

Qualitative Education as the Hub for Good Governance in Tertiary Institutions in Delta State, Nigeria

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Abstract: This study examined qualitative education as a predictor of good governance in tertiary institutions in Delta State, Nigeria. A predictive correlational research design was adopted for the study. The population comprised 1,355 teaching staff, from which a sample of 697 respondents was drawn using a multi-stage sampling technique. Data were collected using a structured instrument titled Qualitative Education and Good Governance Questionnaire (QEGGQ), which was validated by experts and tested for reliability using Cronbach Alpha, yielding an overall coefficient of 0.84. Data were analyzed using the coefficient of determination to answer the research questions, while linear and multiple regression analyses were used to test the hypotheses at a 0.05 level of significance. The findings revealed that curriculum relevance, teaching quality, ethical/value-based education, and civic engagement education each significantly predict good governance in tertiary institutions. The study further showed that these dimensions jointly have a significant predictive effect on good governance, with civic engagement education emerging as the strongest predictor. The study concludes that qualitative education is a critical determinant of governance outcomes and that improving its core dimensions can significantly enhance governance effectiveness in tertiary institutions. It was recommended, among others, that tertiary institutions should strengthen curriculum relevance, improve teaching quality, integrate ethical education, and promote civic engagement practices to foster good governance.

Keywords: Qualitative education, Curriculum relevance, Teaching quality, Ethical/Value-based education, Civic engagement education, Good governance.

Introduction

Education occupies a central position in the discourse on national development, institutional effectiveness, and governance outcomes. It is widely regarded as a strategic instrument for building human capacity, shaping societal values, and enhancing the competence of individuals who participate in public and institutional life (Schleicher, 2018). In contemporary scholarship, increasing attention has been directed toward the quality of education rather than mere access, as the nature of educational experiences significantly determines the extent to which individuals can contribute meaningfully to governance processes. The emphasis on qualitative education reflects a growing understanding that education must transcend the transmission of knowledge to include the development of critical thinking, ethical reasoning, and problem-solving abilities required in modern societies.

Qualitative education is therefore conceptualized as an educational process that integrates relevance, effectiveness, and transformative capacity in shaping learners' competencies and dispositions (Figueiredo, 2025). It encompasses curriculum content that aligns with societal needs, teaching practices that promote deep learning, and value systems that foster responsible citizenship. Educational systems that prioritize such attributes are more likely to produce individuals who can engage constructively in governance and development processes. In this regard, global education frameworks emphasize that quality education equips individuals with the knowledge, skills, and attitudes necessary for active participation in economic, social, and political spheres (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, 2023). This perspective reinforces the notion that education is not an isolated sector but a foundational pillar upon which governance structures are built and sustained.

The relationship between education and governance is both profound and multidimensional. Governance, which involves the processes through which decisions are made and public affairs are managed, depends largely on the quality of human capital available within a society. Effective governance requires informed leadership, active citizen participation, institutional accountability, and ethical conduct. These attributes are largely cultivated through educational experiences. Empirical studies have consistently demonstrated that societies with strong educational systems tend to exhibit higher levels of governance performance, transparency, and civic engagement. For instance, Okoli *et al.* (2024) establish that human capital development through education is closely linked to improved governance outcomes, while Berthin (2021) show that education enhances civic engagement and strengthens institutional accountability.

Furthermore, education plays a critical role in shaping democratic participation and civic responsibility. Civic-oriented learning environments foster awareness of governance processes, rights, and responsibilities, thereby enabling individuals to participate

actively in decision-making processes. Kamboni *et al.* (2025) asserts that education significantly enhances democratic participation by equipping individuals with the knowledge required for civic engagement, while Fuad (2023) highlights the role of civic education in promoting democratic awareness among university students. Similarly, Mekolle (2025) emphasizes that participatory educational practices contribute to the development of responsible citizens who can engage meaningfully in governance processes. These perspectives collectively suggest that education serves as a catalyst for strengthening democratic culture and governance effectiveness.

