

Research Article

Programme Administrators Utilization of Quality Assurance of Funding Measures for Promoting Skill Acquisition in Business Education in Tertiary Institutions in South-South Nigeria

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Abstract

This study ascertained programme administrators utilization of quality assurance of funding measures for promoting skill acquisition in business education in tertiary institutions in South-South Nigeria. One research question guided the study and two null hypotheses were tested. Descriptive survey research design was adopted for the study. The population comprised 154 programme administrators in the 20 tertiary institutions in South-South, Nigeria. The entire population was studied without sample. The instrument for data collection was a 9-item structured questionnaire. The instrument was validated by three experts. To determine the internal consistency of the items, Cronbach's alpha was used to test the items reliability co-efficient a value of 0.77 was obtained. Mean and standard deviation were used to answer the research questions, while t-test was used to test the null hypotheses at 0.05 alpha levels. The findings of the study revealed that programme administrators moderately utilized quality assurance of funding measures for promoting skill acquisition in business education in tertiary institutions in South-South, Nigeria. The findings further revealed that gender differ significantly in their mean ratings of programme administrators on the level of utilization of quality assurance of funding measures for promoting skill acquisition in business education in tertiary institutions in South-South, Nigeria. The study concluded that programme administrators moderately utilized quality assurance of funding measures which mean they are not adequately utilize fund for promoting skill acquisition in tertiary institutions in South-South, Nigeria. It was recommended among others that government should develop teachers' satisfaction questionnaires for assessing the level of utilization of funding provide for quality assurance to programme administrators' as to improve on the teaching and learning, as this will enhance the teaching effectiveness of institutions.

Keywords: Promoting Skill Acquisition, Business Education, Funding Measures, Utilization, Tertiary Institutions.

Introduction

Quality assurance is a proactive measure of ensuring standard or degree of excellence in any organization. In education, quality assurance aims at preventing problems and ensures that the products of the system conform to the expected standards. It is a continuous process by which an institution can guarantee that standard and quality of its educational provisions are maintained and improved upon. According to Okereke (2014), quality assurance is the systematic management and assessment procedure employed by tertiary institutions in order to monitor performance against objectives and to ensure achievement of quality outputs and quality improvement. These could be achieved with adequate quality assurance business education programme involved. Business education as 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. Okoro (2015) viewed business education as the type of education that assists individuals to acquire skills, which can be applied to solve problems in business and office occupations. Okoli, *et al.*, (2018) asserted that business education has a definite role in preparing and equipping students with skills that increase their chances of finding jobs across territorial boundaries after schooling.

Business education is an aspect of educational training which an individual receives with the primary motive of enabling one acquire adequate attitudes, concepts, knowledge, understanding and skills in business activities for vocational usage in careers as an administrator, manager or teacher where ever they may find themselves in the business world. The objective of business education has been clearly stated in the National Policy on Education (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2013) include to equip the recipients with useful skills that will enable one become better employee or employer. The primary goal of business education as noted by the National Policy on Education (FRN, 2013) is to produce skillful and dynamic business educators, office administrators and businessmen and women who will effectively compete in the job market or become successful entrepreneurs. Thus, for these objectives of business education and other inherent benefits of education to be realized, there is need therefore to equip the recipients with necessary skills for sustainable standard, and this can be achieved through quality assurance in business education programme.

The National Universities Commission (NUC) (2015) and National Commission for Colleges of Education (NCCE) (2012) 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 as 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. Onyesom and Umoeshiet (2013) posited that the 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 of everything that goes into the teaching/learning process or system as input and process. Agbulu (2019) stated that business education 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 tertiary institutions have been producing high quality graduates in far past.

However, Igberaharha (2018) noted that tertiary institutions in Nigeria have produced graduates that 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 tertiary institutions is unsavoured and worse still, Nigeria ranked number 22 after South Africa, Egypt, Ghana, Kenya in the ranking of African universities. Similarly, Okoli *et al.*, (2018) declared that the quality of graduates produced in Nigerian tertiary institutions especially in the past four years had thumbed down the quality of graduates again three years' time because most of graduates were not performing to expectation. Due to the declining quality of education in recent years, however, the accolade associated with Nigerian universities seems to have faded away. This is informed by the flood of criticisms on the quality of graduates produced. Parents presently seek alternatives for their children's education in South African and Ghanaian universities and even beyond. This ugly situation in Nigeria tends to negate the tenet of quality tertiary education which is essentially an industry established to produce high quality work force. To upturn or change the ugly situation, the measures for improving quality assurance in business education in tertiary institutions must be sought.

