

QUALITY ASSURANCE MANAGEMENT IN HIGHER EDUCATION FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN NIGERIA

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Abstract

This paper examines Quality Assurance Management in Higher Education and Sustainable Development in Nigeria. Education is regarded as an instrument par excellence in achieving development. It focuses in areas of total quality management, goals of higher education, concept of quality in higher education, concept of sustainable development and various models in quality assurance management. Higher education in knowledge production. Suggestions were made on ways of improving quality education in our institutions. The paper concludes that quality education for sustainable development is of utmost importance for the production of graduates who have the capability to quickly and rapidly respond to the changing needs of our communities in particular and nation in general, as well as meeting the demands of the present and future global realities. Therefore, the federal and state governments should consider the application of total quality management in education because education still remains the backbone for the accelerated development of the nation in this millennium.

Keywords: Quality assurance, management, Higher education, sustainable development

Introduction

Education is regarded as an instrument par excellence in achieving national development. No level of education, is this notion more relevant than in higher education. This is why countries in the world are investing heavily in their higher education sector to position it on sound pedestal to achieve their national goals and aspirations. In Nigeria, the former Minister of Education, Mallam Ibrahim Shekarau participated in the 2015 education forum, of ministerial seminar on education in London said that the education sector was being revamped by the administration former under President Goodluck Ebele Johnathan. That the administration has made funds available to tertiary institution across all levels to cater for the needed infrastructure and facilities that would enhance

the teaching and learning process. That education is the core of the transformation agenda and access and quality are the key goals of the education sector.

Education whether at the lower or higher level is not something that exists on its own accord, it is a vehicle that requires human and material resources to drive it. This is where quality comes in. The quality of human and material resources available determines the extent the vehicle can go in achieving the purpose for its existence. Today, more than ever before in human history, the wealth or poverty of nations depends on the quality of higher education. Those with a larger repertoire of skills and a greater capacity for learning can look forward to lifetimes of unprecedented economic fulfillment. While in the coming decades the poorly education face little better than the dreary (dull and unexciting) prospects of lives of quiet desperation.

“Malcolm Gillis, president of rise university, 12th Feb, 1999”

Higher education is the education received after secondary school, which is called post-secondary or tertiary education. Federal Republic of Nigeria (2004) defines it as the education given after secondary education in Universities, Colleges of Education, Polytechnics, Monotechnics (Nursery and Mid-wifery schools, Agriculture etc), including those institutions offering corresponding courses. United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) in Peretomode (2008b) said that it is educational establishment to which access is available for people who have completed secondary education and in which the course of study lasts for not less than two years, but more generally from three to six years. From these definition, it implies that higher education follows after other educational processes and adds to what they have offered. Therefore higher education supplies better than is provided in other forms of education (Peretomode, 2008b).

It therefore follows that the nature of higher education requires that quality should be given a pride of place, because it is quality that gives meaning and relevance to it. When quality higher education is provided, achievement of sustainable development becomes an easy task because everybody, especially its products, know their responsibilities to themselves, their families, societies and nations, and thus go about doing them well and influencing others to follow suit. Education is a platform for empowering man's intellect to think solutions, while university education is all about empowering man to create solutions to the challenges besetting humanity.

Concept of quality assurance (Total Quality Management)

Quality in Nigerian university education is a multidimensional concept that should embrace all its functions and activities; teaching and academic programmes, research and scholarship, staffing, students, buildings, facilities, equipment, services to the community and the academic environment (UNESCO, 1998). Quality assurance in Nigerian universities, according to Okebukola (2004), is a continuous process of improvement in the quality of teaching and learning activities that will be achieved through employing mechanisms that are internal and external to the universities. It is ensuring that the provisions of the Minimum Academic Standard (MAS) are attained, maintained and enhanced.

