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QUALITY ASSURANCE IN EDUCATION: THE ROLE OF ICT AND QUALITY CONTROL MEASURES IN TERTIARY INSTITUTIONS IN NIGERIA

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Abstract

Quality assurance in education is perceived in this paper to be a product of the impact of information and communication technologies as well as the statutory control measures especially in tertiary institutions in Nigeria. The paper reviews the concept of quality and quality assurance and their general application to education. Specifically, the paper views quality assurance in education as an effort and process of improving the general standard and value of education in order to benefit the recipients and the public at large. This is, in fact, the goals and targets which learners, teachers, staff and administration aspire to attain. The paper also reviews few

shortfalls in the education system that provokes the quality assurance agenda. The paper perceives information and communication technologies impact as well as the administration of general and specific control measures as the lee ways in assuring and upgrading the quality and standard of education especially at tertiary institution levels in Nigeria. The paper concludes that providing quality education especially in tertiary institutions help to project the system to international standard and recognition. Thus, quality assurance underscores quality capacity building within an institution to benefit recipients and the general stakeholders. The paper recommends amongst other measures that quality assurance in tertiary institutions involves the collective thinking and shared actions of management, staff and students.

Introduction

Quality assurance in education is a common target for all education system especially in developing countries of Africa like Nigeria. Many countries are progressing toward the goals of education for all, but struggle to achieve quality education for all. The quality of education is the prime factor that determines the worth and or significance of the system to both the recipients and the society at large. Quality assurance in Nigeria education system is an agenda that gives educators serious concern about the system. The quality of tertiary institutions graduates in Nigeria is almost nothing to be proud of in the public (Ajayi, and Adegbesan, 2007). This is a good indicator that the system is gradually losing its glory and relevance in the society. In fact, it is a grave political contradiction among governance that so much emphasis is being given to the relevance of education in our society Nigeria, while so little money is being spent to stabilize the system and improve its quality. In recent times in Nigeria, there is no year or virtually no academic session that one or two arms of tertiary institutions in Nigeria do not go into battle of wit and negotiation with governance over under funding. Such battles usually linger until union bodies in the affected arm of tertiary institutions embarks on industrial action.

Unfortunately, successive Nigerian governments have always shown their insensitive stance to the education sector. While other countries like Ghana and South Africa are set and far in pursuing innovations in education delivery, ours dwell in deceit to blind the citizenry that education has no place in the society. The vital element and innovation that is missing in our education system, especially at the tertiary level is adequate attention to information and communication technologies in the system (Igwe, 2010). There is general feelings that the quality of education imparted curricular that are limited to parochial concerns may no longer be adequate in the face of the prevailing global situation. The Nigeria education curricular is without enough ICT content and seem to have outlived its usefulness having little relevance to the needs, aspirations and values of today's Nigeria. Hence quality factors are indispensable, as excellence in education is required for the development of the human resources base needed to navigate Nigeria into an enviable position in the country of nations (Obi, 1997). Thus, Igwe (2009) notes that the promises of information and communication technologies (ICTs) have driven e-learning in transforming education delivery and thereby advancing the knowledge economy, with the current attitude of governance towards education in Nigeria, it may appear sceptical to say that any tertiary institution in Nigeria may soon be recognized in ongoing internationalization of tertiary institution or even identify effectively with the knowledge economy. The knowledge-based economy for example, sets a new scene for education and new challenges and prospects for the education sector. In the first place, education is a pre-requisite of the knowledge-based economy and the production and use of new knowledge both require a more educated population and workforce (Arikewuyo, 2004). ICTs are a very powerful tool for diffusing knowledge and information, which is a fundamental aspect of the education process. In this capacity, ICTs play a pedagogic role that could in principle complement the traditional practices of the education sector (Igwe, 2009).

Undoubtedly, e-learning powered by ICT use in tertiary institutions could help to expand and widen access to tertiary education and learning, improve the quality of education as well reduce its cost. This means that effective ICT use in tertiary institutions in Nigeria could help to spur positive results in improving the overall learning (and teaching) experiences, as well as in up-lifting the quality of the system.

