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Female Lecturers in Higher Education: Prelude on Challenges, and Opportunities

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Abstract:

This paper presents a basic framework for understanding the challenges and opportunities faced by female lecturers in tertiary institutions in Nigeria, with focus on African universities. The study adopts a thematic literature review approach drawing from published works, university databases and documentary evidence. The concept of challenges is clarified as any action or situation that places special physical and psychological demands upon a person and unbalances individual equilibrium. Findings show women encounter issues from birth due to stereotypical beliefs, rigid gender norms, cultural practices such as early/forced marriage, wife-inheritance, and preference for sons' education. In universities, factors include hostile work environment, sexual harassment, lack of training, promotion criteria, masculinisation and patriarchy, poor funding, low remuneration, and work-life imbalance. The concept of opportunity is defined as a relationship between an agent and a desired goal mediated by obstacles none of which are insurmountable. Educational opportunities provide instrumental and intrinsic values - access to jobs, health, wealth, civic participation and flourishing life. The paper also traces African university history from Al-Karaouine (859 AD) to expansion in 1980s-1990s, core responsibilities of academic staff (teaching, research, publishing, outreach), and strategic interventions on recruitment, governance, salaries and role of government/private partners. It concludes that female lecturers perform at same level as males but face unique personal, social and institutional problems including gender bias, discrimination, lack of role models, domestic labour, and lack of facilities. Benefits include confidence, reputation, capacity building and inspiring students. The study recommends transparent appointment/promotion, leadership training, increased funding, and gender-sensitive policies to recreate research universities with productive female staff.

Keywords: *Conceptual framework, Challenges, Opportunities, Female lecturers, Tertiary institutions, Job performance, Nigeria, African universities*

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1.INTRODUCTION

Women, initially, encounter a lot of issues in life starting from their birth till death mostly because of the stereotypical beliefs attached by the society. All women deserve a life with the opportunity to be educated, to work, to be healthy and to participate in all aspects of public life. Yet, in every country in the world, women and girls live within the confines of rigid gender norms, which frequently result in disproportionate access to essential services and major violations of their human rights (Dusselier et al., 2010). In Nigeria, the decline in economic activities since the early 1980s has made education a luxury to many Nigerians, especially those in rural areas. Parents are known to invest in children according to sex, birth order or natural endowments; girls and boys are not exact substitutes. Often, the family may only be able to afford to send one child to school and because daughters have assumed responsibilities in the home, she is less likely to be the one to attend school (Denga, 2007). At the beginning of colonialism and Christianity, rigid ideals about gender perceptions were imposed on the African mind. Thereafter, the woman's role has come to be limited to sexual and commercial labour; satisfying the sexual needs of men, working in the fields, carrying loads, tending babies and preparing food. The disempowering colonial 'ideology of domesticity' as espoused by the practice of 'housewification' provided the springboard for women's educational imbalance in parts of Africa (Adeniran, 2007). As such, the overall human development in Nigeria is being hindered by this unevenness in educational accessibility across gender categories. In tertiary institutions, this inequality continues. Various factors which account for the persistence of gender inequalities in Nigerian universities include socio-economic, cultural, institutional, and political factors as major barriers to women's full participation and advancement in the university system (Ogbogu, 2010). Other identified factors included: hostile work environment, sexual harassment, lack of opportunities for further training and promotion criteria (Ogbogu, 2006). Teaching is one of the world's oldest professions. It is also one of the professions that has generated much controversy over the necessary qualifications for membership, the role and functions of members and conditions of service for its practitioners. However, the importance of teachers as facilitators and motivators in the teaching/learning enterprise has always been acknowledged. Coombs (1968) said that teachers lie at the heart of the educational crisis in many countries because they are expensive and are required in large numbers. It is difficult to recruit well-educated and professionally trained teachers and retain their services over a considerable period of time. Challenge has become an integral part of lecturing job. The demand of lecturing job has increased the level of challenges among lecturers in Nigerian universities especially among the female folks. Challenge is a part of the normal fabrics of human existence which according to Oyerinde cited in Amina & Raymond (2014) observed that every individual regardless of race or cultural background, social and occupational status experiences challenges in many ways. It is an inevitable part of stress that occurs in all occupations including academic service.

2.2.1 Concept of Challenges

Women, initially, encounter a lot of issues in life starting from their birth till death mostly because of the stereotypical beliefs attached by the society. All women deserve a life with the opportunity to be educated, to work, to be healthy and to participate in all aspects of public life. Yet, in every country in the world, women and girls live within the confines of rigid gender norms, which frequently result in disproportionate access to essential services and major violations of their human rights. For women and girls to fully participate in their communities and enjoy their rights, they need a life free from gender-based discrimination; a life with the opportunity to be educated, to work on safe jobs with adequate and equal pay, to be healthy and to participate in all aspects of public life. However, women are frequently subjected to gender norms that limit their opportunities, defining them as mothers, caregivers or homemakers. The decline in economic activities since the early 1980s has made education a

