

QUALITY ASSURANCE PRACTICES AND GOAL ACHIEVEMENT OF PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES IN SOUTHWESTERN, NIGERIA

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Abstract

The essential role played by quality assurance in the achievement of university goals cannot be underestimated. The paper examined the contribution of quality assurance practices to university goal achievement in Southwestern, Nigeria. It examined the level of quality assurance, the level of university goal achievement and the contribution of quality assurance to goal achievement. This study adopted a correlational descriptive research design with a population of 6,737 lecturers and 30,309 final year students from the six Federal universities in Southwestern, Nigeria. Four hundred and thirty-five lecturers and 455 students were selected from the population using a stratified sampling technique. The data for the analysis were collected using two questionnaires. The research questions were answered using descriptive statistics such as mean and standard deviation, while the hypotheses were tested using multiple regression at 0.05 level of significance. The findings of the study revealed a significant relationship between quality assurance practices and university goal achievement in Southwestern, Nigeria. It was therefore recommended that student admission and staff recruitment processes should be monitored and infrastructural facilities should be made available, adequate and accessible in the institutions.

Keywords: Quality Assurance Practices, University Goal Achievement, Staff Recruitment, Students' Admission, Community service.

Introduction

There is need for a systematic evaluation of educational programmes to ensure that an acceptable standard of education is maintained in Nigerian universities. The quality of admission processes, infrastructural facilities and staff recruitment processes is to be examined in order to ascertain their impact on university goal achievement in South-west, Nigeria. Stakeholders (parents, students, government et cetera), are showing great concern and interest in the quality of education offered in Nigerian universities. The concern of these stakeholders is to see that the input, process and output of these

universities meet the expected standard and this centres on maintaining and enhancing the quality of the programmes run by the institutions (Akpan, 2014).

Students' intake is germane to quality assurance in Nigerian universities. While agitation for an increase in students' enrolment, maintaining a qualitative admission process should be the watchword in the institutions and entry requirements subjected to periodic review. The issue of students' withdrawal seems to be rampant in some universities due to the fact that some candidates who were granted admission did not possess the basic admission requirement. The quality of staff recruitment process is another important factor in maintaining high standard in the educational sector. Academic staff is of paramount importance to the progress of an institution. The great concern here is the assessment of academic staff qualification and following proper procedure of recruitment. The quality of academic staff is a determinant factor in assuring quality in the universities.

Availability of physical facilities is also an important determinant of effective educational system. Common observation shows that infrastructural facilities are inadequate in our universities. Some essential facilities such as conducive classrooms, libraries, laboratories and internet facilities are either inadequate or not available in some of these universities. There are crowded classrooms, dilapidated structures and abandoned projects in some of the universities and this has been affecting the level of university goal achievement in Nigeria. The importance of the major variables in this study - collaboration, quality assurance and university goal achievement cannot be overemphasized. Inadequate collaboration between universities and industry in the area of joint research, students' industrial training and developmental project support with low standard of the admission process, inadequate infrastructural facilities and poor staff recruitment procedures could have adverse effects on university goal achievement.

Statement of the Problem

The issue of quality assurance is an area of concern for

university goal achievement in Nigeria. There is a need for a systematic review of educational programmes to ensure that acceptable standard of education is maintained in Nigerian universities. The quality of admission processes, infrastructural facilities and staff recruitment processes is to be examined in order to ascertain their impact on university goal achievement in Southwestern, Nigeria. Scholars such as Odukoya, Chinedu, George, Olowookere (2015) have carried out studies on several areas which are related to this study, but considering the variables and contents of the above-mentioned studies, none of them has combined the two variables that the study examined. None of the afore-mentioned authors examined quality assurance as determinants of university goal achievement in Southwestern, Nigeria; hence this study.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to examine the stakeholders' assessment of the contribution of quality assurance to university goal achievement in South-west Nigeria. Specifically, the study was carried out to:

- determine the level of quality assurance in public universities in Southwestern, Nigeria;
- examine the level of goal achievement in public universities in Southwestern, Nigeria;
- determine the contribution of quality assurance to university goal achievement in Southwestern, Nigeria;

Research Questions

In addressing the problem of this study, the following research questions were raised:

- What is the level of quality assurance as assessed by the stakeholders in public universities in Southwestern, Nigeria?
- What is the level of goal achievement as assessed by the stakeholders, in public universities in Southwestern, Nigeria?
- What is the contribution of quality assurance to university goal achievement in Southwestern, Nigeria?

