

20

Compliance with Quality Assurance Mechanisms in Government Technical/Vocational Colleges in Imo State

IFREKE UKO AKPABIO

*Dept. of Educational Management and Planning
University of Uyo*

And

MERCY UDEME ETTÉ

*Dept. of Educational Management and Planning
Faculty of Education
University of Uyo*

And

NELSON ASUQUO NYONG

*Dept. of Educational Management
University of Port Harcourt*

Abstract

The study investigated the extent to which school administrators comply with quality assurance mechanisms in government technical/vocational colleges in Imo state. The study adopted a descriptive survey design guided by three research questions and three hypotheses. A sample size of 128 respondents was purposively used. An instrument titled “Compliance with Quality Assurance Mechanisms Scale (CQAMS)” was used for data collection, CQAMS was validated by experts and reliability index of 0.87 was established using Cronbach Alpha statistic. Retrieval rate was 92% (118). The research questions were answered using mean and standard deviation while z-test was used in testing the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. The finding revealed among others that, provision of infrastructural facilities, recruitment of qualified teachers, and motivation of teachers are quality assurance mechanisms in government technical/vocational colleges in Imo state. Based on these findings, some recommendations were made among which are: that methods of recruitment of teachers should be on merit basis. Also, principals and teachers should improvise some facilities where the government is unable to provide for their respective schools.

Keywords: School functionaries, Compliance, Quality assurance, Mechanisms, Technical Education

Introduction

Education refers to a means of acquisition of knowledge, skills, values and competences through formal and non-formal methods. Education is also the process of becoming critically aware of one's reality in a manner that leads to effective action upon it. An educated person understands his/her world well enough to deal with it effectively. In the opinion of Achunine (2005), the prosperity of a country depends not on the abundance of its revenue, nor the strength of its fortifications, but on the number of its cultivated citizens, men of education, enlightenment and character.

Technical education as described in the National Policy of Education (FRN, 2004) is a workshop-based education designed to equip the Nigerian youth with balanced work behaviour reflecting cognitive, affective, psychomotor and perceptual skills. It refers to the aspect of education which leads to the acquisition of practical and applied skills as well as basic scientific knowledge. Technical education prepares the Nigerian youth to be self-reliant; it is an education that contributes to individual, societal and national development. The standard of quality therefore is a means of achieving the goal of developing the appropriate skilled labour through technical education (Odukoya, Chinedu, George, Olowokere, & Agbude, 2015). It can also be seen as the ability to which a desired product or services meet the estimated standard either internally or externally. In other words, when quality as a standard is established in an organisation, such an organisation becomes superior to competitors. In the context of this work, quality assurance is the ability to fit in the purpose of technical education as stated by the general accepted standards by provision of infrastructural facilities, recruitment of qualified teachers, secondary school curriculum implementation and effective leadership management (Soni & Patel, 2014).

Concept Clarification

Concept of Technical Education

Technical Education is the type of education that prepares students for jobs and careers that are based mostly on manual or practical activities. Sometimes also referred to as vocational education, technical education promotes self-employment and is considered a vital requirement for skill acquisition. Abdul-Azeez, Isah and Orien (2012) opined that technical education teaches procedural knowledge for acquiring a skill or trade; it provides instruction that is usually given to those who need employment in commerce and industry or in any type of enterprise that involves the use of tools and other machinery.

Technical education is offered in an integrated nature in which the guidelines provided by the National Policy on Education are observed. This programme is comprehensively designed to cover various subjects such as technical drawing, woodwork, metal work, electrical/electronics, building construction, automobile technology, and power mechanics, catering craft, plumbing, welding and fabrication etc. The objective of such curriculum is to develop sound basic skills for personal and national development. Therefore, its real concept portrays it as an integrated course of study prepared for all levels, mostly with the aim of providing training in skills acquisition, entrepreneurship, as well as providing the technological literacy for everyday living and to stimulate creativity.

