



Effectiveness of Quality Assurance Strategies in Business Education Programme in Selected Universities in Southern Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to assess the effectiveness of the quality assurance strategies in Business Education programme in universities in Southern Nigeria. This study adopted the survey research design, and the population of the study was 51 Business Education lecturers in seven selected universities in Southern Nigeria. No sampling was done, therefore all the 51 Business Education lecturers were used for the study. The instrument for data collection was a questionnaire titled 'Effectiveness of Quality Assurance Strategies Questionnaire' EFQASQ. The EFQASQ was validated by 2 Business Education lecturers from College of Education, Warri, and 1 lecturer from Measurement and Evaluation, Delta state University, Abraka. To ascertain the reliability of the EFQASQ, 10 copies of the EFQASQ was administered on 10 Business Education lecturers from Colleges of Education in Delta State, data collected were analysed using Cronbach's alpha correlation technique which yielded 0.74 reliability coefficient. Data were collected by the researcher through 7 research assistants from each of the institutions. Mean was used to analyse the data for research questions, while t-test was used to test the hypotheses at .05 level of significance. Based on the findings from the study, it was concluded that there are various effective quality assurance strategies adopted by Universities in Southern Nigeria. These quality assurance strategies include: admission requirement, accreditation, employment of qualified lecturers, and appraisal of lecturers amongst others. It was recommended amongst others that Federal and State Universities Councils should appoint qualified school administrators as Vice Chancellors in Universities in Southern Nigeria.

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INTRODUCTION

University is one of the tertiary institutions in Nigeria. According to the Federal Republic of Nigeria (FRN, 2004), tertiary education include all organized learning activities in Universities, Polytechnics, Monotechnics, and Colleges of Education. The goals of tertiary education, as enshrined in the National Policy on Education (NPE) are to:

Contribute to national development through high level relevant manpower training; Develop and inculcate proper values for the survival of society; Develop the intellectual capability for individuals to understand and appreciate their local and external environment; Acquire both physical and intellectual skills which will enable individuals to be self reliant and useful member of the society; Promote



and encourage scholarship and community services; Forge and cement national unity; and Promote national and international understanding of institutions.

Business Education is one of the programme at the university level of education. Business Education is categorized among Vocational Education in school. This includes management of business, commerce, business studies, accounting, and economics. Business Education serves as the ultimate goals if it is supported with entrepreneurship education and properly nurtured and articulated for it to provide initiatives, self-employment, management and marketing skills, risk-taking, and problem solving. Similarly, Davies (2001) posited that Business Education is an area of education process which concern itself with vocational and professional preparation for a career in Business Education, teaching business subjects, and also with business information important for every citizen and consumer in order that he may better understand and use his business and economic surroundings. According to Abdulkadir (2011), Business Education pays particular attention to the acquisition of knowledge relevant to employment and demonstrable job specific skills or competencies. Ubulom and Thom-Otuya (2006) also defined Business Education as an encompassing programme, which equips its recipient with the necessary knowledge, skills and attitudes that will enable him succeed in whatever business endeavour he may engage in. Despite these laudable features of Business Education, the programme is still faced with quality issues as it relates to the implementation of Business Education curriculum in Nigerian universities.

There have been in recent year serious concern about the quality of graduates (Business Education graduates inclusive) from tertiary institutions in Nigeria, especially in the light of the sudden rise in their number as well as of

the numbers of students, factors which have impacted negatively on the institutional facilities that have become dilapidated, and the overworked academic staff. The university system is faced with chronic under funding that will made it impossible for rehabilitation of infrastructures and the construction of new buildings to accommodate the ever increasing student population, has seriously exacerbated the situation. To address these challenges to quality in the universities, quality assurance models/strategies were put in place.

