Currency Devaluation-Induced Inflation, University Academic Staff Research Output and Coping Strategies

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Abstract

Nigerian university academic staff are exposed to a hostile economic environment characterised by currency devaluation-induced inflation, which poses a significant challenge to their ability to contribute to research and development. This study aims to investigate how currency devaluation-induced inflation affects the research output of Nigerian university academic staff and the coping strategies employed by them. Through the use of a sequential

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explanatory mixed-methods research design, with quantitative data obtained from 413 academic staff in six Nigerian universities, and qualitative data from documents and interviews, the study found that as the Naira value declines, academic research output also declines in resonance. The study also found that academic staff employ diverse economic coping strategies for personal and research output mitigation. The study concludes that currency devaluation-induced inflation inimically affects academic staff research output, and despite the adoption of coping mechanisms, none is significantly effective. The study recommends autochthonous corrective and mitigating pathways.

Keywords: Academic Staff, Coping Strategies, Currency Devaluation-Induced Inflation, Research Output, University

Introduction

Currency devaluation is the intentional reduction in the value of a nation's currency relative to another or a global standard (Awa, 2022). It became prominent in Nigeria under General Babangida's administration in 1986. As part of efforts to promote fiscal balance and stability, the Bretton Woods Institutions recommended the implementation of the Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP) (Onyia & Aniekwe, 2022). This initiative aimed to correct the Naira's overvaluation, which was viewed as a barrier to economic growth and national progress. Although devaluation is occasionally employed as a strategy to enhance exports, it can result in inflation, higher costs of imported goods, and diminished purchasing power when the country adopting it lacks a strong manufacturing base.

The Nigerian case of currency devaluation reveals an evident contradiction between the currency devaluation policy's intended outcome and the observable reality. Adeyanju and Adeyanju (2023) contend that one of the economic contradictions in Nigeria is that it produces what it does not consume and consumes what it does not produce, resulting in an over-reliance on imported finished goods, such that what is obtainable is a complacent economy, where the country is an exporter of raw materials while constantly battling a trade deficit. This suggests that the economic

reality in Nigeria is a bottleneck to currency devaluation, therefore surging into currency-devaluation-induced inflation, rather than currency-devaluation-encouraged exportation.

In an effort to attract foreign investment and position Nigeria as a desirable destination for capital investment, President Bola Tinubu lifted long-standing foreign exchange controls shortly after assuming office in May 2023. The Naira, which had been pegged at an artificially high rate against the dollar for years, subsequently depreciated by about 70% (Osae-Brown & Onu, 2024). This triggered a hyperinflation surge, reaching a 28-year high, and led to a severe cost-of-living crisis, worsening poverty, and sparking violent protests in Africa's most populous nation (Osae-Brown & Onu, 2024; Lain & Vishwanath, 2021).

While globalisation has expanded access to international knowledge networks, research collaborations, and educational resources, which are critical for academics' research output, the rising costs of accessing these opportunities, fuelled by currency devaluation-induced inflation, challenge academic staff in Nigeria in participating in international conferences, accessing academic materials, or pursuing further training abroad, particularly when economic policies do not adequately mitigate the adverse impacts of devaluation on their incomes and professional development pathways. This phenomenon validates the position of Shattock (2014), cited in Pham (2021:2) that "the challenges that higher education systems have had to face so far are fundamental changes regarding international and national circumstances."

Universities play a pivotal role in a country's educational landscape, producing a significant portion of a nation's workforce. However, these institutions and their staff are not immune to the economic challenges posed by currency devaluation, as academic staff in universities face the dual challenge of coping with reduced real income and the wherewithal necessary for their professional development. This situation raises concerns about the long-term sustainability of academic excellence and the overall quality of education in Nigeria. The objectives of this study are to: investigate the influence of currency devaluation-induced inflation on the research output of academic staff in selected universities, and explore the coping strategies used by academic staff to mitigate the inflationary pressure.

Literature Review

Currency Devaluation

Currency devaluation refers to a deliberate downward adjustment of a country's exchange rate relative to other currencies (Awa, 2022). It is typically initiated by a government or monetary authority (Onyia & Aniekwe, 2022). The core objective of devaluation is to improve a country's trade balance by making exports cheaper and imports more expensive, but it often comes with a range of economic consequences, both positive and negative (Adhikari & Pallavi, 2023). This opinion corroborates that of Frankel (2019) that currency devaluation is often employed by countries that operate under a fixed or semi-fixed exchange rate system. In this context, the government or central bank actively sets or controls the exchange rate, and devaluation occurs when the authorities choose to lower the currency's pegged value. Devaluation is commonly used as a tool for managing macroeconomic imbalances, such as trade deficits, or to boost economic growth by promoting exports (Edwards, 2020).

As posited by Bayoumi and Harms (2021), macroeconomic instability also instigates currency devaluation, especially when there is hyperinflation or a huge external debt. In these instances, the value of the local currency becomes unsustainable at its current rate, and devaluation is seen as a necessary adjustment to restore economic equilibrium. This is evident in the study of Siregar and Rajan (2020), which emphasised that one of the key justifications for currency devaluation is its potential to enhance a country's international trade competitiveness by lowering the relative prices of goods and services produced domestically. Devaluation can make a country's exports more attractive in international markets (Siregar & Rajan, 2020; Bayoumi and Harms, 2021). This can help stimulate demand for domestic goods and reduce trade deficits. On the other hand, imports become more expensive, which can encourage consumers and businesses to substitute foreign goods with locally produced alternatives, further improving the trade balance.

However, the impact of devaluation on trade depends on a country's elasticity of demand for exports and imports. The Marshall-Lerner condition suggests that devaluation will improve a country's trade balance if the combined price elasticity of demand for imports and exports is greater than

one (Dibooðlu & Enders, 2019). If this condition is not met, devaluation may worsen the trade balance by increasing the cost of importation without sufficiently boosting export demand. One of the significant drawbacks of currency devaluation is that it can lead to imported inflation. Since devaluation increases the cost of foreign goods and services, particularly essential imports like oil and machinery, it can lead to a rise in overall price levels within the economy (Caporale et al., 2020). This inflationary pressure can erode the purchasing power of consumers and reduce the potential gains from improved export competitiveness. Moreover, inflation induced by devaluation can trigger a wage-price spiral, where workers demand higher wages to cope with the rising cost of living, which in turn can lead to further inflationary pressures. Ostry and Ghosh (2021) note that managing the inflationary impacts of devaluation requires a coordinated monetary policy response, such as tightening the money supply or raising interest rates, which can dampen domestic demand and slow economic growth.

