

**AN EXAMINATION OF STAFF DEVELOPMENT FUNDING
AMONG ACADEMIC STAFF IN AHMADU BELLO
UNIVERSITY, ZARIA (2010-2024)**

Ahmed Mustapha^{1*} & Sani Lawal Malumfashi²

¹Department of Sociology, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, Nigeria

²Department of Sociology, Bayero University, Kano, Nigeria

*almusti2000@gmail.com

ABSTRACT: This paper studied staff development funding among academic staff in Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, 2010-2024. The study specifically examined the condition of refund practices, continuous funding of staff development, and the number of academic staff who benefited from the TETFund between 2010 and 2024. The study used Skinner's Reinforcement theory to analyze issues on staff development funding in the university system. From the 2433 target population, a sample of 1040 academic staff were drawn using multi-stage cluster sampling, across sixteen faculties of the institution. Structured Questionnaires were used to collect quantitative data from academic staff, while in-depth interviews were conducted with 17 academic staff and key informant interviews with four members of the university management. Of the questionnaires distributed to the sample, only 1000 were duly completed and returned by academic staff members. Data were statistically analyzed using SPSS (Version 23) to obtain frequencies, percentages, cross-tabulations of variables, and binary logistic regression results using a mixed-methods research design. Findings reveal that the majority of academic staff have not been refunded for funding staff development. Furthermore, a binary regression analysis with a P value of 0.001 indicates a significant relationship between funding and staff development. Moreover, the available record shows that science-based faculties have benefited more from TETFund funding than humanities-based faculties between 2010 and 2024. Furthermore, the records show that of 231 funding opportunities, only 21 were held by female academic staff and 192 by male academic staff. Based on the findings of the research, the study recommended, among other things, the need for improved partnership and linkage strategies to support staff development participation, and for the university management to eradicate disparities in nominations for funding opportunities.

Keywords: Academic staff, Funding, Staff development, Staff training, Refunding

INTRODUCTION

Scholars and researchers have defined staff development funding in different ways, but the major area of convergence across their interpretations is the availability of incentives for participation in training, such as postgraduate studies, publications, conferences, workshops, etc., to enhance performance. This is why Echono (2024) believed that the funding of tertiary institutions revolves around capital and recurrent expenditure germane to academic training, research, and the institutions' administrative survival in an increasingly competitive environment for attracting

funding and expertise. Notably, the funding of institutions is largely borne by their proprietors, whether public or private. While the funding of public tertiary institutions by Governments is anchored on the consideration of public goods and social services, the funding of private institutions is anchored on business considerations, which explains the high student fees charged by the institutions (Echono, 2024).

Due to the inadequate staff development programs within universities, the Nigerian Government established the Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TETFund) by an act of the National Assembly in June 2011. This act replaced the Education Tax Fund (ETF) Act Cap. E4 Laws of the Federation of Nigeria 2004 and Education Tax Fund (Amendment) Act No 17, 2003. The fund was set up to administer and disburse to the Federal and State tertiary educational institutions in Nigeria. The main source of income available to the fund is the 2% tax paid by the profit-making companies registered in Nigeria. In the distribution of the fund, 41 percent goes to the Universities, 30 percent to the Polytechnics, while 29 percent goes to Colleges of Education (TETFund, 2013).

A number of funding agencies, such as the McArthur Foundation, Carnegie, Ford Foundation, World Health Organization (WHO), etc, exist in the system, giving grants for staff development and different projects. For example, the MacArthur Foundation has since 2000 been supporting four universities in Nigeria, the Universities of Ibadan, Ahmadu Bello, Zaria, University of Port Harcourt, Port-Harcourt, and Bayero University, Kano, in the key areas of staff development, development of ICT infrastructure, etc. The University of Ibadan was awarded a total of USD \$6.4 million between 2000 and 2007. The Foundation also awarded a total of \$7.1 million to the University of Ibadan (\$4.0 million) and Bayero University, Kano (\$3.1 million) for the period of 2008-2010. Apart from these grants, Universities also receive income from endowments, gifts, and donations (Ahmed & Malumfashi, 2024). Yet the universities in Nigeria have been bedevilled with a shortage of quality staff needed to discharge their duties efficiently in the quest of national development. From the foregoing, the studies reviewed primarily capture key performance indicators, employer attitudes, funding formulas, quality issues, and student input, characterizing the current state of staff development in universities across the globe. However, an area that seems to be left out is the frequency of refunds and whether the existing funding will influence continued participation in staff development at Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria. Therefore, this is one area that this study sought to provide some empirical insights.

Statement of the Problem

Staff development funding connotes sponsorship of a continuing training process aimed at assisting, encouraging, and enabling academic staff and professionals to improve their knowledge, skills, abilities, and competence through post-graduate studies, workshops, in-service training, seminars, conferences, and publications within the university system. TETFund has sponsored 23,271 academic staff of public tertiary institutions for PhD programmes. Out of this, 4,598 were sponsored to foreign institutions, while 18,673 attended institutions within Nigeria. Likewise, 15,977 academic staff were sponsored for the Master's degree programme. Three thousand five hundred and twenty-five were in foreign institutions, while 12,452 undertook their studies in local institutions within the country. In addition, 911 scholars were sponsored for Benchwork at foreign institutions, and 872 academic staff for the post-doctoral programme, specifically targeted at

strengthening the country's scientific research capacity. Additionally, 31,071 academic staff from tertiary institutions were sponsored to attend international conferences in foreign countries, while 46,604 were sponsored to attend local conferences, bringing the total number of scholars sponsored for academic conferences to 77,675. Furthermore, 110,432 academic staff from colleges of education were sponsored to supervise teaching practice across the country (Echono, 2024).

Similarly, TETFund has awarded grants for 19,297 Institutional-Based Research (IBR) projects and 912 research projects under the National Research Fund (NRF), designed to support impactful research that will contribute to national development efforts and tackle global challenges. The Fund has also sponsored and supported several research and innovation initiatives, such as Research for Impact (R4i), TETFund Alliance for Innovative Research (TETFAIR), and the Innovation Fellowship for Aspiring Inventors and Researchers (i-FAIR) programmes, all targeted at deepening impactful research and uptake of research outcomes with potential for commercialization as a panacea to societal problems. In addition, TETFund has funded the procurement of 3,099,871 library books in beneficiary institutions. The Fund has also sponsored the publication of 845 titled Academic Research Journals projects, and the development of 2,307 Academic Manuscripts into Books. The intervention supports tertiary institutions, and other steps taken by the government have enabled Nigeria to be ranked as one of the six most improved countries in Times Higher Education Rankings between 2021 and 2022. However, despite all these laudable efforts, there is still a huge gap that needs to be addressed, particularly in funding to enable the government to provide the much-needed quality tertiary education, supported by staff development and capacity building, to its citizenry. This is why Ohaegbulem and Chijioke (2023) found that the annual percentage budgetary allocations to the education sector by the Federal Government of Nigeria, from 1960 to 2023, were not in adherence to the UNESCO-recommended benchmarks. Also, for the period (1999-2021), Nigeria's adherence level to the UNESCO-recommended benchmarks was far below those of some other African countries, like Ghana, Kenya, Senegal, South Africa, and Morocco.