luxury to many Nigerians, especially those in rural areas. In Nigeria, parents are known to invest in children according to sex, birth order or natural endowments, girls and boys are not exact substitutes. Often, the family may only be able to afford to send one child to school and because daughters have assumed responsibilities in the home, she is less likely to be the one to attend school. At the beginning of colonialism and Christianity, rigid ideals about gender perceptions were imposed on the African mind (Abdullah & Dan Mohd, 2011). Thereafter, the woman's role has come to be limited to sexual and commercial labour; satisfying the sexual needs of men, working in the fields, carrying loads, tending babies and preparing food. The disempowering colonial 'ideology of domesticity' as espoused by the practice of 'housewification' provided the springboard for women's educational imbalance in parts of Africa (Adida et al., 2011). As such, the overall human development in Nigeria is being hindered by this unevenness in educational accessibility across gender categories. The Nigerian society (both historical and contemporary) has been dotted with peculiar cultural practices that are potently hurtful to women's emancipation, such as early/forced marriage, wife-inheritance and widowhood practices. Furthermore, the gender disparity is exacerbated by the powerful economic and social rationale for investing in the education of sons rather than daughters. Daughters are perceived to be less valuable once educated, and less likely to abide by the will of the father, brother or husband. Various factors which account for the persistence of gender inequalities in Nigerian universities include socio-economic, cultural, institutional, and political factors as major barriers to women's full participation and advancement in the university system. Other identified factors included: hostile work environment, sexual harassment, lack of opportunities for further training and promotion criteria (Adu-Yeboah, 2011). There are various cultural and socio-economic issues that prevent women from having adequate access to education. According to Agyemang (2010), one prominent cultural view is that it is better for a woman to stay at home and learn to attend to her family instead of attending school. The 'Nigerian tradition' was explained as a tradition that attaches higher value to a man than a woman, whose place is believed to be the kitchen. The plight of women, in terms of education is compounded by this negative attitude of parents toward female education (Oniye, 2010). According to Akhlaq et al. (2010), the phenomenon of gender gap in education was due to cultural and economic factors. She cited as an illustration the admission into Nigeria's premier university in Ibadan in 1948 with only three females and one hundred and one males. To demonstrate the persistence of gender gaps through the decades to the present, she provided some gender statistics covering both public and private universities that currently total 128 (40 federal government-owned, 38 state-owned, and 50 private). The gender statistics include admissions (2000-2008) with females constituting about 40% of total and out-turn figures for doctoral students (2005/2006 session) with 30% of the total population being women. Strikingly, the data on scholarship awards by gender for 2006 and 2007 revealed a mere share of between 11% and 14% for the three types of scholarship examined (Commonwealth, British Educational Institutions and Petroleum Technology Development Fund). It was revealed that women reported a lower sense of belonging and support and were more pessimistic about gender equity and their chances for advancement compared to men. Women also were less likely to believe that their institutions were family-friendly or to see their values as aligning with the institutions (Cha, 2013). Their findings showed that both sexes have equal leadership aspirations and are equally engaged in their work thus the notion that women are less ambitious than men is very wrong. Akhlaq et al. (2010) also observed that constraints arising from the socio-cultural norms such as forced marriages, early child bearing and rearing, gender-biased teaching and educational materials, and girls' responsibility for heavy domestic work at an early stage, also continue to curtail women's access to education, thus making it difficult for them to acquire higher and relevant education. Another issue for women in academics is masculinisation and patriarchy. Mostly, typical masculine behaviour related to success in a

male-dominated environment included political game playing, aggressiveness, backstabbing, point-scoring, overconfidence and 'stitching people up'. The mechanisms women use to cope in male-dominated environments include mentorship and adopting participatory leadership styles like being caring, fair and encouraging, which is more attuned to their natural feminine inclination (Cha, 2013) Africa today faces a multiple of development challenges ranging from policy design to implementation, monitoring and assessment of the outcomes in relation to resources invested and service delivery in the field of higher education. Government investment in several African public Universities particularly in Nigeria is dwindling and yet research is critical for understanding and designing appropriate policies and legislations for responding to the existing challenges. For quality research, African university must of a necessity recruit and retain quality academic staff for higher productivity. But how has the African University responded to this dilemma in the wake of decreasing financing in public Universities? What should be done to recreate a research University in Africa with female academic staff capable of carrying out productive research not only generating knowledge but also for consumption of policy makers and implementers on the continent? Using documentary evidence from published works, University data bases available on the Internet, this paper carries out a thematic analysis of the African University historically, the challenges it has faced in recruiting and retaining quality academic staff and the necessary interventions that would recreate the research University for better academic service delivery and development. Teaching is one of the world's oldest professions. It is also one of the professions that has generated much controversy over the necessary qualifications for membership, the role and functions of members and conditions of service for its practitioners. However, the importance of teachers as facilitators and motivators in the teaching/learning enterprise has always been acknowledged. Indeed, challenge has become an integral part of lecturing job. The demand of lecturing job has increased the level of challenges among lecturers in Nigerian universities especially among the female folks. Challenge is a part of the normal fabrics of human existence which according to Oyerinde cited in Amina & Raymond (2014) observed that every individual regardless of race or cultural background, social and occupational status and even secondary school teachers experience challenges in many ways. It is an inevitable part of stress that occurs in all occupations including academic service. However, when challenges becomes excessive, difficulties occur and the sufferer experiences disrupted emotional, cognitive and physiological functioning. In other words, it affects the individual's. Stress according to Sofoluwe, Akinsolu and Ogbudinkpa (2015) is a state of physical or mental tension resulting from factors that affect the body's equilibrium or the body's reaction to either pleasant or complement simulation. This according to Tanner (2006) stated that challenges is any action or situation that placed special physical and psychological demands upon a person. It is anything that can unbalance an individual's level of equilibrium. Challenges in an individual will be slow, prone to error and not likely to achieve more; yet academic staffs in university, being the highest institution of learning are expected to strive to attain the nation's state of educational goals as stated by Federal Republic of Nigeria in the National Policy on Education (FRN, 2008). In the course of discharging their numerous roles, they have been battling with the issues of stress by combining teaching, research, community service and publications alongside with other personal issues thus make the job of an academia more demanding in Nigeria. This was confirmed by Ijaiya (2016) that any job that is directed at shaping the behavior of young people up to adult life in the midst of conflicting and confusing cultures cannot be easy. The negative effects of academic challenges on psychological well-being of lecturers have also been widely reported. The psychological health problems resulting from academic work stress on female lecturers' productivity and performance had been negatively affected. For Bada and Falana (2012), the demand and challenges of everyday such as job, economic conditions, marriage, desire to survive and others appears to be part of the stressors of life. Man's response to a particular

