

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the study

The importance of quality of education is widely emphasised in all citadels of learning in Nigeria. The National Policy on Education affirms that no education system can rise above the quality of its teachers (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2013). In fact, nothing is as important to learning as the quality of the graduates which would eventually translate to the nation's manpower. This implies that the quality of graduates, who are expected to join the economic sector, is very important. The concern for quality has been at the core of motivating forces for reforms in education. Quality can be seen as the overall features of a process, a product or a service on the performance of education sector; it is the customers' or the clients' perception of performance in education sector. It is not just a feature of a finished product or service but it involves a focus on internal processes, outputs and includes the reduction of waste and the improvement of productivity. Taking a cue from the above definition, quality can be characterised by three interrelated and interdependent strands: efficiency in the meeting of its set goals; relevance to human and environmental conditions and needs; and the exploration of new ideas, the pursuit of excellence and encouragement of creativity.

Unemployment amongst Nigerian graduates has reached an alarming rate and thereby become a source of worry to stakeholders in the educational sector. There seems to be fear that if something drastic is not done to arrest this ugly trend; it might lead to many economic and social vices. As at 2017, the unemployment rate had risen from 14.2% to 18.8% between 2016 and 2017 according to the reports released by the National Bureau of Statistics (2018). The reports further stated that the number of people in the labour

force who are either unemployed or underemployed also rose from 13.6 million and 17.7 million to 15.9 million and 18 million, respectively. The implication of this is that, the chances of Nigerian graduates getting employed are becoming slimmer by the day. To further compound this challenge, Chibuogwu and Anaekwe (2015) revealed that 152 Nigerian universities produce an average of 150,000 to 200,000 graduates yearly and this number is more than the employment slots available in the labour markets. Between 2017 and 2021, the general unemployment rate in Nigeria according to the *VanguardNewspaper*, rose from 18.8 % to 33.3 %. However, studies carried out by Akinyemi, Ofem and Ikuenomore (2012) and Pitan (2016) put the unemployment rate amongst Nigerian graduates at 40.3% to 57.5% and this number could have increased over the years owing to the continuous registration and approval of more universities by the National Universities Commission (NUC) in order to address the problem of accessibility of university education by the teeming Nigerian youths.

Many reasons can be adduced for the inability of Nigerian graduates to be gainfully employed and these include the preference of employers for experienced workers over fresh graduates, economic downturn leading to downsizing of workers and the failure of organisations to fill the vacant positions; gender and ethnic disparities, use of quota system and discrimination; and the emphasis on social and network connections. However, employers of labour have consistently affirmed, according to Adedeji and Oyebade (2015), that none of these reasons is more fundamental as the inadequacy of requisite and life skills in many Nigerian graduates. They therefore ascribe this to the apparent decline in Nigerian education which is reflecting in poor quality of graduates. From the foregoing, while the quantity of Nigerian graduates is on the high side, the quality is what is of concern to most stakeholders. They are believed to have possessed the requisite knowledge, competency, skills and abilities to perform maximally at their work place in their fields of specialisation for which they had been trained. Their quality, therefore, is paramount to growth and development of organisations that employed them as they are expected to exhibit a high level of professionalism and competency that would engender the actualisation of organisational goals.

However, recently, the quality of graduates has come under the scrutiny of stakeholders and employers of labour against the backdrop of the poor performances of Nigerian graduates. As a result, quality of graduates has become the yardstick of evaluating the teaching and learning processes that go on in the departments and faculties of the universities. This quality has also been used to distinguish one university from the other and, more importantly, to assess the state of education in each university. It can therefore be concluded that Nigerian universities seem to be facing many challenges that are invariably affecting the delivery of their mandate in producing qualitative graduates whose quality are expected to develop the economy.

It has been observed that Nigerian graduates are practically deficient in technical abilities, communication (oral and written), conceptual, critical, analytical and thinking; human and social interaction; initiative, decision making and problem solving; management, leadership and resource control skills; work ethics (integrity, values, good character, dedication and commitment, self-esteem, self-discipline, team work or spirit, and organizing and ability to translate ideas to fruitful actions)(Pitan, 2016; Akinbode and Oyelude, 2020). Incidentally, it was noted that these skills are not well emphasised in the curricula currently used in higher institutions. By implication, there is a wide gap between the experience acquired by graduates while in school and what is required by employers of labour (Pitan and Adedeji, 2012). In order to bridge this gap, organisations do go extra miles in painstakingly sending their recruits (for competitive advantage) for further training or make them undergo on-the-job training to improve on their level of competence(Akanmu, 2011; Anho, 2011 and Asuquo and Agboola, 2014).

From the above submission, it appears that the performances of many graduates on their jobs are not very satisfactory. For instance, these graduates are the manpower that would carry out one activity or the other in any sector of the economy in which they will find themselves. This implies that, their level of competency would determinetheir level of productivity into the economy. Furthermore, unemployment among the graduates may continue to increase due to the perception of employers of labour.By

implication, this challenge of high rate of unemployment due to low quality of graduates will lead to increase in dependency rate and thereby lead to high rate of poverty (poor standard of living) which can eventually lead to high mortality rate. High rate of mortality, by implication, will lead to low productivity rate which on the long run will adversely affect the national income. Also, the low quality of graduates will adversely affect the productivity of these graduates.

From the foregoing, public confidence in university education appears to be waning on the premise that quantity is being preferred to quality (Dumbili, 2014); and this has made the government, stakeholders and employers of labour come hard on the universities as being responsible for the level of poor quality of graduates. Uchendu, Samuel and Arinze (2016) averred that the faculties are being questioned that the poor quality of graduates is a reflection of their ineffectiveness and inefficiency in teaching and research works as it is believed that the onus to produce competent graduates rest largely on their shoulders.

In an attempt to improve the quality of university graduates, some studies such as Asuquo and Agboola (2014) and Pitan (2016) have investigated some variables such as Nigerian Universities Output and assessment of skills mismatch. Nevertheless, the problem of quality of graduates is still an issue that deserves attention. Therefore, this study assessed some institutional factors that could improve the quality of graduates in Nigerian universities. These factors are autonomy, funding, academic freedom and curriculum implementation.

The Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU) has, over the years, been contending that the major problem confronting the education sector are rooted in different institutional factors which are both internal and external; and which are inherent in the system. By inference, institutional factors are tangible and intangible variables that play key roles in assessing the success or failure of an institution. It is generally believed that autonomy, funding, academic freedom and curriculum implementation are necessary to

the existence of a university and its governance. They are the institutional factors to be considered in this study.

For instance, ASUU claims that underfunding is responsible for the deplorable state of infrastructural facilities all over university campuses. Over the years, until recently, there has been an increase in the number of students' intake in an attempt to address the problem of accessibility without due consideration for the carrying capacity of the facilities in each university. The rush for certificate under the guise that it improves one's status in the society is one of the underlying factors that have contributed to the increase of students vying for enrolment in the universities. Consequently, quality is subsequently jeopardized at the expense of quantity because there was no commensurate investment in resources to revitalize dilapidated facilities or build new ones.

Ekundayo and Ajayi (2009) and Subair, Okotoni and Adelakin (2012) contended that the resultant effect of this deplorable state of infrastructural facilities of universities was that teaching and learning facilities became acute and overstretched leading to overcrowding of lecture halls, halls of residence; makeshift offices and lecture rooms, congested offices without office equipment, furniture, stationeries, electricity and water, broken toilet facilities and lack of befitting accommodation for lecturers. The implication of this is that lecturers had to carry out their work under dehumanizing and challenging situations with overwhelming population of students thereby resulting in the fall in quality of graduate output because the learning and teaching process was adversely affected as instructional processes in universities lost their firmness due to lack of impetus and low morale amongst faculties.

This underfunding of education has led to poor quality of graduates from Nigerian universities especially the number of graduates vis-à-vis the quality which is assumed to be a factor that is contributing to the problem of unemployment facing the Nigerian graduates. Many faculties are battling with tremendous and excessive work load due to poor lecturer — students ratio which also emanated from vast enrolment of students

without corresponding employment of faculty members. In effect, the lecturer – students’ ratio seems to be affecting the good delivery of academic standard resulting in the poor quality of graduate in Nigerian universities. Apart from carrying out academic activities in lecture rooms, the lecturers also carry out researches and at times, attend to administrative matters that fall within their purview. All these stretch them beyond limit to work extra hours thereby overburdening them which result to stress that leads to health or life-threatening sicknesses or ailments like constant headaches, severe backache, body pains and sleeplessness just to mention a few. Some, as a result became frustrated thereby losing interest in the profession. All these often tell on the extent to which faculties perform and discharge their responsibilities. Summarily, these challenges may also affect the poor production of quality graduate from Nigerian Universities (Ukwayi, Uko and Udida, 2013).

In the area of welfare and condition of service, researchers such as Ukwayi, Udida and Uko(2013) observed that lecturers have been facing a deluge of problems which are highly connected to underfunding of the system. Due to reductions in funding of universities, there has been irregular payment of salaries, delay and/or non-payment of earned allowances, varied academic allowance, delayed release of research grants, non-payment of annual leave bonuses, and deferred or delayed promotion. The continuous clamouring for an improved welfare package and condition of services have persistently led to crises in the ivory tower thereby resulting to intermittent and total closure of universities, disruption of academic calendars and boycotting of lectures. The inability of some lecturers to bear with these challenges is resulting to a high level of brain drain thereby creating a deficit in the numbers of faculty members in many departments. It also increases their work load which seems to make them underperform. In all, the receivers of knowledge are always students with elongated duration of study; and this often impinges on their output after leaving the universities. Thus, university undergraduates seem to be bereaved of the expected knowledge from the outset of their programmes.

Scholars such as Afe(2017), Gambo and Fasanmi (2019) have contended that the problem of funding surfaced in Nigerian universities as a result of many years of neglect on the part of government whose investment on education has never been up to standard and this has affected the effective management, quality control and the provision of adequate, quality resources for effective teaching and learning; and to carry out researches. Table 1.1 shows the federal government budgetary allocation to education in Nigeria between 2001 and 2021.

Table 1.1

Federal Government Budgetary Allocation to Education in Nigeria: 2001-2021

Year	Percentage of allocation to Education
2001	7.00
2002	5.9
2003	1.83
2004	10.5
2005	9.3
2006	11.00
2007	8.09
2008	13.0
2009	6.54
2010	6.40
2011	1.69

2012	10.0
2013	8.70
2014	10.6
2015	9.5
2016	6.10
2017	7.38
2018	7.03
2019	7.03
2020	6.7
2021	5.7

Source: Matthew(2016), Ishaku (2020) and *Premium Times* (2020)

Attiah (2016) noted that further cut down is carried out at the various universities on research grants by administrators via procurements and inflation of contracts. Fadokun (2000) reported that only three percent out of the fifty percent of the money released for research from 1999-2000 was utilized. All these suggest massive low concern for education at the ivory towers. The bottom line is that students are always at the receiving end at their various faculties as they are deprived and starved of knowledge as a result of meagre investment in research and teaching. The system therefore leaves the university graduates to face the challenges of unemployment in the labour market with inadequate skills and knowledge in their fields of study.

Another issue that has remained contentious between the government and ASUU in a bid to proffer solution to the poor quality of graduates in the last three decades is the absence of autonomy in Nigerian universities. So contentious is autonomy that it has led to the disruption of academic calendars, total shutdown of universities for months and most disheartening, the mass exodus of faculty members into foreign universities for greener pastures.

While ASUU insists that since the autonomy of Nigerian universities was usurped in the late '70s as a result of the creation of a parastatal to oversee the affairs of the universities, the quality of graduates seems to have declined and the only remedy to this catastrophe is to reinstate full autonomy to Nigerian universities. ASUU's belief stems from the fact that autonomous universities seem to perform better in the production of good graduate quality than universities who are not autonomous. Government on its part has also argued that the huge financial commitment into tertiary education has not been justified over the years and it is imperative for the culture of transparency and accountability to be enshrined in governance and management of Nigerian universities, hence the non-granting of autonomy to the universities.

Autonomy denotes self-governance and independence on major decision making which borders on appointment of key officers, determination of the conditions of service of staff, admission of students, designing and implementation of curriculum, resource

allocation, self-regulation as an independent entity, making universities managers answerable to the universities and above all, forestalling any undue interference from government and its agencies. Olayinka and Adedeji (2016) affirmed that under autonomy, the nomination and eventual selection of Vice Chancellors and key officers is democratized which allows faculties to participate in the process leading to the final appointment of key officers. It does mean that faculties would have a say in the running of the institution the same way the senate has the final say on academic matters.

However, government sees her interference as inevitable and a good omen in order to actualise the purpose of producing good graduate quality. The undue interference on the other hand is perceived by ASUU as incapacitating the universities to thrive for excellence. The interference permeates all aspects of autonomy and it is more visible in the core duties of faculties which seriously impinge on the creation, transmission, impartation and the preservation of knowledge through teaching and research. The absence of autonomy does not safeguard the interest of the faculties on whose shoulders lie the responsibility of building values, skills and capacities in their students. The internal structure becomes porous and defective as it gives intrusion to university's activities at will.

Due to the lack of autonomy, most of the decisions given to universities by the federal government are politically motivated. Due to the complex nature of the university, the committee system is mostly adopted by university administrators in the governance and management of Nigerian universities. Ogbomida, Obano and Emmanuel (2013) discovered those faculties' views, opinions or suggestions that pertain to academic matters at departmental and faculty levels are often jettisoned or passively implemented by university managers thereby creating disillusion, disinterest and passive attitudes by faculties in participating in the running of the universities.

The rigidities and complexities therefore observed in the universities today emanate in part from the senate and academic committees' style of administration which is not without some shortcomings. They noted that these shortcomings include amongst

others; wrong appointment of committee members, slowness in making of decision, lack of commitment to the vision of the university, non-implementation of recommendations by university authorities and huge cost of maintaining the committees which often results into poor or non-provision of logistics. Imposition of controlled measures, according to Ekong (2001), therefore becomes the order of the day; and at times, the divide and rule tactics become the management style and in an attempt to confront any abysmal decisions, faculty members have been reported to suffer all kinds of oppressions ranging from demotion, delay in promotion and termination of appointments, and these in turn would affect negatively the commitment and morale level of the oppressed.

Closely linked to autonomy is academic freedom which bequeaths freedom on lecturers to teach and carry out research as deemed fit without any internal or external interference. In other words, academic freedom makes all scholarly and intellectual activities the exclusive preserve and responsibility of lecturers with the highest observance of professional ethics. However, academic freedom cannot operate without autonomy; and since Nigerian universities are not autonomous, it implies that there are various degrees of infringements on the academic freedom of faculties.

In an attempt to contribute to the frontiers of knowledge, many faculties members' intention in their research and publication works have been misconstrued by government officials who wrongly accused them of belittling the image of the country in the eyes of international communities while in truth, they were merely stating the obvious without any harm whatsoever. Consequently, some faculty members and their publications have been silently censored through stringent imposition of conditions, withdrawal or pegging of grants, harassment, delay in promotion or victimization to serve as deterrent to others who might want to follow the same path. This trend was more noticeable during the military regime. The resultant effect of this censorship and other controls measured on faculties is the cosmetic presentation of facts in their publications in a bid to be able to attract grants and be on the good page of government officials.

This allows for corrosion of truth, brain drain, loss of interest and nonchalant attitude to work. In effect, limited knowledge is disseminated to students by those faculty members affected with such censorship that will become cautious in carrying out their academic activities under fear of possible termination of appointment. They may not be able to challenge existing knowledge which has become obsolete or out-dated thereby, making them work against their conscience. Under such academic condition, academic activities do not engender critical thinking but stereotyped. It has been discovered that censorship on faculties by government officials and university managers has a subtle way of determining what to and how to teach; publish or research into by faculties (Osaat and Omordu, 2013).

Another contempt of academic freedom as earlier stated is the limited or non-involvement of the lecturers in the final decision making of the senate, most especially on academic matters. It is true that lecturers meet at departmental and faculty levels on varying issues that affect the university as a whole. However, it cannot be ascertained to what extent their views, opinions and suggestions are considered and implemented. Academic freedom embraces consultation which also allows for mutual tolerance and respect for other people's opinion. This means that the process that would lead to decision making, policy formulation and implementation must be democratic rather than imposing. By inference, the problem that lecturers contend with, which are inherent in the absence of autonomy, may also manifest when academic freedom is trampled upon.

One of the major responsibilities of university education is to provide graduates with requisite background and skills like organisation skills, subject matter mastery, knowledge impartation skills, decision making skills, interpersonal skills, time management skills and reflective thinking skills that will enable them perform optimally in their chosen career after graduation by discovering the vast potentials in the individual. Research has shown that in skills acquisition, graduate-level skills like speed of processing information, task execution accuracy, emotional stability, multilingual ability, ICT skills, communication skills, technical skills and team skills are paramount

to high productivity, wealth creation and social justice according to Purcell(2008). One can however deduce a reason why these skills are absent. Atanda (2021) observed that ordinarily, the receivers of Junior Secondary education, going by the 2014 National Policy on Education, ought to be enterprising, morally upright and contribute significantly to national development. He averred further that the receivers of the Senior Secondary education at the completion of their programme, are expected to be ready for employment by being infused with requisite entrepreneurial skills that would enable them face the world of work.

The University education therefore, is expected to leverage and improve these skills or at least remedy the entrepreneurial lapses so as to build a manpower that is strong and viable for national and technological development. These skills however are not infused into the university curriculum that is currently in use and this completely negates one of the core essences of establishing tertiary institutions in Nigeria as contained in the National Policy on Education (FGN, 2013) guideline.

Summarily, employers of labours are indirectly questioning the quality of research and teaching by lecturers in the universities as irrelevant, unimpactful and ineffective in preparing Nigerian graduates for future challenges. If it were not so, they would not consistently call on the government to review and upgrade university curriculum to meet the societal need. By implication, past efforts at reviewing the curriculum seem not to have yielded substantial result. Dabalén, Oni and Adekola (2000) and Olorundare and Kayode (2014) asserted that Nigerian educational system is, more or less, theoretically inclined and as such, can only produce graduates who are best fit for white collar jobs without basic skills. This according to them has led to massive increase in unemployment amongst Nigerian graduates. To be employable, many graduates go the extra miles in acquiring these skills by paying through their nose. At times, however, some organisations do organise on-the-job training or additional training for their graduate recruits.

One of the constraints that faculties might be confronting in the implementation of curriculum could be restriction when teaching. To what extent are they free to explore research knowledge in implementing the existing curriculum? Are they solely restricted to the content of the curriculum? Their restriction therefore, could limit the robust rapport that ought to exist between faculties and the students in the process of teaching and learning. The levels of contributions and inputs lecturers are allowed to make in the review of university curriculum are not certain. However, Dumbili (2014) and Ibijola (2014) have established the fact that the current curriculum for universities in Nigeria was drawn up by NUC and professional bodies.

By implication, it could mean that lecturers and employers of labour made no input or contributions; and if any, perhaps very little. This may make some lecturers not to exhibit total passion and commitment to teach the curriculum they are not part of. As a result, ASUU has consistently decried the use of out-dated curriculum and the non-involvement of lecturers in preparing an encompassing curriculum capable of engendering a reversal in the poor quality of graduates. They have asked for an inclusive, responsive and expanded curriculum that would address present challenges and the needs of Nigerian graduates (Moja, 2000; Adedeji and Oyebade, 2016).

Based on the foregoing, there has been a renewed call to the government to consider granting autonomy and academic freedom to Nigerian universities to save it from total collapse; and to improve the dwindling performances in the quality of Nigerian graduates. The proponents of autonomy and academic freedom for Nigerian universities strongly believed that it will necessitate the free dissemination and impartation of knowledge from lecturers to the students without fear of harassment or intimidation which will enhance additional acquisition of requisite skills likespeed of processing information, task execution accuracy, emotional stability, multilingual ability, ICT skills, communication skills, technical skills and team skills and knowledge on the part of the students. Furthermore, autonomy and academic freedom to faculties would boost the quality of research works being carried out in Nigerian university. In

essence, they advocate that government's involvement in running and managing university education in Nigeria will be, at least, minimal while its investment should be high. However, it seems that the government is hell-bent in not relinquishing university education by granting autonomy.

This study is assessing the institutional factors which are autonomy, funding, academic freedom and curriculum implementation on the quality of graduates variables which are speed of processing information, organisation skills, subject matter mastery, knowledge impartation skills, task execution accuracy, decision making skills, emotional stability, interpersonal skills, multilingual ability, ICT skills, communication skills, time management skills, technical skills, reflective thinking skills and team skills.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

One of the major challenges in Nigeria currently is that there are many unemployed graduates who are labouring assiduously to have a means of livelihood. Quality of Graduates (QG) is an important yardstick for their employability. However, the quality of graduates is on the decline, including those from federal universities in Nigeria. By implication, this challenge of high rate of unemployment due to low quality of graduates will lead to increase in dependency ratio and thereby lead to a high rate of poverty (poor standard of living) which can eventually lead to high mortality rate. High rate of mortality, by implication, will lead to low productivity rate which in the long run, will adversely have effect on the national income.

Previous studies concentrated more on assessment of curriculum quality and skills mismatch than on assessment of Institutional Factors (autonomy, funding, academic freedom and curriculum implementation). This study, therefore, was carried out to assess institutional factors and quality of graduates (speed of processing information, organisation skills, subject matter mastery, knowledge impartation skills, task execution accuracy, decision-making skills, emotional stability, interpersonal skills, multilingual ability, ICT skills, communication skills, time management skills, technical skills and reflective thinking skills) in selected federal universities in Southwestern Nigeria.

1.3 Purpose of the study

This study assessed the influence of institutional factors on the quality of graduates of selected federal universities in Nigeria. Specifically, the study:

- i. found out the profile of graduates in terms of qualification;
- ii. found out the level of quality of graduates in federal universities in Southwestern Nigeria;
- iii. investigated the differences in the quality of graduates across level of degrees;
- iv. examined the level at which institutional factors are being practised in federal universities in Southwestern Nigeria in terms of:
 - (a) autonomy
 - (b) academic freedom
 - (c) curriculum implementation and
 - (d) funding
- v. determined the extent to which institutional factors practices influence the quality of graduates and
- vi. investigated the extent to which institutional factors practices differ among the federal universities.

1.4 Research Questions

The following research questions were used to guide the study:

- i. What is the graduates' profile in terms of qualification?
- ii. What is the level of the quality of graduates in federal universities in Southwestern Nigeria?
- iii. Does the quality of graduates differ across levels of degrees?
- iv. What is the extent of institutional factors (autonomy, academic freedom, curriculum implementation and funding) being practised in federal universities?
- v. To what extent do institutional factors influence the quality of graduates?

- vi. To what extent do institutional factors practices differ among federal universities?

1.5 Significance of the study

This study assessed the extent to which institutional factors affect quality of graduates of federal universities in Nigeria. It also investigated the level of involvement of lecturers in the running of universities in Southwestern Nigeria since the responsibility of research and teaching rests on the shoulders of these lecturers and examined whether funding, autonomy, academic freedom and the curriculum implementation would improve quality of graduates.

In view of these, the study would be of benefit to the Federal Government of Nigeria, the Federal Ministry of Education and the National Universities Commission (NUC) in providing the opportunity to discern whether the present governance of university education in Nigeria needs to adopt the collegiate system of governance in the areas of self-autonomy, funding, academic freedom and curriculum implementation.

The study would also be of benefit to university authorities in the area of policy formulation and to review their curricula to suit academic activities of their students so as to make them more employable in their future endeavour. Similarly, the study would serve as a guide to pertinent measures that should be put in place by university authorities in relation to institutional factors to enhancing quality of graduates.

The outcome of this study would also enable lecturers, as academic instructors, to bridge the gap between the skills and knowledge imparted on students and what they are expected to acquire during the process of teaching and research.

To the employers of labour, they stand to spend less on the training and re-training of Nigerian graduates recruits. It would also make companies, industries and organisations viable as competent hands would manage them. In addition, this study would serve as a pointer to scholars and other stakeholders in the education sector to either begin to advocate, press for the consideration and implementation of the collegiate system of

governance in Nigerian universities as an alternative mode of giving university education a facelift.

The students are a set of other potential beneficiaries from this study. They would learn what will improve their level of employability and competency. The society would also gain immensely from the study. This would enable them to be enlightened on the differences between the institutional factors operated in Nigerian universities and the collegiate system of governance. It would also enable them to know how to address the government whenever the opportunity arises on issue relating to institutional factors.

1.6 Scope of the study

The geographical scope of the study covered all the states in Southwestern, Nigeria. The institutional scope covered all federal universities in Southwestern Nigeria. The contextual scope covered the three first generation federal universities in Southwestern, Nigeria. In these universities, the study covered members of the academic staff. The study assessed the extent of institutional factors (autonomy, funding, academic freedom and curriculum implementation) on the quality of graduates. The quality of graduates was determined by considering their employability and competency skills within the region.

1.7 Operational Definition of Terms

The following terms are defined as used in this study:

Graduate quality – This is the ability to integrate and rigorously apply knowledge, understanding and skills of a recognised discipline defined by scholarly activity.

Graduate quality in this work is the churning out of graduates from universities in terms of employability and competence.

Quality of Graduates – This is the ability of a graduate to be able to discharge his or her expected duties at work without any question on his or her capabilities or qualification. In this work, it is being measured by employability and competency. These qualities are Speed of processing information, Organisation skills, Subject matter mastery, Knowledge impartation skills, Task execution accuracy, Decision making skills, Emotional stability, Interpersonal skills, Multilingual ability, ICT skills, Communication skills, Time management skills, Technical skills, Reflective thinking skills and Team skills.

Employability –It is a group of essential abilities that involve the development of a knowledge based, expertise level and mindset that is increasingly necessary for success in the modern workplace. Employability in this work is the possession of a university degree and requisite skills to get or secure job and to retain it through continuous development of the skills.

Competency – This means a cluster of related abilities, commitments, knowledge and skills that enable a person or an organisation to act effectively on a job or in a situation. Competency in this work is the ability of a university graduate to be able to carry out his or her work independently with little or no supervision based on the training and skills acquired while studying. In other words, it is the acquisition and exhibition of requisite skills that match the demand of a person's job at the work place.

Institutional factors –These are policies, processes, definitions of roles, relationships, systems, strategies and resources that ensure academic standards and continuous

improvement in academic activities and is concerned with the integrity and quality of core education activities of teaching, research and community services.

In this work, it means the extent to which academic staff members of universities who exercise autonomy and academic freedom are adequately provided with fund and are involved in the designing and implementing of the curriculum. In this work, it is being measured by autonomy, academic freedom, funding and curriculum implementation.

Autonomy – This means the right of an organisation, a country or a region to be independent and govern itself. Autonomy in this work is the right of a university to govern itself independently by taking all decisions democratically in line with due process on academic matters, appointment of key officers (senate), recruitment of staff and determination of condition of service; admission of students; designing of curriculum and expending of funds with transparency and accountability without due interference from government or its agencies.

Funding – Funding is the act of providing financial resources, usually in the form of money, or other values, to finance a need, programme and project, usually by an organisation or company. In this work, it means the provision, availability and prudential utilisation of financial resources to run the academic and non-academic activities in the university.

Academic freedom – This refers to the freedom of a teacher to hold and express views without fear or arbitrary interference by officials. Academic freedom in this work is the exclusive right, and freedom of faculties to undertake all scholarly and intellectual activities with due observance to professional ethics and without interference from government or its agencies or university authority.

Curriculum implementation – This means the act of working out the plans and suggestions that have been made by curriculum specialists and subject experts in a classroom or school setting. In this work, it means the extent to which faculties are involved in the designing and implementation of curriculum.

Employers of labour – These are persons, authorities or organisations that employ people. In this work, it means principals of sectors that employed university graduates.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter presents a review of literature of institutional factors and quality of graduates in selected federal universities in Southwestern Nigeria. The review is presented under the following sub-headings:

2.1 Conceptual Review

2.1.1 Quality in Education

2.1.2 Quality of Graduates

2.1.3 Institutional factors

2.1.4 Governance in university

2.2 Empirical Review

2.2.1 Autonomy and Quality of Graduates

2.2.2 Academic Freedom and Quality of Graduates

2.2.3 Curriculum Implementation and Quality of Graduates

2.2.4 Funding of Universities and Quality of Graduates

2.3 Appraisal of Literature

2.4 Theoretical Framework

2.5 Conceptual Model

2.1.1 Quality in Education

Education is a human right issue. It generally has to do with systematic development and cultivation of the mind of people and other natural abilities. It specifically refers to the process by which we acquire knowledge, skills, habits, values or attitudes to make us useful and functional members in our society. It further entails the outcome of the process of both learning and teaching. Thus, education requires quality inputs if it has to provide the enabling environment in which the philosophy and goals of the nation and individual needs could be achieved. The quality of education could be described as the

worth or fabric of education. Quality in itself is something good, ideal or of high standard.