The business and public sectors experienced a quality revolution in the 1980s and 1990s. (Powell, 1995; Hackman & Wageman, 1995). The revolution was termed 'total quality' or 'quality assurance' management. This inspired the establishment of international Network for Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education (INQAAHE) in 1991 with the main purpose of collecting and disseminating information on current developing theory and practice in the assessment, improvement and maintenance of quality in higher education (NUC, 2007). Through information sharing the network, inter alia, promotes good practices in the maintenance and improvement of

quality in higher education, and identifies areas of research into the theory and practice of quality assurance in higher education (P.3).

Total quality seems to work at ensuring that all aspects of institution and every employee is focused all the time on meeting and exceeding customer requirements (West-Burham, 1994). Total Quality management is a process that moves the entire organization towards a culture of total and continuous improvement. Robbins and Coutler (1998) have identified key features of total quality management to be focused on customers needs; concern for continual improvements; improvement in the quality of everything the institution does; wide use of teams and task forces for finding and solving problems; team work and emphasis on participation.

Important lessons from total quality management relevant to quality assurance in education are said to be emphasis on prevention of wastage, involvement of students, teachers, headteachers, inspectors, and parents in the quality process, and securing the right attitude and commitment of all concerned so that quality becomes the concern of all and sundry (Ijaiya, 2001).

Quality assurance (TOM) deals with the practice preventive means of ensuring quality of inputs, teaching-learning process, the outcome, the academic achievements of students and the environment before things get out of hand (Babalola, 2004). It aims at preventing quality problems and ensuring that only conforming products/services reach the customer. They believe some basic determinants of TOM in education are; quality and content of instruction and curriculum; quality of students as inputs; quality and availability of recommended textbooks; quality and quantity of instructional facilities, lecturer-student ratio; workload; quality of management; quality of monitoring, supervision and evaluation. Some other indices of TOM in higher education include involvement of students, staff and parents, National universities commission, quality teaching, programme appraisal, high staff morale and adequacy of resources.

Towards quality assurance in Nigeria-Higher Education

In order to develop a TOM (Or quality assurance) system in a university, Alo (1995:551) proposed: that there should be a mission statement spelling out its mission and vision; strategies should be stated explicitly on the future behaviour and performance required to attain its mission; objectives and values of the higher institution should be stated precisely; critical success factors should be spelt out; performance indicators which will enable observers read the levels as either low, expected or high should be established; also performance review, performance related pay (PRP) and performance improvement programmes (PIP) should be put in place and institutionalized. Performance improvement programme relates to improving motivation and commitment by means of non-financial rewards such as training and career development, succession planning and promotion processes, as well as coaching and counseling. The concern for quality in university education in Nigeria is most desirable for reasons that are obvious. It is the nation's hope for national development. A nation cannot develop beyond the level of the intellectual capabilities of her teachers. In this era of globalization and massification of education, Nigeria cannot afford to run a university system that compromises quality if she is to compete in the global economy.

The factors that account for the poor quality of higher education in Nigeria are both internal and external to the various institution at the tertiary levels of our education system. It is more pronounced in the university system. The internal factors include lack of employee motivation, weak accountability for educational performance and management competency, while the external factors include poor funding, teacher shortage and corruption. What this implies is that a multi-dimensional and holistic approach is required to address the issues of quality assurance, quality control and quality enhancement in the university sub-sector. In order to provide qualitative

university education for the Nigerian child, there should be a collective responsibility of all stakeholders in the education sector. The stakeholders are those who benefit from the programmes and products of the university system and other tertiary institutions. If they are able to identify their roles, admit them and be alive to their responsibilities, qualitative higher education for the Nigerian child would be guaranteed.

The Nigerian Universities Commission (NUC) the statutory agency mandated to maintain academic standards in Nigerian universities, already has in place a Minimum Academic Standards (MAS) for undergraduate programmes in Nigerian Universities. A quality assurance department has been created in the NUC secretariat to help maintain quality in university education. How far these efforts will go in ensuring quality in tertiary institutions is the source of concern because if the external efforts and internal quality assurance mechanisms are not complemented across the board, the desired changes in the Higher education system output may continue to be a mirage.

