



National Open University of Nigeria: Contributions, Challenges and Way Forward

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Abstract: This paper looked at the historical development of the National Open University of Nigeria, its contributions to national development and the challenges the National Open University of Nigeria is facing. Qualitative and quantitative data were used in the paper. The data were collected from online publications and print materials. The paper depends on primary and secondary data. The paper argued that the National Open University of Nigeria since its establishment has been contributing to the social-economic and technological advancement of the country. Some of the contributions of the National Open University of Nigeria include; the development of manpower, increment in enrolment of university education, enrolment of post-graduate education, ensuring stable university education, and development of research and course materials development. In the areas of challenges militating against the operation of the National Open University of Nigeria, the paper identified poor funding, inadequate staff, inadequate infrastructure facilities, poor internet services and unstable power supply.

Keywords: Administration, Distance education, Challenges, National Open University.

Introduction

Distance education has become an important policy option for educational planners in developing countries. In the context of Nigeria, the increasing population, the growing national demand for education, dwindling financial resources, increasing fiscal constraints, and therefore narrowing of access to education led to the emergence of Open Universities in Nigeria to salvage the promise of education only to be choked prematurely to death. Its subsequent re-emergence points to its imperative in salvaging the demand for placement in the universities in Nigeria (Ambe-Uva, 2007).

Since the inception of the National Open University of Nigeria and other related open-distance educational institutions, there have been challenges militating against the administrative operation of the various institutions especially the National Open University of Nigeria. It is because of this that this paper is aimed to examine the challenges militating against the administrative operations of the National Open University of Nigeria.

Objectives of the paper

The objective of this paper is to examine the challenges militating against the administration operation of the National Open University of Nigeria. The specific objective includes;

1. To examine the historical development of the National Open University of Nigeria.

2. To identify the contributions of the National Open University of Nigeria to the social economic development of Nigeria
3. To assess the challenges militating against the administration operation of the National Open University of Nigeria.
4. To recommend solutions to the identified challenges.

Methodology

The objective of this paper is to examine the challenges militating against the administration operation of the National Open University of Nigeria. To do this, we adopted the use of both secondary and primary data. The secondary data were drawn from print and online resources like; textbooks, journal articles, magazines, discussion programmes, newspapers facsimiles, etc. On the other hand, the primary data were drawn from the author's experience in the administration of Open Universities and personal experiences as administrative staff of a public university in Nigeria. Content Analysis was used to facilitate proper understanding and analysis of data on problems faced by the National Open University of Nigeria.

Theoretical Framework

This paper is anchored on system theory which was developed by David Easton in 1953. The theory was adapted from the natural sciences, especially Biology in the works of Ludwig Von Bertallanty. It found its way into the social sciences through anthropology and sociology (Olaniyi, 2001; Johari, 2013). This system views an administrative system as a sub-system of society. It looks at various parts of an administrative system and examines the interlinkages among the various parts. It analyses the dynamic interactions between the administrative system and its external environment. According to Koontz et al. (1980), almost all life is a system; that is the human body, family, educational institutions, bank, government and house are all systems and each of them has interrelated parts which work together to form complex unity.

Katz (2015) argue that all social systems are contrived systems in the sense that they are made by human beings and are imperfect systems such as the university that should be seen as a total system which has interrelated parts with a single goal. The university system comes in different forms such as conventional universities, research universities, specialized universities like agricultural universities, technological universities etc. to achieve the objectives of the university system, all these forms of universities tend towards the achievement of the central goals of the entire global goals of universities if there is a fault in any of these universities it would affect the whole university system. Therefore, the total performance of all the forms of universities affects the overall performance of the whole university system. The systems approach helps in the identification and solution of specific university problems (Yalokwu, 2006). The university system is like the general system whereby various parts are working harmoniously to keep the system in stability and optimal performance (Koontz et al, 1980).

Conceptual Framework

Historical Development of the National Open University of Nigeria

The National Open University of Nigeria is like the national open university of other countries in the World. The idea of an Open University in Nigeria was first muted by the National Universities Commission (NUC), the Nigerian government regulatory agency for all universities, in 1976. The NUC, then headed by Prof. Jubril Aminu as the Executive Secretary (1975-1979) sent a Memo to the Federal Military Government suggesting that an autonomous Open University be established for Nigeria during the Fourth National Development Plan (1981-1985). This was accepted by the Federal Government and subsequently, the idea made its appearance in the National Policy on Education in 1977. In Section Five Paragraph 40, Sub-section A of the Policy, the Government declared that: Maximum efforts will be made to enable those who can benefit from higher education to be given access to it. Such access may be through universities or correspondence courses, open universities, or part-time and work-study programmes. The Higher Education Division of the Federal

Ministry of Education went to work on the process of creating an Open University and integrating it with the existing educational system in the country (NOUN, 2022).