In addition, members of staff also encounter financial constraints when sponsored to undertake higher degree programmes such as Master's or Doctor of Philosophy. The sponsorship, which is limited to reimbursement of registration fee, is normally granted for a period of three years. Members of staff in such universities often resort to state scholarships or some other means for financial assistance. This is because at the expiration of this period, any staff who fails to complete the programme is expected to shoulder the financial responsibility until the programme is completed. Also, if a staff abandons a programme after being sponsored, such a staff must pay back the total amount granted as sponsorship. And paying back the money becomes difficult because the amount granted ought to have been spent in the course of study. Sometimes it is impossible for staff to complete a higher degree programme if the training institutions fail to run their courses within the stipulated period, or go on strike for sometimes. The consequence of this inability of academic staff to complete a post-graduate degree is dropping out of the studies.

In some universities within Nigeria, there have been complaints and allegations of favouritism against the management, that it is only members of the management staff that are constantly sponsored to attend international conferences, training and development programmes. For instance, the Nursing Department of ABU Zaria, which has fails to get full accreditation for forty years has been noticed. This was due to the fact that over eighty percent of their lecturers don't have a

Master's and PhD in Nursing Sciences because members of academic staff do acquire their PhD outside their profession due to inadequate sponsorship opportunities and a way of cutting down the cost of studying outside their primary university (Nursing World, 2019). For this study, the researcher reviewed several studies on staff development funding and related issues in personnel management. In all, while staff development funding has been featured in the literature on the tertiary institution (Onwuemele, 2018; Effiong & Effanga 2018, Akighir, et al 2019, Chemutai & Khalili 2022; Gumede, Sithole & Gumede, 2023), influence of existing funding on continuous participation in staff development and the condition of refunding academic staff for staff development participation within universities have not yet received satisfactory scholarly attention. Hence, this study seeks to examine the condition of refunding staff development participation and the influence of existing funding on continuous participation in staff development within Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria.

Research Objectives

The general objective of this study is to find out the extent to which staff development funding can influence continuous participation in staff development among academic staff within Ahmadu Bello University through the following specific objectives:

1. To describe the condition of refund practices for staff development participation in Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria
2. To examine the influence of staff development funding on continuous staff development participation in Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria
3. To find out the number of academic staff who benefited from TETFund in Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, between 2010 and 2024

Empirical Review and Theoretical Framework

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) report on Malaysia (2022), discovered that in 2019, 65% of the levy funds received from employers (USD 140m out of the USD 215m collected in levies) was returned to employers in the form of grants for training; this compared to 62% in 2018 and 67% in 2017. Over the period 2013-2019, the proportion of levy funds returned to employers has decreased; the two-year average over 2013-14 was 79%, dropping to 63% over 2018-19. In 2019, the HRDF had operating expenses of USD 13.2m; two-thirds of this were staff costs, in addition to other recurrent expenses of USD 4.3m (e.g., staff training, the National Human Resource Development Conference, depreciation for property, plant and equipment). Overall, these administration and operational costs equate to about 8% of levy income received in 2019. In 2018 and 2017, 27% and 30%, respectively, of levy funds received from employers (averaging USD 52.3m each year) were transferred to HRDF's Strategic Fund.¹⁶ In 2018, following recommendations from the Human Resource Development Fund's Governance Oversight Committee, the decision was taken to cease the allocation of about 30% of the total levy collected to the Strategic Fund to improve accountability over usage of the levy funds, which are supposed to be utilized by registered employers. In 2019, although the annual report shows that no additional levies were transferred to the Strategic Fund, USD 63.6m was carried forward from 2018 as unspent funds. As of the end of December 2019, the HRDF had accrued USD 13m in unutilized

levies: levies paid by employers who have been deregistered due to the cessation of business or who have not utilized the levies for a period of five years.

Ukabi and Enang (2021), in their study on professional demands of lecturing job on human capacity development: implication for raising professional business educators in Nigerian tertiary institutions where desk method was adopted discovered that despite the enunciated policy frameworks on the professional demands of teaching at all levels in Nigeria, with particular emphasis on raising well motivated and conscientious professional teachers through a continuous strategic human capacity development of teachers to ensure the effective and productive performance of their services, there still exist a plethora of factors inhibiting the achievement of these professional expectations and demands. Some of these factors include but, not limited to the following: Vague and unrealistic policy framework on professionalism of education in Nigeria, lack of commitment to teachers' professional development by lecturers, institutions and government, poor funding of teacher education institutions in the country resulting to lack of qualified manpower and relevant facilities, lack of legislative frameworks on the implementation of education policies and disciplinary measures for those who contravene the policies, multiple regulatory bodies, lack of recognition and prestige that is accorded to other professions, poor conditions of service, lack of motivation, education been used by the political class as a ground for political settlement, lack of fiscal attention, wrong public perception, lack of comparative competitiveness, lack of strategic teachers retraining programmes, lack of institutional and inclusive support systems for staff capacity development programmes, poor or no academic staff mentoring roles, lack of intellectual capacity by some lecturers to develop, the list is inexhaustible. These factors militating against teachers' professional development call for a serious overhaul and frantic efforts to address them.

Hai and Yen (2020) studied the professional development of university lecturers: some views of lecturers studying at the University of Education and used quantitative and qualitative methods simultaneously. A quantitative method was employed, with 45 randomly selected teachers completing an online survey. A qualitative method was used by constructing lanterns and surveying six PhD students who are PhD students. The questionnaire was sent to the lecturers by email at VNU University of Education from February 2019 to April 2019. There are 45 respondents (of 37.5% in total of 120 lecturers) from the lecturers in VNU UEd. Then, the researchers translated and coded all questions before importing them to SPSS 20 software to analyze the data. The main tools used in this study were Descriptive, Correlation, and multiple-response computing. Findings reveal that, for PhD, the main barriers are identified to be the lack of time due to high workload (78.38%), and financial constraints (45.95%). For MSc, financial constraints are the biggest barrier (85.71%). According to the survey, 64.44% PhD and MSc holders confirm that professional and professional development activities are the most valuable when they have experience in their career and are paid by their employers. The results also show that the lack of support from managers/employers and the opportunity to have an appropriate learning experience is not high, with 14.29% of MSc and 16.22% of PhD students. The problem is that the university lecturers are overwhelmed by their assigned tasks and lack financial resources to support their professional development.