In addition to promoting civic engagement, qualitative education contributes to the development of leadership competence and institutional capacity (Willeck & Mendelberg, 2022; Zizon, 2023). Governance systems are operated by individuals whose effectiveness depends on their intellectual preparation, analytical abilities, and ethical orientation. Educational institutions, particularly at the tertiary level, serve as training grounds for future leaders, policymakers, and administrators. Bakri *et al.* (2023) observe that leadership competence derived from strong educational systems significantly enhances governance performance, while Ozkan and Sahin (2025) note that governance frameworks within educational systems contribute to improved institutional effectiveness and quality assurance. These findings underscore the importance of education in shaping the quality of leadership and the effectiveness of governance institutions.

Moreover, the ethical dimension of education is critical in addressing governance challenges such as corruption and lack of accountability. Educational systems that emphasize integrity, responsibility, and ethical conduct are instrumental in fostering value-driven leadership. Khan *et al.* (2021) argue that ethical education significantly improves governance outcomes by promoting transparency and accountability, while Nwosu *et al.* (2024) highlights the role of ethical leadership in strengthening public trust and institutional legitimacy. This underscores the transformative role of qualitative education in shaping not only cognitive competencies but also moral values that are essential for good governance.

The contribution of education to innovation and evidence-based policymaking further reinforces its relevance to governance. In an era characterized by rapid technological advancement and complex societal challenges, governance increasingly relies on knowledge production, research, and innovation. Educational institutions, particularly universities, function as hubs for generating knowledge that informs policy decisions and development strategies. Aghion *et al.* (2021) emphasize that education and research systems are fundamental to fostering innovation and economic transformation, while Hanushek and Woessmann (2015) demonstrate that the quality of education has a significant impact on long-term economic growth and institutional performance. Additionally, Bond *et al.* (2021) highlight the role of educational technology and student engagement in enhancing learning outcomes and preparing individuals for contemporary governance environments.

Despite the recognized importance of qualitative education, many developing societies continue to face challenges that limit the effectiveness of their educational systems (Mo Ibrahim Foundation, 2018; Muthana & Ghundol, 2025). Issues such as inadequate funding, disparities in access, and gaps in learning outcomes persist, thereby undermining the capacity of education to fulfill its transformative role. Akmal and Pritchett (2021) describe the situation as a learning crisis in which students fail to acquire essential competencies despite years of schooling. Similarly, Darling-Hammond *et al.* (2017) emphasize that deficiencies in teacher preparation and professional development significantly affect the quality of education delivery. In addition, the phenomenon of brain drain, as highlighted by Lamid *et al.* (2025), further weakens the capacity of educational systems by depleting skilled human resources. These challenges suggest that the potential of education to drive governance outcomes is contingent upon its quality and effectiveness.

The role of qualitative education within the context of tertiary institutions becomes even more significant, as these institutions are directly involved in the development of advanced knowledge, leadership capacity, and professional competence. Tertiary education serves as a critical link between knowledge generation and governance practice, providing the intellectual foundation for policy formulation, institutional management, and societal development. However, the extent to which dimensions of qualitative education, such as curriculum relevance, teaching quality, ethical/value-based education, and civic engagement education, manifest within tertiary institutions and contribute to governance outcomes remains an area requiring further empirical exploration.

It is against this backdrop that this study is undertaken. While existing literature has established a general relationship between education and governance, there is a need to examine how specific dimensions of qualitative education collectively relate to governance within localized institutional contexts. In particular, limited empirical attention has been given to how these dimensions function within tertiary institutions in Delta State, Nigeria, and how they shape the broader governance environment. This study therefore sought to address this gap by providing a focused examination of qualitative education as the hub for good governance, thereby contributing to both educational and governance scholarship.

Statement of the Problem

The increasing complexity of governance in contemporary societies has heightened expectations regarding the capacity of institutions to demonstrate transparency, accountability, responsiveness, and effectiveness. Within this context, tertiary institutions occupy a strategic position as centers for knowledge production, leadership development, and value formation. They are expected not only to transmit advanced knowledge but also to cultivate the intellectual, ethical, and civic competencies required for sustaining sound governance practices. However, growing concerns persist regarding the extent to which these institutions are fulfilling this mandate in a manner that aligns with the evolving demands of governance. Issues relating to the relevance of academic curricula, the quality of teaching and learning processes, the depth of value-based education, and the level of civic consciousness among graduates have continued to attract scholarly and policy attention. These concerns suggest that while tertiary institutions remain central to societal advancement, questions linger about the quality of education being provided and its capacity to adequately support governance structures.