The quality of education can be guaranteed by the ability of the different stakeholders of education to adhere to the standards of achieving quality. The various components of quality in education can be assessed on the basis of inputs, processes; environment and outputs(outcome). Inputs include teachers, trainees, instructional materials and the curriculum as a whole. Processes involve instructional delivery system, evaluation and assessment methods. The environment has to do with classroom organization and control, interactions between the different components of the instructional situation. Then the outputs which are reliant on the other components are the academic achievement and attainment with the educational system. That is the quality of value added to the learners' knowledge, skills and attitude during and after one's exposure to the educational system.

Quality in education can be accepted as being multifaceted due to the different inputs of education, organization and management, content of learning and learning outcomes (Amaele, 2013; Fasasi, 2006). This makes it mandatory that education be given greater attention and priority in the Nigerian government's developmental plan and budget allocation. In this way, Nigeria can reverse the present situation in which quality is sacrificed for quantity. Quality education is the right of every Nigerian child. As such, the government has set up a quality assurance system to monitor the implementation of quality standards in education.

Quality has been defined by many scholars but the most general one is the one that conceived quality as fitness for purpose. Ojetunde (2019) viewed quality as a set of measurable dimensions; each dimension representing one quality criterion; and that clear norms or standards are tied to those dimensions indicating the cut off above where there is sufficient and below where there is a lack of quality. He further added that quality is a matter of utility and is relative in every context meaning that individuals

have their own gauge for quality. For example, quality in education can be viewed in the perspectives of goal, process and satisfaction and could be inclusive of all these criteria. These four criteria were called model of quality in education and are used by quality assurance agents to measure educational quality at every level (Ojetunde, 2019).

Goal Oriented Quality is concerned with the assessment of programme output in relation to specified programme objectives. This necessitates the achievement of the stated goals and objectives and the extent of conformity of intervention outcome/output with all the specifications of the programme. For example, a programme that was designed to provide sound education for the citizens; the assessment of such school output using goal and specification model will not be based on students' performance only, but will assess all other quality indicators such as number of learners enrolled, attendance rate, dropout rate of the students; and will investigate the professional developments, staff professional qualifications, and length of service of teachers. Process oriented perspective gives priority to all the transactions that occur in a programme with a firm assurance that it is only quality means that can achieve quality end. The philosophy of this type of model is that quality enabling processes/activities or environment will result in quality exit (product). Quality from the satisfaction perspective aspect of product quality gives priority to the stakeholders' satisfaction and other intended beneficiaries of the programme.

Arikewuyo (2004) viewed quality in education to be accessed by its ability to make the learners perform up to expectations in examinations that are standard and of great importance to what the students, the community and the whole society need. He therefore concluded that quality can be used as determinant to grade based on standard of excellence beneath which a mark of inferiority is imposed or adduced; and above which grades of superiority are defined. However, quality assurance is related to quality control, but it functions in a rather proactive manner in the sense that quality control serves as series of operational techniques and activities used to fulfil those

requirements are met. Quality assurance goes beyond that because it extends the focus from outcomes or outputs to the process which produces them.

2.1.2 Quality of Graduates

The graduates refer to individuals who hold one or more degrees from recognised higher institutions of learning after completing the specified course for the award of such degree. Scholars have succinctly considered and defined the concept of graduate from three perspectives – the quantity, quality and performance perspective. Dabalén, Oni and Adekola (2000) conceptualised graduate quality to mean the total number of graduates turned out from universities per year compared to the number of those employed over the same period of time.

Ilusanya and Oyebade (2008) opined that graduate output denotes the input and output patterns of graduates from the universities in relation to academic discipline and gender. These definitions emphasise quantity which is very essential in guarding numerical deficit of professionals in strategic sectors of the economy for competitive reason though in their studies, they did not de-emphasize the need for skilled graduates. By implication, quantity without quality will under-develop a nation and vice-versa.

Adebayo and Tope-Oke (2017) postulated that the problem of the quality of graduates is not in terms of quantity but rather quality to meet the labour demand for national transformation. Oladosu (2011) stated that quality is how good or bad somebody or something is; the level of excellence attained or achieved by somebody or something; the degree of somebody's or something's worth; a product's value level and standard against which others could be judged.

In other words, Nnennaye (2013) asserted that quality can be observed or seen in people, process, service and products. The essence of university education according to Oluremi and Kolade (2016) is to provide qualitative education that would enable the end products (graduates) of the system perform effectively in any environment. Ajayi

and Akindutire (2007) in Olabanji and Abayomi (2013) asserted that the reason for quality assurance in the universities is to enable “institutions meet the expectation of the users (employers) of manpower in relation to the quality of skills acquired by their outputs”.

More specifically, Adedeji and Oyebade (2016) posited that the dearth in skills has made many Nigerian graduates either unemployed or underemployed. The underemployed deploy acquired experiences in their chosen fields to work in less attractive jobs that add no value whatsoever to their lives or career on the long run. Others put up with menial jobs just to make ends meet thereby becoming frustrated or redundant with time. With this development, the nation at large is at the receiving end as the economic development and technological transformation could suffer serious setback or come to a standstill.

Quality of graduates therefore encompasses quality and behaviour which must be exhibited at the work place through performance because employers of labour expect result. It is the quality of employees that determines employees’ performance and the profitability of organizations (Joshua and Adekunle, 2016).

They submitted further that performance is an individual level variable and it implies how an individual carries out or performs his/her job to the expectation of his/her employer. Therefore, graduate output refers to the supply of skilled labour to the market and their performance in relation to what they have learnt or supposed to have learnt through formal education (Dabalén, *et al.*, 2000; Sadler, 2012).

Becher (1989) and Pascarella and Tererentzini (1995) in Brennan *et al.* (2004) affirmed that what is taught and researched into is what determines graduate output as studies have consistently showed that academic subjects (courses) and curricula content will produce different kinds of graduate whose placement in the society would be the product of their output – performance. The concern that stakeholders have shown in

recent times in graduate output is as a result of the high rate of unemployment and belief that a knowledgeable society thrives.

Sadler (2012) argued that graduate output has become one of the ways stakeholders weigh their investment in education to ascertain whether it is yielding the right dividend. Furthermore, Dabalén, *et al.* (2000) consented to the fact that the supply of highly skilled workforce could easily fast-track development because of their ability to learn fast and adopt new skills which will increase productivity. To improve on the education that will produce good quality of graduates, researchers identified the government, the higher institutions producing these graduates, graduates or alumni, employers of labour, the staff and unions in the universities, parents and guardians and civil societies as some of the key stakeholders whose vested interest, expectations and roles must be sustained.

The interest of the students will centre on the university's facilities or how beneficial education and research will be for future job opportunities. The students' families on the other hand will be anticipating and hoping for a good academic achievement or job opportunities for their children while employers of labour will focus on abilities and competence of the graduates. Academic staff will direct their attention to the classes and learning processes. University managers will focus on the outcome as an institution.

Government would expect the institutions to enrol students in key disciplines e.g Medicine, Technology and so on in a bid to graduate quality students and undertake researches that would proffer solutions to societal problems (National Institution for Academic Degrees and University Evaluation, Japan, 2012; Ndowa, 2016). The continuous relevance of the universities therefore depends heavily on its ability to sustain these divergent interests and further encourage the government to be actively involved in the financing of tertiary education in Nigeria.

2.1.3 Institutional factors

Institutional factors differ from one scholar to another; and across fields of human endeavours as different criteria are being used as institutional factors. As a result, there is no, in the first place, definite definition for the concept but it is generally acknowledged from studies that institutional factors exist in every human endeavour and organisation. For instance, Werner (2009) discovered that different institutional factors were asserted by scholars as being responsible for students' dropping out in higher institutions in Germany. In the same vein, different scholars cited by Ogbogu (2014) in her study posited different institutional factors influencing the academic performance of students at Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife, Osun State. Cletus and Emmanuel (2014) also identified different institutional factors from the submission of scholars in their study.

According to Ogbogu (2014), the concept of institutional factors differs from one institution to another, from one country to another and from one culture to another. It could not also be wrong going by the available empirical studies to draw inferences therefore that institutional factors could be tangible and intangible variables that are used to measure and determine the success of an institution or organisation. Succinctly in this study, institutional factors will be expressed as the basic internal, external and inherent ingredients of governance in the University which enable the internal structures within the system to flourish and function for the university so as to realise the goals of establishing it.

Autonomy (as one of the ingredients of university governance) is paramount to the existence of the university as well as academic freedom, funding and curriculum implementation. These factors to a very great extent, can be used to measure the performance of the university either at the faculty or departmental level within the system. Invariably, institutional factors will be interchangeably used alongside governance in this study.

Universities are complex organisations which demand proper organisation for them to deliver the purpose for which they are set up. Therefore, the Acts that established each university in Nigeria recognise the faculties that make up the university as one of the basic units in the academic structure (Ogunraku, 2016). The faculties are the units through which teachings, learnings and research works are carried out through different departments that offer various and specialised programmes or courses in different fields of human endeavours.

Each faculty in the university is governed by a faculty board. The faculty board is responsible for co-ordinating the entire academic programmes of each faculty and is headed by the Dean. Other members include all the professors and heads of departments in each faculty. The Vice -Chancellor and the Deputy Vice - Chancellors are also members of the faculty board. There seems to be a uniformed composition of and responsibilities of faculty board in Nigerian universities as stipulated in the Acts that established the universities. Mainly, their role is to recommend and advise the senate on academic matters through their respective representatives at the faculty senate and any other matter refers to it by the senate. However, their recommendations would need to pass through the academic committee at the senate. By implication, there is duplication of efforts and their recommendation is not binding as it can be overturned (Ogbomida *et al.*, 2013 and Ogbogu, 2013).

In practical terms therefore, governance at the faculty level is subsumed under the senate and limited to advisory capacity. For example, the University of Ibadan Acts, 1962 concede powers to the senate on academic matters to include:

- i. the selection of candidates for admission as students;
- ii. the organisation and control of courses of study at the university and of the examination held in conjunction with these courses;
- iii. the appointment and promotion of lecturers at the university; and
- iv. allocation of responsibilities to faculties and departments for different branches of learning.

Hence, autonomous power is only exercised by the senate on academic matters thereby making the faculties a stooge on their pivotal responsibilities.

Since the inception of tertiary education in Nigeria, Nigerian universities have religiously adhered to the committee system in taking decision. The committee system is patterned after the British system of governing her universities in the early 40s. However, between then and now, many changes and new management styles of governing universities have evolved. These changes are challenging the existing structures in Nigerian universities. The role of faculties in foreign universities at a time was to make recommendations; but now they are increasingly involved in curriculum planning and execution, students' affairs, policy formulation, strategic and oversight functions. Institutional factors enable faculties in a university to have greater say in the administration and management of its affairs without working at cross purpose with the administration at the central depending on whether the faculties are operating independently or dependently. It is the granting of a greater role in governance to the faculties (Gerber, 2015).

The role of the faculties in the new, autonomous era is still minimal as the various committees working for the senate have usurped their responsibilities. The centralised system of governance which employs committee system has been commended due to the complex nature of the university. Ogbomida *et al.*, (2013) observed that the centralised committee system is highly democratic and allows for an all-inclusive participation of intellectuals at arriving at a decisive decision after a pool of opinion. The system is also less prone to risk and very effective at arriving at a desired consensus (Steering Committee of Singapore, 2005; Ezeigbo, 2017).

Stakeholders have also faulted its shortcomings which include non-implementation of committee decision, delay in decision making, high cost of providing logistics, compromise and favouritism and tribalism amongst members, indiscipline, non-commitment and cumbersomeness (Ogbomida,*et al.*, 2013 and Ezeigbo, 2017). With

these apparent inadequacies, Nigerian universities cannot and have not been responding to changes in a dynamic world (Saint,*et al.*, 2003). Fumasoli *et al.*, (2014) implicitly concluded that faculties within such universities will underperform because crucial decision making is done at the central; resources and rules of engagement (policies) and the workforces are centrally controlled.

Institutional factors embrace the use of a smaller and manageable committee which will incorporate a large percentage of the faculty staff in the decision making of the faculty. It dwells on “shared governance” which is “the process of distributing the power of making decision and implementing them among the main academic institution constituencies’ faculties” (Ben-Ruwin, 2010). Afe (2014) identified the scholars, staff, students and stakeholders as members of the “institution constituencies”. Ayanyemi (2015) noted that in many universities the functions of many governing boards, inspectors and accreditation bodies have been impinging directly on the decision making of the faculties on areas supposedly considered to be the purview of the faculties such as curriculum, tenure and programme review and this is affecting the faculties most especially on collegial models of governance.

Onwunli and Agho (2004) examined faculty opinion on shared authority in some federal universities and reported that overall academic staff is dissatisfied with the general working condition and governance process in these institutions. The study revealed that though academic staff members are consulted on academic matters through their representatives at the faculty senate, their participation in some administrative issues is very limited; and there is need for more consultation and involvement of the academic staff as far as students’ admission issues, accreditation, selection and appointment of Vice Chancellors are concerned. By implication, their indirect participation in the decision making process on academic matters may affect their level of motivation, morale and efficiency in the discharge of their academic responsibility. A plausible explanation is that no academic will own up for what he/she does not initiate or fully participate in.

Using the participatory management theory, Moazen (2012) asserted that involvement of employees in the decision making process will lead to improved employees' satisfaction, encouragement and morale. The culture of ownership and initiative that will engender improved quality of graduates in Nigerian universities could be attained when lecturers are directly engaged in various decision making processes most especially on academic matters (Steering Committee of Singapore, 2005 and Dumbili, 2014).

Governance of Nigerian Universities

The relevance and usefulness of tertiary education cannot be overemphasized. The competitiveness amongst the developed nations of the world today and the bridging of the gap between the developed and developing nations are as a result of the immense contributions of university education in terms of producing skilled, productive and flexible labour force capable of giving birth to, nurturing, disseminating and applying new ideas geared towards proffering solutions to nagging problems (Altbach and Salmi, 2011).

Though universities have evolved with time over the years, their importance and pivotal roles became pronounced when government became involved in establishing and financing them as a 'tool' for improving societal knowledge as they were perceived as institutions that incorporate scholars, teachers with specialty in different fields of learning(subjects) and are physically located (Briggs, 2013 and Ayanyemi, 2015). This is so because, through empirical research, the universities have become a trusted, reliable and an indispensable source of knowledge reservoir from where governments and the private sectors drink from. Through teaching, they are pinnacle of knowledge transfer and impartation in preparing future leaders (UNESCO 2015). In community development, their sites aid and facilitate the quick and rapid development of their host communities most especially in the developing world (Ayanyemi, 2015). Due to the

vast presence of intellectuals, the service they render in various fields of human endeavours is second to none (Ayanyemi, 2015).

In a nutshell, the universities are the bedrock of development (Akomolafe and Ibijola, 2011 and Oluseye, Borishade, Adeniyi and Chinelo, 2014). Furthermore, Brennan, King and Lebeau (2004) observed that universities all over the world have four transformative potentials to any society and without such, societies would remain stagnant. These are economic transformation, political transformation, social transformation and cultural transformation. The fulcrum of all human activities rests on these four transformations.

For instance, a study conducted by Suzigan, Molta and Albuquerque in 2011 indicated empirical evidences to show that the recent economic and social transformations permeating Brazil is linked to the research works of universities, research institutions in collaboration with private companies and the government. Saint, *et al* (2003) have also linked the upsurge in the economic transformation of the Asian nations (The Asian Tigers) to the heavy and sustained investment in human resources in the universities.

In view of the above, lofty benefits which universities provide, researchers have suggested that to maximally harness and utilize their benefits; they must be properly governed and managed being a formal organization shrouded with so much complexities and rigidities (Ekong, 2001; Saint *et al* 2003 and Ogbomida *et al*, 2013). To further underscore their importance in the scheme of things in future, researchers have postulated that the economic, social, political and technological gap between the developed, developing and underdeveloped countries would become widened, reduced or removed depending on how universities are governed (Ayanyemi, 2015; Oluremi and Kolade, 2016). Therefore, for Nigeria to rub shoulders with other countries of the world, governance of Nigerian universities should be paramount and top-notch because greater expectations are anticipated from the universities by the stakeholders.

The National Universities Commission (NUC) is entrusted with the governance of Nigerian universities by the federal government of Nigeria through the Federal Ministry of Education. From a small department in 1962 in the Federal Ministry of Education, the National Universities Commission (NUC) became a statutory body in 1975 through the promulgation of decree 1 of 1974. With over 40 years of existence, it is retrospectively pertinent to take a cursory look at the activities of this commission with a view to ascertain how Nigerian universities have been governed.

A statement on the NUC website reads that “the commission also relies on support from the federal government, state governments and other stakeholders in its bid to improve on the quality of tertiary education and graduates of the nation’s university system”.

Deductively, the National Universities Commission (NUC) is poised to achieving two ‘mandates’ for higher education in Nigeria. These mandates are to improve on the quality of tertiary education and to improve on the quality of graduates of the country’s university system.

Consequently, the commission intends to fulfil the mandates by:

- i. granting approval to all academic programmes being run in Nigerian universities;*
- ii. granting approval to the establishment of higher educational institutions offering degree programmes in the country;*
- iii. ensuring quality assurance of all academic programmes offered in Nigerian universities; and*
- iv. being a channel for all external support to Nigerian universities.*

Approval of Universities

The NUC deserves a pat on the back in respect to granting approval to the establishment of universities to quench the thirst for knowledge by the teeming millions of Nigerian youths. From only 12 universities regarded as the first and second generation universities in 1977 (two years after it had metamorphosed into a statutory regulatory

parastatal) NUC currently governs over 153 universities across the nation. This number is made up of 40 federal universities, 44 states universities and 69 privately owned universities (NUC, 2017).

There are eight distance learning centres offering degree programmes as well. In spite of this, researchers have discovered that the number is still inconsequential considering the number of candidates vying for admission through the Joint Admission and Matriculation Board (JAMB) (Okunola and Arikewuyo 2014). However, while these achievements are laudable, some researchers have actually asserted unequivocally that many of the problems facing tertiary education today are not unconnected to the emergence of NUC as a regulatory body and the establishment of more universities which were politically motivated (Ekundayo, 2008 in Afolayan, 2015; Idumange, 2002 in Nnennaye, 2014).

The issue of dilapidated infrastructural facilities in federal universities has been a source of concern to stakeholders who have vehemently decried the approval and establishment of more universities by NUC to solve the problem of accessibility which many qualified school leavers encounter. Scholars have rather suggested that upgrading and expanding some of the dilapidated infrastructure in the universities should be paramount to remedy the problem of accessibility. Some scholars have noted that most of the newly established universities do not have the needed facilities before taking off thereby compounding the problem of students who are admitted into these institutions; and by so doing, NUC is creating more problems for Nigeria tertiary education rather than solving the problems.

According to Fafunwa (1971) in Oladele (2015), the transition of NUC from an advisory body was tailored after the colonial government pattern of education which existed before Nigeria's independence when the University College, Ibadan (UCI) was established. Then, UCI was heavily funded by the colonial government and supervised by the Inter University Council (IUC) (Fafuwa, 1971 in Oladele, 2015). Babatola

(2015) also found out that, between 1962 and 1977, when the ascendancy of NUC began to be felt in establishing more universities and expanding the existing ones, the educational sector was slightly neglected due to the fact that government concentrated more efforts in developing the country by launching many national development plans without recourse to the role of the universities in national development.

Furthermore, the centralisation of university education through decree 1 of 1974; decree 22 of 1975 and decree 16 of 1985 empowered NUC to govern universities. This marked the subversion and usurping of the hitherto powers and authorities of Vice Chancellors and the eroding of the principles of autonomy and academic freedom (Oladele, 2015; Babatola, 2016; Olayinka and Adedeji, 2016). During these periods under review, Nigerian universities that had enjoyed unalloyed support from the British government, foreign universities and international organizations in terms of collaborative studies and grants, began to witness a reversal of fortune in terms of withdrawal of funds, grants and other logistics. Odebiyi and Aina (1999) quoted in Ayanyemi (2015) posited that international bodies like International Development Research Centre (IDRC); Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA); Swedish International Development Corporation Agency (SIDA); United States Agency for International Development (USAID); Commonwealth Scholarship (CS); United National Population Fund (UNFPA); United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM); The British Council (BC); and many others parted ways with Nigeria.

Dumbili (2014) also argued that the economic recession of the early '80s occasioned by a severe drop in the price of crude oil in the world market further added to the financial problems that confronted Nigerian universities. He further noted that there was gross mismanagement and embezzlement of the proceeds from crude oil of the '70s by the military governments. Quoting Ilon (1994), Dumbili (2014) averred that the economic recession that followed necessitated the introduction of the Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP), the effect of which led to the subsequent decrease in the fund allocated to the education sector, most especially tertiary education. The continuous

stay in power by the military was also a contributory factor why some of these international organizations and countries severed their relationship with Nigeria most especially, the tertiary institutions. As implicitly noted by the British University Grant Commission (1985) in Babatola, (2015) the Nigerian universities, prior to the 1975 federal military takeover of the existing universities by Degree no.22, enjoyed sensible level of authority and academy freedom in line with British civil universities.

For others, the discovery of oil propelled their decision to withdraw assistance to Nigeria (Salako, 2012 in Ayanyemi, 2015). Conversely, the educational sector between 1960 – 1978 (most especially tertiary education) experienced explosive funding due to the euphoria of independence, attainment of self-government and the on-going expansion by NUC. However, Adeyemi (2017) observed that despite this massive funding of this period, government funding of education has never been up to the expectation of the people. It is safe to conclude that at this period, contrary to many observers' belief, education was inadequately funded.

The mandate handed over to NUC by the Nigerian military government to plan a balanced and coordinated development of university education as noted by Oladele (2015) is another clog in the wheel of progress of tertiary education. By this mandate, existing universities were classified into different categories. It is axiomatic that all over the world, development can never be balanced or uniform (Saintet *al.*, 2003) as vision and priority; available resources and manpower are some of the determining factors that aid development. Consequently, the development of some universities was thwarted temporarily, retarded or slowed down due to their over-reliance on government allocation and grants. Many of these institutions subsequently found themselves in an abysmal financial situation leaving them with no option than to revert to the government for assistance and to receive instruction (Isah, 2014).

The foregoing presents two fundamental problems confronting Nigerian tertiary education's erosion of autonomy and underfunding. Aghion, Dewatripont, Hoxby,

Mascolell and Sapir (2009) in a study, “The governance and performance of research universities: Evidence from the Europe and U.S.” discovered that centralised government control is inimical and less effective in the governance of higher institution than allowing autonomous institutions to source for fund and resources. The study also found a significant correlation between universities’ performance, autonomy and competitive environment in which universities operate. In other words, the degree of autonomy enjoyed by a university would determine its performance which often reflects in its output (graduates).

Another study by Ritzen (2016), “University Autonomy: Improving Education Output” further corroborated the position of Aghion *et al.* (2009) but added that an important role is being played by funding in the performance of universities. Significantly, autonomous universities with proper funding are well positioned to add values to their graduates than those that are not. And since the government has placed the NUC over Nigerian universities, it is not wrong to say that the progress of Nigerian universities have been slowed down over the years.

Quality Assurance

Nigerian universities are faced with some challenges that compromise quality in all ramifications and the graduates who are the end products of these universities and the nation at large are at the receiving end. Babatola (2015) is of the view that the growth and unprecedented expansion witnessed in tertiary education in the early 70s were more or less seen in size rather than in quality assurance. He further asserted that political pressures and lack of proper funding have attenuated the quality of Nigerian education. The fallout from this is the loss of confidence by parents, employers of labour, stakeholders and the international community on Nigerian educational sector (Oluremi and Kolade 2016). Therefore, to restore public and international confidence and trust in Nigerian system of higher education, it is imperative that quality be brought to bear in all academic matters such as teaching, research, infrastructural facilities, recruitment

and training of staff and service delivery and the mechanism to achieve this is through quality assurance.

Olabanji and Abayomi (2013) posited that assurance of quality in a university system means the ability of an institution to meet the expectations of users of manpower vis-a-vis the quality of skills acquired by their output and the ability of the institutions to meet certain factors relating to academic matters, staff-students ratio, staff mix by rank, staff development, physical facilities, funding and adequate library facilities.

It is a continuous process of consistently improving the quality of teaching and learning activities such that minimum academic standard are achieved, sustained and enhanced (Okebukola, 2014). Quality assurance embraces internal and external mechanisms for proper monitoring, discovery of shortcomings and prompts response to ameliorate abnormalities (Okpanachi and Okpara, 2014). The essence of quality assurance is to instil acceptable and internationally recognised standards in order to circumvent both short term and long term effects and improve organisational performance. It assures that quality is brought to bear. As Parasuraman *et al* (1988) affirmed in Tsinidou, Gerogiannis, and Fitsilis (2010), quality is the “degree up to which customers’ expectations are met”. Within the context of education, quality often reflects in the end products (graduates) of such institutions in terms of knowledge and characters displayed in the labour market. In other words, it is the importance and proper use of the knowledge acquired to meet the desires of the society (Olabanji and Abayomi, 2013).

Quality therefore becomes a yardstick for distinguishing the product of one institution from another. Saint, *et al.* (2003), however observed that factors that affect the quality of graduates are both internal and external. Ogunraku (2016) affirmed that the internal factors are the primary concerns of the administrators within Nigerian universities who must ensure that quality teaching staff members are recruited at the faculty and departmental levels and merit is considered above political influence in the enrolment of candidates into the university. The external factors are the responsibilities of the

‘interventionist agencies’ in education in Nigeria - the NUC, NBTE, NCCE and TETFUND.

Considering the decline in higher education in Nigeria in respect to poor graduates output, the quality assurance body – the National Universities Commission – has made some landmark contributions to improve the quality of education in the last decade as enunciated by Oladele (2015); Oluremi and Kolade (2016). These are:

1. Increase access to higher education as a result of the establishment of more universities and strengthening the National Open University to meet its admission quota.
2. The introduction and development of the Minimum Academic Standard (MAS) for accrediting programmes and periodic auditing of these programmes and courses in order to enhance the quality of programmes being run in Nigerian universities.
3. The introduction of Post – UTME screening for prospective universities’ candidates as a way of improving the quality of students admitted into the university. This will allow universities to exercise a measure of autonomy on admission of students.
4. The introduction of a new academic curricula and programmes geared towards producing entrepreneurial graduates.
5. Provision of assistance to universities in Nigeria to establish collaboration and linkage with foreign universities.
6. The introduction and provision of modern video conferencing and electronic teaching and learning platform facilities in some universities to address the problem of infrastructural challenges like lecture theatres and so on.
7. Introduction, provision and improvement of communication and technological facilities such as e-mail facilities, computer based Management Information System (MIS) and e-learning programmes.
8. Establishment of carrying capacity for all programmes and courses being run in Nigeria universities to guard against enrolment explosion.

9. The streamlining of part-time courses and programmes.

Although researchers have discovered a significant correlation between quality assurance and university's performance, there are however divergent views on the factors that contribute more to the quality of education from one country to another. For instance, Lagrosen, Seyyed and Leitner (2004) in a study discovered that factors such as information and accountability, proposed academic subjects, university facilities, activities related to teaching, internal assessment, computer facilities and library resources often play significant roles in the enhancement of quality and the efficiency of higher education. The Research Association of America, on the other hand, rated the relationship of graduates, cost, total quality management and achievement of lecturers as paramount to improving quality and university efficiency.

In the case of Nigeria, scholars are of the opinion that the state has to be more participatory in the funding of Nigerian higher institutions as one of the urgent ways to revamp the present absence of quality in the educational sector. In addition, they averred that NUC step up her monitoring capacity of ensuring quality in the Nigerian universities (Okpanachi and Okpara, 2014 and Oluremi and Kolade, 2016) .

Accreditation

One of the cogent ways to infuse and inject quality into the educational programmes of Nigerian universities is through accreditation of all courses and programmes taught at the ivory towers. By virtue of section 10 of Decree No.16 of 1985 which was incorporated as section 4(m) of the NUC amendment Decree No.49 of 1988, the National University Commission is empowered to lay down minimum standards for the universities in the federation and to accredit their degrees.