Technical education according to Usoro, Ikpe, Robert, Akpan & Udo (2012) aimed at producing a whole man that is functional within the society, not just as an individual but as an integral part of the society. Technical education encourages people to learn new skills throughout their lives and facilitates participation in modern economics and societies (Anashie & Ijov, 2014). This type of education is therefore an instrument for developing an individual socially, morally and psychologically. It can be deduced that technical vocational education and society goes hand in hand. Technical education provides for sustainable development processes and emphasizes the need for stimulating a holistic, integrated knowledge and skills needed for a sustainable future as well as changes in values behaviours, and lifestyle. This requires stakeholders in all the key sectors to re-orientate education system, policies and practices in order to empower every individual to make decisions and act in appropriate cultural and moral ways to address the problems that threaten Nigerian lives and future (Anashie & Ijov, 2014).

Summarily, technical education prepares one for the world of works with which the individual can become self-reliant and can make contribution to the society. It provides skills and know-how needed for proper functioning in the society by the use of hand and head. It further provides for training of middle manpower, such as craft person, artisan, technical assistant, electricians, plumbers, carpenters to mention but a few (Ali & Yahaya, 2013)

Quality Assurance

Quality assurance can be referred to as the planned and systematic process of ensuring that activities or programs undertaken in an organization meet the expected standard and that the standards are maintained and improved on. Quality assurance refers to all plans, actions and activities undertaken to ensure that services/products meet the expectations of the society. It involves assessment, monitoring and improvement of activities to ensure that quality is maintained and improved upon. In educational organization, quality assurance is a global concept translated into practical activities to facilitate minimum standard

and ensure the fitness of education services, activities and programmes for its purpose, customers' (students') satisfaction and the societal expectations in general.

Quality Assurance mechanisms in Technical/Vocational Colleges

Quality assurance mechanisms are the control measures used by educational institutions to assure quality, they are operational techniques used in technical colleges to detect errors resulting from production processes, provide solution and also to avoid or minimize issues that lead to improvement or stability in production(Uwaezuoge, 2011). Quality assurance can be external or internal.

Quality assurance in technical colleges in Nigeria engages number of major internal and external educational stakeholders and other government agencies in the process of achieving quality education. These include staff of technical colleges, internal quality assurance units, governmental agencies (ministerial and administrative officers), local education authority, regional and state supervisory bodies, and quality assurance agencies (autonomous or semi-autonomous). Adegbesan (2011) identified the need for quality assurance in Nigerian school as; to serve as indispensable component of quality control strategy in education, to ensure and maintain high standard of education at all levels, to assist in monitoring and supervision of education, to determine the quality of the teacher input, to determine the number of classrooms needed based on the average class size to ensure quality control of education, and to determine the level of adequacy of the facilities available for quality control.

Statement of the problem

Recently, education and in particular technical education has failed to attain its goals. Instances abound where many technical school graduates lack entrepreneurial, technical and vocational job skills for self reliance. Some do not have the desire for self-improvement and achievement of excellence. Researchers' observation revealed that the poor quality of products from technical colleges was as a result of the multifaceted problems bedeviling the system such as inadequate facilities, low morale of teachers, inadequate funding, poor supervision of schools, frequent changes in educational policies, and insecurity in schools.

In an attempt to improve the prevailing situation in the school system, the Federal Government adopted Quality assurance mechanisms in the secondary school system. These quality assurance mechanisms are expected to have been operational in secondary schools for years now but appear not to show any significant improvement in attaining educational goals. It is as a result of the observed problem that motivated the researchers to assess compliance to quality assurance mechanisms in technical colleges in Imo State.

Purpose of the study

The main purpose of this study was to investigate the extent to which school functionaries comply with quality assurance mechanisms in government technical/vocational colleges in Imo State. Specifically, the study sought to:

1. Ascertain the extent of provision of infrastructural facilities as quality assurance mechanism in technical colleges in Imo State.
2. Determine the extent of recruitment of qualified teachers as quality assurance mechanism in technical colleges in Imo State.
3. Ascertain the extent of motivation of teachers as quality assurance mechanism in technical colleges in Imo State.

Research Questions

- What is the extent of provision of infrastructural facilities as quality assurance mechanism in technical colleges in Imo State?
- What is the extent of recruitment of qualified teachers as quality assurance mechanism in technical colleges in Imo State?
- What is the extent of motivation of teachers as quality assurance mechanism in technical colleges in Imo State?

