

An Investigation into the Challenges Preventing Academic Planning Officers from Effectively Using ICT in Federal University Wukari, Nigeria

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Abstract— The study investigated the challenges preventing academic planning officers of academic planning unit from effectively using ICT in their offices in Federal University Wukari, Taraba, State, Nigeria. The researchers employed the descriptive survey research design for this investigation. The population of this study consisted of all the academic planning officers in federal university Wukari, Nigeria. The researchers employed Stratified random sampling was employed as sampling technique to select twenty academic planning officers for the study. Questionnaire was used for the study titled “Challenges Preventing the Use of Information and Communication Technology in By Academic Planning Officers Questionnaire (CPICTAPOQ). Responses of participants were based on four-point Likert scale of strongly agree [4], agree [3], disagree [2] and strongly disagree [1]. In order to determine the construct validity, test re-test method was used. For example, using factor analysis, the factor loadings matrix ranged from .632 to .910 in all the items. All research questions were answered using mean. A mean of 1.50 was taken as the bench-mark. That is, a mean of 1.50 and above was considered high and taken as acceptance of constraints in the use of ICT academic planning officers while a mean below 1.50 was considered low and taken as rejection of constraints in the use of ICT academic planning officers. The result collected and analyze revealed inadequate ICT facilities, unstable power supply, unstable internet service, high cost of ICT facilities, poor computer Literacy among academic planning officers, poor implementation of ICT policies in the universities, poor maintenance culture among the academic planning officers, lack of technical support for repairs and maintenance of ICT facilities by universities technicians and poor ICT capacity development programme for Academic planning officers are the challenges preventing effective utilization of ICT by academic planning officers in federal university Wukari, Nigeria.

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I. INTRODUCTION

Academic planning unit is an integral part of the Vice Chancellor’s office. This unit caters for the most critical needs of the University. It takes charge of projecting the university’s needs and responding to them appropriately through effective planning, delivering relevant programmes, evaluating the outcome of efforts and reporting that outcome back to stakeholders. Academic planning unit is very essential for balanced growth and development of the university education system. Every academic planner, regardless of position, responds to request from faculties, departments, units and the public. He is expected to be proactive in taking the initiative to meet the needs of the university and the public, as well as for effective and efficient management of the system. The academic planning unit makes this possible by taking cognizance of past challenges and experiences and by using a pragmatic

approach to deal with those challenges through logical processes and procedures by Bright, & Abdulganiyu.

The Academic Planning Unit is headed by a Director, who reports to the Vice-Chancellor in most universities. In some universities, it is an arm of the registry. Whether it is an autonomous Division or part of the Registry, the function is still the same. For these functions to be carried out successfully, the Academic Planning Unit is staffed with a full complement of personnel to execute the various technical and coordination aspect of the job. The Academic Planning Unit plays a vital role in successful conduct of university business. It must, therefore, be staffed with competent and result-oriented personnel to enable it perform its functions effectively. The competence and sustainability of the staff are very important. It does not matter what structure the University wants the Unit to adopt; what

An Investigation into the Challenges Preventing Academic Planning Officers from Effectively Using ICT in Federal University Wukari, Nigeria

Available at <https://jscer.org>

matters is that the Unit has a better understanding of its functions and is properly organized to perform them effectively. As a guide on how its functions are to be carried out, the National Universities Commission published a management manual in 1996 in which it spelt out these functions as: allocate planning, feedback planning, process planning, institutional planning, research, statistics and publication, and secretarial services.

