# African Research Review

# Strategies for Ensuring Quality in the Business Education Programme of Tertiary Institutions in Anambra State

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## Abstract

*The main purpose of this paper was to identify those strategies needed to ensure quality in the business education programme in tertiary institutions in Anambra State. The survey method was employed. One research question guided the study while two null hypotheses were tested at 0.05 degree of significance. A structured questionnaire was used to gather data for the study. The study population comprised 71 business teachers in tertiary institutions in Anambra State. Data collected was analysed using mean statistics while the null hypotheses were analysed using ANOVA. Based on the findings of the study, it was concluded that the adoption of strategies such as quality of syllabus and provision of requisite infrastructure and facilities to the business education programme will ensure qualitative education.*

**Key Words:** Quality assurance, Strategies, Business Education Programme.

## Introduction

Quality assurance has been defined as the systematic management and assessment procedures adopted by higher education institutions and systems in order to monitor performance against objectives, and to ensure achievement of quality outputs and quality improvement (Harman, 2000).

Quality assurance clearly emerged as a principal business method in the Western world throughout the 1950's and in the early 1960's. The topic of quality assurance (QA) has always been of utmost importance, originally, in business but now also in education and other public service sectors. Quality remains the most important attribute that creates value about a product or service for the receiver. It is also the means by which business or service providers differentiate themselves from their competitors.

Since businesses are leaders in quality assurance, non-business organizations such as educational institutions can benefit from the important lessons learnt by business. Indeed, QA has implicitly pre-dominated all walks of life from industry, service centre and hospitals to education. The need for quality has therefore proved to be the decisive factor in determining the success or failure of many products and services throughout the development of society although it has often been implied rather than explicitly analyzed and measured. Adaptation of the most successful and relevant strategies would help educational institutions in creating higher standards of quality in education.

The increasing demands for good quality higher education by students and society imply that higher education now face similar pressures that the business sector has been facing for decades. These implications often become more serious for higher institutions that lack the finance and infrastructural resources and have recognition issues, as well as stronger competition from local, distance and international educational institutions. Higher education will continue to play an ever more important role in modern society. If anything,

the demand for educated citizens and critical analyses of society will increase. Every possible change should be made in the organization and methods in business education programme of tertiary institutions in order to improve students' learning, to handle an increased number of students and to give adequate support to new categories of students. Quality does not require doing the same things that have always been done, but finding new ways to achieve the goals that have always been there. A number of terminologies have been developed and used to refer to similar ideas of improving the quality of higher education, such as quality assessment, quality improvement, and quality development (Harman 2000) Brennan & Shah (2000); Hopkin & Lee (2001) Goshing & D Andrea (2001). The quality assurance concerns of institutions are important as they choose partners and create joint ventures for the design, development and delivery of education. They are also interested in the university ability to work globally and enter new markets and quality of service offered in terms of customer focus, flexibility and responsiveness.

Assuring the quality of education provision is a fundamental aspect of gaining and maintaining credibility for programmes, institutions and national systems of higher education worldwide. Quality assurance is designed to prove and improve the quality of an institutions methods, and educational products and outcomes. Oyebede, Oladipo & Adetoro (2008); Zelvys, (2004) perceived that the concept of quality has been one of the most important concepts in contemporary educational terminology. Many educationists have attempted to define the quality of education and educational quality. Qualities are defined by the international organization of standardization (1994) as the totality of features and characteristics of a product or service that bear on its ability to satisfy stated needs. According to Article II of the World Declaration on Education (2003), quality is a multidimensional concept which should encompass all the functions and activities in school space. Allele-Williams (2004) defined quality assurance in any educational institution as that which indicates the pre-eminence and special features that makes the institution distinct

from other forms of institutions. Ndili (1988) and Tovey (1994) described the quality of education as dealing with issues of delivery, validity, functionalism and efficiency of education system in the achievement of national goals and objectives. Okafor (1990) explains that the word quality refers to the degree of goodness and excellence in the education sector.

Oderinde (2004) enumerated two aspects of quality in education which are both internal and external. The internal aspect is the implementations of the school objectives while the external aspect deals with the implementation of national objectives, which are pre-requisites to the achievement of quality in any educational institution. A systematic and consistent quality assurance system helps to establish an institutions good reputation and image. It includes defined standards of achievement, documented procedures for all identified process, established ways of responding to issues and clear accountability for outcomes. It results to greater public confidence, more satisfied students, efficient processes and staff who are confident in their jobs. Students are more likely to experience better quality instructions, learning material and interactions with the institution and its staff, leading to enhanced learning outcomes. Middlehurst (2001) described the scope of quality assurance as

(a)     Regulation, legal frameworks, governance, responsibilities and accountabilities etc.