Essentially, the duties of the quality assurance client include among others, the following;

1. Supervision of curriculum design, content and implementation.
2. Supervision of instruction
3. Monitoring of students' progression and achievement,
4. Periodic assessment of human and material resources available to each programme
5. Liaising with the external quality assurance agency (i.e the NUC) and other professional bodies in order to be abreast of the latest information.
6. Track-tracing of graduates for feedback information from employers.
7. Organizing workshops and seminars for academics.
8. Monitoring input, process and output of the immediate and long-term solution to the problem of poor quality in university education in Nigeria. The adoption and implementation of internal quality assurance mechanism will facilitate the actualization of goals of tertiary education in Nigeria.

The Federal Ministry of Education in 2008 produced a book on National Quality Assurance Policy and an Education Assurance handbook for Nigeria with Quality Standard indicators on which models are anchored. These two vital documents were presented during the 70th Joint Consultative Council on Education (JCCE) in November, 2008 in Akure-Ondo state. This is a way forward if the content of the books would be adhered to and implemented.

Some quality assurance management practices include;

1. **Involvement of students and staff:** At the tertiary levels, students' involvements evident in department/faculty students associations and student union representation on university councils of universities. Staff union contributes to institutional effectiveness by educating and urging members to always put in their best in their jobs. Both teaching and non-teaching staff of our universities are variously involved in the governance of the universities through council membership of their union leaders. As an important stakeholder in the university system, university employees have been described as partners in progress with management and their involvement highly priced (Ekpo, 2005).
2. **Involvement of parents:** Parental involvement in university governance is apparent in ways like payment of the various fees and charges levied on students and attendance at meetings and contributions to discussions on matters affecting the welfare of students and effective university governance. When a state local government area or a corporate personality e.g. EXXON MOBIL UNLIMITED, decides to build workshops, classroom blocks or lecture theatres on a

university or polytechnic campus, this is parental involvement seriously needed to improve the facility/resources input of tertiary educational institutions.

- 3. Students intake through JAMB:** Where good students are admitted into the higher institutions of learning, better results (in terms of grades of passes and competence) are more easily likely than where poor quality of students are admitted. The Joint Admission and Matriculation Board (JAMB) of Nigeria is charged with the responsibility of testing and selecting students for universities, polytechnics and colleges of education nationwide. The role of JAMB in quality assurance management includes ensuring high quality matriculation examinations and high quality administration of the examination.
- 4. Involvement of national universities commission (NUC):** This aspect is being discussed in various sections of this paper.

Concept of Higher Education

Higher education is the tertiary education institutions where middle and high level human capital are trained and produced for national development. These institutions include universities, colleges of education, polytechnics and monotechnics. To be admitted into the higher education institutions in Nigeria, the individual must register and sit for and pass the qualifying examination which is usually conducted by the Joint Admission Matriculation Board (JAMB) and finally pass the aptitude test of the post-Unified Matriculation Tertiary Examination (UTME) that is controlled by each institution.

In recent times, Nigerian higher institution can no longer admit the students' population which is increasing astronomically. Most graduates from these institutions cannot meet up with the standard labour market and low absorptive capacity. In a bid to maintain quality higher education in Nigeria, National Universities Commission (NUC), the Nigerian Board for Technical Education (NBTE) and National Council for Colleges of Education (NCCE) have played the role of monitoring the activities of the universities. These quality control bodies provide quality assurance by way of undertaking institutional assessment and accreditation. Each institution introduces its own quality assurance culture to improve the students experience, improve the quality of teaching and learning which translate to quality capacity development.

The National Policy on Education (FRN, 2004:38-43) clearly distinguished between the traditional university education and other types of higher education. Nigeria expects the university system to contribute optimally to the development of high level manpower within the contest of the needs of the nation by increasing and diversifying its programme, making professional course contents to reflect national requirement, inculcating spirit in students through team projects and action research, and by making all students to offer liberal or general study courses. That technically-based professional courses should have as components, exposure to practical work experience.