As contained in the NUC 2012 manual of accreditation procedures, there are 13 main disciplines currently being taught and studied in Nigerian universities. However, as at 2011, there are more than 3,398 courses that are offshoot of these 13 main disciplines

(Bamiro, 2016). Generally, accreditation exercise commenced in 1990. According to NUC, accreditation is a system for recognising educational institutions' (universities and programmes offered in these institutions) level of performance, integrity and quality which entitled them the confidence of the educational community, the public they serve and the employers of labour (NUC 2012 accreditation manual). In other words, it is subjecting an institution to a holistic evaluation using certain criteria as parameters for the evaluation. For the purpose of integrity and transparency, Oladosu (2011) affirmed that the accreditation is jointly carried out with other professional bodies like the Nigerian Medical and Dental Council (NMDC); Council of Legal Education(CLE); Council of Registered Engineers of Nigeria (COREN); Institute of Chartered Accountants of Nigeria (ICAN) and so on.

Ozurumba and Ebuara (2014) stated that it is a process that incorporates self study and external quality review in scrutinizing programmes in higher institution for the purpose of quality assurance and quality improvement. The development and subsequent approval of the Minimum Academic Standard became the fulcrum for carrying out the exercise.

Programmes that meet the criteria set in the Minimum Academic Standards (MAC) document are given full accreditation for six academic sessions after which compulsory review and evaluation are carried out. Interim accreditation is accorded to programmes that fall short of the MAS criteria. However, such programmes are allowed to run pending the time when another accreditation visit, which is normally after two years, is done. Programmes that are denied are those that do not meet the evaluation standards. Such programmes are expected to be scrapped or suspended pending the time accreditation visit would be carried out on the request of the institution(s) concerned.

The essence of the exercise is to ensure that the provisions in the Minimum Academic Standards (MAS) are fulfilled, achieved and sustained to guarantee the employers of labour that graduates of Nigerian universities have attained an acceptable level of

competency in their chosen career and lastly assured the international community that programmes offered in Nigerian universities are of high standards and Nigerian graduates are competent for employment and further studies (NUC 2012 accreditation manual).

In all, researchers have expressed divergent opinions on the accreditation exercise of NUC. Oyekan and Alaba (2014), Oladele (2015) and Ayanyemi (2015) have observed that the efforts of NUC in sanitizing higher education in Nigeria in order to implant quality through accreditation of all programmes are remarkable. For instance, in the report of the 2016 accreditation exercise, not less than 150 courses in Nigerian universities were unaccredited. These unaccredited courses are being studied in 37 universities out of the 143 universities visited by the accreditation panel of NUC (Premium Times, 9 August, 2016). Another pointer was the banning of 57 illegal universities already operating in Nigeria in 2015 (Daily Post, 27 August, 2015). The NUC noted that the influx of illegal foreign universities is on the increase and they are fast feeding on the gullibility of young school leavers and this could further contribute to poor graduates output and depreciate the academic standard being built. Ozurumba and Ebuara (2014) affirmed NUC's position that since the introduction of the accreditation of programmes, there has been a steady improvement in the performance of Nigerian universities. Furthermore, the curriculum and facilities have been improved upon and quality graduates have substantially been on the increase.

On the contrary, Saint, *et al.* (2003) and Babatola (2015) argued that NUC's efforts had not paid off, giving the low level of labour market absorption, employer assessment of graduates and the sordid experience of putting Nigerian graduates in remedial classes for them to cope with graduate studies in foreign universities. This is a pointer to the fact that the international communities have not really accorded Nigeria's higher education and her graduates the right recognition. Deductively, it may not be wrong to conclude that NUC accreditation exercise has not yielded the requisite results on graduates output as envisaged. Other researchers have also decried the double-

dealing game played by some higher institutions in Nigeria on NUC officials during accreditation exercise. Otokunfor (2015) reported that illegal structures or facilities are either hurriedly put up or those spaces belonging to other departments are converted or re-labelled in order for some programmes to be accredited. Cases of inadequate learning and teaching facilities, according to him, could be traced to the deceitfulness of these institutions and lack of watchfulness on the part of NUC.

Furthermore, Dumbili (2014) claimed that many universities also engaged in sharp practices of hiring or borrowing Professors or Senior lecturers from other universities or schools (who may not retain their tenure) as adjunct staff during the accreditation exercise for the purpose of getting some courses accredited. The implication of this hide and seek game points to the fact that there exists a serious situation of inadequate number of lecturers in many Federal universities which is making those in the service to be over laboured. Also, it revealed that the insincerity on the part of Nigerian universities may continue to play a negative role in addressing the issue of quality in the universities.

Academic Freedom in University System

One of the major values of higher education is academic freedom. Menand (1996) defined it as the key concept that is legitimating the whole enterprise. It is the principle that guides scholars and their works against interference in order for the society to benefit from the service of the higher institutions of learning and not for the benefit of lecturers. In education, the concept of academic freedom has its origin from different sources. One of the most recent ones is Humboldtian principles. This model was explained on the platform that embraces three principles that are interrelated: *Lehrfreiheit*, *Lernfreiheit* and *Freiheit der Wissenschaft*, the terms have German origin (Terence, 2009).

As Metzger (1987) and Hofstadter (1955) submitted: 'The German instructor, according to *Lehrfreiheit* , had two meanings in mind which are that the university don has the

freedom to test facts and submit his discoveries in publication or while lecturing which indicated his enjoyment of independence to teach and make inquiry. This independence was not as conceived by the citizens of Germany to be inalienable gift for everybody; instead, it was particularly the right of the lecturers, including important states of all citadels of learning. *Lehrfreiheit* also pointed to the paucity of bureaucratic laws within the condition of teaching: the absence of a prescribed syllabus, independence to choose tutorial classes and teach subjects in line with the interest of the teacher.

Academic freedom was therefore, a situation of agreement that summed up the total procedure of instruction with research (Hofstadter and Metzger 1955). Hence, *Lehrfreiheit* pointed to ‘the rights of lecturers who were civil servants receiving salaries, to carry out their assigned core responsibilities outside the border of command that included any other civil servants. This encouraged the lecturers to take decisions about their teachings and discoveries of their research without seeking approval from the government or the church or be afraid of the accusation of the state or the church (Terence, 2009). Therefore, to focus on the rights of the university teachers, that model of Humboldtian on academic freedom had precedents in the model of University of Paris.

Another area of *Lernfreiheit*, points to ‘learning freedom’ but as related by Metzger, within the context of Germany as a country at that time, this right amounted to ‘a disclaimer by the university of any control over the course of study of the students except the ones that will be very useful in equipping them for their professional examinations of the state or to make them qualify for the license of academic teaching. It also freed the University of the responsibilities for the private conduct of the students, this account for the reasons universities in Germany confronted their students body firstly as one that supplies knowledge and as an agent of credentialisation, not as a substituted parent or the owner of the land. For their part, the students of the universities in Germany, who are forced to discover their own lodgings and diversions, freed from subject grades and roll calls in the classrooms, allowed to move from one place to

another for the sampling of academic wares, were able to convince the university about themselves as responsible individuals that are independent and not babies, tenants or wards' (Metzger 1987). Therefore, we have this area of the model of Humboldtian on academic freedom, with its focus on the students' right.

Another important area of the academic freedom was the aspect of right of academic self-governance and institutional autonomy of education institutions. Therefore, 'with the noticeable control of the state over appointment of the workers in the university, universities have the right to decide under the direction of the board, on internal matters. The idea of academic self-governance which undergirds *Freiheit der Wissenschaft* is seen as a pointer to the emphasis on institutional autonomy that emerged in the discussions of the court of academic freedom' (Horwitz 2005). It became a necessity to put the right in place in order to protect the freedom to teach and research. Without such protection, universities would have been adversely affected to the censorship of government or religious bodies. And without such wide institutional authorities, the academic staff members would have been at the mercy of the state or the church. Thus, institutional autonomy was very germane to academic freedom (Terence, 2009).

The collaborative pursuit of the unity of research and teaching by staff and students (*Einheit von Lehre und Forschung*) was a major focus of the Humboldtian model. Therefore, the model examined the task of universities as the appreciation of science and reward for scholarly work in the deepest and widest sense in which collaboration works through achievements of intellectual success of one person which can awaken passion for intellectual achievements and interests of others and through the fact that what was initially only said by a person translates to a general intellectual possession instead of fading away in loneliness. Both the teachers and the students will be justified in this process, in the desire to acquire knowledge and therefore the aims of science and scholarship are worked towards with utmost effectiveness through the cooperation of the teachers and the students (Terence, 2009). Therefore, as Lay considered teaching to

be a means of adding value to both the teacher and the learner: impartation would take effect in the display of enthusiasm and experience (Lay, 2004).

To conclude, the Humboldtian model of academic freedom focused on the existence of relationships between research and teaching, in order for both students and university teachers to enjoy academic freedom, with the former acquiring professional status as tenured government workers, allied to institutional autonomy from the state and internal self-governance. It is of great importance to make those that are outside of academia to see the relevance of academic freedom: to lecturers, learners, universities as institutions and the whole society.

Governance within Nigerian universities

The essence of university education cannot be overemphasized. All over the world, it has been discovered that knowledge plays a pivotal role in the development and growth of the individual as only knowledgeable people can contribute to the development of their states. Therefore, university education engenders the creation of a knowledge-based society which subsequently determines the survival of a nation (Faborode and Edigheji, 2016). Ekundayo and Ajayi (2009) posited that in creating a knowledge society, tertiary education is invariably producing the needed manpower that will drive the socio-economic development of a nation. Also, the requisite training needed by teachers, nurses, civil servants, engineers, scientists and a host of other personnel can only be provided in the university (World Bank, 2002 in Ogbomida *et al* 2016). Anho (2011) and Ojo (2016) therefore concluded that university education has the power to transform the society economically, politically, socially and culturally.

To deliver the above goals and objectives, university education must infuse on the graduates being produced from the universities the right characters, values, intellectual capabilities and requisite skills to make them self-reliant. As a result, effective management of the university is sine qua non to delivery of its mandates- vision and mission. Hence, Lidow (2011) in Faborode and Edigheji (2016) remarked that the

society benefits more when universities and those within them are allowed to flourish in carrying out their primary assignment of teaching, research and service delivery. Ndowa (2016) affirmed further that “the governance system within higher education institutions have a direct bearing on whether these higher education systems are able to achieve NUC ideals”.

Governance within Nigerian universities has been faced with many challenges among which are absence of autonomy and poor funding. The enactment of the University (Miscellaneous Provisions) (Amendment) Act of 2003 otherwise known as the autonomy act was enacted to tackle these challenges especially in the area of autonomy by granting more powers to the two administrative structures within the university system saddled with managing the day-to-day affairs in Nigerian universities (Saintet *al* 2003; Ogunraku, 2016).

The university (Miscellaneous Provisions) (Amendment) act of 2003 identified two administrative structures within the university system and these are: the Governing Council and the Senate. The Governing Council is made up of the following members:

1. The Pro – Chancellor;
2. The Vice Chancellor;
3. The Deputy Vice Chancellor;
4. One person from the Federal Ministry responsible for education;
5. Four persons representing a variety of interests and broadly representative of the whole federation to be appointed by the National Council of Ministers;
6. Four persons appointed by the senate from among its members;
7. Two persons appointed by the congregation from among its members; and
8. One person appointed by convocation from among its members.

However, a typical organogram of any university in Nigeria is made up of the Chancellor – Chancellery and the Visitor – the President (Olayinka and Adedeji, 2016). The governing council is vested with the power and responsibility of governance in

accordance with the enabling law of each university. They are in custody, control and disposition of university property, finances and appropriation of fund. The council also has the power to call for the auditing of the university's account as deemed fit. From its composition, most of its members are either government appointees or representatives. Oshio (2009) noted that government (Proprietor) still wields the "ultimate power to control universities through dissolution of council, visitation, the final appeal to the Visitor by a removed Vice Chancellor and the powers of legislation."

The internal management activities of the university revolve around academic matters such as teaching and research, students' admission, awarding of degrees and promotion of research. These are carried out by the Senate which the Vice Chancellor heads. The activities of the Senate are closely under the control and supervision of the Council (Ekundayo and Ajayi, 2009). The head of the management team is appointed by the Council and subject to ratification from the Visitor (the Proprietor). The members of the Senate consist:

- The Vice Chancellor
- The Deputy Vice Chancellor
- The Registrar
- The Deans of faculties and Provosts of Colleges
- Heads of Departments
- Directors of institutions and centres
- The university Librarian
- All Professors
- Nominated members from the congregation

Ogbomida, *et al* (2016) posited that in order to effectively govern and manage the university, a decentralized and all-participative management styles are employed through committee system. Ekundayo and Ajayi (2009) affirmed that the constituted committees are directly responsible to the Council, Senate and the Congregation in an

advisory capacity in assisting them to carry out their functions. Ogbomida (2016) argued further that the committee system is inevitable as an integral part of the management process giving the complexities and rigidities that permeate the university system. These committees include but not limited to:

- Finance and general committee
- Development and promotion committee
- Admission committee
- Academic Planning committee
- Committee of Deans
- Research Grant committee
- Ceremony committee
- Consultative committee on community development
- Students' welfare board
- Library committee
- Sports committee
- Students' disciplinary committee
- Staff disciplinary committee
- Development and physical planning committee
- Staff housing committee/lodging bureau
- Tender board committee
- Alumni relations committee

Scholars have observed that governance within Nigerian universities depicts a democratic arrangement but is fraught with many challenges which have impinged on its objectives and goals. Ojo (2016) acknowledged the challenges Nigerian universities are facing but contended that these challenges are not only peculiar to Nigerian universities but are a global phenomenon which is depriving universities from achieving their objectives. According to him, these challenges include call for accountability, growing demand for enrolment, physical constraints and evolving technologies.

Edafiogho (2017) identified internal and external pressures within the university system as the major constraints which lead to bad governance. Babatola (2016) noted that undue interference by the government and its agencies in the decision making which often comes with high politicking as a way of sustaining their tight-fisted control over the universities is an indictment on university autonomy and academic freedom. Inadequate funding, wrong selection or appointments of principal officers into the senate and committee members often lead to bad leadership (Ogunraku, 2016). It has also been discovered that the involvement and participation of people in the management of the university is often than not a product of the leadership style and behaviour of the Vice Chancellor many of whom exhibit managerial incompetency in governing higher institutions (Mushemeza, 2016).

Mabelebele (2013) admitted the above challenges confronting universities but expressed the view that if universities will produce graduates who will not only be employable but contribute to national development, it is imperative for the government, university administrators and stakeholders to embrace change and see the university as the fulcrum of national development. He advised that the starting point is to accept that the universities are increasingly becoming difficult places to govern, manage and lead because they (the universities) operate in volatile environment and therefore have to constantly embrace and adapt to emerging trends and dynamics. The universities have become places where industries, civil societies, communities and government interest often coalesce and coincide.

2.1.4 Governance in University

There are many definitions of governance as there are many scholars and professionals in different fields of learning and human endeavours. Hence, it is difficult to define governance in one single orientation due to the ambiguity and misconception surrounding it (Gallagher, 2001; UNESCO, 2017). In spite of the subjective definitions on governance, there are however two schools of thought: researchers who have postulated that governance is not synonymous to management; and researchers who strongly believe that governance is synonymous to management. These two schools shall be briefly considered.

From a broader perspective, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) (2017) defined governance as the body and procedures which are put in place to ensure that people are accountable, transparent, responsive, obey the rule of law, stable, empowered and participate widely. It further asserted that it is the delegation of power, the formulation of policies and principles, setting of priorities and making stakeholders accountable. Gallagher (2001) also affirmed UNESCO's position that governance is the body of relationship which brings about coherence in organisation, authorised policies, plan and decisions and account for their probity, responsiveness and cost effectiveness".

In the educational sector in Nigeria, these definitions are germane considering the structures and processes put in place by government in governing education most especially tertiary education. As currently stipulated in the constitution, education is on the concurrent list which avails both the federal and the state governments to share and exercise power and authority in running.

By implication, according to Kelleher (2008), both the federal and the state governments including individuals and organisations have the privilege to establish schools to university level. However, the guidelines and principles for establishing and operating such higher institutions are often set by the federal government through the National Universities Commission (NUC) which is a parastatal under the Ministry of Education (Babatola, 2015).

Also, laws enacted by the federal government in the case of conflict, automatically overrules that of the state, organisations or individuals that own the institutions. This practice perfectly aligns with UNESCO's (2017) position that governance sets the machineries for management and administrative system to function.

Reiterating and reinforcing UNESCO's assertion, Natufe (2006) and Ogunraku (2016) consented that the processes and systems are administered by the government to ensure prudent management of state resources in addressing socio-economic (education inclusive) shortcomings for the well-being of all and sundry. In other words, it is the government that formulates the policies, laws, and so on (through the organs of government) on how these higher institutions should be properly managed for desirable results. Government also spells out how delegated authority amongst management teams should be exercised (Kaufmann in Natufe 2006).

To summarize implicitly, the postulations of some researchers (Erero 1996;Eyinla 1998; Obadan 1998 and Olowu *et al* 1999 in Afolabi, 2016), governance embodies the making of rules, laws and policies and the political will to enforce them functionally under a cordial working relationship. To put it succinctly by inference, Omuta (2009) quoted in Ayanyemi (2015) noted that “governance is the right reserved solely by government and for government to direct educational policy” and to control all educational institutions within the ambit of the law.

In conclusion from the foregoing, it is pertinent to say that governance wields enormous power, control and influence than management but encourages devolution and sharing of the same power amongst recognized structures set up for and within a system; encompasses management (Ogunraku, 2016 and Afolabi, 2016); oversees management (UNESCO, 2001); has external undertone (Marginson, 2001; Ekundayo and Ajayi, 2009) and is participatory (Afolabi, 2016).

On the other side of the divide, there is a plethora of definitions on management which researchers have come up with. However, inferences from literature reviewed showed a consensus amongst some scholars that governance is synonymous to management; and the two words can be used (and have been used) interchangeably when discussing higher education (Ibukun, 1997; Akomolafe and Ibijola, 2011 and Afolabi, 2016).

To Ekong (2001), governance is the management styles employed by Vice Chancellors of higher institutions in organizing, controlling and directing affairs of their respective institutions. This view was also corroborated by Nnennaya (2014). However, streamlining the definitions, Oyebanji (2014) affirmed that management denotes prudent control of resources that is void of wastefulness in order to ensure the education of people in the society. This, according to Resser in Babarinde (2001) cited in Udey, Ebuara, Ekpoh and Edet (2009), will require concerted and collaborative efforts of “performing the functions of planning, organizing, staffing, directing and controlling” amongst key players in a system. It would require structure(s) to be put in place and processes to be followed which will subsequently determine “how they are formerly organised and operated” (Oyebanji, 2014).

The definition of management by The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) (2017) could be a pointer to the view held by scholars that management is synonymous to governance because it embraces some “properties” and shares some similarities aforementioned as management is the planning, implementation, and monitoring functions in order to achieve pre-defined results. Management encompasses processes, structures and arrangements that are designed to mobilize and transform the available physical, human and financial resources to realise concrete outcomes. Management refers to individuals or groups of people who are given authority to achieve the desired goals.

The position of these scholars is irrevocably hinged on the fact that governance cannot be practised without a measurable input from management. One of the key elements of governance is effectiveness and efficiency which can only be attained through prudent

management. Management encourages the best use possible of human and material resources to achieve a given goal that will meet the aspirations of all stakeholders involved in a particular course. Gallagher (2016) re-emphasised this position by positing that “management is achieving intended outcomes through the allocation of responsibilities and resources and monitoring their efficiency and effectiveness”. To achieve the intended outcome for higher education in Nigeria, Saint, Hartneth and Strassner (2004) posited that a strong political will (governance); dynamic and responsive managerial skills on the part of the managers and administrators of Nigerian universities would be needed to address the problem of poor graduate quality.

At present, education is on the concurrent legislative list of the Federal Government of Nigeria. Both the federal and the state governments legislate on this list. Higher and primary education is ceded to the federal government while the state government handles the secondary education. This implies that there is government involvement and investment in running, controlling, and managing higher education in Nigeria. The situation on ground, however, is not encouraging. While government is fully in charge of running university education via her parastatal – The Ministry of Education and its agency – the National Universities Commission (NUC), the investment in education has been low and not up to what is expected for sustainable funding.

2.2.1 Autonomy and Quality of Graduates

Basically, universities are to train graduate manpower and contribute to the socio-economic status of a nation through the creation of knowledge via research. However, this may be unattainable or partly achieved if there is undue interference from the government or external bodies in the management of the universities through obnoxious public policies. The survival and success of any university in the world therefore in achieving these dual goals, is premised on the degree of autonomy it enjoys.

Kezar and Eckel (2004), Olsen and Maasan (2007), Gornitzka and Maasen (2014) affirmed that autonomy is bequeathed to the university because of the fundamental role it plays in the society which stems from its “tradition, history and the values it represents in the

society”. Furthermore, autonomy is so crucial to the university system without which it would fail in its function of discovering and imparting knowledge through research and rendering of community services. Thus, autonomy is a global phenomenon which makes universities to thrive for excellence in the face of a spectrum of challenges, competitions and opportunities. Routledge (2015) asserted that the culture and tradition of academic freedom and institution autonomy are globally written and appreciated principles with which it is possible for every university to accomplish its customary goals of creating knowledge, transmitting knowledge, preserving and performing service roles.

Nyewusira and Nyewusira (2013) attested that autonomous universities are presently the best ranked universities in the world because they are more flexible, competitive, functional and responsive in achieving their set out goal(s). In other words, universities with greater autonomy have been found to perform better than those that are not autonomous or partially autonomous (Ritzen, 2016). It is perhaps in realization of this fact that the issue of autonomy in Nigerian universities has become a perennial and contentious matter between the government and the Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU) for over three decades now.

While government has put the blame of poor quality of graduates at the door steps of universities for not justifying the huge investment on tertiary education, the universities, on the other hand, have consistently fought back that the bane is rooted in the absence of autonomy in Nigeria universities. Ritzen (2016) supported the latter position that autonomy improves the delivery of university education by adding values to the quality of graduates. Ekundayo and Adedokun (2009) asserted that the erosion of autonomy is a contributory factor to graduates’ incompetency. In the same vein, Babalola, Jaiyeoba and Okediran (2007) averred that the university system has been highly politicised as a result of the absence of autonomy and this has grave consequences on the quality of graduates.

The concept of autonomy is defined from two perspectives by scholars. Those who believe that autonomy should be void of any external control irrespective of who finances the universities and on the other spectrum, those who believe that external control is inevitable

from the financier(s) for the purpose of accountability. However, there is a unanimous agreement in respect to the key components that make up autonomy.

Babalola, Jaiyeoba and Okediran (2007) defined autonomy as limited concept implying freedom of universities from external control in matters relating to academic and effective involvement of the academic community in the formulation and implementation of university policies and programmes. Expatiating further, the “Limited freedom” according to them should be sufficient enough for such university to choose her students and staff, establish her own standards, draw up her own curriculum, spell out funds generation and prioritize spending and most importantly, decide to whom to award her own degrees and certificates. However, it was rightly pointed out that this freedom is not total but incomplete and ever changing.

It is the reasonable and respectable internalisation of the mechanism of university governance. By implication, it is the power, authority and freedom accorded the council and the senate of a university to take crucial and essential decisions on all matters that fall within the purview and ambit of the law that set up the university (Olayinka and Adedeji, 2016; Edafiogho 2017). Afe (2014) asserted further explained autonomy as the capacity of an individual or institution to make an informed, self-made decision by its own self. It is a state or condition of having independence to decide a course of an action. Therefore, autonomy connotes self-governance, self-independence or sovereignty from external interference on the administration and discharge of academic or intellectual responsibility.

Ekundayo and Adedokun (2009) expatiated further that autonomy is concerned with the protection of the university from external interference by government officials in the day to day running of the institution especially on issues relating to the selection of students, the appointment and removal of academic staff (Vice Chancellor), the determination of the concept of university education and the management of degree standards, the determination of size and the rate of growth, the establishment of the balance between teaching, research and the advanced study, the selection of the research projects and freedom of publication and the allocation of recurrent income amongst the different categories of expenditure.

A report of the steering committee, set up in 2005 by the Ministry of Education in Singapore, to review university autonomy, governance and funding, after a fact-finding mission to the United States of America opined that autonomy does not allow the concentration of power to make decision at the centre only but rather allows the devolution of power within the system. In other words, autonomy empowers the Deans, Heads of Departments and faculty members to engender the culture of ownership and initiative that will permeate all levels within the university. Autonomy allows for the participation of all segments of the system in the decision making process by sharing authority (Arikewuyo, 2004). The faculties that make up the system are more involved and engaged in academic matters that will enhance students' experience by inculcating in them an entrepreneurial spirit which is crucial to national development and a knowledge economy. The council and senate provide the requisite oversight, monitoring and supervision while the faculties enjoy an unalloyed independence on matters relating to teaching and research.

By implication, autonomy eliminates all internal and external constraints and bureaucratic processes in the running of a university. Autonomy makes the management of the university flexible and responsive (Osaghe, Irabor and Olusi, 2014). For autonomous university to achieve its objectives on the quality of graduates, the faculties must be given a degree of autonomy as it is done elsewhere in the world (Ajayi and Awe, 2010). Okai and Worlu (2014) noted that university autonomy is expected to present a better framework through a decentralized management culture within the system. A World Bank report of 1995 cited in Babalola, Jaiyeoba and Okediran (2007) supported and acknowledged that institutional autonomy promote constant changes and synergy of inputs which improves the quality of education.

Edafiogho (2017) averred that autonomy also accord students, who are one of the stakeholders in the system, protection against violation of their rights. Fundamentally, the council, senate and the faculties must be interested in what students are being taught. It must be relevant and capable of making them competitive after graduation since the onus of developing the curricula and providing oversight direction now rest on them. In a

nutshell, autonomy avails students the opportunity to have a say on all issues that affect their interest and welfare. This also engenders the culture of ownership amongst students.

By inference, what possibly suggested to some scholars that government interference in education in Nigeria will be dominant was the memorandum (white paper) released in 1925 by the Phelps – Stock Commission which cedes the right to the government to direct educational policies and oversee all educational institutions (Ayanyemi, 2015). The Acquisit and Elliot's Commission's reports of 1943 stated that the then University College, Ibadan (UCI) should be accorded an autonomous status. However, in practice it was not as the appointment of key officers and the chairmen of the council were political appointees of the British government: and the academic activities of the College which included admission of students, staffing, and so on, were also taken over by the colonial masters. This trend continued into and after the independence which witnessed the emergence of more universities which were regionally created by the government. These universities include University of Nsukka, Nsukka (1960); University of Ife, Ile-Ife (1961); Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria (1962) and University of Lagos, Lagos (1962). (Babalola, Jaiyeoba and Okediran, 2007)

In Nigeria, government's undue interference became more pronounced since the emergence of the National University Commission in 1975. This is so because government had been singlehandedly financing all the public universities and therefore, the universities must be accountable for the funds put into the system. It is pertinent for government to be aware of how the funds invested is being spent; the outcome of the teaching and learning process on the students' performance after graduation; whether research works conducted by scholars are adoptable and useable or not; and whether the products of Nigerian universities match international standard or not (Taiwo, 2011).

Scholars have argued that since the activities of the universities revolve within the system but extend and affect the state or community; the universities cannot be highly isolated from interference (Dlamini, 1997). However, it is imperative to strike a balance and protect the university from the social, economical and political intrusion as a result of government obligation in financing the universities. Hence government's interference in regards to

enacting policies may affect academic matters (teaching and research), finance, structure, appointment, students' enrolment and degrees awarded. Arikewuyo and Ilusanya (2010) affirmed that some stakeholders do not consider government's interference as unreasonable.

However, there are indications that in recent times, government had exhibited exertion and influence on appointments and dismissal of Vice Chancellors, payment and contribution of service of staff, admission quotas for minority groups; introduction of new teaching fields; membership and control of governing councils; standards in particular subjects and accreditation of courses, number of students to be admitted, closure and amalgamation of courses and duration of academic year and the amount of fees to be charged. The autonomy of Nigerian universities had been usurped because NUC has a say and hand in everything done in Nigerian ivory towers.

Saint,*et al* (2003) and Olayinka and Adedeji (2016) have postulated that the signing to law of the universities Miscellaneous Provisions (Amendment) Act, 2003 has brought a paradigm shift in the management and governance of Nigerian universities. The shift is in key areas of decision making and control which hitherto had been the exclusive right of NUC. Although Edafiogho (2017) observed that the autonomy given is not total, nonetheless portends a positive omen to self-governance and independence that would assist Nigerian universities build their academic and quality profile in enhancing quality graduates (Olayinka and Adedeji, 2016).

