Higher Education in Nigeria: Challenges and the Ways Forward

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Abstract:

The aim of this article is to discuss the challenges faced by higher education in Nigeria. The article used secondary data which was sourced from print material and online publication. The article identified inadequate funding, inadequate lecturers, inadequate infrastructural facilities, unstable academic calendar, academic corruption, insecurity, brain-drain, weak leadership, COVID-19 challenge, poor research and poor staff development as challenges faced by the higher education in Nigeria. To address these challenges, the article recommended that the government should provide, adequate funding for higher institutions, employment of more lecturers, provision of adequate infrastructural facilities, ensure stable academic calendar, fight academic corruption, provide adequate security, motivate lecturers, appoint competent leadership and provide adequate ICT facilities to schools to enable them switch to online education to reduce the impact of COVID-19 on the higher institutions.

Keyword: Challenges, Higher Education, education in Nigeria, etc.

Introduction:

National Policy on Education (2004) defines Higher Education as the Post -Secondary Section of the National education system, which is given of Universities, Polytechnics and Colleges of Technology including courses as are given by the Colleges of Education, Advanced Teachers Training colleges, Correspondence Colleges and such institutions as may be allied to them. According to Adeyemi (2001), the Higher Education refers to a system which embraces much of the country’s research capacity and reproduces majority of the skilled professionals that are required in the labour market.

Obanya (1999) views higher education as “Higher Education is taken to embody all organized learning and training activities at the tertiary level. This includes conventional universities, those with the conventional arts, humanities and science faculties as well as specialized universities like institutions specializing in agriculture, engineering, science, and technology. It also includes post-secondary institutions such as the polytechnics and colleges of education. Obanya (1999) further writes that the “Higher Education includes all forms of professional institutions drawing from the available pool of persons who have completed a various forms of secondary school education: Institution of the military, the police, nurses, agriculture, forestry, veterinary workers, catering services, tourism, secretarial services and other possible

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combinations of programmes. Even this wide spectrum does not exhaust the possibilities of forms of Higher Education... such as non-formal higher education. Indeed, any situations in which mature persons are organized for building up their knowledge and skills, to apply knowledge to the analysis and search for solutions to life problems.”

Higher education, including professional education has the following aims:

i. the acquisition, development and inculcation of the proper value orientation for the survival of the individual and societies;
ii. the development of the intellectual capacities of individuals to understand and appreciate environment;
iii. the acquisition of both physical and intellectual skills which will enable individuals to develop into useful members of the community;

According to Ojo (2006), the primary aim of the tertiary institution is to awaken or quicken the human potentials. These potentials are developed through:

i. enculturation and progressively equipping the individual, the socio-cultural skills that should enable one to fit neatly into one’s immediate society.
ii. acculturation, progressive exposure to outside influence from which one can intelligently borrow from to expand the horizon provided by one’s immediate society.
iii. intellectual skill acquisition, for the pursuit of self-development through the acquisition of knowledge in a variety of forms and by a variety of means.
ii. affective traits development, progressively improving on the imbibe attitudes, values, and other behavioral traits that facilitate one’s relationships with fellow human beings as well as one’s capacity for continuous self-employment.
iii. manipulative and psychomotor skills development, progressively awaking the physical powers of the individual, and progressively working towards a perfect coordination of activities of the body with those of the mind.
iv. inculcation of lifelong learning skills (also called learning-to-learn skills), a constellation of activities, habits, mind-set, etc. that predispose one to develop the spirit of inquiry and a perpetual thirst for knowledge.

The Nigerian higher education is the largest in Africa with millions of students. The Nigerian higher education comprises polytechnics, colleges of education, universities, etc. The Federal government of Nigeria has established the following agencies as the external supervising agencies to oversee the various higher institutions in the country:

i. National Universities Commission,
ii. National Commission for Colleges of Education
iii. and The National Universities Commission is a parastatal under the Federal ministry of education.
The Commission was established in 1962 with the task of developing and managing university education in Nigeria. Its functions include:

i. granting approval for all academic programmes in Nigerian universities;
ii. granting approval for the establishment of all higher educational institutions offering degree programmes; and
iii. ensuring quality assurance, through regular accreditation, of all academic programmes in universities.

