staff. They are the academic and non-academic staff. These two categories of staff work to achieve the purpose for which the university is set up. Recruitment has become of concern to many organisations and management scholars because it is only through a robust recruitment process and procedure that an organisation attracts qualified candidates that can effectively fill vacant positions in its fold (Nwodm, 2021). This, in other words, can help put the orgainsation in an advantageous position over its competitors (Adeyemi, Dumade and Fadare 2015). The process of recruitment is not only important, but necessary as the quality of organisational output is a function of the quality of personnel available to it.

Concern has been raised about the poor recruitment always done in Universities, Polytechnics and Colleges of Education. This is evident by the quality of staff both academic and non-academic employed in these institutions. For instance, some staff in public tertiary institutions are less productive, lack ability and technical known-how to work in the higher institutions because they lacks the skills and required knowledge. The institutions are not realizing the aims and objectives of employing them into the system. It is important to examine the challenges tertiary institutions in Nigeria are faced with in time of recruiting into the tertiary institutions.

Concept of Recruitment

Recruitment is the act of employing an individual into an organization or institution to carry out a designed function at a particular time. Recruitment is the whole process of finding, identifying, sourcing, screening, shortlisting, and interviewing candidates for jobs within an institutions such as educational institutions. Recruitment also is the processes involved in identifying and choosing an individuals for a define functions in an organization. Recruitment is the process of selecting, identifying and choosing an individual that meet the requirement for placement in an organization actively seeking out, finding and hiring candidates for a specific position or job. The recruitment definition includes the entire hiring process, from inception to the individual recruit's integration into the company. Recruitment is the process of actively seeking out, finding and hiring persons for a specific position or job. The recruitment definition includes the entire hiring process, from inception to the individual recruit's integration into the company.

Recruitment in the educational institutions involved the systematic *process of identifying, attracting, interviewing, selecting, hiring and onboarding personnel (teaching and non-teaching)*. Employment of good quality teachers in tertiary institutions is a pre-condition to quality of instruction. The case study on how to attract staff of good quality and their retention in tertiary institutions (University) is done. The same process transpires in polytechnics, monotronics and colleges of education. (Babalola 2008), notes that the general procedure for attracting, selecting and retraining the best scholars to teach at the university level in Nigeria involves articulation of staff post, requisition by heads of academic units, authorisation by the establishment unit to recruit, advertisement (internal/external to contact all sources), application analysis into suitable, possible and unsuitable applicants, short-listing from the suitable list, assessment of suitable applicants through interviews, appointment (letter) subject to medical test and references and acceptance of offer by the most suitable applicant(s). Others include administrative appropriation (opening of a file and organization of induction), assumption of duty by filling of an engagement form, addressing the letter of regret to unsuccessful applicants, and accounting system for effective coordination of pay-roll.

Procedure for Appointment of Academic Staff in University of Port Harcourt, Nigeria

(Nwodem, 2021) observes that the regulations identify the following procedures for the appointment of academic staff in the University of Port Harcourt: All vacant positions shall be advertised; Not later than one week after the last day of the receipt of application, the Registrar shall send to the Dean a summary of all applications received. The Dean shall in consultation with the Heads of Department prepare a shortlist of suitable candidates. A copy of the shortlist with the Dean's comment shall be sent to the Registrar not later than 3 weeks after the last day of the receipt of the applications, the Registrar shall send to the Dean, a summary of all appointments received. The Dean shall in consultation with the Head of Department, prepare a short list of suitable candidates. A copy of the shortlist shall be sent to the Registrar, not less than 3 weeks after the last day for the receipt of application.

The procedure further provides that for the purpose of appointment to the position below the grade of Senior Lecturer or equivalent, there shall be constituted in each Faculty or College, a Committee to be known as the Faculty Selection Committee which shall consist of the Dean, all Professors in the Faculty or College, 2 persons elected by the Faculty Board subject to approval by Senate; not more than 2 persons with knowledge of the field in which the appointment is to be made, invited by the Dean for the purpose of particular appointments provided that a person holding a post below the grade of Senior Lecturer or equivalent may be a member of the Committee for appointments to grades below his own. The Chairman of the Committee shall be the Dean and the Secretary shall be the College Secretary or Faculty Officer of the College/Faculty, respectively.