Fumasoli,*et al* (2014) noted that university autonomy reforms are targeted towards revamping or affecting the university's organisation and governance structures. With the Universities' Miscellaneous Provisions (Amendment) Act 2003 being implemented in Nigerian universities, the internal structure of Nigerian universities had been strengthened to develop the universities to an enviable standard by producing competent graduates. Ritzen (2016) posited that the internal structure of a university is often determined by the components of autonomy which include internal decision making, resource allocation, recruitment of staff, students' enrolment and academic freedom. This implies that a porous

and defective structure in the absence of autonomy will be subjected to the whims and caprices of manipulation incapable of responding to challenges and opportunities.

The structure in which autonomy will thrive to the fullest must devolve power to the faculties to function optimally without hindrance. Therefore the survival of the university lies in the internal regulations rather than external regulations (University of Ibadan 1981 Press release). A strong internal structure with the right calibre of academics in an autonomous university is pivotal to decision making that will produce results. Ritzen (2016) opined that making decisions internally (policy autonomy) has positive impact in increase in graduation of students and employment of graduates. He explained that the plausible interpretation to be given is that lecturers are allowed by internal decision (policy autonomy) to plan their own courses to meet the needs of their learners in order to ensure learning and acquisition of relevant skills to the labour market.

On paper, a degree of autonomy seems to have been granted to Nigerian universities but in practice, that seems a tall order for Nigerian universities to embrace under the new dispensation as noted by Dumbili (2014). Quoting Parker and Jary (1995), Ritzen (2016), De Vita and Case (2003), Wilkinson (2006) and Dumbili (2014) summarised the continuous neglect, interference and excessive control which faculties in Nigerian universities are contending with from the management, and which is hampering them from fulfilling their mandate:

In the universities in Nigeria, control exists where many types of human and non-human structures are put in place in order to monitor the faculty. From the establishment of universities in Nigeria, there was partial academic autonomy. Decisions making and implementation of government policies were done by the management without consulting the faculty. In most of the universities, lecturers are employed by management without any input from the faculty. Therefore, those who wouldn't have been in the academics are employed by their relatives and friends and imposed on the faculty. This increasing administrative interference both internally and externally where the faculty is denied of academic autonomy will soon make the nation's universities to what has been described as the "McUniversity". In any university environment where the

lecturers are excessively controlled and overburdened with duties without commensurate compensation and motivation, the workers will be out rightly demoralized

2.2.2 Academic Freedom and Quality of Graduates

Berdahl (1991) and Ashby (1966) in Fumasoli *et al* (2014) averred that academic freedom and autonomy were traditionally construed to mean the same. However, series of definitions and clarifications by scholars have distinguished and explained the intermix between the two concepts. In operation nonetheless, the two concepts are interrelated. In other words, they depend on each other for the university to function optimally – because they are universally written and appreciated values without which a university can be regarded as one (Routledge, in Babalola, 2015). On the one hand, autonomy emphasizes self rule or self governance for the university while on the other hand, academic freedom bestow dual freedom on the university as a legal entity and on individuals (lecturers and students) within the system.

The 1998 National Policy on Education as cited by Dumbili (2014) accorded autonomy and academic freedom with Nigerian higher institutions. In respect to academic freedom, the policy empowers each university to select its own students (except where the law prescribes otherwise), appoint its staff, teach and select areas of research and determine the content of the courses. Academic freedom further empowers the university to decide on academic ground who may teach, what may be taught, how it should be taught and who may be admitted to study including selection of staff and determining its standard (Dlamini, 1997 and Taiwo, 2011).

It is generally believed that knowledge can only be generated through research and discovered knowledge imparted through teaching and rendering of community services. This however can only be possible when the university enjoys unfettered academic freedom. Academic freedom aids and places the university at a pivotal position to contribute meaningfully to the growth of the nation (Taiwo, 2011).

Research works in higher institution are carried out either individually or collectively within a faculty, between two faculties or among faculties as deemed fit. For faculty members to perform effectively on the job they are employed for, open and free inquiry to confirm or negate existing knowledge becomes inevitable. As a result, the performance of their functions must be truly accorded with a degree of freedom that will protect them from victimization, harassment, molestation, intimidation or censorship in form of demotion, withholding of merited promotion, termination of appointment and so on (Nwogu, 2012).

Fumasoli,*et al* (2014) defined academic freedom as the freedom of the individual scholar in his/her teaching and research to pursue truth wherever it seems to lead without fear of punishment, termination of employment for having offended some political, religious or social orthodox. Arikewuyo (2004) asserted that academic freedom entails the ability of the intellectual community to discharge its duties and responsibilities without unjustified interference. He affirmed further that academic freedom denotes commitment and sense of responsibilities on the part of academics which often reflect in the quality of teaching, research work and community service. Invariably, academic freedom leads to enhanced performance. However, in a system where the truth is caged due to the absence of academic freedom, negative and nonchalant attitude to work by lecturers would have an adverse effect on graduates produced for the country (Osarenren-Osaghae *et al* 2014).

Not only does academic freedom guarantee the freedom of the faculty members, but also avail students the free expression in their studying, publications and research works. Under an atmosphere of academic freedom, students are allowed to think and question reasonably without intimidation from their lecturers or the school authority any postulation being put forward by their lecturers. In other words, if their informed opinion contradicts that of their lecturers, it must be respected. Taiwo (2011); Okai and Worlu (2014) observed that a good classroom rapport will not only facilitate effective learning on the part of the students but also guide against propaganda and tendencies that lecturers might want to display or exhibit for ulterior motives. Nwogu (2012) therefore contended that to avert misleading information under the guise of academic freedom, it behoves on faculty members to display

mastery and competency on their field of specialization. Taiwo (2011) postulated the four key areas of academic freedom to include:

- i. *The freedom of students to study: an issue concerning access.*
- ii. *The freedom of students in what they learn and how they learn it: an issue regarding curriculum and pedagogy.*
- iii. *The freedom of faculty (members of the teaching staff) to make decisions on what to teach and how: issue concerning course approval, validation and accreditation.*
- iv. *The freedom of faculty to carry out research: an issue concerning choices to be made both by faculty themselves and by those who finance their researches on the relative intellectual, practical, financial and other merit of the claims of different programmes and project for time and attention.*

Scholars are of the view that academic freedom also serves society which a University is directly or indirectly responsible to. Academic freedom is beneficial to the community because it expands the frontiers of knowledge discovery and dissemination (Okai and Worlu, 2014).

Okorosaye-Orubite, Paulley, and Abraham (2012) asserted that the fallen standard of education may be adduced to the absence of academic freedom. They noted further that other disadvantages of the absence of academic freedom are that universities may be incapacitated to pursue their sacred functions, make scholars a stooge in the hands of the ruling party leading to truth being sacrificed and finally, there will be loss of job security. The manifestation of the aforementioned is an indication of infringements on academic freedom. Many scholars unequivocally agreed that there are serious infringements (internally and externally) on the practice of academic freedom in Nigerian universities. The greatest effect of this infringement is adversely reflecting on the graduate output of Nigerian Universities.

The external infringements, according to Taiwo (2011), Osaat and Omordu (2013) and Nyewusira and Nyewusira (2013), are caused by the activities and conflicting roles of NUC in the designing of the curriculum which contradict the freedom and power universities

ought to exercise under academic freedom. By centrally designing the curriculum, NUC has subtle control over what is to be taught and how it should be taught thereby leaving only who may teach to the Universities to decide. In addition, the role of the Joint Admission and Matriculation Board (JAMB) further hijacked the responsibility of determining who may be admitted from the purview of the universities. Similarly, the use of quota system, educationally disadvantaged states and federal characters are some of the ominous policies eroding the power of the universities to fully exercise academic freedom (Ekundayo and Adedokun, 2009). Also the late or non- disbursement of research fund by NUC to universities is a systematic way of stagnating or controlling what faculty members should research into (Osaat and Omordu, 2013).

Internally, there are ample evidences by scholars in their studies to show abuses of academic freedom in the system. Taiwo (2011), Nwogu (2012), Okorosaye-Orubite *et al* (2012), Osaat and Omordu (2013), and Osarenren-Osaghae, *et al* (2014) all reported the summary dismissal of members of academic staff at different times in various universities in Nigeria for attempting to express their views on issues bothering on the nation or their respective university. There are cases of alleged and subtle victimization, harassment and demotion of members of academic staff by Vice Chancellors of Universities. Senior faculty members go against junior faculty members on grounds of making their opinion known on research work, academic matters or style of administration (Ekong, 2001 and Mushemeza, 2016). Taiwo (2011) also reported how the senate of many universities are being used by NUC to internally control and determine what research should be carried out. In a nutshell, all these intrigues and intricacies run contrary to the principle of academic freedom.

The situation at the faculty level is even more worrisome going by the scenario presented above. The situation can be best described with the maxim that when the head is cut off, there is nothing the body can do. Osarenren – Osaghae *et al* (2014) and Dumbili (2014) affirmed that the erosion of academic freedom in the University is a major contributory factor to poor graduate output in Nigerian universities. As a result, if the situation must

change, faculties in Nigerian universities must begin to experience academic freedom in teaching and research works.

The freedom of members of academic staff to ensure that there is credibility for academics and especially the curriculum is essential to learners who will gain from the academic freedom of the lecturers. (Terence, 2009). As Standler (2000) pointed out, if the methods of teaching and the syllabus being used are not as challenging in one university than in others, then the degree awarded from such a university is more worthless than an awarded degree from a university with higher standard in academics. If students of universities desire to remain competitive in an international job market that is increasing, ensuring uniform high standards in university education will serve their best interests.

Åkerlind and Kayrooz (2003) confirmed this in their report that preliminary discoveries also suggest that limitations on academic freedom may be a reason in falling teaching and student standards and an emphasis on “safe” rather than speculative or contentious research (Åkerlind and Kayrooz, 2003). With respect to these discoveries that limitations on academic freedom may result to the standards of teaching falling, it is worth noting that the studied area that Karran (2007) demonstrated, academic freedom has less legal protection than other E.U. nations, found it necessary in the 1990’s to establish a national quality assurance agency for higher education to undertake subject and institutional audits to ensure the maintenance of good quality of teaching..

Academic freedom is a term that defines the condition of the universities which is also essential to members of staff and learners. It is a pre-condition for academic excellence as declaimed by Manan (2000). Abdel-Motaal (2002) is of the opinion that the major purpose of academic freedom - and it is all too often forgotten - is to maintain those appropriate conditions within the university to foster and advance creativity, social development and to sustain the increment in knowledge and instil them (Abdel-Motaal 2002). In the same vein, Altbach (2001) stated that the university has academic freedom is at its very core mission. It is important to teaching and research for without it, universities cannot maximise their

potentials neither will they be able to fully add value to the emerging society that is knowledge-based.

It has been argued by the Human Rights Watch that university accomplishes its goals when lecturers are not coerced to work according to an official line, a political school of thought or an economic agenda, but instead are given freedom to actualise their potentials in order to increase human understanding and knowledge (Human Rights Watch). Byrne (1993) stated that academic freedom supplies both aspirational and functional beliefs to the university. The meaning of academic freedom cannot be exhausted in contingency and pragmatism despite the fact that it remains a strong determinant of the dynamic nature of university education in the society at large. Our connection with an ideal academy is being maintained by academic freedom where scholars that are not interested seek for living knowledge with rigour and grace (Byrne, 1993).

2.2.3 Curriculum Implementation and Quality of Graduates

The need to be globally competitive (economically or socially) is pushing many nations of the world to thrive to develop the human capital which is believed to be pivotal to a knowledge economy. Hence, education has been identified as the only fundamental instrument to achieve this. Consequently, tertiary education is seen as a link enroute this noble path of developing the individual by inculcating in him/her the skills and values that would enable him/her contribute meaningfully to national growth. As contained in the National Policy on Education (2004), tertiary education is expected to produce the requisite manpower for the nation's industrial growth and since education is a continuous process, the curricula being used from the primary education through the university must be designed and structured in such a way that they must be able to impart the desired skills (Emeh, Isangadighi, Asuquo, Agba and Ogaboh, 2011).

Ayonmike (2015) asserted that there is no generally acceptable definition of curriculum but rather scholars have defined it based on the items a curriculum should contain and these include: educational goals and objectives, subject matters, list of exercises or activities to be performed (learning experiences and way of determining whether or not the objectives

have been achieved by the learners). The issue of implementation is inseparable when defining curriculum.

Ofoha, Uchegbu, Anyikwa and Nkemdirin (2009) defined curriculum as all the experiences a learner has in school under the guidance of an instructor and the total learning activities or educative experience offered by an institution through its total institutional programmes designed to achieve the prescribed objectives. Onojerena (2014) posited that a curriculum is all the planned learning opportunities offered by the organisation to the learners and experiences learners encountered when the curriculum is implemented. It is the tool employed by policy makers to achieve educational objectives of a nation.

In summary, Ayonmike (2015) averred that a curriculum is a composite document which incorporate the learner, the teacher, teaching and learning methodologies, anticipated (planned) and unanticipated (unplanned) experiences, outputs and outcomes possible within a learning institution. A good curriculum according to Babalola and Jaiyeoba (2008) must also embrace, in addition to the aforementioned, time available for learning, teacher professionalism, the examinations and the resources. Invariably, any curriculum should be capable of making the learner acquire knowledge, develop skills, change attitudes, appreciation and values.

According to Ofoha (2009), implementation refers to the day-to-day activities which school management and classrooms teachers undertake in the pursuits of the objectives of any given curriculum. He also defined implementation as the process involved in translating educational plans into action to bring about change in the learner as they acquire the planned experiences, skills and knowledge that are aimed at enabling the learner function effectively in the society.

In view of this, the role of curriculum cannot be overemphasised. Significantly, Emeh *et al* (2011) argued that when a curriculum is adequate, it is a vital corrective tool that can be employed in correcting social mayhem such as poverty, food insecurity, health crisis and sanitation. In other words, the effective design and good implementation of curriculum is a

fulcrum for functional education and nation building. Furthermore, Singh (2008) submitted that curriculum is a major determining factor on the type of knowledge or skills students or people in a society will acquire. Babalola and Jaiyeoba (2008) asserted the usefulness of a curriculum as being also instrumental to effective learning on the part of learner(s) and a guide for effective delivery of the subject matter on the part of the teacher. Based on this assertion, Pitan (2016) affirmed that the rationale behind Nigerian universities failing to achieve the objective of producing competent graduates is rooted in part, in the curriculum which is considered obsolete and disconnected from the need of the labour market.

On the contrary, Ofohaet *al* (2009) contended that the curriculum being used in Nigerian universities was appropriate in terms of goals and content but was found weak in its method of implementation and the teaching method employed was mainly theoretical. This agreed with Saint *et al* (2003) earlier view that the content and method of teaching the curriculum cannot make Nigerian universities responsive because the curriculum lacked quality and it is poorly implemented (Akpochafo and Filho, 2006).

Oris (2014) observed that the success of any curriculum rests squarely on those who implement it (teachers). Sadly, she reported that teachers are not often allowed to participate in the preparation of the curriculum which could have accelerated its good implementation if they had been carried along. Morinho (2009) surmised that curriculum is ineffective simply because it is based on unarticulated policies and implemented with little or no resources. Hence, it is incapable of providing any feedback. Emehet *al* (2011) noted that Nigerian curriculum at the tertiary level is often overloaded and contains unrealistic goals. They noted further that insufficient teachers, resources, inadequate evaluation and monitoring in the system are some of the problems facing the successful implementation of the curriculum.

Dumbili (2004) averred that one of the deformities in the Nigerian curriculum is in its uniformity which makes courses, syllabi, mode of grading and method of teaching look like the same. He argued that the uniformity makes lecturers' teaching predictable and stereotyped; deprives them of innovation; suffocates skills and inhibits discoveries and it

makes students uninformed because lecturers must adhere to the layout of the curriculum in carrying out their assignment. Emehet *al* (2011) therefore concluded that the present unemployment rate is not unconnected to the lapses in the curriculum.

There is a general consensus amongst stakeholders that the Nigerian curriculum being used in higher institutions had been long overdue for review and modernisation. Singh (2008) and Oyewo, Faboyede and Egbode (2014) suggested that the changing nature of human beings and the rapid and continuous growth in knowledge often make curriculum inadequate and subject to inevitable review. The Nigerian curriculum for universities is centrally prepared and planned by NUC in conjunction with professional bodies and agencies that assess and accredit the professional content of courses and thereafter handed down to universities for implementation (Moja, 2000, Dambili, 2014 and Ibijola, 2014). The reason for this could be the discrepancies discovered by NUC in the curriculum being used in tertiary institutions across the nation after the 2000 accreditation exercise. As a result, Uvah (2005) in Ibijola (2014) reported that NUC in 2001 organised a stakeholders' conference on the review of curriculum which was subsequently incorporated into the Minimum Academic Standard (MAS) document being used by NUC for accreditation. The document is being reviewed after every five years.

By implication, Nigerian curriculum for universities is a product of NUC, experts in different fields and professional bodies with little or no input from the academics. Hence, Dumbili (2014) reported that curriculum harmonisation and monitoring became part of the functions of NUC and by 2005, a new curriculum was introduced by NUC (Oladele, 2015). However, studies have faulted the curriculum due to its lack of responsiveness to societal needs most especially on the issue of graduate output (Moja, 2000).

In order to meet the need and interest of the society which the universities are serving, scholars have advocated for a collaborative effort between universities' management, government and the employers of labour in planning an effective curriculum that would serve the interest of the nation (Moja, 2000, Ofohaet *al* 2009, Emehet *al* 2011, Asuquo and Agboola, 2014, Falaye, 2016 and Ayanyemi, 2017). Specifically, they are of the opinion

that injecting entrepreneurial skills will be a good move in the right direction in making the curriculum very relevant in addressing the myriad of problems facing Nigerian graduates.

Nnennaya (2014) contended that only the universities should be solely responsible for the designing and modification of its own curricula and syllabi without any interference from any quarters. Dumbili (2014) however argued that the faculties should be involved in the review since they would be the ones to implement it when the curriculum comes into effect. Saint, *et al* (2003), reiterating El-Kawas' (2001) and Salmi's (2001) view, submitted that a review to be carried out should be done every two years and should not be restricted to the areas of content but also method of teaching i.e. pedagogy due to the rapid change being experienced all over the world from staff teaching to students learning.

Change is mandated in education through the federal government and also serves as basis for implementing curriculum. It is not always common to have reform efforts from the grass roots that start from the higher level of education. Hopkins and Higham (2007) however, submitted that change can only be effective and lasting if it is appreciated and managed by those who were saddled with the responsibility of teaching at different level of education. Leadership roles should be given to teachers in order for them to actively take part in initiatives that are recent, giving them permission to transform the norms within a school for the preparation of the faculty in the implementation of the new ideas. The ownership of the process and end result is always taken by the teachers because they see change as important (Hopkins and Higham, 2007).

According to Bascia and Hargreaves (2000), the major challenge is whether at the higher institution or not, a mandate from reformers with minutelink to education does not easily change education despite being a complex task. Mostly, people that design and demand transformation through education do not put into consideration, the availability of useful resources like time, or opportunities for professional learning for lecturers (Bascia and Hargreaves, 2000). There should be good planning for change, with good preparation for the site to be used for the faculty, well trained and ready staff, and a readiness to

adjustment will be needed for proper implementation of the curriculum (Kratochwill, Volpiansky, Clements, and Ball, 2007).

The Commonwealth of Learning (COL, 2017) reported that there is a continuous development of new programmes in higher institutions of learning, methods of delivery and policies to respond to the global labour market's demand and the growth of new and innovative information and communication technologies. This is evidence when taking a closer look at the increase in blended learning programmes (best practices of traditional classroom-based learning) with online and digital learning, integrating life skills into higher education (imparting training in life skills in learners to be competent in the dynamic world of work), and rapid rise in micro-credentials (mini-degrees or certifications in a specific topic area that are geared towards providing hands-on training to supplement their learners' education for better employment prospects). These efforts are geared towards enhancing the quality of education in Nigerian universities.

Jegade (2016) defined quality as the attainment of fitness for purpose in a given situation in a systematic and reliable fashion to provide confidence to the client that accurate and reproducible results indicate that the products or services meet or exceed customer/labour expectations. He is of the opinion that there is a clear relationship between a country's institutional governance frameworks, economic policies, incentive structures on the one hand and its economic progress on the other hand as determined by the education offered its people. The lack of appreciable development in Nigeria as compared with other countries of the world is easily adduced to the low level of attention given to education. This has led to calls from stakeholders to the managers of education to make the system more dynamic and result-oriented in the quality of its graduates after several experiences of failure and half-baked products from our various educational institutions in the nation.

A recent UNESCO survey indicated main contributory factors to the low quality in higher education in Africa. These include: research capacity deficit, inadequacies in facilities for teaching, learning and research; lack of a regional quality assurance framework and accreditation system; and slow adoption of ICT for delivering quality higher education.

Nigeria seems to suffer from all these UNESCO's indices of low quality university education. Thus, one may not be surprised that the quality of university education in Nigeria has depreciated tremendously. The result from education sector at all levels of education appear to show that Nigeria's educational institutions are not creating any value. Regrettably, the values which higher institutions in Nigeria had between the 60s and the early 80s long disappeared and all that remain appear to be a shadow of the past.

From the late 1960s to early 1970s, Nigerian graduates were either given jobs before their graduation or immediately employed after their graduation. During those periods, it was understandable that Nigerian economy was just evolving and government, private organizations and multinational companies were in dire need of qualified personnel to fill the many available vacancies but for which there were few qualified graduates. Ayanyemi (2015) affirmed that the economic downturn of the late 80s which was necessitated by maladministration, military rule and corruption ushered in a different situation for Nigerian graduates. Adedeji and Oyebade (2015) noted that today, being a graduate in Nigeria does not seem to hold the prospect of securing a job because the Nigerian labour market is saturated with many young graduates looking for jobs.

Winter and McEachern (2001) studied a wide change in the curriculum of education and materials in Ontario, noting that lecturers seem not to be satisfied with the curriculum implementation process. They submitted that the teachers that did not partake in the process of changing the curriculum saw themselves as incompetent professionals. In order to correct this perception, the educational leaders of the province could have used their professionalism to persuade the instructors to adapt to changes throughout the decision-making process (Winter and McEachern, 2001). The extent to which lecturers will be involved as agents of transformation in schools will be determined by the level at which they see themselves as professional teachers. It was found out in the Chicago Public School System by Sebring, Allensworth, Bryk, Easton, and Luppescu (2006) that teachers have higher chance to be productively involved in transformation provided they receive empowerment by the university management to see themselves as positively imparting the students to be productive citizens. This will typically begin as the leadership

motivates creativity and support for teachers as they try innovative exercises during teaching and learning process (Sebring, Allensworth, Bryk, Easton and Luppescu, 2006).

Apart from participating in curriculum development or policy formulation, professional development is crucial when implementing curriculum at every level of education. Its objectives are to enlighten all members of staff so as to maximally utilise their potentials in their chosen career. Rebores (2001) opined that the objective of staff development programme is to increase skills acquired by the employees through knowledge and thereby give the school district an increase in their potentials to achieve its aims and objective. It will not be productive to give or approve any exercise without checking whether it will help a university to achieve its goals and objectives or not. Professional development should not be by choice but should be given a good planning to meet the changing needs of the institution and labour market to enhance the acceptability of graduates at the labor market.

Benton and Benton (2008) suggested that professional development should create learning experiences for lecturers and applicable during interaction with the students. They encourage extensive planning by leaders, including assessments of needs and setting of goals, before embarking on training exercise, using many methods of instruction in the sessions of training, and evaluation of the quality and relevance of the training exercise (Benton and Benton, 2008). Rebores (2001) emphasised assessing the needs involved: the needs of the teacher, the needs of the community, changes in the curricular, and certificates of teaching requirements. Kratochwill, *et al* (2007) laid emphasis on the relevance of making the staff ready for training, making sure there is administrative support, and planning a follow-up strategy to ensure a lasting change from the training. Guskey (2000) emphasised the necessity to evaluate professional development in order to meet the expected aim and that its recipients understood it. He supposed that educational leaders often miss this step because they often feel unqualified to assess the quality of a programme. Guskey believed that only inquisitiveness to gather information by asking questions about the topics that have been covered is required and no special skills are required (Guskey, 2000).

Not only that resources are needed for implementing higher education curriculum, it is equally essential for faculty professional development and should be provided by the

school or school system. Logically speaking, increase in availability of teaching and learning resources in an institution could stimulate the propensity of lecturers to interact with the students and consequently increase graduates quality.

2.2.4 Funding of Universities and Quality of Graduates

The pressure on university education is constant. Universities are large and complex organisations. Principally, the university amongst other functions has the function to build the nation's manpower and develop the individual so that he/she is able to play an effective role in the development of the society to which he/she belongs. To do this, the university must be adequately and sufficiently funded. However, funding has been seen by scholars as one of the problems confronting tertiary education in Nigeria.

At inception, Nigerian universities according to Ekong (2001), enjoyed great financial supports from the government and international agencies which equipped them to a good standard. Moja (2000) also noted that quality education was offered by Nigerian Universities in the early 70s compared to those offered in overseas due to the fact that the educational sector was well funded. The management of Nigerian education has been retrogressively affected with insufficient fund and a high level of corruption orchestrated by government officials and those at the ivory towers. Hence, the ivory towers can no longer carry out their statutory functions. Akintayo (2008) noted that efforts to improve and promote the quality of university education to meet the challenges of a dynamic environment are often inhibited by inadequate funding. He asserted that it is a known fact that Nigerian universities are funded with tax payers' money and proceeds from the sales of petroleum. These have considerably dwindled over the years as a result of tax invasion, corruption and global economic meltdown. In spite of this, the shambles in universities may continue if pittance fund continues to be released to the universities which invariably will affect universities in all ramifications including producing low quality graduates.

To further buttress the above assertion, the budgetary allocation to education between 1999 – 2003 as compiled by Okebukola (2004) in Sabo (2005) revealed a staggering revelation. The most disheartening aspect is that what is budgeted for despite insufficient fund did not

equate what was actually released in some years under review which established siphoning of allocated monies to the sector.

Ali (1998) averred rightly that over the last two decades or so, the overall statutory funding of Nigerian universities have shown progressive decline at a time inflation has risen to an annual average of ninety percent. Thus, underfunding, high inflationary tendencies and misappropriation of school funds have reduced the abilities of universities in sustaining their various academic and other activities have declined seriously. This condition is worsened by funds misappropriation and delays in receiving statutory funds allocated.

Channelling of Funds and External Supports

From inception of NUC in 1962 as a department in the cabinet office in the Ministry of Education, the body has been saddled with the responsibility of handling the financial matters for universities on behalf of the Federal Government. However, this role was in an advisory capacity until 1974 when it became a statutory body and its responsibilities broadened.

The National Universities Commission Act No 1, 1974, states amongst other functions of NUC in relation to financial matters as follows:

- Inquire into and advise the Federal Government on financial needs, both recurrent and capital, of university education in Nigeria and, in particular, to investigate and study the financial needs of university research and ensure that adequate provision is made for this in the universities.
- Receive block grants from the Federal Government and allocate them to Federal universities in accordance with such formula as laid down by the Federal Government.
- Take into account in advising the Federal and State Governments on university finances on grants as may be made to the Universities by State Governments and by persons and institutions in and outside Nigeria.

Oladele (2015) and Anumnu (2017) reported that by virtue of the above terms of reference that spelt out NUC functions and responsibilities, NUC was empowered to coordinate and

control the administrative and financial matters of all publicly owned Universities. Furthermore, researchers have observed that the terms of reference portend some ominous changes to University governances and funding. Firstly, it marked the reversal of the modus operandi of requesting and making funds available to universities. Secondly, it established a tailored formula or criteria for disbursement of allocated fund to tertiary institutions. Thirdly, it affirmed NUC as the only intermediary or channel between the government, international bodies and the universities in respect to receiving external supports. In a nutshell, university autonomy became eroded (Saint,*et al*2003 and Babatola, 2015).

With this arrangement, Oladele (2015) noted that the former arrangement of Vice Chancellors requesting for fund directly from the Federal Government was squashed. The implication of this is that the financial autonomy hitherto enjoyed by universities became curtailed and Vice Chancellors became accountable to NUC as controlled measures were further put in place in subsequent years. Universities budgets were subjected to scrutiny as they must conform to budgetary and expenditure formula lay down by NUC as follows: sixty percent total academic expenditure; thirty nine percent for administrative support and one percent for pension and benefits (Ogungbenle and Edogiawerie, 2015). Ejiogu (1997) in Anumnu however averred that universities will continue to experience financial problems as the government does not assent to the budgetary requests of the universities but rather approve fund randomly which often fall short of what is required. Adeyemi (2011) noted that this could have been responsible for the inability of the government to adequately fund tertiary education as what is approved has never exceeded seventeen percent of the total budget.