Ogunode and Oluseun (2020), in their study on administration of professional development programme in Nigerian higher institutions: challenges and way forward where desk review method

was adopted revealed that inadequate funding of Nigerian higher education institutions is a major problem facing the administration of professional development programs for employees across higher education institutions. Adequate funding is vital for the implementation of the professional development program. Without adequate funding, no professional development program can be fully implemented as planned. Inadequate funding has been a major challenge to the development of higher education institutions in Nigeria. Many programs for higher education institutions, such as the teaching program, research program, and the community service program, have not developed due to poor funding. The professional capacity development program for higher education institutions is not effectively implemented in many higher education institutions across the country due to the poor funding of higher education in Nigeria. The Nigerian government has failed to meet up to 26% of UNESCO recommendations for education in developing countries such as Nigeria.

Reinforcement Theory

Reinforcement theory is the process of influencing behavior by controlling the consequences of the behavior (Skinner, 1953). One of the prominent figures of Reinforcement theory is B.F Skinner. His work is based on the principle behaviour is influenced by its consequences. Reinforcement theory maintains that you can change someone's behaviour by using reinforcement, punishment, and extinction. Rewards are used to strengthen the behaviour you want and punishments are used to dissuade the behaviour you do not want. Extinction is a means to halt someone from performing a learned behaviour. The technical concept for these processes is known as 'operant conditioning' (Skinner, 1953). The reinforcement theory is suitable in expatiating the influence of funding on staff development participation and has the power to dissect the challenges of staff development within the university system in Nigeria.

The applicability of reinforcement theory to funding for staff development participation shows that the level of funding for staff development is tied to positive and negative reinforcements. This is because adequate funding is likely to increase participation in continuous staff development, which signifies positive reinforcement, especially in areas such as attracting research grants, incentives, adequate sponsorship, the availability of facilities, excellent rankings, excellent accreditation, etc. However, inadequate funding is likely to reduce sustained participation in staff development, which can signify negative reinforcement, including inadequate sponsorship, career stagnation, poor accreditation, poor ranking, etc. Reinforcement theory may not adequately capture external factors, such as inflation, which often create issues with poor retirement funding and underutilization of funding, thereby negatively affecting staff development participation. However, the strength of reinforcement theory is that it tends to increase the drive to reduce the constraints of staff development funding and exposes the cost of inadequate funding of staff development within the university system.

METHODOLOGY

The location for this study is Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria. Zaria Town, the seat of the University, has its own long tradition of learning dating back centuries. Ahmadu Bello University is home to 16 Faculties (Administration, Arts, Education, Business School, Law and, Social

Sciences constitute Complex A, B, & C) (Clinical Sciences, Agriculture, Allied Health Sciences, Engineering, Environmental Design, Life Sciences, Basic Medical Sciences, Pharmaceutical Sciences, Physical Sciences and Veterinary Medicine constitute (Complex D, E, G & H). Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria was selected because inadequate staff development participation by academic staff is hindering the successful accreditation exercise of some departments in Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria. The target population of the study comprised all academic staff at Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria. The total number of academic staff at Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, is 2,433.

For this research, multi-stage cluster sampling, purposive sampling, and captive sampling were used. Cluster sampling involved selecting larger groups, called clusters, which were 16 faculties, and then distributing questionnaires to 1000 staff members through captive sampling, where respondents were selected within their respective faculties. Seventeen members were purposively chosen for interviews, and four members of Ahmadu Bello University management were purposively selected for key informant interviews. The study respected ethical principles such as informed consent, respect for persons, non-maleficence, beneficence, and justice throughout the process. Quantitative data were analyzed using frequency counts, percentages, and binary logistic regression (Yes or No variables) with SPSS version 23, while qualitative data were analyzed thematically according to the research objectives. Additionally, secondary data were presented with pie charts and bar charts to illustrate funding trends by TETFUND at Ahmadu Bello University Zaria from 2010 to 2024.

Table 3.1 Sampled Population from Faculties in Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria

S/N	Faculties/Complexes	No. of Staff	No. Returned Questionnaires
1.	Humanities (Complex A, B, & C)	776	393
2.	Sciences (Complex D, E, G & H)	1657	607
3.	Total	2433	1000

Table 3.2: Matrix of Interviewees Selected from Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria

S/N	In-depth Interview Respondents	Number of Participants
1.	Male Academic Staff	9
2.	Female Academic Staff	8
S/N	Key Informants	Number of Participants
1.	Director of Academic Planning	1
2.	Deputy Director Research	1
3.	Deputy Director Quality Assurance	1
4.	Dean Post-Graduate School	1
Total		21

FINDINGS

This session presents the findings in the following subsections: socio-demographic characteristics of respondents, the condition of refunding staff development, influence of funding on continuous participation in staff development and the number of academic staff who have benefitted from TETfund between 2010 and 2024.

Table 4:1 Socio-Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

Faculties	Frequency	Percentage
Humanities (Complex A, B, & C)	393	39.3%
Sciences (Complex D, E, G & H)	607	60.7%
Total	1000	100.0
Sex	Frequency	Percentage
Male	694	69.4%
Female	302	30.2%
No Response	4	0.4%
Total	1000	100.0

As shown in Table 4.1, the quantitative data were collected from different categories of respondents. Regarding the academic staff's faculties, the majority of respondents, 60.7%, were from the sciences, while 39.3% were from the humanities. This is not surprising because there are more science-based faculties than humanities-based faculties at Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria. In the sex category, most respondents, representing 69.4%, were male, while 30.2% were female. This indicates that the majority of participants in the study were male. This is also expected because there are more male academic staff than female academic staff in the study area.

Condition of Refunding Academic Members' Staff for Participating in Staff Development

Table 4.2: Views of Respondents on Awareness of Funding Opportunities for Staff Development

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Aware of funding opportunities for staff development	866	86.6%
Not aware of funding opportunities for staff development	129	12.9%
No Response	5	0.5%
Total	1000	100.0

Table 4.2, found out of the 86.6% respondents representing the majority of the academic staff believed that they were aware of funding opportunities for staff development, while 12.9% maintained that they are not aware of funding opportunities for staff development. This result is not surprising because academic staff are expected to be aware of funding opportunities for staff development. However, the reason why other academic staff are not aware of funding opportunities for staff development may be due to a lack of information on available information. The above

agreement was supported by evidence from IDI when the majority of the respondents maintained that they are aware of funding opportunities for staff development, but sometimes there are no adequate information on these funding opportunities for staff development. Accordingly, a Lecturer I staff from faculty of Engineering explained how lack of information on funding opportunities is not encouraging equal participation in staff development. In his words:

Yes, academic staff is aware of staff development funding opportunities, but for I'm more interested in quick dissemination of in information. This is why you will see that not all departments are giving equal opportunity in terms of accessing this information that these are those staff development opportunities for your staff and can put in for it. At times you just in the university, a colleague of yours will just tell you he has secure this and you will ask when this funding opportunity came out. And when you find out the justification spreading the information is maybe there are limited opportunity. So because there is limited opportunity everybody may not get the funding opportunity.

