

Adequate Funding Panacea for Sustainable Development of Academic Planning Units of Nigerian Universities

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Abstract: Adequate funding is crucial for the sustainable development of academic planning units in Nigerian universities. The paper examined the benefits of adequately funding academic planning units of the universities in Nigeria. The study adopted the use of secondary data obtained from online publication and print resources. Content analysis was used for selected literatures. The paper concluded that the benefits of adequately funding academic planning units in the Nigerian universities includes; supporting accreditation process, implementation of the core programme, recruitment of qualified staff, improvement in collaboration, support academic programme development, provision of infrastructure facilities, and aids timely staff training and development. It is based on these findings that the paper recommends an increment in the budgetary allocation of academic planning units. The Director of academic planning unit should collaborate with private institutions and international organizations to raise more funds for the implementation of the unit's programme.

Keywords: Academic Planning Units, Adequate Funding, Universities.



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1. Introduction

The National Universities Commission (NUC) proposed and established the Academic Planning Unit (APU) in the Nigerian Universities in the early 1980s in response to the need to coordinate and streamline the academic policies and activities arising from sudden, and sometimes, uncoordinated growth, development and proliferation of programmes and Units in the Universities. The ultimate objectives of Academic Planning Unit (APU) include:

- a. Building the culture of Quality Assurance in Higher Education in line with what obtains in the developed world.

- b. Ensuring the compliance of the University with the National Universities Commission (NUC) guidelines on academic matters.
- c. Ensuring the provision of conducive teaching, learning, research and development environment for the staff and students.
- d. Ensuring efficient and effective utilization of academic resources.
- e. Enhancing the conformity of the University with international academic standards (Funaab 2025).

The functions of Academic Planning Unit (APU) include:

- a. Guiding each Unit on the operation of the University Academic Brief which documents the academic plan of programmes and services of the University including the philosophy, mission, aims, objectives, academic pattern, curriculum, organizational structure and future growth and development plans.
- b. Liaising between the University Management and other regulatory agencies of the Government e.g. NUC, TETFund etc.
- c. Studying and analyzing how the University complies with regulatory agencies' parameters for fund allocation.
- d. Obtaining up-to-date, relevant and accurate data for processing and generating information to guide university management for accurate and timely decision-making on university matters, e.g staff and students' records, financial records, research output etc. (Funaab 2025)

APU perform other functions such as:

- 1. Evaluation of a proposal for the establishment of new academic programmes and review of existing curricula for submission to the Academic Planning and Curriculum Committee, Senate and NUC.
- 2. Involvement in the preparation, procurement and distribution of examination materials
- 3. Coordinates University-wide survey to update data on key matters concerning the University.
- 4. Production of annual reports and publication of the University records, statistics and research reports.
- 5. Coordinates curricula revision and/or review activities as well as ensuring that the University complies with procedures and guidelines on new programme development.
- 6. Analyze collected data for making projections and advising the University on areas of direct concern and attention.
- 7. Provides input into the production and or revision of long term, medium-term and short-term academic briefs and/or plans and modelling of such plans against reality and University goals.
- 8. Serves as an intermediary between the University and governmental agencies, researchers and professional bodies.
- 9. Analyze and interpret University annual statistics on enrolments, staff training and turnover.
- 10. Performing any other function that may be assigned by the Vice-Chancellor (Funaab 2025).

The Academic Planning Unit provides a range of management information and planning support to facilitate informed decision-making, planning and policy formulation, and the overall strategic development of the University. The office is the initial point of contact on matters relating to statistical collections. The office also supplies statistical information to government agencies and a range of parties throughout the wider community. The role of the Academic Planning Unit is to

provide timely and accurate information to the University for planning and managerial decision-making, administer key University investigative research into areas of needs, coordinate compliance reporting activities and guide the management in decision-making (Trinity university 2025). In carrying out its responsibilities, the Academic Planning Unit:

1. Produces a range of institutional statistics and undertakes data manipulation, analysis and interpretation to convert raw data into useful management information.
2. Prepares academic brief for internal and external purposes
3. Monitors resources allocation and utilization in line with the plans of the university
4. Develops resources allocation parameter
5. Determines manpower needs, control and staff development
6. Prepares annual plans of the university for submission to government.
7. Provision of data-based information on various aspect of the university operations
8. Undertakes planning – related investigations and studies.
9. Prepares University budget estimates
10. Coordinates teaching and research equipment grants
11. Computes excess workload for academics and technologists in the University.
12. Coordinates accreditation programmes of the University.
13. Provides close monitoring of the university programmes so as to maintain the quality of our programmes and effective service delivery (Trinity university 2025).