According to Ogungbenle and Edogiawerie (2015), the disbursement of bulk grants from the Federal Government to the universities also follows stipulated guidelines: capital grants on the basis of generation, that is, year of establishment of the university, ratio of personal costs to overhead at ratio 60:40, library 10%, research cost 5%, capacity building 1% of the total recurrent – minimum, academic to non-academic funding at ratio 60:40; expenditure on central administration – 25% maximum and Internally Generated Revenue 10%.

Researchers have faulted the disbursement guideline due to NUC's inconsistency and intermittent alteration. Saint,*et al* (2003) observed that the disbursement guidelines should be made rather flexible and performance-based to meet each university's needs because historically, university funding has been distributed in broadly equitable ways across both institutions and disciplines with little care for their performance. The result has been to create a system of excessively homogenous institutions. This approach although justifiable in terms of fairness, relevance in reducing competitive tensions and political appeals surrounding the allocation procedure; does not however serve the country's long term development interest.

Ritzen (2016) argued that detailed performance funding of universities - number of degrees awarded and contribution to national development through research-engender competitiveness amongst universities and contribute more to graduate output than block funding that is independent of any performance indicator. In addition, Matthew (2016) reported that universities are often starved of approved fund due to late disbursement by NUC coupled with massive corruption perpetuated by NUC officials and administrators of Nigerian Universities. The resultant implication of this is the decay in facilities in these universities.

Moreover, NUC's inability to adhere to the full implementation of the guidelines is another bane. Anumnu (2017) noted that at times, younger universities are given more funds to execute capital projects at the expense of older universities who probably have more students to cater for but with dilapidated facilities. This has resulted to the slow development of the first and second generation universities since NUC became a statutory organization. Olayinka and Adedeji (2016) also asserted that financial autonomy for universities may not be achieved soon as long as the government continues to exercise overwhelming power on how internally generated revenue are administered coupled with the percentage limit placed on the amount to be generated internally by the universities. In this wise, despite revenue diversification, the universities are restricted in generating needed fund for other developmental programmes or projects apart from the ones stipulated

by NUC. The effect of this is the stunted growth Nigerian universities are currently enmeshed in.

Causes and Effects of Underfunding

The incessant fluctuation in the price of crude oil in recent times in the international market coupled with the need to meet heavy and rising debt service obligations has been one of the reasons the government cannot sufficiently fund education, especially university education (Isah, 2014 and Ayanyemi, 2015). Nigeria depends on crude oil as her major source for revenue generation and since the universities depend solely on funds from the federal governments, it will not be difficult to predict the effect of the dwindling income on the universities.

Inconsistency in the formulation and implementation of economic and educational policies has dealt a great blow on university education. Worthy of note of such obnoxious policies is the Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP) as noted by Adetanwa (2005). Currently, the seven point agenda of the present government which put education in the sixth position rather than in the first position depicts the value the government attaches to education. Inadequate planning, rapid increase in the establishment of universities, and ad-hoc expansion of enrolment, the ratio between the academic and non-academic staff members subsequently over stretched the limited infrastructure and the overhead cost of running the universities which require additional fund.

Adetanwa (2005) equally observed that the federal government has starved the universities of funds, providing 51.8% less than the UNESCO recommendation. It is obviously noted that some bureaucrats are making concerted efforts to frustrate all the efforts made so far to improve the higher education system. With the current style and level at which funds are being released, it is a pointer to the fact that higher education will be made to suffer which will thereby lead to the reduction in the quality of education and of course, cause some institutions to collapse or die naturally.

Research Grants and Other Grants

The pivotal role of research in an academic setting cannot be overemphasised. It remains the only channel possible for academics to update themselves and to carry out collaborative studies with the outside world. It has been discovered that research grants and other funds from the government and international donors are often misappropriated and diverted to other use by university administrators (Attiah, 2015).

Bako (2005) analysed the amount released and concluded that from the entire money allocated for research between 1999 and 2000, not up to 20% was released to NUC by the government, while out of this allocation, not up to 50% was released to the universities and from this budget, not up to 30% of the fund was utilised for research. As a result of these inadequacies, the universities have been witnessing delay in the maintenance services and payment of the salaries of workers. That is the main reason many of the universities in Nigerian could not account for the collected research money.

Dike (2003) asserted that as the bad culture of corruption persists, the public tertiary institutions have been abandoned to rot away. Some of the loans given by the World Bank towards education during the '90s were used to purchase unnecessary and "costly equipment" that could not be properly installed or maintained; and many institutions received irrelevant and unuseful books and journals. All these, including ubiquitous corruption, have contributed to the decline in the quality of instruction in Nigeria's education institutions that were once highly appreciated.

It is undoubtedly clear from the above affirmation that there is a great dearth of corruption and misappropriation from the education administrators to the ivory towers. This, therefore, explains the rationale behind the limited knowledge being disseminated from lecturers to students as a result of the scarcity of textbooks and journals in the libraries. It also accounts for the drastic decline of research works.

The faculties and students have continuously bore the brunt of this high level misdemeanour by officials and principal officers within the universities. Bako (2005) quoting the World Bank assessment on the dearth of research in Nigeria universities,

subsequently concluded that the initial sign of the lowered standard can be observed in the products of the universities. Universities graduates are not properly trained and are thereby not productive on the job; and shortcomings are particularly severe in oral and written communication and in the application of technical skills are mostly not impressive.

As observed by Okebukola (2002), the situation may worsen and research work in the universities may become irrelevant as a result of:

- i. a shift from collaborative to individual research*
- ii. using obsolete methods*
- iii. embarking on short-term rather than long-term research*
- iv. reducing the availability of research grants*

There is admittance by government and scholars on the need to improve on the quality and standard of Nigerian education. Nigerian universities are becoming a shadow of themselves as against what they used to be when most of them were established. Adetanwa and Aina (2006) observed that most of the Government-owned universities have big structures that depict the great affluence that was experienced in the country when those universities were being established. Today however, infrastructural facilities in Nigeria universities are in pitiable and despicable state. The universities are now faced with abandoned or uncompleted building projects, dilapidated buildings, insufficient classrooms, empty laboratories, libraries with outdated textbooks and journals, inadequate water supply, epileptic power supply, unequipped medical centres, overcrowded hostels, make-shift canteens, unkempt environments and a host of man-made problems.

Adetanwa and Aina (2006) averred that the abysmal state of facilities in the universities has had serious implication for university management and severe implication for the effective and efficient administration of the university education in the nation. Some of these are high students, wastage, low test pass rates and low quality of graduates being produced.

Bad governance, resulting from leadership, indiscipline and moral decadence had therefore been seen as one of the contributory factors to the decline of university education and the

quality of Nigerian graduates. Akintayo (2008) asserted that university management is construed either in terms of an individual leader or an organisational function or even as an institutional structure or a model for human action which has greatly failed to promote the fundamental education goals of producing good and useful citizens (graduates), ensuring greater efficiency and productivity and promoting attitude, justice, equity and harmony in society.

A report by the Committee for the Defence for Human Right (CDHR) (2001) in Akintayo (2008) further asserted that the gory picture of corruption which emanates from bad governance in the Nigerian universities in all our higher institutions of learning, are as a result of experience on various forms of injustice. We just watch people that occupy offices of administration and responsibility as they decline from being honest and accountable to being engaged in fraud. Thus, this failure of management displayed by a crop of university administrators who have emerged on the landscape of university governance since the 1970s to the meaning of university administrators which is in need of clarification. This has subsequently led to an unprecedented “corruption in large scale, lack of justice, violent acts, malpractices during examinations, immorality and general apathy within the university system” (Taiwo, 2004).

Influence of Autonomy on Quality of Graduates

The public research, social service and academic education are to be served by public higher education. The imposed policy of government and imposed “control” through laws (here suggested the level of autonomy of the university inherent in the policy of government) stand as the means of actualising the goals of government-owned university. The public research universities in the US have analyzed the effect of autonomy on university achievement (Volkwein, 1986). Autonomous universities were discovered to be better in performance on natural talents and gifts per student, and not on some other qualities such as quality of faculty, quality of undergraduate, or the rate at which the government gives grants per full-time equivalent worker. Campuses that are generously funded through the state and which are mostly independent from constraints on their academic programs are always able to raise funds from alumni most successfully

(Volkwein, 1986). In this study, the performance of university performance is being significantly explained by state support for universities (i.e. funding).

In a subsequent study that was conducted after twenty (20) years focuses on the result of research which are measured by international university research rankings and patenting, in line with the Shanghai-ranking for Europe and the US (Aghion, Dewatripont, Hoxby, Mas-Colell, and Sapir, 2009). The partial relationship between the result of university and autonomy are positive for both the US and EU (Aghion et al 2009). When a state university in the US is also being given a positive funding shock (i.e. an adequate financial support like grants or gifts), then if it is more autonomous, it yields more patents and has more competition from private universities through merit-based competitions for federal funding (Aghion *et al* 2009). In the *Times Higher Education* ranking style, the importance of funding was established for a top rank, more recently (Marconi, and Ritzen, 2015). The combined income received per student from both government and private sources is regarded as funding. The rank is a quasi-indicator of university performance, both in the education and research domains. The separate role of autonomy for 32 countries in the Europe was shown in another study: an additional unit of organizational autonomy is associated with a 13% higher likelihood of being ranked as a top 500 university (Hoareau, Ritzen, and Marconi, 2013).

There exists a statistical significant effect of autonomy on research result (through managerial autonomy) and on education result (through policy autonomy). Accordingly, an additional unit of policy autonomy relates to a 3.60 percentage increase in the number of students from backgrounds that are non-traditional. Also, financial help to students positively adds to attracting international students and international researchers (Hoareau, *et al*, 2013).

Managerial autonomy at a higher level and better funding always lead to an increase in research activities. However, while policy autonomy relates to an increase in graduation and employment of graduates, it is insignificantly related to the attractiveness of research and productivity (Hoareau, *et al*, 2013). An interpretation that could be given to this is that

policy autonomy permits lecturers to design their own courses and direct them to what will be very useful for their learners to ensure effective learning and acquiring of skills that will be very needful at the labor market. But no research has yet studied the competencies of graduates as an output to the policy of university in the form of autonomy and funding, even though data are available on competencies of graduates from the OECD project International Assessment of Adult Competencies (PIAAC). The data from PIAAC reflect competencies of graduates in the labour market, measuring literacy, numeracy, and “problem solving in an environment that is technology-driven” (IT skills). The result of graduates’ innate abilities prior to entering education, the process of higher education, with the skills developed while working are these metrics. From the studies mentioned, it is noted that the performance of education and research is set against funding and autonomy, as if policy has nothing to do with both university performance and cultural factors.

Academic Freedom and Quality of Graduates

It would be of great importance to learners who would gain from the academic freedom of the university and probably the atmosphere of freedom which would characterise the campus if lecturers have freedom to protect the credibility of academics and content of study (Terence, 2009), while academics who admire academic freedom for themselves and intentionally, or consciously, deprive their learners of it, by not acting according to these rules and regulations, are not intellectually honest (Derrington 1999). As Standler (2000) pointed out, if the curriculum and methods of teaching are less challenging at one university, than at others, then a degree from that university is worth less than a degree from a university with higher academic standards. If university students wish to remain competitive in an increasingly international job market, their best interests are served by ensuring that there are uniformly high standards in university education. Confirming this, Åkerlind and Kayrooz (2003) reported that preliminary findings also suggest that constraints on academic freedom may be a factor in falling teaching and student standards and an emphasis on “safe” rather than speculative or contentious research. Referring to the discoveries that constraints on academic freedom may lead to falling teaching standards, it is worth noting that the studied area that Karran (2007) demonstrated, academic freedom has less legal protection than other E.U. nations, found it necessary in the 1990’s to

establish a national quality assurance agency for higher education to undertake institutional and subject audits to ensure that teaching quality was being maintained.

In addition to being important to staff and students, academic freedom is a defining character of the health of universities. Hence Manan declaims that academic freedom is a pre-condition for academic excellence' (Manan, 2000), while Abdel-Motaal believes that the fundamental purpose of Academic Freedom - and it is all too often forgotten - is to instill and to maintain those conditions within the university that are conducive for fostering and advancing creativity, social development and to sustaining the advancement of knowledge (Abdel-Motaal 2002). In a like vein, Altbach (2001) stated that: academic Freedom is at the very core of the mission of the university. It is essential to teaching and research for without academic freedom, universities can neither achieve their potential nor fully contribute to the emerging knowledge-based society'.

Furthermore, Human Rights Watch has argued that a university fulfils its mission when academics are not forced to support an official line, an economic agenda, or a political ideology, but rather are free to use their talents to advance human knowledge and understanding' (Human Rights Watch), while Byrne (1993) stated that academic freedom provides both functional and inspirational norms for the university. Academic freedom always remains enmeshed in the changing fortunes of higher education in the larger society, yet its meaning cannot be exhausted in contingency and pragmatism. It maintains our connection with an ideal academy where disinterested scholars pursue living knowledge with rigor and grace' (Byrne, 1993).

2.3 Appraisal of Literature

From the review of literature carried out, it was discovered that researchers in Nigeria have not explored the role of institutional factors (autonomy, funding, academic freedom and curriculum implementation) in the Nigerian educational system. Most works focused primarily on the university as a whole. However, Onwunli and Agho (2014) researched into

faculty opinion on shared authority: a Nigerian national survey to find out the characteristics and government structure of higher education at the federal universities in Nigeria and to determine how academic decisions are made, the level of academic staff participation in university governance and the extent to which academic staff are consulted on key personnel issues.

At the end of the study, the results established that academic staff members are discontented with the governance process and general working conditions. Though they consented that they are consulted on academic matters through their representative at the University senate but there is no evidence to prove that their opinions are always accepted or employed in taking the final decision. It was further revealed that their role is limited in matters relating to non-teaching staff and they are excluded from participating on issues relating to admission criteria and accreditation standards as only external bodies undertake these. The study further revealed that only administrators take administrative decisions which even affect academic staff. Implicitly, there is a level of apathy amongst the academic staff at the faculty level which may be affecting their level of productivity.

Osarenren-Osaghae, Irabor and Olusi's(2014) study affirmed that the dissatisfaction emanates from the fact that academic staff members are sidelined in the running of the universities. Ayanyemi (2015) carried out a research on "Policy factors and private participation in public universities in the South-West Nigeria." He identified another impediment to the roles of the faculties. He noted that in many universities, faculties are now playing minimal roles as the functions of many governing boards, inspectors and accreditation bodies are seriously conflicting with the roles of the faculties in the decision making process of the universities on areas supposedly considered to be the purview of the faculties such as curriculum, tenure and programme review and these are affecting the faculties most especially on collegial models of governance.

Mushemeza (2016) in his study "Opportunities and challenges of academic staff in higher education in Africa" noted that the level of academic staff participation in the management of the institution is determined by the leadership behaviour of Vice Chancellors. This may

explain why suggestions from the lecturers are ignored even when they are germane. This explains the perceived rationale why institutional governance has been relegated to mere advisory function within the university system in Nigeria. Therefore, the potency of faculties in playing vital roles in the decision making process remained untapped and unexplored under the present arrangement. However these studies did not show or establish how institutional factors at the faculty level contribute to quality of graduates.

On skills and the employability of Nigerian graduates, Pitan (2010) studied Assessment of Skills Mismatch among Employed University Graduates in Nigerian Labour Market. The study used the descriptive survey research design of *ex-post facto* in which 1,800 graduate employees and 600 management staff were sampled from five sectors namely, manufacturing, health, banking, agricultural and education. The result showed that skills mismatch is very prevalent in the Nigerian labour market and many Nigerian graduates are deficient in these required skills as a result of the disparity between the course of study and the skills actually demanded for by the employers of labour. It was further revealed that the absence of entrepreneurial education is one of the factors responsible for this problem.

Asuquo and Agboola (2014) studied the Nigerian Universities Output and their Employability in the Labour Market in South-South, Nigeria. The study used the Cronbach Alpha and reliability co-efficient of 0.89 was gotten. A total of 1,200 universities graduates were sampled. The t-test and independent t-test were used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significant. It was shown in the study that the employability of Nigerian universities graduates was significantly below average. The study therefore suggested that the curriculum being used in Nigerian universities should be overhauled through collaborative efforts between employers of labour and the management of Nigerian universities so that it would contain requisite skills that would make Nigerian graduates employable. The study found a correlation between skills acquisition and graduates' employability and traced it to the absence of entrepreneurial skills in the curriculum.

Anho (2011) conducted a comparative perception study of graduates of Nigerian universities by the private and public sector employers. Using the *ex-post-facto* research design, the study employed one research question and one hypothesis. The stratified

sampling technique was used and 1,480 respondents of senior staff cadre were selected for the study. The frequency and percentage statistics were used in analysing the data while the t-test statistics were employed to analyse the hypotheses. The investigation revealed divergent results on how Nigerian graduates are perceived in terms of competence in relation to skills acquisition and employability. On a 20 scale indices of quality, the private sector employers rated Nigerian graduates highly but the public sector rated them of low quality.

In similar studies however, both the private and public employers of labour rated Nigerian graduates poorly in communication and technical skills and established that Nigerian graduates are unemployable or at best would require a remedial or an on-the-job training for a level of performance at workplace.

As earlier posited, most previous studies have either focused on the skills; or skills and the role of the universities as the major contributory factor(s) to quality of graduates but none has explored the influence of the institutional factors on the quality of graduates, bearing in mind that the major activities - teaching and research that produce competent graduates take place when these factors are maximally utilised in the university.

2.4 Theoretical Framework for the Study

This sub-section provides a brief explanation on the theory upon which the study is built.

The System Theory

The system theory is chosen for this study because it is deemed appropriate given the complex nature of the university. Ludwig Von Bertalanffy, a Biologist, propounded the system theory which is popularly referred to as the General System Theory (GST). He presented the General System Theory at a conference at the University of Chicago in 1937. The theory has been used in many fields of endeavour, most especially in sociology where Niklas Luhmann employed it to propound the sociological system theory. In the educational sector, the theory has also been used to proffer solution to many educational problems. For instance, in education, system theory has been used by scholars to draw inference on the educational system in Nigeria (Akinwumi and Jaiyeoba, 2004). Oyebade

has employed the theory to develop the “Students’ – Conflicts – Campus Peace” model which can assist administrators of Nigerian universities in resolving various degrees of issues vis-à-vis crisis in the universities.

The theory is very applicable to this study because it would help promote educational issues and how these affect the quality of students. In addition, it would help to give a pertinent structure for assessing institutional factors and their effects on the performance of students (Abari and Odunayo, 2012).

An organisation is seen as a system which comprises many parts working as a whole. Therefore, university is a system that has many parts working towards attaining one singular goal of producing quality graduates which is one of the primary purposes of establishing a university. The general system theory helps organisations in focusing on their main objectives while at the same time helps those in detecting flaws easily that could prevent them from achieving their goals. Akinwumi and Jaiyeoba (2004) averred that the concept of systems is traceable to the work of Aristotle who contended that the whole is greater than the sum of its parts.

One significant aspect in a system theory is that each element in the system theory has an effect on the functioning of the whole. By implication, the effectiveness or ineffectiveness of any part is a determining factor for the effectiveness or ineffectiveness of the other part within the system (Edafiogho, 2017). It rests on the principle that each of the component parts performs specific functions for the continued existence of the whole system (Akinwumi and Jaiyeoba, 2004). In an organisation like the university, system theory emphasises independence but mutual cooperation and synergy amongst the parts and between the central and the units.

In other words, when the parts are allowed to work independently by allowing each part to carry out its functions without hindrance, the overall goal of producing quality graduates will be attained. Barley (1970) noted that the system theory only attempts to explain the relationship that exists between parts in a whole system. He used it to describe the nature of accounting. The system is built on the belief that the entire universe has a hierarchical

structure. He defined a system as being any complex of elements in mutual interaction. He asserted that human organisations will be most effective if they operate as self - regulating systems with three basic groups' components – management, production and information. The management component controls the system (the university); the production component (faculties) processes input into output and the information components measures and communicates feedback information.

Under the system theory, an organisation can be regarded as being open or closed (Akinwumi and Jaiyeoba, 2004). The level of interaction with the immediate environment or community is a major determining factor in classifying whether an organization is open or closed. To the employers of labour, Nigerian universities are regarded as being closed due to their non-involvement in the design of tertiary curriculum. Hence, there have been calls for the involvement of the employers of labour to make inputs in the curriculum (Moja, 2000; Ayanyemi, 2015 and Falaye, 2016). Other stakeholders are of the opinion that the universities have been open organisations considering their immense contribution to the society in terms of knowledge impartation and acquisition (Okai and Worlu, 2014).

From the theoretical framework used in this study, it shows that if a system is to function effectively, all the parts must work independently but cooperatively. For the universities, which are saddled with the core responsibilities of teaching and research to deliver their mandate of producing competent graduates, should be given a degree of autonomy in certain areas as enrolment of students, curriculum planning and implementation, staff recruitment, promotion and discipline, teaching and research. Invariably, the universities should allow the faculties make policies to run each faculty within the purview of the Act that establishes the universities. Consequently, this would allow for adequate participation of all staff in the decision making which will give way to a strong structure; and to the culture of ownership at the faculty level (Longing, 2002; Ritzen, 2016). The advisory role which faculties are playing in the new era of autonomy will not suffice to revamp the dwindling situation of quality graduates of Nigerian universities. The institution should be allowed to take up and handle their responsibilities and be held responsible and accountable.

The main assumption of systems theory is that a complex system is made up of multiple smaller systems, and it is the interactions between these smaller systems that create a complex system as it is known. University as a complex system, has many smaller units whose interactions will determine the extent to which the main purpose of establishing it (university) which is to produce quality graduates will be achieved.

2.5 Conceptual Framework for the Study

The conceptual framework for the study is the Input-Process-Output (IPO) model under the system theory. The Input-Process-Output model has four components namely: input, process, output and feedback. They are interrelated parts that function as a whole. At the input stage, resources are deployed or acquired from the society for transformation. The resources in this study are the students. The universities admit qualified candidates into the system based on their carrying capacity. The infrastructural facilities on ground or those to be provided should suffice for the admitted students to complete their studies. Hence, the first stage of producing quality graduates is by admitting the qualified students.

The conceptual model employed in this study shows that institutional factors are essential to producing quality graduates that will not only be employable but possess the requisite skills that will make them perform efficiently and effectively in their chosen fields. The institutional factors are autonomy, funding, academic freedom and curriculum implementation. They are elements that have direct effects on the lecturers and the students. They determine how academic staff members discharge their duties and the role of students in the university.

The core purpose why a university is set up is for lecturers to teach, research and render community services. For instance, the purpose of teaching and carrying out research is to produce capable manpower for the nation who will be able to develop the nation economically, technologically and socially thereby contributing to the national growth. However, the realisation of this purpose which is the production of competent and employable graduates is highly dependent on the degree of the institutional factors that lecturers are able to enjoy in a system coupled with good administrative policies from the

central which is also hinged on a good administrative structure (autonomy). Therefore, it entails the devolving of substantial degree of power (process) by the university to the lecturers to handle the core purpose (teaching and research).

The overall inherent benefit of each of the elements is that it would avail academics the opportunity to teach and impart knowledge to their students under a good learning environment without any fear of intimidation or loss of job. When lecturers are allowed to research into areas of interest and such researches are properly funded, it would help them to consistently upgrade the curriculum in line with their research findings and market demands. As a result, this would lead to producing quality graduates who would be sent back to the society to serve in various capacities and they thereafter become the source of feedback to measure the activities – teaching and research of the universities by the government, employers of labour, stakeholders and the society as a whole. The absence of institutional factors could have been some of the contributory factors responsible for the decline in the production of quality graduates.

Figure 2.1 shows the relationship between institutional factors and quality of graduates' variables.

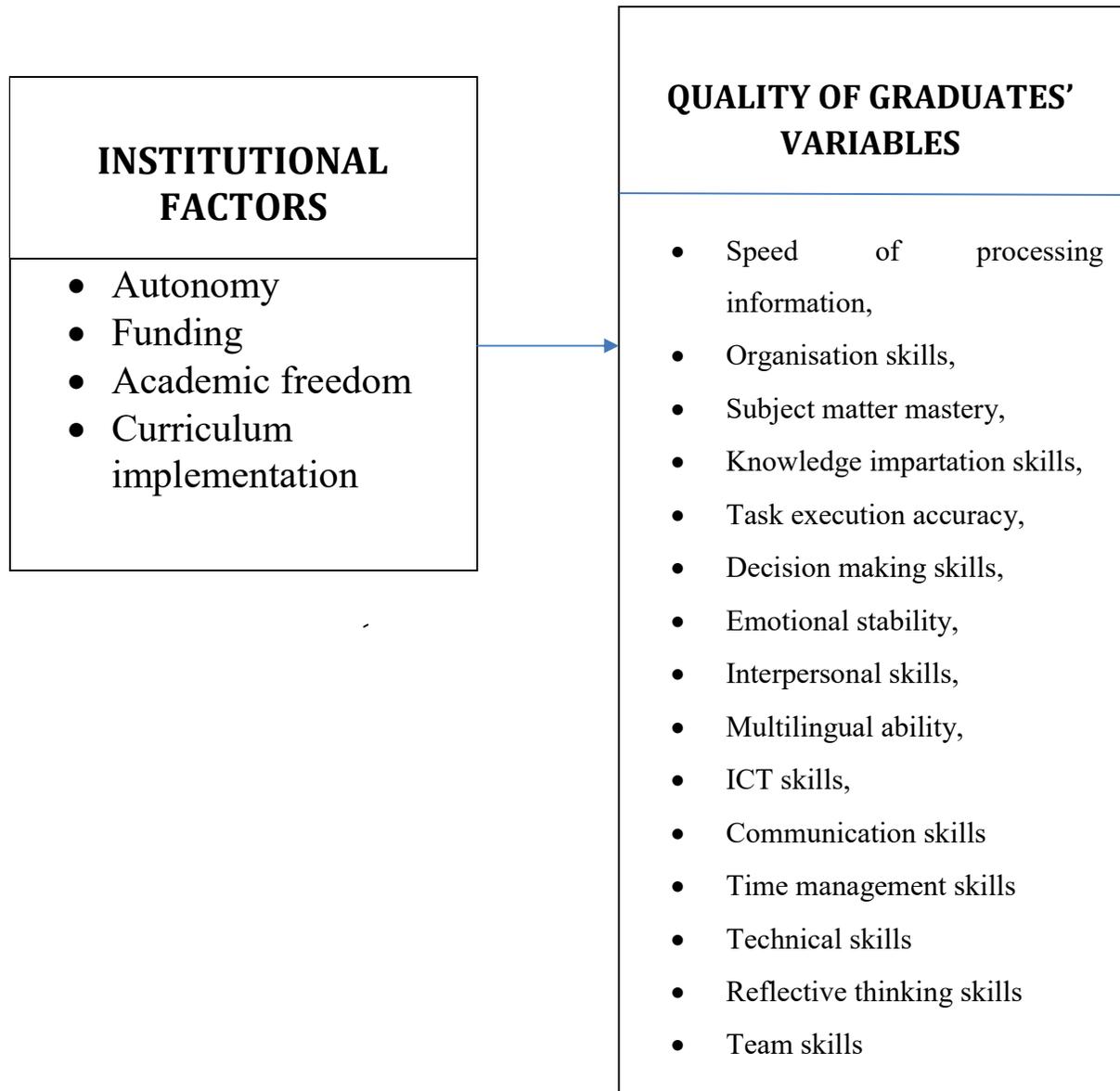


Figure 2.1: Conceptual model for relationship between Institutional factors and Quality of Graduates' Variables

Source: Researcher's conceptualisation

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

This chapter described in details, the methodology that was used in this study. The followings were discussed in the chapter: research design, population, sample and sampling techniques, research instruments, validity and reliability of the instruments, administration of the instruments and method of data analysis.

3.1 Research Design

The descriptive survey design of the *ex-post facto* type was employed for the study. Descriptive survey research is such in which information is collected without manipulation of variables. The independent variable is the institutional factors (Autonomy, Funding, Academic freedom and Curriculum implementation) while the dependent variable is the quality of graduates' variables. Mixed method of data collection was adopted; this is often referred to as multi strategies research which employs the use of more than one type of research method (Bryman, 2008). It is the innovative combination of qualitative and quantitative data collection through questionnaires, interviews and literature (document) search. Mixed method approach is a method between triangulation in which quantitative and qualitative data are being used to achieve a more strengthened research findings. Triangulation, with respect to this study, is a process of using more than one method of data collection in obtaining specific information from respondents. In this study, qualitative data were collected from lecturers and graduates while quantitative data was collected from the lecturers of the selected universities and principals of industries.