The objectives of Academic Planning Unit Federal University Wukari include

- Ensuring the compliance of the university with the National Universities Commission (NUC) guideline on academic matters.
- Ensuring the provision of conducive teaching, learning and research environment for staff and students.
- Ensuring efficient and effective utilization of academic resources and; enhancing the conformity of the university with NUC and indeed international academic standards by Olubunmi.
- According to Olubunmi the specific functions of Academic Planning Unit
- Quantity and quality control organ of the University.
- It receives academic matters and policies from NUC and uses same to guide and advice all appropriate sections of the University in the implementation of such matters and policies under the directive of the Vice Chancellor and University Senate.
- Generation and storage of academic statistical data which concerns staff and student information for various departments, colleges and units in the university.
- Academic planning matters such as preparation of academic calendar etc.
- It works with the National Universities Commission (NUC) in facilitation of the accreditation of courses in the University.
- Collaborations with the NUC to establish new programme in the University.
- Generation, interpretations and analyses of data for the University System Annual Review Meeting (USARM) which holds annually at NUC.
- The Directorate is involved in the University strategic plan programme.
- Provisions of guidance for the Curriculum Review Committee.
- The Directorate is responsible for the preparation of the Teacher/student ratio and the carrying capacity to guide and advice the University Management on employment and student intake into department and colleges.
- Preparation and revision of the Academic Brief of the University.
- Enrolment, projections and determination of Full-Time Equivalent (FTE).
- Assist in search of fellowships, scholarship and external aids for staff to enhance teaching, research and development.
- Guiding each unit on the operation of the University academic brief.
- Study and analyze how the University and the units within it are complying with NUC's parameters for fund allocation.
- Obtaining up-to-date, relevant and accurate data for processing and generating information to guide University Management for accurate and timely decision-making on University matters (e.g. staff and student's records, financial records, research output etc.).
- Any other services that the Vice Chancellor or University Senate may direct by Olubunmi.

The functions and responsibilities of the academic planning unit of the universities involve the use of ICT facilities. The academic planning unit of the universities cannot function effectively without the application of ICT to carry out some of its core duties. Gusen & Olarinoye posited that ICT in education is critical to administrative, societal and cultural empowerment. In education, ICT possess the potentials of remodeling pedagogical methods, Increase access to quality education as well as refine the management of education systems. Zurich submitted that ICT made our work more sustainable: saving energy and materials resources by creating more value from less physical input, increasing quality of life forever more people without compromising the future generation ability to meet their needs. The academic planning officers of the unit employ the use of different ICT facilities to work in their offices. The ICT tools commonly use include computer systems, laptop, printers, projectors, photocopy machines, internet service and micro-computer. The ICT facilities are used to typing, storing, calculating, Presentation of report, sending of document, uploading of official document and for management of student and staff data. The ICT is also used for computing of student data and writing of annual report for the university.

It is common to see many academic planning officers unable to deliver their assignments using ICT facilities in their various offices in the universities. Many official meeting of the universities' committees have been suspended or canceled due to failure from the academic planning officers to prepare the document needed for such meetings to take place due to problems preventing them from using ICT effectively in the universities. This study is aimed to investigate the challenges preventing academic planning officers of academic planning unit from effectively

using ICT in their offices in Federal University Wukari, Taraba, State, Nigeria.

A. Research Objectives

The aim of this study was to investigate the challenges preventing academic planning officers of academic planning unit from effectively using ICT in their offices in Federal University Wukari, Taraba, State, Nigeria. Specific objectives are to:

1. To find out the challenges preventing the Academic planning Officers from using ICT in their offices.

B. Research Question

The following research question where generated to guide this study:

1. What are the challenges preventing the Academic planning Officers from using ICT in their offices?

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Fisher defined ICT as that technology which uses the information to meet human need or purposes including processing and exchanging." "Information and communications technology (ICT) in education is the processing of information and its communications facilities and features that variously support teaching, learning and a range of activities in education." The Federal Ministry of Education, Nigeria viewed ICT to encompassing all equipment and tools (inclusive of traditional technologies of radio, video, and television to the newer technologies of computers, hardware, firm-ware, etc.), as well as the systems, practices, concepts, and principles that come into play in the conduct of the information and communication activities. Information and Communication Technologies includes hardware and software such as radio, television, motion picture, projector, camcorders and emerging hardware and software like computers, netbooks, mobile phones, MPS, e-book readers, personal digital assistances, interactive white board, e-mail, video conferencing. The term ICTs according to Chisenga, encompass a range of rapidly evolving technologies and they include telecommunication technologies (telephony, cable, satellite, TV and radio, computer-mediated conferencing, video conferencing) as well as digital technologies (computers, information networks (internet, World Wide Web, intranets and extranets) and software applications. The importance of ICT in the development of any nation both socially, politically and educationally cannot be overemphasized.

There are many studies on challenges militating against effective utilization of ICT facilities in educational institutions. Alesinloye reported in his survey that, cost of procurement of computers, weak infrastructure, lack of skills, lack of appropriate software and inadequate access to the internet are the factors hampering the successful use of ICT in Nigerian education. This is rightly observed, presently, the nation has only crude oil as her major exporting goods, while machinery like cars, computers and the likes are the country major importing goods.