Table 4.3: Views of Respondents on Source of funding for Staff Development in the University

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
University management	103	10.3%
Government	85	8.5%
TETfund	198	19.8%
Donation	79	7.9%
Grants	127	12.7%
Scholarship	81	8.1%
Self-sponsorship	186	18.6%
Partnership/linkages	109	10.9
No respond	2	0.2%
Total	1000	100.0

Table 4.3 shows that 19.8% of the respondents in Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, representing the majority maintained that TETfund is the common source of funding for staff development; while 7.9% of the respondents stressed that donation from alumni or stakeholders are the source of funding for staff development. This is an indication that the university is upholding contemporary sources of funding for staff development but are yet to explore emerging source of funding through collaboration with private firm, non-governmental organization among others. Additional accounts from the majority of the IDI respondents slightly supported the above views, as the majority of the academic staff interviewed saw the need for the university management and academic staff to diversify sources of funding for staff development within the university. For instance, a director research unit of Ahmadu Bello University stated the following:

In real sense to be frank, I think academic staff should only fund themselves in staff development once in while because of limited sources of funding. Because we all know the take home pay of academic staff. however, even the university are having problem in paying electricity bill. So there is no

dedicated amount for research. What we need to do as university management is to see how we can get more funding into the university especially through the private sector. Banks, major company and others have not been giving anything back into the university especially in the area of research. Again issue of collaboration and issue of grant writing we need to work on it. Only TETFUND is giving us fund and as we aware the competition is too much and only few people tend to benefit.

Table 4.4: Views of Respondents on Sufficiency of Funding for Staff Development within the University

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Funding is very sufficient	114	11.4%
Funding is sufficient	176	17.6%
Funding is not Sufficient	202	20.2%
Funding is highly not sufficient	505	50.5%
No Response	3	0.3%
Total	1000	100.0

Table 4.4 indicates that 70.7% of the respondents, representing the majority of the academic staff, affirmed that funding is not sufficient for their participation in staff development within the university system, while 29.0% of the respondents believed that funding is either very sufficient or sufficient for their participation in staff development within the university system. This is a clear indication that participation in staff development is grossly underfunded. The implication of this result is that inadequate funding for staff development may be due to poor government intervention, competition among staff due to limited resources, poor internal revenue generation, and poor retirement funding, among others. Additional information from the IDIs indicates that the majority of respondents agree that funding for participation in staff development is insufficient. The Dean of the post-graduate school stated the following:

Poor utilization and poor retirement are absolutely affecting the availability of funding for staff development in the university. Funding for international conferences appears no longer available because the university's unable to retire previous allocations to access current or present allocations. And that was actually informed by the inability of staff members who benefited from such a program to actually retire on time. In fact, it has gotten so bad that the university now resorts to deducting what was given to staff from their salaries because of their refusal to actually retire, which is making it not possible for the university to access what has been allocated to it for other members of the university to use. There is also a problem of under-utilization of funding. Some staff will apply for these conference grants, and they will be awarded, but after getting the money, they will decide to divert it to a different use. In fact, we have had stories that people collect conference attendance grants using them to take additional wives, some use them to erect buildings, and so many other things. That is seriously frustrating this effort of funding. If you are giving

money to attend a conference to build your capacity, to acquire more knowledge, and you end up using it to do a non-educational project. Definitely, it will be constraining and affecting the very objectives for which the granting of conference attendance money was meant for.

The director of the research unit also agrees that inadequate funding for staff development is a result of poor retirement. But he stressed that, to further affirm, the lack of understanding of the guidelines for staff development funding intervention is also contributing to inadequate funding for staff development. In his words:

Yes, thank you for this question. In fact, currently ABU was banned from accessing some of these travel grants and others. Because a lot of people have not retired, this grants. And it goes back to the issue of a lack of understanding of the guidelines. The guidelines must be studied by academic staff. For instance, if I collect a hundred naira, how do I retire it? How do I retire what is meant for transport, what is meant for regent, and what is meant for publication? This is clear: immediately, you are done. You are supposed to write a report of funds to the vice chancellor through your head of department, and state your expenses clearly, with attached receipts and evidence. And this lack of retirement has affected us negatively. In fact, we were banned almost a year ago; we were only unbanned until the end of this year, hoping to retire the fund.

Table 4.5: Views of Respondents on Accessibility of Funding Opportunities

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Equal Access to Funding Opportunities	202	20.2%
No Equal Access to Funding Opportunities	797	79.7%
No Response	1	0.1%
Total	1000	100.0

Table 4.5 above indicates that the majority of respondents, representing 79.7% of the survey, agreed that academic staff do not have equal access to funding opportunities for staff development, while 20.2% stated that academic staff have equal access to such opportunities. This clearly describes the extent to which the university system is creating disparity in funding opportunities for staff development among academic staff. Additional evidence from IDIs slightly aligned with the above agreement. According to one of the respondents, who is the director of research at Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, there is no equal access to funding opportunities for participation in staff development due to the standard of proposal and available funding. In his words:

There is no equal access to staff development funding because the criteria for the selection for funding differ. Again, funding local staff development is competitive. And for any staff to benefit from funding, the staff must a very good proposal that will be examined by a panel. Again, the selection of academic staff also depends on funding. For instance, if it is ten million naira

and sixty staff applied, all you can do is select members of staff that the available fund can accommodate. The criteria for the local grants is that you must apply, get a good topic, write a good proposal, and have an appropriate supervisor and methodology. For TETFUND, they send a call for proposal usually two to three months before the date, and they have guidelines that you must follow. TETFUND is more interested in whether a research proposal will meet the standard everywhere. This is also competitive; let us say they have thirty slots, and you will see seven hundred applicants. So, the competition is the major issue.

One academic staff member of the faculty of Life Sciences also agrees that there is no equal access to funding opportunities for staff development due to the prioritization of specializations that are currently without adequate expertise, and no one is capable of supervising such specializations within the departments. In his words:

No, we don't have equal access to staff development funding opportunities. From the information I got, the reason for unequal funding opportunities is that the inequality is not actually the fault of the university but the funding bodies. Because they put priority on the area of specialization, they want the funding to go to. Another criterion is that staff in training should not leave the university for specialization available at the primary assignment. In some instances, where the specialization of staff in training is not available in the department of primary assignment, completion can also disqualify such a candidate due to inadequate funding.

