



QUALITY ASSURANCE OF SKILL ACQUISITION CENTRES AS PERCEIVED BY BUSINESS EDUCATORS IN ONDO STATE TERTIARY INSTITUTIONS

Oluwadare, Ayodeji Abraham

*Department of Accountancy
Rufus Giwa Polytechnic,
Owo, Ondo State, Nigeria.
allehuyah2010@yahoo.com*

Abstract

This study examined quality assurance of skill acquisition of business education programme as perceived by Business Educators in Ondo State tertiary institutions. The population comprises of all the 57 Business Educators in the public owned tertiary institutions running accounting/business education programmes in Ondo State and was used as sample for the study. Two research questions were raised to guide the study. A structured questionnaire validated by three accounting/ business education experts was used for data collection. The reliability of the instrument was conducted to check the internal consistency using Cronbach Alpha reliability coefficient method. A correlation coefficient of 0.73 was obtained. The data collected were analyzed using mean and standard deviation while t-test was used to test the hypotheses. The findings of the study showed that the respondents agreed that the skill acquisition training centers maintained high standard in the training of accounting/business education students. The knowledge and skills needed to function in the work place are acquired and the curriculum recommended by NUC, NBTE and NCCE is followed. However, it was recommended that government should adequately provide funds in order to meet up with current realities in the field of Business Education.

Keywords: *Quality Assurance, Skill Acquisition, Business Education, Tertiary Institutions.*

Introduction

Hornby (2001) defined quality as the standard of something when compared to other things like it; how good or bad something is or a high standard or level. Quality in education means the type of education which agrees with the national education, norms and philosophy. It is that education system which consciously articulates how education should be practiced and run in accordance with the philosophy, and objectives of a country (Tai, 2002). Such quality education specifies quite clearly the contents. The methods and means to use so as to achieve the overall goal of the philosopher of that country. The long run effect of this is that the generality of its citizens will benefit maximally by making them useful to themselves and the nation. Hence quality in education conveys the idea of attainment of prescribed standards. And so quality education suggests a nation and ensuring that such standards are strictly adhered to. Accordingly, the standards are usually publicly set criteria to which activities of product must conform so as to be considered valuable. Valuable teaching is not an easy task because it requires a lot of physical and mental work. (Igbo, 2007).



Onyeachu (2008) submitted that quality is anything everyone consider good and want to have. In line with his view, Oyebade, Oladipo and Adetoro (2012) described the quality of education as dealing with issues of relevance, validity, functionalism and efficiency of education system in the achievement of national goals and objectives. From the above definitions, one can conclude that quality is something that is essential which every individual of the society considers good and strives to possess for effective utilization.

According to Maduewesi and Onyeachu (2010), the heart of education is quality. Similarly Ogunribido (2004) observed that the central issue in the production of any product be it material or human is the quality. This is due to the fact that the quality of a product determines the extent to which the functionality and performance of the product meets the expectation on the users. According to Lockyer in Ogunribido (2004), the quality of a product measures the extent to which the producer conforms to the procedures laid down for its production. Kutter and Keller (2016), maintained that quality is related not only to profitability, but also to growth, the other key dimension of business performance through the impact of qualitative in perceived value. The quality of graduates according to Urah (2005) could be measured by how well they have been prepared for life and for service to society in various spheres of human endeavor.

Assuring the quality of educational provision is a fundamental aspect of gaining and maintaining credibility for programmes, institutions and national systems of higher education worldwide. Maduewesi and Onyeachu (2010) defined quality assurance as the practice of managing the way students are trained and instructions given to make sure they are at a high standard. Adegbesan (2011) opined that and instructions are given to make sure they are kept at a high standard. He also opined 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 the contexts of their mission and their stated objectives. Education being a veritable tool for national development, higher education in Nigeria needs to be managed in such a way that quality is assured. In recent times, the quality of graduates produced in our tertiary institutions has been questioned. Among the issues in question are the standards of various programmes in business education, quality of teachers and students, problem of adequate funding and management of school resources (Adedeji, 2009). Business education is an umbrella body which housed Accounting, Office Technology and Management (formally known as Secretarial Studies) and Marketing options. It is charged with the responsibility of producing the much needed personnel in accounting, secretarial, marketing/customer service skills to perform the pressing functions in the modern day economy.