Unfortunately, this is a great discouragement to adoption of ICT in the country. Odera reported in her research five challenges confronting the use of ICT in education thus: non-availability of computers or inadequate supply of computers in most of secondary schools; lack of proper teacher training to help them integrate ICT into teaching and learning; lack of time to incorporate ICT into subject being taught; insufficient or lack of physical facilities to enable schools to introduce ICT in education and lack of relevant software. These highlighted factors had expressed other problems that can be attributed to poor implementation of ICT in education in this nation. Bukaliya and Mubika from the conclusion of their report on the factors militating against the introduction of computer education in secondary schools, highlighted two major factors that are impeding computer education in secondary schools as follow; no budgets for computer procurement in the majority of schools and funds were inadequate for computer procurement as central government did not avail finances for computer procurement. Watts and Ibegbulen, who asserted that lack of adequate ICT infrastructure and in-depth digital skills among library staff constituted barriers to use of ICT tools and resources in the library. Ibegwam observed in his study that students of the College of Medicine, University of Lagos, Nigeria listed frequent computer breakdown and slow speed of downloading materials as factors affecting their use of the Internet.

Oyedokun, Oyewumi, Akanbi, & Laaro, identified challenges militating against effective utilization of ICT tools in the library for dynamic information service delivery include; lack of adequate information infrastructure, absent of provision for staff training and development, limited and tighter budget for the library, lack of technological know-how, fear of technology on the part of library staff as well as epileptic power supply. Oduwole and Sowole also identify lack of adequate digital skills among library staff as one of the barriers to use of ICTs in the library. Akobo who listed stable power supply and good telecommunication, knowledgeable technical expertise as factors that affect the use of ICT. Barraket and Scott discovered in their study on students' experiences of ICT use in University of Technology, Sydney, Australia, highlighted ready access to infrastructure, availability of facilities, maintaining and upgrading equipment as factors that affected the effective use of ICT. Mathew and Baby study of developing technological skills for academic librarians in universities in Kerala, India underscored that constraints librarian encounter in utilization of

ICT tools in delivering information services include: inadequate training in ICT applications, lack of information infrastructures, lack of support from management, lack of coordination among library staff and lack of initiative from professional associations to conduct specialized training programs. Cisse in the study on access to electronic information reported that inability to access the equipment, difficulty encountered in using ICT affected use of electronic resources. The ICT available in the seven universities were inadequate and this constituted a limitation

An Investigation into the Challenges Preventing Academic Planning Officers from Effectively Using ICT in Federal University Wukari, Nigeria

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to their effective use and literacy skills. The challenges faced by the non-academic staff to use the ICT for administrative functions in the universities were irregular power supply, inadequate number of available ICT, lack of skills to use ICT and limited time of access to available ICT. These challenges must be addressed by the university administrators for increased ICT literacy skills of the undergraduates.

III. METHODOLOGY

A. Design of the Study

The researchers employed the descriptive survey research design for this investigation.

B. Population of the Study:-

The population of this study consisted of all the academic planning officers in federal university Wukari, Nigeria.

C. Sample and Sampling Technique:-

The researchers employed Stratified random sampling was employed as sampling technique to select twenty academic planning officers for the study.

D. Instrument of the Study:-

In order to collect data for the study, the researchers employed the questionnaire as the instrument. The questionnaire is titled: Challenges Preventing the Use of Information and Communication Technology in By Academic Planning Officers Questionnaire (CPUCTAPOQ). The questionnaire was designed to seek information and opinions from Academic planning officers in federal university Wukari, Taraba, Nigeria. The instrument had of two sections – A and B. Section A sought information on the respondents (academic planning officers) While section B consists of eight items designed that was used to collect information on the subject matter. Responses of participants were based on four-point Likert scale of strongly agree [4], agree [3], disagree [2] and strongly disagree [1].

E. Validity of the Instrument:-

The research instrument was examined for face, content and construct validity. The researchers employ the services of professionals to establish the face and content validity of the instrument and items. In order to determine the construct validity, test re-test method. For example, using factor analysis, the factor loadings matrix ranged from 0.74 to 0.82 in all the items. Therefore, the instrument was considered to have construct validity.