Poor funding has been identified as the major factor responsible for problems in the tertiary institutions (Oguniyi, Edinoh & Okoli, 2023). According to (Victor & Babatunde, 2014; Sarkinfada, 2013; Sarkinfada, 2016), the failure of both state and federal government of Nigeria to objectively implement UNESCO 15% to 20% recommendation for education budget annually is responsible for the underfunding of education.

1.1. Theoretical Framework

This paper is anchored on role theory that was developed by George Herbert Mead. A social role refers to the behaviors and responsibilities expected of individuals in society. In terms of gender, social roles prescribe certain behaviors to men and to women. These roles are known as gender roles. Women's gender roles, or social roles for women, include mother, caretaker, and helper. Men's gender roles or social roles for men include breadwinner, protector, and leader. Role theory is the theory that individuals' behavior is actually the performance of roles that are organized into categories defined by society. Individuals aim to meet these roles, which encompass certain expectations, responsibilities, and behaviors. People perform gender roles on a daily basis, meaning that their behaviors are shaped by societal expectations for them depending on their gender (S.M 2022).

The implication of this theory on this paper is that the universities management have specific role to play in ensuring provision of adequate funds for the implementation of academic planning units programme in the Nigeria' universities. Adequate budgetary allocation to the units will ensure provision of adequate human and materials resources in Nigeria.

2. Literature Review

Concept of Adequate Funding

Adequate funding is critical for the development of any public institution. Adequate funding is the key to the achievement of the institution's goals. Adequate funding is the life wire of any

organization. No meaningful impact institutions can attain without adequate funding, Ogunode, Ukozor, & Ayoko, (2023) and Ayuba, (2015). Adequate fund refers to sufficient funds available for execution of a project or programmes. “Funding for education remains one of the important resources that are needed to manage the school system. All levels of education; primary, secondary and tertiary require a sufficient level of funding to improve the standard of education provided in the country. When funding is not provided in the right quantity and at the right time, it affects the education sector in so many ways (Nwafor, Uchendu, & Akani, 2015).

“Adequate fund is the provision of enough money for the implementation of programmes. Adequate fund is the financial allocation above a minimum bench mark for implementation of a programme. Projects or programme are adequately funded when financial provision for the projects or programme is above the budget or equal to the planned budget. Adequate Funding is the act or process of continuously providing sufficient capital for the implementation of the project or programme (Ogunode, & Mohammed, 2023). Adequate funding connotes sufficient funds availability for implementation of educational programme. Adequate funding refers to the provision of budgetary allocation that is enough to develop the educational institutions. Adequate funding is any level of funds capable of meeting the needs of the institutions in term of implementation of programme (Owobamigbe, Ohunene, & Ogunode 2021). To say that adequate funding plays a key role in the effectiveness or success of educational programmes, will be putting it mildly. This is because, often, the effective implementation of policies will require adequate funding (Edinoh, Oche & Adesola, 2024).

3. Method

This paper examined the importance of adequately funding academic planning units of Nigerian universities. Data from different secondary sources were employed for the paper. The paper used content analysis to analyze all the literatures collected. Only those relevant to the topic were systematically selected. The exploratory method was adopted in the analysis. To ensure the reliability and validity of the study, multiple secondary sources were used to minimize the risk of error. The secondary data were collected directly from textbooks, journals, articles, newspapers and other local and international publications.

4. Result and Discussion on Benefits of Adequately Funding Academic Planning Units of Nigerian Universities

Aids Accreditation Process

Proper funding of academic planning units is essential for the sustainability and growth of Nigerian academic planning units and for development of creditable programmes. These units are responsible for implementing all programme and activities that ensure effective execution of accreditation activities and ensuring accreditation facilities are purchase and supply on time. Without adequate funding, the units may struggle to maintain their smooth operations of resources verification and may even face poor accreditation crises (Omoniyi, 2020).

Implementation of the core programmes

The benefits of adequately funding academic planning units of Nigerian universities are numerous. Not only does it support the effective planning and execution of academic programs, but it also helps to improve the quality of education and research being conducted within these institutions. Adequate funding allows for the development and implementation of innovative planning methods, advanced technology and resources in planning programme (Paul, 2021). The importance of adequately funding academic planning units of Nigerian universities cannot be overstated. These units play a crucial role in the development and success of universities by providing strategic planning, budgeting, and resource allocation for various academic programs and initiatives. Without proper funding, these units may not be able to effectively carry out their

responsibilities, leading to a decline in the overall quality of education (Omoniyi, 2020). The impact of adequate funding on academic planning units of Nigerian universities is an important topic that has been receiving increasing attention in recent years. With adequate funding, these academic planning units, which play a crucial role in shaping the academic direction and success of universities, can operate more efficiently and effectively. This can have a positive impact on various aspects of university operations, including recruitment, curriculum development, and research initiatives (Musa, 2022).