Skills acquisition has been described by many as the recipe for eradicating extreme poverty and hunger by creating avenues for employment, thereby creating an avenue for jobs and wealth creation while instilling self-sufficiency and reliance (Isaac, 2011). It has been observed that skills acquisition is the key in the fight for the elimination of hunger and poverty, reduction or elimination of joblessness in the society and reduction of crime through



effective engagement of youths. Skills acquisition is the ability to learn a skill, which can be intellectual such as learning to listen, speak, read and write or manual such as learning to build or make something.

Skill development has been man's means of materials transformation from the earliest of time. However, for development to take place according to Diigbo (1989), it takes trained hands and minds to apply the knowledge and techniques effectively. Thus, skill is the ability to do something well, usually gained through training or experience that is needed while acquisition is the act of getting new knowledge, skill, that are transferable on and to the job. This skill can be obtained through education, training or experience that will inculcate into the individual how to carry out or discharge effective responsibilities very well with the new knowledge. This is because any work carried out by skilled people cannot be compared with those tasks performed by unskilled people. Entrepreneurial skills are the ability of an individual to exploit an idea and create an enterprise (small or big) not only for personal gain but also for social and development gain (Olagunju, 2004).

Requisite job skills are those essential skills that are needed to get most jobs, help employees to stay in a job and facilitate their promotion. The skills are flexibly adapted, applied and transferred under different context necessary for gainful employment. According to Ahmed (2009), requisite job skills include a breadth and depth of specialized knowledge that are needed in the labour market profile.

Kearns (2001) defined requisite skills as 'the skills which can be used across a large number of different occupations. They include the key competencies or key skills but extended beyond these to include a range of other cognitive, personal and interpersonal skills which are relevant to employability'. Globally, requisite skills have been defined by a number of terms including core skills, key skills, essential skills, basic skills, generic skill and workplace skills. The construct of requisite skills for 21st century maintained that it is essential life skills as well as enterprise and requisite job skills. Requisite skills are those skills that students develop during the lesson. According to Okorie and Ezeji (1988), the acquisition of the requisite skills is a means of increasing the productive power of any nation. Consequently, they added that the Nigeria society should recognize the fact that every citizen should be equipped to contribute effectively to the welfare of the country. The acquisition of such practical skills is important in entrepreneurship education because when efficient and skillful hands are employed in any field of human endeavors, high productivity is usually achieved. Practical skills is another skill expected from an entrepreneur, graduates of entrepreneur education should be able to handle tools, equipment and at same time know how to join one or two objects to produce new things. An entrepreneur should be able to transform materials into products and services.

The importance of standards informed the federal government to establish minimum academic standards for higher institutions of learning including skills acquisition in the country through Decree 16 of 1985 (Amaewhule, 2004). This gave rise to the regulatory bodies for those institutions. The National Universities Commission (NUC), National Board for Technical Education (NBTE) and National Commission for Colleges of Education (NCCE) are the bodies for regulation of tertiary institutions. In the performance of



their roles, the organizations use to give directives on the quality of products expected by setting up minimum standards which the tertiary institutions in Nigeria must adhere to. Among the items contained in the minimum standards are objectives of programmes, philosophy, personnel, equipment vis-a-vis number of students, curriculum and examination and admission requirements. To establish and maintain high quality standards, tertiary institutions and the regulatory agencies have a shared responsibility in addressing the following key areas, according to Adedipe (2007)

1. Minimum academic standard
2. Carrying capacity and admission quota
3. Accreditation
4. Impact assessment
5. Structures, infrastructures and utilities

However, Makoju, Nwangwu, Abolade and Newton (2004) in their own view highlighted the followings as quality assurance checklist:

1. Institution/faculty mission and objectives
2. Skill acquisition programmes
3. Students selection
4. Practical work structure
5. Training arrangement
6. Students
7. Assessment/Evaluation
8. Grievance procedures
9. Monitoring of outcomes
10. Staffing issues
11. Infrastructure/resources

Okeke (2010) explained that in order to achieve qualitative knowledge in Business Education programmes, the training centers must ensure that the following skills are required:

1. Technical skills
2. Business management skills
3. Personal entrepreneurial skills
4. Innovative skills
5. Self-motivation
6. Financial resources skills
7. Marketing skills

Statement of the Problem

A review of literature and statistical inquiry pointed to the fact that every facet of Nigerian educational system is besieged with problems. For instance, Adewuyi in Ogunribido (2004) opined that the quality of education in Nigeria is fast deteriorating. The



decline in quality is brought about by a number of factors, which include poor governance, brain drain, incessant industrial actions, unruly and destructive conduct of students, poor preparation of entering students, unsuitable learning environment, poor funding, shortage and outdated equipment, and poor laboratory gadgets (Ijeoma and Osagie, 2005). However, the onus falls on the government to ensure that quality is assured through the maintenance of minimum acceptable standards in all tertiary institutions in Nigeria.

