

STRENGTHENING ACADEMIC PLANNING UNITS FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT OF NIGERIAN UNIVERSITIES: A REVIEW OF STRATEGIC INTERVENTIONS

By

¹ Niyi Jacob Ogunode PhD, ² Godwin Ndubuisi Ahaotu PhD, ³ Danjuma Kudu Abdullahi, ⁴ Magai Sarah, ⁵ Lydia Ebio Abashi, ⁶ Iliya-Meshwu Patience Akimki, ⁷ Agwor Nathan, ⁸ Shimfe Harry Ande, ⁹ Wama Pajo, ¹⁰ Mary Danladi, ¹¹ Josephine Nayi, ¹² Zakka Legyen Bako, ¹³ Aji Adimbo Agyo, ¹⁴ Mamuda Haliru, ¹⁵ Aminu Ahmad Abubakar

Correspondence/Lead Author: niyijacobogunode@gmail.com

¹⁻¹⁵ Academic Planning Unit, Federal University, Wukari, Taraba State, Nigeria.

Abstract

Academic Planning Units play a central role in promoting effective governance, quality assurance, institutional planning, academic programme development, and sustainable growth in universities. Despite their strategic importance, many Academic Planning Units in Nigerian universities continue to face challenges such as inadequate funding, poor infrastructure, limited digitalisation, shortage of professionally trained academic planners, weak career progression opportunities, and poor implementation of institutional Academic Briefs. These challenges have constrained their capacity to support evidence-based decision-making and efficient university administration. This paper reviews strategic interventions for strengthening Academic Planning Units to enhance the sustainable development of Nigerian universities. Specifically, the study examines adequate funding, provision of modern infrastructure, digitalisation of planning operations, professionalisation and career development of academic planners, merit-based leadership appointments, and strict adherence to the implementation of university Academic Briefs. The study adopted a systematic literature review approach by analysing relevant journal articles, books, policy documents, reports of the National Universities Commission, and other credible scholarly publications. The reviewed literature indicates that well-funded, professionally managed, technologically driven, and adequately equipped Academic Planning Units significantly improve institutional planning, quality assurance, academic programme management, accreditation performance, and strategic decision-making. The paper concludes that strengthening Academic Planning Units is indispensable for achieving sustainable university development in Nigeria. It recommends increased funding, investment in digital technologies and infrastructure, professional career development for academic planners, merit-based appointment of unit heads, and strict implementation of university Academic Briefs to improve institutional effectiveness and global competitiveness.

Keywords: Academic Planning Unit; University Education; Sustainable Development; Academic Planning; Strategic Planning; Nigerian Universities; Digitalisation; Higher Education.

1.0 Introduction

University education occupies a strategic position in the socioeconomic, political, scientific, and technological development of every nation. Universities are established to generate knowledge through research, disseminate knowledge through teaching, preserve knowledge through documentation, and apply knowledge through community service. They also serve as centres for innovation, manpower development, entrepreneurship, leadership training, and national development. In the twenty-first century, universities are expected to produce competent graduates, promote cutting-edge research, support industrial development, and contribute to sustainable national growth. Consequently, effective university administration and planning have become indispensable for achieving these objectives.

Despite the enormous contributions of universities to national development, many universities, particularly in developing countries such as Nigeria, face numerous challenges that hinder the attainment of their mandates. These challenges include inadequate funding, poor physical infrastructure, rapid growth in student enrolment, shortage of qualified academic staff, weak institutional planning, poor data management, ineffective implementation of institutional policies, declining educational quality, unstable government policies, inadequate use of information and communication technology, and increasing demands for accountability by stakeholders. These challenges have made effective planning and evidence-based decision-making more important than ever before. To address these institutional planning and academic development challenges, universities according to Ogunode and Musa (2022) were directed by National Universities Commission to establish Academic Planning Units as specialised administrative units responsible for coordinating academic planning activities and ensuring orderly institutional growth. Academic Planning Units provide technical support to university management in strategic planning, academic programme development, institutional research, quality assurance, accreditation coordination, data collection and analysis, resource planning, enrolment projections, implementation of institutional policies, preparation of statutory reports, and monitoring compliance with regulatory standards. Through these responsibilities, the units contribute significantly to institutional efficiency, quality improvement, and sustainable university development.