Table 4.6: Views of Respondents on Criteria for Nomination for Funding Opportunities

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Length of Service	153	15.3%
Academic Qualification	232	23.2%
Good Conduct	108	10.8%
Management Discretion	455	45.5%
Gender	45	4.5%
No Response	7	0.7%
Total	1000	100.0

As shown in Table 4.6, 45.5% of respondents, representing the majority, see management discretion as the criterion for nominating staff for funding development, while 4.5% maintain that gender is the criterion for funding staff development. The above views imply that it is the university management that decides the selection of academic staff who will benefit from funding opportunities within Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria. The above agreement was supported by evidence from IDI, as the majority of the respondents believe that management discretion does not provide equal opportunities for staff development funding. Accordingly, a Senior Lecturer from the faculty of Arts explained how the unequal selection is done:

Of course, there is a belief that funding opportunity is skewed towards the sciences to a large degree. The management believes in its wisdom to develop those in the sciences. Such a belief is affecting the university, especially when funding is not distributed evenly, which means some courses are better than others. However, priorities are often given to new courses, whether in the sciences or the humanities. But the funding needs to go around. There is a need to conduct comparative analyses to identify programs that are falling short in terms of funding for staff development. Hence, allocation should be given to them. Not in line with managerial discretion, which skews it toward science-based courses.

However, the university management's director of quality assurance disagrees with the above position, pointing out that the funding agency often determines the selection process. In his words:

There is a guideline for the selection of staff for funding opportunities. One is the availability of funds by TETFUND, two, your specialization should be the one that cannot be supervised in ABU, that is, when you will look elsewhere. And three templates of the funding agency. For example, when I did my phd studies, it was sponsored by an agency in Germany. And the money is specifically meant for those in agriculture, and even in agriculture, those who specialize in environmental chemistry. Hence, there is no way that money will be used to sponsor a degree in law or a degree in medicine. There tends to be a clear cut that this fund is meant for this, and you cannot go outside that. If your area of study is not among the areas the donor wants to sponsor, the university cannot recommend you for that.

Table 4.7: Views of Respondents on Acceptability of Self-funding of Staff Development

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
It is Right for Respondents to Fund Staff Development	127	12.7%
Not Right for Respondents to Fund Staff Development	870	87.0%
No Response	3	0.3%
Total	1000	100.0

Furthermore, in Table 4.7, it was also found out from the respondents (87%) that the majority of the academic staff believed that it is not right for them to fund their participation in staff development, while 12.7% maintained that it is right for academic staff to fund their participation in staff development. This result is not surprising, as the rising cost of living will make it difficult for academic staff to fund their participation in staff development adequately. The above agreement was supported by evidence from IDI, in which the majority of respondents maintained that it is not right to fund their participation in staff development. Accordingly, a Lecturer from the faculty of Education explained how it is impossible to fund their participation in staff development. In his words:

It is not good for academic staff to fund their participation in staff development. I think it is only in this part of the world that individuals are used to financing research. But research is not for individuals; it is for everyone. In my research, I will generate ideas and use my time to benefit humanity. I think that I have played my role in society. So why will I use what I'm supposed to eat to finance research? I think it is only in Nigeria that individuals usually finance research. In the UK, for instance, it is the government, third parties, and companies that fund research.

Table 4.8: Views of Respondents on Percentage of Staff Development Funded by the University

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
None	344	34.4%
Less than 20 %	160	16.0%
21% to 50 %	167	16.7%
51% and Above	324	32.4%
No Response	5	0.5%
Total	1000	100.0

Table 4.8 shows that the majority of respondents at Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, representing 34%, maintained that they have never benefited from funding for participation in staff development, while only 16% of respondents stated that the university and funding agencies funded less than 20% of their participation in staff development. This estimation shows the university and funding agencies made efforts to fund academic staff participation in staff development, but the funding is inadequate and devoid of equitable distribution of funding for staff development. The above position was supported by evidence from the IDI, in which the majority of respondents reported never having been funded, and those who had been funded maintained that the funding was not enough. Accordingly, one graduate assistant staff member from the Faculty of Arts explained that he has funded his participation in staff development. In his words

I have never benefited from funding for staff development. I'm the one sponsoring my participation in staff development. And this is very bad, considering what we are facing in the country, like low income, and life is already very hard. It is a pity that expenses are already on the high side, and there are a lot of things we need to take good care of. For me to continue funding my participation in staff development is destroying, and it is discouraging as a family man. I need to provide for my family before considering paying for my participation in staff development.

However, the director of Quality Assurance in the university management disagrees with the above position, pointing out that academic staff can only be refunded after funding their participation in staff development, and that they must seek approval from the university management before funding their participation. In his words:

Well, before you fund yourself, you must have gotten approval from the university management. If you go on your own without any approval, you risk not getting a refund from the university. And there is no way the university will approve your participation in staff development without money on the ground. Once they approve and the money is available, you will apply and will definitely be paid. As far as the university management is concerned, if somebody travels to participate in a conference or any staff development, and later he now writes the university management for a refund, that staff will not be refunded, as he did not seek permission.

Table 4.9: Views of Respondents on Refund for Self-Funding-Staff Development

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Refunded for the funding of staff development	229	22.9 %
No refund for funding of staff development	762	76.2 %
No Response	9	0.9%
Total	1000	100.0

Table 4.5.8 above indicates that the majority of respondents, representing 76.6% of the survey, agreed that they have never been refunded for funding their participation in staff development, while 22.9% stated that they were refunded for funding their participation in staff development. This clearly describes the extent of the university's underfunding in Nigeria. Additional evidence from IDI aligned with the above agreement. According to one of the respondents, a lecturer from the Faculty of Life Science, they have never been refunded for participating in staff development. In his words:

I have never been refunded for my participation in staff development. You see, the fact that some of us believe that the university should make some of this fund available for us to participate in conferences, seminars, and workshops outside this country, but the money cannot go round. So what is available in the purse is what they send to the department. And when it comes to that, the department needs to select who is eligible to go and who is not eligible to go. So it is my belief and hope that one day it will get to my turn to be able to benefit from the funding.

Influence of Staff Development Funding on Continuous Staff Development Participation

Table 4.10: Views of Respondents on the Existence of Funding Harming Continuous Staff Development

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Existing Funding will Harm Staff Development	625	62.5%
Existing Funding will not Harm Staff Development	372	37.2%
No Response	3	0.3%
Total	1000	100.0

Table 4.10 indicates that the majority of the respondents, representing 62.5% believed that existing funding will harm continuous participation in staff development, while 37.2% maintained that existing funding will not harm continuous participation in staff development. This is not surprising, as part of the rationale for staff development is career advancement. Hence, academic staff may seek alternative sources of funding to support their participation in staff development and ensure steady career advancement. Additional accounts from the majority of the IDI respondents supported the above views, as they all agreed that the current funding will harm continuous participation in staff development. According to a Senior Lecturer from the faculty of Veterinary Medicine, the following:

A definite decline in funding will affect continuous participation in staff development. Like now, in the current situation we are in we are fighting for survival. For example, I received two hundred thousand in my account. My household needs one hundred and eighty thousand naira to survive. And then the conference needs one hundred and twenty thousand naira. If I were to choose, I would pick my home. So, definitely, it will decline participation in staff development. Our salary is poor, and we don't have the surplus we need to participate in conferences. Because now in Nigeria, the minimum you can spend for local conferences is eighty to a hundred thousand naira. So, where will the surplus or excess come from to participate in staff development?