On assumption of leadership of Nigeria as the Civilian President in October 1979, Alhaji Shehu Shagari, immediately set up a Presidential Planning Committee on the Open University system to work out modalities for the establishment of an Open University for the country. Prof. Afolabi Ojo of the then the University of Ife (now Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife) was appointed Chairman of the Committee on 14th April 1980. Other members of the Committee included Prof. A.E. Afigbo (UNN, Nsukka) and Dr Aminu Orayi (ABU, Zaria) and Mr E.C. Uzodinma, who served as secretary but was later replaced by Mr Olamogoke (NOUN, 2022).

The Presidential Planning Committee presented its report in October 1980. The report which included the draft Bill for the University was approved. The Open University of Nigeria Bill, after passing through all the necessary official processes, which included a change of name to National Open University, was finally ratified and signed into Law by President Shehu Shagari on 22nd July 1983 and was Gazetted on 27th July 1983, as the National Open University Act No. 6 of 1983, thus giving the University legal basis for its existence. It is this Law which governs the existence of the National Open University of Nigeria (NOUN) till today. It is worthy of note that upon the establishment of the National Open University in 1983, the Government named Alhaji Aliyu Obaje, the Attah of Igala as the Chancellor; Alhaji Shuaibu Na'ibi, the Madakin Suleja as the Pro-Chancellor; Prof. Afolabi Ojo as the Vice-Chancellor and Alhaji H.A. Erubu as the Ag. Registrar. However, it was sunset at dawn for the nascent university when unexpectedly, the Federal Military Government that succeeded the Civilian Government of Alhaji Shehu Shagari suspended the operation of the National Open University on 25th April 1984 (NOUN, 2022).

The Resuscitation of the National Open University of Nigeria came as a compelling need for wider access to higher education for teeming Nigerians would not go away a decade and a half after the suspension of the university, thus the idea of reviving the National Open University forcefully entered into the government political narrative with the coming of the Civilian Government headed by Chief Olusegun Obasanjo in 1999. In 2002, the suspended National Open University Act of 1983 was reactivated, thus resuscitating the National Open University with Prof. Olugbemiro Jegede as the Vice-Chancellor. Prof. Jegede had earlier in 2001 been appointed as National Coordinator of, the National Open and Distance Education Programme by Chief Olusegun Obasanjo (NOUN, 2022).

The National Open University of Nigeria (NOUN) as we have it today has become a leading ODL institution in Africa providing functional, flexible, accessible and cost-effective education for all who seek knowledge. It currently has 78 Study Centres spread across the six geo-political zones of the country. The current student population stands at over five hundred thousand. As a faithful trustee of the Nigerian people, NOUN leverages Information and Communication Technology (ICT) to deliver an education tailored towards the globalized economy. The University offers exceptional academic programmes that meet the specific needs of all sectors of the global economy, in the Arts; Health; Law; Physical, Social, Agricultural and Management Sciences (NOUN, 2022). The National Open University of Nigeria is like other public universities in Nigeria that are faced with lots of challenges. It is the view of this paper to critically examine the challenges militating against the administration of the National Open University of Nigeria.

Concept of National Open University

The National Open University of Nigeria is among the universities in Nigeria licensed to provide higher education on the premise of teaching, research and community service. National Open University is classified among the open distance learning institutions. National Open University is an organized higher institution saddled with the responsibility of providing tertiary education through a distance learning model in Nigeria. The National open university of Nigeria is a form of distance education. Denga (1993), defines distance education as the transmission of knowledge through various media such as programmed instructions, multi-media packages, home experiment kits, prepared lectures and notes. It enables students living in remote or isolated parts, or who are employees in full-time jobs or suffer from some physical handicaps to carry on their education at