For countries with large amounts of foreign-denominated debt, currency devaluation can significantly increase the real burden of debt repayments. Since devaluation reduces the value of the domestic currency, repaying loans or interest in foreign currency becomes more expensive, which can strain public finances and increase the risk of default (Kose & Ohnsorge, 2021). This is particularly problematic for developing countries that rely on external borrowing to finance infrastructure projects or cover budget deficits. Devaluation can also affect capital flows. A weaker currency may deter foreign investment if investors perceive the country as a risk to the loan or if they expect further devaluation (Fratzscher, 2022). On the other hand, some foreign investors may view devaluation as an opportunity to acquire assets at lower prices, potentially leading to an inflow of foreign direct investment (FDI). The overall impact on capital flows depends on a range of factors, including investors' sentiment and the country's broader economic conditions.

While currency devaluation can theoretically boost economic growth by improving export competitiveness, its actual impact on growth is highly contingent on the structure of the economy. In countries with a diversified export base, devaluation can lead to sustained growth by fostering the development of export-oriented industries (Rodrik, 2020). However, in

economies that are highly dependent on imported goods and services, particularly for essential inputs, devaluation may lead to stagnation or contraction due to the inflationary pressures it creates. Sokolova and Vermeulen (2021) argued that the effectiveness of currency devaluation as a growth strategy depends on a country's capacity to capitalise on increased demand for exports. This includes having the necessary infrastructure, production capacity, and human capital to meet higher international demand. Without these factors, devaluation can result in little more than temporary gains, followed by a return to economic difficulties as inflation erodes competitiveness.

Policymakers often face difficult trade-offs when considering devaluation as a tool for macroeconomic adjustment. While it can improve trade balances and spur economic growth in some cases, it can also lead to inflation, increased debt burdens, and capital flight. Gupta et al. (2021) suggest that devaluation should be accompanied by structural reforms, such as improving productivity, increasing investment in technology, and diversifying the export base, to ensure that its benefits are sustainable. Alternatives to devaluation include exchange rate flexibility, which allows market forces to determine the value of the currency, and internal devaluation, where a country seeks to restore competitiveness through wage reductions and other cost-cutting measures without altering the exchange rate (Wang & Tsuchiya, 2019). These approaches, however, also carry risks, particularly in terms of social unrest and political instability if wages are cut or unemployment rises.

Drawing from the above, currency devaluation is a complex economic tool with the potential to improve trade balances and enhance export competitiveness. However, its broader impacts on inflation, foreign debt, and capital flows require careful management. The effectiveness of devaluation in promoting economic growth is highly dependent on a country's economic structure, policy environment, and ability to manage the associated risks.

Inflation

Inflation, being the rate at which the general level of prices for goods and services rises, resulting in a decrease in purchasing power, has become a focal point for economists and policymakers. It reflects the economic health

of a nation and can have profound impacts on consumer behaviour, investment, and overall economic growth. Recent literature highlights various dimensions of inflation, exploring its causes, impacts, and the complex interplay with monetary policy (Mankiw, 2020; Blanchard, 2021). Inflation can be driven by demand-pull factors, cost-push factors, or built-in inflation. Demand-pull inflation occurs when aggregate demand outstrips aggregate supply, often in a growing economy (Keynes, 2019). Conversely, cost-push inflation arises when production costs increase, leading to higher prices for final goods and services. Recent studies indicate that supply chain disruptions, particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic, have exacerbated cost-push inflation, highlighting the vulnerability of global trade networks (Jordon et al., 2022).

Central banks play an important role in managing inflation through monetary policy. Tools such as interest rate adjustments and open market operations are utilised to impact money supply and demand (Bernanke, 2020). The relationship between interest rates and inflation is often captured by the Phillips Curve, which suggests an inverse relationship between unemployment and inflation. However, recent empirical evidence suggests that this relationship may not hold in the long term, leading to debates about the effectiveness of traditional monetary policy in controlling inflation (Ball & Mankiw, 2021).

Inflation expectations are pivotal in shaping economic behaviour. When consumers and businesses expect prices to rise, they are more likely to increase their spending, which can further fuel inflation (Friedman, 2020). The adaptive expectations theory posits that individuals adjust their expectations based on past inflation rates, while the rational expectations theory suggests that individuals use all available information to forecast future inflation (Muth, 2019). Understanding these expectations is crucial for policymakers aiming to anchor inflation rates. Inflation is not only a domestic issue; it has global implications. In recent years, emerging markets have experienced heightened inflationary pressures due to external shocks, such as commodity price volatility and currency fluctuations (IMF, 2023). Moreover, the interconnectedness of economies means that inflationary trends in one country can spill over into others, complicating the task for central banks worldwide (World Bank, 2022).

While moderate inflation is a normal part of a growing economy, hyperinflation can have devastating consequences. Historical cases, such as Zimbabwe in the late 2000s and Venezuela in recent years, illustrate how runaway inflation can erode savings, disrupt economic activity, and lead to social unrest (Cagan, 2019). The causes of hyperinflation often include excessive money supply growth, loss of confidence in the currency, and political instability, necessitating urgent corrective measures. Inflation also impacts investment decisions, as rising prices can erode the real returns on investments. Investors tend to seek assets that traditionally perform well during inflationary periods, such as real estate and commodities (Liu & Wang, 2022). Moreover, uncertainty surrounding inflation can lead to volatility in financial markets, impacting corporate investment strategies and long-term economic growth (Baker et al., 2021).

The social implications of inflation are profound, particularly for low-income households that are disproportionately affected by rising prices. Increased costs of essential goods can lead to diminished living standards and greater inequality (Drazen & Grilli, 2020). Policymakers must consider the social dimensions of inflation when designing interventions, ensuring that measures address not only economic stability but also equity and social welfare.

Empirical Review

In their study, Wilson-Osigwe et al. (2020) examined the relationship between staff development and academic output in three federal universities located in Nigeria's South-South region, employing an ex-post facto research design. They collected data through questionnaires, which were analysed using one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) and independent t-tests. The findings indicated that while in-service training did impact academic staff output, this impact was not statistically significant. Additionally, a difference was noted between the outputs of staff who had received ICT training and those who had not, but again, this difference lacked statistical significance.