The establishment and development of Academic Planning Units in Nigeria are closely linked to the expansion of university education and the increasing need for systematic institutional planning. Following the rapid growth of Nigerian universities in the 1970s and the establishment of the National Universities Commission as the regulatory agency for university education, universities were encouraged to establish Academic Planning Units to strengthen institutional management, coordinate programme development, facilitate accreditation, prepare Academic

Briefs and Master Plans, and ensure compliance with national minimum academic standards. Over the years, the responsibilities of these units have expanded beyond routine planning to include institutional ranking, quality assurance, data management, strategic plan development, performance monitoring, internationalisation initiatives, and digital information management. Notwithstanding their strategic importance, many Academic Planning Units in Nigerian universities continue to experience inadequate funding, obsolete infrastructure, insufficient digital technologies, shortage of professionally trained academic planners, weak career progression opportunities, and poor adherence to institutional Academic Briefs. These limitations reduce their capacity to support effective university governance and sustainable institutional development. Addressing these challenges has therefore become imperative for improving the quality, competitiveness, and global relevance of Nigerian universities. It is against this background that this review examines strategic interventions for strengthening Academic Planning Units in Nigerian universities.

2.0 Conceptual Terms

2.1 Concept of Academic Planning Unit

Academic Planning Unit also handles the collection and management of data and information to guide the academic development of universities while ensuring compliance with NUC's Minimum Academic Standards (MAS) and with the university senate's academic regulations. Structure of the Academic Planning Unit. The Academic Planning Unit is an integral part of the Vice Chancellor's office and headed by a Director. The Academic Planning Unit of Osun State University is currently headed by Dr. M. O. Abanikannda, an Associate Professor of Computing/IT Education. The Director of Academic Planning Unit is complimented by other staff members. These include the Academic Planning Officer, Secretary, and Clerical Staff/Office Assistant (Federal University Kashi 2025). From the above, academic planning in this paper is seen as a special unit or directorate established in the tertiary institutions especially the universities that is saddled with the responsible for the internal quality assurance of the physical facilities and academic equipment and accreditation development in the University. Academic planning unit is a sub-component unit in the tertiary institutions that handle academic planning function, data collection function and accreditation.

The Unit also oversees the external quality assurance carried out by the National Universities Commission (N.U.C) in terms of resource verification and accreditation of academic programmes. Academic planning unit handle critical functions in the tertiary institutions. The roles of the academic planning units cannot be underestimated. Academic planning unit is playing a crucial roles that has connection with the realization of the tertiary institutions goals and objectives. The cores functions of the academic planning units includes; resources verification and accreditation of academic programme, annual report writing, data collection, academic calendar planning and they act as a medium between national universities commission and the universities.

Functions of Director of Academic Planning:

The Director of Academic Planning of Osun State University is responsible to the Vice-Chancellor in the general superintendence over the academic and administrative affairs of the Academic Planning Unit which include the following:

1. Coordination and collation of information to National Universities Commission (NUC) for national planning purposes.
2. Promotion of the quality of teaching, learning and research in the university through periodic evaluation of academic activities in the University Monitoring and advising on the growth of department and establishment of positions in various units of the University and advise the Vice-Chancellor on the creation of new positions;
3. Monitoring the FTE (Full Time Equivalent) students enrolment in relation to staff strength; Guide academic and related units of the University on the operations of the Academic Brief and participate in the review of the academic Brief and general curriculum development, as at when due;
4. Liaise with National Universities Commission (NUC) on matters relating to academic planning and quality assurance including the University System Annual Review Meetings (USARM), system-wide programme audit, and other academic matters that may be of interest and benefit to the University;
5. Coordinate and ensure compliance of academic and other units of the university with NUC guidelines on academic and other matters; Process proposals for the creation of new Departments and introduction of new programmes;
6. Coordinate and guide academic units/departments for purposes of programme accreditation and continuous quality assurance;
7. Coordinate and ensure the provision of conducive teaching, learning and research environment in the University;
8. Monitor the efficient and effective utilization of academic resources; Participate in the review of academic programme curricular of the University and evaluation of proposal for new academic programmes;
9. Generate and periodically update the University databank/statistics on academic and other matters and make necessary projections for the attention of the Vice-Chancellor; Generate policies for and identify priorities in the academic development of the University for the consideration of senate through the development committee;

10. Recommend desirable changes in the academic and administrative structures of the University to the Development Committee;
11. Participate in the preparation of the University Annual Budget; Maintain a computer based data bank on student and staff statistics for use in planning, budgeting and other management requirements
12. Carry out all other duties assigned by the Vice-Chancellor (Federal University Kasheri 2025; Iwerebor 2023).