The Role of National University Commission (NUC forthwith) in system performance cannot be overlooked. As an external quality assurance agency of the Nigerian University System, it has the following roles;

i. Advising the federal Government on the establishment and location of universities, creating new facilities and post graduate units in the universities.
ii. Advising Government on the fundamental needs of the universities.
iii. Carrying out periodic plans on the general programme to be pursued by universities staff.
iv. Preparing periodic plans on the general programme to be pursued by the universities
v. Receiving and disbursing Federal grants to Federal Universities.
v. Establishing and maintaining the minimum academic standards. The audit role and the supervisory functions of NUC has indeed contributed to the quality and sustainability of higher education in Nigeria.

The National Commission for Colleges of Education is a parastatal of the Federal Ministry of Education established by Decree 13 of 1989. The establishment of the Commission was a resultant effect of the utmost importance accorded to quality teacher education by the Federal Government of Nigeria. Since its inception, the Commission has continuously pursued the goals of quality assurance in teacher education. It has continuously reviewed and standardized the curriculum of colleges of education in the country (NEEDS, 2014).

Established by Act No. 9 of 1977, the National Board for Technical Education is a parastatal of the FME specifically created to handle all aspects of technical and vocational education falling outside university education. The Board supervises and regulates, through an accreditation process, the programmes offered by technical institutions at secondary and post-secondary school levels. It is also involved in funding of polytechnics owned by the Government of Nigeria. Ene (2016) submits that the Nigerian government in the bid to ensure quality in tertiary institution, established commission like the NUC, National Commission for Colleges of Education, (NCCE forthwith), and National Board for Technical Education (NABTE forthwith). These commissions and the Board are mandated to ensure quality education in Nigeria tertiary institutions (NEEDS, 2014).

Noun (2012) submits that Concern has been raised about the decline in the quality of education in Universities, Polytechnics and Colleges of Education. This is evident by the quality of graduates produced by these institutions. Mohammed & Gbenu (2007) and Obayan (1999) observe that the quality of education offered by higher education institutions in the recent times has deteriorated substantially.
Babalola & Adeleji (2007) describe the situation in the tertiary institutions as “institutional failure” because of skill mismatch. They say that the skill mismatch is a major concern in Nigeria where tertiary education graduates acquire skills that are not demanded by the labour market.

National Universities Commission (2006) submits that university graduates go jobless for the following reasons:

i. A mismatch between teaching in our institutions and the needs of the labour market.
ii. Lack of consultation with private sector has led to teaching of outdated curriculum, resources and teaching methods.
iii. Majority of students learn through lectures and academic textbooks and are academically sound, but often have limited opportunities of acquiring practical experience by using machinery, equipment and practical techniques associated with the profession.
iv. Lack of qualified teachers to teach vocational, innovative, entrepreneurship and job skills.

Based on the above submission on the various issues affecting the higher institutions in Nigeria, this article seeks to examine the challenges facing higher education in Nigeria.

**Challenges Facing Higher Education in Nigeria:**

The following are the challenges facing the Nigerian higher education, inadequate funding, inadequate lecturers, inadequate infrastructural facilities, unstable academic calendar, academic corruption, insecurity, brain-drain, weak leadership, COVID-19 challenge, poor research and poor staff development.