stressful situation determines whether the stress is good or bad. It as a state of discomfort, tension or emotional pain which arises when an individual is faced with a situation which presents a demand that is important for the individuals to meet but for which his capacities and resources are inadequate (Gimba, 2015). According to Maisamari (2013), challenges is defined as an action or situation that places special psychological demands upon a person or anything that can unbalance his/her individual equilibrium. Stress for instance related to institutional demands and self-desires motivate many academic staff to develop their potentials and realize their ambitions. However, response to undesirable challenges situations and prolonged challenges may result and affect the physical, emotional and cognitive areas of functioning. According to Chitty (2005), cognitively or intellectually prolonged challenges of tertiary institution lecturers (female) causes decreased in mental capacity, perpetual dwindled problem solving skills. The implication of this according to Edlin and Golanty (2019) is that prolonged challenges affects the totality of the well-being and job performance of female academic staff of tertiary institution and leads to low productivity. A female academic staff that is challenges free must definitely have high job performance. This connote that job performance is associated with the state of wellbeing of an individual. On the contrary, an individual (female TVET lecturers) that are victims of stress cannot perform high, hence its job performance capacity will be reduce and low. Job performance is defined by Campbell (as cited in Sofoluwe et, al. 2015) as an individual level variable. That is, performance is something a single person does. For Adeyemo and Ogunyemi (2014), it was asserted that academic performance is a variable that depends on many other variables by submitting that lecturer performance is a function not only of initial academic professional preparation but also the result of insight, concepts and personality traits of an individual. It was succinctly put that performance is the output record of a specific job function or activity at a particular time. Job performance is the result of specific functions or activities of workers in a given period of time. Female lecturers' job performance can be viewed or assessed through these dimensions: goal consensus, empowerment, student support, affiliation, professional interest and resources adequacy and work pressures (Sofoluwe et, al. 2015). So to increase their job performance, academics needs to be motivated and provided a stress free workplace. Staff's performance is a measurement of evaluating the academic performance of the lecturer. In this paper, job performance is a function of the quality and quantity of academic turn out performed by female lecturers working under or without stress while stress is anything capable of causing depletion in academic job performance of the female folks counterpart especially as it relates to. In other words, it is inhibitors which affect the moral, psychological, emotional, and mental and well-being of a worker to limit and reduces its job performance.

2.2.2 Concept of Opportunity

Opportunities refer to favorable external factors that could give to an individual, organization a competitive advantage. According to Peter (2013) opportunity provides a helpful opportunity that can be applied to the education sphere. For Peter, an opportunity is a relationship between an agent or a set of agents, and a desired goal, mediated by certain obstacles, none of which are insurmountable. For instance, Alice has an opportunity to become educated mediated by obstacles such as enrolling at a school, putting in hard work, and the quality of her teachers. Educational opportunities are those opportunities that aim to enable individuals to acquire knowledge and certain skills, and to cultivate certain capacities. Education has both instrumental and intrinsic value for individuals and for societies as a whole. As the US Supreme Court stated in its unanimous decision Brown in Nuhu (2017), "In these days, it is doubtful that any child may reasonably be expected to succeed in life if he is denied the opportunity of an education". The instrumental goals of K–12 education for individuals include access to higher education and a constellation of private benefits that follow college education such as access to interesting jobs with more vacation time and better health care; greater personal and

professional mobility, better decision-making skills (Institute for Higher Education Policy, 1998) and more autonomy at work. Research further shows that education levels are correlated with health and wealth: the more education a person has, the healthier and wealthier she is likely to be. At the same time, education is also considered intrinsically valuable. Developing one's skills and talents can be enjoyable or good in itself and a central component of a flourishing life, regardless of the consequences this has for wealth or health. In addition to the instrumental and intrinsic value of education to an individual, education is also valuable for society. All societies benefit from productive and knowledgeable workers who can generate social surplus and respond to preferences. Furthermore, democratic societies need to create citizens who are capable of participating in the project of shared governance. The correlation between educational attainment and civic participation is strong and well-documented: educated citizens have more opportunities to obtain and exercise civic skills, are more interested in and informed about politics, and in turn, are more likely to vote (Verba, 2022). It is therefore relatively uncontroversial to say that education is a highly valuable good to both individuals and to society, especially to democratic societies. This makes questions about who has access to high-quality educational opportunities, and how educational opportunities should be distributed, particularly important. To employ this concept in the context of education, we need to answer questions about who the proper agents are, what the appropriate goal or goals are, and what, if any, obstacles are legitimate. For example, if we take admission at a highly selective college as our goal, and the citizens of some country as our agents, we might think that meeting a certain academic requirement, such as passing an entrance exam, is a relevant obstacle that should be permitted to stand in the way of the goal. In this context, we will also think that an applicant's race, sex or religious affiliation should not be obstacles. When the appropriate group faces only the relevant obstacles with respect to the appropriate goal we can say that equality of opportunity obtains between the members of that group. Most contributors to debates about equality of educational opportunity focus on opportunities that are made available through public K–12 and higher education institutions. The reasons for this are similar to our reasons for being concerned with educational opportunity in the first place. Those institutional opportunities are more easily regulated and under the state's control, they educate the vast majority of children in the developed world, and they have a profound effect on the quality of our lives. As a result, most of the literature primarily concerns K–12 educational institutions and colleges. Nevertheless, a crucial question concerns the extent to which the state should try to address inequalities in educational opportunities that are generated through the family. For example, we know that parents who read to their children give their children an educational advantage (Hutton, Hwang & Thorn, 2015). Should the state seek to correct for the disadvantages of those children whose parents could not (or would not) read to them? More generally, parents pass on not only genetic traits to their children, but also characteristics that differentially prepare children for success at school, and even at jobs. Again, how should the state respond to these and other factors that influence children's likelihood of success at school? Are these appropriate obstacles for children to face or not? For quality research, African university must of a necessity recruit and retain quality academic staff for higher productivity. But how has the African University responded to this dilemma in the wake of decreasing financing in public Universities? What should be done to recreate a research University in Africa with academic staff capable of carrying out productive research not only generating knowledge but also for consumption of policy makers and implementers on the continent? Using documentary evidence from published works, University data bases available on the Internet, this paper carries out a thematic analysis of the African University historically, the challenges it has faced in recruiting and retaining quality academic staff and the necessary interventions that would recreate the research University for better academic service delivery and development. Worldwide, institutions of higher learning trace their roots as early as the