In education, measure 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). Measure as used in this context means all the operational strategies, techniques, activities, actions among others, 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 Ugodulunwa and Mustapha (2015) identified the following measures 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 for students, proper funding of education, supervision and inspection, recruitment of personnel, adequate and proper equipment, quality curriculum, mentoring and monitoring of academic programme, regular evaluation of the system as some important measures for quality assurance in Nigerian educational system. Others are quality curriculum, quality text books, students discipline, quality teaching facilities, good administrative policy, organizational policy, regular accreditation, impact assessment, research and development, and among others. This study focused on quality assurance of funding measure.

Funding is a system of apportioning available capital belonging to an organization for meeting a need. Funding refers to a form of financial support that is given for the achievement of a project. According to

Nwafor *et al.*, (2015), funding is the provision of financial resources in order to meet a need, project or programme. Money needed to run a project or programme in the school may be raised within or outside the school. When funds are generated, they are usually disbursed based on the needs of the school. The process of making the acquired funds available to the units that require them either in the short or long run is referred to as funding. Nwosu *et al.*, (2018) opined that funding of business education programmes would help in providing adequate and conducive classrooms, well-equipped laboratories/studios, state-of-the-art model offices, updated library, appropriate staff offices, appropriate furniture, research and development, and improved to have adequate and proper equipment.

Chibuike (2013) noted funding as effective monitoring and evaluation, review of the programme to accommodate maximum practical skills, recruitment of qualified personnel, appropriate use of quality equipment and effective assessment and development of staff as well as standardization of requirements for admission of students as appropriate measures that promote quality assurance in business education for skills acquisition. Dimunah (2017) revealed that university administrators required training on fund securing alternative resources and to function in an environment of financial uncertainty. Akpotohwo and Ogeibiri (2018) reported that government; education tax fund (ETF) community, private sector, school fees and private sector are all modes of funding business education programme for quality assurance. Ezeonwurie (2019) noted that business educators irrespective of their gender agreed that all the itemized funding strategies and its impact were capable of enhancing business education programme in colleges of education. One of the most significant aspects of business education is its inclination towards the world of work and the emphasis of the curriculum on the acquisition of employable skills.

Quality assurance of funding measures can be properly executed or maintained through programme administrators in business education programme in South-South tertiary institutions. Business education programme administrators in the context of this study are people directly involved in the administration of programmes in tertiary educational institutions. These are Vice-Chancellor, Deputy Vice-Chancellors, Registrar, Bursar, Librarian, Provost, Deputy Provost, Deans and HODs of business education.

The influencing factors in the context of quality assurance of funding measures by programme administrators for promoting skill acquisition in business education programme could be gender and institution type. Gender is a term used to exemplify the attributes that a society or culture constitutes as "masculine" or "feminine" (Ajinaja, 2017). Gender in this research study means all the male and female administrators of the business education programme. For instance, a study conducted by Nwosu *et al.*, (2018) revealed that male and female programme administrators did not differ significantly on moderation of examination, in-service education, proper funding adequate equipment as strategies for quality assurance in business education examined in this study. Okoli *et al.*, (2018) reported that there were no significant difference in the mean responses of both male and female programme administrators from state universities as well as those from federal universities on the quality assurance strategies such as curriculum measures, personnel measures and funding measures for promoting skill acquisition in business education programme in universities in South-South Nigeria for sustainable national development.

Similarly, the institution type here refers to colleges of education and universities that run business education programme. Okoli *et al.*, (2018) noted that Vice-Chancellor, Deputy Vice-Chancellors, Registrar, Bursar, Librarian, Provost, Deputy Provost, Deans and HODs of business education in the universities and colleges of education did not differ significantly on moderation of examination, in-service education, funding as measures for improving quality assurance in business education programme. Considering that success or failure of producing qualified business education graduates in tertiary institutions in South-South, Nigeria, depend on the quality assurance measures adopted by the business educators or the department. It is essential to ascertain the programme administrators level of utilization of quality assurance of funding measures for promoting skill acquisition in business education in tertiary institutions in South-South Nigeria.

