
Students' Evaluation as an Index for Quality Assurance in Technical Colleges in Akwa Ibom State

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ABSTRACT

The main purpose of the study was to examine students' evaluation as an index for quality assurance in technical colleges in Akwa Ibom State. Descriptive survey research design was adopted for this study. The population of the study comprised 4010 ST2 students. A sample size of 364 students was used for the study. Three (3) Technical Colleges were randomly selected for the study through Cluster sampling technique. A 10-item instrument entitled, 'Students' Evaluation and Quality Assurance Questionnaire (SEQAQ)' was used for data collection. The instrument was submitted to three experts for face validation. Cronbach Alpha statistical method was used to determine the internal consistency of the instrument. A reliability coefficient of 0.80 was obtained and the instrument was considered appropriate for use in the study. Linear regression statistical tool was used to answer the research questions and to test the null hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. The study revealed that provision of instructional facilities accounted for quality assurance in technical colleges in Akwa Ibom State. Furthermore, the study revealed that teachers' attitude to work accounted for quality assurance in technical colleges in Akwa Ibom State. It was recommended among others that adequate instructional facilities should be provided by the government for use during the teaching-learning process.

KEYWORDS: Quality assurance, Innovation, Evaluation, Instructional facilities, Learning, Teachers' attitude

Introduction

Quality assurance practices are a series of events, affairs, processes, services that are rendered to ensure that there is proper control, organization, and coordination of school activities to meet the expected quality. Quality assurance practices are actions taken to view the quality requirements, auditing the results of control measures, and the analysis of the performance of both staff and students in order to ensure that appropriate quality standards and procedures are appropriately implemented in the school. The rationale behind quality assurance practice in

schools is to ensure that planned policies, programmes, and activities are driven to meet best practices. Looney and Clemson (2018) asserted that quality assurance consists of the systematic review of educational programmes and processes to maintain and improve their quality, equity, and efficiency.

Quality assurance involves the systematic review of educational programmes and processes to maintain and improve their quality, equity and efficiency. While the design of quality assurance mechanisms (tools, processes and actors) varies across national contexts, their common objective is to improve teaching and learning – with the ultimate goal to support the best outcomes for learners. Quality assurance approaches can include mechanisms that are external and internal to schools. External mechanisms may include national or regional school evaluations and/or large-scale student evaluation. Internal mechanisms may include school self-evaluation, staff appraisal and classroom-based students' assessments. These mechanisms have different but complementary purposes. Ideally, they are part of a coherent, integrated system, with the different mechanisms supporting and reinforcing each other. This kind of productive synergy can ensure a clear focus on school development, providing data on aspects such as school climate and the well-being of all members of the school community, effective teaching and learning, and the impact of innovations.

Quality assurance is important for accountability as well as to support on-going development of schools and of teaching and learning. Well-functioning systems have mechanisms to support and balance vertical and horizontal, internal and external accountability. Quality assurance that is focused on development supports schools to adapt to the ever changing needs of the learners. The focus is not only on improvement but also on innovation – that is, the development or experimental testing of approaches in different contexts -- to support quality, equity and efficiency. Approaches to quality assurance may need to be adapted, over time, to better meet needs for feedback and decision-making across systems.

Evaluation, on the other hand, has been perceived to be a ubiquitous entity as it permeates all facets of scholarship such as law, school programmes, hospital and medical practices, school curriculum, and agricultural extension services (Abe, 2010). Stufflebeam and Shinkfield (2007) described evaluation as the society's most fundamental discipline and went on to define it as a process for giving attestation on such matters as reliability, effectiveness, cost effectiveness, efficiency, ease of use and probity which serves the need of the society by providing affirmation of worth, value, improvement, accreditation and accountability. Evaluation is a periodic, objective, assessment of a planned programme, complete project, or policy. In practice, evaluation is used as a tool for decision-making on how to improve on group's programme. According to Imas and Rist (2009), evaluation can be used to address such questions as: what is taking place (descriptive question); normative question such as comparing what is taking place with what should be taking place to achieve quality assurance. Evaluation will therefore appraise the status of change brought about by the students and the institution. It will also expose students' needs and possibilities.

Students' evaluation provides the stakeholders in technical colleges (i.e. the students, the government, Alumni Associations, PTA, the civil society, and private sector) with much desired extent to which the institutions are meeting the objectives of their establishment. Students' evaluation builds greater transparency and accountability in terms of use of available resources in assuring quality in the institutions (Abe, 2010). Students' evaluation of quality assurance in technical colleges covers such areas as provision of instructional facilities and teachers' attitude to work.

Provision of instructional facilities has been observed as a potent factor to quality education. The importance of the provision and utilization of adequate instructional facilities for teaching and learning cannot be over-emphasized. The dictum that “teaching is inseparable from learning but learning is separable from teaching” is that teachers do the teaching to make the students learn, but students can learn without the teachers. According to Hopkins (2003), learning can occur through one’s interaction with one’s environment. Environment here refers to facilities that are available to facilitate students’ learning outcome. It includes bookshelves on which instruments for practical are arranged, audio-visual, software and hardware of educational technology; size of classroom, sitting position and arrangement, availability of tables, chairs, chalkboards, (Looney, 2009).