Nigeria adopts a binary model of organizing higher education by distinguishing between the traditional universities and other tertiary institutions such as polytechnics and monotechnics (single-subject technological institutions for specialized programmes such as agriculture, nursing etc). Specifically, the Nigerian government requires that the polytechnics, monotechnics should provide knowledge and skills, instruction and training as well as professional studies in engineering, technologies, applied science, business and management, leading to production of trained and self-reliant manpower (such as technicians and technologist who can apply science to solve society's problems) necessary for agricultural, industrial, commercial and economic development of Nigeria.

Concept of quality in Higher Education

Quality, in general terms is defined as “fitness to purpose” in relation to the user and customer needs (Juran, cited in Wilkinson, Redman, Snape and Marchington, 1998). Quality can also mean that the “product conforms to standards, specifications or requirements” (Crosby, cited in Wilkinson, et al, 1998). British Standards Institute (BSI) defined quality as “the totality of feature, and characteristics of a product or service that bear on its ability to satisfy stated or implied needs”. Some scholars also perceive quality as the level of value in a product, something considered good or worthy in preference to others, or simply the degree of excellence of a service or activity. In the factory, the quality of a product can always be assessed against an original product or against customers’ specifications (Ijaiya, 2001).

According to UNESCO (cited in Uvah, 2005), quality in higher education is multi-dimensional and embraces all functions and activities of a university including teaching, academic programmes, research and scholarship, staffing, students, buildings, facilities, equipment, services to the community and the academic environment. Uvah (2005) believe that the quality of university graduates could be measured by how well they have been prepared for life and for service to society in various spheres of human endeavour. Quality may also be considered on the basis of how good and effective the lecturers are, how adequate and accessible the facilities and materials needed for effective teaching and learning are, and how well prepared the graduates are to meet the challenges of life and for solving the problems of society (Bassey and Bassey, 2008).

According to Nwanna (2000), quality in education is the scale of inputs (resources) in the forms of funds, equipment, facility, teachers, pupils and the like, and to the fact that the transactions and the outputs of the institutions in the form of their products are acceptable, desirable, beneficial, efficient or effective from the point of view of the school stakeholders-government, society, private agencies, parents and international bodies. It covers acceptable standards of excellence concerning the total environment of a school system (Tamuno, 1995).

One way of ascertaining quality in higher education is their products, which are graduates who are awarded certificates having fulfilled all stipulated requirements. They are attested to possess knowledge and skills with which they can impact in the society. They are also expected to prove their worth by their level of performance in the competitive labour market. Comparability and international competitiveness of qualifications are therefore seen as being central features of quality education (Babalola, Adediji & Erwat, 2007).

Internal and external criteria are also used to assess quality in higher education. internal criteria focuses on the system itself, using the profile of students’ performance in a standard examination like the final year National Certification in Education (NCE), Higher National Diploma (HND) or degree examination which is the implementation of the school objective while the external criteria are based on its fitness and relevance to the needs of the society, which is the implementation of national objectives (Cooms, 1968, Ejie, 1990).

Goals of Higher Education

The goals of higher education as stipulated in the National Policy on Education by Federal Republic of Nigeria (2004) are as follows:

1. Contribute to the national development through high relevant manpower training.
2. Develop and inculcate proper values for the survival of the individual society.
3. Develop the intellectual capability of individuals to understand and appreciate their local and external environment.
4. Acquire both physical and intellectual skills which will enable individuals to be self-reliant and useful members of the society.

5. Promote and encourage scholarship and community service
6. Forge and cement national unity
7. Promote national and international understanding and interaction.
Peretomode (2008b) indentifies a more concise purpose of higher education to include;
 - a. Teaching people to think further, broader and deeper than they have been so far brought up to do.
 - b. Giving each student a training of mind and cultivation of independent mind to enable him/her think more critically and rationally, understand how conclusions are reached and make informed choices.
 - c. Develop in students' positive attitudes, emotional integrity and interpersonal skills.
 - d. Providing an ethical education, that is, a person who is not just a thinking creature, but one who is retained and knows the difference between right and wrong.
 - e. Developing in students a capacity and interest in serving others. Thus, the core purpose of higher education is to transform lives for the benefit of the individual and society. The education that can transform lives is the one that has meaning; the one that is functional; the one that is well equipped and the one that has the capacity to add value to human lives by making students better and more sophisticated at the exit point than at the entrance level.