i. **Inadequate Funding:** Inadequate funding is one of the major challenges facing the higher education in Nigeria. The higher institutions in Nigeria are not adequately been funded by the government. The major issue in educational development is shortage of funds. Udida, et al. (2009) agree that one of the most serious problems threatening the survival of the educational systems is that of dwindling level of public funding in the face of rising demands and hence rising cost of higher education. This shortage of funds affects job performance and the growth of the institution. Higher educational institutions cannot perform optimally without funding. This situation calls for increased fund initiative from both the government and educational stakeholders so as to sustain the tempo and growth of education industry. The inability of the Nigerian government to objectively accept and implement the 26% funding formula for education recommended by the UNESCO impact negatively on the performance and sustainability of higher education. Thus, it has become obvious that Nigeria’s neglect of the funding formula is detrimental to higher educational institution performance and development aspiration as quality performance is the veritable instrument for sustenance of education system. This neglect has further precipitated crises in the entire higher educational systems as effective teaching, research and service are no longer taking place seriously. On this note, Udida et al. (2009) cited Akinola (1990) about the funding situation and commented thus that “Our higher institution education systems are in dire need of
money...to cater for both their capital and recurrent needs. For a few years past, the budget have been cut back from year to year by the federal government. This cut back has affected both capital and recurrent expenditures. In many higher institutions capital projects embarked upon are few years ago, are yet to be completed due to lack of adequate funds.”

ii. Inadequate Lecturers: Inadequate lecturers is a serious problem facing all the higher institutions in Nigeria. Many higher institutions do not have adequate lecturers to deploy for teaching in the various institutions. The shortage of lecturer is responsible for the poor quality of teaching and learning in most Nigerian higher institutions. The needs assessment summary report was presented to the Federal Government in November 2012. It identified manpower shortage as one of the reasons why Nigerian universities have been unable to compete favorably with universities in many other parts of the world. According to the report, a combination of infrastructural and manpower challenges is responsible for the sharp decline in scholarship in Nigerian universities. On manpower challenges, the report indicated that as at November 2012, there were 37,504 academic staff in 74 public universities in Nigeria. Considering the number of staff vis-à-vis the student population, the report revealed an unmanageable lecturer-to-student ratio. For example, at the National Open University the academic staff-to-student ratio was 1:363, at Lagos State University the ratio was 1:144, and at the University of Abuja the ratio was 1:122. Kano State University, which was 11 years old at the time of the needs assessment period, had one professor and 25 lecturers with PhD degrees, while Kebbi State University had two professors and five lecturers with doctorate degrees. These statistics revealed wide disparities between Nigerian universities and their counterparts in other parts of the world. For instance, the staff-to-student ratio in Harvard University is 1:4, Massachusetts Institute of Technology has 1:9 ratio and the University of Cambridge has 1:3. Gender disparities were also found in the distribution of academic staff. About 83 per cent of academic staff in the universities were men and 16 per cent were women. Further classification of academic staff by qualification and rank indicated that the university system was experiencing a staffing or manpower crisis. For instance, only about 16,127 academic staff in the universities have doctorate degrees, representing 43 per cent of all university academic staff instead of 75 per cent recommended by the NUC. Only about 16,502 (44%) are within the bracket of senior lecturers and professors. Surprisingly, only seven in 74 public universities in Nigeria have up to 60 per cent of their teaching staff with PhD qualifications. These deficiencies have led to a situation in which many universities have to rely exclusively on part-time and underqualified academics with negative implications for quality education in the institutions (NEEDS, 2014).

iii. Inadequate Infrastructural Facilities: Infrastructural facilities refers to classrooms, lectures halls, staff offices, hotels, sport ground, electricity, good road network within the school within etc. These facilities are not adequate in majorities of the higher institutions in the country. The adequacy of these facilities will favor effective teaching and learning and the inadequacy will hamper effective teaching and learning result to poor quality of education. Adejompo (2017) observes that
there is actually a general belief that the condition of school’s learning environment, especially infrastructure has an important impact on students’ academic performance and effectiveness. The facilities that are needed to facilitate effective learning in an educational institution include adequate power and water supply, good communication system, improved transportation system, adequate classrooms, libraries, laboratories as well as furniture items and sporting equipment. The quality of infrastructure has strong influence on the academic standard which is an index of quality assurance in the school. The quest for adequate infrastructure in Nigeria tertiary education sector cannot be abandoned because it is the bedrock of development and highly needed for successful, standard and quality education. Infrastructure development can reduce stress and promote good health. It will also reduce crime level. Infrastructure has always played a key role in integrating economies within a region. Well-developed and efficient infrastructure is essential for a region’s economic development and growth. In a dynamic concept, infrastructure is seen as a regional public good that moves factors of production within and across countries, thus helping the region attain higher productivity and growth. Subair et al. (2012) observed that the place of infrastructure in maintaining quality in Nigerian universities. Using a 20-item self-designed questionnaire and Available Infrastructure Checklist (AIC), data were collected from a random sample of 800 final year students drawn from federal (300) and state (500) universities in the country. The data were analyzed using the t-test statistic and descriptive statistics. It was found that there is no significant difference in infrastructural development between the state and federal universities. Thus, it is recommended that government increases funding towards development of the infrastructure. It is also recommended that universities adhere to appropriate standards of infrastructure maintenance and enroll only those students for whom they have adequate facilities.