Hypotheses

1. There is no significant difference in the mean rating of principals and teachers on the extent of provision of facilities as quality assurance mechanism in technical colleges in Imo State.
2. There is no significant difference in the mean rating of male and female school functionaries on the extent of recruitment of qualified teachers as quality assurance mechanism in technical colleges in Imo State
3. There is no significant difference in the mean rating of rural and urban school functionaries on the extent of motivation of teachers as quality assurance mechanism in technical colleges in Imo State.

Methodology

The study design was descriptive survey design guided by three research questions and three hypotheses. The population comprised all the four (4) government-owned senior technical colleges in the six educational zones in Imo state. The respondent were all the principals, vice principals, and teachers of all public technical colleges in Imo State. A sample size of 128 respondents was purposively used. An instrument titled “Compliance with Quality Assurance Mechanisms Scale (CQAMS)” was used for data collection, CQAMS was validated by experts and reliability index of 0.87 was established using Cronbach Alpha statistic. Retrieval rate was 92% (118). The research questions were

answered using mean and standard deviation while z-test was used in testing the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance.

Result and Discussion

Research Question 1: What is the extent of provision of infrastructural facilities as quality assurance mechanism in technical colleges in Imo State?

Table 1: Mean Ratings of School Functionaries on Provision of Infrastructural Facilities as Quality Assurance mechanism in technical colleges in Imo State

S/No	Items	X	SD	Decision
1.	Comfortable classrooms	3.1	0.9	HE
2.	Staff offices	2.9	0.8	HE
3.	School fences with gates	3.1	0.9	HE
4.	Laboratories	3.2	0.9	HE
5.	Workshops	2.9	0.8	HE
6.	Libraries	2.9	0.8	HE
7.	Pipe borne water	3.1	0.9	HE
8.	Electricity	3.1	0.9	HE
9.	Sizable examination hall	2.9	0.8	HE
10.	Convenience rooms	2.9	0.8	HE
11.	Games pitches	3.1	0.9	HE
	Grand Mean	3.1	0.9	HE

The results of the findings on Table I revealed that the respondents accepted that comfortable classrooms, staff offices, school fences with gates, laboratories, workshops, libraries, pipe borne water, electricity, sizable examination hall, convenience rooms and games pitches are provided to a high extent with the mean scores of 3.1, 2.9, 3.1, 2.9, 3.1, 3.1, 2.9, 2.9 and 3.1 respectively. The grand mean score of all items in table 1 is 3.054 with standard deviation score 0.9 with the grand mean 3.1 which is greater than mean score of 2.50 set as criterion mean score for decision making, the implication is that the respondents accepted that infrastructural facilities are provided as quality assurance mechanism in technical colleges in Imo State.

Research Question 2: What is the extent of recruitment of qualified teachers as quality assurance mechanism in technical colleges in Imo State?

Compliance with Quality Assurance Mechanisms in Government Technical/Vocational Colleges in Imo State - **Ifreke Uko Akpabio, Mercy Udeme Ette and Nelson Asuquo Nyong**

Table 2: Mean Ratings of School Functionaries on Recruitment of Qualified Teacher as Quality Assurance mechanism in technical colleges in Imo State

S/No	Items	X	SD	Decision
12.	Teachers with knowledge of curriculum content are recruited	3.1	0.9	HE
13.	Teachers with professional qualifications are recruited	2.9	0.8	HE
14.	Teachers are recruited on merit	2.9	0.8	HE
15.	Due process is followed in the recruitment of teachers	2.9	0.8	HE
16.		2.9	0.8	HE
17.	Teachers are subject to aptitude tests before recruitment	2.9	0.8	HE
	Grand Mean	2.9	0.8	HE

The results of the findings on Table 2 reveals that teachers with knowledge of curriculum content, teachers with professional qualifications are recruited, teacher are recruited on merit, due process is followed in the recruitment of teachers, the minimum qualification laid down by the government for teaching in secondary schools is considered during recruitment and teachers are subjected to aptitude tests before recruitment as quality assurance mechanisms with the mean scores of 3.1, 2.9, 2.9, 2.9 and 2.9 respectively. The grand mean score of all items on table 2 is 2.9 with standard deviation score 0.8. The grand mean of 2.9 is greater than mean score 2.50 set as criterion mean score for decision making. Thus, this shows that the respondents accepted that recruitment of qualified teachers is a quality assurance mechanism in technical colleges in Imo State.

