An Analysis of Quality Assurance Practice in Continuing Teacher Education Programmes in Selected Centres in Lagos State

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Abstract: *The purpose of the study was to analyze the quality assurance measures in continuing teacher education programmes. Five (5) variables were examined: teaching personnel, learning environment, attitudinal disposition of teachers, motivation and leadership styles. Review of literature concentrated on textbooks, journals, articles, project which were consulted and discussed in relation to assessment of quality assurance measures in continuing teacher education programme. A descriptive survey research design was adopted, using simple random sampling technique to pick 100 respondents removed from 20 local government areas of Lagos State. The data collected were analyzed using descriptive statistics of frequency counts and percentage for demographic data, while inferential statistics of chi-square was used to test hypotheses. Four hypotheses tested and the four hypotheses education programme must be undertaken with student teachers, before disengagement for them to learn about quality assurance measures to take in continuing teacher education programme.*

Keywords: Continue Education, Facilities, Quality assurance, Finance

Introduction

Meeting the need of the end user is the underlying purpose of every product and services and achieving this quality becomes the watchword of the provider of such product and service. There is no doubt today, that improving the quality of our public and private sectors of the national economy must be the most important task facing all of us if our institutions have to survive Quality remains central to survival of even large organizations (Anyamele 2004).

With regards to quality in education, quality assurance practice deals with relevance, validity functionality, efficiency and effectiveness of educational system in the achievement of national goal and objectives (Brownlee 2001). A study on institutional variations in the practice of quality assurance in continuing teacher education programmes becomes relevant If the national goals and objectives of providing an education that will serve as a tool for national development is to be achieved. The study becomes germane particularly in the face of proliferation of continuing teacher education programmes which is a direct consequence of the geometric population growth rate in the country. Put differently, for quality not to be sacrificed in the light of the above development, educational administrators will, as a matter of necessity, ensure that policies that assure quality in education with strict implementation, monitoring and sanctioning where necessary are put in place.

There is no doubt however, that Nigeria has adequate policies that assure quality in education, though, the problem, just like any other facet or sector of the polity, has been with implementation and lack of commitment of the operators. The above assertion could be situated in the findings carried out in the quality assurance practice in some developed countries of the Eastern Europe i.e United States, United Kingdom, Finnish and Czech Republic which revealed different results from what is obtainable from the same practice between those countries and Nigeria

Predictably, there is bound to be variations in the results of the educational policies from one institution to the other as a result of different practices of the policies owing to the problem of implementation and commitment of the operators. It was thus for these reasons, problems and solutions that this study intended to focus on.

These variations are somehow expressed in terms of the quality of academic institutions like the federal institutions, state owned institutions and private institutions in Nigeria and the rest of the world (Brownlee 2001). For a better insight on the study, a brief definition of some basic concepts and various policies at ensuring quality will be apposite and apt at this juncture.

Quality as a concept means different things to different people. Quality can be viewed as exception, as perfection, as fitness for purpose, as value for meoney and as transformative. Quality is a slippery concept because it has such a variety of meanings (Sallis 1993). Hick (2001), in his own perspectives, viewed quality as meeting customers needs and exceptations. The basic factors of education quality therefore encompasses how learning is organized and managed; what the content of learning is; what level of learning is achieved; what it leads to in terms of outcomes; and what goes on in the learning environment.

UNICEF (2000) declared the following as factors associated with education quality:

- A curriculum that is appropriate for a development that includes learning activities for students in a supportive environment;
- A careful selection of personnel, with strategy for service and training;
- Attention to the ratio of personnel – to children;
- Strong administrative support with direct provision of service like health and nutrition;
- Effective monitoring and evaluation processes, allowing personnel to monitor and observe the students' progress; and
- Taking into account cultural child-rearing traditions and new pedagogical practices.

The Federal Government of Nigeria is an effort to ensure quality in education also established institutions to determine the quality of education at various levels.