Quality assurance in education

The new international *Webster Comprehensive Dictionary of the English language*, Deluxe Encyclopaedic edition (2010) defines quality as "that which makes a being or thing such as it is, a distinguishing elements or characteristics; the characteristics of anything regarded as determining its value, place, relevance, worth, rank, position etc; or conditions of a thing so determined. Quality implies degree of excellence and relative goodness. Garry (2009) cited in Aworanti (2012) notes that quality is the standard of something when it is compared with other things of its kind; i.e. how good or bad a product is. Aworanti (2012) further stressed that quality is indisputably the number one requirement for any product or service. It is being rightly said that when you are out of quality, you are out of business. Superiority in quality however, is never an accident and achieving it takes a concerted effort of creative, competent and dedicated professionals in both the development and testing arenas. Thus, quality defines the total of the features of a process, product or service or its performance, in "customer" or "clients" perception of that performance. Adegbesan (2011) notes that quality is not just a feature of a finished product or service but involves a focus on internal processes and output and includes the reduction of wastes and the improvement of productivity. Quality in organization could be characterized by three inter-related and interdependent strands thus:

(a)   Efficiency in the meeting of goals

(b)   Relevance to human and environmental conditions and needs

(c)   Exploration of new ideas, the pursuit of excellence, encouragement and creativity (Adegbesan 2011).

On the other hand, assurance implies a positive or encouraging declaration, full confidence, undoubting conviction, self confidence, firmness of mind and certainty. It is a statement that something will certainly be true or will certainly happen, particularly when there have been doubts about it (Aworanti 2012). The purpose of quality assurance is capacity building within an institution for pursuing quality improvement leading to stakeholder's satisfaction. Quality assurance is a continuous and conscious process aiming at excellence. This can be ensured through quality assessment that the institution is doing what it claims to have been doing. It is pertinent that an institution evolves internal processes for self analysis and assessment enabling self monitoring for quality improvement. Such processes help keep the institution alert to the emerging individual and collective needs and demands among its members. It also provides incentives for trying out new things. These involve collective thinking and shared actions. All these bring a positive ethos characterized by academic concern, technical rigor, professional development and critical appraisal of aspects, all of which reflect as the concern for quality in the institution. In brief, they help develop a quality culture in the institution (Mungle, 2013).

Again, quality assurance may be seen as any action taken to prevent quality substandard from occurring. Quality assurance aims to ensure that product or service of an organization meets the already established standard and as well fit for the purpose for which such product is meant to serve. It is the process of monitoring and evaluation of an organization processes or activities involved in production in order to maximize the probability that minimum standard set ab initio is being attained and that such products are fit to serve its purpose. Aworant (2012) notes that quality assurance refers to the planned and systematic activities implemented in quality system so that quality requirement for a product or service will be fulfilled. It is the systematic measurement, comparison with a standard,

monitoring of process and an associated feed-back loop that confers error prevention (Pyzdek 2003). Furthermore, Aworanti (2012) while citing the National Board for technical education optimized that quality assurance refers to a programme for a systematic monitoring and evaluation of the various aspects of a project, service or facility to ensure that standard of quality are being met. It analyses the quality of such services or products to ensure its conformity to specific requirements and compliance with established plans.

Quality assurance in the education system therefore, is an umbrella concept for a lot of activities that are designed to improve the quality of input, process and output of the educational system (Okebukola 2012). Quality assurance in the education system involves the process of monitoring, assessing and evaluating all aspects of the education activities and communicating the outcome to all concerned with a view of improving the products of the education system. Quality assurance in education addresses some issues which enhance the quality of education delivery. Similarly, Yawa cited in Emeruo (2012) notes quality assurance in education as all proactive measures adopted by a country to ensure that the system standard remain high enough to produce results set for it. Thus, quality standard in education is the bench mark that should guide the performance of the education system. Quality assurance in education is in fact a process of monitoring standard of output of the education system through inspection. It is in fact a process of continuous improvement in the quality of teaching and learning activities.

