



QUALITY ASSURANCE OF TECHNICAL VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING (TVET) PROGRAMME AMONG BUSINESS EDUCATORS IN HIGHER INSTITUTIONS IN RIVERS STATE

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Abstract

The main purpose of this study was to ascertain quality assurance of technical vocational education and training (TVET) programme among business educators in higher institutions in Rivers State. Two research questions and two hypotheses were formulated to guide the study. Descriptive survey design was used for the study. The research population comprised 90 business educators in the key sample locations: Rivers State University, Ignatius Ajuru University of Education and Federal College of Education (Technical), Omoku using purposive sampling technique. The instrument used was structured questionnaire items of four(4) point rating scale. The reliability of the instrument was 0.86 which was determined using Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient. The instrument was content and face validated by three experts, two Business Educators and the other in Measurement and Evaluation. Mean and standard deviation was used to answer the research questions while Z-test analysis was used to test the null hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. The findings revealed that quality assurance have positive effect on TVET programme and it is relevant to business educators in higher institutions in Rivers State. The researcher recommended that for quality assurance to be achieved in TVET programme in higher institutions the Ministry of Education and supervisory agencies should sensitize the public on the need for TVET and there should be exchange programmes between higher institutions and the industry in order to bridge the gaps between theory and practice as well as acquaint the trainers (business educators) and trainees in higher institutions with the present needs and expectation in the industry.

Keywords: Quality Assurance, Technical Vocational Education and Training, Business Educators.

Introduction

The term quality assurance (QA) is a critical examination of the objectives, attitudes, procedures and institutional control systems with a view to ensuring that set standards and quality are maintained (Fadokun in Akhemonkhan&Raimi, 2013). The essence of quality assurance is to enhance the effectiveness of education system towards achieving set standards (Onyesom&Ashibogwu, 2013). According to Majumdar, Khambayat, Tsesoro-Gayondato&Solla (2010), quality assurance is defined as the systematic management and assessment procedures adopted by an educational institution or system to monitor performance and to ensure achievement of quality outputs or improved quality. With specific application to TVET, quality assurance in the learning environment provides policy-makers with deeper understanding of vocational education, its functions, set goals and key characteristics (ETF, 2012).

Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET) is widely recognized as a vital driving force for the socio-economic growth and technological development of



nations. This is because one of the most important features of TVET is its orientation towards world of work and the emphasis of its curriculum on the acquisition of employable skills. According to Mclean and David (2009) TVET is concerned with the acquisition of knowledge and skills for the world of work to increase opportunities for productive empowerment and socio-economic development in knowledge, economics and rapidly changing work environment.

The conceptual definition of TVET cuts across formal or school-based, non-formal or enterprise-based, and informal or traditional apprenticeship. Also, TVET has numerous goals which vary from countries to countries. In Nigeria, TVET is part of the formal education system incorporated in the three levels of education (primary, secondary and tertiary) with a view to meet the nation's need for skilled manpower and support the economic state of individual and the nation in general. The goals of technical and vocational education according to the Federal Republic of Nigeria in her National Policy on Education (2013:50) are to:

- (a) Provide trained manpower in the applied sciences, technology and business particularly at craft, advanced craft and technical levels;
- (b) Provide the technical knowledge and vocational skills necessary for agricultural, commercial and economic development;
- (c) Give training and impart the necessary skills to individual who shall be self-reliant economically.

In achieving the goals and objectives of TVET in Rivers State, the quality of the programme needs to be improved and sustained. Since qualitative TVET is increasingly recognized as the bedrock of every development, quality assurance therefore is an indispensable process for achieving the national goals in TVET which will in turn lead to the production of qualitative human capital for sustainable national development.

Quality

The concept of quality has been one of the most important concepts in contemporary educational terminology (Zelvys as cited in Ayonmike, Okwelle&Okeke, 2015). African Union (2007) stated that quality is a multidimensional concept, embracing all functions and activities of education system, including teaching and academic programmes, research and scholarship, staffing, students, buildings, facilities, equipment, services to the community, academic environment; taking into account national cultural values and circumstances and international dimensions such as exchange of knowledge, interactive networking, mobility of teachers and students, and international research projects. High quality delivery is a prerequisite for effective productivity in education industry and hence quality education is an instrument for effecting national development.