Decree No. 16 of 1985 was promulgated on the minimum standard for primary and secondary schools nationwide with the objectives to:

i. Provide guidelines on general and specific principles of inspection and monitoring of schools;

ii. Provide tools for evaluating the efficiency of school management;

iii. Guide proprietors in providing funds for the schools; and

iv. Use guides for accrediting the schools.

To put these guidelines in operation, the National Council of Education (NCE) and the joint Consultative Council on Education (JCCE) set up a sub-committee in 1988 to work out the details. The National Commission for Colleges pf Education (NCEE) was also established in pursuance of excellence in the supervision of tertiary education.

Allele-Williams (2004) also defined quality assurance as that which indicates the pre-eminence and special features that makes the institution distinct from other forms of institution. Corroborating this definition, Bolman and Deal (1984) Indicated that educational reforms aimed at providing better quality in education worldwide and based on this, there must be reorganization in order to achieve the stated goal.

The Meaning of Quality

The term quality is viewed differently by different authorities. Quality has been one of the basic means of competition among various organizations and it also pervades all human activities. Quality is seen as a slippery concept from the point of view of Salis (1993). This is attributed to the fact that it is often used to describe some attributes like beauty, goodness, expensiveness, freshness and above all luxury. (Anyamele, 2004). The different conception of quality as viewed by different scholars will be is evident in the various definitions that are revealed as follows.

Munro -Faure (1992) defines quality as producing output in conformance to customer requirements. Hick (2001) views quality as meeting customer and expectations. These two definitions imply quality as meeting the customer's expectation of products and services.

Ojerinde (1997), in his own view defines quality as the standard of something when compared tc other things like it. In other words, quality has to do with how good or bad, or the condition or state of something.

Quality education could therefore be seen from the point of view of meeting its objectives with regards to the individual and the community needs. In other words, the individual's objective of transformation and the community objective of development which education is expected to provide should be the core of quality education. Education quality should attempt to meet the conditions of effectiveness and efficiency i.e. input and output, simply put, the resources should be proportional to the result which is educational objectives earlier stated. This is further corroborated by UNESCO (1998) that quality in education is a multi-dimensional concept which should embrace all functions and activities; teaching and academic programme, research and scholarship, staffing, students, buildings facilities, equipment, services to the community and academic environment. Maduewesi(2005) Laying credence to UNESCO (1998) sees Quality in education as a multifaceted issue which encompasses how learning is what level of learning is achieved; what it leads to in terms of outcomes and what goes on in the learning environment.

Quality Assurance

Quality assurance as a concept was initially introduced in World War I1 when ammunitions were inspected and tested for defects after they were made. Quality assurance has been viewed from different perspectives by different scholars: One of such scholars includes Blake (1994) who sees quality assurance in education as implying all action taken to assure interested parties that appropriate policies, structure and procedures are in place to guarantee that the design and delivery of core activities in education are of consistently high quality.

Allele-Williams (2004), in her owa view defines quality assurance as that which indicates the pre-eminence and special features that makes the institution distinct from other forms institution. Bolman and Deal giving credence to this definition indicated that educational reforms aimed at providing better quality in education worldwide and based on this, there must be re-organization in order to achieve the stated goal.

Enaohw, Agabi and Akpotu (1999) in another vein indicate that the internally expressed commitment of academic community to standards, which is backed up by relevant frameworks to promote and give practical effect is quality assurance in education. In other words, it is the effort of the community at ensuring quality. From the foregoing literature review, quality assurance therefore implies all actions and guidelines that guarantee confidence and certainty by a programme of study given by an institution that standards and quality are being maintained and enhanced.

Concept of Continuing Education

Continuing education as a concept is not entirely new in the practice of education in Nigeria. Continuing education has been defined in several ways by several authorities. Osuji (2001) remarks that continuing education is strictly an education concept which stresses the provision of educational opportunities for adults after cessation of formal schooling. He adds, that it means education and re-education, training or retraining opportunities made available to people out of school such as young school leavers, the employed and the unemployed in order to cope with new situations of life. This implies that continuing education refers to educational activities specifically designed to satisfy various needs. These needs according to Abiona and Abu (2000) include educational advancement, occupational skill acquisition, professional qualifications and personal goals.