home through lessons through the post, radio, television or telephone. Distance Education is defined by FRN (2004) as an educational process in which a significant proportion of the teaching is conducted by someone removed in space and/or time from the learners; it involves the use of a range of media such as print, written correspondence, audio, video, computer-based media and networks as well as multi-media facilities for the presentation of information and communication between the University and her students. Baraniuk (2012) as cited by Okebula (2013) listed the following as objectives of open education to (a) bring *people* back into the educational equation – particularly those who have been "shut out" of the traditional world, like talented teachers, scientists and engineers out in the industry, and people who do not read and write English; (b) reduce the *high cost of teaching materials*; (c) reduce the *time lag* between producing course materials and textbooks and getting them into the hands of students. By the time many books are printed, they're out of date. This is particularly problematic in fast-moving areas of science, technology, and medicine; and (d) enables re-use and re-contextualisation such as *translation* and *localisation*, of course, materials into myriad different languages and cultures.

The vision of the National Open University of Nigeria is to be regarded as the foremost university providing highly accessible and enhanced quality education anchored by social justice, equity, equality and national cohesion through a comprehensive reach that transcends all barriers and the mission is to provide functional, cost-effective, flexible learning which adds life-long value to quality education for all who seek knowledge (NOUN, 2022).

The major objectives of the National Open University of Nigeria are: to ensure equity and equality of opportunities in education generally but specifically in university education; to provide wider access to education generally but specifically university education in Nigeria; to enhance Education For All and life-long learning; to provide the entrenchment of a global learning culture; to provide instructional resources via an intensive use of information and communication technology; to provide flexible, but qualitative education; and to reduce the cost, inconveniences, and hassles of easy access to education and its delivery (NOUN, 2022).

Also, as an Open Distance Learning institution, NOUN is an equal opportunity university determined to meet the following objectives that necessitated the establishment of open and distance education in Nigeria: provision of Education for All and promotion of lifelong learning; filling the gap created by the closure of outreaches/satellite campuses; Cost effectiveness; Improved economies of scale; Flexibility of delivery system; Maximum utilization of academic personnel; On-the-job teacher training; Poverty eradication, vocational and lifelong education; Provision of non-formal education; Reaching the unreached and Propagation of national orientation (NOUN, 2022).

Contributions of the National Open University of Nigeria

The National Open University of Nigeria since its establishment has been contributing to the social-economic and technological advancement of the country. Some of the contributions of the National Open University of Nigeria include; the development of manpower, increment in enrolment of university education, enrolment of post-graduate education, ensure stable university education development of research and course materials development.

Manpower Development

The establishment of the National Open University of Nigeria has led to the development of manpower in Nigeria. One of the objectives of the National Open University of Nigeria is to help in the production and development of manpower for the social-economic and technological development of the country. Musa (2017) observes that the university education in Nigeria which also included the National Open University of Nigeria has led to the development of many Nigerians into sound and effective citizens. Here, university education more than any other has led to higher self-awareness and self-realization of individuals at various tasks, enhanced better human relationships, national consciousness and effective citizenship. One cannot doubt the fact that the university education system has enhanced social, cultural, economic, political, scientific and technological progress in Nigeria. The country is more blessed now with specialists in various fields of endeavour: medicine, law, engineering, philosophy, education, etc. And due to this development,

the nation is becoming more and more dynamic and self-reliant as the days go by. This has been made possible because of university education. Okebukola, (2013) opines that Open education comes in to address the human resource needs of the sector. There is a mushrooming of banking and finance programmes in the Nigerian education system that open education can sanitise. With better-developed and better-delivered curriculum materials in banking and finance, better-quality finance experts for the public and private sectors will be assured of the right quantity and quality to run a viable financial system. NOUN (2022) reports that 22,250 students graduated out of which 16,679 were undergraduates in 2022 and 5,571 were postgraduate students and 25 were inmates with one of the inmates being a master's degree student.

Increment in Enrolment of University Education

The establishment of the National Open University of Nigeria has led increment in the enrolment of people in university education in Nigeria. The National Open University of Nigeria has helped to reduce the administration problem in Nigeria by opening up university education for many Nigeria that has been denied access to university education in Nigeria. Many students are denied admission every year in Nigeria (Ademola, Ogundipe, & Babatunde, 2014). The introduction of the National Open University of Nigeria into the space of tertiary institutions in Nigeria has led to an increment in the enrolment of students in the university education system. Okebukola, (2013) states that Nigeria has one single-mode open university- the National Open University of Nigeria as well as six dual-mode universities [conventional universities with distance learning centres] recognised by the National Universities Commission. These are i.e. the Universities of Ibadan, Lagos, Abuja, Maiduguri, Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife and the Federal University of Technology, Yola. Total enrolment in the distance learning programmes of NOUN and the six dual-mode universities is about 100,000 with great potential to offer more opportunities for qualitative university education, to the teeming masses of Nigerians, if well-resourced, coordinated and properly regulated (Okebukola, 2013; Ramon-Yusuf, 2011).