The concept of quality with regards to education is considered as the worth of education in the area of input, teaching/learning process, and output as well as the entire gamut involved in the education delivery system (Onojetah&Amiaya, 2012). When quality education is delivered high enough to meet set standards, the products of education should be able to perform well in the world of work in real life situation.



When quality is low, performance cannot meet the set standards. Hence one can say that the quality of education has declined below set standard. Oderindein Ayonmike and Okwelle (2013) enumerated two aspects of quality in education which are both internal and external. The internal aspect is the implementations of the school objectives while the external aspect deals with the implementation of national objectives, which are pre-requisites to the achievement of quality in any educational institution. A systematic and consistent quality assurance system helps to establish an institution(s) good reputation and image. It includes defined standards of achievement, documented procedures for all identified process, established ways of responding to issues and clear accountability for outcomes. It results to greater public confidence, more satisfied students, efficient processes and staff who are confident in their jobs. Students are more likely to experience better quality instructions, learning material and interactions with the institution and its staff, leading to enhanced learning outcomes.

Quality Assurance

Quality Assurance is a key component of successful internalization, mechanism for building institutional reputation in a competitive local and global arena and necessary foundation for consumer protection (National Universities Commission, 2009). Quality assurance in TVET is the systematic management and assessment procedures adopted by an educational institution or system to monitor performance and to ensure achievement of quality outputs or improved quality (Majumdar et al., 2010). It can be simply put that quality assurance in TVET programme is the adequate provision and utilization of resources in all aspects of the programme activities to produce competent and effective graduates. So, any activity that is concerned with assessing and improving the merit or the worth of an intervention in the field of TVET or its compliance with given standards constitutes quality assurance.

In Nigeria, quality assurance (QA) include internal and external mechanisms put in place by institutions and accreditation agencies respectively, to ensure standard in all the functions of the institutions. The external accreditation bodies are the National Universities Commission (NUC) who maintains oversight functions over the universities; the National Board for Technical Education (NBTE) oversees the polytechnics; and the National Commission for Colleges of Education (NCCE) takes charge of the Colleges of Education. These agencies are established by the government and have developed the Minimum Academic Standards (MAS) as benchmark for QA and institutional self-assessment (Onyesom&Ashibogwu, 2013). Each of these bodies is empowered to set up its own mechanisms for quality assurance for institutions under its supervision. These bodies from time to time draw up Minimum Academic Standards (MAS) in terms of floor space for lectures, minimum laboratory facilities per students, minimum library space, minimum staff/student ratio, minimum teaching facilities/equipment and office accommodation for effective teaching and learning in any given discipline (Uvah in Akhuemonkhan&Raimi, 2013). They also stipulate the curricula for these institutions as well as minimum entry and graduation requirements for each discipline.



Furthermore, to ensure that these Minimum Academic Standards (MAS) are adhered to by the tertiary institutions, the NUC, NBTE and NCCE conduct routine accreditation exercise for courses and programs of institutions under its watch. The essence of this whole exercise is to maintain standard and quality of higher education (including business education) in Nigeria.

To establish and maintain high quality standards, higher institutions have a shared responsibility in addressing the following key areas according to Adedipe (2007):

- 1) Minimum academic standard
- 2) Accreditation
- 3) Carrying capacity and admission quota
- 4) Visitation
- 5) Impact assessment
- 6) Research and development
- 7) Publications and research assessment
- 8) Structures, infrastructures and utilities

Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET)

TVET has played a key role in education as well as national development which has attracted different names such as Technical Education (TE), Vocational Training (VT), Vocational Education and Training (VTE), Technical and Vocational Education and Training, Occupational Education (OE), Apprenticeship Training (AT), and Career and Technical Education (CTE) (Wahba, 2010, Ladipo et al., 2013). The Ministry of Education has consistently articulated its commitment to TVET in the National Policy on Education (NPE) because of the prospects of poverty eradication, job creation, sustainable development and actualization of the Transformation Agenda (Oweh, 2013; Ladipo et al, 2013).

TVET is a specialized education designed to empower learners through the development of their technical skills, human abilities, cognitive understanding, attitudes and work habits in order to prepare learners adequately for the world of work or position them practically for self-employment after graduation (Oni, 2007). Aworanti (2012) stated that to promote the quality of TVET, there should be adequate and functional facilities; good students' teacher relationship; conducive teaching/learning environment; and sufficiently learner-centred environment.