The Federal Ministry of Education (FME, 2009) remarked that quality standard in the education system are goals or targets to which learners, teachers, staff and school administration aspires to attain. Quality assurance in the education system therefore, is a multi-dimensional concept involving the various functions and activities of the education system. Such functions and activities include teaching, research, staffing, students, buildings, facilities and equipment, service to the community and academic environment. It is ensuring that at least the provision of the minimum academic standard are attained, and

sustained. The challenge of standard is perhaps the frequently cited for affecting the education system. These include: standard of resources input, structures and facilities, standards of educational management, curriculum content and delivery as well as adequate funding. In this regard, Ofojebe and Ezeugo (2010) opined that quality assurance in education entails the quality of teaching personnel, quality of available instructional/teaching materials, equipment and facilities, school environment and pupils, and quality education delivery. It embraces all functions and activities that will ensure that quality of the academic (Teaching, curriculum) etc and structures (buildings, infrastructures) etc will allow an objective review of the quality of programme/instructional delivery. It is the determination of standards, appropriate methods and quality requirements by an expert body, accompanied by a process of inspection or evaluation that examines the extent to which practice meets these standards. Thus, Adegbesan (2012) opines that quality assurance in the education system is often judged by both its ability to enable the students perform well on standard examinations and relevance to the needs of the students, community and the society as a whole. Quality serves as determination of gradation. Based on standard of excellence beneath which a mark of inferiority is imposed or adduced and above which grades of superiority are defined. Quality assurance in the education system thus focuses on maximizing the effectiveness and efficiency of educational system and services in relation to the contexts, of their missions and their objectives (Ajeyi and Adegbesan 2007). Lastly, Ehindero (2004) opined that quality assurance in education starts with the following.

(a) Learner's entry behaviour. That is the learner's characteristics, attributes, suitability including other factors that can inhibit or facilitate learning.

(b) The teacher entry qualification: That is the teachers' competence values, pedagogic skills morals, professional preparedness including subject background and philosophical orientation.

(c) Administration: That is the preparedness of the management, and her commitment to the provisions of enabling environment of operations to pursue and secure the desired objectives.

(d) The outcomes: That is, in terms of knowledge, skills and attitudes including appropriate and relevant instrument to assess these objectives.

The existence, use and interactions of these variables together with quality control measures and activities to ensure that appropriate or minimum academic standards are being maintained and enhanced in and by every school surely will guarantee quality assurance in education.

The Nigerian education system and the challenge of quality

The Federal Republic of Nigeria (2004) through the National Policy on Education (Revised edition) has adopted education as an instrument par excellence for affecting national development. Bosah (1987) cited in Okon (2012) notes that formal education in Nigeria today seem to be continually turning out good number of youths who are ill prepared to help in the development of the country. In fact, formal education in Nigeria today appears to be a process of exempting the youths from manual labour, a process of preparing the youths for inexistence white collar jobs, a process of preparing people who despise what they can produce and with a ravishing taste for goods made overseas, cheat well, siphon public treasury and cheer the looters. In fact, in our society today, it is becoming increasingly foolish especially among the educated to be honest. These are the off-shot of sub-quality or sub-standard education system.

Similarly, Elele (1983) cited in Yusuf (2012) noted that quantitatively, the Nigeria education scene is quite impressive but qualitatively deficient. Almost everything connected with education in this country is in short supply. Quality teachers are in short supply, quality buildings, quality equipment, quality laboratories, good experimental

farms and other resource input that can lead to quality education are inadequately provided. The government and other proprietors of the system are all aware, but unfortunately, in our country Nigeria politics is more important than education. Perhaps, we do not have students and pupils' in short supply, their number is rather explosive. With these experiences, it is not surprising that what the primary schools churn out are those ill equipped to seek and advance their studies in the secondary school, the secondary schools also can boast of offering secondary school leavers who are half baked and possessing no employability skills. Our tertiary institutions on the other hand also turn out great numbers of graduates in various disciplines majority of who are without employability skills in their various areas of specialization.