Also, Adeniran and Adeyemi (2014), cited in Ogege (2022), evaluated the impact of fluctuations in foreign exchange rates on human capital development in Nigeria. They discovered that exchange rates have a beneficial, albeit slight, impact on human capital development. Similarly,

Agyemang and Boateng (2021) highlighted the challenges faced in East Africa due to rising costs of professional development programmes. As currencies depreciated, the cost of attending conferences or subscribing to academic journals became prohibitive for many, further stifling their academic and professional growth. This limitation, in turn, affected their chances for promotion and career advancement, indirectly impacting their overall income.

As scholarly development is an incubated human capital growth, Okeme (2017) analysed Nigeria's currency deregulation and human capital growth from 1986 to 2015 using the error correction model (ECM). This analysis took into account the currency rate, government expenditure on education and health, interest rate, inflation rate, GDP (a proxy for national income), and crude oil price. According to the study's findings, there is a direct association between human capital development and a one-year lagged exchange rate, national income, and crude oil price in Nigeria.

Methodology

This study adopts a pragmatic philosophical approach, which emphasises the importance of addressing the research problem rather than solely focusing on specific methods. The study utilised the explanatory sequential mixed-methods research design. Explanatory sequential mixed-method design is a research approach that involves the use of qualitative data in explaining the quantitative data (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). The population of this study is 5,106 academic staff of the selected universities in south-west Nigeria. The University of Ibadan, Oyo State; Federal University, Oye Ekiti, Ekiti State; Adekunle Ajasin University, Akunbgba-Akoko, Ondo State; Lagos State University, Lagos State; Covenant University, Ota, Ogun State; and Adeleke University, Ede, Osun State are the selected universities. All six selected universities cut across all the states in south-west Nigeria, comprising two federal universities: University of Ibadan, Oyo State and Federal University, Oye-Ekiti, Ekiti State; two state universities: Adekunle Ajasin University, Ondo State, and Lagos State University, Lagos State; and two private universities: Covenant University, Ogun State and Adeleke University, Osun State. The rationale that informed the selection of these universities across the six states in South-West Nigeria are: University of Ibadan: Highly ranked and first generation; Federal University, Oye-Ekiti:

Highly ranked; Adekunle Ajasin University: Highly ranked among State Universities but overall averagely ranked; Lagos State University: Highly ranked among State Universities and overall; Covenant University: Highly ranked among Private Universities and overall; Adeleke University: Averagely ranked among Private Universities but overall lowly ranked. This distribution captures all six states in South-West Nigeria, using the ranking indicators: AD Scientific Index (2024), Times Higher Education (2024), and New Telegraph (2024).

The Cochran (1997) is used to determine the sample size, 357, plus an additional 30% as recommended by Zikmund et al., (2015), making the total sample size 464. Therefore, the sample size of 464 was distributed in proportions as follows, using: **Q/N × 464.**

Table 1. Proportional Distribution of Sample Size by Population

S/N	University	Population	Sample Size
1.	University of Ibadan	1577	143
2.	Federal University Oye Ekiti	901	82
3.	Adekunle Ajasin University	1025	93
4.	Lagos State University	762	69
5.	Covenant University	611	56
6.	Adeleke University	230	21
	Grand Total	**5,106**	**464**

Source: Researcher's Computation (2025)

The questionnaire and interview are the instruments of data collection. The five-point Likert scale was used to measure the respondent's response to each question from Strongly Agree (SA) = 5; Agree (A) = 4; Neutral (N) = 3; Disagree (D) = 2; Strongly Disagree (SD) = 1. This scale is used because it allows for dynamic responses from different respondents. The study employed descriptive analysis for the quantitative data and thematic analysis for the qualitative data. The study involved a sample size of 464 academic staff, out of which 413 responses were successfully collected, yielding a response rate of approximately 89.01%.

Table 2. Quantitative Demographic Data

University Affiliation	Frequency (University)	%	Cadre	Frequency (Cadre)	%	Income Range	Frequency (Income)	Percent (Income)
University of Ibadan	152	36.8%	**Assistant Lecturer**	92	22.3%	**100,000 to 159,000**	73	17.7%
Federal University Oye-Ekiti	53	12.8%	**Lecturer II**	65	15.7%	**160,000 to 199,999**	74	17.9%
Adekunle Ajasin University	52	12.6%	**Lecturer I**	65	15.7%	**200,000 to 249,000**	61	14.8%
Lagos State University	74	17.9%	**Senior Lecturer**	145	35.1%	**250,000 to 299,999**	113	27.4%
Covenant University	55	13.3%	**Reader/ Associate Peofessor**	24	5.8%	**300,000 to**	53	12.8%
Adeleke University	27	6.5%	**Professor**	22	5.3%	**350,000 to 399,999**	18	4.4%
Total	413	100%	**Total**	413	100%	**Total**	413	100%

Source: Field Survey (2025)

Table 2 provides a comprehensive overview of the distribution of academic staff across different universities, cadre levels, and income ranges in relation to the subject matter. Additional 9 samples were added to the University of Ibadan; an additional 5 to Lagos State University; and an additional 6 to Adeleke University to complement the under-responsiveness of other Universities, especially the Federal University, Oye-Ekiti and Adekunle Ajasin University, Akungba-Akoko.

The distribution of academic staff by university affiliation shows that the University of Ibadan accounts for the largest share, with 152 staff (36.8%). Lagos State University follows with 74 staff members (17.9%), while Covenant University and Federal University, Oye-Ekiti account for 13.3% and 12.8%, respectively. Smaller proportions are observed in Adekunle Ajasin University (12.6%) and Adeleke University (6.5%), reflecting variations in workforce size or academic staff retention across these institutions.

The cadre distribution highlights that Senior Lecturers constitute the largest group of respondents, representing 35.1% of the total sample (145 staff). This suggests that mid-to-high-level academic staff are more prevalent in the selected universities and are likely among the most affected by income constraints and professional development challenges. Assistant Lecturers make up 22.3% (92 staff), indicating that entry-level academic staff also form a substantial proportion of the workforce. Lecturer II and Lecturer I each account for 15.7% (65 staff), while Reader/Associate Professors and Professors represent smaller groups, at 5.8% and 5.3%, respectively. This distribution reflects a career progression trend, with fewer individuals at the higher academic ranks.

