



QUALITY ASSURANCE IN BUSINESS EDUCATION IN NIGERIAN UNIVERSITIES: STRATEGIES CONSIDERED EFFECTIVE

Prof. Nwosu Basil .O.
Ebonyi State University, Abakiliki
Department of Business Education
drbasilnwosu@yahoo.com

Crossdale O. J.
Federal College of Education (T), Asaba, Delta State
School of Business Education
Department of Accounting Education
josephcrossdale@gmail.com

&

Ofulue Justina .I.
Delta State Polytechnic, Ogwashi-Uku
Department of Office Technology and Management
ofuluejustina@yahoo.com

Abstract

This study was carried out to determine business educators' rating of strategies considered to be effective for quality assurance in business education in South-South Nigerian Universities. Descriptive survey design was used for the study. Sixty-eight business educators from the Universities in South-South Nigeria that offer business education constituted the population and sample for the study. Three research questions and three hypotheses was raised and tested. The study utilized a validated four point scale questionnaire with a reliability coefficient of 0.84 using Crombach Alpha analysis. Mean and standard deviation was used to analyze the data collected to answer the research questions while the hypothesis was tested at 0.05 level of significance using 2-test statistics. It was found that proper moderation of examination questions, proper supervision of examinations, in-service education, standardized conferences and work-shops for staff, well equipped e-library for research and proper funding were rated as effective strategies for quality assurance in business education. It was therefore recommended among others that the entire strategies put in place for quality assurance in business education should be properly monitored and regularly appraised in terms of effective control to achieve the desired result.

Keywords: Quality Assurance, Business Education.

Introduction

Throughout the history of mankind so far, education has assumed various roles and significance and has been used as alchemy for achieving various aims, goals and objectives for the benefit of human societies, Esene (2013). In Nigeria, it is glaring that education was regarded as the single most important industry for the production of high-level manpower and the capstan of the entire society, Onyesoh and Umoeshiet (2013). The Federal Republic of Nigeria (FRN, 2004) posited that education is an instrument per excellence for development of the nation towards making the nation and her citizen self-reliant. The goal of tertiary education is thus summarized as to contribute to national development through high relevant manpower training as well as to enable its recipients acquire both physical and intellect skills, competencies and knowledge which will enable individuals to be self-reliant and useful members of the society at large, Esene, (2013).

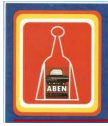
To achieve the goals of education as mentioned above, the Federal Republic of Nigeria set up a Federal education Parastatal, the National Universities Commission (NUC), of Nigeria. This commission was established to promote quality higher education



in Nigeria in 1962. The commission has a governing council, currently headed by Professor Shehy Galadanchi and its Executive Secretary is Prof. Abubaka Rasheed, who assumed office on August, 3rd, 2016. Since its establishment, the commission has transformed from a small office in the cabinet office to an important arm of government in the area of development and management of University education in Nigeria. The roles of the NUC are: to standardize the system of obtaining report and statistical information from the various universities on students, staffs, libraries and financial matters; to record such information on diskettes, tapes to the NUC for information storage analysis and retrieval purpose; to ensure that such informations are accurate and timely; to organize for planning, budgeting and decision making; to help universities put in place an effective management system and improve utilization of resources; and ensuring quality assurance of all academic programs offered in Nigerian Universities and (.....2015).

Business education is a subset of the general education programme falls within the spectrum of vocational education. Nwosu and Ojo (2014) described business education as a programme of instruction that prepares the recipients with the necessary manpower skills and competencies that can enable the graduates meet the needs of societal development. Jimoh-Kadiri and Bupo (2011) also described business education as the transfer of pedagogical and business competencies necessary for teaching business attitudes, concepts, skills and knowledge. Therefore, business education is that aspect of educational training which an individual receives with primary motive of enabling him acquire adequate attitudes, concepts, knowledge, understanding and skills in business activities for vocational usage in careers as an administrator, manager or teacher whereas he may find himself in the business world. The objective of business education has been consistently and clearly stated in National Policy on Education even in the latest sixth edition (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2013 in Igboke and Chinedu (2015) are to equip the recipients with useful skills that will enable him/her become better employee or employer, Igboke and Chinedu (2015). For these objectives of business education and other inherently benefits of education to be realized, there is need therefore to ensure quality and sustainable standards in the education system. Hence, it becomes imperative to devise and improve the strategies for quality assurance in business education. Quality assurance in the educational system implies the ability of the institution to meet the expectations of the users of manpower in relation to quality of skills acquired by their outputs, (Ajayi & Akindutire, 2014). The National Universities Commission (NUC) (2007) described quality assurance as a key component of successful internalization mechanism for building institutional reputation in a competitive local and global arena and necessary foundation for consumer protection.