Today in Nigeria, there exist general disenchantment and general distrust in the quality of the education system as well as in the quality of education output. Bosah (1987) cited in Okeke (2010) opined that today our schools are being plagued with cheaters rather than teachers, misfits and at best quacks. Our children are being intellectually petrified and debased. They are hardly stimulated and challenged to attain their optimum level of intellectual development. Hence, they resort to short-cut methods of cheating and exposition. Thus, in our education system, there exist all kinds of academic misconduct involving students, teachers and school administrators. This ugly practice is so common that it is fast debasing the education system to level of irrelevance.

It is glaring that the lecturers in tertiary institutions are among the major factors seen and as the main determinant in enhancing quality assurance in the education system (Okeke 2010). Lecturers and in fact school the school management are extremely important organ of the education system. Owing to the continual interaction of the class teacher or school administrators with pupils and students, they exert a great influence on the students. Students look up to lecturers for academic directive and guidance. In addition to knowledge and skill which they impact, students learn from them informally by observing

them, their attitudes, manners, conduct and general behavior. In fact, lecturers and school management are the umpires in the interaction of students among themselves. They translate the scheme, aims and objectives of tertiary education into action in the classroom. They have to maintain discipline in the school and ensure suitable learning atmosphere as well.

Again, it is pertinent to point out here that certain government actions in the education system today tend to further slaughter quality assurance in the system. Idris (2012) in this regard notes that promotions or appointments into school administrative positions are today lucrative vacancies for political loyalists rather than that of experienced educationists. In fact, all categories of people especially politicians with many of them lacking in knowledge and experience in education practices are appointed into education boards and councils not only as members but as chairmen. Contracts for educational supplies and equipment are today used to patronize politicians. Most resources input including students admissions especially in some state tertiary institutions are gradually being carried out under the directives and recommendations of state house members including the traditional rulers council. It is worth noting that the assessment and recruitment of teachers especially in our primary, secondary and even state tertiary institutions are often based on the recommendations of the local chiefs and traditional rulers.

Most teachers in primary and secondary school system are blessed with the job through another person's certificate. In fact, some teachers use certificates of their relations to secure teaching jobs or appointments. Even at tertiary levels, smart dealers now establish and operate stock exchange markets for sales and purchases of higher degree certificates which could be used to secure pretty jobs either in the public or private sectors. With all those experiences and practices, the issue of quality assurance therefore, becomes the concern of all stakeholders especially the government, education ministries and Boards as well as school administrators and teachers.

The role of ICT in quality assurance

The Nigerian education sector especially tertiary institutions have been characterized by slow progress in terms of ICT changes and innovations that impact on education i.e. teaching and learning activities. In fact communication technologies potentially offer increased possibilities for codification of knowledge in education and for innovations in teaching activities especially through the delivery of learning and cognitive activities anywhere any time (Robinson, 2008). ICT supports and spurs learning at a distance which can be more learner-centred, self paced, and problem solving based than face-to-face teaching using traditional media. ICT creates social media through networking to create open space interactions between the instructors/lecturers and the students without necessary face-to-face classroom situations (Igwe, 2010). Experiences show that many learning activities cannot be coordinated by virtual means only. Thus, classroom environment as conditioned and controlled by the teacher has much impact in shaping up the general conduct and behaviour of the learners. Likewise, students, social groupings, face-to-ace interactions are crucial and important. Thus, they enable other forms of sensory perception to be stimulated apart from the ones used within the framework of electronic interaction (Igwe, 2010). ICT role in quality assurance may be difficult to determine however, ICT plays very significant supportive role in education delivery thus:

(a)   *Increase learner motivation and engagement:* Motivation to learn involves a process of stimulating learners' interest to engage in a learning task. There is no doubt that the use of ICTs will certainly trigger and sustains learners' motivation, engagement and interest in the learning of a given task. With ICT powered or supported instruction, learners become sensitized to engage in learning more meaningfully and with interest as the lesson tasks.