(b)     Educational process (admissions, registration or enrolment, curriculum design and content (validation and approval frameworks, levels and standards etc).

(c)     Learning experience (consumer protection, students (experience, complaints and appeals etc).

(d)     Outcomes (qualifications, certificates, transcripts, security, transferability, recognition/currency, and value etc).

In summary, Middlehurst sees quality as a grade of achievements, a standard against which to judge others. Quality may also     be

considered on the basis of how good and efficient the teachers are, how adequate and accessible the facilities and materials needed for effective teaching and learning are, and how prepared the graduates are for meeting the challenges of life and for solving societal problems. Thus, quality assurance is the guarantee of confidence and certainty by a programme of study given by an institution that standards and quality are being maintained and enhanced. By this conceptual understanding, it can be said that the emphasis on quality assurance is the training of personnel to enhance performance in work places.

To establish and maintain high quality standards, tertiary institutions have a shared responsibility in addressing the following key areas according to Adedipe (2007):

1. Minimum academic standard
2. Accreditation
3. Carrying capacity and admission quota
4. Visitation
5. Impact assessment
6. Research and development
7. Publications and research assessment
8. Structures, infrastructures and utilities

The need for quality teaching and learning in higher education has been felt all over the world. The NUC Act of (2004) brought with it increasing concerns about how universities perform and the quality and services they provide. Chacha (2004) observed that globally, the environment of higher education is facing relentless and rapid change.

Quality assurance is a continuous process by which an institution can guarantee that standard and quality of its educational provisions are being maintained or enhanced (Standa 2008). Quality remains the most important attribute that creates value about the product or service for the receiver. It is also the means by which business service providers differentiate themselves from their competitors. Since businesses are leaders in quality assurance, non-business

organizations such as educational institutions can benefit from the important lessons learnt by business. The adoption of quality assurance systems has therefore been considered by some scholars as a strategic decision by educational institutions to ensure delivery of quality service. The problem of this study therefore, is that there seem to be no guarantee that standards and quality of educational provisions are being maintained in the business education programme of tertiary institutions in Anambra State. The purpose of the study was to ascertain the strategies for ensuring quality in the business education programme of tertiary institutions in Anambra State.

The following research question guided the study

1      What strategies are adopted by tertiary institutions in Anambra State to ensure quality of business education programme?

The following null hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance

1      Business educators in Federal, State and Private tertiary institutions in Anambra State do not differ significantly in their mean ratings on strategies for ensuring quality of business education programme in the state.

2      Experienced and less experienced business educators do not differ significantly in their mean ratings regarding the strategies for ensuring quality of business education programme in tertiary institutions in Anambra State

**Method**

The population of the study comprised all the educators in all the tertiary institutions in Anambra State offering business education courses. These included:

- ➢ Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka
- ➢ Nwafor Orizu College of Education, Nsugbe
- ➢ Federal College of Education (Tech.) Umunze
- ➢ Madonna University, Okija

➢ Anambra State University, Uli

The total population of business educators in these institutions was 71.

Due to the manageable size of the population, no sample was drawn.

The research instrument was a structured questionnaire based on the formulated research question. The instrument was designed to elicit the responses of the respondents on the strategies for ensuring quality in the business education programme of tertiary institutions in Anambra State. The instrument was both face and content validated by three experts in Business Education.

A total of 71 copies of the questionnaire were administered by the researchers and the four research assistants. Data collected were analysed using mean ratings while the hypothesis was tested at 0.05 level of significance using ANOVA.

The survey instrument used for this study was subjected to tests of internal consistency using the test-retest method. The questionnaire was administered to 10 business educators from institutions outside of the study area (i.e) (Eastern State of Nigeria).

**Results**

**Research Question:** What strategies are adopted by tertiary institutions in Anambra State to ensure the quality of business education programme?

**Table 1:** Respondents' Mean Rating on Strategies Adopted by Tertiary Institutions in Anambra State to Ensure Quality of Business Education Programmes.