The problem of this study therefore is posed as a question: Are the standards set relative to the variable that determine the quality of training Business Education students being adhered to by the skill acquisition centers and the tertiary institutions in Ondo State.

Purpose of the Study

The major purpose of this study was to determine the level of adherence to the standards set relative to the variables that determine the quality of training Business Education students of Ondo State tertiary institutions. Specifically, the study sought to:

1. Determine the level of adherence to the admission and staffing policy by the skill acquisition centers in the training of Business Education students of Ondo State tertiary institutions.
2. Determine the level of adherence to the provision of equipment and facilities by the skill acquisition centers in the training of Business Education students of Ondo State tertiary institutions.

Research Questions

1. To what extent do skill acquisition centers adhere to admission and staffing policy in the training of Business Education students of Ondo State tertiary institutions?
2. How adequate are equipment's and facilities provided by the skill acquisition centers in the training of Business Education students of Ondo State tertiary institutions?

Hypotheses

1. There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of male and female business educators on the extent of adherence to admission and staffing policy in the training of Business Education students.
2. There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of male and female respondents regarding the adequacy of equipment and facilities provided by the skill acquisition centers in the training of Business Education students.

Method

Descriptive research design was adopted for this study. According to Nworgu (2006), a descriptive research design is one in which a group of people or items are studied by collecting and analyzing data from only a few people or entire group. Data were collected from all business educators in three public tertiary institutions offering accounting/ business



education courses in Ondo State namely AdekunleAjasin University, Akungba-Akoko, Rufus Giwa Polytechnic, Owo and Adeyemi College of Education, Ondo. The population of 57 from the tertiary institutions comprising 30 males and 27 females. The number was manageable and as such, there was no sampling. The instrument for data collection was 19 items structured questionnaire validated by three Business Education experts, one from each of the tertiary institutions. Their corrections and suggestions were used to produce the final instrument.

The questionnaire was structured on a four points rating scale weighted 4,3,2 and 1 respectively with options as follows: Very High Extent (4), High Extent (3) Low Extent (2) and Very Low Extent (1). The Instrument was first administered to a number of 20 respondents who were not part of sample for the study. The Pearson Product Moment Correlation statistical tool was employed which yield a coefficient of 0.73 revealing that the instrument was reliable. The data collected were analyzed using the frequency table, mean and standard deviation to answer the research questions while t-test was used to test the null hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance.

Results

Research Question 1

To what extent do the Skill Acquisition Centers adhere to admission and staffing policy in the training of Business Education students of Ondo State Tertiary Institutions?

Table 1: Mean scores and Standard Deviation on the adherence to admission and staffing policy by Skill Acquisition Centers in the training of Business Education students?

S/N	Items	Mean	SD	Remark
1.	Employment of qualified academic staff.	3.21	0.98	VHE
2.	Certify the recommended number of technical staff.	2.75	0.85	HE
3.	Maintenance of carrying capacity.	3.26	0.01	VHE
4.	Maintenance of disciplinary measures.	2.97	0.91	HE
5.	Maintenance of general admission requirements	3.37	1.09	VHE
6.	Maintenance of specific course requirements	2.86	0.89	HE
7.	Presentation of original letters from their institutions	2.68	0.81	HE
8.	Registration with appropriate government agencies.	3.12	0.95	VHE
9.	Maintenance of required working hours.	3.31	1.05	VHE
10.	Employment of recommended number of supporting staff.	2.94	0.81	
Grand Mean		3.07	0.84	HE

Source: Field Survey, 2017



The data presented in Table 1 show that the mean scores of respondents ranged from 2.68-3.37 with a grand mean of 3.07. The respondents affirmed that the skill acquisition centers adhere highly to admission and staffing policy as set by the regulatory agencies.

Research Questions 2

How adequate are equipment's and facilities provided by the skill acquisition centers in the training of Business Education students of Ondo State Tertiary Institutions?