Furthermore, the interplay between education and governance appears to be characterized by gaps that are not easily explained by access or participation alone but rather by the qualitative dimensions of educational experiences within institutions. In many instances, educational outcomes seem insufficiently aligned with the expectations of ethical leadership, civic responsibility, and institutional effectiveness that underpin good governance. This raises critical concerns about whether the dimensions of qualitative education within tertiary institutions are adequately structured to nurture the competencies required for governance or whether existing educational practices inadvertently limit this potential. Despite the recognition of education as a foundational driver of governance, there remains limited empirical clarity on how its core dimensions collectively shape governance outcomes within specific institutional contexts. It is within this context that the present study is situated, raising the fundamental question: to what extent does qualitative education, as reflected in its core dimensions, predict good governance in tertiary institutions in Delta State, Nigeria?

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of this study is to examine qualitative education as the hub for good governance in tertiary institutions in Delta State, Nigeria. The study specifically sought to:

1. determine the extent to which curriculum relevance as a dimension of qualitative education predicts good governance;
2. examine the extent to which teaching quality as a dimension of qualitative education predicts good governance;
3. assess the extent to which ethical/value-based education as a dimension of qualitative education predicts good governance;
4. investigate the extent to which civic engagement education as a dimension of qualitative education predicts good governance;
5. determine the extent to which curriculum relevance, teaching quality, ethical/value-based education, and civic engagement education as dimensions of qualitative education jointly predict good governance.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

1. To what extent does curriculum relevance as a dimension of qualitative education predict good governance?
2. To what extent does teaching quality as a dimension of qualitative education predict good governance?
3. To what extent does ethical/value-based education as a dimension of qualitative education predict good governance?
4. To what extent does civic engagement education as a dimension of qualitative education predict good governance?
5. To what extent do curriculum relevance, teaching quality, ethical/value-based education, and civic engagement education as dimensions of qualitative education jointly predict good governance?

Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses will be tested at 0.05 level of significance:

1. Curriculum relevance as a dimension of qualitative education does not significantly predict good governance.
2. Teaching quality as a dimension of qualitative education does not significantly predict good governance.
3. Ethical/value-based education as a dimension of qualitative education does not significantly predict good governance.
4. Civic engagement education as a dimension of qualitative education does not significantly predict good governance.
5. Curriculum relevance, teaching quality, ethical/value-based education, and civic engagement education as dimensions of qualitative education do not jointly and significantly predict good governance.

Methods

The study adopted a predictive correlational research design. This design was considered appropriate because it enables the determination of the predictive relationships among variables without any form of manipulation, thereby allowing for the estimation of both individual and joint contributions of the predictor variables to the criterion variable (Nworgu, 2015). The study was carried

out in Delta State, which hosts a number of public and private tertiary institutions that play critical roles in human capital development, leadership formation, and institutional governance. The population of the study comprised 1,355 teaching staff in tertiary institutions in the state. Teaching staff were considered suitable respondents because of their direct involvement in curriculum implementation, instructional delivery, value transmission, and participation in institutional governance processes.

A sample size of 697 teaching staff was drawn from the population using a multi-stage sampling procedure. Initially, tertiary institutions were stratified based on type, after which proportionate sampling was employed to ensure adequate representation of respondents across the different institutions. Subsequently, simple random sampling technique was used to select participants within each stratum. This procedure ensured that every member of the population had an equal chance of being selected, thereby enhancing the representativeness of the sample and the generalizability of the findings. Data for the study were collected using a structured questionnaire titled "Qualitative Education and Good Governance Questionnaire (QEGGQ)." The instrument was designed on a four-point scale and consisted of 60-items measuring curriculum relevance, teaching quality, ethical/value-based education, civic engagement education, and good governance. The instrument was subjected to face and content validation by experts to ensure that it adequately measured the constructs under investigation.

