

ENHANCING QUALITY ASSURANCE IN HIGHER EDUCATION IN SOUTH SOUTH NIGERIA: MANAGEMENT PERSPECTIVES

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Abstract

This study investigated enhancing quality assurance in higher education in South South Nigeria: Management Perspectives. The study adopted correlational survey design. The population of the study (staff) in the tertiary institutions in the South-South geopolitical zone of Nigeria – comprising of Akwa Ibom State, River State, Cross River State, Bayelsa State and Edo State. Simple random sampling technique was used to draw 300 staff as the sample size. E-management Questionnaire (E-MQ) and Quality Assurance Questionnaire (QAQ) were used as instruments for the study. The instrument was validated by experts. The reliability indices of 0.75 and 0.78 determined through Cronbach's Alpha Statistics. Four research questions were answered and four hypotheses were tested. Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) was used for answering the research questions by comparing the values with the extent scale of correlation was also used for testing the hypotheses. The result of the study revealed that there is a significant relationship between planning, staffing, coordinating, reporting in management and quality assurance in higher institutions in South-South Nigeria. Based on the finding of the study, it was recommended that in the area of learning resources, the management of the Nigerian higher institutions need to pay more attention to provision of basic technological infrastructures that will facilitate inventions, productivity and development. This is particularly more relevant in the science, technology and engineering disciplines. The functionality of the acquired gadgets should be maintained. There is need for management to make

more concerted effort to utilize such information to effect pragmatic reforms. Collation of information should be extended to stakeholders outside the higher institutions. Parents for instance should be more involved. Students should also be more informed and engaged in the quality control drive.

Keywords: Quality assurance, higher education and management perspectives

Background to the Study

Nigerian higher education stakeholders are greatly concerned about the quality of education provided the citizens of the country. Concerns about the quality of education students receive from higher institutions, the quality of lecturers (teaching staff) employed to teach students, the quality of infrastructures and instructional facilities have always been of utmost interest. Additionally, higher institutions stakeholders are interested in the quality of health facilities for students/staff health services, quality of students' hostels, quality of the overall institution environment, quality teaching and learning as well as quality support services from non-academic staff. Researchers have linked quality in higher education with student intake, academic programs, program designs, lecturers, teaching and learning, students' experiences and academics as well as non-academic support for the students (Baird, 2006; Fry, 1995; Nordvall & Braxton, 1996). Baird (2006) maintains that quality in higher education relates to development of intellectual independence. He recommended collaborative action research for quality assurance, improving quality, stressing that, institutions of higher learning must take the lead in fostering improvement in quality of education at all levels. The quality of knowledge which is generated in institutions of higher learning is critical to national competitiveness (Asiyai, 2005). She emphasized that, it is only quality education that can sharpen the minds of the individual and help transform the society economically, socially and politically.

Among the aims of higher education in Nigeria outlined by the Federal Ministry of Education (2004) and highlighted by Asiyai (2005) are:

- Production of the much-needed high-level manpower essential for the nation's growth and development.
- They are centers of excellence in teaching, research and storehouses of knowledge for nurturing the manpower needs of the nation.
- Promotion and encouragement of scholarship and community services.

The Federal Ministry of Education also stated that universities in Nigeria shall vigorously pursue these goals through:

- Teaching
- Research and development
- Knowledge generation and dissemination and international cooperation
- Dedicated services to the communities through extra-mural and consultancy services.

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All these stated goals are closely related to quality education. Nigerian government both state and national level has considered quality higher education a veritable instrument for achieving radical social, economic and political development. Nigeria intend to use education as a vehicle for fostering development of all her citizens to their full potentials in the promotion of a strong, democratic, prosperous, indivisible and indissoluble sovereign nation (Ehigiamusoe, 2012). The attainment of this objective noted by Ehigiamusoe necessitates that, the inputs into Nigerian higher education systems be of high standards since other levels of education depend on the University for the production of high level manpower to man the systems.