iv. **Unstable Academic Calendar**: Another challenge facing the Nigerian higher institutions is the problem of unstable academic calendar. Unstable academic calendar is also caused by the various trade union groups within the schools. They often embarked on strike action due to disagreement with the government on welfare issues. Presently the academic staff of Nigerian in on strike. The strike action always disrupt the academic programme of the schools causing more cost and prolong student programme. Strike actions in the tertiary institutions of learning have constituted a serious threat to effective learning. All the tertiary institutions witnessed a strike action in 2009. Non-accreditation of some of the programmes in our tertiary institutions is another major factor for quality of instruction. Ogunode (2020) did a study investigated the causes of unstable academic calendar in Nigerian higher institutions.² Data collected were analyze and the result showed that that Academic staff union of universities/Non-academic staff of union of universities (SUU/NASU) Strike, students’ election, communal crisis, increase in school fees, cultic conflict, National programme and public holiday are factors responsible for unstable academic calendar of higher education in Nigeria. It was also established that half bake graduates, poor coverage of syllabus,

² A case study of federal university Wukari, Taraba state, Nigeria
resources wastage, students’ involvement in criminal activities and students' prolonged years of graduation are the effects of unstable academic calendar. The following were recommended that the government should always try to honor whatever agreement reached protracted strikes can be averted if necessary steps are taken to build a good relationship between both parties.

v. Academic Corruption: Corruption have penetrated the Nigerian higher institutions. The limited funds made available by the government for the development of programme, research and infrastructural facilities end up in private hands or are been diverted for personal used. According to Premium Times (2020) the Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TET Fund) has accused lecturers across the country’s public tertiary institutions of diverting research grants to build homes, purchase cars, and engage in other frivolous activities. This is coming days after an allegation of personnel budget inflation levelled against some academic and healthcare institutions including the University of Ibadan, by the Independent Corrupt Practices and other Related Offences Commission (ICPC), was made public (Chinyere & Chukwuma, 2017). He said: “It is sad to note that public funds made available to lecturers to conduct groundbreaking and demand-driven researches towards solving Nigeria’s socio-economic, and even political challenges, are misappropriated by those who are expected to be above board. I mean the beneficiaries of our grants. Corruption in this paper refers to absurd or deviant disposition of people in institutions of higher learning which violates the ethical standards. The prevalence of corruption in tertiary institutions is viewed to negate the core values of education at this level. Major themes discussed included definition of corruption, corruption in Nigerian society and higher learning institutions, highlighting the various aspects and shapes of corruption in Nigerian higher institutions. Dimensions of corruption identified included students, lecturers, non-academic staff and administrators. The shapes of corruption among students included bribing of lecturers for unmerited grades, cultism, examination malpractice, attacks on lecturers for stopping students from indulging in examination malpractice, fiscal extortion from innocent students by fellow students who form themselves into lecturers’ boys”. Forms of corruption among lecturers included demanding huge amount of money, sex from female students for high grade, etc. Among non-teaching staff, the shades of corruption included monetary extortion from students before they see their results, demanding of money from unsuspecting parents in the guise that they are lecturers with a promise to secure admission for their children/wards, they also act as agents for lecturers, receiving money from students for higher grades after examination. At the administrator's level, shades of corruption included misappropriation and misapplication of fund meant for capital projects, offer of admission to undeserving students for a fee while deserving candidates are by-passed, amongst others. Impact of corruption on higher education administration was discussed and means that can be adopted or adapted to curb the menace were suggested. Corruption have done many damages to the Nigerian higher institutions.