Research Question 3: What is the extent of motivation of teachers as quality assurance mechanism in technical colleges in Imo State?

Table 3: Mean Ratings of School Functionaries on Motivation of Teachers as Quality Assurance mechanism in technical colleges in Imo State

S/No	Items	X	SD	Decision
18.	Regular payment of teacher's salaries and allowances	3.1	0.9	HE
19.	Praising teacher for work well done	3.1	0.8	HE
20.	Rewarding outstanding performance	3.2	0.9	HE
21.	Providing in service training	3.1	0.9	HE
22.	Promoting teachers as at when due	3.0	0.9	HE
23.	Involving teachers in decision making	3.0	0.8	HE
24.	Allowing teachers access to health care	2.9	0.9	HE

	services			
25.	Recognition of hard work	2.9	0.9	HE
	Grand Mean	3.0	0.9	HE

The results of the findings on table 3 revealed that teachers are motivated to high extent with the mean scores 3.1, 3.1, 3.2, 3.1, 3.0, 3.0, 2.9 and 2.9 respectively. The grand mean score of all items on table 3 is 3.0 with standard deviation score 0.9, the grand mean of 3.0 which is greater than criterion mean score 2.50 used as a mean score for decision making, thus, this shows that the respondents accepted that motivation of teachers is a quality assurance mechanism in technical colleges in Imo State.

Test of Hypotheses

Ho₁: There is no significant difference in the mean rating of principals and teachers on the extent of provision of facilities as quality assurance mechanism in technical colleges in Imo State.

Table 4: Z-test Analysis of the Extent of Provision of Infrastructural Facilities as Quality Assurance mechanism in Technical Colleges in Imo State.

Status	N	X	SD	Df	z-cal	z-tab	A	Decision
Principals	4	2.9	0.930	116	0.67	1.96	0.05	Accepted Ho ₁
Teachers	114	3.2	0.933					

From the results of data analysis present on Table 4, it could be observed that although principals in Imo State recorded lower mean score of 2.9 than the mean score 3.2 for teachers, the difference in these means scores is statistically not significant at 0.05. This is because the calculated t-value (0.67) is less than the critical value (1.96). Therefore, the null hypothesis (Ho₁) is accepted which implies that there is no significant difference in the mean ratings of technical colleges principals and teachers on the extent of provision of infrastructural facilities as quality assurance mechanism in technical colleges in Imo State.

Ho₂: There is no significant difference in the mean rating of male and female school functionaries on the extent of recruitment of qualified teachers as quality assurance mechanism in technical colleges in Imo State

Table 5: Z-test Analysis of Recruitment of Qualified Teachers as Quality Assurance mechanism in Technical Colleges in Imo State.

Status	N	X	SD	Df	z-cal	z-tab	A	Decision
Male	66	3.0	0.94	116	1.01	1.96	0.05	Accepted Ho ₂
Female	52	2.9	0.94					

From the results of data analysis presented on Table 5, it could be observed that although male school functionaries recorded higher mean score of 3.0 than the mean score 2.9 for female, the difference in these mean scores is statistically not significant at P 0.05. This is because the calculated t-value (1.006) is less than the critical value (1.960). Therefore, the null hypothesis (H₀₂) is accepted which stated that there is no significant difference in the mean rating of principals and evaluators on the extent of recruitment of qualified teachers as quality assurance mechanism in technical colleges in Imo State.

Ho₃: There is no significant difference in the mean rating of rural and urban school functionaries on the extent of motivation of teachers as quality assurance mechanism in technical colleges in Imo State.

Table 6: Z-test Analysis of the Extent of Motivation of Teachers as Quality Assurance mechanism in Technical Colleges in Imo State.