Bocher (2016) held the view that the concept of quality assurance has been one of the most important concepts in contemporary terminology. This is a result of the place of education in nation building and its expectations from the public. To this end, quality assurance is the entire process of ensuring maximum effectiveness and efficiency of educational programmes and services in relations to their context, mission and stated



objectives, Oladipo et al (2009) in Oyesom and Umoeshiet (2013) posited that quality of educational programme could be measured in terms of quality of input, quality of content, quality of process, quality of context and quality of output. Therefore, ensuring quality in business education requires the right quantity and quality in everything that goes into the teaching/learning process or system as input and process.

For education and business in particular to be accorded its respect in our society, Okolocha and Ile (2015) noted that it must provide graduates with the needed skills that will enable them to be self-reliant and useful to the society. It is on record that Nigerian Universities have been producing high quality graduates in far past. As evidenced by Daisi in Oladipo et al (2014), many graduates from Nigerian Universities have distinguished themselves in their areas of specialization so much that some of them are now professors in the best Universities across the globe. Ekumayo (2016) submitted that the non-inclusion of any of the nations' Universities in the world best 1,500 Universities is unsavoured and worse still, Nigeria ranked number 22 after South Africa, Egypt, Ghana, Kenya in the ranking of African Universities. Similarly, Okebukola (2014) declared that the quality of graduates produced in Nigerian tertiary institutions especially in the last four years had thumbed down the quality of those that would be graduates in three years time. Due to the declining quality of education in recent years, however, the accolade hitherto association with Nigerian Universities seems to have faded away. This is informed by the flood of criticisms on the quality of graduates produced. Parents now seek alternative for their children education in South African and Ghanaian Universities and even beyond. This ugly situation in Nigeria tends to negate the tenet of quality University education which is essentially an industry establish to produce high quality work force for national development.

Strategy could be described as the technique or mechanism consciously put in place to maintain a standard or degree of excellence of a product or service, Bocher (2016). The term as used in this context means all the operational techniques, activities, actions etc. through which business educators ensure that the services they deliver or intend to deliver serve the purpose for which they are intended and remain relevant and appropriate to the needs of the society. It is against this background that Adegbesan (2014), Ugodulunwa and Mustapha (2015) identified the following strategies for quality assurance in Nigerian educational system to salvage the deplorable situation. They are, internal and external moderation of examination, in-service education and retraining of teachers, maintaining admission policy of students, proper funding of education, supervision and inspection, mentoring and monitoring of academic programme, regular evaluation of the system as some important strategies for quality assurance in Nigerian educational system. However, this study assessed the effectiveness of some of these strategies considered to be more important in business education programme in Nigerian Universities.



Statement of the Problem

The Nigerian educational system seems to indicate that all is not well as expected with the quality assurance system. The scenario appears more worrisome when viewed against the background that Nigeria once served as the hub of University education in West African sub-region but now in a deplorable state. This development revolves round a lot of factors ranging from the collapse of essential infrastructure and inefficient school staff to explosion in students enrolment without corresponding increase in funding. Educational funding and financing strategies in Nigeria have in fact become imperative. Poor funding and embezzlement of funds meant for educational services and development has hindered quality education in Nigerian Universities, Utoware and Kren-Ikide (2015), lack of adequate funding, dilapidated infrastructure and facilities, inadequate staff, poor attitude of some teachers have clearly impaired the performance and standard of Nigerian education as the vicious circle of helplessness, frustration and recrimination is continually fed in mutually re-enforcing manner, Kayode in Oyesom (2013). Although, Adegbaesan (2014) and Ugodulunwa and Amahua (2015) have identified some strategies for quality assurance, the question now is how effective are these strategies? This has therefore informed this study.

Purpose of Study

Based on the foregoing problem, this study therefore determined: strategies considered effective in Business Education programs in Nigerian universities.

Specifically the study determines:

- 1) The effectiveness of moderation of examination as a strategy for quality assurance in business education programme in Nigeria Universities.
- 2) The effectiveness of in-service education as a strategy for quality assurance in business education programme in Nigerian Universities.
- 3) The effectiveness of proper funding as a strategy for quality assurance in business education programme in Nigerian Universities.