3.2 Population of the Study

The population of this study comprised 7,494 academic staff members of the federal universities in southwestern, Nigeria. The six federal universities in southwestern, Nigeria, are shown on table 3:1 with relevant information about them.

Table 3:1 Number of Federal universities, population of academic staff and year of establishment in southwestern, Nigeria

S/N	Names of Universities	State	Year of establishment	Number of academic staff
1.	University of Ibadan, Ibadan. (UI)	Oyo	1948	2,088
2.	Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife.(OAU)	Osun	1962	1,780
3.	University of Lagos, Lagos. (UNILAG)	Lagos	1962	1,811
4.	Federal University of Technology, Akure. (FUTA)	Ondo	1981	800
5.	Federal University of Agriculture, Abeokuta. (FUNNAB)	Ogun	1988	605
6.	Federal University, Oye Ekiti. (FUOYE)	Ekiti	2011	410
	TOTAL			7, 494

Source: Registry departments of the six universities (2017)

3.3 Sample and Sampling Techniques

The sample size of this work is one thousand, two hundred and seventy three (1,273) academic staff members; twelve (12) lecturers of federal universities in southwestern,

Nigeria and one hundred and twenty (120) captains of industries who rated 1,197 graduates of the selected universities working in respective organizations. Six graduates, (two per university) were sampled for Key Informant Interview for self-assessment on quality of graduates.

Multi-stage sampling procedure was adopted to select participants for the study. At the first stage, purposive sampling was used to select the three first generation universities out of six federal universities in southwestern Nigeria. The universities are University of Ibadan, Ibadan; Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife and University of Lagos, Akoka, Lagos.

At the second stage, purposive sampling was used to select four faculties with large number of students and that are running four years degree programmes namely faculty of Education, faculty of Arts, faculty of Social Sciences and faculty of Science of the selected universities.

At the third stage, proportionate stratified random sampling was used to select 51% of the departments (145 out of 285) from each of the selected faculties.

At the fourth stage, stratified random technique was used to select 60% of the lecturers (1,273 out of 2,121) in the selected departments to make the total sample of one thousand two hundred and seventy three (1,273) participants. (See Tables 3.2a and 3.2b)

At the fifth stage, one hundred and twenty (120) captains of industries were randomly selected to rate at least 10 graduate employees that are working in their organisations, who graduated between 2008 and 2018 from the selected universities and faculties for the study. (See Table 3.2c) At the last stage, four (4) lecturers were selected from each of the selected universities for Key Informant Interview (KII) making a total of twelve (12). Six (6) graduates were also selected from each of the universities for Key Informant Interview (KII) for self-assessment on quality of graduates.

Table 3.2a: Sampled departments and respondents

Institution	Number of Faculties	Sampled Faculties	Number of Departments	Sampled Departments	Number of Academic Staff	Sampled Academic Staff
University of Ibadan	16	4	68	35	505	303
University of Lagos	17	4	124	63	1,047	629
Obafemi Awolowo University	18	4	93	47	569	341
TOTAL	51	12	285	145 (51%)	2,121	1,273 (60%)

Source: Preliminary study (2017)

Table 3.2b: Sample and sampling techniques at different stages

	Number	Sampling	Sampling Techniques
UNIVERSITIES, FACULTIES, DEPARTMENTS AND ACADEMIC STAFF			
Federal universities	6	3	Purposive Sampling
Faculties	51	4	Purposive Sampling
Departments	285	145	Proportionate Stratified Random Sampling
Academic staff	7,494	1,273	Stratified Random Technique
			Multi-stage technique

Source: Preliminary study (2017)

Table 3.2c: Sample of Principals of Industries and Rated Graduates

State	Number of Organisations	Number of rated Graduates
Oyo	40	400
Lagos	40	400
Osun	40	397
TOTAL	120	1,197

3.4 Research Instruments

The data collection instruments were used to collect qualitative and quantitative information for the study. The first instrument is a questionnaire that was filled by the academic staff of federal universities titled, “Institutional Factors Questionnaire” (IFQ) which was divided into two sections: Section A contained the demographic information of the respondents and section B focused on items related to Institutional Factors Questionnaire. The second instrument is a rating scale that was filled by principals of industries which was titled “Quality of Graduates Rating Scale” (QGRS) which was also divided into two sections: Section A contained the demographic information of the respondents and section B focused on items related to Quality of Graduates Rating Scale (QGRS).

Institutional Factors Questionnaire (IFQ) and Quality of Graduates Rating Scale (QGRS) are self-report scales developed by the researcher for the purpose of this study. IFQ is a four sub-scales questionnaire which contained 27 items and QGRS contained 15 items with expected response formatted as H = High and L = Low. The third instrument is a qualitative instrument titled “Key Informants Interview on Institutional Factors”. The instrument consists of items designed for lecturers in the selected faculties.

The fourth instrument is also a qualitative instrument titled “Key Informants Interview on Self-Assessment of Quality of Graduates”. The instrument consists of items designed for graduates from the selected universities.

3.5 Validity of Instruments

To ensure the accuracy of the data and to establish face and content validity, the instruments were assessed to ascertain that they measure what they are supposed to measure. To this end, the instruments; structured questionnaire and rating scale were presented to the researcher’s supervisors and other experts in the field of Educational Management for critique and technical correctness and the final drafts of the instruments were in accordance with the suggested corrections.

3.6 Reliability of Instruments

The researcher conducted a trial testing at the Federal University, Oye Ekiti (FUOYE), which is not among the sampled universities but within Southwestern, Nigeria. Forty (40) academic staff members were considered for the trial testing of the first instrument titled “Institutional Factors Questionnaire” (IFQ) while thirty (30) principals of industries were administered the second instrument titled “Quality of Graduates Rating Scale” (QGRS) in the same Ekiti state and the information collected were subjected to reliability analysis using Cronbach Alpha reliability approach. The result revealed the Cronbach Alpha reliability Co-efficients for Quality of Graduates Rating Scale (QGRS) is 0.91 and for Institutional Factors Questionnaire (IFQ), funding is 0.77, autonomy is 0.78, academic freedom is 0.75 and curriculum implementation is 0.72 which is an indication that the instruments are reliable.

3.7 Administration of Research Instruments

The instruments for this research were administered by the Researcher and four trained Research Assistants after seeking the consent of the respondents. The researcher started by administering the questionnaire in the University of Ibadan. The gathered experience in the areas of skills, strategies and knowledge served as basis upon which the Research Assistants were trained before they could gather data from designated universities having sought the consent of these different universities’ authorities. In total, one thousand two hundred and seventy three (1,273) copies of Institutional Factors Questionnaire (IFQ) were administered and retrieved while one thousand and two hundred (1,200) copies of Quality of Graduates Rating Scale (QGRS) were administered but one thousand one hundred and ninety seven (1,197) copies were retrieved. The Key Informant Interviews on Institutional Factors and Self-Assessment on Quality of Graduates were conducted by the researcher.

3.8 Methods of Data Analysis

The data collected were analysed using descriptive and inferential statistics. Descriptive statistics such as frequency counts, percentage mean and standard deviation were used to analyse demographic variables and the research questions 1, 2 and 4. One-Way analysis of variance was used to analyse research questions 3 and 6 at 0.05 level of significance. The qualitative data were content-analysed.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Results

This chapter contains analysis of data collected, answers to research questions raised as well as the discussion of findings.

4.0: Demographic Characteristic of the rated Graduates

Table 4.0a: Distribution of Graduates by Gender

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	852	71.2
Female	345	28.8
Total	1197	100.0

Table 4.0a presents the result on the distribution of graduates by gender; the result revealed that 71.0% of the graduates are males while 28.8% are females. This is an indication that

the proportion of male graduates is more than female graduates. Therefore, there are more male employees in the sample.

Table 4.0b: Age Distribution of Graduates

Age	Frequency	Percentage
26yrs – 35yrs	174	14.5
36yrs – 45yrs	800	66.8
46yrs – 55yrs	120	10.0
56yrs–65yrs	103	8.6

Table 4.0b shows the age distribution of the graduates, it could be observed that 14.5% of the graduates are in the age range of 26-35yrs, 66.8% are in the age category of 36-45yrs, 10.0% falls within the age range of 46-55yrs while 8.6% are between ages 56yrs and

above. From the result, it could be observed that majority of the employees rated are in the age range of 36-45yrs.

Table 4.0c: Highest Educational Qualification of the Graduates

Highest Educational Qualification	Frequency	Percentage
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First Degree	692	57.8
Second Degree	473	39.5
Ph.D	32	2.7

Table 4.0c presents the result on the distribution of the graduates by highest educational qualification. The result revealed that 57.8% are first degree holders, 39.5% have their highest educational qualification to second degree while 2.7% are Ph.D holders. Inference

could be made from the result that majority of the employees are first degree holders (Bachelor's degree).

Table 4.0d: Years of Working Experience of the Graduates

Year of Working Experience	Frequency	Percentage
1 – 10yrs	324	27.1

11 – 20yrs	719	60.1
21 – 30yrs	108	9.0
31 – 40yrs	46	3.8

Table 4.0d shows the result on the working experience of the rated employees. The result revealed that 27.1% of the graduates have worked for 1-10yrs, 60.1% worked for 11-20yrs, 9.0% have working experience of 21-30yrs while 3.8% have worked for 31-40yrs. The result reveals that majority of the employees have worked for about 11 to 20years.

4.1: Answers to Research Questions

Research Question 1

What is the graduates' profile in terms of qualification?

Table 4.1: Highest Educational Qualification of the Respondents

Highest Educational Qualification	Frequency	Percentage
First degree	692	57.8
Second degree	473	39.5
Ph.D	32	2.7
TOTAL	1,197	100

Table 4.1 presents the result on the distribution of the respondents by highest educational qualification. The result revealed that 57.8% are first degree holders, 39.5% have their highest educational qualification to second degree while 2.7% are Ph.D holders. Inference could be made from the result that majority of the graduates are Bachelor's degree holders.

Research Question 2

What is the level of the quality of graduates in federal universities in southwestern Nigeria?

Table 4.2: Level of Quality of Graduates in the Federal Universities in Southwestern Nigeria.

Item	High	Low	Mean	Std. Dev.
1.Speed of processing information	154 (12.9%)	1043 (87.1%)	1.13	0.33
2. Organisation skills	754(63.0%)	443(37.0%)	1.63	0.48
3. Subject matter mastery	370(30.9%)	827(69.1%)	1.31	0.46
4. Knowledge impartation skills	261 (21.8%)	936 (78.2%)	1.32	0.41
5. Task execution accuracy	594(49.6%)	603 (50.4%)	1.50	0.50
6. Decision making skills	571 (47.7%)	626 (53.3%)	1.48	0.50
7. Emotional stability	583 (48.7%)	614 (51.3%)	1.49	0.50
8. Interpersonal skills	787 (65.7%)	410 (34.3%)	1.66	0.47
9.Multilingual ability	674 (56.3%)	523 (43.7%)	1.56	0.50
10.ICT skills	423 (35.3%)	774 (64.7%)	1.35	0.48
11.Communication skills	520 (43.4%)	677 (56.6%)	1.43	0.50
12.Time management skills	787 (65.7%)	410 (34.3%)	1.66	0.47
13.Technical skills	492 (41.1%)	705 (58.9%)	1.41	0.49
14.Reflective thinking skills	546 (45.6%)	651 (54.4%)	1.46	0.50
15. Team skills	583 (48.7%)	614 (51.3%)	1.49	0.50
Weighted Mean Average			1.42	

Table 4.2 presents the result on the quality of graduates' variables. The graduates were rated high on Interpersonal skills (65.7%), Time management skills (65.7%), Organisation skills (63.0%), Multilingual ability (56.3%) and Task execution accuracy (50.00%). However, they were rated low on Emotional stability (48.7%), Team skills (48.7%), Decision making skills (47.7%), Team skills (45.6%), Communication skills (43.4%), Technical skills (41.1%), ICT skills (35.3%), Subject matter mastery (30.9%), Knowledge impartation skills (21.8%) and Speed of processing information (12.9%).

In summary, the quality of graduate was ($\bar{x} = 1.42$). It can be concluded that the quality of graduates of the three Federal Universities (UI, UNILAG and OAU) was very low.

Research Question 3

Does the quality of graduates differ across levels of degree?

Table 4.3a: Differences in the Quality of Graduates based on Qualification

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
First degree	667	24.4753	3.84504
Second degree	473	24.4820	3.77607

Ph. D	57	24.5789	4.06618
Total		24.4829	3.82551

Table 4.3a presents the result of the descriptive statistics of the mean difference in quality of graduates based on qualification. The result revealed that mean quality of graduates for first degree is (\bar{x} =24.48, SD=3.85), second degree has the mean quality of (\bar{x} =24.48, SD=3.78) and third degree graduates has the mean quality of (\bar{x} =24.58, SD=4.07). The result shows that mean quality difference across level of education qualification is quite minute. The result of test of significant of mean was presented in Table 4.3b.

Also, it could be observed from the mean that the quality of graduates progresses gradually (24.4753; 24.4820 to 24.5789) meaning that additional qualification leads to higher quality of graduates.

Table 4.3b: Test of Mean Difference in Quality of Graduates Based on Education Qualification

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	.565	2	.283	.019	.981

Within Groups	17502.334	1194	14.659		
Total	17502.899	1196			

Table 4.3b shows the result of One-Way Analysis of Variance for the differences in the quality of graduates based on their education qualification. The result revealed that no significant mean different was found among the graduates based on their education qualification ($F_{(2,1194)}=0.019$, $p<0.05$). This shows that quality of graduates in the sampled universities does not differ based on education qualification.

Research Question 4

What is the extent of institutional factors (autonomy, academic freedom, curriculum implementation and funding) being practised in Federal universities?

University Of Ibadan

Table 4.4a: Extent of Institutional Factors - University of Ibadan (FUNDING)

FUNDING	VLE	LE	SE	VSE	Mean	Std. Dev.
Inadequate funding of Nigerian universities.	10 (5.9%)	10(5.95)	35 (20.7%)	114 (67.5%)	1.50	0.85
Non-implementation of appropriate salary scale.	4 (2.4%)	13 (7.7%)	82 (48.5%)	70 (41.4%)	1.71	0.71
Non-release of research grants to researchers at the faculty level.	6 (3.6%)	11 (6.5%)	80 (47.3%)	72 (42.6%)	1.71	0.74
Mismanagement of released fund in Nigeria universities.	6 (3.6%)	13 (7.7%)	73(43.2%)	77 (45.6%)	1.69	0.76
Inefficiency as a result of lack of basic facilities for the lecturers.	6 (3.6%)	12 (7.1%)	71(42.0%)	80 (47.3%)	1.67	0.76
Irregular payment of lecturers' salary.	7 (4.1%)	16 (9.5%)	79 (46.7%)	67 (39.6%)	1.78	0.78
Weighted Mean Average					1.68	

Table 4.4b: Extent of Institutional Factors - University of Ibadan (AUTONOMY)

AUTONOMY	VLE	LE	SE	VSE	Mean	Std. Dev.
Lecturers' involvement in the appointment of key officers in the universities.	72 (42.6%)	89 (52.7%)	2 (1.2%)	6 (3.6%)	3.34	0.68
Giving autonomy to lecturers for the admission of students based on performance.	75 (44.4%)	85 (50.3%)	3 (1.8%)	6 (3.8%)	3.36	0.69
Allowing universities to adhere to recruitment procedures in the	76 (45.0%)	76 (45.0%)	12 (7.1%)	5 (3.0%)	3.32	0.73

appointment of lecturers.						
Democratizing the selection process in the appointment of key officers in the universities.	73 (43.2%)	76 (45.0%)	12 (7.1%)	8 (4.7%)	3.27	0.79
Removal of stringent control measures by government in teaching and research work.	22 (13.0%)	71 (42.0%)	69 (40.8%)	7 (4.1%)	2.64	0.76
Strict adherence to promotion and disciplinary guidelines for lecturers.	17 (10.1%)	120 (71.0%)	23 (13.6%)	9 (5.3%)	2.86	0.66
Weighted Mean Average					3.13	

Table 4.4c: Extent of Institutional Factors - University of Ibadan (ACADEMIC FREEDOM)

ACADEMIC FREEDOM	VLE	LE	SE	VSE	Mean	Std. Dev.
Allowing lecturers to choose their area of research.	69 (40.8%)	76 (45.0%)	10 (5.9%)	14 (8.3%)	3.18	0.88
Granting lecturers freedom to adopt the right teaching methods for efficiency and effectiveness.	80 (47.3%)	70 (41.4%)	8 (4.7%)	11 (6.5%)	3.30	0.84
Allowing lecturers to share findings from their research work on internet.	77 (45.6%)	75 (44.4%)	7 (4.1%)	10 (5.9%)	3.30	0.81
Recognition and reward for scholarly works by universities.	31 (18.3%)	109 (64.5%)	20 (11.8%)	9 (5.3%)	2.96	0.72
Collaborative research work amongst	24	63	76	6	2.62	0.77

lecturers.	(14.2%)	(37.3%)	(45.0%)	(3.6%)		
Absence of victimization of lecturers.	18 (10.7%)	114 (67.5%)	31 (18.35)	6 (3.6%)	2.85	0.64
Creating an enabling environment for scholarly work.	21 (12.45%)	123 (72.8%)	14 (8.3%)	11 (6.5%)	2.91	0.68
Weighted Mean Average					3.02	

Table 4.4d: Extent of Institutional Factors - University of Ibadan (CURRICULUM IMPLEMENTATION)

CURRICULUM IMPLEMENTATION	VLE	LE	SE	VSE	Mean	Std. Dev.
Curriculum relevancy.	70 (41.4%)	76 (45.0%)	12 (7.1%)	11 (6.5%)	3.21	0.84
The non-involvement of lecturers in the design of the curriculum.	13 (7.7%)	17 (10.1%0	64 (37.9%)	75 (44.4%)	1.81	0.91
Curriculum recency.	23 (13.6%)	121 (71.6%)	12 (7.1%)	13 (7.7%)	2.91	0.71
Ineffective implementation of the curriculum.	15 (8.9%)	15 (8.9%)	124 (73.4%)	15 (8.9%)	2.18	0.71
Time allotted for the implementation of the curriculum (duration of the implementation).	12 (7.1%)	129 (76.3%)	14 (8.3%)	14 (8.3%)	2.82	0.68
Over-population of students in Nigerian Universities.	11 (6.5%)	28 (16.6%)	64 (37.9%)	66 (39.1%0	1.91	0.90
Inadequate number of lecturers to	11		58	80	1.78	0.90

implement the curriculum.	(6.5%)	20 (11.85)	(34.3%0	(47.3%)		
Ineffective implementation of the practical aspects of the curriculum in Nigerian Universities.	11 (6.5%)	14 (8.3%)	60 (35.5%)	84 (49.7%)	1.72	0.87
Weighted Mean Average					2.30	

University of Lagos

Table 4.4e: Extent of Institutional Factors - University of Lagos (FUNDING)

FUNDING	VLE	LE	SE	VSE	Mean	Std. Dev.
Inadequate funding of Nigerian universities.	43 (4.7%)	74 (8.0%)	229 (24.9%)	575 (62.4%)	1.55	0.83
Non-implementation of appropriate salary scale.	19 (2.1%)	70 (7.6%)	476 (51.7%)	356 (38.7%)	1.73	0.69
Non-release of research grants to researchers at the faculty level.	28 (3.0%)	71 (7.7%)	460 (49.9%)	362 (39.3%)	1.74	0.73
Mismanagement of released fund in Nigeria universities.	28 (3.0%)	70 (7.6%)	452 (49.1%)	371 (40.3%)	1.73	0.73
Inefficiency as a result of lack of basic facilities for the lecturers.	28 (3.0%)	59 (6.4%)	419 (45.5%)	415 (45.1%)	1.67	0.73
Irregular payment of lecturers' salary.	39 (4.2%)	67 (7.3%)	463 (50.3%)	352 (38.2%)	1.78	0.76
Weighted Mean Average					1.7	

Table 4.4f: Extent of Institutional Factors - University of Lagos (AUTONOMY)

AUTONOMY	VLE	LE	SE	VSE	Mean	Std. Dev.
Lecturers' involvement in the appointment of key officers in the universities.	412 (44.7%)	436 (47.3%)	40 (4.3%)	33 (3.6%)	3.33	0.72
Giving autonomy to lecturers for the admission of students based on performance.	423 (45.9%)	415 (45.1%)	50 (5.4%)	33 (3.6%)	3.33	0.74
Allowing universities to adhere to recruitment procedures in the appointment of lecturers.	421 (45.7%)	406 (44.1%)	72 (7.8%)	22 (2.4%)	3.33	0.72
Democratizing the selection process in the appointment of key officers in the universities.	399 (33.3%)	418 (45.4%)	59 (6.4%)	45 (4.9%)	3.27	0.79
Removal of stringent control measures by government in teaching and research work.	130 (14.1%)	392 (42.6%)	356 (38.7%)	43 (4.7%)	2.66	0.77
Strict adherence to promotion and disciplinary guidelines for lecturers.	121 (13.1%)	626 (68.0%)	111 (12.1%)	63 (6.8%)	2.87	0.71
Weighted Mean Average					3.13	

Table 4.4g: Extent of Institutional Factors - University of Lagos (ACADEMIC FREEDOM)

ACADEMIC FREEDOM	VLE	LE	SE	VSE	Mean	Std. Dev.
Allowing lecturers to choose their area of research.	389 (42.2%)	398 (43.2%)	66 (7.2%)	68 (7.4%)	3.20	0.87
Granting lecturers freedom to adopt the right teaching methods for efficiency and effectiveness.	464 (50.4%)	332 (36.0%)	57 (6.2%)	68 (7.4%)	3.29	0.88
Allowing lecturers to share findings from their research work on internet.	434 (47.1%)	370 (40.2%)	43 (4.7%)	73 (8.0%)	3.26	0.88
Recognition and reward for scholarly works by universities.	170 (18.5%)	587 (63.7%)	119 (12.9%)	45 (4.9%)	2.96	0.71
Collaborative research work amongst lecturers.	133 (14.4%)	366 (39.7%)	386 (41.9%)	36 (3.9%)	2.65	0.77
Absence of victimization of lecturers.	135 (14.7%)	627 (68.1%)	135 (14.7%)	24 (2.6%)	2.95	0.63
Creating an enabling environment for scholarly work.	155 (16.8%)	645 (70.0%)	83 (9.0%)	38 (4.1%)	3.00	0.65
Weighted Mean Average					3.04	

Table 4.4h: Extent of Institutional Factors - University of Lagos (CURRICULUM IMPLEMENTATION)

CURRICULUM IMPLEMENTATION	VLE	LE	SE	VSE	Mean	Std. Dev.
Curriculum relevancy.	407 (44.2%)	405 (44.0%)	66 (7.2%)	43 (4.7%)	3.28	0.79
The non-involvement of lecturers in the design of the curriculum.	53 (5.8%)	69 (7.5%)	369 (40.1%)	430 (46.7%)	1.72	0.83
Curriculum recency.	170 (18.5%)	666 (72.3%)	32 (3.5%)	53 (5.8%)	3.03	0.67
Ineffective implementation of the curriculum.	62 (6.7%)	38 (4.1%)	671 (72.9%)	150 (16.3%)	2.01	0.69
Time allotted for the implementation of the curriculum (duration of the implementation).	131 (14.2%)	677 (73.5%)	50 (5.4%)	63 (6.8%)	2.95	0.68
Over-population of students in Nigerian Universities.	43 (4.7%)	121 (13.1%)	372 (40.4%)	385 (41.8%)	1.81	0.84
Inadequate number of lecturers to implement the curriculum.	43 (4.7%)	75 (8.1%)	338 (36.7%)	465 (50.5%)	1.67	0.82
Ineffective implementation of the practical aspects of the curriculum in Nigerian Universities.	43 (4.7%)	71 (7.7%)	335 (36.4%)	372 (51.2%)	1.66	0.81
Weighted Mean Average					2.47	

Obafemi Awolowo University

Table 4.4i: Extent of Institutional Factors - (FUNDING)

FUNDING	VLE	LE	SE	VSE	Mean	Std. Dev.
Inadequate funding of Nigerian universities.	7 (3.8%)	12 (6.6%)	46 (25.1%)	118 (64.5%)	1.50	0.78
Non-implementation of appropriate salary scale.	1 (0.5%)	13 (7.1%)	104 (56.8%)	65 (35.5%)	1.73	0.61
Non-release of research grants to researchers at the faculty level.	2 (1.1%)	14 (7.7%)	99 (54.1%)	68 (37.2%)	1.73	0.65
Mismanagement of released fund in Nigeria universities.	2 (1.1%)	13 (7.1%)	90 (49.2%)	78 (42.6%)	1.67	0.66
Inefficiency as a result of lack of basic facilities for the lecturers.	2 (1.1%)	13 (7.1%)	90 (49.2%)	78 (42.6%)	1.67	0.66
Irregular payment of lecturers' salary.	2 (1.1%)	13 (7.1%)	97 (53.0%)	71 (38.8%)	1.70	0.65
Weighted Mean Average					1.67	

Table 4.4j: Extent of Institutional Factors - Obafemi Awolowo University (AUTONOMY)

AUTONOMY						Std.

	VLE	LE	SE	VSE	Mean	Dev.
Lecturers' involvement in the appointment of key officers in the universities.	83 (45.4%)	85 (46.4%)	6 (3.3%)	9 (4.9%)	3.32	0.76
Giving autonomy to lecturers for the admission of students based on performance.	81 (44.3%)	86 (47.0%)	7 (3.8%)	9 (4.9%)	3.31	0.77
Allowing universities to adhere to recruitment procedures in the appointment of lecturers.	82 (44.8%)	81 (44.3%)	11 (6.0%)	9 (4.9%)	3.29	0.79
Democratizing the selection process in the appointment of key officers in the universities.	83 (45.4%)	81 (44.3%)	12 (6.6%)	7 (3.8%)	3.31	0.76
Removal of stringent control measure by government in teaching and research work.	28 (15.3%)	76 (41.5%)	69 (37.7%)	10 (5.5%)	2.67	0.80
Strict adherence to promotion and disciplinary guidelines for lecturers.	18 (9.8%)	132 (72/1%)	21 (11.5%)	12 (6.6%)	2.85	0.68
Weighted Mean Average					3.13	

Table 4.4k: Extent of Institutional Factors - Obafemi Awolowo University (ACADEMIC FREEDOM)

ACADEMIC FREEDOM	VLE	LE	SE	VSE	Mean	Std. Dev.
Allowing lecturers to choose their area of research.	84 (45.9%)	77 (42.1%)	8 (4.4%)	14 (7.7%)	3.26	0.86

Granting lecturers freedom to adopt the right teaching methods for efficiency and effectiveness.	95 (51.9%)	64 (34.0%)	7 (3.8%)	17 (9.3%)	3.30	0.92
Allowing lecturers to share findings from their research work on internet.	92 (50.3%)	70 (38.3%)	9 (4.9%)	12 (6.6%)	3.32	0.85
Recognition and reward for scholarly works by universities.	38 (20.8)	122 (66.7%)	17 (9.3%)	6 (3.3%)	3.05	0.66
Collaborative research work amongst lecturers.	23 (12.6%)	74 (40.4%)	80 (43.7%)	6 (3.3%)	2.62	0.74
Absence of victimization of lecturers.	27 (14.8%)	124 (67.8%)	26 (14.2%)	6 (3.3%)	2.94	0.65
Creating an enabling environment for scholarly work.	28 (15.3%)	133 (72.7%)	11 (6.0%)	11 (6.0%)	2.97	0.67
Weighted Mean Average					3.07	

Table 4.4l: Extent of Institutional Factors - Obafemi Awolowo University (CURRICULUM IMPLEMENTATION)

CURRICULUM IMPLEMENTATION	VLE	LE	SE	VSE	Mean	Std. Dev.
Curriculum relevancy.	89 (48.6%)	70 (38.3%)	18 (9.3%)	6 (3.3%)	3.32	0.78
The non-involvement of lecturers in the design of the curriculum.	6 (3.3%)	10 (5.5%)	70 (38.3%)	97 (53.0%)	1.59	0.74

Curriculum recency.	35 (19.1%)	138 (75.4%)	4 (2.2%)	6 (3.3%)	3.10	0.58
Ineffective implementation of the curriculum.	7 (3.8%)	7 (3.8%)	142 (77.6%)	27 (14.8%)	1.97	0.58
Time allotted for the implementation of the curriculum (duration of the implementation).	25 (13.7%)	143 (78.1%)	8 (4.4%)	7 (3.8%)	3.02	0.58
Over-population of students in Nigerian Universities.	6 (3.3%)	19 (10.4%)	78 (42.6%)	80 (43.7%)	1.73	0.78
Inadequate number of lecturers to implement the curriculum.	6 (3.3%)	13 (7.15)	70 (38.3%)	94 (51.4%)	1.62	0.76
Ineffective implementation of the practical aspects of the curriculum in Nigerian Universities.	6 (3.3%)	11 (6.0%)	71 (38.8%)	95 (51.9%)	1.61	0.75
Weighted Mean Average					2.25	

Table 4.5: Weighted Mean Average of Institutional Factors of the Sampled Universities

University	Funding	Autonomy	Academic freedom	Curriculum Implementation
UI	1.68	3.13	3.03	2.47
UNILAG	1.7	3.13	3.05	2.47
OAU	1.66	3.18	3.08	2.46
MEAN AVERAGE	1.68	3.15	3.05	2.47

NOTE: Threshold $\bar{x} = 2.50$

From Table 4.5, the status of institutional factors are as follows: Funding: UI ($\bar{x} = 1.68$), UNILAG ($\bar{x} = 1.70$), OAU ($\bar{x} = 1.66$) and Curriculum Implementation: UI ($\bar{x} = 2.47$), UNILAG ($\bar{x} = 2.47$), OAU (2.46) were low against the threshold mean of 2.50. However, Autonomy: UI ($\bar{x} = 3.13$), UNILAG ($\bar{x} = 3.13$), OAU ($\bar{x} = 3.18$) and Academic Freedom: UI ($\bar{x} = 3.03$), UNILAG ($\bar{x} = 3.05$), OAU ($\bar{x} = 3.08$) were high against the threshold of 2.50.