The table reveals significant disparities in income ranges among the academic staff. The largest proportion of staff (27.4%) earn between ¦ 250,000 and ¦ 299,999, suggesting that a considerable number of academic staff may struggle to cope with currency devaluation-induced inflation while attempting to invest in their professional growth. A further 17.9% earn between ¦ 160,000 and ¦ 199,999, while 17.7% fall within the ¦ 100,000 to ¦ 159,000 range. These lower-income brackets highlight financial constraints that are likely to hinder access to international opportunities such as conferences, workshops, and research collaborations. At the higher end,

12.8% of the academic staff earn between ¦ 300,000 and ¦ 349,999, while only 4.4% fall within the ¦ 350,000 to ¦ 399,999 range, and 5.1% earn ¦ 400,000 and above.

Table 3 Qualitative Demographic Data

Key Informants	**Affiliation**	**Position/ Portfolio**	**Sentiment Analysis Deduction**
Respondent 1 (R1)	Nigerian Army University Biu, Borno State, Nigeria	Professor of Political ScienceConvener, Social Diagnostics Entrepreneur	Q1-Q2: Negative
Respondent 2 (R2)	University of Ibadan, Ibadan, Nigeria	Professor of Genetics and Molecular Biology	Q1-Q2: Negative
Respondent 3 (R3)	Erstwhile Member of the Nigerian Youth Parliament, National Assembly, Abuja Nigerian Institute of International Affairs	Ex-Parliamentarian Lawyer Research Fellow	Q1-Q2: Negative
Respondent 4 (R4)	Adventist University of West Africa, Liberia	FacultyDean, College of Business and Public Administration International Student, Babcock University	Q1-Q2: Negative
Respondent 5 (R5)	Independent ResearcherForex TraderYouth Development Advocate	Independent ResearcherForex TraderYouth Development Advocate	Q1-Q2: Negative

Table 3 highlights the key informant interviewees, their affiliation, position and sentiment analysis deductions. All respondents have a negative

reservation against all questions asked regarding the effect of currency devaluation-induced inflation on the international professional development of academic staff and the place of income in the discourse. The affiliations of the key informants encompass Nigerian Universities, a foreign University, a Research Institute in Nigeria on International Issues and the Nigerian Parliament. Respondents are coded into R1, R2, R3, R4, and R5.

Data Presentation and Analysis

Objective One

Investigating the influence of currency devaluation-induced inflation on the research output of academic staff in selected universities.

Table 4. Investigating the impact of currency devaluation-induced inflation on the research output of academic staff in selected Universities

	Strongly Agree		Agree		Neutral		Disagree		Strongly Disagree		Total	
	Count	Table N %	Count	Table N %	Count	Table N %	Count	Table N %	Count	Table N %	Mean	Standa Deviati
Currency devaluation-induced inflation limits the maximisation of international conference opportunities by teaching academics.	216	52.30%	197	47.70%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	4.52	.50
Currency devaluation-induced inflation limits the maximisation of international research funding/grants by teaching academics.	231	55.93%	182	44.07%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	4.56	.50
Currency devaluation-induced inflation limits teaching academics' publication output in credible international journals.	199	48.18%	214	51.82%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	4.48	.50
Currency devaluation-induced inflation inhibits international research collaborations of teaching academics.	160	38.74%	253	61.26%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	4.39	.49

Source: Field Survey (2025)

Table 4 provides insights into the impact of currency-devaluation-induced inflation on the research attainment of academic staff in selected universities. The responses are analysed in terms of agreement levels, mean scores, and standard deviations.

The first statement, "Currency devaluation-induced inflation limits the maximisation of international conference opportunities by teaching academics", shows unanimous agreement among respondents. A total of 216 participants (52.30%) strongly agreed, and 197 participants (47.70%) agreed. There were no neutral or dissenting views, indicating a consensus on the restrictive impact of inflation on international conference participation. The mean score of 4.52 and a standard deviation of 0.50 reflect strong agreement with minimal variability.

For the second statement, "Currency devaluation-induced inflation limits the maximisation of international research funding/grants by teaching academics", the pattern of unanimous agreement continued. Among respondents, 231 individuals (55.93%) strongly agreed, and 182 individuals (44.07%) agreed. The absence of neutral or opposing views underscores the shared perspective on the negative impact of inflation on access to international research funding. The mean score of 4.56 and a standard deviation of 0.50 suggest slightly stronger agreement compared to the first statement.

The third statement, "Currency devaluation-induced inflation limits teaching academics' publication output in credible international journals", also elicited unanimous agreement. A total of 199 participants (48.18%) strongly agreed, while 214 participants (51.82%) agreed. This indicates widespread recognition of inflation's adverse impact on academic publishing. The mean score of 4.48 and a standard deviation of 0.50 demonstrate a high level of agreement with relatively low variability.

Finally, the fourth statement, "Currency devaluation-induced inflation inhibits international research collaborations of teaching academics", received unanimous agreement as well. However, compared to the other statements, fewer respondents strongly agreed (160 participants, 38.74%), while a majority (253 participants, 61.26%) agreed. This distribution, coupled with a mean score of 4.39 and a standard deviation of 0.49, indicates a slightly lower intensity of agreement compared to the preceding statements.

The findings reveal unanimous agreement that currency-devaluation-induced inflation significantly restricts the international research opportunities, funding, collaborations, and publication outputs of academics. Despite slight variations in intensity, the overall consensus underscores the profound impact of inflation on academic staff's research attainment.

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Table 4b. Naira Value and Research Output of Selected Universities Per Year

Year	Avg. Naira value per 1 Dollar	University of Ibadan	Federal University Oye-Ekiti	Adekunle Ajasin University	Lagos State University	Covenant University	Adeleke University	Total
2019	363	1309	145	142	223	842	31	**2692**
2020	378	1703	206	192	305	777	56	**3239**
2021	410	1767	276	180	323	726	54	**3326**
2022	424	182	33	24	47	119	7	**412**
2023	766	677	83	72	142	192	25	**1191**
2024	1587	615	66	62	103	182	21	**1049**
	Total	**6253**	**809**	**672**	**1143**	**2838**	**194**	**11909**

Sources: SCIPACE; Harzing's Publish or Perish Software (HPPS); Valutafx.com; and CBN

Table 4b Naira Value and Research Output of Selected Universities Per Year offers a comprehensive view of both the economic context, reflected in the average Naira value per US Dollar, and the research productivity of six Nigerian universities over a six year span (2019–2024).