Knowledge as a product has many facets. To know or have knowledge of something would involve learning and or some finding out which implies research. This something that is known or that is found out can have value in the sense of having utility. It can yield satisfaction when utilized and can also yield economic returns when invested. Since knowledge is a product, it can be produced and production involves the input of certain factors as in this case-personnel, ideas, money and managerial acumen or ability. Higher education everywhere is in the business of knowledge production. It is in higher education that you have or should have the highest concentration of specialized knowledge personnel with the right milk of ideas than can be processed with appropriate material and of monetary inputs to produce knowledge that would continue to advance the course of human progress.

Concept of sustainable development

UNESCO (2002) asserted that sustainable development is that type of development designed to meet the needs of the present generation from diverse regions, continent, race, language, and religion beliefs without compromising the ability of the future generations to meet their requisite needs. Ekong (2002), defined sustainable development as an economic and social development that meets the needs of current generation without endangering the ability of future generation in satisfying their needs and choosing their life styles.

Sustainable development is a goal countries all over the world have been striving to achieve, by instituting plans and actions to improve the way things are done. It calls for constant efforts to initiate programmes and executing them for the overall interest of people. It can be defined as development which meet the needs of the present generation without compromising the ability of the future generations to meet their own needs (world commission on environment and development, 1987). It is a systematic concept relating to the continuity of economic, social, institutional and environmental aspects of human society as well as non-human environment.

From the above views, it is clear that sustainable development is seen as the efforts of a nation to address her developmental needs at all times without jeopardizing the future of any segment of the society. The purpose of sustainable development is to provide a means of configuring civilization and human activity so that society, it's members and economies are able to meet their needs and express their greatest potential in the present, while preserving biodiversity

and natural ecosystems and planning and acting for the ability to maintain these ideas in a very long term (Wikipedia, n.d.). It emphasizes a desirable future state for human society in which living conditions and resource use meet human needs without undermining the sustainability of natural systems and the environment so that future generations may also have their needs met.

UNESCO (2005) identifies principles underlying sustainability which include-inter generation equity, gender equity, just and peaceable societies, social tolerance, environmental preservation and restoration, poverty alleviation and natural resource conservation. These principles must be reasonably achieved before sustainable development can add values to the lives of people. Therefore, the focus of any nation desirous of sustainable development must be to eliminate disabilities from her citizens, especially the disadvantaged and vulnerable groups.

The desire of Nigeria to be an economically viable nation is clearly demonstrated in her five main national philosophy of education which have formed the foundation for her national policy on education. according to FRN (2004) they are; the building of;

- a. “A free and democratic society
- b. A just and equalitarian society
- c. A united, strong self-reliant nation
- d. A great and dynamic economy and
- e. A land full of bright opportunities for all citizens” (p.6).

The attainment of the above goals according to Ominyi (2008) is a necessary step towards sustainable development in Nigeria. Lending credence to the above, Ocho (2004) maintained that the attainment of these goals is dependent on the quality of education received supporting this, Igu and Ogba (2008) affirmed that education fosters the worth and development of the individual and the society. It stands to reason that the most important means of achieving sustainable development is investment in education.

The success stories of countries like Japan, South Korea, Singapore and China to mention a few are overwhelming evidence that no country has achieved or will achieve socio-economic transformation without a significant rise in the level of education among its people. The relationship between education and sustainable development intricately inter-woven that none can be dispensed for the other. Sustainable development recognizes that not only human behaviour can be altered to limit harmful effects on the environmental, but to encompass how individuals and communities behave and interact with earth. More importantly, it gives regard to the fact that growth must be both inclusive and environmentally sound to reduce poverty and build shared prosperity for today’s population and to continue to meet the needs of future generations. As such, this development must emphasize efficiency with resources and carefully plan them to deliver immediate and long term benefits for people, planet and prosperity (World Bank n.d).