Research Questions

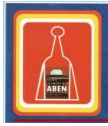
The following research questions guided the study:

- 1) How effective is moderation of examination as a strategy for quality assurance in business education programme in Nigeria Universities?
- 2) How effective is in-service education as a strategy for quality assurance in business education programme in Nigerian Universities?
- 3) How effective is proper funding as a strategy for quality assurance in business education programme in Nigerian Universities?

Research Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were tested at 0.05 alpha levels;

- 1) The mean rating of Federal and State business educators do not differ significantly on moderation of examination as a strategy for quality assurance in business education.



- 2) The mean rating of Federal and State business educators do not differ significantly on in-service education as a strategy for quality assurance in business education.
- 3) The mean rating of Federal and State business educators do not differ significantly on proper funding as a strategy for quality assurance in business education.

METHOD

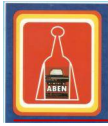
The study was conducted using survey design and in all the universities in South-South Nigeria that offer business education programme. The population of the study comprised 68 business educators as follows; University of Benin, Benin City-8; Ambrose Ali University, Ekpoma-4; Benson Idahosa University, Benin-5, Delta State University, Abraka-8; University of Calabar, Calabar-9; Cross River State University of Science and Technology-8; University of Uyo, Uyo-5; River State University of Science and Technology, Portharcourt-10; Niger Delta University, Amasoma-5; Ignatius Ajuru University of Education, Portharcourt, Portharcourt-6. This statistics was gathered from the various business education departments of the institutions. There was no sample since the size of the population was manageable. The instrument for data collection was a four point scale structured questionnaire of very effective, effective, fairly effective and not effective. The questionnaire was validated by three experts in the field of education from the Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka. The internal consistency of the questionnaire was established through a pilot testing and the data generated thereof was subjected to Crombach Alpha analysis. The result showed a coefficient of 0.84 which is deemed reliable. Mean and standard deviation were used to analyze the data collected in order to answer the research questions. For decision, items with a mean range of 3.01 to 4.00 were regarded as very effective, 2.01 to 3.00 as effective, 1.01 to 2.00 as fairly effective and 0.01 to 1.00 as not effective. On the other hand, the null hypotheses were tested at 0,05 level of significance using z-test statistics and hypotheses were rejected if the calculated z-value is equal or greater than the critical z-value but not rejected if the calculated z-value is less than critical z-value. However, out of the 68 questionnaires administered, 62 (91%) completed copies were successfully retrieved and used for the analysis.

Results

The data collected were analyzed and the results are presented in the tables below.

Table 1: Mean Responses and Standard Deviation on Effectiveness of Moderation of Examination as a Strategy for Quality Assurance in Business Education

S/N	Means of Examination Moderation	Mean	SD	Interpretation
1	Moderation of examination questions	2.72	0.86	Effective
2	Moderation of marking schemes	2.63	0.94	Effective
3	Moderation of answer scripts	3.60	0.33	Very Effective
4	Moderation of CA scores	2.74	0.57	Effective
5	Moderation of exam results	3.76	0.24	Very Effective



6	Moderation of students' research projects	2.81	0.41	effective
---	---	------	------	-----------

The results presented in Table 1 above show that the various forms of examination moderation are effective means of ensuring quality in business because all the items have a mean interpretation of either effective or very effective. Hence, moderation of examination is an effective strategy for quality assurance in business education.

Table 2: Mean Responses and Standard Deviation on Effectiveness of In-service Education as a Strategy for Quality Assurance in Business Education

S/N	Forms of In-service Education	Mean	SD	Interpretation
1	Conferences	2.81	0.51	Effective
2	Seminars	3.12	0.20	Very Effective
3	Workshops/Symposia	3.63	0.15	Very Effective
4	Summits	3.25	0.36	Very Effective
5	Inductions	3.48	0.21	Very Effective
6	Demonstration Lesson	2.94	0.64	Effective
7	Sandwich/Par-Time Courses	3.52	0.43	Very Effective

Data presented in Table 2 indicates that the various forms of in-service education are effective means of ensuring quality in business education since all the items have a means of interpretation of either effective or very effective. Hence, in-service education is an effective strategy for quality assurance in business education.

