

PERCEIVED EFFECT OF QUALITY ASSURANCE MECHANISM ON IMPLEMENTATION OF ACADEMIC PROGRAMME IN COLLEGES OF EDUCATION IN SOUTH EASTERN NIGERIA

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Abstract

This paper explores how quality assurance mechanism (QAM) impacts on the quality of teacher education, particularly in terms of student admissions, teaching practices, assessments, and institutional management. The aim of the study is to assess the influence of QAM on academic program implementation and to identify the effectiveness and challenges of these mechanisms in Colleges of Education. The sample size was 600 respondents, including teaching and non-teaching staff, as well as students. Descriptive survey design was used, and data collected via structured questionnaires, and analysed using mean and standard deviation. The findings of this research are expected to contribute to policy discussions on improving the quality of education in Nigeria. By providing empirical data on the role of QAM, this study offers practical recommendations such as; College of Education management in south-east Nigeria should ensure that the curriculum for academic programme of the Colleges are regularly reviewed and updated to meet current standards, among other things.

Keywords: Quality Assurance, Mechanism, Implementation, Academic programme.

Introduction

Colleges of education, as educational institutions, have unique purpose of training competent, knowledgeable, resourceful, conscientious, and highly motivated teachers for the basic (primary and secondary) education level (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2013;43). Therefore, Quality Assurance Mechanisms (QAM) constitutes complete process and standard for efficient institution's mandate delivery (Ebisine, 2013; Katete, 2023). More so, quality educational programme and teacher education in colleges of education can be evaluated by a number of factors tilted towards creating a culture of quality (Chime, Obineme and Ekweogu, 2021). Quality is the totality of features and characteristics of a product or

service that bear on its ability to satisfy stated or implied needs.

Thus, QAM in the implementation of academic programme in colleges of education are multi-dimensional and all-encompassing in terms of students' enrolment/access or admission process, mode of instructions, methods of teaching and assessment, teaching practices, exercise and supervision, conduct and supervision of examination, marking and grading systems as well as management goals and policy (Atanda and Adeniran, 2020). All these are institutions' prioritized needs that an effective QAM must fulfill by averting defaults or lapses. Okebukola (2004) has examined the concept of academic quality assurance as a process of continuous

improvement in the quality of teaching and learning activities which will be achieved via pathways of employing mechanism internal and external to the system. Indeed, Quality Assurance Mechanisms (QAM) is the major/indispensable factor in developing and implementing qualification frameworks needed to promote academic success and general restructuring in Nigerian colleges education system (Adegbesan, 2010; Shabani, 2013).

The present study therefore intends to evaluate perceived effect of Quality Assurance Mechanism on implementation of academic programme in colleges of education in South Eastern Nigeria. This will bring to fore the pragmatism of the effectiveness of QAM on the implementation of academic programme in colleges of education in South Eastern Nigeria.

Research Problem

The issue of quality in the delivery of academic programme has been a dominant challenge in regions of Nigeria. South Eastern region like other areas in Nigeria also faces similar challenges. Of interest is the bane of inconsistencies and policy somersaults in spite of the National commission for Colleges of Education (NCCE) and other regulatory bodies attempt at introducing various quality assurance mechanisms. Enakpoya and Okposio (2012) pinpoint general dissatisfaction on the state of education in Nigeria which is indicative of a drastic erosion of the quality of our educational system. Indeed, the situation has culminated into perpetual concerns in the area of implementation of quality assurance mechanisms. Hence, this research intends to address the gap in knowledge regarding how these quality assurance mechanism influence the implementation of academic programme and their overall efficiency in Colleges of Education.

Purpose of the Study

As earlier indicated, the main purpose of this study is to explore how quality assurance mechanisms influence of Education in South Eastern Nigeria. Specifically, this study sought to:

1. Identify and analyze the Quality

Assurance Mechanism (QAM) that exists in Colleges of Education in South-Eastern Nigeria.

2. Investigate the effectiveness of Quality Assurance Mechanism (QAM) in the implementation of academic programme in Colleges of Education in South Eastern Region of Nigeria.
3. Examine the challenges of Quality Assurance Mechanism (QAM) in the implementation of academic programme in Colleges of Education in South Eastern Region of Nigeria
4. Expound the impact of quality assurance mechanisms on the quality and delivery of academic programme in Colleges of Education in South Eastern Region of Nigeria.

Research Questions

In this study, the following research questions were examined.