Zelvys (2004) opined that quality has been one of the most important concepts in contemporary educational terminology. Many scholars have attempted to define quality in education. Ajayi and Adegbesan (2007) see quality as the total of the features of a process, product or service on its performance. As well, Okafor (1990) explains that quality refers to the degree of goodness and excellence in the education sector. Consequently, quality assurance is related to quality control, but functions in rather proactive manner in the sense that quality serves as series of operational techniques and activities used to fulfil requirement. Quality assurance goes beyond that, because it extends the focus from outcomes or outputs to the process which produces them.

Alele-Williams (2004) defines quality assurance in education as that which indicates the pre-eminence and special features that makes the institution distinct from other forms of institution. Similarly, Ajayi and Adegbesan (2007), argued that, quality assurance is related to accountability both of which are concerned with maximizing the effectiveness and efficiency of educational systems and services in relation to their contexts, of their mission and their stated objectives. Ehindero (2004) posited that quality assurance focused on the:

- i. Learners entry behaviours, characteristics and attributes



- including some demographics factors that can inhibit or facilitate learning;
- ii. The teacher entry qualification, values, pedagogic skills, professional preparedness, subject background, and philosophical orientation;
 - iii. The teaching and learning processes including the structure of the curriculum and learning environment; and
 - iv. The outcomes, which are defined for different levels in terms of knowledge, skills and attitudes including appropriate and relevant instruments to assess these objectives.

Oderinde (2004) enumerated two aspects of quality assurance, which are internal and external. The internal aspect is the implementation of the school objectives, while the external aspect deals with the implementation of national objectives, which are prerequisites to the achievement of quality in educational institutions. Quality assurance in the university consists of internal and external mechanisms. The external mechanism is constituted by accreditation conducted by the statutory regulatory agencies and the professional bodies. However, the internal institutional mechanisms for the Academic Departments, the faculties, Schools, or Colleges and the Senate or Board of Studies as comprises quality assurance mechanism. In the university system, Act No 16 of 1985 empowers the National Universities Commission (NUC) to lay down minimum academic standards for all academic programmes taught in Nigerian universities and to accredit the universities programmes. To assure quality various quality assurance strategies have been put in place.

According to Ehindero (2004) quality assurance focused on the learners' entry requirement, the teacher entry qualification, the teaching and learning

processes including the structure of the curriculum and learning environment. In support, Adedipe (2007) posited that to establish and maintain high quality standards, the universities and the National Universities Commission (NUC) have a shared responsibility in addressing the following key areas to assure quality, these are: Minimum academic standard; Accreditation; Carrying capacity and admission quota; Visitation; Impact assessment; Research and development; Publication and research assessment; and Infrastructures and utilities. In addition, Baldwin (1990) highlighted the following as quality assurance strategies: Institution/Faculty mission and objectives; Teaching programmes; Students selection; Course structure and documentation; Teaching arrangement; Postgraduate supervision; Assessment/Evaluation; Monitoring of outcomes; Research and development; Staffing; and Infrastructures. Also, Arikewuyo (2004), reported that task which must be done to assure quality include: Measurement and standardization of academic attainments; Evaluation of the quality of work during supervision, and Use of competent teachers and administrative supervisory personnel.

Various quality assurance strategies have been put in place to address the production of low quality of graduates from universities in Nigeria. Despite these quality assurance strategies adopted by various universities, the quality of Business Education graduates is still very low due to the facts that majority of these graduates lack employable skills. The problem of graduates not possessing employable skills may be as a result of ineffectiveness of the quality assurance strategies adopted in the universities in Nigeria. Hence, the need to conduct this study to find out if the quality assurance strategies adopted in universities in Southern Nigeria are effective.



Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to assess the effectiveness of the quality assurance strategies in Business Education programme in universities in Southern Nigeria. Specifically, the study seeks to:

- i. Identify the various quality assurance strategies in Business Education programme in universities in Southern Nigeria.
- ii. Assess the effectiveness of the various quality assurance strategies in Business Education programme in universities in Southern Nigeria.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

- i. What are the various quality assurance strategies in Business Education programme in universities in Southern Nigeria?
- ii. How effective are the various quality assurance strategies in Business Education programme in universities in Southern Nigeria?

Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were tested at .05 level of significance:

- i. There is no significant difference in the mean response of Business Education lecturers from Federal and States Universities on the various quality assurance strategies in Business Education programme in tertiary institutions in Southern Nigeria.
- ii. There is no significant difference in the mean response of Business Education lecturers from Federal and States Universities on effectiveness of the various quality assurance strategies in Business Education

programme in tertiary institutions in Southern Nigeria.

METHODOLOGY

This study adopted the survey research design since no variable was manipulated in the study. Survey research design involves the selection of a representative and unbiased sample of subjects drawn from a group under study (Colin, 2007). The population of the study was 51 Business Education lecturers in seven selected universities in Southern Nigeria which comprised of 3 Federal (University of Nigeria, University of Benin, and Nnamdi Azikiwe University) and 4 State universities (Ambrose Ali University, Niger Delta University, Delta State University, and River State University of Science and Technology). No sampling was done, therefore all the 51 Business Education lecturers were used for the study. The instrument for data collection was a questionnaire titled 'Effectiveness of Quality Assurance Strategies Questionnaire' EFQASQ, the questionnaire has two sections A and B. Section A is on the bio data of the respondent, while section B has two parts 1 and 2 based on the research questions. Each part has 14 item respectively making a total item of 28, the EFQASQ is on a 4-point scale of Strongly Agree (SA=4), Agree (A=3), Disagree (D=2), and Strongly Disagree (SD=1). The EFQASQ was validated by 2 Business Education lecturers from College of Education, Warri, and 1 lecturer from Measurement and Evaluation, Delta state University, Abraka. To ascertain the reliability of the EFQASQ, 10 copies of the EFQASQ was administered on 10 Business Education lecturers from Colleges of Education in Delta State, data collected were analysed using Cronbach alpha correlation technique which yielded 0.74 reliability coefficient. Data were collected by the researcher through 7 research assistants from each of the institutions, who administered the questionnaire on



Business education lecturers in the universities under study, and completed questionnaire were returned to the researcher. Mean was used to analysed the data for research questions, while t-test was used to test the hypotheses at .05 level of significance. The decision point was 2.50, this implies that any response with 2.50 and above was regarded as Agreed and mean below 2.50 was regarded as Disagreed. Furthermore, when t-calculated is less than t-critical,

the hypothesis was accepted, and when t-calculated is greater than t-critical, the hypothesis was rejected.

RESULTS

The results were presented based on research questions and hypotheses.

Research Question 1: What are the various quality assurance strategies in Business Education programme in universities in Southern Nigeria?

Table 1: Various quality assurance strategies in Business Education programme in universities in Southern Nigeria

S/N	Item Statement	Federal Universities N= 24		States Universities N=27	
		Mean	Remark	Mean	Remark
	The following are quality assurance strategies adopted in Business Education programmes in Universities in Southern Nigeria:				
1.	Admission requirement	3.55	Agreed	3.60	Agreed
2.	Accreditation	3.42	Agreed	3.34	Agreed
3.	Provision of infrastructural facilities	3.58	Agreed	3.41	Agreed
4.	Provision of instructional materials	3.30	Agreed	3.38	Agreed
5.	Employment of qualified lecturers	3.78	Agreed	3.55	Agreed
6.	Teaching practice	3.54	Agreed	3.24	Agreed
7.	Teaching practice supervision	3.62	Agreed	3.58	Agreed
8.	Project defence	3.09	Agreed	3.14	Agreed
9.	Examination	3.59	Agreed	3.43	Agreed
10.	Examination monitoring	3.67	Agreed	3.76	Agreed
11.	Award research grant to lecturers	3.56	Agreed	3.48	Agreed
12.	Award of scholarship to lecturers	3.01	Agreed	3.09	Agreed
13.	Organising seminar, workshop, and conference for lecturers	3.11	Agreed	3.21	Agreed
14.	Appraisal of lecturers before promotion	3.68	Agreed	3.59	Agreed
Grand Mean		3.46		3.41	

