

Higher Education System Support Initiatives for Teaching and Learning: Experience in Nigerian Universities

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Abstract: To evaluate the support initiatives offered by universities in Nigeria, this article examines the measures taken to assist students, focusing on support aimed at improving teaching and learning processes. Using Tinto's theory of student integration and employed an explanatory sequential mixed-methods approach. A random sample of 10,097 students from 18 universities (9 federal and 9 state) across Nigeria's six geopolitical zones was surveyed. Data was gathered through questionnaires, key informant interviews, and focus group discussions. The data were analysed using descriptive statistics, inferential statistics, and thematic analysis. The findings reveal that a large majority of universities in Nigeria (84.7%) do offer support initiatives to promote good study habits (84%), utilise various teaching methods to aid learning (84.4%), provide access to course advisors at no cost (84%), furnish conducive lecture rooms (82.7%), and equip them with comfortable seating (82.3%). The area with the least support was financial assistance

(49.8%). State universities provide financial support at a rate of 51.5%, while federal universities provide it at a rate of 49.8%. A significant difference was observed, $t(2,10095) = 12.70$, $p < .001$, with state universities ($M = 45.68$, $SD = 11.92$) offering more support than federal universities ($M = 42.62$, $SD = 12.05$). The effect size was small (Cohen's $d = 0.255$), indicating a modest practical distinction between the two groups. Faculty members at the institutions supported the quantitative findings, stating that state universities provide better teaching facilities, infrastructure, training, and workshops/conferences/ICT training compared to federal universities.

Keywords: Higher institution, system support services, teaching and learning, Nigerian universities.

1. Introduction

Nigeria, as one of Africa's most populous countries, understands the critical role that higher education plays in national growth. Over the years, the country's higher education system has encountered various issues, including obsolete curricula and inadequate facilities. To address these concerns and create a more dynamic and competitive educational environment, Nigerian universities have launched initiatives to support the higher education system for teaching and learning. These institutions prioritise the development of sophisticated learning resource centres. These centres, which include cutting-edge libraries, research facilities, and collaboration spaces, help to foster an environment conducive to both independent and group learning (Ayeni, 2012).

Nigerian institutions are also reevaluating and updating their curricula to ensure relevance in a rapidly expanding industry. This endeavour is critical for producing graduates with the skills necessary for the current employment market (Okebukola, 2017). The approach involves collaborating with industry to identify essential competencies and incorporate them into educational programmes. Furthermore, technology integration is crucial for transforming teaching and learning in Nigerian universities (Ogunsola, 2004). The utilisation of e-learning platforms, virtual classrooms, and educational technology tools not only increases student access to education but also enhances the overall learning experience.

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Despite these efforts, Nigeria's higher education system faces significant challenges in providing quality teaching and learning experiences to its expanding student population. Recognising these limitations, various groups have launched projects to address them. Government funding for universities is often insufficient, adversely affecting facilities, resources, and faculty development. High student-to-staff ratios hinder personalised learning and engagement, while many institutions lack up-to-date technology, libraries, and learning facilities. Furthermore, not all staff have received training in new pedagogical methods, limiting effective teaching. Additionally, access to quality resources is restricted, and the curriculum frequently lags behind the evolving demands of the global labour market (Nkang, 2012; Ajibade, 2020; Asiyai, 2015). In light of these challenges, the government, in collaboration with various foreign and local entities, has initiated several projects aimed at improving the effectiveness of teaching and learning in the country's institutions.

The National Universities Commission, Nigeria's official organisation responsible for university regulation, has launched reforms aimed at improving the curriculum, fostering research, and maintaining university standards (Onyeike & Eseyin, 2018). These reforms are crucial for repositioning Nigerian universities to meet global standards and for creating an environment that fosters academic pursuits. Furthermore, Nigeria's Ministry of Education has launched several programmes in collaboration with international organisations such as the World Bank and UNESCO to build capacity in science and technology education, which are crucial components of a thriving knowledge economy (Onyeike & Eseyin, 2018). The need for quality private higher education has never been greater. Consequently, policy recommendations suggest that public funding mechanisms, such as the TETFund, be expanded to support private institutions, ensuring that they contribute effectively to national development. Such assistance could include infrastructure, research funds, and personnel development (Adedeji, Okotoni & Ognleye, 2019). Academic authorities have recognised the importance of lecturer motivation and adequate supervision as part of a comprehensive strategy to raise educational standards (Nkang, 2012). Measures such as increased pay, professional development opportunities, and performance-based rewards are becoming increasingly significant.