- i. What are the Quality Assurance Mechanisms (QAM) that are being used in implementation of academic programme in Colleges of Education in South Eastern Region of Nigeria?
- ii. How effectual are these Quality Assurance Mechanism (QAM) in the implementation of academic programme in Colleges of Education in South Eastern Region of Nigeria
- iii. What are the challenges of Quality Assurance Mechanism (QAM) combating Colleges of Education in the implementation of academic programme in South Eastern Region of Nigeria?
- iv. What are the impact of quality assurance mechanisms on the quality and delivery of academic programme in Colleges of Education in South Eastern Region of Nigeria?

Significance of the Study

This study will contribute to the hitherto existing body of knowledge on quality assurance in higher education by providing empirical evidence on its perceived impact on the implementation of academic programme in colleges of education. The findings will be

valuable to policy makers, educational administrators, and other stakeholders in the Nigerian education sector. They may find it useful as a working manual or tool for institutional change in the implementation of academic programme in colleges of education. Moreover, this study would be of immense value to scholars as a reference material and may also act as an antidote for further research initiatives. The study will also contribute to the existing body of knowledge in the area of study and provide a basis for further research in related fields. This research will also aim to increase the general understanding of perceived effects of quality assurance mechanisms on the implementation of academic programme in colleges of education. It will as well provide practical recommendations for improving the effectiveness of quality assurance mechanisms, thereby enhancing the quality of teacher education in the region.

Related Literature reviewed

Relevant academic literature on quality assurance in higher education note the importance of quality assurance in strengthening the academic management system and reduce costs by maximizing results (Carvalho, Rosa, and Amaral, 2023; Tamrat, 2022). Others address the significance of regulatory frameworks and institutional commitment in maintaining academic standards (Ulewicz, 2017; Harvey and Williams, 2010; Vlăsceanu, Grünberg, and Pârlea, 2007). Alzafari and Ursin (2019) stated that universities formulate quality assurance systems derived from national standards, which are then adopted as needed. Oktarina, et. al. (2023) noted that the quality assurance system is more focused on curriculum development and teaching activities.

In the Nigerian context, studies have shown that while quality assurance mechanisms exist, their implementation often falls short due to issues such as inadequate funding, poor infrastructural facilities and equipment, population growth, lack of training for staff, poor staffing, examination malpractice, corruption, quality of students, poor teaching and learning environment (Ajayi and Awe Bolupe, 2008; Atanda and Adeniran, 2020;

Ayodele and Oyebanji, 2008; Ebisine, 2013; Nwagwu, 2012; Ofoegbu and Alonge, 2016). Hence, Darojat (2018) noted that quality assurance in higher education requires a solid commitment to developing and implementing quality assurance programme. Furthermore, this will promote regular self-assessment and stakeholder feedback. The present study therefore intends to contrive on existing research by focusing specifically on the Colleges of Education in South-Eastern Nigeria and providing empirical data on the effectiveness of Quality Assurance Mechanism (QAM).

Research Methodology

Design

This study adopted a descriptive survey design.

Area of Study

The area of the study is all Colleges on Education in South Eastern Nigeria, covering the five colleges of education of Umunze, Eha-Amufu, Nsugbe, Enugu and Omoku in South Eastern Nigeria

Population of the Study

The study population describes the entire people who are key informants to the findings of a study. Although the study focuses on all Colleges on Education in South Eastern Nigeria, the population of the study include teaching staff, non-teaching staff and students from five colleges of education in Umunze, Eha-Amufu, Nsugbe, Enugu and Omoku in South Eastern Nigeria respectively.

Sample and Sampling Technique

A total of 600 respondents were selected. A purposeful sampling technique was adopted as a sampling modality for the administration of the research instrument. Purposive sampling technique was referred because it involves selecting certain units or cases based on a definite purpose. Thus, five colleges are selected and one hundred and twenty (120) respondents comprising 40 teaching, 40 non-teaching staff and 40 students were selected from each of the five colleges, giving a total of 600 respondents.