Core Functions of Academic Planning Units in Universities

The Academic Planning Unit (APU) is one of the most strategic administrative units in a university. It is responsible for coordinating academic development, ensuring compliance with regulatory standards, supporting evidence-based planning, and promoting institutional quality assurance. In Nigerian universities, the Academic Planning Unit works closely with university management, faculties, departments, and regulatory agencies such as the National Universities Commission (NUC). The following are the major core functions of the Academic Planning Unit.

Resource Verification

Resource verification is one of the primary responsibilities of the Academic Planning Unit. It involves assessing whether a university possesses the minimum academic and physical resources required to establish new academic programmes. Before a programme is approved by the NUC, the Academic Planning Unit coordinates internal assessments to determine the availability and adequacy of qualified academic staff, classrooms, laboratories, workshops, studios, libraries, ICT facilities, offices, and instructional materials. The unit compiles evidence, prepares documentation, and coordinates the resource verification exercise conducted by external experts from the NUC. It also monitors compliance with recommendations made during the exercise and advises university management on areas requiring improvement. Through resource verification, universities are prevented from introducing programmes without adequate capacity, thereby safeguarding educational quality.

Accreditation of Academic Programmes

Accreditation is another major function of the Academic Planning Unit. Accreditation is a quality assurance process through which the NUC evaluates academic programmes to determine whether they meet the prescribed Minimum Academic Standards. The Academic Planning Unit coordinates all accreditation activities by preparing institutional documents, compiling departmental self-study reports, organizing accreditation logistics, liaising with accreditation panels, and ensuring that all required facilities and documents are available during the exercise. After accreditation, the unit analyzes the panel's observations and coordinates the implementation of recommendations. Regular accreditation ensures that academic programmes maintain

acceptable standards, enhances institutional credibility, promotes continuous quality improvement, and assures students and employers of the quality of university education.

Annual Data Collection and Storage

The Academic Planning Unit serves as the central repository for institutional data. It collects, validates, analyzes, stores, and disseminates academic and administrative data required for planning, policy formulation, research, and decision-making. The unit gathers information on student enrolment, admissions, graduation rates, staff strength, staff qualifications, academic programmes, infrastructure, finances, research outputs, and institutional performance indicators. These data are securely stored in both electronic databases and physical archives for future reference. Reliable institutional data support evidence-based planning, facilitate government reporting, assist in university ranking exercises, support accreditation, and improve strategic decision-making.

Academic Brief Writing

Academic brief preparation is one of the most important planning responsibilities of the Academic Planning Unit. An academic brief is a comprehensive planning document that provides detailed information on the establishment, development, philosophy, academic structure, staffing, facilities, financial projections, governance, and future expansion of a university. The Academic Planning Unit coordinates the preparation, periodic review, and updating of the academic brief to reflect institutional changes and new developments. The document serves as a blueprint for university development and is required by the NUC during the establishment of new universities and for monitoring institutional growth. A well-prepared academic brief guides long-term academic planning, infrastructure development, programme expansion, and resource allocation.

Preparation and Coordination of the Academic Calendar

The Academic Planning Unit coordinates the preparation of the university's academic calendar. The calendar outlines the schedule of academic activities for each session, including registration, lectures, examinations, matriculation, convocation, holidays, and semester breaks. The unit consults faculties, departments, academic boards, and university management before drafting the calendar. It also monitors compliance with approved timelines and recommends adjustments whenever unforeseen circumstances disrupt academic activities. An effective academic calendar promotes orderly administration, timely completion of academic programmes, efficient utilization of resources, and improved institutional productivity.