Nigerian institutions invest in faculty development programmes, recognising the importance of educators in creating a positive learning experience. These programmes provide teachers with the latest teaching approaches, research strategies, and technological resources (Olayinka, 2018). Continuous professional development ensures faculty members remain at the cutting edge of educational innovation. In the wake of globalisation and technological advancements, Nigerian institutions are modifying their courses to meet industry demands and foster critical thinking skills in their students. The use of information and communication technology (ICT) in teaching methodologies has played a critical role in improving overall learning outcomes. System support initiatives encompass cognitive, affective, and systemic assistance provided through mentoring, as well as social, academic, counselling, and administrative support, all geared towards enhancing the teaching and learning activities of the institution. Both students and lecturers require system support to strive towards accomplishing the goals of teaching and learning.

The Tertiary Education Trust Fund, a government intervention agency established to provide additional financial support to public postsecondary institutions, has played a critical role in education. The agency's activities have contributed to restoring old structures, equipping laboratories, and providing access to educational materials. TETFund's actions have also aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly in promoting inclusive and equitable quality education (Fejoh & Oloruntoba, 2020). Universities worldwide are under increasing pressure to enhance their students' teaching and learning experiences. This enhancement requires a focus on effective educational approaches and the establishment of a conducive learning environment. The

effective use of learning technology, such as online materials and learning management systems, can boost student engagement and improve learning outcomes, which resonates well with senior faculty (Bates, 2019; Picciano, 2017).

This research is based on Vincent Tinto's concept of student integration, as outlined in *Leaving College: Rethinking the Causes and Cures of Student Attrition*. Tinto (1993) asserts that students' perseverance, engagement, and academic achievement in higher education are predominantly influenced by their levels of academic and social integration within their institutions. The theory posits that universities are not passive entities; rather, institutional frameworks—including effective pedagogical methods, academic advising, mentoring, counselling services, and supportive faculty-student interactions—actively influence students' dedication to learning and degree attainment. When students recognise robust institutional support, they are more inclined to cultivate a sense of belonging, enhance their academic self-efficacy, and maintain engagement in their studies. Tinto's approach offers a theoretical basis for analysing the impact of emotional, instructional, and structural support systems at universities on enhancing teaching and learning outcomes.

1.1 Problem statement

Despite the acknowledged significance of effective teaching and learning in higher education, Nigerian universities continue to encounter substantial challenges in providing adequate support for these fundamental activities. Numerous faculty members report limited access to modern teaching resources, insufficient opportunities for professional development, and inadequate institutional support structures. Conversely, students frequently face outdated curricula, overcrowded classrooms, and restricted access to learning technologies. Financial constraints, inconsistent policy implementation, and a lack of sustained investment in educational infrastructure exacerbate these issues. Consequently, both educators and learners struggle to achieve optimal outcomes, raising concerns about the overall quality and competitiveness of university education in Nigeria within a global context. Addressing these challenges necessitates a critical examination of existing support initiatives and a commitment to implementing more effective strategies that can enhance the teaching and learning experience for all stakeholders. Previous research has underscored the value of institutional and instructional support in improving academic engagement, satisfaction, and learning outcomes at universities. Supportive teaching, pedagogical competency, accessible services, and favourable student-faculty relationships are all associated with enhanced academic adjustment and performance. Students who receive substantial emotional and institutional support demonstrate increased motivation and commitment. However, the majority of research has concentrated on isolated aspects of support that require integration, leaving a gap in the understanding of the collective impact of emotional, instructional, structural, and technological support on teaching effectiveness and student learning outcomes, thereby indicating the necessity for further research. The following research questions were raised to guide the study:

- What are the system support initiatives provided by the institutions towards effective teaching and learning at the national level?
- What are the system support initiatives provided by the institutions towards effective teaching and learning at the federal level?
- What are the system support initiatives provided by the institutions towards effective teaching and learning at the state level?
- Is there a significant difference between state and federal universities' provision of the system support initiatives?
- What are the perceptions of senior academic staff about the system support initiatives provided by the institutions towards effective teaching and learning?

2. Methodology

The study employed an explanatory sequential mixed-method design using a QUAN→qual approach, where quantitative data were collected first, followed by qualitative data. The qualitative

data aimed to explain the quantitative results of the study. The population consisted of all students and senior academic staff (deans and heads of departments) in universities across Nigeria. Sample selection was conducted at various stages using a multistage sampling procedure. All six stratified geopolitical zones were initially selected. In the third stage, purposive sampling was employed to select three universities from each zone, totalling eighteen universities (nine federal and nine state), based on faculties and staff strengths. Deans of faculties and heads of departments were also randomly sampled in the study. A simple random sampling technique was used to select ten students, with five from each gender chosen from each university based on the number of faculties. However, newly approved universities were not included, as they had not established a stable teaching culture within the preceding two years. The University of Ibadan, which was used for pilot testing methodology, validation of instruments, and execution of a small-scale study, was also not included. Two quantitative and two qualitative instruments were used to collect data. They are the Lecturer Questionnaire ($r = 0.90$), the Student Assessment of Teaching Quality Scale ($r = 0.89$), the Key Informant Interview guide, and the Focus Group Discussion guide. The reliability of these instruments was established through Cronbach's alpha reliability method. The overall university provisions concerning these system support activities, as stated by the students and lecturers, were highlighted based on the combination of both federal and state universities (national) across Nigeria. This was followed by an evaluation of the facilities provided in terms of system support initiatives by the federal and state universities, respectively.