In terms of annual performance, 2019 began with the Naira valued at 363 per dollar and a total research output of 2,692 across all institutions. That year, the University of Ibadan contributed the most with 1,309 outputs, followed by Covenant University's robust 842 outputs, while the remaining universities provided more modest figures. In 2020, with a slight increase in the exchange rate to 378, overall research output rose to 3,239. The University of Ibadan again led the pack with 1,703 outputs, indicating its strong research culture despite modest inflationary pressures.

By 2021, the trend continued with the exchange rate climbing to 410 and the aggregate research output peaking at 3,326. University of Ibadan's output reached 1,767, while Covenant University, Lagos State University, Federal University Oye-Ekiti, Adekunle Ajasin University, and Adeleke University also maintained or slightly increased their contributions. However, 2022 marked a dramatic shift: although the Naira value increased only slightly to 424, total research output plummeted to 412. The University of Ibadan's output fell sharply to 182, with similarly reduced figures across other institutions; an indication that the cumulative effects of inflation and other potential economic pressures severely disrupted research activities during that year and more so, the extended COVID-19 effect, backlog publication data record and other related factors are likely determinants of the general poor research output in year 2022.

The subsequent years, 2023 and 2024, show signs of partial recovery. In 2023, the Naira's value spiked to 766, and overall research output rebounded to 1191, with the University of Ibadan recording 677 outputs. Yet, in 2024, despite the Naira further devaluing to 1,587 per dollar, total output only reached 1,049, and the University of Ibadan's contribution was 615. These figures, while higher than the dismal 2022 numbers, remain well below the robust levels observed in the pre-2022 period.

Summing the cumulative outputs by university over the entire period underscores the disparities among the institutions. The University of Ibadan overwhelmingly leads with a total of 6,253 outputs, establishing its status as

the primary research hub. Covenant University follows with 2,838 outputs, indicating substantial research activity, whereas Lagos State University contributed 1,143 outputs. Federal University, Oye-Ekiti and Adekunle Ajasin University recorded 809 and 672 outputs respectively, and Adeleke University's total of 194 highlights its comparatively limited research footprint.

Overall, the data reveal significant fluctuations in annual research outputs but also illustrate the broader impact of macroeconomic instability on academic productivity. The gradual yet dramatic devaluation of the Naira, culminating in a steep rise from 363 in 2019 to 1,587 in 2024, appears to correlate with periods of severe decline in research output, notably in 2022. This pattern suggests that as financial pressures mount, the capacity for academic institutions to sustain high levels of research productivity is compromised. The aggregate figures provide a dual insight: while historically strong institutions like the University of Ibadan have maintained leadership in research output, all universities are vulnerable to the adverse effects of economic instability, as evidenced by the pronounced dip in 2022 and the incomplete recovery in subsequent years.

Table 4c. Ranking of Selected Universities by Research Output, 2019-2024

Position	University	Research Output
1st	University of Ibadan	**6253**
2nd	Covenant University	**2838**
3rd	Lagos State University	**1143**
4th	Federal University Oye	**809**
5th	Adekunle Ajasin University	**672**
6th	Adeleke University	**194**

Sources: Deduction from SCIPACE; and Harzing's Publish or Perish Software (HPPS)

Table 4c ranks six Nigerian universities based on their cumulative research output between 2019 and 2024. At the top is the University of Ibadan with a commanding total of 6,253, far surpassing its peers, which suggests a strong research tradition and a potentially larger or more productive faculty. Covenant University, with 2,838, holds second place, showing significant research activity that is still less than half of Ibadan's output. Lagos State University follows in third place with 1,143, while Federal University Oye-Ekiti and Adekunle Ajasin University register more modest outputs of 809 and 672 respectively. Adeleke University, at 194, trails considerably behind the others.

Objective Two

Exploring the coping strategies used by academic staff to mitigate the inflationary pressure.

Table 5. Coping Strategies Employed by Academic Staff for Income

			Strongly Disagree Count	Disagree Count	Neutral Count	Agree Count	Strongly Agree Count
University Affiliation	Adeleke University	Cutting back on non-essential expenses	0	0	0	12	5
		Engaging in non-academic jobs/investments	0	0	0	16	11
		Taking freelance academic gigs	0	0	0	19	8
		There is no effective coping mechanism.	0	0	0	7	20
	Covenant University	Cutting back on non-essential expenses	0	0	0	29	26
		Engaging in non-academic jobs/investments	0	0	0	25	30
		Taking freelance academic gigs	0	0	0	21	34
		There is no effective coping mechanism.	10	31	8	2	4
	Lagos State University	Cutting back on non-essential expenses	0	0	0	23	51

		Engaging in non-academic jobs/investments	0	0	0	40	34
		Taking freelance academic gigs	0	0	0	39	35
		There is no effective coping mechanism.	5	5	9	39	16
	Adekunle Ajasin Uni.	Cutting back on non-essential expenses	0	0	0	33	19
		Engaging in non-academic jobs/investments	0	0	2	34	16
		Taking freelance academic gigs	0	0	0	25	27
		There is no effective coping mechanism.	7	2	3	29	11
	Federal Uni. Oye-Ekiti	Cutting back on non-essential expenses	0	0	0	26	27
		Engaging in non-academic jobs/investments	0	0	0	28	25
		Taking freelance academic gigs	0	0	0	23	30
		There is no effective coping mechanism.	4	5	5	25	14
	University of Ibadan	Cutting back on non-essential expenses	0	0	5	57	90
		Engaging in non-academic jobs/investments	0	0	0	59	93
		Taking freelance academic gigs	0	0	0	65	87
		There is no effective coping mechanism.	10	14	22	72	34
	Total	Cutting back on non-essential expenses	0	0	5	180	228
		Engaging in non-academic jobs/investments	0	0	2	202	209
		Taking freelance academic gigs	0	0	0	192	221
		There is no effective coping mechanism.	36	57	47	174	99

Source: Field Survey, (2025)

Table 5 provides insights into the coping strategies employed by academic staff across various universities to manage their income. The strategies considered are cutting back on non-essential expenses, engaging in non-academic jobs or investments, taking freelance academic gigs, and acknowledging a lack of an effective coping mechanism. The responses from academic staff are categorised as Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Neutral, Agree, and Strongly Agree, with the number of respondents for each category provided.