UNESCO-UNEVOC (2006) identified three main types of TVET programmes namely formal, non-formal and informal TVET. According to the organizations, formal TVET refers to organized vocational education programmes provided within an approved public educational or training institution and it is structured (in terms of curriculum, learning objectives and learning time) such that it constitutes a continuous "ladder" where one level leads to the next and finally leads to certification. Non-formal TVET is the type of vocational education and training which takes place outside the formal school system either on a regular or intermittent basis. It has the advantage of shorter duration, is occupation-specific and its main emphasis is on the acquisition of practical skills for direct employment. On the other hand, Informal TVET is the type of vocational education that is provided by craftsmen of different



trades in the informal sector. It is more appropriately often referred to as vocational training or experience based learning and is usually carried out in form of apprenticeship system.

Statement of Problem

Quality Assurance (QA) and Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET) are two widely discussed concepts in specialized skill-focused education. Ineffective or absence of Quality Assurance has been identified by policymakers as an inhibition to the realization of goals of TVET. In Rivers State, TVET programmes are bedeviled with numerous challenges that have been affecting the quality of TVET programmes both in output and input. These challenges include inadequate funding of TVET; inadequate infrastructures; poor power supply; poor in-service training scheme for TVET teachers / instructors; shortage of qualified TVET teachers/instructors; poor supervision of TVET programmes; inadequate curriculum planning and implementation and negative perception of the programme (Alfred & Kayom, 2012). It is based on the issues above that the researchers carried out a study of this magnitude.

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of the study was to ascertain the impact of quality assurance on technical vocational education and training (TVET) among business educators in higher institutions in Rivers State. Specifically the study sought to:

- 1) Identify the effect of quality on technical vocational education and training (TVET) programme among business educators.
- 2) Identify the relevance of quality assurance on technical vocational education and training (TVET) programme among business educators.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study.

- 1) What are the effect of quality on Technical vocational education and training (TVET) programme among business educators?
- 2) What are the relevance of quality assurance on technical vocational education and training (TVET) programme among business educators?

Hypotheses

The following hypotheses that guided the study were tested at 0.05 levels of significance:

- 1) There is no significant difference in the mean rating of male and female business educators on the effect of quality on technical vocational education and training (TVET) programme.
- 2) There is no significant difference in the mean rating of male and female business educators on the relevance of quality assurance on technical vocational education and training (TVET) programme among business educators.



Methods

The study was conducted in higher institutions in Rivers State. The study adopted descriptive survey type because the study is designed to ascertain quality assurance of technical vocational education and training (TVET) programme among business educators in higher institutions in Rivers State. The population of the study comprised 90 business educators in the three higher institutions in Rivers State. From the study population, the ninety business educators were taken using purposive sampling technique due to the fact that they were few. Instrument used for the study was a structured questionnaire. The researcher personally administered the instrument on the selected respondents. All copies of the questionnaire administered to the respondents were retrieved. The instrument was subjected to face validation by three experts to determine its adequacy, appropriateness for the study and for its proper wordings. The test re-test reliability was conducted at the three tertiary institutions in Rivers State by administering the questionnaire to 20 lecturers who were not part of the study. The result was analyzed using Pearson's correlation coefficient statistical instrument and the coefficient was 0.86 which was high enough for this research work. The data gathered from the study were analyzed using the mean and standard deviation. Mean responses below 2.5 was regarded as "Reject" while a mean response above 2.5 was regarded as "Accept" for the research questions. The null hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance such that any calculated z-test value of 1.96 or above at 0.05 level of significance ($p > 0.05$) were regarded as "significant".

Table 1: Population Distribution

| S/No | Higher Institutions | No. of Business Educators | Total |
|------|--|---------------------------|-----------|
| 1. | Rivers State University | 11 | 11 |
| 2. | Ignatius Ajuru University of Education | 50 | 50 |
| 3. | Federal College of Education (Technical) Omoku | 29 | 29 |
| | Total | 90 | 90 |

Source: Departmental Examination officers (2017).

Results

Research Question 1: What are the effect of quality on technical vocational education and training (TVET) programme among business educators?