The recent explosion in the field of information technology which translates into new knowledge economy and new information technologies are altering the ground rules for effective information flow in every society. According to Thomas (2004), the relevance of using new technologies to provide information access is of great significance in the global economy. In other words, IT is the focal point of electronics, data processing and telecommunication.

Tremendous technological advancement has occurred in the present twenty-first century which has culminated in far-reaching developments in university administrative systems, especially in the developed nations. Cost-effective technology and flexibility in learning and administrative activities are essential to enhance efficiency. One of the tasks in university administration experiencing a global information technology revolution is students' management. Nwankwo (as cited in Oladejo, 2007, p. 9) observed that the functions of students personnel management include admission, registration, enrolment, students' organization, classification, provision of essential services such as medical, sports, guidance and counseling services as well as the comprehension and development of activities, interests and needs of individual students. In essence, all the activities and services rendered to the students in the university are included in the students' personnel management and appear to be the core of institutional administration.

The rising administrative costs of tertiary institutions, especially students' personnel makes it imperative to devise an alternative management framework which will reduce these administrative costs in the long run, and at the same time, optimize the University's objective function; hence, the need to embrace a technology-based approach to student management. The emergence of modern Information and Communications Technology (ICT), and the need for Nigerian universities to be viewed and ranked through the degree of their website functionality, network structure, and associated academic portal necessitated the adoption of e-management of students' personnel functions.

Statement of the Problem

The importance of quality education in nation building cannot be over emphasized. There have been several calls on the educational managers on how to make the educational system to be more vibrant in the quality of its products after several

quantity of mass failure and half-baked products from our various educational institutions in the country. These over the years have generated a lot of debate and argument among Nigerians on the newspapers, radio and television programmed, including parents, religious bodies and nongovernmental organizations. They often expressed their concern about the manner in which the system is losing its confidence as regards to the effective and efficient nature of the system.

In the modern era of information technology, many human endeavors are now being carried out and managed electronically. E-management is a type of contemporary approach that seeks to convert the institutions' operations from manual to electronic using information technology in delivering its administrative functions. The rising administrative costs of tertiary institutions, especially in students' personnel administration, makes it imperative to develop an alternative management framework which will reduce these costs in the long run, and at the same time, optimize the University's objective function. Hence the need to embrace a technology-based approach to student management. The extent to which e-management of students has facilitated university administration has to be continuously investigated. However, this research work will work on how to Enhance the Operation of Quality Assurance Processes in Higher Education: in the South South Nigeria Educational Management and E-management Perspectives.

Objectives of the Study

The main purpose of the study was to determine relationship between E-management and quality assurance in higher institutions in South-South Nigeria. Specifically, the study sought to

1. To determine relationship between planning in management and quality assurance in higher institutions in South-South Nigeria.
2. To examine the relationship between staffing in management and quality assurance in higher education in South-South Nigeria.
3. To assess the relationship between co-ordinating in management and quality assurance in higher education in South-South Nigeria.
4. To ascertain relationship between reporting in management and quality assurance in higher education in South-South Nigeria.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

1. What is the relationship between planning in management and quality assurance in higher institutions in South-South Nigeria?
2. What is the relationship between staffing in management and quality assurance in higher education in South-South Nigeria?
3. What is the relationship between co-ordinating in management and quality assurance in higher education in South-South Nigeria?

4. What is the relationship between reporting in management and quality assurance in higher education in South-South Nigeria?

Research Hypotheses

1. There is no significant relationship between planning in management and quality assurance in higher institutions in South-South Nigeria.
2. There is no significant relationship between staffing in management and quality assurance in higher education in South-South Nigeria.
3. There is no significant relationship between co-ordinating in management and quality assurance in higher education in South-South Nigeria.
4. There is no significant relationship between reporting in management and quality assurance in higher education in South-South Nigeria.