In-depth qualitative analysis of interviews with senior members of academia at federal institutions corroborates the above quantitative analysis, indicating that federal institutions provide teaching facilities, infrastructural support, training, and workshops/conferences/ICT training for lecturers and, at times, for students. Other forms of support provided to students included teaching and learning support, psychological support, academic advancement, financial assistance, and external support. The quantitative and qualitative data were analysed using frequency, percentages, graphs, t-tests, and thematic analysis. The recorded interviews were transcribed, coded, and analysed thematically. The ethical consent obtained was through a letter requesting permission to conduct the research from the heads of the sampled higher institutions. Additionally, verbal consent was obtained from the adult participants.

3. Presentation of Results

The system support initiatives offered by the institutions for effective teaching and learning at the national level are shown in Figure 1.

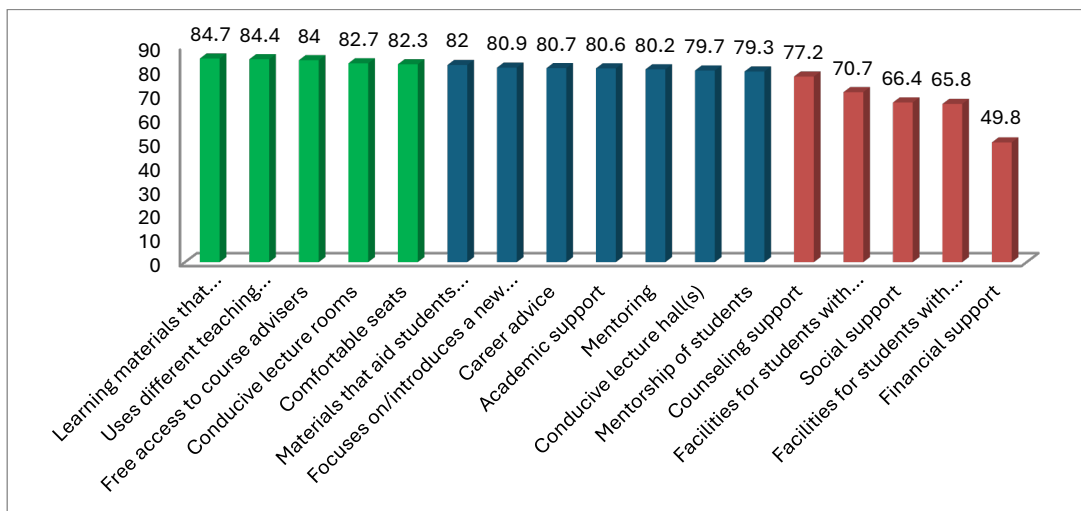


Figure 1: System support initiatives by all universities (national)

The extent to which institutional support initiatives enhance teaching and learning in Nigerian universities is illustrated in Figure 1. It was revealed that system support is provided for students "to a great extent"; for example, "learning materials that encourage good study habits" (84.7%), "the use of different teaching methods to aid mastery" (84.4%), "free access to course advisers" (84%), "conducive lecture rooms" (82.7%), "comfortable seats in conducive lecture rooms" (82.3%), "materials that aid students in developing skills that will make them self-reliant" (82%), "focus on/introduce new pedagogical tools for better understanding" (80.9%), "career advice" (80.7%), "academic support" (80.6%), "mentoring" (80.2%), "conducive lecture halls" (79.7%), "mentorship of students" (79.3%), "counselling support" (77.2%), "facilities for students with special needs in lecture rooms, e.g., comfortable furniture" (70.7%), "social support" (66.4%), and "facilities for students with special needs in the department, e.g., ramps" (65.8%). "Financial support" (49.8%) is provided to a small extent. This implies that most universities do offer the necessary system support initiatives. Most respondents feel that lecture room conditions, mentorship, and academic support are available to "some extent" or "great extent", but there seems to be a lack of facilities for students with special needs and financial support, with a significant number indicating "no extent" for these items.