The Committee shall assess the candidate for appointment either by personal interview or consideration of his curriculum vitae, references and publications or a combination of these and other tests as it may consider appropriate. The decision of the Committee with relevant documentation shall be sent to the Appointments and Promotions Committee (Academic) for approval. However, the Vice Chancellor may on the recommendation of the Dean, approve an appointment in accordance

with the decision of the Committee subject to subsequent ratification by the Appointment and Promotions Committee (University of Port Harcourt 2015).

Procedure for Recruitment, Selection and Appointment of Non Academic Staff in University of Port Harcourt, Nigeria

The regulations governing staff conditions of service provides amongst others the following procedures for recruitment, selection and appointment of Junior Staff: All vacancies shall be advertised. Such advertisement shall be in any Nigerian newspaper and shall ensure that adequate time is given for the receipt of applications; copies of the applications duly listed shall be sent to the Dean or Head concerned within two weeks of the close of the advertisement; the Dean or Head of Department shall prepare a shortlist of suitable candidates and send to the Registrar within 7 days of the receipt of the scheduled application from the Registrar; interview and selection exercise for post on CONTISS1-3 shall be conducted in the Faculty or Administrative/Technical Department Service Unit concerned and the report shall be endorsed by the Dean/Head of Department to the Registrar, who shall consider the report and where appropriate approve the report for necessary action on behalf of the Junior Staff Committee; the Selection Committee and its Chairman in the Faculty/Department/Service Unit shall be nominated by the Dean/ Head concerned and approved by the Registrar; the Selection Committee shall ensure that the academic, professional recruitments, as well as experience stipulated in the advertisement are adhered to in making its recommendations; references and background information on candidates shall be sought and placed before the interview panel to enable it assess the candidates in detail; the Registrar shall on behalf of the Junior Staff Committee consider the report and offer appointment where appropriate, to those recommended and present the interview report to the Junior Staff Committee, thereafter for ratification (Nwodm, 2021)

Challenges Hindering Effective Recruitment Exercise in the Nigerian Tertiary Institutions

There are many factors that hindered effective recruitment exercise in the Nigerian tertiary institutions. Some of the problems include; inadequate funding, bureaucratic bottlenecks, federal character principals, political influence, corruption, embargo problem, strike actions and Lack of professional individual and personnel.

Inadequate Funding

Inadequate funding of public tertiary institutions has hindered effective recruitment in the system. The poor funding has made it impossible for higher institutions administrators in Nigeria to recruit staff when there is shortage of academic staff in the institutions. (Ahaotu & Ogunode 2021) submits that inadequate funding is one of the greatest problems facing the administrators of higher institutions in Nigeria. Higher institutions administrators do not have access to adequate funding for effective running and administration of the institutions under their care. 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 (NOUN, 2012; Ogunode & Ahaotu 2020; Ogunode, & Jegede, 2021). 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 (Ogunode, 2020). Researchers have identified inadequate funding as one of the problems facing Nigerian schools especially higher institutions. This has in no small measures hindered their optimal performances over the years (Ajayi & Akindutire 2007). Such predicament adversely affects the administration of the institutions across the country. Consequently, poor staff recruitment, delayed salaries and staff remuneration, poor infrastructural development, shortage of basic learning amenities, poor maintenance of structures and poor staffing are prevalent. Most institutions in the country are poorly financed and the consequence of this is more felt in the recruitment of staff and other resources needed in the system. (Ogunode & Adamu 2021) posits that inadequate funding of public higher institutions in Nigeria is responsible for the shortage of academic staff. The public higher institutions

in Nigeria are underfunded. The inability of the government to implement the recommendation of the UNESCO 26% annual budget allocation for education for the developing countries like Nigeria is affecting the development of higher education. Due to inadequate funds in the system, the school administrators cannot employ adequate academic staff required to implement the teaching programme as expected (Ogunode, Yirolkun & Akeredolu, 2019; Ogunode, Ahmed, Gregory, & Abubakar 2020). This problem of inadequate funding has led to shortage of staff (Ogunode, Olugbenga, & Ezema, (2022); Ogunode. Ugochukwu & Iroegbu, (2022).