Literature Review

Theoretical issues in Quality Assurance

The need to assess quality in educational provision is now generally accepted as one of the tools of educational reforms. There two widely used systems of quality assurance in higher education. The first is the system of certification of students by a renowned scholar in the field. The value of the credentials awarded, are assured by the reputation of the scholar as well as his place in the genealogical succession of established scholarship in the field of study. This brand of quality assurance has evolved into one of internal and external peer review of student performance and advancement of scholarship within the academia. The other system is the accreditation of institutions or professional programmes. The essence of accreditation system is that of meeting input standards in such areas as curriculum, library facilities, staff qualifications, students' entry qualifications, duration of study etc. It should be noted that the two systems are mutually in-exclusive. The current tendency is for the two approaches to be grafted into one another (Miller, 2002).

Defining quality in higher education has proved to be a challenging task. Some scholars believe that 'education quality is a rather vague and controversial concept and that quality is a notoriously ambiguous term. At the broadest level, education quality can be viewed as a set of elements that constitute the input, process and output of the education system, which provides services that completely satisfy both internal and external strategic constituencies by meeting their explicit and implicit expectations (Pounder 1999; Cheng and Tam, 1997). If higher education is viewed as a system, then any quality management programme must therefore assess inputs, process and outputs.

Internal and external stakeholders have been identified in the quality management process in which current students and front line staff forms the internal constituents and employers, government bodies, institutional management, prospective students, and professional bodies are external.

These stakeholders might have disparate definitions of quality as well as different preferences for how quality is assessed. Hence Hughes (1988) suggests quality indicators may differ for internal and external stakeholders, and Cheng and Tam (1997) are of the opinion that expectations of the different constituencies may be not only different but contradictory.

According to Cullen, Joyce, Hassall and Broadbent (2003), the challenge is to produce a performance evaluation framework that permits the equal expression of legitimate voices, though they may conflict or compete in some ways. Harvey and Knight (1996) suggest that quality can be broken down into five different but related dimensions: quality as exceptional (e.g. high standards), quality as consistency (e.g. zero defects), quality as fitness for purpose (fitting customer specifications), quality as value for money, and quality as transformative (an ongoing process that includes empowerment and enhancement of the customer satisfaction). While the authors advise that quality as transformative incorporates the other dimensions to some extent, it can also be argued that different stakeholders are likely to prioritise the importance of these different dimensions of quality according to their motivations and interest (Owlia & Aspinwall, 1996). In some quality initiatives therefore, there may be a preference for the monitoring of some quality dimensions at the expense of others.

What is apparent from this discussion is that the concept of quality in higher education is complex and dependent upon different stakeholder perspectives. While Pounder (1999) suggests that we should be looking for another more appropriate concept than quality to benchmark performance in higher education, in reality quality remains the key focus for higher education provision and shall continue to be assessed in a number of different ways by different stakeholders.

Traditionally external stakeholders have been associated with quality assurance procedures. Quality assurance refers to the 'planned and systematic actions [deemed] as necessary to provide adequate confidence that a product or service will satisfy given requirements for quality' (Borahan & Ziarati, 2002, p. 42). For higher education institutions this requires them to demonstrate responsible actions in their professional practices, be accountable for public funds received and demonstrate the results they achieve with the available resources (Jackson, 1998). Elton (1992) refers to these as the quality 'A's: Accountability, Audit, and Assessment' and suggests these are concerned with the control of quality and the people who control quality. The particular mechanisms for assurance are usually imposed by external bodies, such as university management and most commonly include accreditation, external examiners and quality audits (McKay & Kember, 1999). As a control tool therefore, the focus is predominantly on the extent to which the procedures and conditions that are perceived to result in appropriate levels of quality are followed within institutions or programmes and are effective in meeting their purpose (Jackson, 1996, p. 39). Prioritised dimensions of quality therefore include quality as consistency, quality as fitness for purpose, and quality as value for money. As these external stakeholders also assure that a minimum

threshold of quality is maintained, quality as exceptional is also a relevant dimension. To this extent, external quality assurance mechanisms have a pertinent role to play in quality assessment practices for a number of stakeholders. However, the processes adopted are by nature summative providing only a snapshot of 'quality' and therefore McKay and Kember (1999) argue that quality control measures in isolation may have limited impact if not accompanied by appropriate educational development initiatives. In addition, the legitimacy of these approaches for quality enhancement purposes has been questioned as the use of external change agents does not imbed quality into the culture of programmes (Roffe, 1998).