Table 3: Mean Responses and Standard Deviation on Effectiveness of Proper Funding as a Strategy for Quality Assurance in Business Education

S/N	Elements of Proper Funding	Mean	SD	Interpretation
1	Adequate and conducive classrooms	3.48	0.22	Very Effective
2	Well-equipped laboratories/studios	3.51	0.31	Very Effective
3	State-of-the-art model offices	3.16	0.52	Very Effective
4	Updated Library	3.63	0.24	Very Effective
5	Appropriate staff offices	3.74	0.16	Very Effective
6	Appropriate furniture	3.09	0.68	Very Effective
7	Research and development	3.87	0.24	Very Effective

The results presented in Table 3 above reveal that all the items have a mean interpretation of very effective. Hence, proper funding is an effective strategy for quality assurance in business education.

Hypothesis Testing

H1: The mean responses of business educators in the universities and colleges of education did not differ significantly on moderation of examination as a strategy for quality assurance in business education.

Table 4: Summary of z-test Analysis of Null Hypothesis one

Business Educators	N	X	SD	df	z-cal	z-crit	Remark
--------------------	---	---	----	----	-------	--------	--------



Federal	20	3.21	0.50	60	-1.29	2.00	Not Rejected
State	42	3.39	0.54				

The data in Table 4 showed that z-calculated is less than the z-critical; hence, the null hypothesis was not rejected. This means that, there is no significant difference in the rating of business educators in the universities and colleges of education on moderation of examination as a strategy for quality assurance in business education.

H2: The mean rating of business educators in the universities and colleges of education did not differ significantly on in-service education as a strategy for quality assurance in business education.

Table 5: Summary of z-test Analysis of Null Hypothesis two

Business Educators	N	X	SD	df	z-cal	z-crit	Remark
Federal	20	3.31	0.34	60	1.42	2.00	Not Rejected
State	42	3.18	0.33				

The analysis in Table 5 showed that at 0.5 level of significance, z-critical of 2.00 is greater than the z-calculated of 1.42. hence, the null hypothesis was not rejected meaning that the responses of business educators in the universities and colleges of education did not differ significantly on in-service education as a strategy for quality assurance in business education.

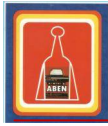
H3: The mean rating of business educators in the universities and colleges of education did not differ significantly on proper funding as a strategy for quality assurance in business education.

Business Educators	N	X	SD	df	z-cal	z-crit	Remark
Federal	20	3.47	0.32	60	-0.26	2.00	Not Rejected
State	42	3.49	0.34				

In table 6, the z-calculated of -0.26 is less than the z-critical of 2.00 at 0.005 alpha level; hence, the null hypothesis was not rejected. Therefore, the responses of business educators on proper funding did not differ significantly.

Discussion

The study found that moderation of examination is an effective strategy for quality assurance in business education. Examination is an important component of quality assurance and it is essential for determining effectiveness of teaching and learning, for maintenance of standards and for certification among other purposes. In this regard, moderation of examination plays a paramount role in monitoring and ensuring standards in the entire examination processes. This finding agrees with the submission of Ugdulunwa and Mustapha (2005) who posited that moderation of examination became essential in schools because of lack of staff with high integrity, inability to construct good tests and dearth of measurement experts. Therefore, to maintain quality and expected standard in students examination, moderation of the entire examination processes must be integrated in business education.



Similarly, the study also revealed that in-service education is an effective strategy for quality assurance in business education. This finding corroborates with the position of Akpotu and Nwaham (2008) when they noted that in-service education is important for improving the quality of instruction and upgrading the substandard teachers. As it is commonly said that no education can rise above the quality of its teachers and the National Commission for Colleges of Education (2008) puts it that the teacher is the kingpin of quality in education. Therefore, to ensure quality and good standards in business education, the training and retraining of staff should not be neglected.

Furthermore, the research has identified proper-funding as an effective strategy for quality assurance in business education. This finding conforms to the notion of Babalola (2001) who reported that quality education is a function of adequate funding of the system. The establishment and running of tertiary institutions are capital intensive. Adequate funding is needed to provide the necessary facilities and equipment in the school to make it of good standards. This is because the facilities and the general environment of the school constitute the ground upon which the school is being judged by the public. So, the place of proper-funding in ensuring quality in business education cannot be overemphasized.

With reference to the research hypothesis, it was found that the opinions of male and female business educators did not differ significantly on the three strategies for quality assurance in business education examined in this study. This shows how important and effective these strategies are in assuring quality in business education.

Conclusion

Nigeria in recent times has been witnessing a significant proliferation of tertiary institutions. However, it is saddening to note that many of the indices that can guarantee qualitative university education are not taken into cognizance in the country's quest to make university education accessible to all. The quality of education is deteriorating as the days keep unfolding.