Bureaucratic Bottlenecks

Bureaucratic bottlenecks is another problems that has slowed down and hindered recruitment of qualified staff in the Nigeria public tertiary institutions. The federal government in order to ensure smooth recruitment processes in the tertiary institutions formulated some policies, procedures and processes that must be followed before higher institutions can employ academic and non-academic staff in their respective institutions. The Bureaucratic policies, procedures and processes have not aided effective recruitment in the various tertiary institutions. The bureaucratic bottlenecks which universities are made to pass through in their process of recruitment to replenish existing vacancies is not helping the already bad staffing situation. Punch (2022) quotes Maigoro who explains that before the vice-chancellor of a federal university could recruit academic staff, it could take more than a year, because they would have to pass through the Office of the Accountant-General of the Federation, Budget Office of the Federation, Federal Character Commission and Office of the Head of Service, and each process would take minimum of three months. The issues was put straight by Ajao as captured by Punch (2022) who notes that “The first thing you need to know is that universities have their tradition and have their ways of living on their own and this is why you cannot subject a university to a ministry’s bureaucratic principles. It is not going to work.

Federal Character Principle

The federal character principle used for employment in all federal institutions and tertiary institutions has also contributed to poor recruitment in the tertiary institutions because the best brains are not finally been recruited into the system. (Justine, Agbodike & Ogoomegbulam 2015) observed that the federal character principle or quota system as enshrined in Nigeria's Constitution since 1979, seeks to ensure that recruitment and appointments to public service organizations reflect the linguistic, ethnic, religious, and geographic diversity of the country. The Fundamental Objectives and Directive Principles of State Policy, Chapter two, Section 14(3&4) of the 1999 Constitution as amended states that: The composition of the Government of the Federation or any of its agencies and the conduct of its affairs shall be carried out in such a manner as to reflect the federal character of Nigeria and the need to promote national unity, and also to command national loyalty, thereby ensuring that there shall be no predominance of persons from a few State or from a few ethnic or other sectional groups in that Government or in any of its agencies (FRN, 1999). The federal character principles is not the best for recruitment of staff into the public tertiary institutions because the place of merit is suppressed for equal distribution of human resources into the system according to ethnic, religious, and geographic diversity of the country. Merit and standard on the best is not always applied when adopting the federal character principles for recruitment. (Ozeh, unadated) argues that Federal Character principle downplays merit in favour of the place of origin. In order words, it is not concerned with what but who is coming from where. By this, Federal Character accepts even a mediocre once the place of origin is satisfactory, thus sacrificing meritocracy at the altar of mediocrity. Critics argue that the functionality of the system possible only through meritocracy should take precedence in appointment of personnel into positions of authority. Goshwe 2022) concluded that all state and federal universities have resorted to employing mainly from their "catchment areas". Based on the law establishing Federal character commission, no provision or quota is given to foreign staff and most qualified. All lecturers must be Nigerians only.

Political Influence

The Nigerian higher institutions are designed to be political dominated. They are structured to only functions based on the decision of government actors appointed as governing councils. The lapses