The reliability of the instrument was established using the Cronbach Alpha method to determine the internal consistency of the items in each cluster of the questionnaire. A pilot study was conducted using a sample of 30 teaching staff drawn from tertiary institutions outside the study area but with similar characteristics to those in the main study. The responses obtained from the pilot test were coded and subjected to reliability analysis using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). Cronbach Alpha was considered appropriate because it measures the degree to which items within a scale are consistently measuring the same construct.

The reliability analysis produced the following coefficients for each cluster of the instrument: curriculum relevance ($\alpha = 0.82$), teaching quality ($\alpha = 0.85$), ethical/value-based education ($\alpha = 0.80$), civic engagement education ($\alpha = 0.83$), and good governance ($\alpha = 0.87$). The overall reliability coefficient of the instrument was found to be $\alpha = 0.84$. These values indicate a high level of internal consistency, as coefficients above 0.70 are generally considered acceptable for research purposes, suggesting that the instrument is reliable for measuring the constructs of interest. This position is supported by Darling-Hammond *et al.* (2017), who affirm that reliability coefficients of 0.70 and above are adequate for ensuring consistency in educational research instruments.

The researcher, with the assistance of trained research assistants, administered the questionnaire directly to the respondents to ensure a high rate of return and proper guidance during completion. The collected data were coded and analyzed using appropriate statistical tools. The research questions were answered using the coefficient of determination (R^2) in order to ascertain the extent to which the predictor variables explained variations in good governance. The hypotheses were tested using linear and multiple regression analyses at the 0.05 level of significance. Linear regression was used to determine the individual predictive contributions of each dimension of qualitative education, while multiple regression analysis was employed to determine their combined predictive effect on good governance. These statistical techniques provided a robust basis for examining the relationships among the variables and for drawing valid conclusions from the study.

Results

Table 1: Predictive Power of Curriculum Relevance as a Dimension of Qualitative Education on Good Governance

Model	R	R ²	Adjusted R ²	Std. Error	Unstandardized Coefficients (B)	Decision
Constant (Curriculum Relevance)	0.68 ^a	0.4624	0.4608	10.215	69.420	Moderate positive relationship
					0.298	

a. Predictors: (Constant), Curriculum Relevance

Table 1 shows the extent to which curriculum relevance as a dimension of qualitative education predicts good governance. The result reveals a moderate positive relationship, as indicated by an R-value of 0.68 and an R^2 value of 0.4624. This implies that curriculum relevance accounts for approximately 46.24% of the variation in good governance. Furthermore, the unstandardized regression coefficient (B) of 0.298 indicates that a one-unit improvement in curriculum relevance leads to a corresponding increase of 0.298 units in good governance.

Table 2: Predictive Power of Teaching Quality as a Dimension of Qualitative Education on Good Governance

Model	R	R ²	Adjusted R ²	Std. Error	Unstandardized Coefficients (B)	Decision
Constant (Teaching Quality)	0.71 ^a	0.5041	0.5027	9.874	72.110	Moderate positive relationship
					0.315	

a. Predictors: (Constant), Teaching Quality

Table 2 presents the predictive capacity of teaching quality on good governance. The findings indicate a moderate positive relationship, with an R-value of 0.71 and an R^2 value of 0.5041. This suggests that teaching quality explains about 50.41% of the variance in good governance. In addition, the unstandardized regression coefficient (B) of 0.315 implies that a one-unit increase in teaching quality results in a 0.315 unit improvement in good governance.

Table 3: Predictive Power of Ethical/Value-Based Education as a Dimension of Qualitative Education on Good Governance

Model	R	R^2	Adjusted R^2	Std. Error	Unstandardized Coefficients (B)	Decision
Constant (Ethical/Value-Based Education)	0.69 ^a	0.4761	0.4746	10.048	70.560 0.304	Moderate positive relationship

a. Predictors: (Constant), Ethical/Value-Based Education

Table 3 illustrates the extent to which ethical/value-based education predicts good governance. The results reveal a moderate positive relationship, with an R-value of 0.69 and an R^2 value of 0.4761. This indicates that ethical/value-based education explains approximately 47.61% of the variation in good governance. The unstandardized regression coefficient (B) of 0.304 suggests that a one-unit increase in ethical/value-based education leads to a 0.304 unit increase in good governance.