Table 4.11: Views of Respondents on Existing Funding Sustaining Continuous Staff Development

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Existing Funding will Sustain Staff Development	257	25.7%
Existing Funding will not Sustain Staff Development	739	73.9%
No Response	4	0.4%
Total	1000	100.0

Table 4.11 above clearly shows that the majority of the respondents, representing, 73.9% agreed that the existing funding will not sustain continuous participation in staff development, while 25.7% maintained that the existing funding will sustain continuous participation in staff development. This means that after the career growth of academic staff, they may be dissuaded from continuous participation in staff development, and others who experience stagnation may leave the university. Additional evidence from the majority of IDI respondents confirmed the above and maintained that the current funding will not sustain continuous participation in staff development. A Lecturer I from the faculty of Agriculture has this stay:

The current situation will never sustain the continuous participation in staff development, such as conferences. You will agree with me that if you participated in the conference over the last two years and you participated this year, you will realize that the level of participation among academic staff is dwindling and seriously reducing. This is to say, if things continue as they are this year, no one will participate in conferences.

Table 4.12: Cross Tabulation from Humanities and Sciences by Percentage of Staff Development Funded by the University

Variables	Humanities		Sciences	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
None	235	23.5%	109	10.9%
Less than 20 %	74	7.4%	86	8.6%
21% to 50 %	65	6.5%	102	10.2%
51% and Above	19	1.9%	305	30.5%
No Response			5	0.5%
Total	393	39.3	607	60.7%

From table 4.12 above, 23.5% of the respondents representing more than the average amount of the academic staff from humanities have not benefited from staff development funding, while 30.5% of the respondents representing more than the average amount of academic staff from sciences have benefited from more than 51% funding of their staff development participation. This means that science-based faculties have benefited more as a result of partnerships and linkages with donor agencies, overseas universities, and research institutes. Again, the implication of this result may be unrelated to the view that the university management tends to favour academic staff from sciences over academic staff from humanities when it comes to beneficiaries of staff development funding, due to the strength of the sciences and the high number of science-based faculties. Again, given that the last three vice chancellors at Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, were from the sciences, some academic staff from the humanities believed that there is an ongoing element of the winner-takes-all in staff development funding.

Table 4.13: Binary Logistics Regression on Existing Funding by Staff Development Participation

Variables	B	S.E	Wald	Sig.	Exp (B)
Funding Harming Staff Development	1.081	0.191	32.19	0.001	2.95
Funding Sustaining Staff Development	0.931	0.221	17.81	0.001	2.54

Based on Table 4.13 above, the binary logistics regression shows that the relationship between existing funding and staff development is statistically significant, which suggests that there is a significant level of influence of funding on staff development participation by academic staff where existing funding harming staff development participation has a P value of 0.001, and existing funding sustaining staff development has a P value of 0.001. The implication of this result is that a decline in funding will harm continuous staff development participation, as many constraints will arise when there is inadequate funding to facilitate participation in staff development within the university system. Again, increasing funding will sustain continuous participation in staff development, as adequate funding will ensure an enabling environment and adequate facilities that encourage participation in staff development within the university system.

Number of Academic Staff Sponsored by TETFund in Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, between 2010 and 2024

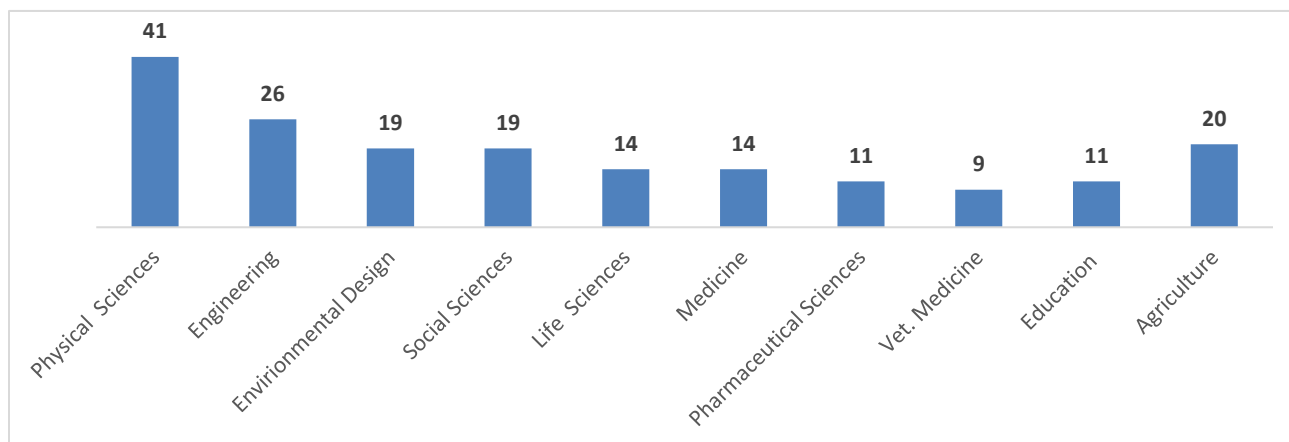


Figure 4.5.1: Distribution of Top Beneficiaries of TETFund Sponsorship by Faculties in Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, Between 2010 and 2024

Figure 4.5.1 shows that nine out of sixteen faculties have benefited more from staff development funding sponsored by TETFund between 2010 and 2024 at Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria. The breakdown revealed that from 2010 to 2024, forty-one academic staff from the Faculty of Physical Sciences, constituting the majority of beneficiaries, were sponsored by TETFund, while only the Faculty of Law has one beneficiary of TETFund sponsorship at Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria. This indicates that academic staff in science-based faculties have benefited more from TETFund sponsorship than those in the humanities. This may be related to the fact that there are more science-based faculties than humanities in Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria.