Statement of the Problem

The national educational objectives, according to the Federal Republic of Nigeria (FRN) (2013) include the acquisition of appropriate skills, abilities and competencies both mental and physical considered invaluable for all Nigerians to live and contribute to sustainable national development. Nwosu *et al.*, (2018) stated that the nation's educational activity should be centred on the students in order for them to acquire maximum skills for self-development and fulfillment in the labour market. Regrettably, they noted further that the level of practical skills acquired by students do not address the demands of the labour market and technological

advancement. Other authors decry quality of education acquired by the graduates of tertiary education institutions (Eduwen, 2016; Okoli *et al.*, 2018). The declining quality of graduates produced in the tertiary institutions has constituted a lot of worry on the parents which led the parents to seek alternatives to their children's education in foreign countries. Thus, most graduates of business education are neither gainfully employed nor self-reliant as stated by the objectives of business education programme. This may create reduction in people applying for admission into the programme. The inability to apply quality assurance measures in academic programmes has been identified by Okoli *et al.*, (2018) as the major factor to the ineffective and inefficient delivery system of the programme. The products of the programme are ill equipped and short of the necessary needed skills for self-realization and national development. As a result, the society has been denied the much-desired benefit of the programme as the products cannot contribute adequately and meaningfully in their world or work. It is against this background that this study will ascertain the programme administrators utilization of quality assurance of funding measures for promoting skill acquisition in business education in tertiary institutions in South-South Nigeria.

Research Questions

The following research question guided the study.

- 1) What is the programme administrators' level of utilization of quality assurance of funding measures for promoting skill acquisition in business education in tertiary institutions in South-South Nigeria?

Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance:

- 1) Male and female programme administrators do not significantly differ in their mean ratings on the level of utilization of quality assurance of funding measures for promoting skill acquisition in business education in tertiary institutions in South-South Nigeria.
- 2) There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of programme administrators from university and college of education on the level of utilization of quality assurance of funding measures for promoting skill acquisition in business education in tertiary institutions in South-South Nigeria.

Method

The study adopted descriptive survey design. The population of the study comprised 154 programme administrators (91 in universities and 63 in colleges of education) in South-South, Nigeria. No sample and sampling technique was given because the population is manageable for the researchers. Data for this study was collected using a 9 items structured questionnaire. The respondents were requested to rate the items on a 5-point rating scale of very highly utilized (5), highly utilized (4), moderately utilized (3), lowly utilized (2) and very lowly utilized (1) respectively. The instrument was validated by two experts in business education. Cronbach's alpha method was used to establish the items reliability of the instrument with overall reliability coefficients values of 0.77. Out of the 154 copies of questionnaire instrument was administered to the subjects in their institutions through direct approach which facilitated a response rate of 147 copies (representing 95 percent) with an attrition rate of seven copies (representing 5 percent) and used for data analysis. Data collected were analyzed using mean and standard deviation to answer research questions while t-test was used to test the null hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. The application of Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 23 was used for data analysis. For the null hypotheses, p-value was used for decision making. Where the calculated p-value was less than the stipulated level of significance 0.05 ($p < 0.05$), it implies that there was a significant difference between respondents' mean scores and the null hypothesis is rejected. On the other hand, if the p-value is greater than or equal to the alpha level of 0.05 ($p > 0.05$), it means that there was no significant difference in the respondents mean scores and is not rejected.

Presentation of Results

Research Question 1

- 1) What is the programme administrators' level of utilization of quality assurance of funding measures for promoting skill acquisition in business education in tertiary institutions in South-South Nigeria?.

Data in Table 1 revealed that items number 1, 3 and 5 are rated highly utilized with mean ratings ranging from 3.54 to 3.70. Items 2, 4, 6, 7, 8 and 9 are rated moderately utilized with mean ratings ranged of 2.69 and 3.36. The cluster mean score of 3.35 which indicates' that programme administrators moderately utilized quality assurance of funding measures for promoting skill acquisition in business education in South-South tertiary institutions. The standard deviation of the responses showed that respondents are not wide apart in their mean ratings which indicate homogeneity.

Table 1. Programme administrators' mean ratings on the level of utilization of quality assurance of funding measures for promoting skill acquisition in business education in tertiary institutions in South-South Nigeria (N=147).

S/N	Statement on programme administrators level of utilization of quality assurance of funding measures	\bar{x}	SD	Remarks
1	Providing conducive classrooms for effective teaching and learning	3.60	0.43	Highly utilized
2	Providing well-equipped laboratories for effective practical work	3.20	0.54	Moderately utilized
3	Providing well-equipped studios for effective teaching and learning	3.70	0.42	Highly utilized
4	Providing well-equipped ICT laboratories for effective research work among students and teachers	2.69	0.57	Moderately utilized
5	Providing state-of-the-art model offices for the teachers and all staff	3.54	0.44	Highly utilized
6	Providing teaching resources update in the libraries for effective teaching and learning	3.24	0.53	Moderately utilized
7	Providing appropriate staff offices for its human resource personnel	3.20	0.54	Moderately utilized
8	Providing appropriate furniture for the offices	3.30	0.50	Moderately utilized
9	Providing much fund for carrying on research and development among teachers and students	3.36	0.49	Moderately utilized
Cluster mean		3.35		Moderately utilized

Hypothesis 1

Male and female programme administrators do not significantly differ in their mean ratings on the level of promoting skill acquisition in business education through funding measures utilization in tertiary institutions in South-South Nigeria.