Table 2: Mean Scores and Standard Deviation in respect of Adequacy of Equipment and Facilities provided by Skill Acquisition Centers in the training of business education student.

S/N	Items	Mean	SD	Remark
1.	Possession of ventilated/conducive workplace.	3.91	1.30	VHE
2.	Possession of departmental structures.	3.01	0.94	HE
3.	Possession of recommended number of classrooms.	3.34	0.92	VHE
4.	Acquisition of modern/sophisticated equipment.	3.58	1.42	VHE
5.	Application of equipment during training.	3.55	1.38	VHE
6.	Adequate computer tables and chairs in the laboratories.	3.61	1.46	VHE
7.	Allowances for self-assessment/evaluation.	4.01	1.53	VHE
8.	Possession of recommended number of computers and other facilities for teaching Business Education.	2.90	1.17	HE
9.	Adequate funds for replacement of depreciated/ obsolete equipment's.	2.52	0.78	HE
Grand Mean		3.38	1.21	VHE

Source: Field Survey, 2017

The data presented in Table 2 revealed that the mean scores of respondents ranged from 2.52-4.01 with a grand mean of 3.38. The respondents affirmed that the equipment and facilities needed to train Business Education students for practical purpose are available and adequate.

Hypothesis H01

There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of male and female business educators on the extent of adherence to admission and staffing policy in the training of Business Education students.

Table 3: The t-test Analysis of the Mean Ratings of Male and Female Respondents on the Admission and Staffing Policy in the Training of Business Education Students.



Variables	N	X	SD	DF	t.cal	t.crit	Remarks
Male	30	3.31	0.81	55	0.186	1.67	NS
Female	27	3.07	0.82				

The result in table 3 reveals that t-calculated of 0.186 is less than the t-critical of 1.67 at 0.05 level of significance and 55 degree of freedom. Hence, the null hypothesis was not rejected. This indicates that there is no significant difference between the mean ratings of male and female business educators on the extent of adherence to admission and staffing policy in the training of Business Education students.

Hypothesis Ho2:

There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of respondents in tertiary institutions regarding the adequacy of equipment and facilities provided by the skill acquisition centers in the training of Business Education students.

Table 4: The t-test Analysis of the Mean Ratings of Male and Female Respondents on the Adequacy of Equipment and Facilities provided in the Training of Business Education Students.

Variables	N	X	SDDF	DF	t.cal	t.crit	Remarks
Male	30	3.40	0.71	55	0.158	1.67	NS
Female	27	3.38	0.74				

The result in table 4 reveals that t-calculated of 0.158 is less than the t-critical of 1.67 at 0.05 level of significance and 55 degree of freedom. Hence, the null hypothesis was not rejected. Therefore, there is no significant difference between the mean ratings of male and female business educators on the extent of adequacy of equipment and facilities provided skill acquisition centers in the training of Business Education students.

Discussion of the Findings

From the study, it was found out that all the respondents agreed with the 10 items under adherence to admission and staffing policy by the skill acquisition training centers in the training of Business Education students. These include employment of qualified academic staff, maintenance of carrying capacity, maintenance of disciplinary measures and required working hours and certify the recommended number of technical staff etc. The results of the analysis showed that the skill acquisition training centers complied with the admission and staffing policy requirements as recommended by NUC, NBTE and NCCE. The study however revealed that most of the students submitted statements of their SSCE results and do not bother to submit their original certificates.



The analysis of the results also showed that out of the three public tertiary institutions offering accounting/ business education courses in Ondo State, Rufus Giwa Polytechnic, Owo admit students more than carrying capacity. This may be as a pressure to improve on its internally generated revenue (IGR) as well as pressure to accommodate most of the candidates seeking for admission. The personnel met the required standard.

Furthermore, the findings of the study revealed that the respondents agreed with the 9 items regarding the adequacy of equipment and facilities provided by the skill acquisition training centers. These items include possession of departmental structures, application of equipment during training, possession of recommended number of computers and other facilities for teaching business education courses, adequate computer tables and chairs in the laboratories etc. It was discovered that all the skill acquisition training centers maintained high standard. Staff offices were well furnished while the laboratories were properly equipped. This is in line with the views of Chibuikwe (2013) and Okoro(2015) who found that the quality of equipment and infrastructure in Nigeria tertiary institutions is gradually improving as a result of the competition from the private universities.