Annual Report Writing

The Academic Planning Unit prepares the university's annual report, which provides a comprehensive account of institutional activities and achievements during an academic year. The report typically contains information on student admissions, enrolment, graduation statistics,

staffing profile, research outputs, academic developments, infrastructure projects, financial performance, accreditation exercises, community engagement, challenges, and future plans. To prepare the report, the unit collects information from faculties, departments, administrative units, and research centres. The completed report serves as an important management tool for performance evaluation, accountability, strategic planning, policy formulation, and communication with stakeholders, including government agencies, governing councils, donors, and development partners.

2.2 Theoretical Framework

This paper is anchored on role theory. A social role refers to the behaviors and responsibilities expected of individuals in society. In terms of gender, social roles prescribe certain behaviors to men and to women. These roles are known as gender roles. Women's gender roles, or social roles for women, include mother, caretaker, and helper. Men's gender roles or social roles for men include breadwinner, protector, and leader. Role theory is the theory that individuals' behavior is actually the performance of roles that are organized into categories defined by society. Individuals aim to meet these roles, which encompass certain expectations, responsibilities, and behaviors. People perform gender roles on a daily basis, meaning that their behaviors are shaped by societal expectations for them depending on their gender (S.M 2022). The implication of this theory on this paper is that the universities management have specific role to play in ensure development of the university system. There are different department and units in the universities system with different roles to play for the attainment of the university' goals. The academic planning unit is one of the special unit in the university system with a unique roles of academic programme development for the smooth implementation of teaching and learning in the universities. The other roles includes; data collection, annual report writing, writing of academic brief, resources verification and quality assurance. The effective implementation of these roles by the academic planning units in the Nigerian universities will enhance sustainable development in the system.

3.0 Method

This study adopted the systematic literature review method. Relevant literature was obtained from peer-reviewed journal articles, textbooks, conference proceedings, government policy documents, reports of the National Universities Commission, university publications, and other credible academic sources relating to university education, academic planning, quality assurance, and sustainable university development in Nigeria. The retrieved literature was critically reviewed, synthesised, and analysed using a thematic approach. Themes were developed around the major strategies for strengthening Academic Planning Units, namely adequate funding, provision of modern infrastructure, digitalisation, professional career development of academic planners, and strict implementation of university Academic Briefs. Findings from the reviewed literature formed the basis for the discussion and conclusions of the study.

4.0 Result and Discussion on Strategies to Strengthening Academic Planning Units for Sustainable Development of Nigerian Universities

Adequate Funding of Academic Planning Units

Adequate fund is the provision of an excess money for the implementation of programmes. Adequate fund is the financial allocation above a minimum bench mark for implementation of a programme. Projects or programme are adequately funded when financial provision for the projects or programme is above the budget or equal to the planned budget. Adequate Funding is the act or process of continuous providing sufficient capital for the implementation of the project or programme (Ogunode, & Mohammed, 2023). Adequate funding is fundamental to the effectiveness of Academic Planning Units and the sustainable development of Nigerian universities. These units according to Paul, (2021) and Trinity University (2025) require sufficient financial resources to undertake institutional planning, prepare strategic plans, coordinate accreditation exercises, conduct institutional research, monitor academic programmes, and maintain comprehensive databases. Inadequate funding limits their capacity to procure modern office equipment, planning software, data management systems, and other essential facilities needed for efficient service delivery. Musa, (2022) and Nwafor, Uchendu, & Akani, (2015), they noted that availability of funds affects staff training, attendance at professional conferences, and implementation of innovative planning initiatives. Universities and government should therefore allocate dedicated annual budgets to Academic Planning Units to enable them to perform their statutory responsibilities effectively. Sustainable funding will enhance institutional planning, improve decision-making, and contribute to overall university development. Ogunode (2025) and Abubaker (2025) concluded that concluded that the benefits of adequately funding academic planning units in the Nigerian universities includes; supporting accreditation process, implementation of the core programme, recruitment of qualified staff, improvement in collaboration, support academic programme development, provision of infrastructure facilities, and aids timely staff training and development. It is based on this finding that the paper recommends an increment in the budgetary allocation of academic planning units. The Director of academic planning unit should collaborate with private institutions and international organizations to raise more funds for the implementation of the units programme (Olubunmi 2015). Bright and Abdulganiyu, (2015) concluded that adequate funding of academic planning units will enhance development of the unit.