The system support initiatives provided by the institutions towards effective teaching and learning at the federal level are presented in Figure 2.

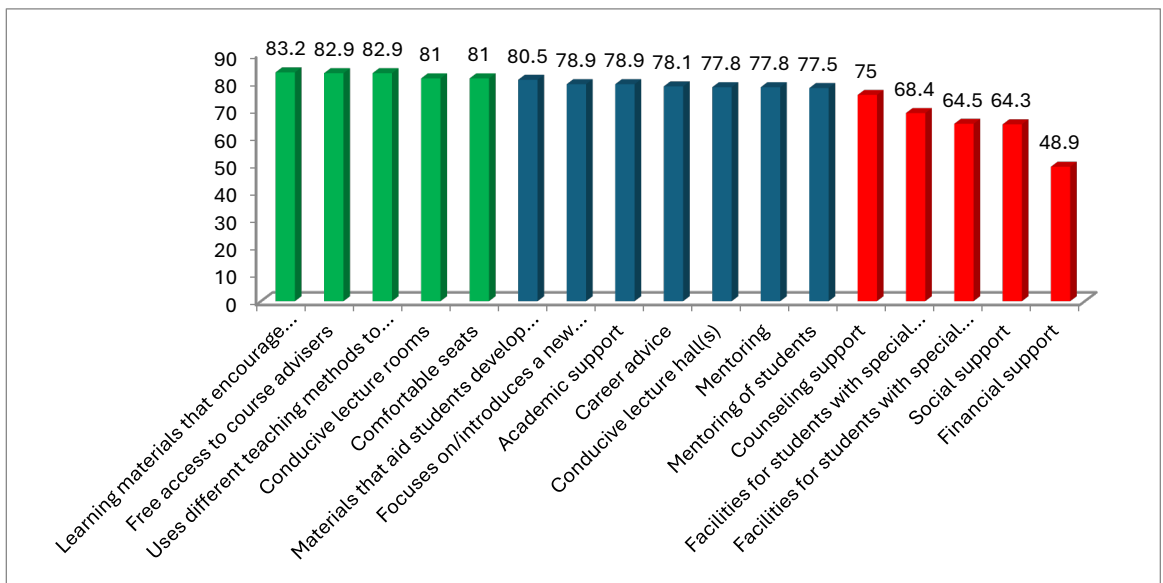


Figure 2: System support initiatives by federal universities

Figure 2 presents the findings of system support initiatives in federal universities. It was revealed that the top five system support initiatives being provided adequately by federal universities for the use of the students to a great extent are 'learning materials that encourage good study habits' (83.2%), 'use different teaching methods to aid mastery' (82.9%), 'free access to course advisers' (82.9%), 'conducive lecture rooms' (81%), and 'comfortable seats' (81%). Four facilities were provided to a great extent but less in some universities in 'counselling support' (75%), 'facilities for students with special needs in lecture rooms, e.g., comfortable furniture' (64.5%), 'social support' (64.3%), 'facilities for students with special needs in the dept., e.g., ramps' (64.3%), and 'financial support' (48.9%). This implies that the majority of the federal universities do provide adequate system support initiatives for students, except for financial support, which is being provided to a lesser extent.

The system support initiatives provided by the institutions towards effective teaching and learning at the state level are presented in Figure 3.