helped the politicians to influence the recruitment exercise in the system. (Nwodm, 2021) submits that both politicians and bureaucrats use the few available spaces as patronage to their allies, friends and relations undermining the rational policies and procedures for recruitment of staff in public institution, such as universities. These are the underlying elements of corruption. (Kirya 2019) observed that corruption and fraud in higher education is a global scourge that hinders human capital formation, especially in developing countries and that it ranges from capture of universities to favouritism in admissions, diversion of funds, academic dishonesty and extortion. For instance, (Nwodm, 2021) observed that in 2019, the authorities of the Rivers State University advertised positions into the various Faculties and Departments. Hundreds and thousands of applications flooded the Institution. There were allegations that most of the candidates who applied were not even shortlisted nor were they invited for interview, as the exercise turned to a 'who knows who exercise. In the end, proper recruitment exercise was not conducted. In December 2020, (Nwodm, 2021) observed that authorities of the University conducted recruitment exercise into academic and non-academic positions in the Institutions. A total of 125 nonacademic staff and 148 academic staff positions were filled at various levels in the various Departments and Faculties in the Institution. This was after over 5 years of non-recruitment of staff in the Institution. However, stakeholders in the University, especially the Academic Staff Union of Universities, (ASUU) faulted and kicked against the process and guidelines as not following due process. For instance, it accused the administration of not making the job vacancies open by advertising it to members of the public, both locally and internationally. This flouted the first process stipulated by the recruitment policy of the University. This process seemed to be hijacked by persons in authority and politicians outside the University to favour specific candidates in the process. As a matter of fact, the union threatened a local industrial action if the process was not reversed. There was palpable tension on Campus over the threat by ASUU. The stance of the Union was based on the fact that there was no form of competitiveness in the selection process, it did not give qualified and quality personnel a fair chance of applying for the vacant positions thus sweeping merit under the carpet. Not following this initial procedure creates room for maneuvering the process as favoured candidates are most likely to be recruited during the exercise. There were also reports that the Faculty Selection Boards, for the respective Departments were not properly constituted as some elected representatives into the Board were not informed of the interview dates. This is yet another room for circumventing the rules to favour some. (Ogunode & Abubakar 2022) agrees that many politicians in Nigeria are using their political influence to influence employment of their cronies and friends into the public universities. (Nnenna 2011) observed that government interference in school management to a large extent has influence the management in different ways. It is observed that in areas of employment within education sector, politics to a large extent determines who is to be taken and who is not to be employed. (Ogunode, Ajape & Jegede 2020) opined that politicians have at least a slot in any recruitment processes in the Nigerian higher institutions. Sometimes their candidates may not qualify; they influence their employment against the policies of the institutions. The activities of political officeholders and politicians in the Nigerian higher institutions are threat to the sustainability of higher education policies.

Corruption

The corruption in the management of tertiary institutions in Nigeria has hindered effective recruitment of quality staff into the various tertiary institutions across the country. Recruitment processes are manipulated to favour their candidate into the system. ICPC did a system check recently, and it was so shocking. In fact, the worst two organizations they mentioned are the Teaching Hospitals and our universities." In 2018, the Socio-Economic Rights and Accountability Project claimed that there were allegations of corruption in several federal universities relating to the truncation of staff's salary on the payroll; employment of unqualified staff; unfair allocation of grades; contract inflation; certificate scandal; examination malpractice; sexual harassment; and issuance of results for expelled students to graduate (Punch 2020). (Godwin 2017) submits that there are cases of recruitment and promotion of staff being based on political patronage instead of merit; students being exploited by staff. There are cases of abuse of office by those in authority. Other vices include admission racketeering, hostel profiteering, sorting, examination malpractice, sexual

harassment, etc. (Ahmodu, & Sofoluwe 2018), observed that corruption manifests in Nigerian Universities mostly as; bribery, embezzlement, money laundering, financial misappropriation, falsification of academic records, non-remittance of tax or money collected, contract inflation and ghost worker syndrome. (Ogunode, Josiah & Ajape 2021; Ogunode & Onyekachi, 2021; Ogunode & Oluseun, 2020A; Ogunode & Adamu (2021) laments that corruption is another factor responsible for shortage of academic staff in the Nigerian public higher institutions. The forms of corruption practices that responsible for shortage of academic staff in the higher institutions include; funds diversion, ghost workers and recruitment fraud. Funds released for the employment of academic staff are been looted by some administrators and principals officers of the institutions. Some school administrators are using fake names to collect salaries for people that are supposed to be employed in the system (Ogunode, Jegede & Musa, 2021; Ogunode, Akinlade & Abubakar, 2021).