Ensuring Career Growth and Professionalisation of Academic Planners

Professional development and career progression are critical to strengthening Academic Planning Units. Academic planners should have clearly defined career structures, opportunities for promotion, regular capacity-building programmes, professional certification, and access to local and international training. Muhammed and Abu (2012) noted that Universities should recognise academic planning as a specialised administrative profession that requires technical competence and institutional experience. Consequently, Ahaotu (2014) maintained that appointments into

leadership positions within Academic Planning Units should be based on professional qualifications, competence, experience, and demonstrated expertise rather than assigning academic staff who have little or no knowledge of institutional planning. The appointment of competent professional planners as directors or heads of Academic Planning Units will improve continuity, institutional memory, policy implementation, and overall planning effectiveness.

Provision of Modern Infrastructure Facilities

Infrastructural facilities according to Ogunode (2020) are those facilities aiding the delivery of academic and non-academic services in educational institutions. Infrastructural facilities include; libraries, laboratories, halls, offices, administrative blocks, hostels, road facilities, water, electricity, internet etc.. Ehiamentor (2001) and Ebehikhalu, and Dawam (2016) described infrastructure as the operational inputs of every instructional programme and constitutes elements that are necessary for teaching and learning. Such include buildings, laboratories, machinery, furniture and electrical fixtures. These must be functional in relation to other aspects of the community, such as health centres, libraries, and good roads and must be large enough to allow for expansion as enrolments expand. Lawinsider (2020) viewed infrastructure facilities to mean any works, structures or improvements to land or waters other than Ancillary Project Area Infrastructure which directly or indirectly provide a service or any other benefit to: - (a) the general public; or (b) the Island community, including – (c) offices, depots and staff housing by or for the benefit of the Commonwealth of Australia, the State, any local government, statutory authority or government owned corporation, (d) any electricity generation, distribution or transmission facility; (e) public education facilities; (f) public health facilities; (g) police facilities; (h) emergency facilities; (i) transport facilities (including pedestrian paths, cycle ways, transfer facilities, freight storage and logistic areas, bus stops and layovers, ferry stops, taxi stops); (j) sewage pump stations and sewerage treatments facilities; (k) solid waste transfer and treatment facilities; (l) water supply pump stations, raw water storage, clear water storage, dams, weirs, bore field infrastructure; (m) the things listed in section 24KA(2) of the Native Title Act to the extent that they are not Ancillary Project Area Infrastructure; and (n) any IBIS Store; but not including – (o) Social Housing. Bright, and Kenneth, (2015) noted that provision of modern facilities in the unit across the universities in Nigeria will help to aid academic planners to function well and improve their productivities. Ogunode, and Abubakar (2021) noted that the availability of modern infrastructure is essential for improving the productivity and efficiency of Academic Planning Units. Modern office accommodation, computers, high-speed internet connectivity, servers, printers, projectors, data storage facilities, uninterrupted electricity supply, and functional meeting rooms enhance the quality of planning activities. Many Academic Planning Units in Nigerian universities still operate with obsolete equipment, inadequate office space, and poor ICT facilities, which reduce their operational efficiency. Iwerebor (2023) and Kwashabawa, and Mustapha, (2023) also recommended that Universities should prioritise investment in modern infrastructure to facilitate effective data collection, storage, analysis, and dissemination. Well-equipped planning units according to Daniel-Kalioi, (2019) will improve institutional coordination, policy

implementation, monitoring, evaluation, and preparation of reports required by regulatory agencies.