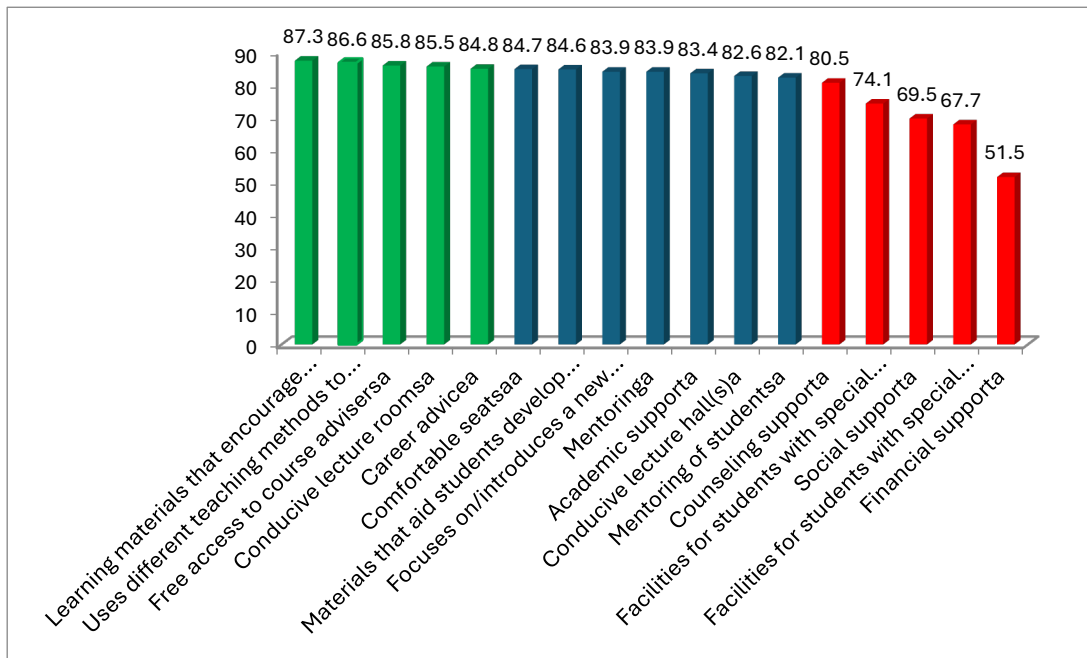


Figure 3: System support initiatives by state universities

The provision of system support initiatives by Nigerian state universities is presented in Table 3 and Figure. The top five system support initiatives that are adequately provided by the state universities for student use to a great extent are: ‘learning materials that encourage good study habits’ (87.3%), ‘using different teaching methods to aid mastery’ (86.6%), ‘free access to course advisers’ (85.8%), ‘conducive lecture rooms’ (85.5%), and ‘career advice’ (84.8%). The initiatives provided to some extent include: ‘counseling support’ (80.5%), ‘facilities for students with special needs in lecture rooms, e.g., comfortable furniture’ (74.1%), ‘social support’ (69.5%), ‘facilities for students with special needs in the department, e.g., ramps’ (67.7%), and ‘financial support’ (51.5%). This implies that the majority of state universities provide adequate system support initiatives for students, except for financial support, which is relatively poorly provided.

A summary of the extent to which both federal and state universities provide system support initiatives is presented in Table 4. The results show that universities provide the following for student use ‘to a great extent’: ‘learning materials that encourage good study habits’ (F=83.2%, S=87.3%), ‘using different teaching methods to aid mastery’ (F=82.9%, S=85.8%), ‘free access to course advisers’ (F=82.9%, S=86.6%), ‘conducive lecture rooms’ (F=81%, S=85.5%), ‘career advice’ (F=81%, S=84.8%), ‘comfortable seats’ (F=80.5%, S=84.7%), ‘materials that aid students in developing skills that will make them self-reliant’ (F=78.9%, S=84.6%), ‘focuses on/introduces new pedagogical tools for better understanding’ (F=78.9%, S=83.9%), ‘mentoring’ (F=78.1%, S=83.9%), ‘academic support’ (F=77.8%, S=83.4%), ‘conducive lecture halls’ (F=77.8%, S=82.6%), ‘mentoring of students’ (F=77.5%, S=82.1%), ‘counseling support’ (F=75%, S=80.5%), ‘facilities for students with special needs in lecture rooms, e.g., comfortable furniture’ (F=68.4%, S=74.1%), ‘social support’ (F=64.5%, S=69.5%), ‘facilities for students with special needs in the department, e.g., ramps’ (F=64.3%, S=67.7%), and ‘financial support’ (F=48.9%, S=51.5%). This indicates that system support services in both federal and state universities are provided to a great extent in terms of required items, except for financial support, which was provided at less than 50%.