vi. Insecurity: The insecurity challenges facing the country is another challenge preventing effective administration and management of higher institutions in
Nigeria. The insurgent in the Northern part of Nigeria have attacked many higher institutions disrupting their academic programme, killing students and destroying infrastructural facilities meant for teaching and learning. Insecurity in Nigeria and in the Northeast in particular have done more damages to the educational infrastructural facilities. Many school facilities from basic to higher education have been destroyed by the insurgent. Insecurity have contributed to poor deployment of ICT facilities and administration in the various educational institutions in the northern part of Nigeria. Abubakar (2016) Observed that these facilities were either burnt down or destroyed by the militants during crises because there is no enough security in most of our schools. This is in line with the called by UNESCO to the Nigerian Government to provide more security and improve training on safety and security of schools in northeast Nigeria. The Cable (2019) cited the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) who reports that Boko Haram has killed 2,300 teachers in Nigeria’s northeast since the start of the insurgency in 2009. In the 2018 UNESCO global education monitoring report (GEM), the UN agency said 19,000 teachers have been displaced in the region, affecting access to education. The latest education needs assessment found that out of 260 school sites, 28% had been damaged by bullets, shells or shrapnel, 20% had been deliberately set on fire, 32% had been looted and 29% had armed groups or military in close proximity.” Abubakar (2016) Concluded that the school administrators condemned in strong terms the level of implementation of National educational policies on ICT and the executions of interventional projects. They are also with the opinion that government is doing her best on the availability of these facilities and they attributed the negative developments to the lack of basic social amenities, insecurity, lack of external support and poor policy implementations. Obi (2015) stresses that insecurity and terrorism has been a major challenge to the Nigerian government in recent times. The activities of the Islamic sect\(^3\) had led to loss of lives and properties in the country especially in the Northern part of Nigeria. Some of these activities include bombing, suicide bomb attacks, sporadic shooting of unarmed and innocent citizens, burning of police stations, churches, kidnapping of school girls and women, etc. Kidnapping, rape, armed robbery and political crises, murder, destruction of oil facilities by Niger Delta militants alongside the attacks carried out by Fulani Herdsmen on some communities in the North and South have been another major insecurity challenge facing the country. Nigeria has been included among one of the terrorist countries of the world. Many lives and properties have been lost and a large number of citizens rendered homeless. Families have lost their loved ones. Many women are now widows. Children become orphans with no hope of the future. This has implications for national development.

\(^{vii.}\) **Brain-drain:** Brain drain refers to massive movement of professional from developing countries to developed countries to work because of a better working condition. The brain –drain problem have affected many higher institutions in the country losing many of their professors to foreign universities. The massive movement of these lecturers is causing major lecturer gap in the Nigerian higher

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\(3 \) Boko Haram
institutions especially the sciences programme. Bangura (1994) reveals that between 1988 and 1990, over 1000 lecturers left the federal university system in Nigeria. According to Saint et al. (2003), various factors have combined to cause these staffing difficulties. One has been the relatively low level of academic salaries during the past decade and the declining financial attractions of university employment in comparison to other opportunities. Another has been the rising workloads associated with deteriorating staff/student ratios. It must be emphasized that while the best brains are leaving the university system, the broad aim of producing high level manpower from the system for national development cannot be achieved. Smah (2007) submits that Professor Joseph Stilglitz, 2001 Nobel Prize winner in Economics, who, while delivering a lecture at the first Dr. Pius Okadigbo memorial lecture series in Enugu said that there is a particular university in the U.S. that has over 25 Nigerian professors. He submitted that the above pointer is instructive for any serious-minded government that wants to address the issue of brain-drain.