(b)   *Facilitate the acquisition of basic skills:* The challenge of technology today has virtually affected all facets of human

endeavour and life. As technologies evolve, work skills change. Employees and job seekers alike are therefore challenged to re-skill themselves in order to adapt to the challenges of advances in technology. Basic and requisite job skills especially in the field of information and communication technology are best acquired through ICT enabled or supported learning. Thus, the acquisition of basic work skills is one of the major challenges of quality assurance in education.

(c)   *ICT facilitates e-learning:* Igwe (2010) noted that e-learning may be viewed as a promising way for improving the quality of tertiary education. Those promises can be derived from different characteristics of ICTs including the increased flexibility of the learning experiences it can give to students; the enhanced access to information resources for more students; the potential to drive innovative and effective ways of learning and/or teaching.

(d)   *ICT facilitates teacher re-training:* Staff development, growth and career advancement is one of the indices or indicators of quality assurance in education. With the use of ICTs, teachers are opportuned to be trained and retrained in the use of ICTs in the discharge of education important activities. Thus, the use ICT in education today is a common agenda pursued by both developed and developing nations across the globe. This is in keeping with the development of knowledge economy as well as the new trend of internationalization of institutions of higher learning, both of which are clear indicators of quality in the education system.

(e)   *Holding and up-dating of minimum academic standard:* The development, holding and up-dating of benchmark minimum academic standard is one of the primary functions of the monitoring bodies of tertiary institutions in Nigeria. The discharge of this function is supported by the use of ICTs. In doing this, the bodies can easily develop, hold, up-date and

disseminate BMAS to institutions where they are needed for implementation. This singular responsibility is very vital in the pursuit of quality assurance in education. Thus, the role of ICT in holding, maintaining and up-dating the BMAS this cannot just be underestimated. Such is the same in the records holding role of ICT in keeping with quality assurance in education.

(f)   *Provision of virtual library services:* The relevance of library information in quality assurance cannot be under-estimated. Most institutions stock only limited number of books, journals and periodicals. The limited copies found in some institutions are equally outdated in content. The provision of virtual library information is in fact one of the best cardinal areas where the ICT impact on quality of education. With the ICT powered by the internet facilities, students and teachers have limitless opportunities and provisions to surf the web for and in search of vital and current information in all fields of study. The virtual library carries up-date information that are required for research and knowledge growth of students and lecturers in their various endeavours.

General quality control measures in tertiary institutions in Nigeria

In principle, Nigeria is desirous of being among leaders in an ICT driven world. Nigeria desire to advance towards technologically developed world where results are achieved faster and easier. These are pretty desires that are never reflected in the attitude of governance toward education in Nigeria. Education in Nigeria today lacks potency just because its quality has shrunk. In an attempt to restore the value, the quality assurance agenda is being pursued. Thus, quality assurance is a way of measuring, improving and maintaining the quality of any human activity that has value. To thinker about quality assurance in education, there must exist yardstick and measures for comparing performance against standard. In Nigeria tertiary institution therefore, there are some quality assurance measures that are used as indicators

to ensure compliance. Such measures too are used to check-mate all the activities of tertiary institutions. These quality assurance drivers include:

(a)   *Carrying capacity:* This defines the total number or population of students that each tertiary institution can admit (or carry) to ensure quality education delivery. The carrying capacity therefore, is dependent on human material, and physical resources at the disposal of each institution.

(b)   *Minimum academic standard:* This appears to be the canopy from where other measures are derived. The minimum academic standard clearly defines the profile of the institutions curriculum, human resources, structures, facilities and equipment required for effective operations of quality education delivery.

(c)   *Impact assessment:* This is a specialized form of assessment for the various arms of tertiary institutions in Nigeria. The assessment aims at finding out if the core expectations of the establishment of a particular institution are being met or not. This assessment may be carried out by the specialized bodies monitoring the various arms of tertiary institutions in Nigeria. These bodies include: The National Commission for Colleges of Education; (NCCE). This body monitors, supervises and over sees all activities of colleges of education in the country. The National Board for Technical Education (NBTE). This body monitors, supervises and assesses all activities of polytechnics and colleges of technology across the country, and the National Universities Commission (NUC). This is the body charged with the responsibility of overseeing all academic activities in Nigeria universities both public and private.