Achieving Sustainable Development through Quality in Higher Education

Higher education is a veritable instrument for national transformation and sustainable development. It is the production point for highly skilled manpower to drive the sustainable development needs of any country. Therefore, the purpose of education at this level still remains; to enlighten the mind and develop national consciousness in the individual. The role of higher education in achieving this purpose is to ensure that their educational programmes, their implementations, learning environments, facilities and personnel are of the right quality to meet the needs of the present, without compromising future generation’s ability to meet their own needs. Higher education is regarded as the key sector in the process of social change, economic, and political development. Every nation depends on knowledge, ideas and skills which are produced in

universities and other higher institutions. Therefore, the survival and development of any nation depends on the quality of this education at this level.

Quality assurance defined by the British standards institute as “all those planned and systematic actions necessary to provide adequate confidence that a product or service will satisfy given requirements for quality” (Taylor and Hosker, 1992). Taylor and Hoster also stated that for effectiveness quality assurance requires a continuous evaluation of factors that affect the adequacy of the design or specification as well as verification and audits of production, installation and inspection operations. This then means that it is just the final product that is tested, but there is need to control quality over the whole process of production. Testing only the end-product is too late since it becomes largely detection of failure Caulcutt (1995) added that it is achieved by means of prevention rather than correction. In education, more emphasis should be paid to continuous assessment because final examination seemed to be an approach too late for assessing quality of education.

Quality assurance implies that quality control is being practical in the process of educating. Quality is both during an operational process and at the post-process stage. Its characteristics resides in containment and inspection. Quality control in technical environment is defined as “operational techniques and activities that are used to fulfill the requirements for quality”. Rekkedal stated that concerning higher education, it includes the state control strategy concerning quality in higher education. In Nigeria, the inspectorate departments of the state and federal ministries of education carryout inspection of various schools and institutions. However, their activities are being hampered by many challenges and problems.

Quality assessment in higher education is taken to mean “a systematic examination to determine whether quality services comply with planned arrangements and whether the educational process is implemented effectively and is suitable for achieving objectives. Quality assessment in education in Nigeria is carried out by the state and Federal Ministries of Education and other education authorities or bodies saddled with the responsibility for quality control of education at various levels to ensure that standards and practices are in compliance with the national policy of education. Examples are the National Universities Commission (NUC) and the National Board for Technical Education (NBTE).

Taylor and Hosker (1992) defined quality management as “the aspect of the overall management function that determines and implements the quality policy”. Therefore, quality management includes strategic planning, allocation of resources and other systematic activities for quality such as planning, operations and evaluations. It must be noted that the attainment of desired quality requires the commitment and participation of all members of the organization. This notwithstanding, the responsibility for quality management still belongs to top management. From the above definitions and explanations on quality assurance, total quality management, quality assessment and control, some of the strategies to be adopted in achieving sustainable development and quality assurance management through higher education are;

- i. Students should be engaged in effective learning

They should be made to participate in classroom activities, homework’s and continuous assignments. Through this, indolence and laziness would be eliminated among them. This effective learning, if properly harnessed should result in producing graduates who are adequately informed, technically equipped and morally prepared to become responsible and law-abiding citizens. The effective learning will enable the students discover new knowledge and ideas that will enable them live useful lives and impact on their societies positively.

ii. Effective teaching should be embarked upon by lecturers

They should ensure that the quality of their instructions should be challenging enough to trigger critical thinking among students and meet the required standard. This can be achieved through active involvement in research by exposing themselves to the internet and relevant books to bring out new information and knowledge than can add value to their teaching.