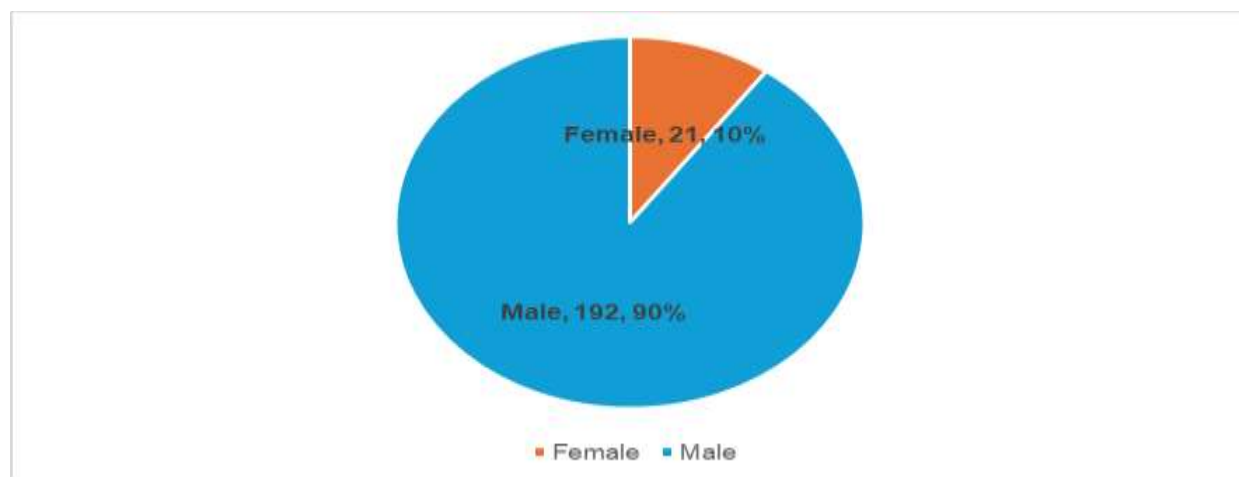


Figure 4.5.2: Gender Distribution of Academic Staff Sponsored by TETFund in Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, between 2010 and 2024

Figure 4.5.2 shows the gender distribution of academic staff who have benefited from staff development funding by TETFund between 2010 and 2024 at Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria. Out of 213 beneficiaries, only 21, or 10%, were female academic staff, while 192, or 90%, were male academic staff. This is not surprising because there are more male academic staff than female academic staff at Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria.

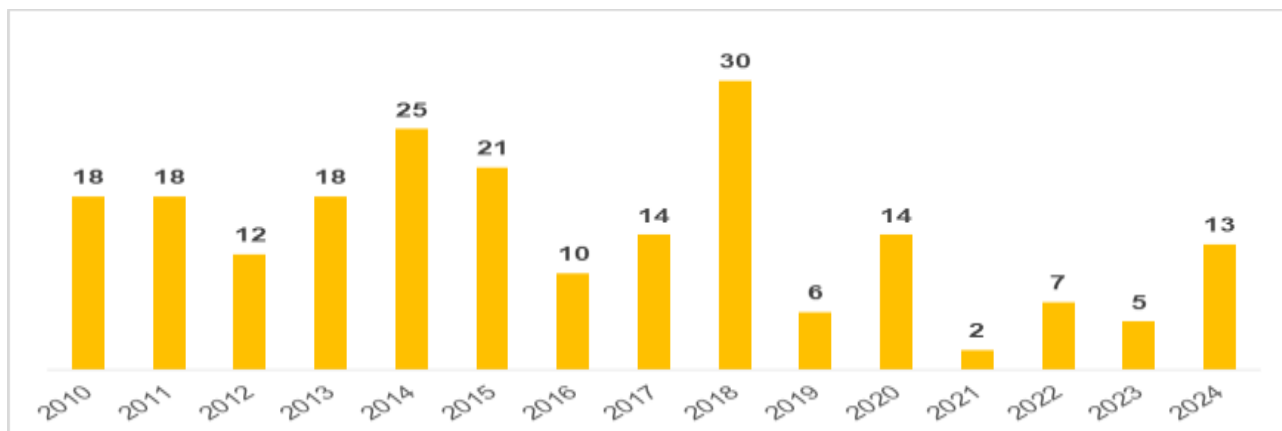


Figure 4.5.3: The Number of Academic Staff Sponsored by TETFUND on a Yearly Basis in Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, Between 2010 and 2024

Figure 4.5.3 shows that in 2018, 30 academic staff members, who represented the majority of those participating in staff development, were sponsored by TETFund at Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria. This marks the highest number of TETFund sponsorship between 2010 and 2024. In contrast, only two academic staff members benefited from TETFund in 2021. This indicates that from 2010 to 2024, 30 beneficiaries received funding in 2018, representing the highest sponsorship opportunities, while only two academic staff were sponsored in 2021, representing the lowest. This variation may be due to the amount of funding intervention from TETFund and the types of staff development sponsored in 2018 and 2021.

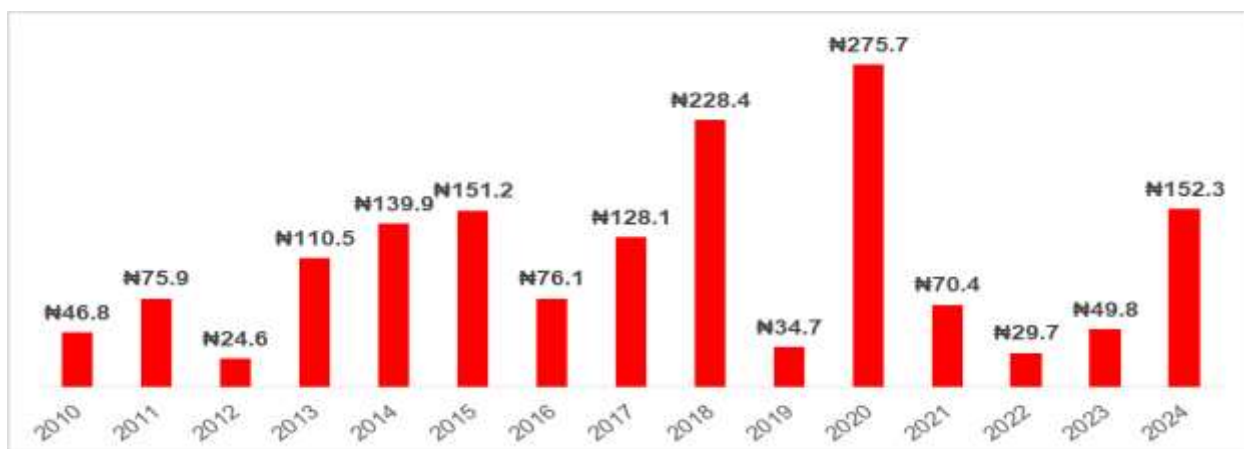


Figure 4.5.4: Trend on the Amount of Money Spent on Staff Development in Ahmadu Bello University between 2010 and 2024 (Millions of Naira)