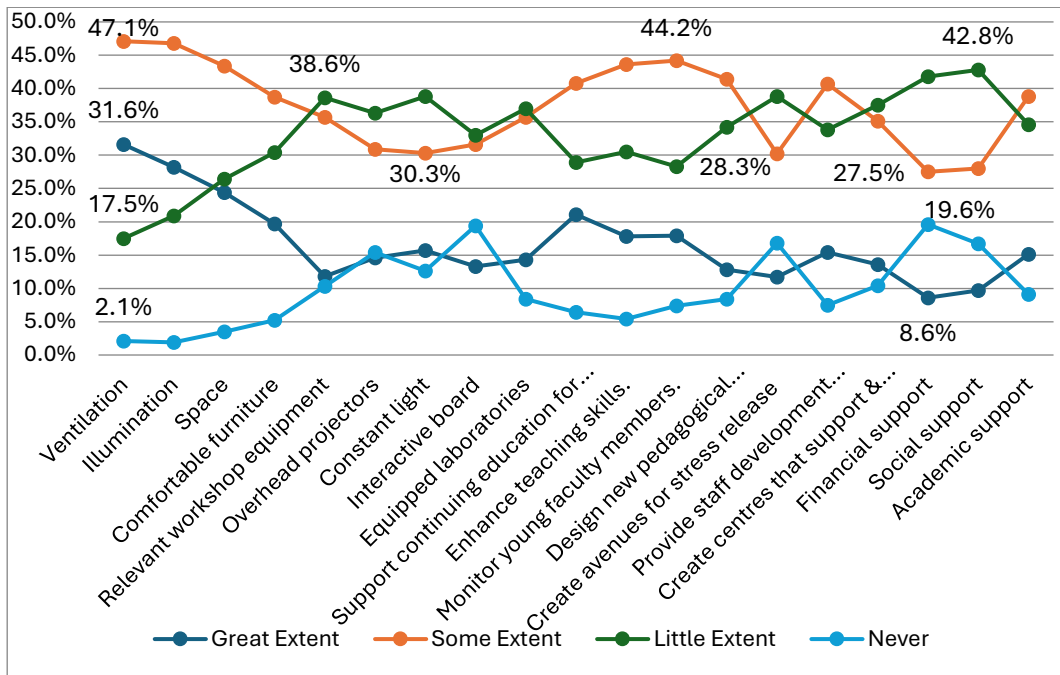


Figure 4: Provision of teaching support by the institutions for lecturers at the national level

Figure 4 illustrates the basic facilities and virtual learning environments provided by the institutions. A total of 38.7% (47.1% of lecturers) indicated that the provision of a conducive learning environment was met to some extent in terms of ventilation, illumination, and space. Teaching facilities, such as staff development programmes, support for continuing education for staff members, monitoring of young faculty members, the design of new pedagogical strategies/approaches for teaching, and enhancement of teaching skills, were rated as being provided to some extent by 40.7% to 44.2% of the lecturers. However, workshop equipment, overhead projectors, constant lighting, interactive boards, and well-equipped laboratories were rated as being provided to a small extent or to some extent by 33.0% and 30.2%, respectively.

The provision of staff support systems (such as financial, social, and academic support) was rated modestly by the lecturers. Academic support was provided to 180 lecturers (39.4%) and 155 lecturers (33.9%) to 'some extent' and 'a little extent', respectively, while 'financial and social support' was provided to a lesser extent to 132 lecturers (28.9%) and 187 lecturers (40.9%); 118 lecturers (25.8%) and 203 lecturers (44.4%) reported receiving support to 'some extent' and 'a little extent'.

To determine the difference between the provision of system support initiatives by state and federal universities, an independent samples t-test was conducted to compare the provision in state and federal universities. Before interpreting the mean differences, Levene's Test for Equality of Variances was examined to determine whether equal variances could be assumed.

Table 1: Difference between the provisions of system support initiatives

Group Statistics					
	Ownership	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
System Support Initiatives	State	4413	45.68	11.924	0.16
	Federal	5684	42.62	11.924	0.16

Table 2: Independent Samples Test

	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances	t-test for Equality of Means			Mean Difference
	F	t	df	Sig.	
System Support Initiatives	2.99	12.704	10095	0.084	3.06

The results indicated that State-owned institutions ($M = 45.68, SD = 11.92, n = 4,413$) provide more support system initiatives than the Federal institutions ($M = 42.62, SD = 12.05, n = 5,684$). Levene's test showed that the assumption of equal variances was met, $F(1, 10095) = 2.99, p = .084$. The t-test revealed a statistically significant difference, $t(10095) = 12.70, p < .001$, with a mean difference of 3.06. The magnitude of the difference was examined using effect size measures. Cohen's $d = 0.255$ (95% CI [0.215, 0.294]) indicated a small but meaningful effect. This suggests that while the difference between State and Federal institutions is statistically significant, the practical impact is modest.

To further explain the extent to which the institutions provide system support initiatives, the perceptions of members about the system support initiatives provided by the institutions towards effective teaching and learning were sought and presented in Figure 5.