Government Embargo

The embargo placed on recruitment on federal institutions including the tertiary institutions has prevented effective recruitment of academic staff into the various higher institutions. Whenever, embargo The Nigerian government in year 2021 placed embargo on recruitment due to shortage of revenue in the country. The ban on employment imposed by the Federal Government has led to a shortage of professors and other academic staff members in federal universities in Nigeria. Tertiary institutions are not able to recruit staff as of when due because of the embargo on recruitment which included the tertiary institutions. Findings by (Punch 2022) showed that some universities, which depend on professors on sabbatical, had lost the accreditation of certain courses, while others were given interim accreditation by the National Universities Commission due to the dearth of professors and enough academics for certain programmes. (Ogunode 2020) affirms that there was indeed a shortage of professors owing to the ban on fresh employment. The embargo has frustrated the old arrangement of retaining first-class graduates in their departments.

Integrated Personnel and Payroll Information System (IPPIS)

The Nigerian government directed that all Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) including universities drawing their personnel cost from the Consolidated Revenue Fund (CRF) must enroll in the Integrated Personnel and Payroll Information System (IPPIS). The university community is belief to the bedrock of knowledge and centre of reforms that always strove for probity, transparency and accountability for good governance, would contribute tremendously in bringing to bear all such rare qualities in the implementation of IPPIS. The enrollment of all tertiary institutions in the Integrated Personnel and Payroll Information System (IPPIS) has prevented effective recruitment exercise in the public tertiary institutions. The Integrated Personnel and Payroll Information System (IPPIS) has frustrated tertiary institutions administrators to carry out smooth employment in the various institutions in the country. The IPPIS, according to researchers, does not recognise adjunct professors and those on sabbatical, which informed the decision of the Academic Staff Union of Universities to develop the University Transparency and Accountability Solution as an alternative payment platform. Uko was quoted by (Punch 2022) observed that the IPPIS forced on academics is not helping matters. Departments are short-staffed. Before, we had academics on sabbatical. You teach in the school and you get paid there but sometime ago, it was stopped. Some universities depend on these professors on sabbatical.” Also, Maigoro as reports by Punch (2022) states that the current shortage of lecturers across all federal universities because of the introduction of the IPPIS. “For instance, if a professor retires and there is no replacement, the university will have no choice but to retain him on contract or go to another university to get someone on sabbatical. The IPPIS will not pay the visiting professor or someone who comes on sabbatical; they are usually paid an allowance because as far as the IPPIS is concerned, the person has retired and shouldn’t have anything to do in the university. Atilade as reports by (Punch 2022) opines that “There is no employment as far as university recruitment is concerned. I don’t know whether we will call it an embargo or whatever. You can’t recruit until you get to Abuja. The Treasury Single Account and the IPPIS cannot allow vice-chancellors to even recruit, not even on a temporary basis. The university system is different from other systems.”

Strike Actions

Strike actions by unions in the public tertiary institutions has made it impossible for tertiary institutions administrators to conduct recruitment as of when due. Whenever unions in the higher institutions in Nigeria declares industrial action it triggers unintended consequences such as suspension of administrative functions, prolonged academic session, exhausted financial reserves, and it created two and in some cases, three backlogs of admission exercises. The suspension of administrative functions affected recruitment exercises and delay employment of staff into the system. Research by leadership disclose that Nigerian universities have been shut down disrupting the administrative activities for more than four years due to the frequent strikes embarked upon by the members of the Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU) and others since the return of democracy to the country in 1999. Leadership (2022) submits that the union's ongoing strike 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. These strike actions have affected the universities performance (Ogunode, Akinjobi, & Musa, (2022); Ogunode, Ugochukwu, & Jegede (2022); Ogunode, Akin-Ibidiran & Ibidiran 2022).