Increment in Enrolment of Post-graduate Education

The National open university has also helped to increase the enrolment rate of post-graduate students in Nigeria. The establishment of the National open university of Nigeria has led to the expansion of post-graduate education in Nigeria. The university has granted post-graduate admission to many Nigerians and many have graduated in the various master programmes and PhD Programmes. The coming of the National Open University of Nigeria has expanded the admission of post-graduate students in Nigeria

Stable University Education

The establishment of the National Open University in Nigeria has helped in the sustainability of stable university education in Nigeria. The National Open University have helped to install the possibility of a university without going on strike. The National Open University of Nigeria is a university with a stable academic calendar. Since the inception of the university, there is nothing like a strike. Ogunode, Yiolokun & Akeredolu (2019); Ogunode, Ugochukwu & Jegede (2022) describes strike actions as one of the major problems Nigerian tertiary institutions are faced with. Strike actions have nearly collapsed the conversion university system in Nigeria. Every government that came on board since 1999 have been faced with the problems of strike actions. The National Open University of Nigeria has not been part of these strike actions and this has made it possible for the National Open University of Nigeria to ensure a stable university education system in Nigeria.

Research Development

The National Open University of Nigeria has contributed to research development in Nigeria and across the world. Ogunode & Abubakar (2020) and Ogunode, Jegede, Adah, Audu, & Ajape, (2021) note that research is the second cardinal programme of higher institutions. Research is very important to the development of society. Research is conducted mostly in the higher institution's environment to solve problems affecting society. The academic staff is saddled with the responsibility of carrying out research in the universities. Conducting research is one criterion for

measuring their performance. The National Open University of Nigeria in a bid to fulfil the mandate of research programme implantation of the tertiary institutions directed many of its faculties and department to commence annual journal publication. Every year the National Open University publish various journals with rich empirical studies.

Course Materials Development

The National Open University of Nigeria is known for the production of course materials for each of its programmes from first degree to PhD level. These textbooks or course materials come in form of hardware copies and software copies online. These materials are very rich and useful for all tertiary institutions across the globe. Many university students at both undergraduate level and post-graduate levels have found these materials useful and impactful to their various studies. Many university lecturers have adopted these materials to lecture their students and have even recommended them to their students across Nigeria. NOUN materials come in form of software and hardware and they are very useful to students, lecturers and researchers across Nigeria. The development of the literature at the National Open University of Nigeria has contributed seriously to the expansion of literary works in the Nigerian research spaces. Okebukola, (2013) submits that NOUN students that he interviewed last week confirmed that the university has increasingly deployed online resources and that many students are now able to access electronic textual materials and download same at remote locations. The third force pushing up the profile of open and distance education is cross-border higher education. Several online courses are being offered by a motley assortment of institutions from all nooks and crannies of the world (Okebukola, 2008). Enrolment in these programmes by Nigerians despite most being of doubtful quality has continued to take an upwards swing.

Challenges facing the National Open University of Nigeria

There are many challenges militating against the operation of the National Open University of Nigeria. Some of these challenges include; poor funding, inadequate staff, shortage of infrastructure facilities, poor internet services and unstable power supply.

Inadequate Funding

Poor funding is one of the major problems facing the administration of the National Open University in Nigeria. The budgetary allocation release for the management and operational cost of National open Nigeria is not adequate and this has affected the operation of some of their states and zonal offices across the country. National Open University is like any other public university in Nigeria that gets its allocation from the federal government through the National Universities Commission. The university system requires a lot of funds to be able to implement its programme of teaching, researching and community services. The annual budgetary allocation for the administration of universities in Nigeria is grossly inadequate. The inability of the federal government to stick to the UNESCO 15-20% of the national budget for education has affected the management of Nigerian universities (Ogunode & Abubakar, 2020). The poor funding of public universities in Nigeria is responsible for the poor quality of education, decayed infrastructure facilities and poor performance (Adetunji & Ogunleye, 2015); Ahmed, & Dantata, 2016). The factors responsible for inadequate funding of public universities in Nigeria include lack of political will, corruption, increase in population, inflation, fall in national revenue and poor financial planning. The implications of underfunding of public universities include; inadequate infrastructural facilities, shortage of academics staff, poor quality of education, brain drain and strike action (Ogunode & Onyekachi (2021); Ogunode & Ohunene & Olatunde-Aiyedun, 2022; Ogunode & Ndayebom, 2022).