Table 1: Colleges Sampled for the Study

Name of College	Number of Teaching Staff	Number of Non - Teaching Staff	Number of Students	Total
1. Federal College of Education (Technical),Umunze	40	40	40	120
2. Federal College of Education, Eha-Amufu	40	40	40	120
3.NwaforOrizu College of Education, Nsugbe	40	40	40	120
4 Enugu State College of Education (Technical), ESCET	40	40	40	120
5 Federal College of Education (Technical), Omoku	40	40	40	120
Total	200	200	200	600

Data Collection

- Quantitative Data: A structured questionnaire titled: 'Perceived Effect of Quality Assurance Mechanisms on Implementation of Academic Programme in Colleges of Education' (EQAMIACPCE) will be used to generate data for the study. The questionnaire will be administered to teaching and non-teaching staff and students to gather information on the implementation and perceived impact of quality assurance mechanisms. The research instrument involves the use of rating scale to generate quantitative data. The instrument was patterned based on the modified 4- points Likert response scale. This provided four levels of opinion which are: Very High Extent (VHE), High Extent (HE), Low Extent (LE), Very Low Extent (VLE), and weighted mean of $4+3+2+1 = 10/4 = 2.5$. The respondents will be assured of anonymity and confidentiality of their responses and urged to answer the questions truly and without any fear.
- Qualitative Data: In-depth interviews and focus group discussions will be conducted with key stakeholders, including college administrators, quality assurance officers, and students, to gain

insights into the challenges and achievements of implementing these mechanisms.

Data Analysis

Simple means and standard deviations were applied to achieve quantitative analysis of the data collected. In other words, the data gathered through questionnaire were analyzed using frequency count, mean and standard deviation. The samples were collected mainly from primary source. At the end of the collection of data, there were carefully scrutinized for accuracy and completeness in order to eliminate errors via thematic approach. Sorting of data was carried out on the basis of qualitative or quantitative characteristics of the items. Data was presented by tallying the responses, adding up figures and sorting out variables for further analysis, and computing the necessary statistical constraints. Arithmetic mean and standard deviation were applied to measure the magnitude of the responses and to achieve a qualitative and quantitative analysis of the data generated.

Results

Research question 1: What is the Quality Assurance Mechanism (QAM) that is being used in implementation of academic programme in Colleges of Education in South Eastern Region of Nigeria?

Table 2: Mean and Standard Deviation on QAM that are being used in implementation of academic programme in Colleges of Education in South Eastern Region of Nigeria?

S/ N	ITEMS	SA	A	D	SD	N	Mea n	Std	Decision
1	The curriculum for academic programs in our college of education is regularly reviewed and updated to meet current standards.	18 0	20 0	80	140	60 0	2.70	2.0 7	Accepted
2	Faculty members receive regular training and workshops to enhance their teaching methodologies.	25 0	21 0	10 0	40	60 0	3.12	1.5 8	Accepted
3	There is a system in place to monitor the quality of teaching and learning in our college of education.	17 0	23 0	80	120	60 0	2.75	1.9 9	Accepted
4	There are clear guidelines and policies in place to address academic misconduct and ensure academic integrity.	30 0	15 0	10 0	50	60 0	3.17	1.5 8	Accepted
5	The process of program evaluation is transparent, involving input from various stakeholders including students, faculty, and industry experts.	12 0	18 0	20 0	100	60 0	2.53	2.1 4	Accepted
							2.85	1.8 7	Accepte d

Data in Table 2 above shows that the respondents were of the opinion that items 1 to 5 with their individual mean and corresponding standard deviation should be accepted as the Quality Assurance Mechanisms that are being used in implementation of academic programme in Colleges of Education in South Eastern Region of Nigeria. Although, 5 out of the 5 items were accepted because their individual mean is greater than the cumulative mean average of 2.50. The grand mean set stood at 2.85(Std=1.87) indicating that the respondents from the area

under study agreed that to a high extent, the above Quality Assurance Mechanisms are being used in implementation of academic programme in Colleges of Education in South Eastern Region of Nigeria.

Research question 2: How effectual are these Quality Assurance Mechanisms (QAM) in the implementation of academic programme in Colleges of Education in South Eastern Region of Nigeria?

Table 3: Mean and Standard Deviation on the extent of the effect of QAM in the implementation of academic programme in Colleges of Education in South Eastern Region of Nigeria

S/N	ITEMS	SA	A	D	SD	N	Mean	Std	Decision
6	The curriculum review process in our college of education is effective in meeting current educational standards.	330	215	50	5	600	3.45	1.15	High Extent
7	Faculty members' training and workshops effectively enhance their teaching methodologies.	400	120	60	20	600	3.50	1.18	Very High Extent
8	Monitoring mechanisms in place effectively ensure the quality of teaching and learning.	195	180	200	25	600	2.91	1.76	High Extent
9	The policies and guidelines addressing academic misconduct and ensuring academic integrity are effective.	150	150	250	50	600	2.67	2.00	High Extent
10	The transparency of the program evaluation process involving various stakeholders is effective.	450	100	30	20	600	3.63	1.02	Very High Extent
							3.23	1.42	High Extent