Lack of Professional and Personnel

Lack of professional individual and personnel in some field of discipline or programme has posited a lot of challenges for recruitment exercise by tertiary institutions administrators in the Nigeria. Many tertiary institutions have established new programme but when adverts were placed for recruitment into the new departments and faculties in the various higher institutions, there are no applicant to the position due to shortage of manpower in such profession. Profession like medicine, engineering, security studies, early child education, ICT, transportation etc. The unavailability of these professionals in the country is posing challenges for tertiary institutions recruitment exercises. There are many factors responsible for shortage of professionals or shortage of manpower in Nigeria. (Ogunode & Adamu 2021) submits that the lack of sound strategic manpower planning for the production of manpower for the nation' higher institutions is another reasons for the shortage of academic staff in the Nigerian higher institutions. The Nigerian government through the various commissions established to oversee the administration of higher institutions in the country have not designed an implementable road map for the production of adequate manpower for the higher institutions in the country. The inability of these agencies to draw the strategic plans of ensuring the production of the right manpower for the higher institutions is responsible for the shortage of academic staff in the Nigerian public higher institutions. Brain-drain problem is another major factor responsible for the challenge of inadequate academic staff in the Nigerian public higher institutions according to (Ogunode & Atobauka, 2021a); Ogunode & Abubakar (2020) opined that the massive movement of these lecturers is causing major lecturer gap in the Nigerian higher institutions especially the sciences programme. (Bangura 1994) reveals that between 1988 and 1990, over 1000 lecturers left the federal university system in Nigeria. (Ogunode & Paul 2021; Ogunode, Abubakar & Ajape (2021); Ogunode, Jegede, Adah, Audu & Ajape, (2021) identified limited teachers' education institutions in Nigeria as another factor responsible for shortage of professional teachers in the various educational institutions. The total number of higher institutions that specializes in teachers' production for the country is few and not produce the needed manpower requirement for the entire educational institutions. (Ogunode 2020) observed that inadequate teachers in institutions is another factor contributing to the shortage of professional teachers in the Nigerian educational institutions. The total numbers of teacher institutions in the country is not enough to produce the numbers of teachers needed in all the forms of Nigerian educational institutions. The number of Colleges of education, institute of education and faculty of education in the country do not have the capacity to produce the professional teachers required for all the educational institutions in the country.

Way Forward

Based on the above challenges identified, this paper recommends as follows

- a) The government should increase the funding of all public tertiary institutions in Nigeria. This will help to recruit both academic and non-academic staff in right qualities and quantities.
- b) Full autonomy status should be granted to all Nigerian tertiary institutions and should be practiced. This will help to stop politicians and public officers from influencing recruitment processes in the system. This will also help to remove the tertiary institutions from government policies of embargo and the recruitment based on federal character principles;
- c) The government need to establish more teacher education institutions across the country to aid the production of more professional teachers in the country.
- d) The government should develop a strategic manpower blue print to give direction for the teacher manpower planning and implementation in the country. This will help to reduce the problem of shortage of professional teachers in the country.
- e) Public tertiary institutions in Nigeria should adopt a rational, just and competitive recruitment policy that meets up with global standard;
- f) The National Universities Commission (NUC) should strengthen its regulation mechanism that would ensure that universities in Nigeria strictly follow the laid down recruitment processes;
- g) Anti-corruption measures in the tertiary institutions in should be strengthened to prevent corruption in recruitment exercise in the various tertiary institutions. The government should fight all forms of corruption in the teacher education especially the ghost work problems. Recruitment in the educational institutions should be done objectively and void of political influences.
- h) The government should provide conducive working environment for all the staff in the teacher education institutions. This will help to reduce the brain-drain problems.
- i) Government should implement agreement reached with various unions groups to prevent strike actions the leads to suspension of administrative functions in the tertiary institutions
- j) Government should adopt the payment plate form designed by academic staff that accommodate all their needs to prevent shortage of staff in the tertiary institutions and to aid effective staffing in the institutions.

Conclusion

This paper examined the challenges hindering effective recruitment exercise in the Nigerian tertiary institutions. The paper concluded that inadequate funding, bureaucratic bottlenecks, federal character principals, political influence, corruption, embargo, strike actions and lack of professional individual and personnel are the challenges hindering effective recruitment exercise in the Nigerian tertiary institutions.

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