F. Reliability of the Instrument:-

The researchers used Cronbach Alpha method to obtain the reliability of the instrument. Twenty academic planning officers were used for the actual study to respond to the questionnaire items. Further, data generated from the responses to the questionnaire items were statistically analyzed using Cronbach Alpha. A coefficient of 0.82 was

retained. The statistical measure enabled the researcher to verify the reliability coefficient of the study

G. Method of Data Collection:-

Administration of the questionnaire was carried out in the academic planning unit in Federal University Wukari, Taraba. The instrument was administered by the researchers.

H. Method of Data Analysis:-

All research questions were answered using mean. A mean of 1.50 was taken as the bench-mark. That is, a mean of 1.50 and above was considered high and taken as acceptance of constraints in the use of ICT academic planning officers while a mean below 1.50 was considered low and taken as rejection of constraints in the use of ICT academic planning officers

IV. RESULT ANALYSIS

Research Question: What are the problems preventing effective use of ICT by the Academic planning Officers?

Table One: Responses on problems preventing effective use of ICT by the Academic planning Officers in Academic planning Unit. The following are the challenges preventing academic planning officers from effectively using ICT facilities in their offices:

TABLE I: The following are the challenges preventing academic planning officers from effectively using ICT facilities in their offices:

S.No	ITEMS	Agree	%	Dis Agree	%	X	SD	Decision
1	Inadequate ICT facilities	18	90	2	10	1.87	0-62	High
2	Unstable Power Supply	10	50	10	50	1.50	0-84	Moderate
3	Unstable internet service	12	60	8	40	1.76	0-50	High
4	High cost of ICT facilities	20	100	-	-	2.1	0-82	High
5	Low Computer Literacy Among academic planning Officers	10	50	10	50	1.5	0-91	Moderate
6	Poor implementation of ICT Policies at the universities	8	40	12	60	1.43	0-63	Low
	Poor maintenance Culture Among academic Planning Officers	8	40	12	60	1.32	0-63	Low
8	Lack of technical support for repairs and maintenance of ICT facilities	16	80	4	20	1.86	0-98	High

An Investigation into the Challenges Preventing Academic Planning Officers from Effectively Using ICT in Federal University Wukari, Nigeria

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9	Poor ICT capacity development Programme for Academic Planning Officers	14	70	6	30	1.86	0-87	High
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Table 1 shows that item one had a mean scores of 1.87 which is above the cut-off mean of 1.50. The statistics of item one showed that 100% of the respondents strongly agreed that inadequate ICT facilities is a problem preventing them from regularly using ICT to work in the offices. This implies that majorities are of the view that inadequate ICT facilities is a problem affecting the usage of ICT facilities for office work. Item two mean scores was 1.50 which is equal the cut-off mean of 1.50. The statistic for item two revealed that all respondents are undecided that if unstable Power Supply is a challenge frustrating the use of ICT to carry out official functions in the offices. Item three mean scores obtained was 1.76 which is above the cut-off mean of 1.50. The percentage figure for item three showed that 60% ticked agreed that unstable internet service is a major problem facing the utilization of ICT for official responsibilities. This indicated that all the respondents agreed that unstable internet service is a problem. Result from table four revealed that 1.82 mean scores was obtained for item four which is above the cut-off mean of 1.50. The statistics for item four revealed 100% of the respondents agreed that High cost of ICT facilities is another problem facing the effective use of ICT for administrative purposes. This implies that majorities of respondents agreed that High cost of ICT facilities is among the problem preventing academic planning officers from using ICT facilities in their offices.

The statistics of item five disclosed that 100% of the respondents agreed that Low Computer Literacy among academic planning officers is a factor preventing effective utilization of ICT by academic planning officers in their offices. This mean that academic planning officer agreed that Low Computer Literacy is a major problem facing them. Item six mean scores obtained was 1.42 which is below the cut-off mean of 1.50 and the statistics for item six disclosed that 60% of the respondents disagreed that poor implementation of ICT political in the universities is another challenge preventing the usage of ICT constantly for office work. Many of the respondents disagreed that poor implementation of ICT policies at the universities is also a problem limiting the use of ICT by academic planning officers in their offices. Item seven had a mean score of 1.42 which is below the cut-off mean of 1.50. The statistic of item seven revealed that 60% of the respondents disagreed that poor maintenance Culture among the academic planning officers is another problem preventing effective use of ICT facilities by academic planning officer. The result here showed that academic planning officers disagreed that poor maintenance Culture and their negative attitude toward

handling ICT facilities prevent them from regularly using ICT for office work.