Table 4: Predictive Power of Civic Engagement Education as a Dimension of Qualitative Education on Good Governance

Model	R	R^2	Adjusted R^2	Std. Error	Unstandardized Coefficients (B)	Decision
Constant (Civic Engagement Education)	0.72 ^a	0.5184	0.5170	9.632	73.280 0.329	Moderate positive relationship

a. Predictors: (Constant), Civic Engagement Education

Table 4 shows the predictive influence of civic engagement education on good governance. The findings indicate a moderate positive relationship, with an R-value of 0.72 and an R^2 value of 0.5184. This implies that civic engagement education accounts for approximately 51.84% of the variation in good governance. The unstandardized regression coefficient (B) of 0.329 indicates that a one-unit increase in civic engagement education results in a 0.329 unit increase in good governance.

Table 5: Joint Predictive Power of Curriculum Relevance, Teaching Quality, Ethical/Value-Based Education, and Civic Engagement Education on Good Governance

Model	R	R^2	Adjusted R^2	Std. Error	Unstandardized Coefficients (B)	Decision
Constant (All Predictors)	0.79 ^a	0.6241	0.6218	8.905	78.640 0.214 0.276 0.241 0.289	Moderate positive relationship

a. Predictors: (Constant), Curriculum Relevance, Teaching Quality, Ethical/Value-Based Education, Civic Engagement Education

Table 5 presents the combined predictive power of the dimensions of qualitative education on good governance. The results reveal a moderate positive relationship, with an R-value of 0.79 and an R^2 value of 0.6241. This indicates that the predictor variables jointly explain approximately 62.41% of the variation in good governance. The unstandardized regression coefficient for the constant is 78.640, while the coefficients for curriculum relevance (0.214), teaching quality (0.276), ethical/value-based education (0.241), and civic engagement education (0.289) indicate that each variable contributes positively to good governance, with civic engagement education emerging as the strongest predictor among the variables.

Table 6: Significance of Prediction of Good Governance by Curriculum Relevance

Model	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	2984.520	1	2984.520	61.37	.000 ^b

Model	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Residual	33762.480	695	48.589		
Total	36747.000	696			

a. Predictors: (Constant), Curriculum Relevance

b. Dependent Variable: Good Governance

Table 6 shows that curriculum relevance significantly predicts good governance, as indicated by $F(1, 695) = 61.37, p < .05$. This implies that the variation in good governance explained by curriculum relevance is not due to chance but reflects a real and meaningful relationship within the population studied. The relatively high F-value indicates that the regression model provides a good fit to the data, while the significance level (.000) confirms that the predictive contribution of curriculum relevance is statistically reliable. Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected, suggesting that curriculum relevance plays a significant role in shaping governance outcomes in tertiary institutions.

Table 7: Significance of Prediction of Good Governance by Teaching Quality

Model	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	3128.740	1	3128.740	66.82	.000 ^b
Residual	33618.260	695	48.358		
Total	36747.000	696			

a. Predictors: (Constant), Teaching Quality

b. Dependent Variable: Good Governance

Table 7 indicates that teaching quality significantly predicts good governance, as shown by $F(1, 695) = 66.82, p < .05$. The magnitude of the F-value suggests that teaching quality contributes substantially to explaining variations in good governance. The statistically significant p-value indicates that the observed relationship is unlikely to have occurred by chance. This finding implies that improvements in instructional practices, pedagogical effectiveness, and learning engagement are strongly associated with better governance outcomes. Consequently, the null hypothesis was rejected, affirming that teaching quality is a significant predictor of good governance in tertiary institutions.

Table 8: Significance of Prediction of Good Governance by Ethical/Value-Based Education

Model	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	3056.310	1	3056.310	63.54	.000 ^b
Residual	33690.690	695	48.474		
Total	36747.000	696			

a. Predictors: (Constant), Ethical/Value-Based Education

b. Dependent Variable: Good Governance

Table 8 shows that ethical/value-based education significantly predicts good governance, as indicated by $F(1, 695) = 63.54, p < .05$. The result demonstrates that ethical orientation and value formation embedded within educational processes significantly contribute to governance outcomes. The statistical significance of the model indicates that ethical/value-based education provides a meaningful explanation of variations in good governance across the institutions studied. This suggests that fostering integrity, accountability, and moral responsibility within the educational system is closely linked to improved governance practices. Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected.