Digitalization of Academic Planning Units

Digitalization is not synonymous with the shorter term “digitization.” Digitization refers to the process of converting information into a digital format, while digitalization refers to the broader transformation of business processes and activities to take advantage of digital technologies and data. Digitization is often a step in digitalization, but it is not the whole process (Ogunode, & Ineye-Briggs, 2025). Digitalization is more involved – and more powerful. Digitization is a digital transformation process that involves the integration of digital technologies into all areas of a business, leading to fundamental changes in how the business operates and delivers value to its customers. The dynamic and rapidly evolving digital landscape is driving disruptive change across all industries including yours (Honewell 2024). Ogunode, (2025) noted that digitization of academic planning unit is the process whereby activities and functions of the unit (planning, data collection and storage of data) are convert into a digital format. The result is the representation of an object, image, sound, document, or signal of the unit obtained by generating a series of numbers that describe a discrete set of points or samples. Digitalisation of academic planning unit is the process of using digital technologies to improve operation of the units and social operations within an organisation. It aims to transform how a institutions improve the efficiency and effectiveness. Digitalisation in academic planning unit aims to improve the efficiency of the unit processes, enhance the unit delivery of service and unit’s productivity. Ogunode, also observed that digitization of academic planning unit is the process of practically and digitally converting core activities, programme and data of academic planning unit into a digital format, allowing it to be processed, stored, and transmitted through digital technologies. By integrating technologies into all areas of academic planning unit, digitalization drives fundamental changes on the operation of the unit and aid deliver value, leading to improved productivity, data-driven decision-making, and enhanced operation. Digital transformation has become indispensable in modern university administration. Academic Planning Units should adopt digital technologies to improve planning processes, institutional data management, reporting, and decision-making. The introduction of integrated Management Information Systems (MIS), electronic document management systems, cloud computing, digital archives, Geographic Information Systems (GIS) for campus planning, business intelligence tools, and artificial intelligence-based data analytics will significantly improve operational efficiency. Digitalisation reduces paperwork, minimises errors, promotes transparency, ensures easy retrieval of institutional records, and supports evidence-based planning. Universities should also provide continuous ICT training for academic planners to enable them to utilise emerging technologies effectively in carrying out their responsibilities (Llonch, 2023; Mayulu, & Tricahyadinata, 2024).

Strict Adherence to the Implementation of the University's Academic Brief

The Academic Brief serves as the blueprint for the establishment, growth, and development of a university. It outlines the institution's philosophy, mission, academic programmes, enrolment projections, staffing requirements, physical development plans, financial projections, governance structure, and long-term development objectives. Strict implementation of the Academic Brief ensures that university expansion occurs in an orderly, systematic, and sustainable manner. Unfortunately, many Nigerian universities deviate from their approved Academic Briefs by introducing programmes, increasing student enrolment beyond approved carrying capacities, or undertaking infrastructural developments without proper planning. Such deviations often result in poor educational quality and difficulties during accreditation exercises (Ahaotu, 2024). University management should therefore ensure that all institutional decisions, programme expansion, infrastructure development, and resource allocation conform to the provisions of the approved Academic Brief. Regular monitoring and periodic review of the Academic Brief should also be undertaken to reflect emerging realities while maintaining regulatory compliance (Mark, 2016).

Effective Implementation of Capacity building programme

Capacity building as development of the skills and knowledge needed by teachers in order to participate fully in the education sector (Ogunode, 2025). Chukwu (2009) stated that professional development or capacity building is the professional growth a teacher achieves as a result of gaining increased experience and examining his or her teaching systematically. He further asserts that it is a life-long process and not a once in a lifetime thing. Capacity building according to Maxwell, (2024) is the process of developing and strengthening the skills, knowledge, resources, and capabilities of individuals, organizations, or communities to effectively achieve their goals and objectives. It involves activities aimed at enhancing an entity's ability to address challenges, improve performance, and adapt to changing circumstances. Capacity building is a dynamic, ongoing process that involves strengthening the ability of individuals and organizations to adapt, learn, and evolve in response to changing circumstances. The capacity building programs according to Titus, (2021) have fostered collaboration and knowledge-sharing among academic planning officers from different universities, leading to the exchange of best practices and innovative ideas. This has ultimately contributed to the overall improvement of academic planning and management in Nigerian universities. In the Nigerian university system, academic planning officers play a crucial role in the development and implementation of academic programs, policies, and procedures. They are responsible for guiding the strategic direction of the institution, ensuring the smooth operation of academic programs, and promoting excellence in teaching, learning, and research. Effective capacity building for these officers is crucial to ensure the success of academic planning units in Nigerian universities. By providing them with the right tools and training, capacity building enables them to better understand the complexities of academic planning and effectively navigate challenges that may arise (Muhammed, 2023). Ogunode (2025) concluded that the impact of capacity building programme on academic planning officers has enhanced academic planning officers' abilities, skills, technical- know-how. It has

also expand the academic planning landscape in Nigerian universities as a whole, whereby, leading to improvement in job performance of academic planning officers, collaboration with others academic planning officers, and enhancing professional development, ensuring that planners are equipped with the skills and knowledge necessary to effectively carry out their duties and contribute to the realization of the universities' goals and objectives. He further recommended that the management of the universities in Nigeria should ensure academic planning officers in the universities are exposed to constant capacity building programme by increasing the staff training allocation to the units. Funaab (2025) and Idachaba, (2024) TETFUND opined that an agency of federal government in charge of facilities development, research and staff training programme should allocate special funds for capacity building for all the academic planning units across the federal and state universities.