viii. **Weak Leadership:** School administrators appointed to head many higher institutions in Nigeria are weak and do not have the ability and competent to handle the administration and management of higher institutions. Udida et al. (2009) observe that some individuals appointed as vice chancellors of some university are weak, not competent and lack administrative potentials; such appointees must possess administrative qualities and must lead by example. The leader must have integrity, must be knowledgeable, and practice modern types of management leadership styles. He or she must be visionary and ready to adjust to situations in the system. The performance of the administrator should be sustained through the proper utilization of material and human resources in the achievement of the institutional goals and objectives. Udida et al. (2009) also submit that leaders in some universities are weak, uncoordinated and lack administrative skills. Some do not have administrative knowledge or skills. According to Udida et al. (2009) who cited Ekaette (2001), a lot of higher education system managers do not pose the charisma, or good human relations needed for effective and efficient leadership. As a result of the poor leadership and ineffective style of administration, a lot of programme of activities are not carried out in such institutions such as provision of grant for research and publications, staff welfare is neglected, no adequate control of staff and students, no vision for the University. Such leaders also do not have the zeal for supervision and monitoring of institutional activities. This can affect the systems performance in that, workers can result to a nonchalant attitude toward work and hence no sustainability or continuity of good track records of performance in the system. Nigerian Higher Educational System need leaders who can position it to an envying height of success and progress this contributing to society’s quest for self-reliance (Udida et al., 2009).

ix. **COVID-19 Problem:** Since the outbreak of COVID-19 and the shutdown of educational institutions in Nigeria. The COVID-19 have affected the higher education programme in Nigeria. Deborah (2020) did a study to find out the perception of undergraduate students on the impact of COVID-19 pandemic on higher education development in Federal Capital Territory, Abuja, Nigeria. This
The study adopted the descriptive research design of the survey type. The study population comprised all higher institutions in FCT, Nigeria. Out of this population, a sample of two higher institutions was taken and selected through the stratified random sampling technique. Out of the 2,05,878 undergraduate students, 200 undergraduate students made up of final years students were selected from the sampled two higher institutions. The method of selection was also through the stratified random sampling technique. The instrument used to collect data for the study was a questionnaire titled “Perception of Undergraduate Students on the Impact of COVID-19 Pandemic on Higher Institutions Development Questionnaire. The questionnaire was in two parts A and B. Part A was demographic. The reliability of instrument was determined using the test-retest reliability techniques. The instruments were administered through the use online medium. Data collected were analyzed using simple percentage and Chi-square test was used to test the hypotheses. Result collected and analyzed showed that; 100% of the respondents agreed that Covid-19 pandemic affects the academic calendar of higher institutions; 90.5% of the respondent agreed that Covid-19 pandemic would have effect on implementation of higher institutions financial budget for 2020; 94.5% of the respondents agreed that Covid-19 pandemic have relationship with reduction of manpower in higher institutions; 100% of the respondents agreed that Covid-19 pandemic have relationship with the cancelation of academic conferences of higher institutions and 89% of the respondents agreed that online education is the alternative measures for conversational in class teaching and learning for future occurrences of any pandemic.