Table 2: Mean score and Standard deviation analysis of effect of qualityon (TVET) programme(N=90).

| S/No | Items | Male Business Educators | | Female Business Educators | | Decision |
|------|---|-------------------------|-------------|---------------------------|-------------|---------------|
| | | $\bar{x}1$ | SD1 | $\bar{x}2$ | SD1 | |
| 1. | Improved instructional and infrastructural resources | 3.18 | 0.94 | 3.24 | 0.95 | Accept |
| 2. | Recruitment of experts and well trained business educators | 2.81 | 1.09 | 3.05 | 1.37 | Accept |
| 3. | Better synergy between TVET institutions and industry | 2.84 | 0.97 | 3.39 | 0.85 | Accept |
| 4. | Regular capacity-building and training for those handling TVET programmes | 3.08 | 1.76 | 2.97 | 2.04 | Accept |
| 5. | Regular motivation for instructors/trainers | 2.86 | 0.99 | 3.08 | 1.83 | Accept |
| 6. | Strict adherence to the curriculum and teaching procedures | 2.92 | 1.96 | 3.37 | 0.73 | Accept |
| 7. | Provide a basis for articulation and accreditation | 2.79 | 0.92 | 3.05 | 1.48 | Accept |
| | Total | 2.93 | 1.23 | 3.16 | 1.32 | Accept |

Source: Field Survey, 2017

The result in Table 2 shows that the mean responses from item 1-7 with mean scores of 3.18, 2.81, 2.84, 3.08, 2.86, 2.92 and 2.79 for male and 3.24, 3.05, 3.39, 2.97, 3.08, 3.37 and 3.05 for female business educators, indicates that there is positive effect of quality on TVET programmes as they were all agreed by the responses of the respondents. The grand mean of 2.93 and 3.16 for male and female business educators respectively shows that quality in TVET programme is very essential and necessary. Furthermore, the standard deviation which ranged between 1.23 and 1.32 indicates closeness in the opinions of the respondents.

Research Question 2: What are the relevance of quality assurance on technical vocational education and training (TVET) programme among business educators?

Table 3: Mean score and Standard deviation analysis of relevance of quality assurance on (TVET) programme (N=90).

| S/No | Items | Male Business Educators | | Female Business Educators | | Decision |
|------|---|-------------------------|------|---------------------------|------|----------|
| | | $\bar{x}1$ | SD1 | $\bar{x}2$ | SD1 | |
| 1. | Updating and enhancing skills | 2.92 | 1.80 | 2.97 | 1.87 | Accept |
| 2. | Adequate linkage with industry for programmes development | 2.77 | 0.95 | 3.18 | 0.91 | Accept |



| | | | | | |
|--|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|---------------|
| 3. Adequate tools, facilities and equipment | 3.02 | 1.66 | 3.03 | 2.11 | Accept |
| 4. Used as the basis for assessment, certification, articulation and accreditation | 2.94 | 1.41 | 2.87 | 2.77 | Accept |
| 5. Motivation and developmental programme for staff | 2.98 | 1.63 | 2.89 | 2.69 | Accept |
| 6. Good management practices | 2.73 | 0.93 | 3.45 | 0.83 | Accept |
| 7. Attachment opportunities to industry, to relate theory to practice | 2.92 | 1.80 | 3.31 | 0.88 | Accept |
| Total | 2.89 | 1.45 | 3.10 | 1.72 | Accept |

Source: Field Survey, 2017

Table 3 shows that the mean responses from item 1 – 7 with mean scores of 2.92, 2.77, 3.02, 2.94, 2.98, 2.73 and 2.92 for male and 2.97, 3.18, 3.03, 2.87, 2.89, 3.45 and 3.31 for female business educators, indicates that quality assurance is relevant to technical vocational education and training (TVET) programmes as agreed by the respondents. The grand mean of 2.89 and 3.10 for male and female business educators respectively shows that quality assurance of TVET programme is relevant to business educators. Furthermore, the standard deviation which ranged between 1.45 and 1.72 indicates closeness in the opinions of the respondents.

Hypotheses Testing

Ho1: There is no significant difference in the mean rating of male and female business educators on the effect of quality on technical vocational education and training (TVET) programme.