Table 2. Summary of t-test analysis on the mean ratings of male and female programme administrators on the level of utilization of quality assurance of funding measures for promoting skill acquisition in business education in tertiary institutions in South-South Nigeria.

Gender	N	\bar{x}	SD	α	df	t-cal	p-value	Decision
Male	94	3.14	.17	0.05	145	2.425	.001	Significant
Female	53	3.12	.15					

Table 2 indicates that the calculated t-value is 2.425 at 145 degree of freedom and .001 p-value. Since the p-value of .001 is less than the alpha value (0.05). It implies that male and female programme administrators differ significantly in their mean ratings on the level of utilization of quality assurance of funding measures for promoting skill acquisition in business education in South-South, Nigeria tertiary institutions. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected.

Hypothesis 2

There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of programme administrators from university and college of education on the level of utilization of quality assurance of funding measures for promoting skill acquisition in business education in tertiary institutions in South-South Nigeria.

Table 3. Summary of t-test analysis on the mean ratings of programme administrators from university and college of education on the level of utilization of quality assurance of funding measures for promoting skill acquisition in business education in tertiary institutions in South-South Nigeria.

Institutions type	N	\bar{x}	SD	α	df	t-cal	p-value	Decision
Universities	88	3.54	.14	0.05	145	1.463	.000	Significant
College of education	59	3.46	.09					

Table 3 indicates that the calculated t-value is 1.463 at 145 degree of freedom and .000 p-value. Since the p-value of .000 is less than alpha value (0.05). It implies that programme administrators from university and college of education differ significantly in their mean ratings on the level of utilization of quality

assurance of funding measures for promoting skill acquisition in business education in tertiary institutions in South-South Nigeria. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected.

Discussion of Findings

The findings of the study revealed that programme administrators moderately utilized quality assurance of funding measures for promoting skill acquisition in business education in tertiary institutions in South-South, Nigeria. This implies that moderate utilization of funding measures will make business education programmes have insufficient/adequate and conducive classrooms, un-equipped laboratories/studios, inappropriate staff offices, inappropriate furniture and among others. This finding agrees with Dimunah (2017) who revealed that university administrators required training on fund securing alternative resources and to function in an environment of financial uncertainty. The finding disagrees with that of Akpotohwo and Ogeibiri (2018) who reported that government; education tax fund (ETF) community, private sector, school fees and private sector are all modes of funding business education programme for quality assurance. The findings also showed that gender and institutions type mean ratings of programme administrators' significantly influenced utilization of quality assurance of funding measures for promoting skill acquisition in business education in tertiary institutions in South-South, Nigeria. The finding on gender difference agrees with that of Ezeonwurie (2019) who reported that business educators irrespective of their gender agreed that all the itemized funding strategies and its impact were capable of enhancing business education programme in colleges of education. Similarly, the finding on institutions type agrees with that of Akpotohwo and Ogeibiri (2018) who revealed that institutions type influenced the quality assurance strategies established which is capable of promoting skill acquisition in business education programme in universities. The reason for the similarities in test of hypotheses is as a result of their ability to ensure that quality modern facilities and instructional materials are made available for the programme. The reason for the rating of the respondents is that they are in position to use available funds to impact suitable programme for attainment of goal. They are one to be blame when the time comes against the inadequate performance of students in the world of work.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, it is concluded that programme administrators moderately utilized quality assurance of funding measures which mean they are not adequately utilize fund for promoting skill acquisition in South-South, Nigeria tertiary institutions. This is because quality in business education is not determined by end product but by the processes leading to the end product.

Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusion of the study, the following recommendations are made:

- 1) Programme administrators need to increase on the way they utilized funding provide to their institutions to deliver flexible and demand-driven training and business education lecturers need to contribute to the development of national skill standards to impart on the learners towards promoting skill acquisition in business education in South-South, Nigeria tertiary institution.
- 2) Government should develop teachers' satisfaction questionnaires for assessing the level of utilization of funding provide for quality assurance to programme administrators' as to improve on the teaching and learning, as this will enhance the teaching effectiveness of institutions.

Declarations

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