third century A.D. with some of the features of the time surviving up to the present day (IAFW, n.d.). Until recently, Euro-centrist history professors taught that it was the Europeans who brought higher education to the African continent (Lulat, 2005). 'While the Europeans have indeed influenced African education for quite some time, there is vital information that most history books leave out: for centuries before the arrival of the Europeans, the vast and advanced native African civilizations already had sophisticated universities and other institutions of higher education to boast about' (Lulat, 2005). Indeed, Africa has had institutions of higher learning for centuries, including those of indigenous, Islamic and, later, western origins. The earliest recorded universities appear in the northern part of the continent, most notably in Egypt and Morocco. 'The University of Al-Karaouine was established in Fez, Morocco, in 859 A.D. and is considered as one of the oldest continuously operating universities in the world' (Esposito 2003). It played a leading role in relations between the Islamic world and Europe in the middle Age (Lulat, 2005). Materu (2007) however, observes that: Authority over the quality of university education in those early days was a function of their governing boards and faculty. With affiliation, the institutions automatically became part of the British, French, Portuguese or other systems of quality assurance through their partner universities. These institutions were subject to the same kinds of quality control as were British or other European universities, including external examiners and other aspects of these systems (Materu 2007). Materu further explains that as 'other new universities were established, some of them were also affiliated with external institutions. Over time, some of the first institutions, such as the University of Cape Town, became mentors for younger institutions in South Africa, as was the case for Fort Hare University which was affiliated with Rhodes University'. In Uganda, the then Makerere College was elevated to the level of the University College of East Africa (1949) but attached to the University of London, the latter acting as a watchdog in regard to the quality of education over the former. From the University of East Africa, established in 1963, three more Universities emerged in 1970, namely; the University of Nairobi, the University of Dares salaam in Tanzania and Makerere University in Uganda. 'In Sudan, the Gordon Memorial College, established in 1902 by the Anglo- Egyptian Condominium, entered into a special relationship with the University of London and instituted degree programmes. It evolved into Khartoum University College in 1951 and in 1956 became Khartoum University' (Kanangire 2010). In Ethiopia, Haile Selassie I University was created in 1961 from the University College of Addis Ababa, which had been established in 1950, and it became the Addis Ababa University in 1975 (Kanangire 2010). In the period that followed independence i.e. 1960 and 1970s, higher education was limited with one University per country in most cases. Although the quality of graduates and research output was high, higher education was indeed a privilege of the few. The situation, however, changed in the 1980s and 1990s. African states realized the need to have an educated mass in various fields – engineering, medicine, agriculture, economics, public administration and management, development studies for a multi-disciplinary approach - to support economic growth and development. This was a time of increased population growth. More secondary schools were built and produced large numbers that yearned for University education. As a result governments established more public universities, institutes, and colleges in their respective societies but with the majority of institutions located in cities and urban centres. As Eshiwan, (1999) cited by Tjeldvoll et.al 2005; and Kanangire 2010 put it ' the main challenge of African Universities became the necessity to expand their services rapidly, from the education of the elite to mass education, despite limited financial resources'. This demand situation forced governments to liberalise higher education and licensed several private universities and institutes to provide the much needed service. 'In Ethiopia, Addis Ababa University enrolled over 33,600 students in 2007/08 from 12,500 in 2003/04' (Alemu, Huesmann, & Taylor, 2010). 'In Kenya Nairobi University enrolled 49,000 students in 2010' (Mwiandi 2010) 'while in Burundi students enrollment for