Theoretical issues in Selected E-Management Variables and University Administration

According to Christiana (2008), e-management plays a vital role in supporting powerful, efficient management and administration in the education sector because technology can be used right from student administration to various administrative areas in an education institution. Hossein (2008) lends credence to Christiana's view that e-management provides several possibilities for educational administrators to do their tasks and one of these tasks is the student admission process. The integration of ICT enhances the overall admission activities of higher education institutions by making it more accessible to many (Thomas, 2004).

The transition from manual to online applications, registration, scoring of scripts, and collating and disseminating of results improves the efficiency, accuracy and reliability of admission procedures (Nosiri, 2005). Mbakwem and Okeke (2007) stated that such a transition guarantees safety, security and efficiency in handling large volumes of scores over a very short period.

Online registration is a recent technology in school administration via e-management. Before the advent of on-line registration, students were faced with a monotonous task of manual registration of courses where they were faced with all manner of intimidation and wrong attitude from staff who are supposed to sign such forms. Ajayi (2004) noted that this method was cumbersome and time wasting. The idea of online registration is however in line with the world's latest trend of information technology prior to the advent of e-management in Nigerian universities.

The online registration system allows students, to register through the internet, and drop or add courses online within the registration period. The students are expected to go into a cybercafé or any available internet facility and log into the school web site and register courses for the semester/session. Ashish and Arun (2005) and Ajayi (2004) stated that on-line registration has put an end to all manners of complaints by students about the nonchalant attitude of some staff in signing course forms as experienced in manual registration, and also allows quicker response. In the same vein, Chaoes (2006) also noted that a well-conceived and implemented automated student record system can reduce the cost of handling the paper work associated with record keeping.

Another very important service delivered by the Student Affairs Unit has to do with the arrangement for hostel accommodation. Onyeagbako (2002) maintained that manual method of managing and administering hostels in institutions is obviously not effective as it is attributed to drawbacks like human error, low security, difficulty in data update, and difficulty in record keeping. Kola (2014) then submitted that the easiest way to address the drawbacks of the manual scheduling methods and ensures data integrity especially in a thick populated institution is to make access to accommodation electronic and online.

Mohammadzadeh, Hejazi and Bazargan (2007) investigated model for quality assurance in the higher education system in Iran. According to the results from the research, Ministry of Science, Research and Technology should be creators and administrator for quality assurance structure at the national level. The NGOs should determine standards (requirements) and participate in an external evaluation process. It should establish an office in each university to ensure quality. In addition, it should be uses the volunteers – encourage, participatory and soft procedures rather than mandatory - punitive, judgmental, centralized and hard procedures, until to become quality culture as available for higher education.

Methodology

Correlational survey design was adopted for the study. This is because the study sought to ascertain the relationship between the variables using data gotten from responses from survey instrument such as questionnaire. Data collected was analyzed using a correlational statistics – Pearson Product Moment Correlation Statistics.

Population of the Study

The population of this study will comprise of stakeholders (staff) in the tertiary institutions in the South-South geopolitical zone of Nigeria – comprising of Akwa Ibom State, River State, Cross River State, Bayelsa State and Edo State.

Sample and Sampling Technique

A sample size of 300 staff was used for the study selected through simple random sampling technique. Out of this number, 150 academic staff and 150 non-academic staff was used for this study.

Sampling Frame

Social indexes	Akwa Ibom	Bayelsa	Cross River	Edo	Delta	Rivers	Total
Academic staff	25	25	25	25	25	25	150
Non academic staff	25	25	25	25	25	25	150

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Total	50	50	50	50	50	50	300
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Instrumentation

Two researchers made instruments titled E-management Questionnaire (E-MQ) and Quality Assurance Questionnaire (QAQ) were used for data collection. There were total of (25) items in the E-management (E-MQ) 5 on planning, 5 on staffing, 5 on coordinating and 5 on reporting. Quality Assurance Questionnaire (QAQ) consisted of (20) items. The two instruments were structured on 4-point Likert type Scale of strongly agree (4 points), Agree (3 points), Disagree (2 points) and strongly disagree (1 point).