Hypothesis

The following hypothesis was formulated to guide the study.

Ho₁: There is no significant contribution of quality assurance to university goal achievement in Southwestern, Nigeria;

Literature Review

Nkang (2013) reviewed Nigerian universities' state-

of-the-art quality control systems with a view to offering interventions that would improve the quality of education at the institutions. The population consisted of 624 Federal university professors in the South-south region of Nigeria. Stratified sampling technique was used in selecting a sample of 225 professors from the selected universities. On the basis of the study variables two null hypotheses were formulated. These were tested at the 0.05 alpha level, using t-test analysis. Data collection was performed using a structured questionnaire named, "Quality Assurance in Nigerian University Education" (QANUE). The calculated t-values were lower than the critical t, leading to the two null hypotheses being upheld. It was therefore concluded that the quality of university education in Nigeria is weak and cannot be assessed globally because of the poor quality assurance mechanisms in universities. On the basis of this, it was recommended that steps to enhance the standard of Nigerian university education include adequate funding, upgraded libraries, well-equipped laboratories and workshops, provision of teaching materials and school facilities, encouragement of lecturers and proper supervision.

Obikeizie, Nwadiaro, Timothy and Essien (2016) studied lecturers' perception of academic quality assurance variables in Nigerian universities. A 25-item survey was responded to by five hundred lecturers from public universities in the South-South geopolitical zone. The study employed an explanatory descriptive research design. Three research questions were raised and in analysing and presenting the data, descriptive statistics were used. The results showed that the most important variables in the quality control of higher education were the availability of a sufficient number of qualified teachers, the willingness of students to research, the early publishing of student examination results, the availability of well-equipped laboratories and facilities and the funding of tertiary education.

Okoro (2015) examined Nigerian universities' methods for improving quality control in the business teacher education programme. Two research questions and four hypotheses guided the study. This study adopted a descriptive survey design. The research population comprised 129 lecturers in state and federal universities in South-south Nigeria for business education. Since population was manageable there was no sampling. The instrument for data collection was a 35-item questionnaire. The instrument's contents and face validity were handled properly. Using the Cronbach alpha, it had a reliability

coefficient of 0.94. The mean scores were used to answer the research questions. The findings listed quality research and publications, quality curriculum, quality textbooks, teacher training, quality infrastructure and quality teaching facilities, among others, as some of Nigerian universities' strategies for enhancing quality assurance in Business Teacher Education. It was also recommended that the school authorities hire sufficient qualified teachers and that the Business Education curriculum be expanded to include appropriate areas in marketing, accounting, office technology and management.

Ibijola (2015) sought the opinions of academic stakeholders as to who would be responsible for ensuring the standard of university education in Nigeria. Descriptive research of survey design was used in the study. The population consisted of all the staff members in public universities, students and employers of Nigerian university graduates in Southwest Nigeria, while the sample consisted of 50 staff members and 200 students, each from 3 Federal and 3 State universities, and 50 employers of Nigerian university graduates, each from the 6 Southwest Nigeria states. Findings showed that university education quality assurance is a collective responsibility of all stakeholders, with the greater burden falling on the government.