higher education moved from 3,821 in 1991-92 to 21,158 in 2005/06' (Barakamfitiye 2010) and in 'Egypt the number of students is over 2.6 million in eighteen public universities, twelve colleges and fifteen private institutions' (Alemu et.al 2010). Although the establishment of more institutions has increased opportunities for both parents and their children to access higher education, it is also a fact that weak students have joined universities and other institutions and their performance is not the best. Lecturers and Professors are overloaded with little time space to prepare for lectures, mentor students, attend an international conference when funds allow and conduct research. In institutions where government sponsored programmes run parallel to those privately sponsored ones, the academic staff is overwhelmed by the practice of teaching more hours to earn an extra income. In some African countries, however, political instability that resulted from struggles for power has undermined the university space. Indeed universities collapsed or are limping in Somalia, Angola and Democratic Republic of Congo (Teferra and Altbach 2004). In broad terms, today globalisation has created new challenges to a university and the delivery of higher education in general. Zelesa and Olukoshi (2004) raises a number of questions or dilemmas that face the African university amidst technological change, weakened capacity of the African state in most African countries after nearly two decades of unrelenting economic crises and orthodox structural adjustment. 'The dilemmas according to the authors centre on: 'How to balance autonomy and viability, expansion and excellence, equity and efficiency, access and quality, authority and accountability, representation and responsibility, diversification and differentiation, internationalisation and indigenisation, global presence/visibility and local anchorage, academic freedom and professional ethics, privatisation and the public purpose, teaching and research, community service/social responsibility and consultancy, diversity and uniformity, the preservation of local knowledge systems and the adoption of global knowledge systems, knowledge production and knowledge dissemination, the knowledge economy and the knowledge society'. All these questions are a reality and relate to the most rapidly expanding higher education sector in middle-income and developing countries. However, our main concern in this paper is how quality academic staff can be recruited, promoted and retained in higher institutions for a better service delivery. Service delivery in this case entails, academic productivity (quality teaching, research, publication and dissemination), doctoral training and professional excellence. This is because quality academic staff has a direct link to the development of a well-functioning university and the growth and stability of the academic profession and development in Africa in the 21st century Core Responsibilities of an Academic Staff in a University World over universities agree that their core function centre around four areas; teaching, research, publishing and outreach. This is possible when universities recruit, train and retain quality academic staff. There are other factors which are important but we will discuss them later particularly, governance/management, quality of students, financial resources, infrastructure etc. The centrality of quality academic staff is a reality in terms of designing relevant programmes and courses, teaching, examination and supervision of students' research. The academic staffs are expected to be scholars who produce knowledge mainly through research. A scholar must constantly create the knowledge he/she delivers to students (NCHE, 2011). In other words, a scholar is a person who studies independently and continuously in search of truth as he/she tries to understand a phenomenon and where necessary solves a problem that bothers society.
When research has been accomplished, academic staff is expected to publish books and articles in recognized academic Journals. It is also acceptable to publish monographs, working papers and policy papers. This is important for dissemination to the wider society for utilization. However, quite often, academic intellectuals write in sophisticated language making it difficult to those outside the university and in some cases even those inside the university to read and understand what has been communicated. For academicians to be relevant in the 21st century, their works must be able to be appreciated and understood by sizeable sections of society in

which the research problem addressed is valuable. The other important core function of a university is 'where the academic staff is expected to make a contribution is community outreach. Modern universities are supposed to be leaders in the social and economic development of their communities and nations and this raises the question of the relevance of their programmes and research' (NCHE, 2011). It is therefore important for academic staff to design programmes and projects that focuses on the community needs and aspirations, the market and general society. They are also expected to engage in effective internship programmess, lead the way in building linkages that allow community participation in university activities and making regional collaboration a reality Quality staff in a university has been found to be useful to the wider society in terms of consultancy services offered. The academic staff with skills and competencies is engaged in consultancy assignments which bring money to the university. University consultants use their research skills to solve problems as requested by clients. Governments, NGOs, Intergovernmental organizations like UN, Banks, and enterprises quite often engage academic intellectuals in consultancy assignments that benefit, not only the clients but the wider society of humankind. The Legal Perspectives on Academic Staff Recruitment in Africa in Africa governments have put in place legislative instruments and established regulatory institutions to maintain quality in higher education.
Yet the implementation of the required standards remains a huddle. In Kenya, the Universities Act of 1985 established the Commission for Higher Education (CHE). The CHE places great emphasis on the academic focus-with quality assurance measures aimed at the promotion of academic standards in programme delivery. 'Both Private Universities and Public Universities are expected to meet the standards set for university education on pertinent issues such as admission requirements, programme length, qualification levels of enrollment of students, quality issues, minimum academic requirements for staff, infrastructural facilities and ethical standards by which the university staff should be governed' (Thaver cited in Alemu, Alemu, Huesmann, & Taylor, 2010). In Uganda the University and Other Tertiary Institutions Act, 2001, section 119 provides that 'no University or Tertiary institution shall employ a lecturer or other person recruited for the purpose of teaching or giving instructions to students whose qualifications do not conform to the standards set by the NCHE by regulations'. The standards are provided in Statutory Instrument No. 50 of 2010. All universities are required to have publically known rules and regulations for hiring, promotion and firing staff. The compliance to this statutory instrument enables universities to design quality assurance mechanisms and maintain quality control. In Ethiopia, Proclamation No.351/2003 – 'the Higher Education Proclamation provides for the modes of governance and operation of higher education. Institutions both public and private are governed by the same legislation. Similarly in Sudan, the National Council of Higher Education and Research was created by the 1990 Higher Education Reform Act (amended in 1993 and 1995). It is vested with wide-ranging powers relating to formulating policies and developing programmes that are in line with overall priority areas of government policy' (Abdalla & Elhadary 2010). There is a debate on whether the state/government should meet the bulk of financing higher education in Africa. There is also the view of encouraging private-public partnerships in financing higher education. While supporting private – public partnerships, Mamdani (2007) warns us of 'the danger/tendency to change the academic curriculum in response to market demands, uncritically and across the board thus failing to distinguish between privatization and commercialization' (p236). He argues and correctly so that 'commercialization of higher education undermines efforts of building a research university, the only entity that can provide the institutional framework for sustaining intellectual thought'. The issue of funding and particularly the welfare of staff at various universities in Africa have been at the centre of a series of strikes since 1990s. Inadequate remuneration in form of salaries has resulted into several unfortunate consequences particularly; It has been reported (Dusselier et al., 2010) that 'some academic staff approaching

the decade prior to retirement, get very anxious about the financial trepidations that tend to accompany retirement. They therefore make decisions about quitting academia in good enough time and taking up positions that are better paying and consequently are more likely to enable them accumulate enough to ensure a more comfortable retirement, even if they do not get a large pension Strategic Interventions Necessary to Build a Strong and Well-functioning University in Africa In a study carried out in five Anglophone universities in Sub-Saharan Africa – Universities of Botswana, Ghana, Ibadan, Kwazul-Natal and Makerere University-Tettey (2006) suggests a number of interventions critical in reversing Africa's loss of its intellectual capital. From my analysis find some of his suggestions still relevant today. We therefore incorporate his suggested interventions in our recommendations below particularly, on appointments and promotion; institutional governance, research and professional development; salaries and benefits; and the role of other key stakeholders.