Validity and Reliability of the Instrument

Copies of the above instruments were given to some senior colleagues in Measurement and Evaluation department for content, construct and face validity. The reliability indices of 0.75 and 0.78 determined through Cronbach’s Alpha Statistics.

Method of Data Analysis

Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) was used for answering the research questions by comparing the values with the extent scale of correlation was also used for testing the hypotheses by comparing it with the critical-r- value. The entire hypotheses formulated were tested at .05 level of significance. In order to take decision as regards the research questions, any r-value that falls between 0.10 – 0.39 was regarded as low, 0.40 – 0.59 was regarded as moderate and 0.60 – 0.99 was high. In terms of hypotheses, whenever the calculated r-value was greater than the critical r-value, the null hypothesis was rejected and also whenever the calculated r-value was less than the critical r-value, the null hypothesis was accepted.

Results

Research Question One

What is the relationship between planning in management and quality assurance in higher institutions in South-South Nigeria?

Table 1: Pearson’s Product Moment Correlation Analysis of the relationship between planning in management and quality assurance in higher institutions in South-South Nigeria (n=300)

Variables	ΣX	ΣX^2	ΣXY	r
R^2	ΣY	ΣY^2		
Planning in Management	4999	85195	201301	0.66
	0.43			

Quality Assurance	11740	498254
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$\alpha = 0.05$, $R^2 =$ coefficient of determination

Result on Table 1 is correlation coefficients of the relationship between planning in management and quality assurance in higher institutions in South-South Nigeria. Results showed that the correlation between planning in management and quality assurance in higher institutions in South-South Nigeria was 0.66. This means there was a very high and strong positive relationship between planning in management and quality assurance in higher institutions in South-South Nigeria. The coefficient of determination associated with 0.66 is 0.43. The coefficient of determination (0.43) also known as the predictive value means that 43% of planning in management accounted for the variation in quality assurance in higher institutions in South-South Nigeria. This is an indication that 57% of variation in quality assurance is attributed to other factors other than planning in management.

Research Question Two

What is the relationship between staffing in management and quality assurance in higher education in South-South Nigeria?

Table 2: Pearson’s Product Moment Correlation Analysis of the relationship between staffing in management and quality assurance in higher education in South-South Nigeria. (n=300)

Variables	R^2	ΣX	ΣX^2	ΣXY	r
		ΣY	ΣY^2		
Staffing in Management		4992	84924		
	0.40			20081	0.64
Quality Assurance		11740	498254		

$\alpha = 0.05$, $R^2 =$ coefficient of determination

Result on Table 2 is correlation coefficients of the relationship between staffing in management and quality assurance in higher institutions in South-South Nigeria. Results showed that the correlation between staffing in management and quality assurance in higher institutions in South-South Nigeria was 0.64. This means there was a very high and strong positive relationship between staffing in management and quality assurance in higher institutions in South-South Nigeria. The coefficient of determination associated with 0.64 is 0.40. The coefficient of determination (0.43) also known as the predictive value means that 40% of staffing in management accounted for the variation in quality assurance in higher institutions in South-South Nigeria. This is an indication

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that 60% of variation in quality assurance is attributed to other factors other than staffing in management.

Research Question Three

What is the relationship between co-ordinating in management and quality assurance in higher education in South-South Nigeria?

Table 3: Pearson’s Product Moment Correlation Analysis of the relationship between co-ordinating in management and quality assurance in higher education in South-South Nigeria (n=300)

Variables	R^2	ΣX	ΣX^2	ΣXY	r
		ΣY	ΣY^2		
Co-ordinating in Management	0.42	5012	85660	201776	0.65
Quality Assurance		11740	498254		

$\alpha = 0.05$, R^2 = coefficient of determination

Result on Table 3 is correlation coefficients of the relationship between coordinating in management and quality assurance in higher institutions in South-South Nigeria. Results showed that the correlation between coordinating in management and quality assurance in higher institutions in South-South Nigeria was 0.65. This means there was a very high and strong positive relationship between coordinating in management and quality assurance in higher institutions in South-South Nigeria. The coefficient of determination associated with 0.65 is 0.43. The coefficient of determination (0.42) also known as the predictive value means that 42% of coordinating in management accounted for the variation in quality assurance in higher institutions in South-South Nigeria. This is an indication that 58% of variation in quality assurance is attributed to other factors other than coordinating in management.