Recruitment of qualified staff

Additionally, it can attract top staff, both domestic and international, and foster a dynamic and diverse working environment and exchange of skills (Paul, 2021). One of the most significant impacts of adequate funding on academic planning units is the ability to attract and retain top talent. The recruitment of highly qualified faculty members. With sufficient funding, these units can offer competitive salaries and benefits, which can help them attract highly qualified individuals who can contribute to the overall academic success of the university. This, in turn, can lead to increased student enrollment and retention, as students are drawn to universities with strong academic planning units that can provide them with a high-quality education (Musa, 2022). Adequate funding of public institutions will support recruitment of new staff (Ogunode, Hauwa, & Muhammad, 2023).

Improvement in collaboration

Adequate funding for academic planning units can also lead to collaborations and partnerships with other institutions and organizations, creating opportunities for interdisciplinary research and further academic advancements. Moreover, it can enhance the reputation and global recognition of Nigerian universities, leading to increased funding and support from external sources. In short, adequate funding for academic planning units is crucial for the overall success and advancement of Nigerian universities, and it benefits not only the institutions themselves but also the students, faculty, and society as a whole (Paul, 2021).

Support academic programme Development

Moreover, adequate funding for academic planning units can also lead to improved academic programme development in the universities. With more resources at their disposal, these units can develop innovative and relevant courses that reflect the needs of the industry and society. This can help universities stay ahead of the curve and produce graduates who are well-equipped to tackle the challenges of the modern world (Musa, 2022). In addition, adequate funding can have a positive impact on academic programme development in the universities. With proper funding, academic planning units can support and facilitate research on curriculum and academic programme not offered in the universities. This can lead to groundbreaking discoveries and advancements in various fields, elevating the academic reputation of the university.

Provision of Infrastructure facilities

Adequate funding of academic planning units as noted by Omoniyi, (2020) also translates to improved academic outcomes for quality planning. With the necessary resources and funding, these units are able to create and implement effective strategies that enhance the stable academic environment. This includes providing necessary tools and equipment, planning and organizing academic events, and supporting research and development. Adequate funding will provide access to necessary resources and equipment, and supply of technological devices, digital facilities and AI facilities. This funding serves as a panacea for improving the overall quality of education and research within these institutions. It allows for the implementation of more effective and innovative strategies for academic planning, leading to better outcomes for students and faculty alike. With proper funding, academic planning units can also invest in new technological

infrastructure facilities and academic planning resources and materials. This ultimately contributes to the development and growth of Nigerian academic planning units, both academically and economically. Therefore, adequate funding should be a top priority for ensuring the sustainable development of academic planning units in these institutions (Ogunode, Ukozor, & Ayoko, 2023a).

Aids Timely Staff training and development

Training is teaching, or developing in oneself or others, any skills and knowledge or fitness that relate to specific useful competencies. Training has specific goals of improving one's capability, capacity, productivity and performance. Training is a highly useful tool that can bring an employee into a position where they can do their job correctly, effectively, and conscientiously. Training is the act of increasing the knowledge and skill of an employee for doing a particular job. Adequate funding of academic planning units can also have a positive impact on staff training of the units (Ogunode, Edinoh & Olatunde-Aiyedun 2023). With proper funding, these units are able to support and promote effective staff development programme, research, and innovation, which can improve the overall standing of the unit in the academic community (Omoniyi, 2020). Increment in the budgetary allocation to educational institutions will guarantee effective staff development (Ogunode, Kasimu, & Sambo, 2023).

4.1. Finding

The paper revealed that the benefits of adequately funding academic planning units includes; supporting accreditation process, implementation of the core programme, recruitment of qualified staff, improvement in collaboration, support academic programme development, provision of infrastructural facilities, and aids timely staff training and development

4.2. Conclusion and Recommendations

In conclusion, it is clear that adequate funding of academic planning units is crucial for the success and development of Nigerian universities. It not only supports the day-to-day operations of the university but also has a direct impact on the quality of education, sustainability, and reputation of the institution.

The paper concluded that the benefits of adequately funding academic planning units includes; supporting accreditation process, implementation of the core programme, recruitment of qualified staff, improvement in collaboration, support academic programme development, provision of infrastructural facilities, and aids timely staff training and development. It is based on this finding that the paper recommends an increment in the budgetary allocation of academic planning units. The Director of academic planning unit should collaborate with private institutions and international organizations to raise more funds for the implementation of the units programme.

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