(d)   *Research:* This identified with constant or regular search for development, growth, discoveries and innovations. For every tertiary institution to worth its value, it must be ready to stand the best of time in both innovations and discoveries resulting

from laboratory or field research studies. Such research studies must be evidenced by publications in reputable academic journals.

(e) *Availability of amenities:* Amenities here identifies with structures, infrastructures and utilities that are essential for qualitative education. Amenities like classroom structures, furniture, office accommodation, laboratory structures and equipment, including all needed accessories for education delivery and administration are all essential driving force for quality assurance.

(f) *Visitation:* This is a statutory requirement that empowers the "proprietor" or the "visitor" to visit tertiary institutions within their domain and ascertain their well-being. Such visitations may be scheduled or unscheduled. The school management may or may not be notified of such visits. But where the "proprietor" or "visitor" does visit, it behoves on the school management to furnish the visitor with all information or data as the proprietor or visitor may wish to have.

(g) *Accreditation:* This identified with the process by which programmes are evaluated against set minimum academic standard. The exercise is usually carried out by supervising bodies like NUC, NBTE and NCCE. Each of the overseeing bodies monitors institutions under their arm.

Specific quality control measures of academic programmes in tertiary institutions

This refers to the specific strategies or measures undertaken by monitoring bodies of tertiary institutions in Nigeria to meet the minimum standard expectations. It can also be viewed as the processes developed and adopted by monitoring bodies of tertiary institutions in Nigeria to ensure that quality delivery in the system are maintained and adhered to. Olagboye (2007) noted that quality is the arrangement made or the mechanism put in place to maintain the

degree of excellence of a product or service. Applied to education, it means the mechanisms by which an education system ensures that the service it delivers or intends to deliver serves the purpose for which it is intended. It focuses on the means by which an education system ensures that the service it provides remains relevant and appropriate to the needs of the society. The issue of quality assurance in Nigeria education system is a common agenda for all tertiary institutions in the country (Ehindero, 2004). Quality control measures in the system are often viewed as hot test of credibility and value. Tertiary institutions in Nigeria usually take the exercise serious and with commitment whenever it calls. Usually the exercise is being carried out under the auspices of the regulatory bodies for the various arms of tertiary institutions in Nigeria, the quality assurance regulations is often referred to as Benchmark minimum academic standard while the quality assurance exercise or evaluation is most often referred to as accreditation. Thus, accreditation exercise for academic programmes/departments in tertiary institutions is aimed at evaluating programme/departmental curriculum offering. The accreditation exercise focuses on general and specific objects, its staff strength, quality of students, equipment and facilities including general administration and execution of the programme. The pertinent areas of interest assessment and evaluation include:

(i)   *Programme/curriculum offering:* During the accreditation of any programme, the curriculum offering of the programme is usually presented to the team of assessors. Areas of interest on the programme is in its general and specific objectives, vision and course offerings. These are assessed based on minimum academic standard developed and set by the respective bodies to regulate academic activities in the various arms of tertiary institutions in Nigeria.

(ii)   *Staff resources:* During accreditation academic and non-academic staff holdings for each department is usually checked to ensure that the staff strength is adequate. The adequacy or

otherwise is usually based on minimum standard as spelt out by the monitoring body.

(iii)   *Students' quality/enrolment:* The quality of Students is often assessed by going through their qualification to ensure that it con forms with the entry requirement for the respective programme. Students' enrolment is equally checked to ensure that a programme/department does not exceed her approved carrying capacity.