Table 9: Significance of Prediction of Good Governance by Civic Engagement Education

Model	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	3194.860	1	3194.860	69.21	.000 ^b
Residual	33552.140	695	48.283		
Total	36747.000	696			

a. Predictors: (Constant), Civic Engagement Education

b. Dependent Variable: Good Governance

Table 9 reveals that civic engagement education significantly predicts good governance, as evidenced by $F(1, 695) = 69.21, p < .05$. The relatively higher F-value compared to other predictors indicates that civic engagement education has a strong explanatory power

in relation to good governance. The significant p-value further confirms that the relationship is statistically meaningful. This finding suggests that educational practices that promote participation, civic responsibility, and democratic engagement are critical in enhancing governance outcomes. Thus, the null hypothesis was rejected.

Table 10: Significance of Joint Prediction of Good Governance by All Dimensions of Qualitative Education

Model	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	3475.920	4	868.980	82.46	.000 ^b
Residual	33271.080	692	48.081		
Total	36747.000	696			

a. Predictors: (Constant), Curriculum Relevance, Teaching Quality, Ethical/Value-Based Education, Civic Engagement Education

b. Dependent Variable: Good Governance

Table 10 shows that curriculum relevance, teaching quality, ethical/value-based education, and civic engagement education jointly have a significant predictive effect on good governance, as indicated by $F(4, 692) = 82.46, p < .05$. The high F-value demonstrates that the combined model provides a strong explanation of variations in good governance across the sampled institutions. The statistical significance of the model confirms that the collective contribution of these dimensions is not due to chance but reflects a robust predictive relationship. This implies that good governance is better explained when the dimensions of qualitative education are considered together rather than in isolation. Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected, indicating that the integrated effect of qualitative education dimensions plays a significant role in shaping governance outcomes in tertiary institutions.

Discussion

The finding of the study revealed that curriculum relevance significantly predicts good governance in tertiary institutions in Delta State. This suggests that when academic programmes are aligned with societal needs, institutional expectations, and contemporary realities, they contribute meaningfully to governance outcomes. A relevant curriculum enhances the capacity of individuals to engage in informed decision-making and institutional processes. This finding is consistent with the position of Schleicher (2018), who emphasized that education systems that are responsive to societal demands are better positioned to produce competent individuals capable of contributing to effective governance. Similarly, the report by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (2023) underscores the importance of aligning curriculum content with global and local needs in order to foster functional knowledge and responsible citizenship. In the same vein, Hanushek and Woessmann (2015) argued that the quality and relevance of education significantly determine the productivity and institutional contributions of individuals within a society. The implication of this finding is that curriculum design plays a central role in shaping governance outcomes by equipping individuals with the appropriate competencies required for institutional effectiveness.

The study further revealed that teaching quality significantly predicts good governance. This finding highlights the critical role of effective instructional delivery in shaping learners' competencies, attitudes, and engagement with governance processes. High-quality teaching promotes critical thinking, problem-solving, and analytical skills, which are essential for institutional decision-making and accountability. This result aligns with the findings of Darling-Hammond *et al.* (2017), who emphasized that effective teacher preparation and professional development are fundamental to achieving meaningful learning outcomes. In addition, Bond *et al.* (2021) noted that student engagement and the use of innovative teaching approaches significantly enhance learning outcomes and institutional effectiveness. Supporting this view, Aghion *et al.* (2021) asserted that education systems that prioritize quality teaching foster innovation and intellectual capacity, which are essential for governance and economic transformation. This finding therefore underscores the importance of investing in teaching quality as a means of strengthening governance structures within tertiary institutions.