Research Question Four

What is the relationship between reporting in management and quality assurance in higher education in South-South Nigeria?

Table 4: Pearson’s Product Moment Correlation Analysis of the relationship between reporting in management and quality assurance in higher education in South-South Nigeria (n=300)

Variables	R^2	ΣX	ΣX^2	ΣXY	r
		ΣY	ΣY^2		

Reporting in Management	5000	85236	201378	0.66
	0.43			
Quality Assurance	11740	498254		

$\alpha = 0.05$, $R^2 =$ coefficient of determination

Result on Table 4 is correlation coefficients of the relationship between reporting in management and quality assurance in higher institutions in South-South Nigeria. Results showed that the correlation between reporting in management and quality assurance in higher institutions in South-South Nigeria was 0.66. This means there was a very high and strong positive relationship between reporting in management and quality assurance in higher institutions in South-South Nigeria. The coefficient of determination associated with 0.66 is 0.43. The coefficient of determination (0.43) also known as the predictive value means that 43% of reporting in management accounted for the variation in quality assurance in higher institutions in South-South Nigeria. This is an indication that 57% of variation in quality assurance is attributed to other factors other than reporting in management.

Hypothesis One

There is no significant relationship between planning in management and quality assurance in higher institutions in South-South Nigeria

Table 5: Pearson’s Product Moment Correlation Analysis of the relationship between planning in management and quality assurance in higher institutions in South-South Nigeria (n=300)

Variables	ΣX	ΣX^2	ΣXY	r-cal.	r-crit.
Decision					
	ΣY	ΣY^2			
Planning in Management	4999	85195		201301	0.66
S*					0.139
Quality Assurance	11740	498254			

**Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

The result presented in Table 5 revealed that the calculated r-value of 0.66 is greater than the critical r-value of 0.139 at 0.05 level of significance with 298 degrees of freedom. With this result, the null hypothesis that says there is no significant relationship between planning in management and quality assurance in higher institutions in South-South Nigeria was rejected. This implies that there is a significant relationship between

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planning in management and quality assurance in higher institutions in South-South Nigeria

Hypothesis Two

There is no significant relationship between relationship between staffing in management and quality assurance in higher education in South-South Nigeria.

Table 6: Pearson’s Product Moment Correlation Analysis of the relationship between staffing in management and quality assurance in higher education in South-South Nigeria (n=300)

Variables	ΣX	ΣX^2	ΣXY	r-cal	r-crit
Decision	ΣY	ΣY^2			
Staffing in Management	4992	84924			
			20081	0.64	0.139
S*					
Quality Assurance	11740	498254			

**Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

The result presented in Table 6 revealed that the calculated r-value of 0.64 is greater than the critical r-value of 0.139 at 0.05 level of significance with 298 degrees of freedom. With this result, the null hypothesis that says there is no significant relationship between relationship between staffing in management and quality assurance in higher education in South-South Nigeria was rejected. This implies that there is a significant relationship between staffing in management and quality assurance in higher education in South-South Nigeria.

Hypothesis Three

There is no significant relationship between co-ordinating in management and quality assurance in higher education in South-South Nigeria.

Table 7: Pearson’s Product Moment Correlation Analysis of the relationship between co-ordinating in management and quality assurance in higher education in South-South Nigeria (n=300)

Variables	ΣX	ΣX^2	ΣXY	r-cal.	r-
crit. Decision	ΣY	ΣY^2			
Co-ordinating in Management	5012	85660			

0.139 S*		
Quality Assurance	11740	498254

**Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

The result presented in Table 7 revealed that the calculated r-value of 0.65 is greater than the critical r-value of 0.139 at 0.05 level of significance with 298 degrees of freedom. With this result, the null hypothesis that says there is no significant relationship between co-ordinating in management and quality assurance in higher education in South-South Nigeria was rejected. This implies that there is a significant relationship between co-ordinating in management and quality assurance in higher education in South-South Nigeria.