Recruitment, Appointment and promotion – I have pointed out that quality academic, highly trained and experienced staff are central to building a strong and well-functioning university. This means recruitment, appointments and promotion of potential candidates and existing ones must be done professionally. 'African universities therefore should avoid frustration and tardiness of appointment and promotion process and foster transparency, by ensuring that they are devolved to faculties, and anchored in a representative committee system at every level' (Elias et al. 2011, Esia-donkoh 2014, Gallagher et al., 2014). In addition National Commissions of Higher Education in Africa should harmonise academic promotion criteria. Quite often senior academics retire from public institutions when they are still very productive. In this regard universities should reconsider the retirement age for academics at least, as a short term measure to ensure that the institutions are staffed by qualified personnel until long term solutions are found. Indeed, there is a common saying in Africa that 'we have several Professors who retired from public universities but are not tired'. They can still be engaged on contractual terms both in public and private universities to mentor young scholars while at the same time attract research funding from international development partners through well-developed proposals.

Institutional Governance and Workplace Climate – In a study comprising of federal, state and private universities in Nigeria on leadership behavior of university Vice-chancellors and its implications to the work behavior of academic staff, Oke et. al. (2010) makes interesting revelations. The authors found out (among various hypotheses tested) that 'the lecturers' level of perception of their Vice-chancellors leadership behavior has a significant relationship with their level of participation in university activities'. This implies that in order to enhance lecturers' participation (read academic staff) in university activities, a Vice-chancellor need to exhibit positive leadership behavior. From their findings, they recommend a 'leadership training programme for Vice-chancellors. This type of leadership training programme could cover areas such as the dynamics of human behaviour, personnel functioning and administrative ability management, the politics of planned change, governance, organizational behavior and other key leadership competences'. Indeed, African University leaders should embrace more training for better governance and service delivery Leadership of African universities is very crucial in building the university we all desire. Hsiou-Hsia (2007:58) observes and correctly so that 'the intellectual depth, elegancy, vision and most of all courage of a President/Vice-chancellor are direct reflections of the heart, soul and quality of the university'. He further observes that 'the quality of any university's leadership reflects that of the university. If one excels, so would the other; if one faulters, so will the other.' A Vice-chancellor for instance or any other senior administrator in higher institutions of learning must be aware and cognizant of the 'optimisation principle' commonly taught in economics schools. Such an administrator needs to be 'aware of the dichotomy that often arises between the interests of proprietors/institution (such as its survival, growth and development) on one hand;

and the interests, needs and demands of staff and students on the other. He/she needs to be constantly aware of the possible implications and consequences of his/her decisions and actions as some of these will be positive and others negative' (Bibangambah 2009:22-3). It is therefore recommended that African universities should offer training programmes for newly appointed administrators to acquaint them with different skills needed to accomplish the demands of their role. Furthermore, universities should address concerns around governance at unit and institution-wide levels through the establishment of representative committee structures, transparency in decision making, genuine consultative processes, and open channels of multi directional communication. Similarly, staff members should also be willing to participate in these structures and processes, and have a responsibility to keep them informed about various guidelines, regulations and procedures. Indeed when staff are represented on key governance organs of the university – council, boards of council, Senate, Senior Management etc. it increases transparency, accountability, balanced decision making and ultimately confidence and high retention.

Teaching, Research and Professional Development – In our analysis we noted high enrollment of students with few highly academic staff in some African universities. As a result most academic staff is engaged in teaching undergraduates with little time to engage in research and professional development. 'There is evidence that universities in Africa contribute less than 1 percent in international referred Journals. The contribution of African universities to World's scientific publications is only 1.4 percent with more than half of these coming from Egypt and South Africa' (Hassan 2008). Yet, for a university to be relevant its academic intellectuals must engage in quality teaching and researches that reflect the scientific and technological needs of society. 'It is prudent for universities to insist on optimum level of student intake, under current circumstances, to address workload problems and release some energy to both basic and applied research. Universities should provide institutional support for mentoring programmes; institute starter grants and innovation grants for junior scholars; increase research and conference grants, forge research linkages with other institutions in Africa and abroad, as well as with governments and the private sector'. Academics staff should post their profiles on the university websites for all interested in the world of academia and public policy. Scholars, students, practitioners, indeed would want to spend time learning from the best minds, and to associate with the fame and respect that goes with such interaction as already noted. It is through university websites, one can easily find such experienced minds/scholars.