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Table 1 revealed that Business Education lecturers from Universities in Southern Nigeria agreed that the following are quality assurance strategies: Admission requirement; Accreditation; Provision of infrastructural facilities; Provision of instructional materials; Employment of qualified lecturers; Teaching practice; Teaching practice supervision; Project defence; Examination; Examination monitoring;

Award research grant to lecturers; Award of scholarship to lecturers; Organising seminar, workshop, and conference for lecturers; and Appraisal of lecturers before promotion.

Research Question 2: How effective are the various quality assurance strategies in Business Education programme in universities in Southern Nigeria?

Table 2: Effectiveness of the various quality assurance strategies in Business Education programme in universities in Southern Nigeria

S/N	Item Statement	Federal Universities N=24		States Universities N=27	
		Mean	Remark	Mean	Remark
	the quality assurance strategies adopted in Business Education programmes in Universities in Southern Nigeria are effective:				
1.	Admission requirement	3.65	Agreed	3.62	Agreed
2.	Accreditation	3.71	Agreed	3.64	Agreed
3.	Provision of infrastructural facilities	3.50	Agreed	3.51	Agreed
4.	Provision of instructional materials	3.40	Agreed	3.48	Agreed
5.	Employment of qualified lecturers	3.58	Agreed	3.45	Agreed
6.	Teaching practice	3.20	Agreed	3.34	Agreed
7.	Teaching practice supervision	3.46	Agreed	3.42	Agreed
8.	Project defence	3.00	Agreed	3.21	Agreed
9.	Examination	3.45	Agreed	3.53	Agreed
10.	Examination monitoring	3.66	Agreed	3.73	Agreed
11.	Award research grant to lecturers	3.51	Agreed	3.47	Agreed
12.	Award of scholarship to lecturers	3.06	Agreed	3.01	Agreed
13.	Organising seminar, workshop, and conference for lecturers	3.23	Agreed	3.33	Agreed
14.	Appraisal of lecturers before promotion	3.72	Agreed	3.65	Agreed
Grand Mean		3.44		3.46	



Table 2 revealed that Business Education lecturers from Universities in Southern Nigeria agreed that the following quality assurance strategies were effective: Admission requirement; Accreditation; Provision of infrastructural facilities; Provision of instructional materials; Employment of qualified lecturers; Teaching practice; Teaching practice supervision; Project defence; Examination; Examination monitoring; Award research grant to lecturers; Award of scholarship to lecturers; Organising seminar, workshop, and conference for lecturers; and Appraisal of lecturers before promotion.

Business Education Lecturers	Mean	N	S.D	t-cal	t-cri	Decision
Federal Universities	3.46	14	0.77	0.601	1.782	Accepted
States Universities	3.41	14	0.49			

Df=12

Since t-cal 0.601 is less than t-cri at df=12 is less than 1.782, the hypothesis which stated that there is no significant difference in the mean response of Business Education lecturers from Federal and States Universities on the various quality assurance strategies in Business Education programme in tertiary institutions in Southern Nigeria was accepted. This implies that there is no significant difference in the mean

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant difference in the mean response of Business Education lecturers from Federal and States Universities on the various quality assurance strategies in Business Education programme in tertiary institutions in Southern Nigeria.

Table 3: t-test analysis of significant difference in the mean response of Business Education lecturers from Federal and States Universities on the various quality assurance strategies in Business Education programme in tertiary institutions in Southern Nigeria

response of Business Education lecturers from Federal and States Universities on the various quality assurance strategies.

Hypothesis 2: There is no significant difference in the mean response of Business Education lecturers from Federal and States Universities on effectiveness of the various quality assurance strategies in Business Education programme in tertiary institutions in Southern Nigeria.