From the foregoing, it can be seen that continuing education is a lifelong education and training activities (after an initial educational phase) which is meant to refresh, update and upgrade the competence of the individuals to enable him perform better in his economic and social undertakings. This education is related to professional improvement as well as that of non- occupational roles, such roles as parents' citizens and mates. In the main, the goal or purpose of continuing education is to refresh, update and upgrade the individual's competence, no matter his profession. This is necessary as Obi (1989) points out initial education or training alone cannot give the worker all the knowledge and skills he needs in the performance of his duties; rather it is continuing education programme that can help him to achieve this objective. The phenomenon of knowledge explosion has raised the need for a worker to be always aware of the changes in his discipline, if he is to remain in the field.

Problems of the Public Centres Providing Continuing Education Programmes

Supervision: One of the problems of public centers that offer continuing education programmes is supervision. The government body that approves the running of these centres has not been demonstrating much concern about the efficiency of these centres through adequate supervision. Lack of supervision gives room to a lot 'of obnoxious activities in some public centres. How can one assess a centre that has not shown any remarkable improvement for years and no government agent cares, once that centre is able to pay the annual renewal fees. As a result of lack of supervision, most of these centres lack proper organization and some of them do not have the picture of an academic institution. Learning and teaching are neither controlled nor regulated.

At times, ministry officials often accept that the objectives of continuing education exist only as policy statement without concrete programmes to point to.Where the programmes exist, they are scattered in the ministry and lumped with other programmes in such a way as to lose their very identity.

Finance: The problem of finance is identified by Oyeniran (1989) in Egunyomi (2001) as the major problem inhibiting successful implementation of adult education throughout developing countries including Nigeria. This assertion is buttressed by Kurma (1977) in Imhabekhai (1998) when he states that government during the 1975- 1980 development plan allocated 0.8 percent of the total revenue allocated to education to adult education; this gives the impression that the government only attached little recognition to adult education. More often than not, priority is usually given to the education of the youth. The little fund provided also lacks proper management, lack of sufficient fund usually affects recruitment of qualified personnel, provision of materials and construction of structures where there is no adequate funding and the proprietors depend heavily on the fees paid by participants, surely, there can be no provision of adequate facilities. Apart from building infrastructures, fund is needed to purchase laboratory equipment, teaching and writing materials.

Lack of Structural Facilities: A lot of public institutions that organize continuing education programmes lack adequate facilities. Visits to some satellite campuses reveal that the structural facilities needed for the programme are not only inadequate but, most of the buildings and modern equipment are also dilapidated.

The classrooms are grossly inadequate to accommodate students. Some of the students receive lectures under the trees. The classrooms that are available are notconducive enough to encourage the adult learners. They are subjected to uncomfortable learning facilities irrespective of their status in the society.

Continuing teacher education therefore, is the maintenance of professional competence through continuous updating of knowledge and skills of the professional teachers. It is the responsibility of the individual to develop and maintain the professional competence necessary to provide high quality services to client's employers and other stakeholders. Various institutions provide continuing teacher education programme in Nigeria in general state in particular which was the focus of this study. These institutions can be categorized using the provider model which involves federal universities providing continuing teacher programmes in Lagos state and these are:

i. National Teachers Institute with the headquarters in Kaduna with centres spread all over the country.

ii. The Institute runs teacher education programme leading to the Nigeria Certificate in Education (NCE) be distance learning;

iii. The Sandwich Degree Programme, Faculty of Education, University of Lagos; and

iv. The Sandwich Programme of the Federal College of Education (Technical) Akoka

Statement of the Problem

Given the diversity in the number of institutions offering continuing teacher education programs in Lagos State, the global and national quest for improved quality education and the Imperatives for ensuring the quality of serving teachers enrolled in the programmes , one tempted to ask what measures are being taken to ensure the quality of continuing teacher education programmes in Lagos state and whether the measures have the potential to enhance the quality of the teachers trained.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study therefore was to:

1. Assess the minimum entry requirements prescribed for admission of students teachers into the programmes;
2. Assess the relevance, currency and structure of the curriculum content;
3. Assess the adequacy and suitability of the teaching staff employed
4. Examine the adequacy and suitability of the teaching staff employed;
5. Ascertain the level of involvement of key operatives in the administration supervision monitoring of the programmes;
6. Examine the extent to which the methods of instructions and the classroom climate have the effect of motivating learning among the student teachers; and
7. Examine the attitudinal disposition of participants and the teachers towards classroom attendance

Research Questions

i. Do the students in continuing teacher education programmes meet the prescribed minimum entry requirements?

ii. Are the curricula of the programmes relevant and current in content and structured?

iii. Do the institutions provide adequate and functional infrastructural facilities?

iv. What is the level of academic performance of the student teachers trained in the preceding five years?

Research Hypotheses

Ho_1: There is no significant difference between the prescribed minimum entry requirements and continuing teacher education programmes

Ho_2: There is no significant difference between relevance, currency and structure of the curriculum content and continuing teacher education programmes.

Ho_3: There is no significant difference between institution and provision of adequate and functional infrastructural facilities.

Ho_4: There is no significant difference between the quality of the teachers trained in the preceding five years and academic performance of student teachers.

Methodology

This study adopted the descriptive survey research and 'ex-post facto research designs. The choice of this research design was informed by the fact that the study dealt with the appraisal of the quality assurance practices in continuing teacher education programmes. The adoption of the descriptive survey research was justified by the fact that the retraining of teachers is a continuous process and to ascertain the effectiveness of the retraining programmes on teachers. The population of the study comprised of all continuing teacher education centres in Lagos State. The sample for the study consisted of 20 respondents from each of the five continuing teacher education centres in Lagos State to make a total of 100 respondents. The random sampling technique was

adopted. This was adopted in order to cover all parts of the study area and also to give all units of the population an equal chance of being selected. This technique rules out biases and creates room for credibility, reliability and validity of the study. A self developed questionnaire was used to collect data from the respondents in order to give direct information on the subject under study. This formed the primary source of data. The secondary sources of data include books Journal articles, magazines, newspapers, internet and other publications. All these sources will be referenced at the day. The study employed both the descriptive and the inferential statistical methods. In this, the simple percentages and frequency tables were used for Descriptive purpose while the chi-square statistical analysis was adopted to test the hypotheses in order for inferences to be made.

Results and Discussion

The data collected through the questionnaire were collated and subjected to statistical test. The percentage distributions method was used to analyse the bio-data and Chi-square Statistical analysis was used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. Results and discussion were presented as follow:

Table 1: Distribution of Respondents by Gender

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	65	65%
Female	35	35%
Total	**100**	**100%**

Table 1 presents the gender of the respondents 65(65%) were male while 35(35%) were female. This shows that the male proportion is higher than the female proportion.

Table 2: Age Distribution of Respondents

Age	Frequency	Percentage
Below 24 years	5	5%
25-30 years	25	25%
31-35 years	45	45%
36-40 years	5	5%
40+	20	20%
Total	100	100%

From table 2, there were 5(5%) respondents below the age of 24 years, 25(25%) respondents within the age range of 25-30 years, 45(45%) respondents within the age range of 36-40 years, 20(20%) respondents within the age range of 40 and above.

Table 3:Marital Status of the Respondents

Marital status	Frequency	Percentage
Single	5	5%
Married	78	78%
Divorced	8	8%
Seperated	9	9%
Total	**100**	**100%**

From table 3, a total of 5(%) were single, 78(78%) were married, 8(8%) were divorce, while 9(9%) were separated.

Table 4: Academic Qualifications of the Respondents

Education	Frequency	Percentage
B.Ed/B.Sc/B.A	85	85%
M.Ed/M.Sc	10	10%
Ph.D	5	5%
Total	**100**	**100%**

Table 4 presents the academic status of respondents 85(85%) of the respondents first degree (B.Ed/B.Sc/B.A/) holders, 10(10%) have M.Ed/M.Sccertificiates. While respondents with Ph.D have the lowest percentage 5(5%).