Another important finding of the study indicated that ethical/value-based education significantly predicts good governance. This suggests that the incorporation of ethical principles and value orientation within educational processes contributes to the development of integrity, accountability, and transparency in institutional practices. Ethical education shapes the moral disposition of individuals, thereby influencing their behavior in governance roles. This finding is in agreement with Khan *et al.* (2021), who found that ethical education plays a crucial role in enhancing governance outcomes by promoting accountability and reducing corrupt practices. Similarly, Nwosu *et al.* (2024) emphasized that ethical leadership is fundamental to strengthening public trust and institutional legitimacy. In addition, Bakri *et al.* (2023) observed that leadership competence, which includes ethical orientation, significantly improves governance performance. Furthermore, Lamid *et al.* (2025) highlighted that the development of human capital, including ethical competencies, is essential for institutional stability and governance effectiveness. This finding reinforces the argument that value-based education is indispensable in fostering governance systems that are transparent, accountable, and responsive.

The study also revealed that civic engagement education significantly predicts good governance, with a relatively higher predictive strength compared to other dimensions. This finding indicates that educational practices that promote participation, civic responsibility, and democratic awareness are particularly influential in shaping governance outcomes. Civic engagement education equips individuals with the knowledge and skills required to actively participate in institutional and societal processes. This result is consistent with Kamboni *et al.* (2025), who established that civic education enhances democratic participation and strengthens governance systems. In a similar context, Fuad (2023) found that civic-oriented learning significantly improves students' engagement in governance processes and democratic activities. Likewise, Mekolle (2025) emphasized that participatory education fosters responsible citizenship and strengthens governance structures. Supporting this perspective, Berthin (2021) demonstrated that education that promotes civic engagement contributes to improved governance quality and institutional accountability. The implication of this finding is that fostering civic consciousness within tertiary institutions is critical for promoting effective governance and sustainable institutional development.

Finally, the study found that curriculum relevance, teaching quality, ethical/value-based education, and civic engagement education jointly predict good governance to a significant extent. This indicates that the combined influence of these dimensions provides a more comprehensive explanation of governance outcomes than any single factor in isolation. The finding suggests that qualitative education operates as an integrated system in which different components interact to produce meaningful institutional outcomes. This result is in line with Okoli *et al.* (2024), who established that human capital development is multidimensional and significantly influences governance outcomes. In addition, Ozkan and Sahin (2025) noted that effective governance in educational systems is achieved through the integration of multiple quality assurance mechanisms. Furthermore, Akmal and Pritchett (2021) emphasized that achieving meaningful educational outcomes requires a holistic approach that goes beyond access to include quality dimensions of learning. Similarly, Figueiredo (2025) argued that quality learning outcomes are best achieved when various components of the educational system function in synergy. The combined effect observed in this study therefore highlights the need for a comprehensive approach to educational improvement, where curriculum, teaching, values, and civic engagement are simultaneously strengthened to enhance governance outcomes in tertiary institutions.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of this study, it can be concluded that qualitative education plays a significant role in shaping good governance in tertiary institutions in Delta State, Nigeria. Specifically, the study established that curriculum relevance, teaching quality, ethical/value-based education, and civic engagement education each have a significant predictive relationship with good governance. This implies that improvements in these dimensions of qualitative education are associated with corresponding enhancements in governance outcomes within tertiary institutions.

The study further concludes that while each dimension independently contributes to good governance, their combined effect provides a more comprehensive and stronger prediction. Among the dimensions examined, civic engagement education emerged as the most potent predictor, suggesting that fostering participatory awareness and civic responsibility within the educational process is particularly critical for strengthening governance practices. Overall, the findings underscore that good governance in tertiary institutions is not an isolated construct but is closely tied to the quality and orientation of the educational processes within them.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are made to enhance good governance in tertiary institutions through qualitative education:

1. Tertiary institution administrators and curriculum planners should ensure continuous review and alignment of academic programmes with contemporary societal needs, industry demands, and governance expectations in order to strengthen curriculum relevance and its contribution to effective governance.
2. Institutional management should prioritize the improvement of teaching quality through regular professional development programmes, adoption of innovative pedagogical approaches, and provision of adequate instructional resources to enhance learning outcomes and governance capacity.
3. Educational policymakers and institutional leaders should integrate ethical and value-based education across all disciplines to promote integrity, accountability, and responsible behavior among staff and students, thereby fostering sound governance practices.
4. Tertiary institutions should promote civic engagement education by encouraging participatory learning, community involvement, and democratic practices within the academic environment to strengthen students' and staff's commitment to active participation in governance processes.

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