The most common coping strategy across all universities is cutting back on non-essential expenses. Notably, a significant number of respondents at each university agreed or strongly agreed with this statement. For example, at the University of Ibadan, 57 respondents agreed and 90 strongly agreed. This indicates that a large portion of academic staff at this university actively engages in reducing their expenditures to cope with financial challenges. Similarly, other universities like Lagos State University (23 agree, 51 strongly agree) and Covenant University (29 agree, 26 strongly agree) also show a similar trend. This suggests that staff in these institutions are prioritising essential spending to maintain financial stability. The overall total shows 180 agreeing and 228 strongly agreeing, further emphasising this strategy's prevalence.

Engaging in non-academic jobs or investments is another widely employed coping strategy. Academic staff at all universities seem to find it a viable solution, with particularly strong agreement from respondents at Covenant University (25 agree, 30 strongly agree) and Lagos State University (40 agree, 34 strongly agree). This trend highlights that many academic staff are supplementing their income by pursuing opportunities outside of academia. The University of Ibadan also saw a high number of respondents agreeing (59) and strongly agreeing (93) with this strategy. On the whole, 202 individuals agreed and 209 strongly agreed across all universities, reflecting the significance of non-academic income sources in their coping mechanisms.

Taking freelance academic gigs appears to be a prominent coping strategy as well, though with varying levels of adoption across the universities. At the University of Ibadan, 65 respondents agreed, and 87 strongly agreed, indicating a high reliance on freelance academic work to supplement their

income. Similarly, Lagos State University (39 agree, 35 strongly agree) and Covenant University (21 agree, 34 strongly agree) show significant numbers of staff engaging in freelance opportunities. Overall, 192 respondents agreed, and 221 strongly agreed with taking freelance academic gigs as a viable coping strategy, making it one of the most commonly employed methods for generating additional income.

A portion of respondents across the universities also expressed dissatisfaction with their coping mechanisms, with many indicating that there is no effective way to cope with their financial challenges. This sentiment was particularly strong at Covenant University, where 31 respondents disagreed, and only 4 strongly agreed that there were effective coping mechanisms. Similarly, at Lagos State University, 5 respondents strongly disagreed, and 39 agreed that there was no effective coping strategy. Despite these responses, the overall number of respondents indicating a lack of effective coping mechanisms was relatively low compared to those who agreed with other strategies. The total count for this response is 36 strongly disagreeing, 57 disagreeing, and 47 being neutral, which shows that while some staff perceive a lack of options, the majority find alternative coping strategies effective.

On the whole, the table reveals that academic staff across Nigerian universities predominantly rely on reducing non-essential expenses, engaging in non-academic jobs, and taking on freelance academic gigs to manage financial pressures. While a small proportion of staff feel there are no effective coping mechanisms, these strategies remain the most prominent ways to supplement or stabilise their income. The strong agreement with these strategies highlights the financial challenges faced by academic staff and their resilience in finding ways to cope.

Table 5b Coping Strategies Employed by Academic Staff for Research Output

	Strongly Agree		Agree		Neutral		Disagree		Strongly Disagree		Total Mean	SD
	Count	Table N %	Count	Table N %	Count	Table N %	Count	Table N %				
Collaborating with researchers /institutions in diaspora in order to share resources.	189	45.76%	221	53.51%	3	0.73%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	4.45	.51
Utilising open-access journals or free research materials/specimens/equipment	203	49.15%	210	50.85%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	4.49	.50
Scaling back research activities	214	51.82%	196	47.46%	3	0.73%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	4.51	.51
Opting for alternative publishers/ journals to international publishers/journals.	203	49.15%	208	50.36%	2	0.48%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	4.49	.51
Using savings/emergency funds	225	54.48%	188	45.52%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	4.54	.50
Institutional sponsorships and subsidisation	208	50.36%	205	49.64%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	4.50	.50
There is no effective coping mechanism.	108	26.15%	167	40.44%	50	12.11%	40	9.69%	48	11.62%	3.60	1.29

Source: Field Survey, (2025)

Table 5b explores coping strategies employed by academic staff to sustain research output in the midst of the challenges, with responses categorised by agreement levels, mean scores, and standard deviations for seven statements.

The first statement, "Collaborating with researchers/institutions in diaspora in order to share resources", gained strong agreement. A majority of respondents, 189 (45.76%), strongly agreed, while 221 (53.51%) agreed. Only 3 respondents (0.73%) remained neutral, and none disagreed. The mean score of 4.45 and a standard deviation of 0.51 indicate a shared acknowledgement of the value of collaboration in overcoming resource limitations.

For the second statement, "Utilising open-access journals or free research materials/specimen/equipment", all respondents agreed, with 203 (49.15%) strongly agreeing and 210 (50.85%) agreeing. The mean score of 4.49 and a low standard deviation of 0.50 reflect strong consensus, highlighting the importance of freely available resources in sustaining professional development.

The third statement, "Scaling back research activities", also received unanimous agreement. A majority, 214 respondents (51.82%), strongly agreed, while 196 (47.46%) agreed. Only 3 participants (0.73%) expressed neutrality. The mean score of 4.51 and a standard deviation of 0.51 suggest that reducing research activities is a widely recognised coping mechanism, albeit one with potential long-term implications for academic progress.

The fourth statement, "Opting for alternative publishers/journals to international publishers/journals", showed unanimous agreement. Among respondents, 203 (49.15%) strongly agreed, and 208 (50.36%) agreed, while 2 participants (0.48%) remained neutral. The mean score of 4.49 and a standard deviation of 0.51 indicate strong agreement, emphasising the shift to alternative publishing options as a viable strategy.

The fifth statement, "Using savings/emergency funds", received unanimous agreement, with 225 respondents (54.48%) strongly agreeing and 188 (45.52%) agreeing. The mean score of 4.54 and a standard deviation of 0.50 suggest that personal financial reserves are a commonly used strategy to support professional development efforts.

For the sixth statement, "Institutional sponsorships and subsidisation", respondents expressed unanimous agreement. A total of 208 respondents (50.36%) strongly agreed, while 205 (49.64%) agreed. The mean score of 4.50 and a low standard deviation of 0.50 highlight the significant role of institutional support in mitigating professional development challenges.

The final statement, "There is no effective coping mechanism", yielded more diverse responses. A total of 108 respondents (26.15%) strongly agreed, and 167 (40.44%) agreed, while 50 (12.11%) were neutral. However, 40 respondents (9.69%) disagreed, and 48 (11.62%) strongly disagreed. The mean score of 3.60 and a higher standard deviation of 1.29 reflect mixed perceptions, suggesting that while some academics feel there are no effective coping mechanisms, others disagree or remain uncertain.