Inadequate Academic Staff

Inadequate academic staff is another major problem facing the National Open University of Nigeria. Many states and zonal offices of the National Open University of Nigeria are not having adequate staff to manage the operation of the offices across the country. This is a problem common to all public universities in Nigeria. Many public universities in Nigeria are understaffed and lack the financial capacity to employ adequate staff (Ogunode & Adamu, 2021). Nigerian universities are faced with the problem of a shortage of lecturers in many departments and faculties, especially in a

programme like the sciences (Ogunode & Abubakar, 2020). Recently, National Universities Commission (2021) submits that universities should be isolated from the Federal Government's circular on new employment owing to the shortage of lecturers. The commission noted that 100,000 academic staff members were attending to 2.1 million students in Nigerian universities. The NUC disclosed that the commission was supervising over 200 universities consisting of 48 belonging to the Federal Government; 54 states and 99 private institutions. NUC observed that —The entire system has about 2.1 million students and a staff strength of about 170,000 non-teaching and 100,000 academic staff. —Some of the problems facing the system include increased running costs, meagre budgetary allocations, issues of power shortages and shortages of manpower. Ogunode (2022); Ogunode & Adamu (2021); Ogunode & Okwelogu (2022) and Atelhe & Akande (2018) notes that underfunding, poor manpower planning, poor motivation, government policy on the embargo, corruption (Ghost worker) and strike action problems are the causes of inadequate academic staff in the public universities in North-central Nigeria and the implications of the shortage of academic staff in public universities include poor implementation of teaching programme, high student-lecturers ratio, heavy workload for lecturers, poor local and international ranking, bad international image, poor coverage of scheme of work and poor academic programme accreditation.

Shortage of Infrastructure Facilities

The National Open University of Nigeria is also faced with the problem of a shortage of infrastructure facilities across some of their states and zonal offices across the country. Infrastructure facilities, according to Ogunode, Abubakar & Ajape (2021) and Ogunode & Agwor (2021) are facilities aiding the delivery of academic and non-academic services in educational institutions. Infrastructural facilities include; libraries, laboratories, halls, offices, administrative blocks, hostels, road facilities, water, electricity, internet etc. The availability of infrastructural facilities in adequate quantities will support the effective administration of educational institutions and the inadequacies will prevent the effective administration of educational institutions. Many public universities in Nigeria do not have adequate lecture halls, laboratories and offices for both students and academic staff (Ogunode, & Okwelogu, 2022). The shortage of these infrastructure facilities has affected the operation of some of the states and zonal offices. Some of the National Open University in Nigeria offices do not have adequate ICT facilities to run a stable and reliable programme. The factors responsible for inadequate infrastructural facilities in Nigerian public universities according to Ogunode & Adah (2022); Ogunode & Onyekachi (2021) include; underfunding, increased students population, corruption, poor infrastructural facilities planning, poor supervision and inflation. The implication of inadequate infrastructural facilities in Nigerian public universities includes; poor quality of education, poor teaching and learning, low productivity, brain drain and overcrowding of lecture halls (Ogunode & Jegede (2021); Ogunode, Akin-Ibidiran & Ibidiran 2022).

Poor Internet Service

Poor internet service is a major problem militating against the effective administration in the National Open University offices across the country. The National Open University model of operation is made possible through a virtual learning programme. National Open University depend highly on ICT for connecting its tutors with students across the country. So, the poor internet services in the country are affecting the programme of the National Open University of Nigeria. Ogunode, Hammadu, Ahmed, & Ojo (2021) observes that internet service is what gives life to other ICT facilities to function. In the absence of stable and quality internet service, other ICT facilities are useless. Internet services can be described as the fuel that the ICT needs to operate or move. Internet service is very important to the operation and utilization of ICT facilities in educational institutions. In Nigeria, the quality of internet services is poor and ineffective. The various internet service providers have not invested in the provision of quality services. The federal government agencies regulating the activities of the internet service provided are very weak, and this is responsible for the ineffectiveness of the internet service provision (Ogunode, Garba, Solomon, 2022). Many higher institutions are not covered properly with internet services and this is affecting the application of ICT for teaching (Ogunode, Babayo, Jegede, & Abubakar 2020). Much academic staff with their ICT facilities cannot effectively use them because of weak internet services. In some public universities,