According to O’Day (2002), facilities constitute a strategic factor in organizational functioning. This is so because they determine, to a very large extent, the smooth functioning of any social organization or system including education. O’Day further stated that their availability, adequacy and relevance influence efficiency and high productivity. Imas and Rist (2009) opined that the wealth of a nation or society could determine the quality of education in that land; emphasizing that a society that is wealthy will establish good schools with quality teachers where there are learning infrastructures, students learn with ease thus bringing about good academic achievement. Writing on the role of facilities in teaching, Suffleabeam and Shinkfield (2007) submitted that no effective teaching activity can exist without equipment for teaching. This is because facilities enable the learner to develop problem-solving skills and scientific attitudes. In their contribution, Looney and Clemson (2018) reiterated that when facilities are provided to meet relative needs of a school system, students will not only have access to the reference materials mentioned by the teacher, but individual students will also learn at their own pace. The net effect of this is increased overall academic performance of the entire students.

Teachers’ attitude to work can pose serious challenges in an attempt to implement the curriculum. Marete (2014) contended that teachers are attracted to motivation, job satisfaction and staff development because they believe that these factors will contribute to enhancing their wellbeing which in turn will aid in imparting knowledge, skills and attitude to the students, contributing to their growth, development and academic improvement. Muthoni (2014) supported the view of Okumbe (2001) that when supervisors take into consideration teachers’ needs and expectations in planning for staff development activities, then the likelihood of these needs being met is high. Adikinyi (2007) noted that supervision is also likely to create an enabling environment for teachers to be dedicated to their work as they are being monitored routinely. Secondly, supervision helps the teachers to improve their attitude towards classroom practices, thereby enhancing learning activities. Muthoni (2014) puts it clearly that good attitude of teachers could work wonders in students’ performance improvement. Carrel (2011) insisted that motivation of teachers was a crucial component of improving their attitude towards teaching. Some areas in which the school is expected to maintain standards for quality assurance to be obtained in education include: Firstly, the inspector has to safeguard the effective implementation of the school curriculum. Secondly, the inspectorate should administratively ensure that technical colleges are conducive for learning in terms of provision of resources and facilities that create effective learning environments. Thirdly, the school inspectors should ensure that schools satisfy the needs of the society in terms of quality, relevance and equity. According to Marete (2014), the free basic education can only bring forth quality education if at all there would be comprehensive supervision

on infrastructure, methodologies of teaching, adequate preparation by teachers, marking of pupils' work and positive attitude of teachers during curriculum delivery.

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of the study was to examine students' evaluation as an index for quality assurance in technical colleges in Akwa Ibom State. Specifically, the study examined:

1. The extent to which provision of instructional facilities predict quality assurance in technical colleges in Akwa Ibom State.
2. The extent to which teachers' attitude to work predict quality assurance in technical colleges in Akwa Ibom State.

Research Questions

1. To what extent does provision of instructional facilities predict quality assurance in technical colleges in Akwa Ibom State?
2. To what extent does teachers' attitude to work predicts quality assurance in technical colleges in Akwa Ibom State?

Research Hypotheses

1. Provision of instructional facilities does not significantly predict quality assurance in technical colleges in Akwa Ibom State.
2. Teachers' attitude to work does not significantly predict quality assurance in technical colleges in Akwa Ibom State.

Methodology

Descriptive survey research design was adopted for this study. The study area is Akwa Ibom State. The population of this study comprised 4010 ST2 students in the 7 Technical Colleges in Akwa Ibom State (State Technical Schools Management Board, 2019). A sample size of 364 students was used for the study. Three (3) technical colleges were randomly selected for the study through Cluster sampling technique. A 10-item instrument entitled 'Students' Evaluation and Quality Assurance Questionnaire (SEQAQ)' was used for data collection. Four-point rating scale was used and scored as follows: Very Great Extent (VGE) – 4, Great Extent (GE) – 3, Little Extent (LE) – 2, Very Little Extent (VLE) – 1. The instrument was submitted to three experts for face validation. Cronbach Alpha statistical method was used to determine the internal consistency of the instrument. A reliability coefficient of 0.80 was obtained and the instrument was considered appropriate for use in the study. The researcher administered the questionnaire on the respondents in the 3 selected Technical Colleges. Linear regression statistical tool was used to answer the research questions and to test the null hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. The null hypotheses were retained where the p-value is greater than 0.05 level of significance and rejected where the p-value is less than or equal to 0.05 level of significance.

Results and Discussion

Results

Research question 1

To what extent does provision of instructional facilities predict quality assurance in technical colleges in Akwa Ibom State?