In summary, the findings reveal that academic staff employ various coping strategies, such as leveraging open-access resources, collaborating with diaspora researchers, and relying on institutional support. However, the mixed responses to the absence of effective mechanisms suggest that some academics still face significant challenges in finding sustainable solutions for research output.

Discussion of Findings

Objective One

The first objective of this study is to examine the impact of currency-devaluation-induced inflation on the research output of academic staff in selected universities. Both quantitative data and qualitative insights reveal that inflation has a consistent and significant negative effect on research activities, including publication output and international collaborations.

Table 4b illustrates this dynamic vividly. Over the six-year period from 2019 to 2024, the average Naira value per US Dollar escalated dramatically, from 363 in 2019 to 1,587 in 2024, indicating severe currency devaluation. Correspondingly, research output across the six universities showed significant fluctuations. In the early years (2019–2021), research outputs were robust: total outputs increased from 2,692 in 2019 to a peak of 3,326 in 2021, with the University of Ibadan and Covenant University leading with 1,309–1,767 and 842–2,838 outputs, respectively. However, the data reveal a stark collapse in productivity in 2023 and 2024, when total output plummeted to 1,191 and 1,049 respectively, suggesting that the escalating

inflationary pressures severely disrupted research activities. Partial recovery in 2023 (1,191) and 2024 (1,049) was noted, but these levels remained substantially below those of the pre-2022 period.

This documented quantitative trend is echoed in the surveyed quantitative and qualitative findings. Table 4 shows that respondents unanimously agree that inflation limits opportunities for international conferences, research funding, journal publications, and collaborative engagements. For instance, Respondent 1 stated that academic staff members are struggling to balance research demands with financial survival (Interview with Respondent 1, January 21, 2025, 5:54pm), a sentiment that aligns with Oloruntoba and Falola's (2022) assertion that financial instability adversely impacts research productivity among African scholars. Similarly, Wang and Sun (2023) have noted that economic constraints curtail scholars' opportunities for professional development and international collaborations, as well as their ability to publish in high-impact journals.

The high level of consensus is further highlighted by the finding that 100% of respondents agreed that currency devaluation-induced inflation limits the maximisation of international conference opportunities. With 52.30% strongly agreeing and 47.70% agreeing (mean score of 4.52, SD = 0.50), this unanimity reflects the reality that the rising costs associated with currency devaluation, evidenced by the steep increase in the Naira's value, are severely restricting access to global academic platforms. Respondent 4 corroborated this by noting that the cost of international travel for conferences has become prohibitively expensive, thereby limiting networking and knowledge exchange opportunities (Interview with Respondent 4, January 08, 2025, 6:43pm).

Further, Respondent 3 highlighted that many academics are prioritising financial survival over research due to rising inflation (Interview with Respondent 3, December 28, 2024, 12:28pm). This observation, which resonates with the findings of Okonkwo et al. (2023) that economic pressures reduce scholars' motivation to pursue rigorous research, is reflected in the dramatic decline in research output from 2019 to 2024, in resonance with Naira's value deflation. Most notably, the University of Ibadan's output fell from 1,767 in 2021 to just 615 in 2024. The inability to afford high-quality research materials and international subscriptions, as discussed by Adedokun

and Yusuf (2022), further isolates Nigerian academics from the global academic community.

Similarly, the challenge of securing international research funding is underscored by both qualitative responses and quantitative data. The statement that inflation limits the maximisation of international research funding/grants received 55.93% of respondents strongly agreeing and 44.07% agreeing (mean score of 4.56, SD = 0.50). This response indicates that the high costs for research materials and institutional subscription costs, which likely contributed to the overall drop in research outputs from 2019 to 2024, have significantly diminished the ability of researchers to attract external funding. Respondent 3 emphasised this point during the interview, reinforcing the view that inflation-related financial constraints are a major barrier to securing international grants.

Moreover, unanimous agreement was observed for the statement that inflation limits teaching academics' publication output in credible international journals (48.18% strongly agreeing and 51.82% agreeing, with a mean score of 4.48, SD = 0.50). The data from Table 4b, showing a dramatic drop trend in overall research output from 2019 to 2024, reflect the high costs associated with journal subscriptions, open-access publication fees, and obtaining updated datasets. Respondent 5 affirmed that inflation has restricted access to scholarly materials, thereby decreasing academic productivity (Interview with Respondent 5, December 29, 2024, 9:11pm). Additionally, Respondent 4's observation that rising costs for journals, datasets, and essential software limit scholars' capacity to conduct high-quality research further aligns with Adebayo and Olanrewaju's (2023) findings that financial restrictions hinder researchers in developing countries from producing competitive and impactful scholarly work.

Finally, the statement regarding the inhibition of international research collaborations by currency devaluation-induced inflation, which received a mean score of 4.39 (SD = 0.49), indicates that even international networking is not immune to these financial pressures. Respondent 2 noted that increasing costs of research tools, software, and laboratory equipment are significant barriers to participating in global research networks (Interview with Respondent 2, January 28, 2025, 11:11am). This challenge is underscored by the persistent lower research outputs in 2023 and 2024 compared to the pre-2022 peak, despite some partial recovery.

In summary, both the quantitative data and the qualitative insights from respondents clearly demonstrate that currency-devaluation-induced inflation significantly impairs the research attainment of academic staff. The dramatic rise in the average Naira value- from 363 in 2019 to 1,587 in 2024, correlates with a severe drop in research outputs, particularly evident in the collapse observed in 2022. Financial constraints limit opportunities for international conference participation, research funding, publication in credible journals, and collaborative engagements. These findings, supported by scholarly studies (Wang & Sun, 2023; Okonkwo et al., 2023; Adedokun & Yusuf, 2022; Adebayo & Olanrewaju, 2023), underscore the urgent need for strategic interventions to mitigate the impact of economic instability on academic research productivity.

Objective Two

On the objective of this study to explore the coping strategies employed by academic staff in response to currency devaluation-induced inflation in selected universities, the quantitative data from Tables 5 and 5b reveal that academic staff adopt a range of strategies; from reducing non-essential expenditures to engaging in supplementary income activities, in order to manage financial pressures and sustain research output. Complementing these quantitative trends, qualitative insights provide a deeper understanding of the mechanisms behind these strategies and the challenges that persist despite adaptive measures.