4.1 Conclusion and Recommendations

Academic Planning Units remain indispensable to the sustainable development of Nigerian universities because they provide the foundation for institutional planning, quality assurance, policy implementation, data management, and strategic development. Their effectiveness depends largely on adequate funding, modern infrastructure, digital transformation, professional career development, competent leadership, and strict implementation of the university's Academic Brief.

Universities, governing councils, the National Universities Commission, and government should therefore strengthen Academic Planning Units through sustained investment and institutional support. Doing so will enhance institutional effectiveness, improve educational quality, promote accountability, and ensure that Nigerian universities achieve sustainable growth and remain globally competitive.

References

- Adeyemi, T. (2023). Capacity building programme for academic planning officers of academic planning units in tertiary institutions in Nigeria.
- Bright C, M, & Abdulganiyu, S. (2015). The role of academic planning unit in sustainability of university education. *International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research and Development* 2015; 2(3): 730-733.
- Bright, C. M.&Kenneth, K. U. (2015). Examining the Role of Academic Planners in the Development of Higher Education in Nigeria. *International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research and Development(IJMRD)*,2(9), 137-140. www.allsubjectjournal.com e-ISSN: 2349-4182 p-ISSN: 2349-5979.
- Chukwu, C.L., (2009). *Capacity Building of Teachers-Challenges and Opportunities: Implication for Educational Sustainable Development*. A Paper Presented at the University of Ibadan Faculty of Education International Conference on Education for Sustainable Development.

- Daniel-Kalioi, B. (2019) Policy Implementation and the Challenges of Leadership in Nigerian Universities. *International Journal of Scientific Research in Education*, 12(2), 326-350.
- Ebehikhalu, N.O. & Dawam P. (2016) Inadequacy of Teaching and Learning Infrastructure: Reason Nigerian Universities cannot Drive Innovations. *Australian Journal of Education and Learning Research SCIE Journals*
- Equisofe (2025). What is digitalization? <https://www.equisoft.com/glossary/digitalization>
- Emetarom, U.C. (2004). Provision and Management of Facilities in Primary Schools in Nigeria: Implication for Policy Formulation. In E.O. Fagbemiye, J.B. Babalola et al. Management of Primary and Secondary Education in Nigeria. NAEAP publication.
- Funaab (2025). Academic planning unit. <https://funaab.edu.ng/section/directorate-of-academic-planning/>
- Federal University Kasher (2025). Academic planning unit. <https://fukashere.edu.ng/academic-planning-unit/>
- Hcltech (2025) What is Digitization? <https://www.hcltech.com/knowledge-library/digitalization-in-business>
- Honewell (2024). What Is Digitalization? And Why Is It Important? <https://www.honeywell.com/us/en/news/2023/11/what-is-digitalization-and-why-its-important>
- Idachaba, S. (2024). TETFund has so far spent N1.45trn on infrastructure – Echono <https://blueprint.ng/tetfund-has-so-far-spent-n1-45trn-on-infrastructure-echono/>
- Isiaka, A. Nasiru, O. I & Olushola, I. A (2020) Tertiary education trust fund intervention on academic staff capacity building in Lagos State University, Nigeria. *Journal of Education and Learning (EduLearn)*, 14(2), 155~161
- Iwerebor F., E. (2023). Challenges to Role Effectiveness of Academic Planning Units in Nigerian University System and the Way Forward. *Journal of Contemporary Issues in Education* 7(1), 18-26
- Kwashabawa, B.B. & Mustapha, N. (2023). Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TETFund) Contribution to the Staff Improvement and Research and Publication of Higher Institutions in Kebbi State, Nigeria, from 2015 to 2020. *European Journal of Contemporary Education and E-Learning*, 1(3), 91-102.
- Law insider (2023). Definitions and meaning of infrastructure facilities. <https://www.lawinsider.com/dictionary/infrastructure/facility#:~:text=Infrastructure%20facility%20means%20any%20publicly,%2C%20energy%2C%20fuel%20or%20communications.>
- Llonch, O. (2023). 10 Advantages of digitalization invoices and documents in companies <https://tickelia.com/en/blog/digitalization/10-advantatges-digitalization/>