Sofoluwe and Akinsolu (2015) examined community participation in quality assurance as a catalyst in enhancing quality and equity towards the attainment of Education for All (EFA) and Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in Nigeria. The study adopted a descriptive survey design with the use of a devised instrument on the duty expected of the community members in ensuring provision of quality education service in the basic education sector tagged, "Community Participation in Quality Assurance Instrument." Stratified random sampling technique was used to sample 150 school managers (both principals and head-teachers) and 150 classroom teachers, totalling 300 respondents. The instrument was validated and the test of reliability was conducted using test-re-test method and found to be of reliability coefficient of 0.85. The study revealed the need for community participation in enhancing quality and equity towards the attainment of EFA and MDGs.

In a study carried out by Adetunji, Adetunji and Falebita (2017), the paper's objective was to study the model introduced to ensure quality in the Nigerian university context in order to know why the suggested

model has failed. Through an in-depth review of relevant literature, the study revealed that some of the models used as measuring indicators of quality assurance were designed theoretically without any observation of what was achievable in practice. It was, therefore, suggested that the model for measuring quality in the Nigerian universities be developed from practical knowledge and within the practice of the institutions.

Odukoya, Chinedu, George, Olowookere, & Agbude, (2015) conducted a research on quality assurance in African universities. The authors investigated the quality assurance models, the extent to which the models meet international standard, the implementation of these models, the challenges experienced in the course of implementing the quality assurance models, and the level of success in attaining and maintaining quality in the institutions. Questionnaires and interviews were used for data collection. Data were analyzed with simple descriptive statistics and qualitative techniques. Findings revealed a high standard of quality assurance in Nigerian private universities.

Ekwe and Abuka (2014) examined the level of quality assurance in the teaching of Accounting courses in Nigerian tertiary institutions. The study aimed at ascertaining the adequacy of Accounting curriculum and the extent of quality assurance among the lecturers. It applied the descriptive research design and with the use of questionnaire, data were created from accounting lecturers and educational administrators in the institutions. The data collected were analysed using mean scores, standard deviation and t-test statistics. The research results indicated unusual evaluation of the teaching approach used by Accounting lecturers. Many lecturers also used conventional methods of teaching Accounting that neither improved the learning of the students nor promoted their interest in the course.

Results also showed that the Accounting curriculum was adequate but that many of the Accounting lecturers were not computer literate, especially in the use of modern methods and packages in Accounting. It was therefore proposed that the Ministry of Education, along with the supervisory agencies, ensure that Accounting lecturers are routinely educated by organizing in-service training programs for them. It was also suggested that Accounting lecturers should be involved in curriculum planning and development for the Accounting courses and a regular review of the curriculum should be done.

Methodology

This study used a correlational descriptive research design with a population of 6,737 lecturers and 30,309 final year students from the six Federal universities in Southwestern, Nigeria. Four hundred and thirty-five lecturers and 455 students were selected from the population using a stratified sampling technique. The data for the analysis was collected using two questionnaires. The research questions were answered using descriptive statistics such as mean and standard deviation, while the hypotheses were tested using multiple regression at 0.05 level of significance.

Result

Research Question 1: What is the level of quality assurance in universities in Southwestern, Nigeria?

Research Question one was answered based on the rating scale as responded to by the respondents of the sampled federal universities in Southwestern, Nigeria as indicated in Table 1. Mean scores of the responses were summed up and used for the analysis. The mean scores obtained were recoded to ordinal value and transformed to frequency and percentage. Since the scale is five, the mean score range was determined by subtracting the 1(minimum score) from 5 (maximum score) and divided it by 3 (levels) equaled to 1.33. Hence, the data was recoded to 1.00 - 2.33 = 1, 2.34 - 3.67 = 2, and 3.68-5.00 = 3. Hence, the frequency and percentage were used to establish the level.