Salaries and Benefits – In the last three decades, African universities have been characterized by high tensions between academic staff and students on one side and the administration and proprietors/government on the other. In several instances academic staff has withdrawn their labour (laying down their tools) due to inadequate remuneration and scholastic materials. The academic intellectuals are the most highly trained human resource in society and yet

Role of Governments, the private sector and International Partners – In a globalized world, the private sector and international development partners like, African Development Bank, IDRC, SIDA-SAREC, are increasingly becoming important in financing/supporting higher education programmes. Although African governments are urged to increase financial support to universities, it is those institutions with private sourced component that are likely to achieve the dream of a strong and well-functioning university and be among the top ones on the continent. In this regard, international and private sector efforts at strengthening material resources and institutional capacity; ICT skills, training and research capacities in leadership and governance in African countries should be mobilized. 'Networking among African universities including mobilization of African scholars in the Diaspora to support the rebuilding of the African university is urgent. Such support would be but not limited to areas of programme and course designing, quality assurance and quality enhancement, publications

(editing Journal articles, review of articles, joint writing of conference papers), sandwich doctoral training, website designing and development, library acquisitions, information sharing on scholarships and research grants'(Elias et al., 2011, Esia-donkoh 2014, Gallagher et al., 2014).

2.2.3 Challenges that Face Female Lecturers in Tertiary Institutions

African universities face numerous challenges particularly female lecturers. The significance of having academic staff profiles on their websites. However, networking scholars are looking for quality staff to make linkages. Why are African universities scholars to the Diaspora, government, Think tanks and other private companies or civil society organizations? First is the factor of funding higher education. There is a debate on whether the state/government should meet the bulk of financing higher education in Africa. There is also the view of encouraging private-public partnerships in financing higher education. While supporting private public partnerships, Mamdani (2007:236) warns us of 'the danger/tendency to change the academic curriculum in response to market demands, uncritically and across the board thus failing to distinguish between privatization and commercialization'. He argues and correctly so that 'commercialization of higher education undermines efforts of building a research university, the only entity that can provide the institutional framework for sustaining intellectual thought'. The issue of funding and particularly the welfare of staff at various universities in Africa have been at the centre of a series of strikes since 1990s. Inadequate remuneration in form of salaries has resulted into several unfortunate consequences particularly; Low morale and self-esteem, Resignation to join better paying institutions after being sponsored for advanced degrees, Low productivity and poor outputs especially in research and innovations, Limited time allocation to research and publication resulting into stagnation of staff in posts, Inability to pay household utility, food, school fees and health care bills regularly. It has been reported (Tettey 2006) that 'some academic staff approaching the decade prior to retirement, get very anxious about the financial trepidations that tend to accompany retirement. They therefore make decisions about quitting academia in good enough time and taking up positions that are better paying and consequently are more likely to enable them accumulate enough to ensure a more comfortable retirement, even if they do not get a large pension'.

2.2.3.1 Personal Problems Faced by Women in Higher Education

Female lecturers perform at the same level as their male counterparts, if not better. However, they continue to face significant problem in their professional lives, including gender bias, work-life balance, discrimination and harassment. There are some unique problems that female lecturers in higher education face in addition to their male counterparts, including lack of role models, fitting in, and gaining the respect of male students. In Nigeria working women in education system face many problems that are not faced by working men. To look after children, make food, clean the house, family and other daily routine works in joint families are the primary duties of women. In Sokoto mostly men do not share household chores. Therefore major burden come on shoulders of working women in education department. Female lecturers working in institutions face many problems. These problems come from their family and relatives. When they go out for their jobs they need permission from male family members. According Babajide (2017) male colleagues don't support them during the work because they feel that they have no adequate skills. Their subordinates and colleague feel that they have no power of decision and are not able to make policies. It is not possible to stay in off days or late hours therefore they considered unfit. Some other problems are separate place for prayer, wash room and lack of transport facilities to the place of their jobs. Ronald (2018) discuss the relationship between organizational practices to support women's career advancement and their work attitudes and satisfaction and their psychological well-being. Five organizational experiences were considered: equal treatment, negative attitudes towards women, support,

male standards and career barriers. Wentling, (2020) says the role of women causes conflict and tension due to her social structure. Her study on working women has shown that traditional authoritarian set up of Hindu social structure continues to be the same basically and hence. Women according to the situation can help to overcome their problem. Sophia (2018) found that most of the women employees were dissatisfied with career development programmes and women were discriminated against in career development opportunities. At the more senior and higher levels of education, the problem of early marriages arise. In preparation for the early marriage, parents are burdened by the monetary pressure for managing a dowry, which in its turn can drive the need for income earning from the males in the family and preferential investment in male education (Maqsood, et al., 2012). If educational institutions are not available nearby, travelling for girls becomes a major obstacle. Travel is seen as a threat to personal security. This is a particularly strong factor in deterring girls from entering higher education as institutions are likely to be very distant and even if boarding facilities are available there are possible incidents of sexual harassment and sexual abuse to consider (Cho et al., 2015).

2.2.3.2 Social Problems Faced by Women in Higher Education

Higher Education contributes a substantial role in the development of a country. It is associated with the personal, social, economic and cultural aspects of human being, and underpins the goal of a sustainable society. It provides opportunities for people to enjoy an enhanced "life of the mind", offering both social and radical benefits to society (Dusselier et al., 2010). Higher education is a pre-requisite of an open civil society based on merit. It helps in the understanding of societal norms; gives individuals self-reliance, and discourages discrimination based on gender, beliefs, religion and social class (Kramarae, 2000). Female empowerment can be strengthen through higher education. Higher education assists females in two ways. It empowers qualified women to become leaders in society and it permits them to become role models for younger girls. It also helps women to choose domains of expertise, whether this is as decision makers through influence on policy issues related to social, economic, and cultural development, or by their participation in family and community life (Shaukat & Siddiquah, 2013). Educated women have a greater sense of control over their lives and more power and control over resources within the family as compared to uneducated women. They get social recognition, which helps them to get insight of and have an awareness of what is undesirable and unfavourable about their current situation. The educated female can perceive a better situation and the possibility of attaining it. She can realize what is within her reach and what she should do to affect the improvement (Usha & Sharma, 2001). In this way, educated women become empowered and have increased status and autonomy. They can enjoy this empowerment at community or regional/national level as well as within the family/household (Friedmann in Zafar, 2014). Women suffer gender discrimination as a consequence of the prevailing socio-cultural climate in some countries like Nigeria (Sen, 2001) There is significant variety in the status of women across classes, regions, and the rural/urban divide due to uneven socio-economic development and the influence of tribal, feudal, religious and social formations on women's lives. However, the women's situation versus that of the men's is one of general subordination, determined by the forces of patriarchy across classes, regions, and the rural/urban divide. The country has generally a male dominating society, and commonly adopts a hostile attitude towards women. According to The World Bank (1999) Country Gender Profile of Pakistan, the status of women in Pakistan is the lowest in the world. Gender inequality in Pakistani higher education is a consequence of persistent discrimination prevailing through the education system from an early age. Girls lag behind boys in the provision of education and in the access to schooling available (Tembon & Fort, 2008).There are a number of explanations for this gender-biased criterion of resource allocation. The preference for sons is due to their leading and productive role in household life. Male members