Table 5: Work Experience of Respondents

Work Experience	Frequency	Percentage
0-5 years	5	5%
6-10 years	5	5%

11-15 years	5	5%
16-20 years	65	65%
20 and above	25	25%
Total	**100**	**100%**

From Table 5, work experience of the respondents shows that 5(5%) of the respondents work between 6-10 years, 5(5%) of the respondents work between 11-15 years, 65(65%) of the respondents work between 16-20 years while 25(25%) of the respondents work between 20 and above.

Testing of Hypotheses

Hypotheses 1

There is no significant difference between the prescribed minimum entry requirements and continuing teacher education programmes.

Table 6: Chi-square results showing responses on prescribed minimum entry requirements and continuing teacher education programmes.

Responses	Frequency	%
SA	65	65
A	25	25
D	7	7
SD	3	3
Total	**100**	**100%**

The table indicates that the calculated chi-square value 10.24 was significantly greater than the critical value of 7.82 at 0.05 level of significance. The hypothesis was therefore rejected meaning that there is significant difference between the prescribed minimum entry requirements and continuing teacher education programmes.

Hypothesis 2

There is no significant difference between relevance, currency and structure of the curriculum content and continuing teacher education programmes.

Table 7:Chi-square result showing responses to the relevance, currency and structure of curriculum content and continuing teacher education programmes.

Responses	Frequency	%
SA	75	75
A	15	15
D	5	5
SD	5	5
TOTAL	**100**	**100%**

The table indicated that the calculated chi-square value 25.2 was significantly greater than the critical value of 7.82 at 0.05 level of significance. The hypothesis was therefore rejected meaning that, there is significant difference between relevance, currency and structure of curriculum content and continuing teacher education programmes.

Hypothesis 3

There is no significant difference between institution and provision of adequate and functional infrastructure facilities.

Table 8: Chis-square result showing responses on institution and provision of adequate and functional infrastructural facilities.

Responses	Frequency	%
SA	35	35
A	45	45
D	12	12
SD	8	8
TOTAL	**100**	**100%**

The table indicates that the calculated chi-square value 13.93 was significantly greater that the critical value of 7.82 at 0.05 level of significance. The hypothesis was therefore rejected meaning that, there is significant difference between the institution and provision of adequate and functional of infrastructural facilities.

Hypothesis 4:

There is no significant difference between the quality of the teachers trained in the preceding five years and academic performance of student teachers.

Table 9: Chi-square results showing responses on quality of teachers' trained and academic performance of student teachers.

Responses	Frequency	%
SA	65	65
A	25	25
D	7	7
SD	3	3
TOTAL	100	100%

The table indicates that the calculated chi-square value 10.21 was significantly greater than the critical value of 7.82 at 0.05 level of significance. The hypothesis was therefore rejected meaning that there is significant difference between the quality of the teachers trained in the preceding five years and academic performance of student teachers.

Conclusion

Based on the results of the study, interview and personal observations by the researcher, the following conclusions were arrived at:

- There is significant difference between the prescribed minimum entry requirements and continuing teacher education programmes.
- There is significant difference between relevance, currency and structure of curriculum content and continuing teacher education programmes.
- There is significant difference between the institution and provision of adequate and functional of infrastructural facilities
- There is significant difference between the quality of the teachers trained in the preceding five years and academic performance of student teachers.

Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusions of this study, the following recommendations are made;

1. Early, honest and realistic education programme must be undertaken with student teachers before disengagement for them to learn about quality assurance measures to take in continuing teacher education programme.
2. Federal, State and non-governmental institutions should encourage teachers, student teachers to retrain themselves in order to use quality assurance measures in continuing teacher education programme.
3. Workshop and seminars on quality assurance measures in continuing teacher education programme should be set aside for teaching personnel, stakeholders in education and student teachers.
4. Letter of support Reference letter) should be given to qualified student teachers when needed.
5. Provision of internet database for all teaching personnel is very important.
   All active teaching personnel and student teachers should embrace quality assurance measures in continuing teacher education programme.

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