Table 4: Responses of Business Educators on Effect of Quality on (TVET) Programme

| Responses | N | \bar{x} | SD | DF | P | Z-CAL | Z-CRIT | DECISION |
|-----------|----|-----------|------|----|------|---------|--------|----------|
| Males | 50 | 2.93 | 1.23 | 88 | 0.05 | 0.95833 | 1.96 | |
| Females | 38 | 3.16 | 1.32 | | | | | |

*Significant at 0.05 level of significance

The analysis in Table 4 shows the z-test of difference between males and females business educators on the effect of quality of TVET programme. The calculated z-value ($z = 0.95833$) was less than the critical z – values (1.96) at 0.05 alpha level of significance which implies that there is a positive effect of quality on TVET programme among business educators in higher institutions in Rivers State. Thus, the null hypothesis was accepted.

Ho2: There is no significant difference in the mean rating of male and female business educators on the relevance of quality assurance on technical vocational education and training (TVET) programme among business educators.



Table 5: Responses of Business Educators on Relevance of Quality Assurance on (TVET) Programme

| Responses | N | \bar{x} | SD | DF | P | Z-CAL | Z-CRIT | DECISION |
|-----------|----|-----------|------|----|------|---------|--------|----------|
| Males | 50 | 2.89 | 1.45 | 88 | 0.05 | 0.77778 | 1.96 | |
| Females | 38 | 3.10 | 1.72 | | | | | |

**Significant at 0.05 level of significance*

The analysis in Table 5 shows the z-test of difference between males and females business educators on the relevance of quality assurance on TVET programme. The calculated z-value ($z = 0.77778$) was less than the critical z – values (1.96) at 0.05 alpha level of significance which implies that quality assurance is relevant to TVET programmes among business educators in higher institutions in Rivers State. Thus, the null hypothesis was accepted.

Discussion of Findings

The data in Table 2 revealed that the respondents accepted all the items in the questionnaire as the effect of quality assurance on TVET programme in higher institutions in Rivers State. This shows that if business educators embrace quality as an educational factor, the objectives of TVET programme as outlined in NPE (2013:50) will be achieved and worthwhile.

The study also revealed in Table 3 that quality assurance has come to stay in higher institutions in Rivers State, that is, it is relevant to TVET programme in higher institutions, business educators, students and the society at large. The relevance of QA on TVET programme include: adequate linkage with industry for programmes and attachment opportunities to industry, to relate theory to practice; this in line with the views of Raimi and Akhuenkhan (2014) who stated that revitalizing TVET to impact on employability is to increase exchange programmes with industry to enrich the practical content of teachers and bridge the gaps between theory and practice as it occurs in the industry. In recognition of the worth of QA to the educational system, the government of Nigeria in the National Policy on Education (2013) established Inspectorate Services to enforce quality assurance in educational institutions. The purpose of this is to guarantee that the standards and values of education are strictly regulated, sustained and improved by training institutions in consonance with the dynamics of the society and industry (Mohsin & Kamal, 2012; Onyesom & Ashibogwu, 2013).

Moreso, the achievement of a quality TVET delivery is solely dependent on the provision of effectively trained instructors; its relevance to business educators is updating and enhancing skills through motivation and developmental programme for staff. Atchoarena and Dellucas cited in Hartl (2009) asserts that success in the attainment of a high-quality TVET program lies in the crucial role of the teacher or training personnel. Therefore, business educators and all other personnel of quality



TVET programmes are expected to be masters of their work, meticulously skilled in every phase of their career, and well-informed regarding all technically related issues in their field (Berhe, 2011).

Conclusion

Quality in any programme is important and necessary as it ensures positive effect of TVET programme. Business educators in higher institutions of learning ought to ensure that quality is attained in TVET programme. Hence, quality enhances and enriches every programme. Therefore, business educators need to always be competent, highly skilled and knowledgeable for quality to be attained in TVET programme at all levels of education.

Recommendations

It was recommended based on the findings and conclusions of this study that;

- 1) The Ministry of Education in collaboration with the supervisory agencies should embark on sensitization campaign through the mass media to enrich public understanding and perception on the socio-economic benefits of TVET. This is needed to correct the negative stereotyping of students on different TVET programmes.
- 2) TVET institutions should invest massively in routine and periodic capacity-building training programmes for business educators as it keeps them informed of best practices and methodological changes in the field.
- 3) Exchange programme between Industry and TVET institutions is inevitable for effective TVET outcomes that meet industry's needs and needs of individuals for self-employment and improved productivity. Exchange arrangements often bridge the gaps between theory and practice as well as acquaint the trainers (business educators) and trainees in higher institutions with the present needs and expectations in the industry.



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