Table 4: t-test analysis of significant difference in the mean response of Business Education lecturers from Federal and States Universities on effectiveness of the various quality assurance strategies in Business Education programme in tertiary institutions in Southern Nigeria

Business Education Lecturers	Mean	N	S.D	t-cal	t-cri	Decision
Federal Universities	3.44	14	0.71	0.230	1.782	Accepted
States Universities	3.46	14	0.47			

Df=12

Since t-cal 0.230 is less than t-cri at df=12 is less than 1.782, the hypothesis which stated that there is no significant difference in the mean response of Business Education lecturers from Federal and States Universities on effectiveness of the various quality assurance strategies in Business Education programme in tertiary

institutions in Southern Nigeria was accepted. This implies that there is no significant difference in the mean response of Business Education lecturers from Federal and States Universities on effectiveness of the various quality assurance strategies.



DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

The study revealed that Business Education lecturers from Universities in Southern Nigeria agreed that the following were quality assurance strategies: Admission requirement; Accreditation; Provision of infrastructural facilities; Provision of instructional materials; Employment of qualified lecturers; Teaching practice; Teaching practice supervision; Project defence; Examination; Examination monitoring; Award research grant to lecturers; Award of scholarship to lecturers; Organising seminar, workshop, and conference for lecturers; and Appraisal of lecturers before promotion. As well the quality assurance strategies were effective. These findings are in line with the research of other scholars such as Ehindero (2004), Adedipe (2007), Baldwin (1990), and Arikewuyo (2004). Ehindero (2004) posited that quality assurance focused on the learners' entry requirement, the teacher entry qualification, the teaching and learning processes including the structure of the curriculum and learning environment. In support, Adedipe (2007) posited that to establish and maintain high quality standards, the universities and the Nigerian Universities Commission (NUC) have a shared responsibility in addressing the following key areas to assure quality, these are: Minimum academic standard; Accreditation; Carrying capacity and admission quota; Visitation; Impact assessment; Research and development; Publication and research assessment; and Infrastructures and utilities. In addition, Baldwin (1990) highlighted the following as quality assurance strategies: Institution/Faculty mission and objectives; Teaching programmes; Students selection; Course structure and documentation; Teaching arrangement; Postgraduate supervision; Assessment/Evaluation; Monitoring of outcomes; Research and development; Staffing; and Infrastructures. Also, Arikewuyo (2004), reported that task which must be done to assure quality

include: Measurement and standardization of academic attainments; Evaluation of the quality of work during supervision, and Use of competent teachers and administrative supervisory personnel.

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings from the study, it was concluded that there are various quality assurance strategies adopted by Universities in Southern Nigeria. These quality assurance strategies include: admission requirement, accreditation, employment of qualified lecturers, teaching practice, teaching practice supervision, examination, examination monitoring, project defence, award research grant to lecturers, award of scholarship to lecturers, appraisal of lecturers, provision of infrastructural facilities, and instructional materials, and organising seminar, workshop, and conference for lecturers. Also, it was concluded that the quality assurance strategies were effective.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations were made:

- i. Federal and State Universities Councils should appoint qualified school administrators as Vice Chancellors in Universities in Southern Nigeria.
- ii. Federal and State Universities Councils should employed qualified academic staff in Universities in Southern Nigeria.
- iii. Vice Chancellors in Universities in Southern Nigeria should appoint qualified and experience academic staff as Deans of Faculty of Education.
- iv. Vice Chancellors in Universities in Southern Nigeria should approve research grants for academic staff in Faculty of Education.



- v. Vice Chancellors in Universities in Southern Nigeria should organise training and retraining workshop for academic staff in Faculty of Education.
- vi. Vice Chancellors in Universities in Southern Nigeria should establish quality assurance department in Faculty of Education.
- vii. Vice Chancellors in Universities in Southern Nigeria should establish in Faculty of Education.

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