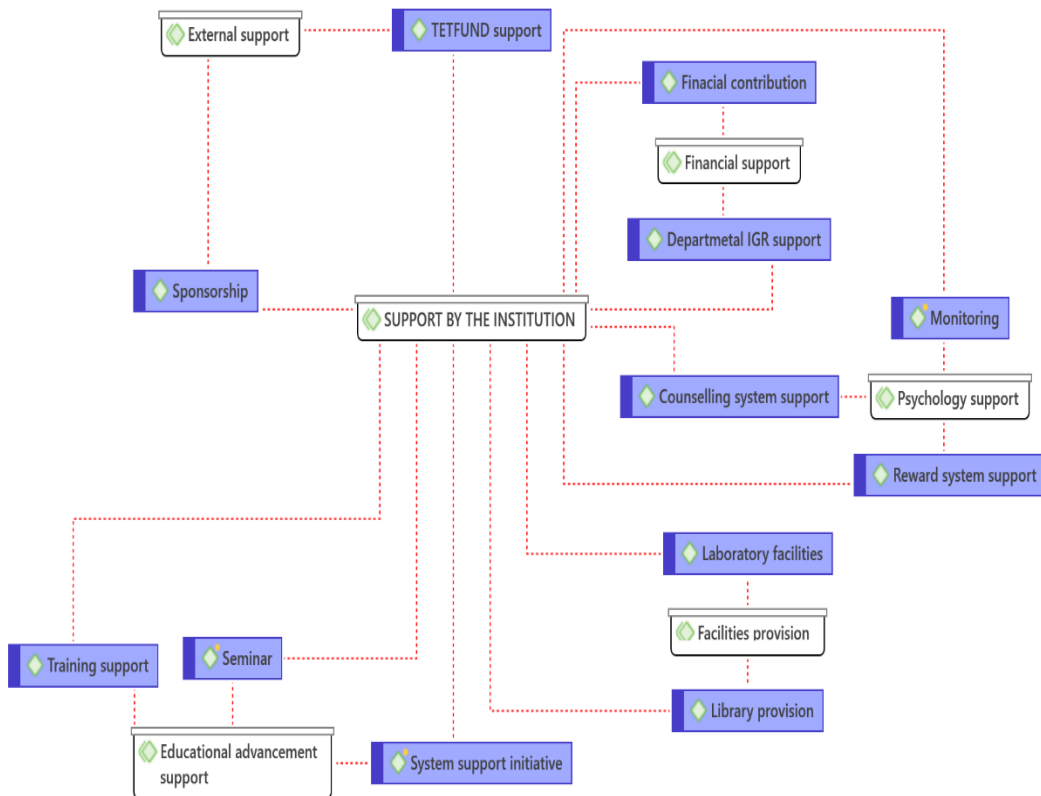


Figure 5: Institutional support for students at the national level

- i. **Educational advancement support for students** - The respondents mentioned that training in various modes was given to lecturers and students. It was also expressed that workshops and seminars were given.

- ii. **Psychological support – Counselling** support was given to students; also, monitoring, mentorship and rewards were used as support for the students and lecturers. One of the HODs said:

“We give the person mentorship; whenever we have a new colleague coming on board, we normally used to attach him to one of our senior colleagues so that he can assist him in conducting a class, conducting exams, and a lot of things under him so that he can monitor him and mentor him at the same time.”

- iii. **Financial support – Arrangements** were made for students to study, work, and be given stipends to support them.

“The idea is that students who are indigent should report and register with the school authority, and they are paid a stipend; it’s not too much, but up to a maximum of five thousand naira per month, and that meant a lot to them.”

- iv. **Facilities provision – Laboratories** and library facilities were provided by the institutions.
- v. **External support – As** part of the support system, scholarships were given to students. The institutions also receive external support from TETFund, as confirmed by one of the HODs.

“TETFUND has done well too (coughs). At the university we used to struggle to get money to sponsor, and sometimes we don't have money. TETFUND grants are there. It is available once the person is a genuine staff member who is confirmed because one condition is that you have to be confirmed staff. The TETFUND grant is there and never exhausted...”

4. Discussion of Findings

The study findings reinforced the empirical literature on system support initiatives in higher education institutions. It indicates that most Nigerian universities provide system support initiatives for teaching and learning activities within their institutions. Most of the initiatives implemented by the universities are ongoing on a global scale. Furthermore, in educational institutions, academic support plays a significant role in students’ achievement because the provision of certain academic activities and services positively influences students’ decision-making, motivation, and academic performance. As students pursue higher levels of education, institutional support becomes increasingly important for meeting their academic and individual needs. Academic support enhances personal confidence and status, helping students succeed and retain stable knowledge in their future lives (Kakada, Deshpande & Bisen, 2019). The findings of the study are also consistent with the findings of Guo et al. (2025), which stated that teacher emotional support significantly enhances students’ academic engagement, with academic self-efficacy and resilience acting as mediating factors. This underscores that effective teaching extends beyond cognitive instruction to include relational and affective dimensions that strengthen students’ persistence, motivation, and psychological readiness for learning. Consequently, universities must cultivate supportive instructional climates that foster both academic competence and emotional well-being.

However, previous work has found a clear relationship between technology support, social support, academic support, service support, and student satisfaction. A feedback-driven academic decision support system has been shown to improve the accuracy of early performance predictions when updated with real-time student data. The system reduced prediction errors and facilitated dynamic intervention strategies, illustrating how analytics-based support can enhance institutional responsiveness to student needs (Adeyemi & AlOtaibi, 2025).