Table 1: Simple linear regression on the extent to which provision of instructional facilities predicts quality assurance in technical colleges

Variables	β	R	R Square	Adjusted r square
Provision of Instructional facilities (x)	0.31			
		0.38	0.202	0.088
Quality assurance in technical colleges (y)	0.53			

Table 1 shows that the coefficient of β are $x = 0.31$, $y = 0.53$. This indicates that for every unit rise in provision of instructional facilities, quality assurance in technical college increases by 0.53 units. The R coefficient (0.38) is the linear correlation with a weak value, which indicates a weak but positive influence of provision of instructional facilities on quality assurance in technical colleges. The R^2 correlation coefficient of (0.202) shows that only 20.2% variation in quality assurance in technical colleges is explained by provision of instructional facilities.

Research question 2

To what extent does teachers' attitude to work predict quality assurance in technical colleges in Akwa Ibom State?

Table 2: Simple linear regression on the extent to which teachers' attitude to work predicts quality assurance in technical colleges

Variables	β	R	R Square	Adjusted r square
Teachers' attitude to work (x)	0.28			
		0.51	0.610	0.522
Quality assurance (y)	0.53			

Table 2 shows that the coefficient of β are $x = 0.28$, $y = 0.53$. This indicates that for every unit rise in teachers' attitude to work, quality assurance in technical colleges increases by 0.53 units. The R coefficient (0.51) is the linear correlation with a strong value, which indicates a strong and positive influence of teachers' attitude to work on quality assurance in technical colleges. The R^2 correlation coefficient of (0.610) shows that 61.0% variation in quality assurance in technical colleges is explained by teachers' attitude to work.

Research Hypothesis 1

Provision of instructional facilities does not significantly predict quality assurance in technical colleges in Akwa Ibom State.

Table 3: Result of regressing provision of instructional facilities and quality assurance in technical colleges

Source of Variation	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F-cal	p-value	Decision at p<.05
Regression	211.900	1	218.439			
				6.54	0.03	*
Residual	1811.644	362	28.315			
Total	2023.544	363				

*= significant at p<.05

Table 3 shows that the p-value (0.03) is less than 0.05 level of significance. The null hypothesis which states that provision of instructional facilities does not significantly predict quality assurance in technical colleges is rejected. Therefore, the result is significant. This means that provision of instructional facilities accounted for quality assurance in technical colleges in Akwa Ibom State.

Research Hypothesis 2

Teachers' attitude to work does not significantly predict quality assurance in technical colleges in Akwa Ibom State.

Table 4: Result of regressing teachers' attitude to work and quality assurance in technical colleges

Source of Variation	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F-cal	p-value	Decision at p<.05
Regression	344.177	1	224.433			
				5.61	0.04	*
Residual	3166.642	362	55.222			
Total	3510.598	363				

*= significant at p<.05

In Table 4, it is shown that the p-value (0.04) is less than 0.05 level of significance. The null hypothesis which states that teachers' attitude to work does not significantly predict quality assurance in technical colleges is rejected. Therefore, the result is significant. This means that teachers' attitude to work accounted for quality assurance in technical colleges in Akwa Ibom State.

Discussion of Findings

The finding reveals that only 20.2% variation in quality assurance in technical colleges in Akwa Ibom State could be explained by the provision of instructional facilities. It also reveals that provision of instructional facilities accounted for quality assurance in technical colleges in Akwa Ibom State. According to O'Day (2002), facilities constitute a strategic factor in organizational functioning. This is so because they determine, to a very large extent, the smooth functioning of

any social organization or system, including the school system. Writing on the role of facilities in teaching, Suffleabeam and Shinkfield (2007) submitted that no effective teaching activity can exist without the equipment for teaching. This is because facilities enable the learner to develop problem-solving skills and scientific attitudes. The finding is in congruence with that of Looney and Clemson (2018), who found out that when facilities are provided to meet relative needs of a school system, students will not only have access to the reference materials mentioned by the teacher, but individual students will also learn at their own pace.

Finally, the finding reveals that 61.0% variation in quality assurance in technical colleges could be explained by teachers' attitude to work. It also reveals that teachers' attitude to work accounted for quality assurance in technical colleges in Akwa Ibom State. Muthoni (2014) puts it clearly that good attitude of teachers could work wonders in students' performance improvement. The finding concurs with that of Marete (2014), who stated that free basic education can only bring forth quality education if at all there would be comprehensive supervision on infrastructure, methodologies of teaching, adequate preparation by teachers, marking of pupils work and positive attitude of teachers during curriculum delivery.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, it was concluded that only that provision of instructional facilities accounted for quality assurance in technical colleges in Akwa Ibom State. Furthermore, it also revealed that teachers' attitude to work accounted for quality assurance in technical colleges in Akwa Ibom State.

Recommendations

1. Adequate of instructional facilities should be provided by the government for use during teaching and learning activity.
2. Regular and periodic monitoring and evaluation of academic programme in technical colleges should be carried out in order to check teachers' attitude to work for possible correction.

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