Table 1
Level of Quality Assurance in Universities in Southwestern, Nigeria

Level	Score Range	Frequency	Percentage
Low	1.00 - 2.33	11	1.6
Moderate	2.34 - 3.67	294	42.2
High	3.68 - 5.00	382	56.2
Total		697	100

In Table 1, the level of Quality Assurance (QA) in public universities in Southwestern, Nigeria as assessed by lecturers and students in public universities in Southwestern, Nigeria was rated high, since the mean score of the 392(56 %) of the respondents is within the range of 3.68-5.00. Hence, the frequency and percentage were used to determine the level. This means that the level of quality assurance practices by the universities under study in Southwestern, Nigeria was high based on the respondents' rating.

Research Question Two: What is the level of university goal achievement in South-west Nigeria?

Research Question Two was answered based on the rating scale as responded to by the respondents of the sampled federal universities in Southwestern, Nigeria as indicated in Table 2. Mean scores of the responses were summed up and used for the analysis. The mean scores obtained were recoded to ordinal value and transformed to frequency and percentage. Since the scale is five, the mean score range was determined by subtracting the 1(minimum score) from 5 (maximum score) and divided it by 3 (levels) equalled to 1.33. Hence, the data was recoded to 1.00 - 2.33 = 1, 2.34 - 3.67 = 2, and 3.68-5.00 = 3. Hence, the frequency and percentage were used to establish the level.

Table 2
Level of University Goal Achievement in Southwestern, Nigeria

Level	Score Range	Frequency	Percentage
Low	1.00 - 2.33	194	27.8
Moderate	2.34 - 3.67	497	71.3
High	3.68 - 5.00	6	.9
Total		697	100

Table 2 reveals the level of university goal achievement in public universities in Southwestern, Nigeria as assessed by lecturers and students. The

level was scored moderate since 497(71%) of the respondents mean scores are within the range of 2.34 – 3.67. Therefore, it implies that the level of goal

achievement of the sampled public universities in South-west Nigeria was moderate based on respondents' rating.

Hypothesis Testing

Ho₁: There is no significant contribution of quality assurance to goal achievement in public universities in Southwest Nigeria.

Table 3
Adjusted R Square Value for the Model Summary of Staff Recruitment, Infrastructural Facilities, Admission Processes and University Goal Achievement in South-west, Nigeria

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.480	.231	.227	10.309
a. Predictors: (Constant), StaffRecruitment, Industrial Training, Collaborative Research				
b. Dependent Variable: University Goal Achievement				

Table 3 showed that multiple regression correlation coefficients indicating the contribution of the predictor variables (Staff Recruitment, Infrastructural Facilities, Admission Processes) and University Goal Achievement was 0.480. The adjusted R squared is

0.227, this means that the predictor variables accounted for 22.7% variation in the University Goal Achievement. The results on the Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) for the model are as shown in Table 4.

Table 4
Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) between Predictors (Staff Recruitment, Industrial Training, & Collaborative Research) and UGA

Model		Sum of Square	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	22079.984	3	7359.995	69.254	.000 ^b
	Residual	73648.651	693	106.275		
	Total	95728.634	696			

The results on the Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) for the model are as shown in Table 4 is F (3,693) = 69.254; p < 0.05. This indicated that there is a significant positive contribution of the predictors to University Goal Achievement as assessed by staff and students of sampled public universities in South-west Nigeria.

Based on this significant contribution, the coefficient for the Beta weight for the amount of standard deviation unit of change in the dependent variable for each standard deviation unit of change in the dependent variable was calculated. The results are as shown in Table 5.

Table 5
Coefficients for (Staff Recruitment, Infrastructural Facilities, Admission Processes) and University Goal Achievement

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta	T	
1	(Constant)	44.017	2.696		16.324	.000
	Admission Processes	.556	.101	.224	5.505	.000
	Infrastructural Facilities	.534	.106	.205	5.049	.000
	Staff Recuitment	.384	.069	.195	5.526	.000

The standardised coefficients in Table 5 showed that:

- The independent variables, Admission Processes value has a weak positive contribution to the university goal achievement because the Beta ($\beta = .224, .000$) shows a statistically significant contribution because the alpha value is greater than 0.05.
- The independent variable, infrastructural facilities has a weak positive contribution to the university goal achievement because the Beta ($\beta = 0.205, .000$) indicates a statistically significant contribution to the criterion (Goal Achievement) because the alpha value is less than 0.05.
- The independent variable, Staff Recruitment has a weak positive contribution the university goal achievement because the Beta ($\beta = 0.195, .000$) revealed a statistically significant contribution to the criterion (Goal Achievement) because the alpha value is less than 0.05.