The null hypotheses revealed that there were no significant differences in the mean ratings of male and female respondents regarding the extent of adherence to admission and staffing policy as well as adequacy of equipment facilities provided in the training of business education students in the skill acquisition training centers as expected by the authorities of the tertiary institutions on Ondo State in line with laid down rules and guidelines. This finding corroborates the Onyesom and Ashibogwu (2013) who found out that the opinions of male and female business educators of Universities and Colleges of Education did not differ significantly on the strategies for quality assurance in business education programmes.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, it shows that the adherence with the minimum standard set by the NUC, NBTE and NCCE policy in the training of Business Education students can be imagined to be high. There is still need to adequately provide equipment and facilities by the proprietor of the skill acquisition centers in order to facilitate more effective and qualitative skill acquisition. Management put in place in those tertiary institutions should ensure that funds provided/ allocated to them for capital projects are not diverted or misappropriated. Stakeholders in education sector must ensure that all hands are on deck. Appointments into technical positions in tertiary institutions should be based on competency and not on political influence, affiliation or strength.

Recommendation

On the basis of the findings and conclusion from the study, the following recommendations were made:



1. Government at all levels should provide means of assisting skill acquisition training centers financially in form of grant or soft loans. This will go a long way in replacing obsolete and depreciated equipment and facilities.
2. Tertiary Institutions should empower their SIWES personnel with necessary and needed facilities so as to effectively monitor students on industrial training for effective performance.
3. Government should restructure SIWES programmes for a more robust and effective performance and also endeavor to pay SIWES or industrial training allowances of students in tertiary institutions on time as it would help motivate them to perform better.
4. Well-meaning philanthropists as well as alumnus of tertiary institutions should endeavor to pay back in form of donation, not only in cash but sustainable capital projects.

References

- Adedeji, E.O. (2009). An antidote to the falling standard in business education in Nigeria tertiary Institutions. *Association of Business Educators of Nigeria Book of readings 1 (9)*, 166- 172.
- Adegbesan, S.O. (2011). Establishing quality assurance in Nigerian education system: Implication for educational managers. *Educational research and Reviews*, 6 (2), 147- 151.
- Amaewhule, W.A. (2004). Business education and challenges of standardization. *Business Education Journal*, 4 (2), 1-7.
- Chibuikwe, V. C. (2013). Analysis of quality assurance in business education: The perception of business studies teachers in Enugu State junior secondary schools. *Nigerian Journal of Business Education*, 1 (2), 49-56.
- Eze, M. E. (2014). Quality assurance in the training of Office Technology and Management (OTM) students in polytechnics in Kogi State. *International Journal of Business, Science and Technology*, 2(1), 141-148.
- Hornby, A.S. (2001). Oxford advanced learners dictionary of current English (6thed). London Oxford University press.
- Maduewesi, B.U and Onyechu, J.A.E. (2010). Quality assurance in primary education in Nigeria. *Http://www.wesoedu.com*.
- Makoju, G.A.E; Nwangwu, R; Abilade, J. and Newton, P. (2004). Towards improved quality assurance system for Nigerian schools. Federal Ministry of Education, Abuja.
- Ogunribido, O.R. (2004). Quality management in the production of Nigerian certificate of education accounting graduates: College of Education, Okene experience. *Business Education Journal*, 4 (2), 166-176.



- Okoro, J. (2015). Strategies for enhancing quality assurance in business teacher education programmes in Nigerian universities. *Journal of Education Practice*, 6 (12), 202-208.
- Onyeachu, C.I.O (2008). Quality assurance in junior secondary education in Abia State. *Nigeria Journal of Curriculum Studies (sp.ed)*, 179-187.
- Onyesom, M. and Ashibogwu, N. K (2013). Towards quality assurance in business education in Nigeria. Constraints and Control. *Asian Journal of Business and Management*, 5 (3), 306- 312.
- Oyebade, S.A; Oladipo, S.A. and Adetoro, J.A. (2012). Determinants and strategies for quality assurance in Nigerian university education. Retrieved from <http://www.herp.net.org>.
- Tahir, G. (2006). The home, the society and education of Nigerian child. *Nigerian Academy of Education Book of Proceedings*, Owerri. Peace wise system. 4-18.
- Umoru, T. A. (2006). The impact of an integrated total quality management concept on service delivery by lecturers in higher institutions: A path analysis. *Lokoja Journal of Management and Technology*, 1 (1), 1-8.