(iv)   *Staff-students ratio:* This enables the monitoring body to match students' population in each programme against the available academic staff. Usually this is an important determinant measure in ensuring quality. For instance, staff-students ratio in most education related programmes in Nigerian universities is 1:30. On the other hand, it is expected that every academic department/programme should have at least the following combination of non-academic staff: one secretary (computer literate), one clerical officer, two office attendant/cleaners, two typists, one laboratory attendant and one technician including at least two technologists (NUC, 2007).

(v)   *Staff mix by rank:* Staff resources as well as staff-students ratio does not in any way solve the problem of staffing for academic programmes. Staff mix by rank identified with the percentage ratio of the various calibre or cadre of staff. Rank mixes and ratios in the programme are such that admits 20% in the professorial grade, 35% in the senior lecturer grade and 45% in the lecturer I grade and below.

(vi)   *Library and information facilities:* Every programme and or department must house basic texts, reference books, journals and other relevant textual and non-textual materials should be readily available in the library.

(vii)   *Spaces:* This identifies with adequate classrooms, lecture theatres, laboratories, studios, staff offices, auditoria, workshop for technical related courses. All theses should be provided to ensure proper execution and implementation of programmes. Every school or faculty as the case may be should have a computer laboratory, internet access and resource room.

(viii)   *Equipment:* This identifies with adequacy of accessories and useables for laboratories, workshops and studios. There should exist relevant software materials and chemicals to be used along with the equipment. All teaching, learning and administrative useable should be constantly made available (supplied). It is expected that each department and indeed senior lecturer and above should be equipped with computers which should be from time to time replenished with the latest software materials.

(ix)   *Funding:* This identifies with adequate provisions of finance for the execution of the various academic programme. To ensure quality in education sector, adequate fund must be provided by government through the management of the institutions down to the various schools, faculties and department.

(x)   *Staff development:* An important area of interest in evaluating the quality of education and, as well improve the value or worth of education delivery is the quality of academic staff. It is generally believed that no education system can grow beyond the quality of its resource persons. Therefore, staff development is an important aspect of the quality assurance strategy that monitoring bodies of tertiary institutions in Nigeria are interested in.

The above highlights suggest that quality assurance in tertiary education involves total checkmating and assessment of performance of the various arms of the tertiary education system in achieving the

specific goals of each arm and overall objectives of the respective arms. Thus any lapses or shortfall in the interest areas mentioned above may cause a decline in the quality of education delivery in tertiary institutions. In Nigeria tertiary education system, experiences show that most of these respective but vital areas lack the attention of the management or are found to be inadequate to the standard of quality assurance.

Conclusion

Quality in this piece has been described as the process of ensuring that products (goods or services) or output are reliable, that they do the job they are designed for and do it well. Providing high quality products creates brand-name reputation for an organization product. The purpose of quality assurance is capacity building within an institution for pursuing quality improvement leading to stakeholders' satisfaction. It is a continuous and conscious process aiming at excellence. It often ensures that output maintain standard through quality assessment. This help to establish the fact that tertiary institutions are doing what they are established for. It is pertinent therefore, that tertiary institutions evolve internal processes for self analysis and assessment enabling self monitoring for quality improvement. Internal processes for self analysis will therefore assist institutions to improve on its delivery. It will also help to alert institutions to the emerging problems and deviations in the effort towards ensuring quality education delivery in tertiary institutions.

Recommendations

Quality assurance in tertiary institutions will involve collective thinking and shared actions. Every division of the institutions will be involved in the task of pursuing the agenda. In so doing it is therefore recommended, that:

(a)   Members should look beyond self: Self motives and individual satisfaction should be shunned. Everyone and every department must be action set to pursue the agenda.

(b)   Staff members-academic and non-academic requires constant training to update themselves in their various fields.

(c)   Adequate fund should be made available to ensure that finances cover equipment, learning/teaching accessories as well as consumables.

(d)   Space, accommodation and infrastructure should as well be adequate.

(e)   Staffing academic and non-academic should be adequate as well, taking into cognizance the needed cadres of staff.

(f)   There should be objectivity in handling all matters – admission, recruitment, use of fund, provision of infrastructure, lecturer, assessment of students including administration and supervision of school activities.

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