The statistics of item eight disclosed that 80% of the respondents agreed that lack of technical support for repairs and maintenance of ICT facilities by universities technicians is a factor preventing effective utilization of ICT by academic planning officers in their offices. This mean that academic planning officer agreed that lack of technical support for repairs and maintenance of ICT facilities by universities technicians is a major problem facing them.

Item nine showed that 70% of the respondents agreed that poor ICT capacity development programme for Academic planning officers is among is a factor preventing effective utilization of ICT by academic planning officers in their offices. This implies that the majorities agreed that poor ICT capacity development programme for Academic planning officers is among is a factor preventing effective utilization of ICT by academic planning officers to execute their functions.

V. DISCUSSION OF FINDING

Table 1 shows that item one showed that the respondents strongly agreed that inadequate ICT facilities is a problem preventing them from regularly using ICT to work in the offices. This finding is in line with the Ogunode. ICT facilities like computer system, laptop, printer, photocopy machine, are essential to smooth running of the administration and management of services in the offices. Offices in the universities where the Non-academic staff are occupying to provide non-academic services should have the ICT facilities adequately to enable them discharge their responsibilities fast and without any hitch. It is unfortunate that many offices and department in the universities across the country do not have adequate ICT facilities for the administrative staff and other staff that need the ICT facilities to carry out official duties. Livinus, discovered that the academic staff ranked the inability of their college to provide them with computer as their major constraint. The non-academic staff also ranked that as their major constraint in utilizing computer. Apart from that most staff both academic and nonacademic lacked the skill to operate computer. All the constraints except scarcity of computer software were rated high as a problem in computer utilization.

Item two result revealed that that Unstable Power Supply is a challenge frustrating the use of ICT to carry out official functions in the offices. Electricity problem has been a persistent problem militating against ICT application and use in Nigeria making the few schools with ICT facilities unable to use them regularly by Adomi, a; Adomi, Omodeko, and Odo.; Adomi, Okiy, and Ruteyan. According to Agyeman, about 40% of Nigerians enjoy electricity from the national grid however, electric power supply is sporadic, and several communities in the urban areas lack electric power and that rural communities are worse off because of the absence of infrastructures.

An Investigation into the Challenges Preventing Academic Planning Officers from Effectively Using ICT in Federal University Wukari, Nigeria

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Item three result indicated that unstable internet service is a major problem facing the utilization of ICT for official responsibilities. This result supported the findings of Ogunode Many Non-teaching staff of the Nigerian universities cannot send document online and access their official email due to poor internet service or unstable internet service. The quality and stability of internet services in majorities of Nigerian cities and communities is still poor due to the poor quality of infrastructural facilities available in the country to provide the services. The majorities of internet services provider in Nigeria are private and many of them do not have adequate capital to invest on quality ICT infrastructural facilities that will guarantee quality and stable internet services for the Nigerian consumers. Generally, the internet services in Nigeria is not stable and is affecting the higher institutions especially the universities that depend on ICT to carry out major of their functions and programme including teaching and researching.

Result from table four revealed that respondents agreed that high cost of ICT facilities is another problem facing the effective use of ICT for administrative purposes. This implies that majorities of respondents agreed that High cost of ICT facilities is among the problem preventing academic planning officers from using ICT facilities in their offices. Ogunode submitted that the high cost of computer system and laptop have prevented many Non-academic staff from buying personal computer and laptop for personal use to complement the inadequate ICT facilities in the offices. Many Non-academic staff cannot afford to buy new ICT facilities for personal use and sometime for official use. The high cost of ICT facilities is also preventing the Non-teaching staff from using ICT constantly to carry out official responsibilities. Another factor limiting the application of ICT by the Non-teaching staff is the high cost of internet service. Nigeria have one of the highest tariff on internet services in Africa and this is affecting how people including the educational institutions subscribe to the internet service. Aduwa- Ogiegbaen and Iyamu had identified cost, poor infrastructure, lack of skills and lack of relevant software as obstacles to the use of ICT in secondary schools. The high cost of internet data and electronic services, is basically the element of ICT usage and value and is one of the challenges of installing ICT in Nigerian tertiary institution Tongia & Subrahmanian.