ICT facilities have been provided in the lectures halls to aid in delivering the lecture through ICT but if absent or poor internet services such ICT facilities are abandoned by the academic staff who are supposed to be using them for lecturing

Unstable Power Supply

Another challenge the National Open University of Nigeria is facing is the problem of unstable power supply. This problem Nigeria being a developing nation cannot boast of twenty-four hours electricity supply to its citizens. The institutions are directly connected to Power Holdings Company of Nigeria, yet no electricity of power is supplied to the institutions. It is a sad note that some of the faculties and departments of the institutions cannot afford a generating set that can power the entire computer for teaching and learning. Consequently, both the teachers and students are handicapped and may not be able to offer computer lessons. As observed by Ogunode & Ayoko (2022) Constant energy supply is a key to the realization of tertiary education objectives. Provision of adequate and constant energy is critical to the development of tertiary institutions. Energy is one of the critical resources that the tertiary institution cannot do without. Stable energy provision to the tertiary institutions in Nigeria has been an issue. It is difficult to see any tertiary institutions enjoying stable supply of energy. This problem of unstable power supply is affecting the development of tertiary institutions in Nigeria. The National Open University is no difference because university system is designed to function with constant supply of light. Almost all the administrative activities in the universities required light. The university system is system that deals with activities of typing, photocopying, sending of mails and receiving mails and printing of documents. The university system is also a system that deals with production, distribution and consumption of documents that required typing, printing, photocopying and distribution. Okebukola, (2013) observes that the impediments to a steady power supply are numerous and some of them include; inadequacy in generation and distribution is one. The other is corruption. On the corruption angle, the observation in the public domain is that persons or groups who are benefitting from the importation of generators are committed to stalling reforms in the energy sector. The third impediment is the capacity deficit in specialised technical skills demanding dependence on expatriate engineers and technicians. It is this impediment that open education can tackle. Ogunode, Okwelogu, & Olatunde-Aiyedun (2021); Deebom & Zite, (2016 submitted that unstable electricity is another challenge preventing the utilization of ICT for teaching in many public universities across the country. Electricity is key to the effective application of ICT in educational institutions. Electricity is the backbone of ICT infrastructural facilities. Ogunode, Garba, Solomon, (2022) and Adavbiele (2016) opined that technological and science laboratories are run using electricity. Computers cannot operate without electricity even if all the equipment required is present. Several teachers today have never used computers in their lives and they are shy when they are confronted with this new technology and the terminology associated with using them. Some schools do not have them provided for their teachers and some teachers may not be economically buoyant to buy one for themselves. It is unfortunate that in Nigeria the power generation for the entire over 200 million people is below 10,000 megawatts. The poor power supply is one of the major problems facing the economy of the country and the entire educational institution.

Way Forward

Based on the identified challenges militating against the administration of the National Open University of Nigeria, the paper hereby recommended the following; increment in the budgetary allocation of the National Open University of Nigeria. This will enable the university to provide adequate infrastructure facilities to all its state and zonal offices across the country. The increment in the funding of the National Open University of Nigeria will also enable the employee more academic and non-academic staff to strengthen the workforce of the institutions. The government should ensure internet service providers and energy companies improve the quality of their internet service and electricity supply across the country. This will help to improve the services of the National Open University of Nigeria its operation mostly depend on stable internet services and stable energy electricity to carry out its programme.

Conclusion

This paper examined the historical development of the National Open University of Nigeria and its contributions to national development. The paper also analyzed the various challenges facing the national open university of Nigeria. The paper argued in line that the National Open University of Nigeria has contributed to the social-economic and technological advancement of Nigeria as a country. The paper identified some of the contributions of the National Open University of Nigeria including; the development of manpower, increment in enrolment of university education, enrolment of post-graduate education, ensuring stable university education, development of research literature and course materials development. In the areas of challenges militating against the operation of the National Open University, the paper identified poor funding, inadequate staff, shortage of infrastructure facilities, poor internet services and unstable power supply.

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