Research Question 5

To what extent do institutional factors (Funding, Autonomy, Curriculum implementation and Academic freedom) influence the quality of graduates?

The result of the KII conducted for some principal officials of the sampled universities on the influence of institutional factors on the quality of graduates showed that to a very large

extent all the indices are major bane working against the production of quality of graduates in Nigeria universities.

On funding, a Principal Officer (Dr. A) while stressing the inadequate funding opined that:

You see as a university lecturer, I'm employed to do three things: to teach, to do research, and to do community service. Now when I'm not well funded, when I don't have a comfortable environment to work, when I don't get enough research. Most of the researches we do today in Nigeria are not supported by the industry. We scabble and struggle to get grants from ETF and even when you get it, you realize that in recent times, the ETF grant is being politicized. Now is not only teaching alone, you are supposed to teach research knowledge what you have researched into but when you are not well funded, how do you research into what? How do you teach what you have not researched? So in that situation, there is no way all these things will not affect the quality of the students we produce because we are still using the same curriculum with the same concept. There is no way the quality of students will not be affected. So, the problem with us is that Universities are not adequately funded and it's affecting curriculum preparation, its affecting teaching, it's affecting learning and affecting a lot of things. The funding is nowhere to be found, I mean it is nothing to write home about.

Another Principal Officer (Dr B.) buttressed the above assertion by adducing the dilapidated state of facilities in the universities, payment of meagre salaries; and delay in the payment of salaries to inadequate funding:

Well so to a greater extent. Number One, let us start with the staff salaries. If you know how much lecturers, even a professor gets at the end of the month, it may not even interest you to pursue Ph.D because you may begin to think, does it really worth it? Now look at the learning environment, the type of chairs or seats we have in our classrooms, even the

structure of the classrooms. When you get to some Universities, you just have switches and often lighting points displayed – they are all damaged. Most times no light. Go to the library, in an ideal situation, every department is supposed to have its own library, every faculty should have but we don't have and what is responsible for all of these is funding. Even you go to lecturers' offices, you see two-three lecturers managing an office. How many University lecturers now do go for lecture with instrumental materials, even in the laboratories where we teach Science subjects and all that? That is where we now talk of the quality of students being prepared

In the words of another interviewed Principal Officer (Prof./HOD D) she pointed out that:

the salary is nothing to be compared with anywhere. In fact, I can say that they are frustrating lecturers. Because I remember there was somebody working in a private organization, the person doesn't have more than first degree, and he is taking home five hundred and something thousand in a month, unless the person is a VC. Even the so called peanuts that they are giving now, they still owe months even with the peanuts that they are giving. Many don't believe it when we tell them that a Professor doesn't earn up to five hundred thousand naira in a month.

Furthermore, the impact of inadequate funding is summed up by another Principal Officer(Prof./HOD A) thus;

Very seriously, funding is affecting faculty governance because funds are important. It is the wheel that drives the whole work in the system. Now we have inadequate fund and that is affecting a lot of things where HODs Deans and some other people have to use their own money to fund some things they have to do in their departments. It's really so bad and so many things we ought to do what we cannot do because there is no fund to take care of them. Funding is very, very important and it's affecting Nigerian universities.

The summary from above opinions imply that inadequate funding is affecting the university education and the quality of Nigerian graduates. However, two of the principal

officers raised the issue of corruption as a contributory factor to the inadequate funding in the University. According to one of them (Dr B), the systemic corruption flows from the top down of the University system as he said:

Firstly, when it comes to the issue of funding, I don't like to discuss it because you can never have accurate data or information as far as anything that comes into the system or goes out of the system is concerned. That is my own position: on the paper, you may see five million naira, what gets to the University or what gets to the faculty will be two hundred thousand. So you now see somebody still covering up for something even when you have not "eaten" anything out of that money, you will still be the one providing information documents and all of that for the amount which has been taken away by some other things like that.

According to another Principal Officer (Prof./Dean C), he said:

Very bad, very poor, extremely poor and I said that even if the minister is seated here I would say extremely poor, appalling, because people have to use their personal money to run services that ordinarily should be getting funds to run. If the government has released the money to university administrators and they are not giving it to the department too bad, but the fact is that the grassroots departments and faculties that should be carrying out the mechanical jobs of running the system are not getting the resources to do it. Sometimes, you try to scout for funds from friends, old students and all of that, they are not finding the economy easy and so it is expected that departments and faculties/ academic units are funded better than what it is now it is really really bad, capital BAD

Therefore, the view expressed above firmly aligned with the fact that inadequate funding is affecting the quality of graduates to a very large extent.

Most principal officers are of the opinion, to a large extent, that there is no real autonomy in the federal universities sampled as universities in Nigeria are not governing themselves independently; and this is really affecting the quality of graduates.

According to a Principal Officer (Dr A):

Well, when we talk about institutional factors in Nigeria, they are nothing to write home about because government in higher education is supposed to be the most powerful instrument to start and influence both teaching, research and community services functions and to make them relevant for the 21st century. However, as I explained, the definition depends on the circumstances in which it is being used. However, when you look at Nigeria, you realize that we are not working towards that direction. Autonomy cannot be granted. I mean autonomy cannot be achieved.

Another Principal Officer (Dr B) while emphasizing the absence of autonomy said:

I doubt if there is any lecturer in any of the Federal Universities that can boldly say I enjoy or we enjoy or this faculty enjoys any form of autonomy because one of the major factors that has eroded it is the way people have brought in politics into the whole structure. Yes politically, the structure is down, in fact, if I say zero, I don't feel it will be an exaggeration because in a session, as a faculty, there is always a little to what you can do without you actually seeking that support of your Vice Chancellor. Without you actually, in fact, once you are accepted, by everyone in your faculty, he or she can draw you from that position even when you are an elected officer into that office. So, you now see that this issue of autonomy is eroded. You don't have free opportunity or say, opportunity of doing something. In fact, when it comes to staff selection, may be, I should even use that as an example. Staff selection is a major prerogative of the dean and the

department. Such a person at work sometimes feels the influences of people from higher quarters, where they will tell you this is someone's candidate. Even admission of the number of candidates that come into your department or into your faculty is determined by certain factors which of course involve people who are naturally eligible for admission. They are qualified by virtue of influence and some other things like that. So, you will now see that whole thing is that when it comes to autonomy; and I say zero, it may be out of place but I doubt if we have to date any faculty that enjoys up to 30 percent autonomy.

Also, Prof./Dean B, while expressing his own view about autonomy said:

However, in terms of the autonomy for university, it's more of something in principle and not in practice because if you look at the way universities are, you will hardly agree that there is autonomy

Summarily, therefore, the implication of the absence of autonomy in respect to institutional factors is evident in the products of the sampled universities as buttressed by another Principal Officer(Prof./HOD A) that:

Yes, institutional factors influence a lot. If institutional factors have problem, then this quality of graduates that are being produced will be faulty and that's why this issue of IPPIS Abuja is trying to see that they want to give us, that is, recommending lecturers for Universities, is going to destroy the University. So, if the governance of the University is not done the right way, it's going to affect our products. It is actually going against the autonomy that we have. The autonomy should be that we hire and fire our own faculties not any external body doing that for us. Once anybody is doing it, then the University is finished. The products will be worse.

It was established that lecturers are fully involved in the preparation of curriculum. Faculty members also determine the area of coverage while the authority emphasizes strict

compliance and adherence during teaching. However, the non-involvement of all stakeholders in the formulation of the curriculum to a very large extent is related to the poor quality of graduates in Nigerian universities.

A Principal Officer (Dr B) opined that:

at any departmental meeting, the first thing is to request for your course outline. The course outline at the point of presentation will have to be viewed by every other member of that department. That is to say that, the essence is to ensure that you are not teaching outside the curriculum – to ensure compliance to the curriculum.

According to Prof./HOD A, he affirmed further that:

For the curriculum, we have to be because we compare our note with what is obtainable abroad. We are always on the net and looking at what they are doing. And from time to time, like 5 years, we go through our curriculum and do curriculum reform, review and innovations. Bringing in new courses and the one we still feel is okay. We have to add to some of the topics we are going to teach, to make it what it ought to be so that we will be at par with other advanced countries. Our curriculum is being updated from time to time.

However, the non-involvement of major stakeholders in the preparation of the curriculum has been noted to be responsible for the poor quality of graduates in Nigerian universities.

In the words of Dr A, he suggested that:

In curriculum development you first have to, of course, look at the needs of the society, what the society needs and what the society wants. You know we can go outside there to exactly look at what our society, our community in which the students we are going to teach, we are going to train will work. To really feel the pulse of the labour market, what exactly should be integrated into what you are going to teach the students so that when the students graduate they go out, they will be able to

make good use of that outside. We don't consider that in most cases. Many of them will sit down look at prospectus and curriculum of southern University and package it for Nigeria; those things cannot work. It must be democratic. There must be an area that we call contemporary issues every year that you must integrate into your course outline to make your students benefits from what is going on. So, developing a curriculum, the governance of the University has not done enough. There is nothing stopping us when we want to have a curriculum review to take what we call an academics summit, invite stakeholders outside to look at what people want in their area so that we know exactly how we can package those ideas into our curriculum to benefit our students, to benefits this society for which we are preparing the students.

Any environment, any community, any society, any educational system that wants to forge ahead particularly in terms of curriculum development, one must first of all adopt this principle of democracy. And what is that principle of democracy? The principle is that there must be participation of all stakeholders that are involved in the educational system must be brought on table; ideas from different sectors must be brought to the table so that things will go a long way.

It was however noticed by one of the interviewed principal officers (Prof./Dean B) that the failure of the curriculum to address the issue of quality of graduates could also be traced to inadequate funding. He said that:

The employability of education graduates is determined by so many factors one of which is the curricula/curriculum through which they are trained. But because the funding is problematic, the curriculum might not have been operated the way they should be.

Divergent views were expressed on institutional factors in respect to the effects of academic freedom on the quality of graduates. On the one hand, it was established that there is academic freedom as rules and regulations put in place are only meant to check excesses in the university system.

In his words, one of the interviewed Principal Officers (Prof. HOD A) said that:

We have a system that is not loose. Under academic freedom, we are governed by rules and regulations. The NUC check what we are doing and they are the one that is going to give us accreditation. Every department, every university, every faculty has to abide by their rules and regulations. So also, universities have their rules and regulations and every faculty and every lecturer must abide by the rules. In Nigeria, we have rules that have been put in place to make sure that our system runs without any problem. There is academic freedom because those rules and regulations are not really against academic freedom. The academic freedom is not talking about disobeying rules and regulations but would make us to function very well because those rules and regulation are meant for the success of the students we are trying to lead and to guide. Every lecturer must be interested in wanting to see their students succeed. So those rules and regulations are not meant to hinder our academic freedom.

However, overbearing influence of both internal and external bodies is considered disturbing by some lecturers to some extent as impinging on their academic freedom.

Prof./Dean B, while emphasizing the use of the committee system in the operations of the University said:

In the university, many of our operations are governed by Committee System. So, the governance of a faculty as an entity this time around (not staff members), is run on Committee System. So, a lot of things that faculty members also do are governed by the operations of this system and it is monitored by the regulations of the university.

On the contrary however, Dr Baverred in his submission that:

For you to introduce any new concepts even though they are not part of the programme that has been accredited by NUC, you may have to undergo series of faculty reviews because you don't just come up

with anything. It has to undergo faculty review and from faculty review, it is even forwarded to management. You cannot start any programme no matter how innovative you are no matter how industrious you are, without seeking the approval of the university entirely.

It is based on the above that some faculties concluded that there is no total academic freedom which is affecting the quality of graduates to a very large extent as innovations and creativity are not quickly welcome to address current issues that could make graduates compliant to the present day challenges and situations. According to another Principal Officer (Prof. HOD), he said that:

Is there any academic freedom on ground? Do we really have academic freedom? Because even the programme that we have, have to be approved by NUC, that is why you have accreditation. So, if there is autonomy (academic freedom) the NUC doesn't have to come in for any accreditation but they still come for accreditation. Moreover, if something is not within the curriculum, there is no way you can start. You have to get approval to include it in the curriculum.

Influence of Institutional Factors on the quality of graduates

From the result, it could be deduced that out of the factors affecting quality of graduates, inadequate funding was found to be more pronounced and this could be probably due to the fact that funding influences all other variables of institutional factors. The quality of graduates is being negatively affected to a very large extent as proper funding of federal universities is lacking. This is expressed in the opinion of all the interviewed lecturers that poor funding is responsible for the poor quality of these graduates. According to Dr B, he said:

Now, look at the learning environment, the type of chairs or seats we have in our classrooms, even the structure of the classrooms, when you get to some universities, you just have switches and other lighting points displayed, you go there, they are all

damaged. Most times no light, you now begin to wonder, is this a university?

One of the interviewed officers (Prof./ HOD A) also buttressed the effect of institutional factors on the quality on graduates as he said:

Yes, institutional factors influence it a lot. If institutional factors have problems, then the quality of students that are being produced will be faulty and that's why this issue of IPPIS, Abuja trying to see that they want to give us that is, recommending lecturers for universities is going to destroy the university. So, if the governance of the university is not done the right way, it's going to affect our products.

The result of the KII conducted on self-assessment for some graduates who are currently working using some of the items on Table 4.2. This is aimed at juxtaposing the survey results of the employers of labour with the self-assessment results of the graduates. For instance, on the result of how information are processed by graduates, the result revealed that some of the graduates could moderately process information while very few could process the same information faster. However, one of them affirmed that there is difficulty in processing information very fast.

According to UI (A):

I will just try and be calm, and see how I can strategically handle them (information). I can handle information to a small extent because I don't like stress

Some of the graduates asserted that they can only process information moderately just as said by OAU (B) that:

If the work or information is not that much, I can handle it moderately or averagely

This implies that some of graduates could independently process information. This aligns with the rating given by the employers of labour who rated Nigerian graduates high on information processing.

Nigerian graduates also assessed themselves high on the ability to organize human beings and other staff members in undertaking and accomplishing tasks. Some of the interviewees acknowledged this while few of them affirmed it to be a difficult task. According to UI (A):

It is taxing because what works for A might not work for B.

On knowledge impartation assessment, while employers of labour rated the graduates very low, the graduates evaluated their performances to be average. Some of the interviewees agreed that it is an easy task, while some affirmed difficulty in imparting knowledge into others. According to UI (B),

Knowledge impartation is not very easy. People learn the same thing through different means. Not everybody will get result as expected.

The implication of this is that, averagely, only few graduates could effectively impart knowledge to others. Hence, the assessment of the employers of labour only slightly differs from that of the graduates.

Furthermore, the graduates' assessment on completion and accuracy of tasks aligned with that of the employers of labour who rated them very low. The KII result revealed that some of the graduates often turned in tasks or complete given tasks late or behind schedule. However, some of them also agreed to prompt and timely completion of assignment. According to UI (A):

Yes, I have had such occurrences...Well, I just said 'sorry'

Also, UI (B) said:

Not really; sometimes the time is not sufficient. But so far you are still on it (the assignment), they know it will be accomplished. Because I believe in the power of communication. So far I have communicated them ahead, even if the time will not be enough

The self-assessment on control of emotion and interpersonal relationship by the graduates agreed with that of the employers of labour who rated them very high. Provocation as attested to by some of the interviewees is inevitable in human relationship at the work place. However, communication through interpersonal relationship is pivotal in resolving issues. According to UI (B):

Provocation is inevitable when working with different personalities. Provocation comes, yes. But experience makes someone to know that when provocation comes, then there is need for patience... It happens but not often...I take time to explain things to them.

The survey finding on multilingual abilities of graduates is in agreement with the self-assessment KII result of the graduates. It was discovered from the self-assessment result that most of the interviewees could only communicate in two languages – English and one native language. This implies that the possibility of graduates who can communicate in many languages in getting employed is higher than those who cannot.

On ICT compliancy, the KII result indicated that all the interviewees are knowledgeable in the use of computer as against the views expressed by the employers of labour. These divergent opinions could have been expressed due to the fact that being proficient in the use of application packages is different from being knowledgeable in the use of computers. The employers of labour could have rated them on the level of proficiency rather than being knowledgeable.

With the survey results of the employers of labour and KII results of the self-assessment results, it could be established that indeed employers of labour often based their employment criteria of recruits on some of the items on Table 4.2 and others. Invariably, any graduate who is deficient in most of these items may not get employed on time. This was confirmed by the interviewees.

In the words of OAU (B):

It took me close to three years before I could get a job. They (employers of labour) always say that we lack experience and they need experienced graduates

Interviewee UI (B) corroborated the assertion of OAU (B). According to him:

Number one, it is the population. Someone needs to distinguish himself in one way or the other to prove he is better than others by adding values to oneself. Another thing is experience. In fact, experience is what most employers of labour are looking for. Nobody wants to teach you the rudiments of what you should know.

Furthermore, UI (B) affirmed other reasons which include incompetence on the part of Nigerian graduates. According to him:

Sometimes, probably they are unable to deliver as they ought to. Then, maybe they don't have connection or maybe they didn't perform well at the interviews.

The implication of all these is that the long duration Nigerian graduates remain at home after graduation could be responsible for the loss of skills already acquired in the university. Therefore, the claim by employers of labour that Nigerian graduates lack skills could be genuine.

Research Question 6

To what extent do institutional factors practices differ among the federal universities?

Table 4.8a: Difference in Institutional Factors Practice Based on Universities Funding

University	N	Mean	SD	Source of Variance	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
UI	309	10.07	3.87	Between Groups	9.027	2	4.514	.34 1	.71 1
UNILAG	627	10.21	3.68	Within Groups	16794.236	1270	13.22		
OAU	338	9.98	3.17		16803.26	1272	4		

Total	1274	10.16	3.63	Total	3				
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Table 4.8a presents the result of the analysis on the difference in institutional factors practices based on the university funding in the selected universities. The result revealed that mean funding practices of the University of Ibadan is (Mean=10.07, SD=3.87), UNILAG has the mean funding practices of (Mean=10.21, SD=3.68) while (Mean=9.98, SD=3.17) was reported for OAU. The result revealed that there is no wide difference in mean practices with respect to funding among the sampled universities. The ANOVA table revealed that the mean practice in the institutional factors with respect to funding was not significantly different ($F_{(2,1270)} = .341, p > 0.05$) among the universities selected .

Table 4.8b: Difference in Institutional Factors Practice Based on University Autonomy

University	N	Mean	SD	Source of Variance	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
UI	309	18.78	3.15	Between Groups	.485	2	4.51	.023	.97
UNILAG	627	18.80	3.24	Within Groups	13454.76	1270	13.22		
OAU	338	18.74	3.37	Total	13455.25	1272			
Total	1274	18.79	3.25						

Table 4.8b shows the result of practices of university autonomy among the selected universities. The finding revealed that the mean practice of autonomy among the selected universities ranges from 18.74 to 18.80. This is an indication that the practice of university autonomy is similar in the sampled universities. The ANOVA table revealed that the mean practice of university autonomy among the selected universities are not significantly different from one another ($F_{(2,1270)} = 0.34, p < 0.05$). Hence, the practice of university autonomy among the sampled universities is similar.

Table 4.8c: Table 4.8c: Differences in Institutional Factors Practice Based on Curriculum Implementation

University	N	Mean	SD	Source of Variance	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
UI	309	18.33	2.31	Between Groups	27.381	2	13.691	3.064	0.00
UNILAG	627	18.13	2.11	Within Groups	5674.749	1270	4.468		
OAU	338	17.96	1.95	Total	5686.760	1272			
Total	1274	18.14	2.11						

Table 4.8c shows the result of the analysis on the practice of institutional factors with respect to curriculum implementation. The result revealed that UNILAG and UI have similar mean curriculum implementation practice (\bar{x} =18.13, SD = 2.11) and (\bar{x} = 18.33, SD=2.31) while the curriculum implementation practice of OAU is different from the two universities (\bar{x} = 17.96, SD=1.95). The result of ANOVA revealed that the mean practice of curriculum implementation among sampled universities is different from each other ($F_{(2,1270)}= 3.064$, $p<0.05$). Therefore, pattern of curriculum implementation of the sampled universities differs.

Table 4.8d: Differences in Institutional Factors Practice Based on Academic Freedom

University	N	Mean	SD	Source of Variance	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
UI	309	21.11	3.97	Between Groups	10.558	2	5.279	0.320	0.726
UNILAG	627	21.31	4.073	Within Groups	20971.960	1270	16.513		
OAU	338	21.46	4.09	Total	20982.518	1272			
Total	1274	21.31	4.06						

Table 4.8d shows the differences in institutional factors among the sampled universities based on Academic Freedom. The result revealed that the mean academic freedom among universities in the study is not different from each other. The result further revealed that the mean Academic Freedom of OAU ($\bar{x} = 21.46$, $SD = 4.09$) is not significantly different from UNILAG ($M\bar{x} = 21.31$, $SD = 4.07$) and UI ($\bar{x} = 21.11$, $SD = 3.97$). The result of ANOVA shows that there is no statistical difference in Academic Freedom among the three universities ($F_{(2,1270)} = 0.320$, $p > 0.05$)

4.2 Discussion of Findings

The findings on the profile of graduates of the sampled universities reveal that majority of the graduates are first degree holders, followed by Master's degree holders and then Ph.D holders. The result showed that the minimum qualification of the sampled graduates is B. A./B.Sc. or B. Ed as the case may be. It could also be observed that graduates of Ph.D are still actively involved in service. However, the result in Table 4.3a shows that the quality of

the graduates varies with the qualification which implies that their display of professionalism in service improves based on their academic qualification. This means that additional qualification leads to higher quality.

By implication, this goes to show that employers of labour who encourage their employees to add to their qualifications while working in their organisations stand the chance of benefitting from them after the completion of such programmes. Graduates who add to their qualifications do not only add skills to the ones they already have but also grow in confidence and experiences in displaying such skills to the fulfilment of organisational goals. The KII and survey results affirmed that employers of labour often complain that most Nigerian graduates do not exhibit self-confidence and reflective thinking when undertaking tasks as they often go to their bosses to ask questions or get further instructions which could have been given earlier. Furthering one's education for more qualifications avails people the opportunity to meet with other gainfully employed people and learn from their experiences; and this instil into them, confidence and self-belief.

However, many employers of labour hardly allow their employees to further their education to acquire additional qualification because of the fear of losing them to other competitors or the inability to increase their wages in line with their qualification. It is a fact notwithstanding, that when reward most times, is commensurate to qualification and competencies (skills), the tendency of a higher quality services from a worker is high.

Regarding the employability of graduates of federal universities in Southwestern Nigeria, the result reveals that most employers of labour rated the performance and skills of graduates working under them to be low. They are low in speed of processing information, subject matter mastery, knowledge impartation skills, decision making skills, emotional stability, ICT skills, communication skills, technical skills, team skills and ability to team-work. It is however observed in the study that, there is still need for improvement in the skills of Nigerian graduates as suggested in previous studies (Pitan, 2010, Akanmu, 2011; Anho, 2011 and Asuquo and Agboola, 2014) which rated the skills and performance of Nigerian graduates to be very low and classified them as being deficient in requisite skills.

From the findings, two major reasons could be adduced to this low quality of graduates. First is the poor implementation of the introduction of entrepreneurial education some years back in Nigerian universities which is perceived to have a positive impact in the skills acquisition of the Nigerian graduates. Secondly, and most importantly, the KII results revealed that many lecturers either at departmental level or personally have been collaborating and working hand in hand with some employers of labour to identify and know skills that are needed but missing in Nigerian university graduates in order to incorporate them and teach the students within the ambit of academic freedom while still adhering to the curriculum. This was confirmed by almost all the Principal Officers interviewed with the KII guide that this is being done to bridge the wide gap between the experience acquired by students while in school and the actual skills required by captains of industries.

With this observation, the result indicated however that the skills displayed by the graduates working with the sampled employers of labour are not impressive. This finding could probably be due to the fact that the environment does not support effective display of learnt skills at the university level or maybe diminishing return has set in as a result of long years of learning or waiting at home before being employed. Moreover, the result might even be as a result of carried over effect or half-baked graduates in most of the universities in Nigeria. The result also corroborated the findings of other studies in the literature such as the one conducted by Adedeji and Oyebade (2015) that there is inadequacy of requisite and life skills in many Nigerian graduates, a situation that may probably be an institutional factor or from the part of government.

Findings in this study revealed that divergent views exist amongst lecturers on autonomy. On the one hand, there are those who agreed that partial autonomy exists in Nigerian universities giving the fact that lecturers are involved in the appointment of key officers in the universities, in the admission of students at departmental level, adherence to recruitment procedures in the appointment of lecturers, the democratisation process of selection and appointment of key officers in the universities, adherence to promotion and disciplinary guidelines for lecturers and the removal of stringent control measures by government in teaching and research work.

On the other hand however, there are lecturers who according to the KII result are of the opinion that autonomy does not truly exist in Nigerian universities. According to the interviewed officers, the autonomy which some regarded as partial or not total, only exists in principle and not in practice; and cannot engender the production of quality graduates in Nigeria universities due to the many infractions on the part of the government. The effects of these infractions are not only pronounced on the universities but are directly felt by the lecturers whose primary assignment of teaching, researching and carrying out community services reflect more on the products (graduates) of every university. The infringements include the use of quota system in the admission of students, imposition of candidates on faculty members during recruitment exercise, the use of committee system which slows down quick decision making and the generation of new ideas and other subtle measures.

The issue of autonomy has been argued to have heinous effects on the university system administration which in turn is affecting the quality of graduates. Researches such as the one conducted by Ogbomida, Obano and Emmanuel (2013) reported that partial autonomy is not only restricted to Nigerian institutions. In most cases, most of the decisions or suggestions given to universities by the Nigerian government are politically motivated and could result to poor administration as well as counter-productivity. Therefore, it can be reasonably argued that the effect of autonomy on the quality of graduates is indirect because absent of complete autonomy for the universities is not the problem, but for the fact that government uses it to perpetuate its political ambition which consequently wreck the university system and result in low quality of graduates. The previous line of thought is at variance to the findings of some scholars who argued that the issue of university autonomy must be taken with seriousness in Nigeria because autonomous universities are currently the best ranked universities in the world as they are more flexible, competitive, functional and responsive towards achieving their set out goal(s) (Nyewusira and Nyewusira 2013). In other words, universities with greater autonomy have been found to perform better than those that are not autonomous or partially autonomous (Ritzen, 2016).

Closely connected to autonomy of the university is academic freedom for lecturers. In the same vein, lecturers' opinions were divided on the extent of the academic freedom which

lecturers enjoy and how it affects the quality of graduates in Nigerian universities. In the survey result, it was established that faculty members really have academic freedom on matters relating to choosing research topics, freedom to adopt the right teaching methods for efficiency and effectiveness, freedom to share research work on internet, recognition and reward for scholarly work by universities, collaborative research work amongst lecturers, absence of victimisation of lecturers and an enabling environment for scholarly work.