Figure 4.5.4. shows that in the year 2020, 275.7 million naira was spent on staff development, constituting the highest amount of money spent on staff development between the years 2010 and 2024 in Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, while 24.6 million naira was spent on staff development in the year 2012, constituting the lowest amount spent between 2010 and 2024. This signifies that funding for staff development is fluctuating between increasing and decreasing interventions, making it difficult to establish a consistent number of beneficiaries for staff development funding at Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

With reference to the influence of funding on continuous participation in staff development, the entire Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria has continued to bear the brunt of inadequate funding. For instance, this study revealed that the majority of academic staff are yet to be refunded for funding their continuous participation in staff development. Again, this study revealed that science-based faculties have benefitted more than humanity-based faculties from TETFund sponsorship. Also, male academic staff have benefitted more from TETFund than female academic staff in Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, and the binary logistics regression shows that there is significant relation between funding and continuous staff development participation. This signifies that adequate funding is probably going to influence continuous staff development and inadequate funding is likely to dissuade continuous staff development participation within the university system. These findings are in congruence with the discovery of Ward & Selvester (2012) and Olayiwola (2012). For instance, according to Ward & Selvester (2012), facilitating faculty professional development and improving teaching practices have been discussed for a long time in the US higher education. In the current environment, with growing attention to accountability and decreased budget, instructional development for faculty has become a challenge. According to Olayiwola (2012), the funding formula for allocation to universities by the NUC has been reviewed constantly based on several factors, such as generation of universities (that is year of establishment), number of students enrol per degree program, number of academic and non-academic staff and ration of science and humanities-based disciplines, as a result of these factors, the funding formula keep on changing. This has a negative impact on the sustainability and effectiveness of staff development on universities in Nigeria. These findings are similar to the assumptions of reinforcement theory on the link between funding by staff development participation. A functional university management must ensure adequate funding which may be achieved through internally generated revenue and alternative source of funding for the facilitation of staff development participation in the university. Failure to have functional university management that will provide adequate funding may harm staff development participation within the university. And inadequate funding can create problems like low research output, career stagnation, poor ranking, poor accreditation and contributing negatively to the quest of national development.

Conclusion

It has been observed that the significance of staff development funding within the university system, including Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria cannot be overemphasized. Based on this, inadequate staff development funding within the university system may dissuade continuous staff development participation. It is impossible to attain adequate staff strength, full accreditation, an excellent

ranking, increased visibility, and greater grant attraction within the university system, which is characterized by inadequate staff development funding opportunities. Therefore, strategies such as improved partnerships and linkages, and the eradication of disparities in nomination for funding opportunities must be implemented by University management, as these strategies were found to help mitigate inadequate staff development funding at Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria.

Recommendations

1. The management of Ahmadu Bello University must improve its strategy of partnerships and linkages in order to reduce the cost of staff development participation.
2. The university management must encourage grant training in order to attract funding for research so as to investigate social problems, suggest ways of addressing these problems, and develop a strategy for national development.
3. The university management must strengthen its internally generated revenue through alumni, intervention, donations, production goods, and services as a way of improving research funding and refunding for academic staff to continuously be able to participate in staff development.
4. The management of the university must ensure equitable distribution and allocation of funding opportunities so as to make sure all academics have an equal opportunity of being selected as beneficiaries of funding available for staff development.
5. The Government and management of TETFund must ensure that the annual allocation of funding for staff development is at par with the level of inflation in Nigeria so as to maintain consistency in the number of beneficiaries selected for TETFund sponsorship.

REFERENCES

- Ahmed, M., & Malumfashi, S. L. (2024). *An examination of staff development among academic staff within Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria* (PhD thesis). Bayero University Kano.
- Akighir, S. T., Iyaji, G. O., & Mbayuav, T. S. (2019). Influence of training opportunities on staff job performance in public universities in Benue State, Nigeria. *BSUJEM*, 1(1).
- Babagana, S. A. (2014). Influence of training and development on lecturers' performance in Nigerian polytechnics. *International Journal of Finance and Management in Practice*, 2(1), 11–20.
- Chemutai, L. P., & Khalili, O. E. (2022). Influence of staff training and development on academic performance of lecturers at Rongo University, Kenya. *International Academic Journal of Social Sciences and Education*, 2(3), 74–93.
- Echono, S. S. T. (2024). *Funding of tertiary education in Nigeria* (Paper presented at the 26th Seminar of the Nigerian Academy of Education, Conference Hall, National Commission for Colleges of Education, Abuja, May 8, 2024).

- Effiong, U. O., & Effanga, E. M. (2018). Professional development and lecturers' job effectiveness in universities in South-South geo-political zone of Nigeria. *Journal of Education and Practice*, 9(12), 123.
- Gumede, P. R., Sithole, M. P., & Gumede, D. (2023). Lecturers' perspectives of pedagogical training initiatives at a university of technology in KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa. *South African Journal of Higher Education*, 37(5), 221–236. <https://doi.org/10.20853/37-5-5287>
- Halidu, S. (2015). The impact of training and development on workers' productivity in some selected Nigeria universities. *International Journal of Public Administration and Management Research*, 3(1), 2234–2350.
- Hai, P. T. T., & Yen, D. T. H. (2020). Professional development of university lecturers: Some views of lecturers. *Ho Chi Minh City University of Education Journal of Science*, 17(5), 844–855.
- Nursing World. (2019, September 27). *Restoration of accreditation to the Department of Nursing, ABU Zaria: Facts, fallacies and kudos by UGONSA Northern Zone*.
- Ogunode, N. J., & Oluseun, D. J. (2020). Administration of professional development programme in Nigerian higher institutions: Challenges and way forward. *Intercathedra*. <https://doi.org/10.17306/J.INTERCATHEDRA.2020.00102>
- Ohaegbulem, E. U., & Chijioke, S. E. (2023). On Nigeria's budgetary allocations to the education sector (1960–2023) in view of UNESCO's benchmarks. *International Journal of Mathematics and Statistics Studies*, 11(4), 32–44.
- Onwuemele, A. (2018). University–community engagement in Nigeria: Evidence from selected universities. *Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences*, 9(5).
- Omar, R., Ab Rashid, R., Mohamad, A., & Yusof, N. (2017). A review of challenges for professional development of Malaysian teachers. *International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences*, 7(7), 809.
- Tertiary Education Trust Fund. (2013). *Interventions within tertiary institutions in Nigeria*.
- Ukabi, O. B., & Enang, B. E. (2021). Professional demands of lecturing job on human capacity development: Implication for raising professional business educators in Nigerian tertiary institutions. *International Journal of Research in Education and Sustainable Development*, 1(5).
- UNESCO. (2022). *Human Resource Development Fund (Pembangunan Sumber Manusia Berhad – PSMB): Global review of training funds country briefs 117 Malaysia*.
- Ward, H. C., & Selvester, P. M. (2012). Faculty learning communities: Improving teaching in higher education. *Educational Studies*, 38(1), 111–121.