The statistics of item five disclosed that that poor computer literacy among academic planning officers is a factor preventing effective utilization of ICT by academic planning officers in their offices. Agih and Joseph wondered how academic and nonacademic staff in a tertiary institution could function effectively without knowing how to utilize computer service. Poole had indicated that computer illiteracy is now regarded as a new illiteracy. The same fact is echoed by Oyabanji in a related study. Livinus did a study and find out that 50% of the respondents have tried to use computer while about 7.5% of them being non-academic counterparts do not. A percentage of 38.5 of academic staff and 33.5 of non-academic staff were not computer literate. Only 11.5% academic and 16.5% non-academic were

literate in computer. 37.5% and 44.5% of academic and non-academic staff respectively have no computers of their own. 37% and 33.5% of academic and non-academic staff respectively cannot make use of computer. 13% academic and 20.5% non-academic staff respectively can surf the internet. On the whole the level of computer literacy among the staff of the college is unimpressive. It is worthy of note that more of non-academic than academic staff are computer semi-literate. The results of Livinus also indicate that about 13.5% and 26% academic and non-academic staff have computers officially assigned to them by the college. 2.5% academic and 1.5% non-academic staff can utilize computer. The same results apply to the use of computer in presentations. Computer accessories can be used by only 11.5% academic and 16% non-academic staff. Students' results can be computed using computer by just 2.5% and 1% academic and non-academic staff respectively. The percentage analysis reveals all the staff in the college underutilize computer in their daily services.

Item six mean showed that respondents disagreed that poor implementation of ICT policies in the universities is another challenge preventing the usage of ICT constantly for office work. This result is contrary to the view of Hennesy who observes that one of the greatest challenges in implementation of ICT in schools is balancing educational goals with economic realities. This is so because implementation of ICT requires large capital investments, schools need to be prudent in making decisions about what models of ICT will be implemented and be conscious of maintaining economies of scale. Ultimately it is an issue of whether the value added by implementing ICT offsets the cost, relatives to the cost of alternatives. The challenges of ICT usage may not be fund nor the technology but rather the will on the part of government and/or the governors of education Itegboje and Okubote. Item seven disclosed that all respondents disagreed that poor maintenance culture among the academic planning officers is another problem preventing effective use of ICT facilities by academic planning officer. The result here showed that academic planning officers disagreed that poor maintenance culture and their negative attitude toward handling ICT facilities prevent them from regularly using ICT for office work.

The statistics of item eight indicated that respondents agreed that lack of technical support for repairs and maintenance of ICT facilities by universities technicians is a factor preventing effective utilization of ICT by academic planning officers in their offices. According to Goshit, the main problem facing Nigeria and its ICT programme is workforce training of which teaching as a profession in Nigeria is considered to be for poor people, therefore the few professional that are available prefer to work in companies and industries where they can earn better salaries. With this deplorable condition, teachers are not motivated to go the extra mile in assisting the students to acquire computer education by Oduroye, n.d. There is also inadequacy of well qualified personnel to train others and repair the broken down computers for continuity, progress and well being of Nigerian teachers and students in general

An Investigation into the Challenges Preventing Academic Planning Officers from Effectively Using ICT in Federal University Wukari, Nigeria

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Mohammed and Yarinchi, Item nine showed that poor ICT capacity development Programme for Academic planning officers is among is a factor preventing effective utilization of ICT by academic planning officers in their offices.

VI. CONCLUSION

The objective of this study was to find out the challenges preventing the Academic planning Officers from using ICT in their offices. The result collected and analyze revealed inadequate ICT facilities, unstable power supply, unstable internet service, high cost of ICT facilities, poor computer Literacy among academic planning officers, poor implementation of ICT policies in the universities, poor maintenance culture among the academic planning officers, lack of technical support for repairs and maintenance of ICT facilities by universities technicians and poor ICT capacity development Programme for Academic planning officers are the challenges preventing effective utilization of ICT by academic planning officers in federal university Wukari, Nigeria.

VII. RECOMMENDATION

Based on the finding obtained from this study, the researchers hereby recommend the following; the government should increase the funding of universities to enable the university's administrators to acquire more ICT facilities and supply to the academic planning unit and other units and departments in the university. The National Universities commission should work with the universities administrators to come up with Programme to training and retraining academic planning officers in the universities. The Academic planning officers should be caution to develop positive maintenance culture. This will help to keep the ICT facilities to last long.

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