| S/N | Strategies | $\overline{X}$ | SD | Remark |
|-----|-----------|------|------|--------|
| 1 | Quality of syllabus | 3.59 | 0.05 | Accept |
| 2 | Quality faculty members | 3.39 | 0.60 | Accept |
| 3 | Disciplined students and teachers | 3.42 | 0.62 | Accept |
| 4 | Selective admission of students | 3.08 | 0.86 | Accept |
| 5 | Provision of requisite infrastructure and facilities | 3.62 | 0.57 | Accept |
| 6 | Choose appropriate media | 3.28 | 0.57 | Accept |
| 7 | Appropriate curriculum design and oversight | 3.42 | 0.50 | Accept |
| 8 | Appropriate student guidance | 3.23 | 0.59 | Accept |
| 9 | Appropriate assessment of students' performance | 3.46 | 0.58 | Accept |
| 10 | Appropriate academic planning and coordination | 3.39 | 0.64 | Accept |
| 11 | Choose appropriate media and offer balance in their use | 3.21 | 0.81 | Accept |
| 12 | Carefully time the provision of guidance to students, the level of skill development and amount and positioning of interactivity in a course | 3.17 | 0.76 | Accept |
| 13 | Effective management of interactive learning | 3.17 | 0.76 | Accept |
| 14 | Appropriate staff work load | 3.38 | 0.64 | Accept |
| 15 | Provision of high level of support | 3.56 | 0.66 | Accept |

| 16 | Allocation of more time for research and development and for motivation in teaching because of the complexity of education | 3.13 | 0.84 | Accept |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 17 | Provision for regular feedback on the results of evaluation studies | 3.38 | 0.52 | Accept |
| 18 | Effective communication among stakeholders | 3.24 | 0.69 | Accept |
| 19 | Team work | 3.29 | 0.66 | Accept |
| 20 | Staff motivation | 3.20 | 0.95 | Accept |
| 21 | Engaging staff and students in decision-making | 3.07 | 0.74 | Accept |
| 22 | Adequate lecture room | 3.38 | 0.57 | Accept |
| 23 | Adequate laboratory equipment | 3.32 | 0.58 | Accept |
| 24 | Availability of requisite ICT facilities | 3.42 | 0.71 | Accept |
| 25 | Adequate library space | 3.49 | 0.72 | Accept |
| 26 | Availability of internet facilities | 3.33 | 0.72 | Accept |
| | **Average of Means** | 3.34 | 0.41 | Accept |

Information in Table 1 indicates that the respondents accepted all the items in the questionnaire as being essential strategies for ensuring quality in the business education programme of tertiary institutions in Anambra State.

**Table 2: Analysis of Variance of the Responses of Business Educators From Federal, State and Private Tertiary Institution on Strategies for Ensuring Quality of Business Education Programmes**

| | | Sum of squares | df | Mean Square | f-cal | Sign. | Decision |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Quality of syllabus | Between groups | 1.043 | 2 | .521 | 2.200 | .119 | |
| | Within groups | 16.112 | 68 | .237 | | | Rejected |
| | Total | 17.155 | 70 | | | | |
| | Between groups | .682 | 2 | .341 | .956 | .390 | |
| Quality faculty members | Within groups | 24.275 | 68 | .357 | | | |
| | Total | 24.958 | 70 | | .686 | .507 | Rejected |
| | Between groups | .540 | 2 | .270 | | | |
| Disciplined students and teachers | Within groups | 26.784 | 68 | .394 | | | |
| | Total | 27.324 | 70 | | | | Rejected |
| | Between groups | 2.667 | 2 | 1.333 | 1.857 | .164 | |
| Selective admission of students | Within groups | 48.826 | 68 | .718 | | | |
| | Total | 51.493 | 70 | | | | Accepted |
| | Between groups | .073 | 2 | 0.37 | .110 | .896 | |
| Provision of requisite infrastructure and facilities | Within groups | 22.659 | 68 | .333 | | | |
| | Total | 22.732 | 70 | | | | |
| | Between groups | .015 | 2 | .007 | .022 | .978 | Accepted |
| Choose appropriate media | Within groups | 22.352 | 68 | .329 | | | |
| | Total | 22.366 | 70 | | | | Rejected |
| | Between groups | 2.042 | 2 | 1.021 | 4.544 | .014 | |

| | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Appropriate curriculum design and oversight | Within groups | 15.282 | 68 | .225 | | | |
| | Total | 17.324 | 70 | | | | Accepted |
| | Between groups | .335 | 2 | .168 | .473 | .625 | |
| Appropriate student guidance | Within groups | 24.059 | 68 | .354 | | | |
| | Total | 24.394 | 70 | | | | Rejected |
| | Between groups | 1.550 | 2 | .775 | 2.383 | .1.00 | |
| Appropriate assessment of students' performance | Within groups | 22.112 | 68 | .325 | | | |
| | Total | 23.662 | 70 | | | | Rejected |
| | Between groups | .674 | 2 | .337 | .810 | .449 | |
| Appropriate academic planning and coordination | Within groups | 28.284 | 68 | .416 | | | |
| | Total | 28.958 | 70 | | | | |
| | Between groups | 2.166 | 2 | 1.083 | 1.686 | .193 | Rejected |
| Choose appropriate media and offer balance in their use | Within groups | 43.665 | 68 | .642 | | | |
| | Total | 45.831 | 70 | | | | Rejected |
| | Between groups | 4.557 | 2 | 2.278 | 4.374 | .016 | |
| Carefully time the provision of guidance to students, the level of skill development and amount and positioning of interactivity in a course | Within groups | 35.415 | 68 | .521 | | | |
| | Total | 39.972 | 70 | | | | Rejected |
| | Between groups | 2.169 | 2 | 1.084 | 2.978 | .058 | |
| Effective management of interactive learning | Within groups | 24.761 | 68 | .364 | | | |
| | Total | 26.930 | 70 | | | | Rejected |
| | Between groups | .698 | 2 | .349 | .847 | .433 | |
| Appropriate staff work load | Within groups | 28.034 | 68 | .412 | . | | |
| | Total | 28.732 | 70 | | | | Accepted |
| | Between groups | 10.583 | 2 | 5.292 | .389 | .679 | |

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|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Provision of high level of support | Within groups | 924.881 | 68 | 13.601 | | | |
| | Total | 935.465 | 70 | | | | Rejected |
| | Between groups | 11.910 | 2 | 5.955 | 10.671 | .000 | |
| Allocation of more time for research and development and for motivation in teaching because of the complexity of education | Within groups | 37.949 | 68 | .558 | | | |
| | Total | 49.859 | 70 | | | | Rejected |
| | Between groups | .582 | 2 | .291 | 1.090 | .342 | |
| Provision for regular feedback on the results of evaluation studies | Within groups | 18.150 | 68 | .267 | | | |
| | Total | 18.732 | 70 | | | | Rejected |
| | Between groups | 2.743 | 2 | 1.372 | 3.090 | .052 | |
| Effective communication among stakeholders | Within groups | 30.186 | 68 | .444 | | | |
| | Total | 32.930 | 70 | | | | Rejected |
| | Between groups | 4.638 | 2 | 2.319 | 6.031 | .004 | |
| Team work | Within groups | 26.150 | 68 | .385 | | | |
| | Total | 30.789 | 70 | | | | Rejected |
| | Between groups | 4.354 | 2 | 2.177 | 2.514 | .088 | |
| Staff motivation | Within groups | 58.886 | 68 | .866 | | | |
| | Total | 63.239 | 70 | | | | Rejected |
| | Between groups | 1.966 | 2 | .983 | 1.822 | .170 | |
| Engaging staff and students in decision making | Within groups | 36.682 | 68 | .539 | | | |
| | Total | 38.648 | 70 | | | | Rejected |
| | Between groups | .698 | 2 | .349 | 1.078 | .346 | |
| Adequate lecture room | Within groups | 22.034 | 68 | .324 | | | |
| | Total | 22.732 | 70 | | | | Accepted |

| | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Adequate laboratory equipment | Within groups | 23.258 | 68 | .342 | | | |
| | Total | 23.549 | 70 | | | | Rejected |
| | Between groups | .902 | 2 | .451 | .891 | .415 | |
| | | | | | | | |
| Availability of requisite ICT facilities | Within groups | 34.422 | 68 | .506 | | | |
| | Total | 35.324 | 70 | | | | Rejected |
| | Between groups | 1.410 | 2 | .705 | 1.691 | .192 | |
| | | | | | | | |
| Adequate library space | Within groups | 28.337 | 68 | .417 | | | |
| | Total | 29.746 | 70 | | | | Rejected |
| | Between groups | 4.167 | 2 | 2.083 | 4.466 | .015 | |
| | | | | | | | |
| Availability of internet facilities | Within groups | 31.720 | 68 | .466 | | | |
| | Total | 35.887 | 70 | | | | Rejected |
| | Between groups | .219 | 2 | .109 | .636 | .532 | |

## Discussion of findings

The data presented in Table 1 shows that the respondents accepted all the items in the questionnaire as being essential strategies for ensuring quality in the business education programme of tertiary institutions in Anambra State. This shows that if these strategies are adopted, quality business education will be ensured. Harman (2000) rightly observed that assuring quality is the systematic management and assessment procedures adopted by higher education institutions and systems in order to monitor performance against objectives, and to ensure achievement of quality outputs and quality improvement.

## Conclusion

This study has actually established the fact that the adoption of credible strategies to ensure quality in the business education programmes in tertiary institutions in Anambra State will help to ensure qualitative education.

## Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the business education programme of tertiary institutions in Anambra State, should adopt all these strategies to ensure qualitative business education programme. Quality remains the most important attribute that creates value about the product or service for the receiver.

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