Hypothesis Four

There is no significant relationship between reporting in management and quality assurance in higher education in South-South Nigeria

Table 8: Pearson’s Product Moment Correlation of significant relationship between reporting in management and quality assurance in higher education in South-South Nigeria (n=300)

Variables	ΣX	ΣX^2	ΣXY	r-cal.	r-
crit. Decision	ΣY	ΣY^2			
Reporting in Management	5000	85236	201378	0.66	
0.139 S*					
Quality Assurance	11740	498254			

**Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

The result presented in Table 8 revealed that the calculated r-value of 0.66 is greater than the critical r-value of 0.139 at 0.05 level of significance with 298 degrees of freedom. With this result, the null hypothesis that says there is no significant relationship between reporting in management and quality assurance in higher education in South-South Nigeria was rejected. This implies that there is a significant relationship between reporting in management and quality assurance in higher education in South-South Nigeria.

Discussion of Findings

The results from research question one and hypothesis one revealed that a moderately high positive and significant relationship exist between planning in management and quality assurance in higher institutions in South-South Nigeria. This finding is in line with the finding of the study conducted by Christiana (2008) who found that planning. From the above finding the researcher wish to observe that higher institutions tend to do well in terms of quality where exist planning both internally and externally. The results from research question two and hypothesis two showed that a high positive and significant relationship exist between staffing in management and quality assurance in higher institutions in South-South Nigeria. This finding is in consonance with finding of Mohammadzadeh, Hejazi and Bazargan (2007) who investigated model for quality assurance in the higher education system in Iran. They found that a significant relationship exists between staffing in management and quality results from the research. The recommended that Ministry of Science, Research and Technology should be creators and administrator for quality assurance structure at the national level. The results from research question three and hypothesis three indicated that a high positive and significant relationship between coordinating in management and quality assurance in higher institutions in South-South Nigeria. This finding is in line with Borahan, and Ziarati (2002) who found that in their research work that coordinating is a pivot to achieve the predetermined goals of the organisation smoothly. The results from research question four and hypothesis four also showed that a high positive and significant relationship between reporting in management and quality assurance in higher institutions in South-South Nigeria. This finding is in consonance with the finding of Asiyai (2005) who found that reporting in a management process lubricates all the concerned activities towards facilitation of work and achieving the desired result.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of this study, it is therefore conclude that management and quality assurance or all aspects of the higher Institution and commitment of educational value to society must be approached from a holistic perspective with a set of appropriate plethora of tools and techniques depending on the situational needs. Bringing about a cross marriage of the education management through quality management and strategic management, with the E-management as the enabler for quality assurance is the hall mark for successful quality higher education. Moving from the macro organizational strategic needs to the micro level operational processes needs a new mind-set that calls for the capability and capacity of the individual and organization. It can thus be said that strategic management is the "determination, matching and creation of the capabilities of the institution to achieve a future envisioned position based on the timeline from the past to the present and into the future".

Recommendations

1. The programme curricula and course compacts need more intensive and regular review to meet national needs and international standards. More effort should also be made to standardize Students' assessment in terms of test development, validation, administration, scoring, grading and interpretation. This statement covers both formative [i.e. continuous assessments] and summative assessments. This is the genesis of quality control.
2. In the area of learning resources, the management of the Nigerian higher institutions need to pay more attention to provision of basic technological infrastructures that will facilitate inventions, productivity and development. This is particularly more relevant in the science, technology and engineering disciplines. The functionality of the acquired gadgets should be maintained.
3. There is need for management to make more concerted effort to utilize such information to effect pragmatic reforms. Collation of information should be extended to stakeholders outside the higher institutions. Parents for instance should be more involved. Students should also be more informed and engaged in the quality control drive.
4. An area worthy of commendation is the application of external quality assurance model.

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