Status	N	X	SD	Df	z-cal	z-tab	A	Decision
Urban	81	3.0	0.93	116	0.93	1.96	0.05	Accepted Ho ₃
Rural	37	2.9	0.81					

From the results of data analysis presented on Table 6, it could be observed that although urban school functionaries recorded higher mean score of 3.0 than the mean score 2.9 for school functionaries in Imo State but the difference in these mean scores is statistically not significant at P 0.05. This is because the calculated z-value (0.93) is less than the critical value (1.96). Therefore, the null hypothesis (H₀₃) is accepted which stated that there is no significant difference in the mean rating of rural and urban school functionaries on the extent of motivation of teachers as quality assurance mechanism in technical colleges in Imo State.

Dicussion of Findings

The results of the findings on table 1 revealed that the respondents accepted that infrastructural facilities such as comfortable classroom, staff offices, school fences with gates, laboratories, workshops, libraries, pipe borne water, electricity, sizeable examination hall, convenience rooms and games pitches are provided in secondary schools as quality assurance mechanismS in technical colleges in Imo State. The result of this study is in contrast with the observation made by Nwafor (2009) that poor provision and management of infrastructural facilities in Nigerian schools affected quality assurance practices by secondary principals. Commenting on the status of the findings of these studies, Kis (2005) maintained that, in educational institutions quality assurance is measured by providing and managing the quality of infrastructural facilities, assembling them in components or products, directing them to services related to production; production processes or management processes and inspection processes that will enhance quality production and services.

The results of the findings on Table 2 revealed that the respondents accepted that teachers are recruited based on knowledge of curriculum content professional qualifications, on merit, due process, minimum qualification laid down by the Government for teaching in technical schools and aptitude tests before recruitment as quality assurance mechanism in technical colleges in Imo State, is implemented by the findings of Uzodinma(2008) who observed that lack of adequate qualified personnel hinders attempts at effective management of secondary school by principals which ensure that quality assurance practice is achieved. Nwafor (2009) observed that there are inadequate qualified personnel in secondary schools in Udi Local Government Area of Enugu State. This according to the study affected quality assurance practice by principals of secondary schools in the study area.

The results of the findings on Table 4 revealed that he respondents accepted that regular payment of teachers' salaries, praising teachers for work well done, rewarding outstanding performance, providing in service training, promoting teachers as at when due, involving teachers in decision making, allowing teachers access to health care services and recognition of hard work as quality assurance mechanism in technical colleges in Imo State is implemented to a high extent. The reason adjudged to this is that when teachers are motivated using the above indices, teachers tend to improve their teaching performance. The findings of this study is in line with the observation made by Ogagwo (2005) that there was significant difference between the mean scores of quality enhancement in Secondary School education by classroom teachers that were given incentive by either government or private individuals than those that receive no incentive in their various duty post, such incentive as word appreciation, gratification from parents, salary increment, payment of minimum

Compliance with Quality Assurance Mechanisms in Government Technical/Vocational Colleges in Imo State - **Ifreke Uko Akpabio, Mercy Udeme Ette and Nelson Asuquo Nyong**

wage, over time allowance, leave allowance, medical allowance and among the rest.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of this study, it was concluded that provision of infrastructural facilities, qualified teachers recruited, motivation of teachers are quality assurance mechanisms in technical colleges in Imo State. It was also observed that the extent compliance to quality assurance mechanism in technical colleges in Imo State is not significantly different.

Recommendations

From the findings of this study, the following recommendations are made;

- Teachers and principals should improvise some facilities that are necessary for quality assurance when the government is unable to provide for their respective schools.
- Methods of recruitment of teachers should be on merit basis not on quota system which was filled by unqualified teachers.
- Government, its agencies and other private bodies should be involved in improving staff welfare in secondary schools.
- The Ministry of Education should periodically organize seminar on whole school evaluation to ascertain the quality of education in technical colleges in Imo State.