Discussion of Findings

The study assessed the contribution of quality assurance to goal achievement of public universities in South-west Nigeria. Two research questions were raised to examine the level of quality assurance and goal achievement in the universities.

Research Question one, as indicated in Table 1, revealed a high level of quality assurance in public universities in South-west Nigeria as assessed by 56% of the respondents. This implies that quality assurance level of the sampled public universities in South-west Nigeria was high based on respondents' ratings. This shows that the sampled universities maintained a high standard in the three indicators of quality assurance, namely admission process, infrastructural facilities and staff recruitment process. These universities ensure proper conduct of the entrance examination, direct entry candidates are subjected to test before admission is granted, the institutions strictly adhere to admission requirements for programmes in the course of the admission process and assuring lecturers' involvement in setting the entrance examination, the extent to which effective means of identifying impersonators is put in place and the verification of O' Level results before admission is granted. The need to determine if admission is granted only on merit is of great importance to the researcher. On the issue of infrastructural facilities, the results show that the institutions maintained a high standard in ensuring quality in availability, adequacy, accessibility and utilization of classrooms, laboratories and equipment, workshops and library facilities. Another measuring

indicator of quality assurance is the staff recruitment process. The quality of academic staff has a lot to contribute to the level of university goal achievement in Nigeria. The National Policy on Education (FGN, 2013) stressed the importance of qualified teaching manpower in the educational system and affirmed that no education system can rise above the quality of its teachers. In order to estimate the future demand for teachers, it is not enough to emphasize the number of teaching personnel that would be required for the expansion of the educational system, but also the quality of such staff. The level of these predictors was found to be high in the institutions. This was in contrast with Nkang (2013) who examined the state of quality assurance mechanisms in Nigerian universities and found that the quality of Nigerian university education is low and could not measure up globally, due to the poor state of quality assurance mechanisms in the universities. The high level of quality assurance in the area of staff recruitment process was in line with Obikeizie, Nwadiaro, Timothy and Essien's (2016) study on lecturers' perception of academic quality assurance variables in Nigerian universities. The findings of the study showed that lecturers perceived the availability of an adequate number of qualified staff, students' attitude to study, early publication of students' examination results, availability of well-equipped laboratories and workshops, and funding of tertiary education, as the most important variables in academic quality assurance.

Table 2 indicated the level of university goal achievement in public universities in South-west Nigeria, being the result for research question six. The level was moderate as assessed by 71. % of the respondent. This implies that goal achievement level of the sampled public universities in Southwestern, Nigeria is moderate based on respondents rating. The implication of this finding was that universities in South-west Nigeria achieved their goals in teaching, research publication and community service in a moderate measure, when looking goal achievement in general. But, in assessing each of the predictors of university goal achievement, lecturers' research publication and community service were not as high as the teaching aspect.

Considering the hypothesis, hypothesis one, which stated that there was no significant contribution of quality assurance to goal achievement in public universities in Southwest Nigeria was not accepted. Table 3 showed that multiple regression correlation coefficients indicating the contribution of the predictor variables (Admission Processes,

Infrastructural Facilities, Staff Recruitment) and University Goal Achievement was 0.480. The R squared was 0.231, which means that the predictor variables accounted for 22.7% variation in the University Goal Achievement. This shows a significant contribution result. Hence, the hypothesis was not accepted. This means that quality assurance has a significant contribution to university goal achievement in Southwestern, Nigeria, implying that university goals will be achieved if quality is ensured in Nigerian universities. This finding is in line with Okoro (2015), who found quality research and publications, quality curriculum, quality textbooks, the discipline of teachers, quality infrastructure and quality teaching facilities, among others, as some of the strategies for enhancing quality. In the same vein, a study carried out by Ibijola (2015) revealed that the quality assurance is a way of improving the standard of university education in Nigeria.