Poor Research: Research is the second cardinal programme of higher institutions. Research is very important to the development of the society. Research is conducted mostly in the higher institutions environment with the objectives to solve problems affecting the society. Inadequate funding in the Nigerian higher institutions is responsible for poor research programme. Nigerian higher institutions do not conduct research like other higher institutions in other countries especially the developed countries. Yusuf (2012) opines that the role of higher education research in national development cannot be overemphasized. However, research in Nigeria’s institutions of higher learning comprising the universities, polytechnics and colleges of education has yet to make a real impact on the technological advancement of the country and the socio-economic well-being of its citizenry. Constraints hampering the realization of research goals in the higher education sector include inadequate and irregular funding, poor motivation, poor or obsolete research infrastructure, brain drain and rising workload resulting from deteriorating staff/student ratio. These constraints have also generally led to low research productivity. Against this backdrop, this paper appraises the research scene in Nigeria’s institutions of higher learning with emphasis on the university sector, and stresses the need to fill yawning gaps in such critical areas as funding levels, capacity building, including ICT requirements, research focus or specialty and tertiary institution-industry collaboration among others, as part of strategic national research and development (R & D) planning.
xi. **Poor Staff Development:** Poor staff development is one of the challenges facing higher institutions in Nigeria. Due to inadequate funding, many higher institutions do not support staff development programme. Chukwuma et al. (2015) did a study that examined staff development and the output of academic staff in the state universities in South-South Nigeria. An ex-post-facto survey design was used to conduct the research in three state universities in the area. Three research hypotheses were formulated to guide the study. Data were collected from a sample of 402 academic staff. This was done using a questionnaire entitled “Academic Staff Development and Academic Staff Output Questionnaire”. One way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was used to analyze the data. The findings were that significant relationship exists between staff development and the productivity of academic staff in terms of research, teaching and community service. Therefore, the study concluded that in-service training and attendance of conferences and workshops influence the output of academic staff. Accordingly, it is recommended that adequate funding towards staff development and policies that support staff development are imperative for improved performance.

**Way Forward:**

The following have been recommended for the development and the sustainability of higher education in Nigeria. They include: Adequate funding, employment of more lecturers, provision of adequate infrastructural facilities, ensure stable academic calendar, fight academic corruption, provide adequate security, motivation of lecturers, appointment of competent school administrators and provide adequate ICT facilities to enable higher institutions switch to online education to reduce the impact of COVID-19 on higher institutions.

i. **Adequate Funding:** The government should increase the funding of higher education in the country. This will enable the higher institutions meet other pressing needs like developing the research programmes of the institutions.

ii. **Employment of More Lecturers:** The government should direct higher institutions in the country to employ more academic and non-academic staff to improve the quality of education in the Country.

iii. **Provision of More Adequate Infrastructural Facilities:** The realization of the higher education depends to some extend the availability of infrastructural facilities in the various schools.

iv. **Stable Academic Calendar:** The government should direct National Universities Commission to harmonize the calendar of higher institution in the country and the government should be proactive in responding to the request of various trade union groups in the various higher institutions spread across the country.

v. **Fight Institutional Corruption:** The government and the various higher institutions management team should fight all the academic corruption and institutional corruption in the higher institutions across the country through the use of the anti-craft agencies.

vi. **Adequate Security in Higher Institutions:** The school management team should collaborate with various security agencies in the country to ensure security in the various school environment.
vii. **Motivation of Lecturers:** The government should increase the salaries of lecturers and provide conducive working environment for them to prevent them from moving out to other countries to seek a better job.

viii. **Provide Adequate ICT in Schools for Online Education:** The government should provide adequate ICT facilities to all the higher institutions to enable them switch to online education and reduce the impact of COVID-19 on higher institutions in the country.

ix. **Appointment of Qualified Schools Administrator:** To achieve the objectives of higher education in Nigeria, the government should ensure qualified school administrators are appointed to head the various higher institutions in the country.

**Conclusion:**

The higher education is the post-secondary school education. Higher education is very vital to the development of the country. The Nigerian higher education is aimed at providing the manpower for the industrial sector in the country. It is unfortunate that this higher education is plagued with many challenges. This article identified inadequate funding, inadequate lecturers, inadequate infrastructural facilities, unstable academic calendar, academic corruption, insecurity, brain-drain, weak leadership, COVID-19 challenge, poor research and poor staff development as the challenges facing the higher institutions in Nigeria. To address these challenges, the article recommended that the government should provide: adequate funding for higher institutions, employment of more lecturers, provision of adequate infrastructural facilities, ensure stable academic calendar, fight academic corruption, provide adequate security, motivate lecturers, appoint competent leadership and provide adequate ICT facilities to schools to enable them switch to online education to reduce the impact of COVID-19 on the higher institutions.

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