References

- Abdul-Azeez, S., Isah, A. & Orien, A. I. (2012). Vocational and technical educational skills in Nigeria: To whose benefit. *Knowledge Review*, 25(1), 100-102.
- Abebe, R. T. (2014). Institutionalization of quality assurance in Ethiopian public universities. An unpublished Masters' degree dissertation, University of Tempere.
- Achunine, R.N. (2005) Achieving Millennium Development Goals in Women Education: New Focus for African Women Movement and Activists. *International Journal of Gender and Health Studies*.
- Achunine, R.N. (2005) Achieving Millennium Development Goals in Women Education: New Focus for African Women Movement and Activists. *International Journal of Gender and Health Studies*.
- Anashie, A. B. & Ijov, T. M. (2014). Enhancing entrepreneurship education through effective management: A sine-qua-non for sustainable development and security. *In* J. E. Tabotndip, I. O.

Enukoha & J. C. Obunadike (Eds). *Issues and Challenges in Entrepreneurial Education in Nigeria*. Onitsha: West and Solomon.

Ayeni, A. I. (2010). Teachers instructional task performance and principals "supervisory roles in correlates of quality assurance in secondary schools in Ondo State. Unpublished Doctoral Dissertation. Obafemi Awolowo University Ile-Ife, Nigeria.

Bozimo, G. and S. N. Ikwumelu, (2013). Quality assurance mechanisms in teacher education: The Nigerian perspective. Being a paper presented at the 2nd African Forum of Teaching Regulatory Authority (AFTRA) Teaching and Learning in Africa Conference and 4th AFTRA Roundtable. Mombase City, Kenya. June 24th -29th 2013.

Federal Ministry of Education (FEM, 2009). Quality assurance handbook for basic and secondary education in Nigeria. Abuja: Federal Inspectorate Service.

Federal Republic of Nigeria (2003). National policy on education. Lagos: NERDC Press.

Federal Republic of Nigeria (2004). *National Policy on Education*. Lagos: NERDC

Kis, V. (2005). Quality assurance in tertiary education: Current practices in OECD countries and a literature review on potential effects. Retrieved from <http://www/oecd.org/education/skills-beyond-school/38006910.pdf>.

Nwafor, C. O. (2009). Psychology in the classroom Enugu: New Generation Press.

Odukoya, J.A., Chinedu, S.N., George, T.N., Olowokere, E., &Agbude, G.(2015) Quality Assurance Practices in African Universities: Lessons from a private Nigerian University. *Journal of Educational and Social Research*, 5(2).

Odukoya, J.A., Chinedu, S.N., George, T.N., Olowokere, E., &Agbude, G.(2015) Quality Assurance Practices in African Universities: Lessons from a private Nigerian University. *Journal of Educational and Social Research*, 5(2).

Ogagwo, A. (2005). Standard and the dilemma of Nigeria Universities. *Journal of Educational Improvement*. 2(2): 15-22.

Oyibe, O. A. and E. C. Oketa (2012). Assessment of the extent of implementation of Social Studies Curriculum in Secondary Schools in Onueke education zone of Ebonyi State. *In Anambra State University journal of education*, 2(1):67-73.

Soni, N.K. & Patel, T.P.(2014) Quality Teaching and Higher Education in India.

Compliance with Quality Assurance Mechanisms in Government Technical/Vocational Colleges in Imo State - **Ifreke Uko Akpabio, Mercy Udemé Ette and Nelson Asuquo Nyong**

Soni, N.K. & Patel, T.P.(2014) Quality Teaching and Higher Education in India.

Usono, H., Ikpe, S. A., Robert, E. E., Akpan, U. T. & Udo, I. A. (2012). Problems and Prospects of Technical Vocational Education (TVE) in Nigeria. *Multidisciplinary Journal of Research Development*, 19(1), 12-17.

Uwaezuoke, D. C. (2011). From school inspection to Quality Assurance: Challenges for the classroom teacher under this paradigm shift: *A Journal of Quality Assurance Evaluation*, 1(2): 53-60.

Uzodinma, U. E. (2008). Quality assurance in tertiary institution in Nigeria: Implications for the present information age. In B.G. Nworgu (Ed), *Education in the information age: Global challenges and enhancement strategies*. Nsukka: University Trust Publishers.