of the family are encouraged to get a good quality of education to compete for resources in the outside world. On the other hand, female family members are trained about domestic tasks and taught how to be good mothers and wives (Khan, 2007, Maqsood, & Raza, 2012). Parents do not prioritize education for girls due to low family household income. The main reason for low participation of females in higher education is financial such as fee issues, textbooks and other materials. It is also expected that girls should perform their responsibilities in the home (Maqsood, Haustein, & Stefanie, 2012).

Creating Equal Opportunities

Gender equity in education has to do with promoting equal opportunities and the fair treatment of all citizens on a personal, social, cultural, political and economic level. The current leaders in education are seriously committed to addressing, amongst others, the issue of gender equity in education, and for the purposes of this study, the gender inequalities evident in the appointment to leadership and management positions in schools. This is evident in structures that were put into place and reforms initiated by the government and the Department of Education to do just that. The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa defines South Africa as "being a sovereign, non-racial, non-sexist state", and which establishes, amongst others, the right to gender equity, this is provided for in the Bill of Rights as well as in Section 187. The structures put into place by the South African government were to specifically promote gender equality and empowerment in South Africa. The first structure being the Commission for Gender Equality (CGE), which under the Constitution of South Africa, Act 108 of 1996 is mandated "to strengthen constitutional democracy by promoting and protecting gender equality in the pursuit of social justice and democracy." The CGE was tasked with monitoring the compliance of the principle of gender equality, educating and informing the public about gender equality and processing gender complaints from the public. The second structure put into place by the government was the Office on the Status of Women (OSW) which was located in the Executive Deputy-President's office. Among the OSW's key Junctions were the advancement of national women's empowerment and. the development of a national gender equality policy framework. The OSW was additionally tasked with undertaking research, advising the Presidency on gender related matters, and interacting with international organizations such as the United Nations (UN). In addition to these government structures, the following documents on Gender Mainstreaming and Education were also drawn up.

2.2.4 Benefits for Female Lecturer in Higher Education

There are many opportunities for women in higher education include the following

Teaching is not merely a job for Women; rather it is a process to give knowledge to the students. It is not only to impart education, but also to inspire, help students, get a perspective of their life and bring about a change, and guide them in achieving success in their future.

It is a new experience for women in academic, you are learning while sharing with students. The classes are fun-filled the students share jokes to make class light. You also listen to them and try to understand their viewpoints it has helped us to understand each other well, making the teaching-learning process effective.

Teaching gives confidence and reputation**.**

Lecturing is a capacity building to female lectures, you are learning every day because you are searching and preparing notes to your students, sharing ideas and discussing each other is also crucial to your knowledge.

3. Conclusion:

This conceptual framework has established that challenges are an inevitable part of lecturing job, but become destructive when excessive. For female lecturers, challenges are multidimensional - cultural, socio-economic, institutional and political. First, culturally, Nigerian tradition attaches higher value to man than woman, whose place is believed to be kitchen. Parents invest according to sex, and daughters are less likely to be sent to school

because they have assumed home responsibilities. Practices like early marriage, forced marriage and heavy domestic work curtail women's access to education. Second, institutionally, women reported lower sense of belonging, less family-friendly institutions, hostile work environment, sexual harassment, and lack of opportunities for training and promotion. Masculinisation and patriarchy (political game playing, aggressiveness, backstabbing) dominate male environment. Women cope through mentorship and participatory leadership - caring, fair and encouraging. Third, economically and structurally, African universities face dwindling funding, high enrolment, overloaded staff, low remuneration, low morale, resignation to better paying institutions, and low research output - less than 1% in international referred journals. This directly affects job performance, defined as quality and quantity of academic output. Prolonged challenges cause decreased mental capacity, dwindled problem-solving, low productivity. On the other hand, opportunity provides hope. Education is highly valuable instrumentally and intrinsically. Opportunity, when obstacles are only legitimate ones like passing exam and not race, sex or religion, creates equality of opportunity. For female lecturers, opportunities include teaching as capacity building, confidence, reputation, new experience, learning while sharing, and inspiring students to succeed. Strategic interventions are therefore needed: transparent recruitment, appointment and promotion devolved to faculties; institutional governance with positive Vice-Chancellor leadership; institutional support for mentoring, starter grants, conference grants; improved salaries and benefits to prevent brain drain; and mobilization of government, private sector and international partners (ADB, IDRC, SIDA-SAREC) and diaspora scholars. It is recommended that universities in Sokoto State and Nigeria generally adopt gender-sensitive policies, fund female research, and create family-friendly environments so that female lecturers can achieve high job performance and contribute to recreating the research university in Africa.

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