A predominant coping mechanism identified is the practice of cutting back on non-essential expenses. Quantitative data indicate that a substantial number of respondents at institutions like the University of Ibadan, Lagos State University, and Covenant University reported either agreeing or strongly agreeing with this strategy. This approach appears to be a first-line response to declining income value under inflationary pressures. As one respondent detailed a comprehensive range of coping strategies, including engaging in non-academic jobs, taking freelance academic gigs, and pooling resources; this reflects a multifaceted adaptation to economic challenges (Interview with Respondent 2, January 28, 2025, 11:11am). Adesina and Balogun (2023) contend that such informal strategies are common among academics in unstable economic environments, highlighting the necessity

for individuals to reallocate personal expenditures as an immediate survival tactic.

In addition to expense reduction, many academic staff actively seek supplementary income through non-academic employment and freelance opportunities. The quantitative data show high levels of agreement regarding the engagement in non-academic jobs or investments and freelance academic gigs as viable coping strategies. This diversification of income streams is critical in mitigating the adverse effects of inflation. Eze and Nwosu (2022) found that the adoption of alternative income-generating activities not only helps in stabilising personal finances but also provides a buffer against the erosion of purchasing power. The coping strategy of taking freelance academic gigs, for instance, is supported by high response counts across institutions, which underscores the resilience of academic staff in pursuing additional financial avenues to support their professional responsibilities.

When it comes to sustaining research output, the quantitative evidence from Table 5b indicates that academic staff rely heavily on both individual and institutional strategies. Collaboration with researchers or institutions in the diaspora, utilisation of open-access journals, scaling back on research activities, opting for alternative publishers, and using personal savings or emergency funds are among the most endorsed methods. Interview insights corroborate these findings; for example, Respondent 2 mentioned benefiting from TETFund through research grants early in their career, which not only provided access to essential research materials but also facilitated international exposure (Interview with Respondent 2, January 28, 2025, 11:11am). Moreover, Respondent 3 emphasised that while institutional sponsorship and subsidisation could significantly mitigate negative impacts, such support remains elusive for many public university academics (Interview with Respondent 3, December 28, 2024, 12:28pm). Oke and Adeola (2023) assert that institutional backing is vital in sustaining professional development, yet discrepancies in funding between private and public institutions often necessitate reliance on personal resources and external collaborations.

While universities such as the University of Ibadan and Lagos State University exhibit robust use of strategies like collaborating with international researchers and leveraging open-access resources, Covenant University

displays a divergent pattern. At Covenant University, there is a notably lower endorsement of strategies aimed at mitigating the negative impacts of inflation, reflected in fewer respondents agreeing that effective coping mechanisms exist. This finding is consistent with the qualitative remark that institutional support in private institutions may not be uniformly available across the board, leaving many academic staff relying heavily on personal income and resourceful measures (Interview with Respondent 3, December 28, 2024, 12:28pm). Nwachukwu (2023) highlights that such disparities in institutional funding contribute to significant variations in coping strategies, ultimately affecting the sustainability of professional development initiatives.

A final dimension of the findings concerns the perception of the effectiveness of these coping strategies. Although a majority of academic staff report employing one or more adaptive strategies, a notable minority express dissatisfaction, indicating that there remains a perception among some staff that no effective mechanism exists to fully counteract the financial challenges induced by inflation. This ambivalence is evident in both the quantitative data, where responses to the statement "There is no effective coping mechanism" show considerable variability, and in the qualitative narratives that underscore persistent gaps in support systems (Interview with Respondent 5, December 29, 2024, 9:11pm). Ongoing challenges, such as insufficient research grants, low salaries, and limited government funding, suggest that while individual and institutional coping strategies provide temporary relief, they may not offer a long-term solution to the systemic issues affecting professional development (Eze & Nwosu, 2022).

Overall, the data confirm that academic staff employ a combination of personal, collaborative, and institutional strategies to cope with the adverse effects of currency-devaluation-induced inflation. Although these adaptive measures reflect considerable resourcefulness and resilience, the mixed perceptions regarding their long-term effectiveness point to an urgent need for enhanced institutional support and policy interventions. Addressing these systemic challenges is critical not only for stabilising academic staff finances but also for ensuring sustained professional growth and research productivity in the face of ongoing economic instability.

Conclusion and Recommendation

The study concluded that persistent Naira devaluation and spiralling inflation significantly constrained the research output of Nigerian university academic staff by eroding their income and limiting access to foreign research materials, international engagements, and cross-border scholarly opportunities. The hostile forex regime and recurrent economic disruptions undermined academic research and development, with varying but significant inimical effect on the lower-income academic staff and their higher-income peers. These findings support the conclusion that the adverse economic environment has shifted academic staff below the elite status they once held, emphasising an urgent need for policy interventions to stabilise the currency, bolster income levels, and secure the international competitiveness of Nigerian higher education.

The study established that addressing this issue requires both systemic economic interventions and institution-specific policies. The study therefore recommends the following as potential panacea to the identified problems per objectives:

i. To enhance research output of academic staff, applying for external grants, utilising open-access resources, engaging in collaborative research, and developing alternative income streams are feasible pathways. Also, economic policy-makers must foster a productive economy, through broader macroeconomic reforms, because institutional intervention may only provide temporary relief rather than a long-term solution. Therefore, a primary recommendation is that policymakers should prioritise economic policies that stabilise the currency, curb inflation, and create a conducive environment for academic staff to thrive professionally. A feasible way to achieving the aforementioned is by targeting a complimentary economy by enhancing massive indigenous production and consumption of indigenous produce and services.

ii. Universities should regularly adjust academic staff salaries to align with inflationary trends. Government agencies and university administrations must work together to implement structured salary review mechanisms that prevent real income erosion. In addition, universities should advocate for increased research grants,

conference sponsorships, and sabbatical leave support to ensure that academic staff have the necessary resources for continuous career development. Anti-graft measures should also be enforced to guarantee that allocated funds reach their intended beneficiaries and are not lost to corruption and administrative inefficiencies.

On the whole, a holistic approach, combining macroeconomic stability with targeted institutional interventions, is essential for mitigating the financial challenges faced by academic staff. A dual strategy that promotes economic growth while strengthening research sponsorship and salary adjustments would be the most effective path forward. Policymakers, university administrators, and funding bodies (TETFUND) must collaborate to create sustainable mechanisms that ensure financial security and professional growth for academic staff. Without these concerted efforts, the long-term development of higher education and research in Nigeria may remain constrained by international economic conditionality.

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