Similarly, the data in Table 3 above shows that the respondents were of the opinion that items 6 to 10 with their individual mean and corresponding standard deviation should be agreed as the extent of the effect of QAM in the implementation of academic programme. Although, 5 out of the 5 items were accepted because their individual mean is greater than the cumulative mean average of 2.50. The grand mean set stood at 3.23 (SD = 1.42) indicating that the respondents agreed that to a high extent, that

these Quality Assurance Mechanisms affects the implementation of Academic programme in Colleges of Education in South Eastern Region of Nigeria.

Research question 3: What are the challenges of Quality Assurance Mechanisms (QAM) combating Colleges of Education in the implementation of academic programme in South Eastern Region of Nigeria?

Table 4: Mean and Standard Deviation on challenges QAM combating Colleges of Education in the implementation of academic programme in South Eastern Region of Nigeria

S/N	ITEMS	SA	A	D	SD	N	Mean	Std	Decision
11	The lack of adequate funding poses a significant challenge to the implementation of quality assurance mechanisms in colleges of education in Nigeria.	418	170	10	2	600	3.67	0.84	Very High Extent
12	Limited access to up -to-date resources and technology hinders the effectiveness of quality assurance mechanisms in academic programs.	300	180	100	20	600	3.27	1.41	High Extent
13	Insufficient training and professional development opportunities for faculty members impact the quality of teaching and learning in colleges of education.	402	180	5	13	600	3.62	0.95	Very High Extent
14	The absence of transparent and efficient assessment methods contributes to challenges in ensuring the quality of education in colleges of education in Nigeria.	150	100	250	100	600	2.50	2.20	High Extent
15	The lack of transparency and stakeholder involvement in the program evaluation process contributes to challenges in ensuring the quality of academic programs.	450	100	30	20	600	3.63	1.02	Very High Extent
							3.34	1.28	High Extent

Again, the data in Table 4 above shows that the respondents were of the opinion that items 11,12,13,14 and 15 with their individual mean and corresponding standard deviation should be agreed as the challenges of Quality Assurance Mechanism (QAM) combating Colleges of Education in the study area. Although, 5 out of the 5 items were accepted because their individual mean is greater than the cumulative mean average of 2.50. The grand mean set stood at 3.34 (SD=1.28) indicating that the respondents

agreed that to a high extent that the above items are challenges of Quality Assurance Mechanisms combating Colleges of Education in the implementation of academic programme in South Eastern Region of Nigeria.

Research question 4: What are the impact of quality assurance mechanisms on the quality and delivery of academic programme in Colleges of Education in South Eastern Region of Nigeria?

Table 5: Mean and Standard Deviation on the impact of quality assurance mechanisms on the quality and delivery of academic programme in Colleges of Education in South Eastern Region of Nigeria

S/N	ITEMS	SA	A	D	SD	N	Mean	Std	Decision
16	Quality assurance mechanisms have a positive impact on ensuring the relevance and modernity of academic programs in colleges of education in Nigeria.	380	200	18	2	600	3.60	0.94	Very High Extent
17	The implementation of quality assurance mechanisms enhances the quality of teaching methodologies used by faculty members.	350	189	50	11	600	3.46	1.16	High Extent
18	The evaluation and monitoring processes under quality assurance mechanisms effectively improve the overall quality of academic programs in colleges of education.	402	180	5	13	600	3.62	0.95	Very High Extent
19	Quality assurance mechanisms play a significant role in ensuring academic integrity and reducing instances of academic misconduct in colleges of education.	300	200	80	20	600	3.30	1.37	High Extent
20	Stakeholder engagement facilitated by quality assurance mechanisms leads to better decision-making processes and enhances the quality of academic programs.	450	100	30	20	600	3.63	1.02	Very High Extent
							3.52	1.09	Very High Extent

Similarly, the data in Table 5 above shows that the respondents were of the opinion that items 16 to 20 with their individual mean and

corresponding standard deviation should be agreed as the impact of quality assurance mechanisms on the quality and delivery of

academic programmes in Colleges of Education. Although, 5 out of the 5 items were accepted because their individual mean is greater than the cumulative mean average of 2.50. The grand mean set stood at 3.52 (SD=1.09) indicating that the respondents agreed that to a very high extent, quality assurance mechanism impacts on the quality and delivery of academic programme in Colleges of Education in South Eastern Region of Nigeria