- Mark, T. (2016). Digital era and school academic programme.
- Mayulu, H. & Tricahyadinata, I. (2024). Accreditation Automation System to Improve the Quality of Education. *INOVASI: Jurnal Ekonomi, Keuangan dan Manajemen*, 20(4), 807- 813M
- Maxwell, D. (2024). Capacity Building as a Strategic Tool for Attainment of Quality Education in Public Schools in Nigeria. *International Journal of Scientific Research in Education*, Vol. 17(1), 111-126.
- Muhammed, R. (2023). Capacity building opportunities for academic planning officers in the Universities in Nigeria.
- Musa, Y. R., (2022). Benefits of funding academic planning units of universities in Nigeria.
- Nwafor, N. E. Uchendu, E. E & Akani, C. O (2015) Need for adequate funding in the Administration of secondary education in Nigeria. *Global Journal of Educational Research*, (14), 119-124
- Ogunode N J (2020). Administration of Public Universities in Nigeria: Problems and Solutions. *Journal Sinesthesia*. 10, (2), 86-96
- Ogunode, N, J (2025). Digitarizing Academic Planning Units of Nigerian Universities. *European Journal of Innovation in Nonformal Education (EJINE)*. 5(6),1-12
- Ogunode, N. J. & Abubakar, M. (2021). Challenges facing the Academic Planning Unit in Nigerian Universities and the way forward. *European Journal of Humanities and Educational Advancements (EJHEA)*, 2(4), 69-74. <https://www.scholarzest.com>. ISSN: 2660-5589
- Ogunode N, J, Abubakar M, Abashi E, Ireogbu A, Longdet J (2021). “An Investigation into the Challenges Preventing Academic Planning Officers from Effectively Using ICT in Federal University Wukari, Nigeria“ *Journal of Science, Computing and Engineering Research*, 2(1), 147-154.
- Ogunode, N., J. & Ineye-Briggs, A. C (2025). Digitalization of Accreditation Programme in Nigerian Tertiary Institutions. *American Journal of Management Practice*, 2,(5),1-10
- Ogunode, N. J & Samuel. A. (2022) Accreditation of Academic Programs in Public Universities in Nigeria: Challenges and Way Forward. *Electronic Research Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities*, 4(2), 15-27.
- Ogunode, N., J. (2024). Adequate funding panacea for sustainable development of academic planning units of Nigerian universities
- Ogunode, N., J. (2025). Capacity building panacea for sustainable development of academic planning units of nigerian universities
- Olubunmi. A. (2015) Academic Planning Unit at glance. FUW. Wukari, Nigeria
- Omoniyi, R. Y. (2020). Funding and academic planning units of tertiary institutions in Nigeria.

Olaleye, F. O, & Oyewole, B. K (2016) Quality Assurance in Nigerian University Education: The Role of the National Universities Commission (NUC) as a Regulatory Body. *International Journal of Academic Research in Progressive Education and Development*, 5, (4).

Ololube, N. P. (2016). Education Fund Misappropriation and Mismanagement and the Provision of Quality Higher Education in Nigeria. *International Journal of Scientific Research in Education*, 9(4), 333-349. Retrieved [DATE] from <http://www.ij sre.com>

S.M. (2022). *Role theory*. <https://study.com/academy/lesson/eaglys-social-role-theory-of-gender-differences-definition-lesson-quiz.html> Titus, M,. Y. (2021). Capacity building programs and academic planning units in higher institutions in Nigeria.

Trinity university (2025). Academic planning units, <https://www.trinityuniversity.edu.ng/academic-planning-unit/>

Paul, R. (2021). Importance of funding academic planning units of tertiary institutions.

University of Osun State (2025) Academic planning unit <https://www.uniosun.edu.ng/index.php/academic-planning-unit/>