Therefore, a university must play an important role in providing students with the opportunity to develop their social lives and practise social integration as they learn and advance in their knowledge. Social support positively and significantly affects students’ satisfaction in both state and

federal universities. Service support has received immense attention in current educational literature because of its multi-dimensional approach, nature, and eventual influence on individual satisfaction, behavioural loyalty, and ultimately, the success of educational institutions (Paul & Pradhan, 2019). Qualitative evidence from global south contexts highlights how institutional constraints and policy environments shape the quality of academic advising. Factors such as resource limitations and advisor training have affected the consistency and usefulness of advising support for students, illustrating systemic barriers as well as enablers of effective support (Versfeld & Mapaling, 2024). Pedagogical competency is an important part of the structure of higher education. According to Zhang et al. (2025), instructors' instructional skills are a strong predictor of student happiness, especially when pleasant learning experiences are involved. In addition, research has shown that institutional support services that are easy to use and accessible to everyone can help students stay engaged in their studies and make progress (Hitches et al., 2024). These findings indicate that strong university support systems are built on outstanding teaching, professional development, and responsive student services.

Furthermore, according to Ayuni and Mulyana (2019), better service support determines success in student learning, where the role of institutional support is crucial in explaining satisfaction. This study supports the notion that educational institutions providing higher education can achieve a competitive advantage by focusing on service support. These results clearly show that state university students have high levels of technology support. Kakada, Deshapande and Bisen (2019) concluded that the dimensions of institutional support—technology support, academic support, social support, and service support—are positively and significantly related to students' satisfaction in both state and federal universities. From this study, it is evident that most universities provide social, academic, and counselling support to their students.

Nevertheless, the greater the number of support systems made available by universities, the more efficient and effective the teaching and learning activities become. Nationally, as evidenced by the project findings, many universities provide lecture rooms and halls. Findings from the study by Amoozegar, Daud, Mahmud, and Jalil (2017) revealed that university support—particularly its greater influence—and administrative support, but not technical support, significantly affected perceived learning in Malaysian universities. This highlights the importance of taking support systems seriously by university leadership. However, the benefits of institutional support systems illustrate the interconnectedness of various types and levels of support, which facilitate quality teaching by providing a supportive learning environment.

Finally, the findings of this study can be explained through Institutional Support Theory, which asserts that students' academic success, engagement, and persistence are profoundly affected by the level of structured academic, social, and psychological support provided by institutions. This theory is fundamentally based on Vincent Tinto's study (1993), particularly his Student Integration Model, which contends that students are more inclined to persist when they are academically and socially integrated into the university environment. In this context, institutional structures such as academic advising, mentoring systems, accessible faculty, and student services serve as mechanisms that facilitate integration and reduce attrition.

5. Conclusions and Recommendations

The findings from this investigation indicate that most universities in Nigeria provide system support to students for quality assurance purposes, except for financial support, which is not widely available in many institutions. It was discovered that a few universities do address students' needs by providing facilities for students with special needs in lecture rooms (e.g., comfortable furniture) and departments (e.g., ramps). The findings also revealed that many universities offer activities such as career advice, mentoring, and free access to course advisers, which assist students in developing skills that promote self-reliance and encourage good study habits to enhance the teaching-learning

process. However, it was noted that universities in Nigeria are primarily focused on introducing new pedagogical tools to improve understanding and learning for students.

This study, therefore, provides a framework to assist institutions in evaluating their current efforts to support students and lecturers in teaching and learning activities. Findings such as conducive lecture rooms, social support provided to students by universities, free access to course advisers, materials that help students develop self-reliance, learning materials that promote good study habits, diverse teaching methods to aid mastery, and the introduction of new pedagogical tools for better understanding, as well as mentoring, academic support, and counselling, confirm that higher education institutions embrace the use of effective support systems and maintain good quality control of teaching and learning. However, the role that financial incentives play in helping individuals adjust their level of attention towards school activities, which might previously have been regarded as too challenging or time-consuming, cannot be overemphasised. Therefore, there is a need for institutions to make adequate provisions for students. A review of all aspects of system support services through evaluation and monitoring bodies is necessary to determine whether contemporary facilities align with the requirements of students and lecturers in effective teaching and learning activities. Students' access to system support services should be free and adequate, while lecturers should also enjoy sufficient access to these services to ensure effective teaching and learning. Further studies could explore the interplay of system support initiatives in universities.

6. Declarations

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Conflicts of Interest: The author declares no conflict of interest

Data Availability: The data are not publicly available due to confidentiality agreements with participants and ethical restrictions imposed by the Institutional Review Board. However, de-identified data can be made available from the corresponding author upon reasonable request, subject to approval by the ethics committee.

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