Summary of Findings

The major findings that emerged from this study are presented as follows:

- i. The Quality Assurance Mechanisms being used in implementation of academic programme in Colleges of Education in south eastern region of Nigeria includes: Regular review and update of curriculum for academic programme to meet current standard, regular training and workshops to enhance teaching methodologies, a system that monitors the quality of teaching and learning in the colleges, guidelines and policies put in place to address academic misconduct and ensure academic integrity and finally inputs from various stakeholders in the process of program evaluation.
- ii. Quality Assurance Mechanisms being employed in the study affects the implementation of Academic programme in Colleges of Education in South Eastern Region of Nigeria.
- iii. The challenges of Quality Assurance Mechanisms (QAM) combating Colleges of Education in the implementation of academic programme in South Eastern Region of Nigeria are: Adequate funding, Limited access to up-to-date resources and technology, Insufficient training and professional development opportunities for faculty, The absence of transparent and efficient assessment methods and lack of transparency and stakeholder

involvement in the program evaluation process.

- iv. Quality Assurance Mechanisms to a very high extent impacts positively on the quality and delivery of academic programme in Colleges of Education in South Eastern Region of Nigeria.

Discussion of findings

The findings obtained on Research Question 1 on Table 2 indicated that the following Quality Assurance Mechanism (QAM) are being used in implementation of academic programme in Colleges of Education in South Eastern Region of Nigeria: regular review and update of curriculum for academic programme to meet current standard, regular training and workshops to enhance teaching methodologies, a system that monitors the quality of teaching and learning in the colleges, guidelines and policies put in place to address academic misconduct and ensure academic integrity and finally inputs from various stakeholders in the process of program evaluation. This is in conformity with the idea of Oktarina, et. al. (2023) who noted that the quality assurance system is more focused on curriculum development and teaching activities.

The result also indicates that the grand mean of 3.23 (SD = 1.42) indicates that the respondents agreed that to a high extent, that Quality Assurance Mechanisms affects the implementation of Academic programme in Colleges of Education in South Eastern Region of Nigeria.

Furthermore, the findings of this study reveals that adequate funding, limited access to up-to-date resources and technology, insufficient training and professional development opportunities for faculty, the absence of transparent and efficient assessment methods and lack of transparency and stakeholder involvement in the program evaluation process are the challenges of Quality Assurance Mechanisms combating Colleges of Education in the implementation of academic programme in South Eastern Region of Nigeria. In support of this Akamobi (2005) in his study, observed that quality assurance mechanisms exist, their

implementation often falls short due to issues such as: inadequate funding, poor infrastructural facilities and equipment, population growth, lack of training for staff, poor staffing, examination malpractices, corruption, quality of students, poor teaching and learning environment.

Finally the findings obtained from research question 4 on table 5 indicates that Quality Assurance Mechanisms has positive impacts on the quality and delivery of academic programme in Colleges of Education in South Eastern Region of Nigeria to a very high extent.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of this study, it was concluded that:

Quality Assurance Mechanisms being employed in the study affects the implementation of Academic programme in Colleges of Education.

Implementation of QAM is faced with the challenges of inadequate funding, limited access to up-to-date resources and technology, insufficient training and professional development opportunities for faculty, the absence of transparent and efficient assessment methods and lack of transparency and stakeholder involvement in the program evaluation process.

Quality Assurance Mechanisms impacts positively on the quality and delivery of academic programme in Colleges of Education in South Eastern Region of Nigeria.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made;

- i. College of Education management in south-east Nigeria should ensure that the curriculum for academic programme of the Colleges are regularly reviewed and updated to meet current standards.
- ii. The annual appraisal of lecturers should dwell not just on few but all the items of in-service professional development programme. This will improve lecturers' performance and in-turn improves the standard of the school, knowing that no education system can grow beyond the skills and knowledge of the teachers.
- iii. College management should ensure that; the required academic staffs are employed, students are exposed to practicum, and that collaborative curriculum review be promoted. This will go a long way in improving the academic content of the programme.
- iv. Educational administrators should implement more robust and frequent monitoring processes within Educational Management programme. This can involve real-time data tracking, regular evaluations, and proactive measures to address any identified gaps in employability skills.

Educational management administrators should collaborate with accreditation bodies to ensure that accreditation criteria explicitly incorporate indicators related to the development of employability skills. This could include requirements for practical experience, industry partnerships, and alignment with current workforce demands.

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