Conclusion

The study examined the contribution of collaboration and quality assurance to goal achievement of public universities in South-west Nigeria. Based on the findings of the study, it was concluded the level of institution-industry collaboration in public universities in South-west Nigeria was moderate. It was also concluded that the level of quality assurance was high in the institution. The study also concluded that the level of university goal achievement in public universities in South-west Nigeria was moderate. Another conclusion drawn from the study was that there was a significant contribution of institution-industry collaboration and quality assurance to goal achievement in the universities.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, it was recommended that student admission and staff recruitment processes should be monitored and infrastructural facilities should be made available, adequate and accessible in the institutions.

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CREATIVE ARTS ACTIVITIES AND DEVELOPMENT OF SOCIAL SKILLS AMONG EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION PUPILS IN OGUN STATE , NIGERIA

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Abstract

This study examined the influence of creative arts activities and development of social skills among Early Childhood Care Education pupils in Ogun State. This research adopted a survey design. The population of the study consisted of all pupils in Early Childhood Care Education two classes in all public primary schools in Abeokuta North Local Government Area. A total of 200 Early Childhood Care Education two pupils were selected from 10 primary schools as a sample size using simple random sampling technique. The instrument that was used in this study was a questionnaire titled "Creative Art Activities and Development of Social Skills Questionnaire (CAADSSQ)". Three hypotheses guided the study. Data collected were analyzed using the multiple regression analysis statistics. The result was tested at 0.05 levels of significance. The results of the study showed that creative art activities influence the Early Childhood Care Education pupils' development of communication skills, competitive skills and leadership tendencies. Based on the findings, it was recommended that there should be integration of creative art activities in the teaching Early Childhood Care Education pupils so as to develop their social skills.

Keywords: Creative Arts, Activities, Development, Social Skills, and Early Childhood Care Education

Introduction

Education is the process through which knowledge skills, attitudes and values are imparted for the purpose of integrating individuals into societies. Knowledge is based upon experience and participation of pupils is the main path to learning (Ebebe, 2011). Similarly, Efug (2013) posited that creative arts influence the pupils' participation in class and that the materials used by pupils relates with their acquisition of social skills. According to Daniel (2012) an important aspect of education is providing a program of activities using activities to help in

socialization of an individual. However, as we are living in the age of social conflict, it is highly important that teachers use every means possible to instill positive social habits in children through creative arts activities

Creative arts are activities that engage a child's imagination and can include activities such as art, dance, drama and music. They stimulate and help children cultivate their abilities across virtually every domain, and they are open-ended activities, fostering flexibility of the mind. Most important creative arts emphasize the process skills development and serves as teaching kids in a world that is progressively more and more product-driven. Creative arts utilization leads to the utilization of instructional method which enable the instructional objectives to be achieved easily (Chen, 2016). Nwankwo (2015) has noted the following benefits that can be derived from children learning through creative arts activities materials:

- (1) increases the extent to which children are absorbed in their work and find it important to them;
- (2) the child's understanding of what he is doing is enhanced;
- (3) the demand made on children by their work in relation to what is appropriate to develop their skills;
- (4) the use of materials in investigation to answer their questions;
- (5) the use of manipulative skills in advancing their ideas. Their regular engagement on such play and the social interaction that occur during such play help promote children's social development. For instance

children must learn to share, take turns, cooperate and inhibit aggression in order to play with peers and sustain the play. Social play also helps children to view the world from the other people's perspective.

However, there are many social skills a child can acquire while playing with their colleagues at school