However, to savage this deplorable situation in Nigerian educational system, strategies have been enlisted. Such strategies as assessed by this study are moderation of examination, in-service education and proper funding. Therefore, to enthrone quality and sustainable standards in business education, these strategies must be harnessed and implemented properly.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study and to ensure quality in business education, the following recommendations were made:

1. There should be moderation of the examination system by the department, faculty, senate and of course, an external moderator in business education. Moderated materials should also be checked-off by HODs before administration.
2. Institutions should regularly organize in-service training and retraining of staff in business education to improve and equip them with new ideas, knowledge and



- skills. Apart from the training programmes organized by various institutions, individual lectures should make spirited efforts to acquaint and upgrade themselves with current global trends in the education industry.
3. Funding of business education should be seriously improved by schools proprietors and other donor agencies in its budgets as funding is the confluence of all other factors determining quality education. However, education departments should collaborate with both national and international organizations for sourcing of funds.
 4. NUC should supervise and monitor business education programmes in all tertiary institutions and harmonize the course for quality assurance.
 5. The entire strategies put in place for assuring quality in business education should be properly monitored and regularly appraised by managements in terms of effective control to achieve the desired results.

Reference

- Adegbesan, S. O. (2014). Establishing quality assurance in Nigerian education system: Implication for educational managers. *Educational Research and Reviews*, 6 (2), 147-151.
- Ajayi, I. A. & Akindurite, I. O. (2014). The unresolved issues of quality assurance in Nigeria Universities. *Journal of Sociology and Education in Africa*. 6 (1), 17-22.
- Amahua, A. S. (2010). Under-funding of education in Nigeria: The case of research and development for quality assurance in business education. *Business Education Book of Readings*, 1(10), 184-200.
- Babalola, J. B. (2014). University funding: Responses and performance under a declining economy in Nigeria. Educational Planning Unit, University of Ibadan.
- Bocher, P. (2016). Quality assurance and quality enhancement in higher education institutions: creating a culture. Brochure on practical seminar of Berlin university.
- Crossdale, O. J. (2017). Entrepreneurial and skills acquisition training for youths. A keynote address at Federal College of Education (Technical), Asaba, 11th July, 2017
- Ekumayo, Z. A. (2016). Universities ranking: Nigeria keeps sliding. *The Sun*: 27-28.
- Esene, A. R. (2013). Perceptions of OTM educators and non-OTM educators toward quality assurance in office technology and managerial programmes in polytechnics in Delta and Edo states. *Business educators journal*.
- Federal Republic of Nigeria (2013). National policy on education (4th ed). Lagos: NERDC Press.
- Igboke, S. A. and Chinedu, O. (2015). Imperativeness of educational infrastructure in the production of competent business teachers. *Business educators journal*, (2). 27-29
- Jimoh-Kadiri, S. O. & Bupo, G. O. (2015). Challenges facing e-learning in teaching business education courses: Strategies for improvement. *Orient Journal of Education*, 6(1&2), 163-169.



- National commission for colleges of education (2013). Weekly bulletin. Vol. 4, (6), 2.
- National Universities commission (2013). Quality assurance in Nigerian universities, ranking of universities according to performance of their academic programs, Abuja: NUC.
- Nwosu, B. O. & Ojo, K. E. (2014). Improving business education and industry collaboration for manpower training in the era of new technologies. *Business education journal*, 2 (1), 12-14
- Okebukola, P. A. (2014). Intensive retraining program graduates of universities for better quality and standard. A keynote Address at the first Oyo State Education Summit, Ibadan, July 10.
- Okolocha, C. C. & Ile, C. M. (2015). Strength of the business plan and industrial collaboration strategies in the teaching of entrepreneurship in tertiary institutions. *Business Education Journal*, 8(1), 257-273.
- Oladipo, A., Adeosun, O. & Oni, A. (2014). Quality assurance and sustainable university education in Nigeria. Retrieved on the 24th April, 2012 from <http://aadice.hiroshima-u.ac>.
- Onyesom, M. & Umoeshiet, E. (2013). Strategies considered effective quality assurance in Nigeria universities. *Business education journal*, 2 (1), 25-27
- Ugodulunwa, C. A. & Mustapha, A. Y. (2015). Strategies for quality assurance in educational assessment at the university level. *Journal of Curriculum Organization of Nigeria*, 12 (3), 10-17
- Utoware, J. D. and Kren-Ikedi, C. P. (2015). Funding strategies for quality business education in Nigerian universities.
- Zugharia, A. A. (2015). Quality assurance criteria to improve their operations. *Social science research journal* 2, (3), 10-12