The KII result also attests to the above freedom to a very small extent but this however depends on individual university. To some lecturers therefore, it could be inferred that they enjoy particular academic freedom. To a very large extent however, the KII result showed that there is no academic freedom being enjoyed by the lecturers. Some of the interviewed officers based this assertion on the premise that once the autonomy of a university is tampered with, the academic freedom of lecturers within the system is directly and indirectly affected; and this would have damaging effect on the products (graduates) of such university. In such a situation, whatever freedom being enjoyed by the university is only contingent on the privileges and rights being extended to the faculties by the Vice Chancellor of the university. They only averred that the academic freedom they enjoy when compared to private universities is the leisure to come in at any time they want and to go out anytime they like because their work schedule is a bit flexible.

Despite this, it was discovered that some lecturers are monitored, subtly victimised and censored and their freedom of expression curtailed, they are delayed in promotion and so on. Also, inadequate funding of the university as opined by most of the interviewees is having its own effects on the academic freedom of lecturers. In summary, lecturers will not be able to function effectively in respect to teaching and carrying out research work. By implication therefore, the quality of Nigerian graduates will be adversely affected as the means of adding to the frontiers of knowledge by lecturers would be hindered.

The result of the influence of the institutional factors on the quality of graduates revealed that funding is a great impediment to the performance of lecturers in the production of quality graduates in Nigerian universities. The result showed that faculties have been greatly hindered from performing their statutory roles of teaching, research and community

services due to poor funding. On research, interviewees who participated in the KII affirmed that research grants have been politicised by government agencies to the extent that preferential treatment is deployed in the released or it is delayed or not released at all under the guise of excuses.

Furthermore, the KII result revealed that many industries or organisations that used to invest in research works in Nigeria have either dwindled considerably or cut down drastically on their investment due to the economic challenge in the country. As a result, most lecturers now use personal resources to undertake resources that are cost demanding. Due to meagre and irregular payment of salaries, many lecturers found it extremely challenging to complete many works on time as a result of limited fund. Hence, many research works personally undertaken by lecturers that could have furthered the frontier of knowledge are either abandoned from the scratch or midway. Therefore, the tendency of recycling obsolete knowledge is inevitable amongst some lecturers. It was also discovered that in a bid for them to impart knowledge on their students, they now expend part of their resources as impress in purchasing office items and other essential needs to augment for the shortfall in funding. Yet, they still carry out their duties under strenuous and demanding conditions of dilapidated structures and facilities in the sampled universities.

Moreover, the result indicated that in recent times, the introduction of stringent controlled measures on the payment of lecturers' salaries under IPPIS, issue on sabbatical, TSA (Treasury Single Account) and others have infringed on the rights of lecturers and the universities; and this in turn will affect the production of quality graduates. For instance, since the introduction of some of these measures, many lecturers are being owed backlog of salaries while some have been debarred to proceed on sabbatical due to the refusal of the government from allowing them do the leave in another federal university. These measures have further compounded the financial stress of lecturers and shrink the funds that are being given to universities in Nigeria. Invariably, inadequate funding of universities and not allowing these experienced and exposed faculties to give their wealth of knowledge to the students in these federal universities will negatively affect the quality of graduates from

the universities. The findings in the study is therefore consistent with that of Osho (2009); Ekundayo and Ajayi (2009) and Ukwai, Uko and Udida (2013).

One of the reasons of research is to include and package its findings into the curriculum that will be used in imparting knowledge to the students. The relevancy and recency of curriculum therefore is a product of continuous and sustained research by the lecturers who are saddled with the responsibility of teaching. The bottom line of any research work is to solve problems. Invariably, every curriculum should be designed to address recent challenges confronting the students with a bid to preferring either short term or long term solution(s). It is when this is done that the curriculum is believed to have achieved its fundamental purpose of not only imparting knowledge theoretically but practically (skills). However, many of the challenges the lecturers are being confronted with according to some of the interviewees, among which are poor funding, drops in sponsorship of research work by corporate organisations and absence of total autonomy could make one to infer that, the quality of the curriculum being used in the universities in Nigeria may not be able to address the problems of poor quality of graduates.

Indeed, the result attested to the recency and the relevancy of the curriculum, however the non-involvement of lecturers in the design, ineffective implementation, shortage of faculty members in the implementation and the ineffective implementation of the practical aspects of the curriculum are issues hindering the production of a quality (problem-solving) curriculum.

Therefore, considering the effects of curriculum implementation on the quality of graduates, the result revealed that lecturers are involved in curriculum implementation processes except in curriculum design. This result is a good reflection of what happens in reality because lecturers are meant to implement curriculum, except in some cases where a few experts in a particular field or subject are called to partake in curriculum design. Although, there are recurrent reports in literature that teachers and lecturers alike are always excluded from the processes of curriculum design (Dumbili, 2014 and Ibijola,2014) and had resulted into a situation whereby lecturers do not exhibit total passion and commitment to their teaching to what they are not part of. However, whether lecturers are

involved in the process of curriculum design or not, this should not reduce their passion in the implementation of the draft curriculum whether by NUC or other professional bodies since one of their core mandates is teaching (implementation). Studies especially, the one conducted by Emeh, *et al.* (2011) argued that when a curriculum is adequately and successfully implemented, it is a vital corrective tool that can be employed in correcting social mayhem such as poverty, food insecurity, health crises and sanitation. In other words, the effective implementation of curriculum is a fulcrum for functional education and nation building. In alliance with this, Singh (2008) submitted that curriculum is a major determining factor on the type of knowledge or skills students or people in a society will acquire.

Furthermore, since universities cannot exist in isolation even though the management and activities are managed within the purview of the system, the inputs of the society where such universities exist are inevitable and vice versa. It is in line with this assertion, that many of the interviewed officials faulted the exclusion of major stakeholders in the design and implementation of the curriculum being used in the Nigerian universities bearing in mind the poor state of facilities in the universities. Findings revealed that there used to be synergy in the past between the universities and principals of industries. However, it was noticed that there has been a disconnection between the labour market, the industry and the university. As a result of this, even graduates with First class grade are made to write aptitude tests before being employed. The implication of this is the unimpressive display of skills and competency experienced from these graduates.

Taking a close look at the result on the impact of institutional factors on the quality of graduates, it could be institutional factors which influence activities of the university as well as the quality of graduates. The findings further showed that the idea of autonomy in Nigerian universities is vague and in the real sense, does not exist. These results could be due to the fact that all the independent variables in the study constitute input-process variables of a typical university system and are meant to determine the quality of graduates. It could also be observed in the result that most process variables such as implementation and academic freedom were highly correlated with the quality of graduates which is an

indication that variables in the study are key determinants of quality of graduates of the university system.

Moreso, the effect of autonomy on the performance of university has been analyzed for public research universities in the US Ritzen (2016). Universities that have a higher level of autonomy were only found with better performance on financial assistance and gifts per student, and not on some other quality factors such as quality of the faculty, quality of undergraduate students, or the extent to which the government gives grants per full-time equivalent staff member. “Those campuses that have the least interruption in their programs, and that are also abundantly funded through the government, experience more success in getting funds from their alumni” Ritzen (2016). The performance of a university is significantly explained through the financial support from the state (i.e. more funding resulted in better performance). Also, the study by Aghion, *et.al* (2009) found that partial positive relationships exist between university graduates and autonomy for both the EU and US.

These findings were in alliance with other studies in literature such as the study conducted by Olayinka and Adedeji (2016) established significant relationship between autonomy and graduate quality. Fadokun (2000) reported that funding was highly correlated with quality of university graduates while inclusive, responsive and expanded curriculum that would address present challenges and the needs of Nigerian graduates is a key determinant of university graduates as reported by Moja (2000) and Adedeji and Oyeade (2016).

The result on the differences in funding, autonomy, academic freedom and curriculum implementation based on the universities sampled revealed that the sampled universities do not differ in funding and autonomy and academic freedom. However, the pattern of curriculum implementation of each of the university significantly differs. This finding is in alliance with the report of Rotzen (2009) who reported that substantial differences exist among countries/universities on how they deliver university education, in terms of the level of funding provided per student and the granting of autonomy to the universities. The result on the curriculum implementation is in consonance with the finding of Dada and Ojetunde (2020) who observed that the pattern of curriculum implementation in Nigerian universities

differ and in most cases, it was observed that curriculum varies for students who are studying the same course at the same level across universities in Nigeria and the implementation also skewed towards the level of lecturers' knowledge.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the result highlighted in chapter four, this chapter takes a step further to give summary of the findings upon which the conclusion of the whole investigation was based. An attempt was made to tender some recommendations for education stakeholders' actionable strategy for the effective management of university system in order to enhance the production of quality graduates

5.1 Summary

The study assessed institutional factors and quality of graduates of federal universities in

Southwestern, Nigeria. Few empirical studies have attempted to integrate variables of institutional factors to present a comprehensive analysis of factors that could explain quality of graduates. Thus, this research was oriented towards prediction of quality of graduates' variables from institutional factors indicators. The research design adopted for the study was *ex-post facto*, correlational type approach with total population of all the teaching staff in federal universities in Southwestern, Nigeria and the employers of their graduates. Mixed method approach of data collection was adopted for the study. Four developed and validated instruments were used to collect information for the study and information collected were subjected to descriptive, content and inferential analyses. The results revealed that:

- i. Majority of the rated graduates have Bachelor's degrees from their respective federal universities.
- ii. The quality of graduates with respect to the rating of employers of labour is low which is a poor reflection of the quality of graduates from the federal universities in Nigeria.
- iii. The quality of graduates in the sampled universities was different from each other based on their academic qualifications.
- iv. Most federal universities in Southwestern Nigeria are not autonomous in the area of funding and some administrative decisions which is resulting to poor quality of graduates.
- v. Lecturers enjoy academic freedom when it comes to teaching, research and community services.
- vi. The curriculum being used in the federal universities in Nigeria is ineffectively implemented especially in the practical aspects which are resulting into the poor quality of graduates. There are also inadequate lecturers in the federal universities to implement the curriculum thus, resulting to overburdening of lecturers. This can also lead to the ineffectiveness in the implementation of the curriculum.
- vii. There is low level of funding of federal universities in Southwestern Nigeria which in turn influences the poor quality of graduates from these universities.
- viii. Significant difference exists among the sampled federal universities in Southwestern Nigeria with respect to curriculum implementation.

- ix. There is no significant difference among federal universities in Southwestern Nigeria with respect to pattern of funding of universities by the government.
- x. Level of university autonomy was not significantly different among sampled universities in Southwestern Nigeria.

5.2 Conclusion

Based on the results of the findings, it could be concluded that many universities' input variables such as curriculum implementation and academic freedom explain much of the variances that occur in the quality of graduates in the sampled universities. Therefore, they can be said to be key determinants of quality of graduates. It was also discovered in the study that input variables of universities such as funding and university autonomy made a less contribution when compared with the process variables though they were regarded by majority of the respondents as the sole reason for low quality of graduates in the universities in Nigeria.

It could further be concluded that variation observed in the quality of graduates in the universities in Nigeria could be better explained when adequate considerations are given to some process variables underlining institutional factors and quality of graduates. Conversely, the more universities pay attention to the pattern of curriculum implementation and level of academic freedom given to lecturers to execute their academic duties, the better the quality of graduates the universities will produce.

5.3 Recommendations

Considering the results of the findings, the following recommendations were made:

The pattern and structure of funding of Nigerian universities need to be reconsidered to balance estimated need of the universities and cater to for issues that will degenerate into low quality of graduates.

Furthermore, university autonomy that will enhance the smooth running of Nigerian university system in order to produce quality graduates as well as reduce undue interference should be given by the government for efficient and effective management of the universities in Nigeria.

In addition, in order to increase the quality of graduates, all concerned stakeholders should be invited and be involved in its review and effective curriculum implementation and this should be the priority of the lecturers after all the resources and autonomy have been provided.

Full academic freedom that will enhance the quality of graduates of universities in Nigeria should also be given to the lecturers and other instructors alike.

Lastly, special consideration should be given to curriculum implementation process in the universities and the level of academic freedom given to university lecturers should be appraised as these are key determinants for quality of graduates of a university system.

5.4 Contributions to knowledge

The researcher successfully introduced another construct (institutional factors) that incorporated the input and process variables determined by internal and external university stakeholders to explain the quality of university graduates in southwestern Nigeria.

The study was able to project the fact that though academic freedom and university autonomy are parts of institutional factors that have been the recurrent factors echoed among scholars to underline the low quality of graduates of Nigerian universities, these two factors only explain little why there is low quality of graduates. But much of the reasons why there is variation in quality of graduates are due to the combination and consideration of input and process variables such as funding and pattern of curriculum implementation.

Besides, most empirical studies on quality measure quality of graduates from the perspective of academic grades and the result obtained at the end of university education. This study took a giant stride to develop and validate the quality of graduates' variables instrument to measure quality of university graduates from the data obtained from their employers.

5.5 Limitation of the study

There are several limitations with respect to the data collected especially from federal universities in Lagos, Oyo and Osun states that represent the southwestern Nigeria in this

study. This is because the results can only represent the viewpoint of academic staff and principals of industries in those states. Therefore, it might not be appropriate to generalise the findings to all the states in Southwestern Nigeria or in Nigeria as a whole. In the study, the approach of cross-sectional study is another limitation. It only studied the points of view present in certain moment of time. Meanwhile, the perspectives of lecturers and employers of labour could change from time to time. Therefore, the result at that period might be different compared to the viewpoint developed by the approach of longitudinal study. Besides, the limitation of answer options is another constraint to the study. The target respondents were restricted to certain range of answers provided in the distributed research instruments. They were required to select only the extent to which they agree with the questions raised in the surveys. Hence, the researcher might not be able to gather more precise data (extended view of the respondents especially the principals of industries).

5.6 Suggestions for further studies

Studies like this could be carried out in other parts of the country. It is also advisable for the researcher to examine the administrative governance variables influencing quality of graduates. Suggestions could also be made for the researchers to:

- i. Disaggregate the institutional factors into input and process institutional factors variables that influence quality of graduates in universities in Nigeria.
- ii. Conduct a comparative study on the assessment of quality of university graduates using employers of labour and personal observation approaches.
- iii. Conduct a comparative study of status of institutional factors in state and federal universities in Nigeria with respect to the quality of their graduates.

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UNIVERSITY OF IBADAN, IBADAN
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL MANAGEMENT
INSTITUTIONAL FACTORS QUESTIONNAIRE (IFQ)
(To be completed by Academic Staff members only)

Dear Respondent,

The researcher intends to assess institutional factors in the areas of autonomy, funding, academic freedom and curriculum implementation on the quality of graduates with focus on employability and competency. The information collected will be preserved with utmost confidentiality and used for research purposes only.

This questionnaire was designed to elicit information on institutional factors of federal universities in Southwestern Nigeria.

Thank you for anticipated participation.

Yours Sincerely,

MATTHEW O.

SECTION A: DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

Please tick (√) the appropriate column.

1. **Name of university:**
2. **Faculty:**
3. **Department:**
4. **Gender:** Male () Female ()
5. **Age:** 26yrs – 35yrs() 36yrs – 45yrs() 46yrs – 55yrs() 56 yrs–65yrs()
6. **Educational Level:** 1st Degree () Masters () Ph.D ()
7. **Years of Experience:** 1 – 10 yrs() 11 – 20yrs() 21 – 30yrs() 31 – 40 yrs()
8. **How many years have you worked in this university?** yrs

SECTION B: INSTITUTIONAL FACTORS QUESTIONNAIRE (IFQ)

Kindly indicate the extent to which the indicators of institutional factors in the following table below influence quality of graduates of federal universities.

Very Large Extent (VLE) = 4 Small Extent (SE) = 2

Large Extent (LE) = 3 Very Small Extent (VSE) = 1 VLE LE SE

S/N	ITEMS	4	3	2	1
FUNDING					
1	Inadequate funding of Nigerian universities.	4	3	2	1
2	Non-implementation of appropriate salary scale.	4	3	2	1
3	Non-release of research grants to researchers at the faculty level.	4	3	2	1
4	Mismanagement of released fund in Nigerian Universities.	4	3	2	1
5	Inefficiency as a result of lack of basic facilities for the lecturers.	4	3	2	1
6	Irregular payment of lecturers' salary.	4	3	2	1
AUTONOMY					

1	Lecturers' involvement in the appointment of key officers in the universities.	4	3	2	1
2	Giving autonomy to lecturers for the admission of students based on performance.	4	3	2	1
3	Allowing universities to adhere to recruitment procedures in the appointment of lecturers.	4	3	2	1
4	Democratizing the selection process in the appointment of key officers in the universities.	4	3	2	1
5	Removal of stringent control measure by government in teaching and research work.	4	3	2	1
6	Strict adherence to promotion and disciplinary guidelines for lecturers.	4	3	2	1
ACADEMIC FREEDOM					
1	Allowing lecturers to choose their area of research.	4	3	2	1
2	Granting lecturers freedom to adopt the right teaching methods for efficiency and effectiveness.	4	3	2	1
3	Allowing lecturers to share findings from their research work on internet.	4	3	2	1
4	Recognition and reward for scholarly works by universities.	4	3	2	1
5	Collaborative research work amongst lecturers.	4	3	2	1
6	Absence of victimization of lecturers.	4	3	2	1
7	Creating an enabling environment for scholarly work.	4	3	2	1
CURRICULUM IMPLEMENTATION					
1	Curriculum relevancy.	4	3	2	1
2	The non-involvement of lecturers in the design of the curriculum.	4	3	2	1
3	Curriculum recency.	4	3	2	1
4	Ineffective implementation of the curriculum.	4	3	2	1
5	Time allotted for the implementation of the curriculum (duration for implementation).	4	3	2	1
6	Over-population of students in Nigerian universities.	4	3	2	1
7	Inadequate number of lecturers to implement the curriculum.	4	3	2	1
8	Ineffective implementation of the practical aspects of the curriculum in	4	3	2	1

Nigerian universities.				
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Thank you for your time and attention!

**UNIVERSITY OF IBADAN, IBADAN
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL MANAGEMENT
QUALITY OF GRADUATES RATING SCALE (QGRS)**

(To be completed by principals of industries only)

Dear Respondent,

The researcher intends to assess institutional factors in the areas of autonomy, funding, academic freedom and curriculum implementation on quality of graduates with focus on employability and competency. The information collected will be preserved with utmost confidentiality and used for research purposes only.

This questionnaire was designed to elicit information on quality of graduates of federal universities in Southwestern Nigeria.

Thank you for anticipated participation.

Yours Sincerely,

MATTHEW O.

SECTION A: DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

Please tick (√) the appropriate column.

1. **Name of Organisation:**
2. **Position:**
3. **Number of staff:**
4. **Gender:** Male () Female ()
5. **Age:** 26yrs – 35yrs () 36yrs – 45yrs () 46yrs – 55yrs () 56 yrs–65yrs ()
6. **Educational Level:** 1st Degree () Masters () Ph.D ()
7. **Years of Experience:** 1 – 10 yrs() 11 – 20yrs () 21 – 30yrs () 31 – 40 yrs ()

SECTION B: QUALITY OF GRADUATES RATING SCALE (QGRS)

Please rate university graduate(s) from your department who also work(s) in your department with respect to the following items:

High = (H) Low = (L)

		H	L
S/N	ITEMS		
1	Speed of processing information		
2	Organisation skills		
3	Subject matter mastery		
4	Knowledge impartation skills		
5	Task execution accuracy		
6	Decision making skills		
7	Emotional stability		
8	Interpersonal skills		
9	Multilingual ability		
10	ICT skills		

11	Communication skills		
12	Time management skills		
13	Technical skills		
14	Reflective thinking skills		
15	Team skills		

Thank you for your time and attention!

QUALITY OF GRADUATES RATING SCALE (QGRS)

Table 1: Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	No. of Items
.913	.944	15

Result in table 1 showed that the reliability value measured using the Cronbach alpha value was 91.3%. This implies that there is high reliability value for the section and that this section of the questionnaire is validly satisfactory in measuring the construct it was designed for.

Table 2:Item-Total Statistics

	Items	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
1.	Speed of processing information	41.15	15.818	.676	.846
2.	Organisation skills	41.85	15.608	.415	.879
3.	Subject matter mastery	41.10	15.989	.719	.844
4.	Knowledge impartation skills	41.00	17.158	.332	.877
5.	Task execution accuracy	41.35	15.503	.869	.833
6.	Decision making skills	41.15	16.029	.627	.850
7.	Emotional stability	41.30	17.063	.517	.861
8.	Interpersonal skills	41.20	15.747	.630	.749
9.	Multilingual ability	42.00	19.789	-.349	.811
10.	ICT skills	41.35	18.134	.205	.883
11.	Communication skills	41.20	15.537	.791	.837
12.	Time management skills	41.45	16.892	.374	.873

13.	Technical skills	41.45	16.366	.551	.857
14.	Reflective thinking skills	41.40	17.832	.456	.868
15.	Team skills	41.25	16.829	.521	.860

Table 2 presented the value that Cronbach's alpha would be if a particular item was deleted from the scale. We can see that removal of any question would result in a lower Cronbach's alpha. Therefore, we would not want to remove these questions. Thus, this might lead us to consider whether we should not remove any of the items.

INSTITUTIONAL FACTORS QUESTIONNAIRE (IFQ)
Reliability Test

FUNDING

Table 1: Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	No. of Items
.771	.812	6

Result in table 1 showed that the reliability value measured using the Cronbach alpha value was 71.2%. This implies that there is high reliability value for the section and that this section of the questionnaire is validly satisfactory in measuring the construct it was designed for.

Table 2:Item-Total Statistics

	Items	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Squared Multiple Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
1.	Inadequate funding of Nigerian universities	15.00	4.103	.090	.794	.769
2.	Non-implementation of appropriate salary scale	15.50	5.385	.319	.658	.725
3.	Non-release of research grants to researchers at faculty level	15.25	1.987	.751	.568	.721
4.	Mismanagement of released fund in Nigeria universities	15.25	4.808	.120	.771	.750
5.	Inefficiency as a result of lack of basic facilities for the faculties	14.75	4.038	.293	.733	.677
6.	Irregular payment of faculty salary	16.13	2.163	.804	.738	.711

Table 2 presented the value that Cronbach's alpha would be if a particular item was deleted from the scale. We can see that removal of any question would result in a lower Cronbach's alpha. Therefore, we would not want to remove these questions. Thus, this might lead us to consider whether we should not remove any of the items.

AUTONOMY

Table 3: Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	No. of Items
.784	.797	6

Result in table 3 showed that the reliability value measured using the Cronbach alpha value was 78.4%. This implies that there is high reliability value for the section and that this section of the questionnaire is validly satisfactory in measuring the construct it was designed for.

Table 4:Item-Total Statistics

	Items	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Squared Multiple Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
1.	Faculty involvement in in the appointment of key officers in the universities	14.50	13.590	.797	.887	.752
2.	Giving autonomy to faculty for the admission of students based on performance	14.38	13.317	.799	.886	.751
3.	Allowing universities to adhere to recruitment procedures in the appointment of faculties	14.75	16.603	.706	.881	.786
4.	Democratising the selection process in the appointment of key officers in the universities	15.00	14.103	.783	.818	.755
5.	Removal of stringent control measure by government in teaching and research work	14.88	18.317	.525	.846	.788
6.	Strict adherence to promotion and disciplinary guidelines for faculties	14.63	16.651	.496	.489	.789

Table 4 presented the value that Cronbach's alpha would be if a particular item was deleted from the scale. We can see that removal of any question, except question 5 and 6, would result in a lower Cronbach's alpha. Therefore, we would not want to remove these questions. However, removal of question 5 and 6 would lead to a small improvement in Cronbach's alpha. Also, the variation between the total Cronbach value and what we will get when Item 5 and 6 are removed is statistically significant, this might lead us to consider whether we should remove these items.

ACADEMIC FREEDOM

Table 5: Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	No. of Items
.754	.769	7

Result in table 5 showed that the reliability value measured using the Cronbach alpha value was 75.4%. This implies that there is high reliability value for the section and that this section of the questionnaire is validly satisfactory in measuring the construct it was designed for.

Table 6:Item-Total Statistics

	Items	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Squared Multiple Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
1.	Allowing faculties to choose their area of research	18.38	30.497	.645	.762	.742
2.	Granting faculties freedom to adopt the right teaching methods for efficiency and effectiveness	18.00	30.256	.675	.738	.731
3.	Allowing faculties to share findings from their research work on internet	18.25	30.449	.568	.647	.740
4.	Recognition and reward for scholarly works by universities	18.00	28.718	.709	.792	.727
5.	Collaborative research work amongst faculties	17.63	30.753	.631	.789	.734
6.	Absence of victimisation of faculties	17.88	33.189	.643	.725	.759
7.	Creating enabling environment for scholarly work	17.88	29.087	.739	.797	.724

Table 6 presented the value that Cronbach's alpha would be if a particular item was deleted from the scale. We can see that removal of any question, except question 6, would result in a lower Cronbach's alpha. Therefore, we would not want to remove these questions. However, removal of question 6 would lead to a small improvement in Cronbach's alpha. However, the variation between the total Cronbach value and what we will get when Item 6 is removed is not statistically significant, this might lead us to consider whether we should not remove this item.

CURRICULUM IMPLEMENTATION

Table 7: Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	No. of Items
.721	.756	8

Result in table 7 showed that the reliability value measured using the Cronbach alpha value was 72.1%. This implies that there is high reliability value for the section and that this section of the questionnaire is validly satisfactory in measuring the construct it was designed for.

Table 8:Item-Total Statistics

	Items	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
1.	Curriculum relevancy	21.50	42.564	.688	.668
2.	The non-involvement of faculties in the design of the curriculum	21.88	43.702	.581	.674
3.	Curriculum recency	21.75	44.808	.562	.675
4.	Ineffective implementation of the curriculum	22.00	44.615	.579	.674
5.	Time allotted for the implementation of the curriculum(duration for implementation)	22.00	45.128	.533	.676
6.	Over-population of students in Nigerian universities	21.75	43.013	.584	.674
7.	Inadequate human resources to implement the curriculum	21.63	41.522	.669	.669
8.	Ineffective implementation of the practical aspects of the curriculum in Nigerian universities	21.63	42.035	.627	.671

Table 8 presented the value that Cronbach's alpha would be if a particular item was deleted from the scale. We can see that removal of any question would result in a lower Cronbach's alpha. Therefore, we would not want to remove these questions. This might lead us to consider whether we should not remove any of the items.

**DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL MANAGEMENT
FACULTY OF EDUCATION
UNIVERSITY OF IBADAN
KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEW ON INSTITUTIONAL FACTORS AND
QUALITY OF GRADUATES' VARIABLES OF SELECTED FEDERAL
UNIVERSITIES IN SOUTHWESTERN, NIGERIA**

Lecturers are saddled with the responsibility of teaching, research and community services. They are responsible to some extent for the changes that happen in the life of graduates in terms of knowledge, skills and attitude during the course of their undergraduate programs. With these functions in view, the researcher would like to have an interactive session with some lecturers.

This interview aims at identifying stakeholders' opinions on the institutional factors and quality of graduates of Nigerian universities. This interview will take approximately 30 minutes, but may take longer if the respondent has more to share. The discussion will start with introduction as follows:

What is your job title?

How long have you been teaching as a university lecturer?

1. What do you understand by institutional factors?
2. How would you describe institutional factors in Nigerian universities with respect to:
 - a. Autonomy
 - b. Academic freedom
 - c. Curriculum implementation
 - d. Funding
3. How do the institutional factors influence the quality of graduates of Nigerian universities?
4. To what extent do you enjoy your work in terms of autonomy, academic freedom, funding and curriculum implementation?
5. How would you describe the quality of Nigerian universities graduates in terms of employability?

We have reached the end of our interview. Do you have any additional information or suggestion on institutional factors and employability of Nigerian universities graduates.

Thank you

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**KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEW (SELF-ASSESSMENT) ON INSTITUTIONAL
FACTORS AND QUALITY OF GRADUATES' VARIABLES OF FEDERAL
UNIVERSITIES IN NIGERIA**

1. To what extent do you handle overloaded information without stress?
2. How easy is it to organize human beings to accomplish a particular goal?
3. Do you consider knowledge impartation easy, especially in secondary school?
4. In any of the places you have worked or working currently, have you ever had encounter with your supervisor on a particular task assigned because of time lag? How did you resolve it?
5. Have any of your co-workers provoked you? How often does this happen? How do you relate with such people thereafter?
6. Which of the languages do you prefer most? What other language do you speak?
7. Do you use computer? Which software are you able to work with?
8. Are you working presently? How long did it take you to secure the job?
9. Why do you think most first degree graduates could not secure job on time?