By so doing, lecturers will be enriched with knowledge and equipped with materials for appropriate lecture delivery that can produce outstanding results to their teaching performance. There is need for commitment on the part of lecturers to realize this. Effective teaching results in the inculcation of useful knowledge for transforming the way and manner students think and behave which are positive steps in ensuring the achievement of sustainable development.

iii. Unethical issues must be addressed with a view to eradicate them. Some of the issues include, irregular attendance to lectures by lecturers and students, inadequate and incompetent lecture preparations by lecturers, aiding and abetting misconducts in examinations, lack of integrity in the internal assessment of students by lecturers, poor supervision of students by lecturers, poor relationship with students amongst others. An evil that a person perpetuates today can be his/her albatross tomorrow. When lecturers are seen as active collaborators in perpetrating these vices, students will not see the need to live transparent and honest lives, as the lecturers are supposed to be role models, as such sustainable development becomes unachievable.

iv. The quality of infrastructural facilities should be adequately addressed. Our higher institutions lack adequate infrastructural facilities such as enough classrooms for teaching and learning, furniture, libraries, laboratory equipment, conducive learning environment, including offices for lecturers. If they are available, they are obsolete. Those that are still relevant to the system have problems of maintenance. Recently, the federal government took a bold step to address some of these problems during the last academic staff union of universities (ASUU) strike in 2013 including other tertiary institutions by giving funds for infrastructural development instalmentally to these institutions. It is worthy to note that most tertiary institutions have not seen a remarkable improvement in this direction. There has been an outcry in this direction by lecturers as the situation is still deplorable, despite also the intervention of Tertiary Education Fund (TETFUND). The problem is as a result of lack of adequate monitoring and supervision of these funds vis-à-vis the projects done so far. As a result this lack of adequate infrastructural facilities and conducive teaching and learning, it affects the quality of the students who graduate from our tertiary institutions.

v. Provision of more ICT facilities are very imperative. These facilities include computers, projectors, internet facilities, Compact Disc (CDs), interactive television among others. In addition, higher institutions should ensure that there is internet connectivity in their campuses. This would assist lecturers search for background information, content materials, bring concepts alive through multimedia, keep informed, collaborate with their colleagues elsewhere and gain new resources available online. Also students can have ample opportunities to search for information, practice what they have learnt, further explore ideas and topics for research, interact and actively engage in learning. Through these, the minds of lecturer and students are kept alive, and ward off idleness which is a breeding ground for inability to meet societal needs.

vi. Diversification of the curriculum of higher institutions in core skills such as verbal and qualitative reasoning, information and community technology, fluency, entrepreneurship, intrapersonal and interpersonal skills, role playing and nation building is important. This

will not only emphasize functional education, but will also enable the students stand the chance of getting transformed through exposure to a curriculum that assure the full development of all their intelligence such as cognitive, emotional and imaginative (Obanya, 2012).

A transformed graduate will only think of how to create wealth and jobs, instead of waiting for white collar jobs that has been overstretched and which provides little room for self realization and empowerment. Through this, he/she will contribute significantly towards the development and sustainability of their societies and country in general. Such a person becomes an asset and not a liability.

Recommendations

- The National Universities Commission should be properly repositioned and empowered financially and otherwise to enable it carry out its quality control function. More necessary logistics should be put in this regard.
- The stakeholders in the education sector (the government, parents, students, teachers, non-governmental organizations, the private sector) should be more sensitized and gingered to perform their roles in this sector.
- As the major stakeholder in the education sector, the government should appreciate the strategic position of universities in national development and increase its budgetary allocation to the sector including other tertiary institutions.
- Importantly, as much as possible, politicization of the system, especially in terms of appointments should be discouraged. Appointments should be on merit. This will facilitate internal efficiency in the system and ensure sustainability by successive government in the nation.
- Universities and other tertiary institutions should endeavour to track-trace their graduates for feedback information on their performance from employers.
- Institutional administrators would need to demonstrate commitment to the fundamental values of integrity in their day-to-day management practices, appointment and promotion of academics, appointment to position of responsibility, disposition to personal initiative, crisis management strategies and procedures for dealing with misconduct to engender similar values in academics which are required for affecting reform initiatives for quality assurance and sustainability in this sector.
- To further enhance academics emotional involvement in the education enterprise, exemplary pedagogical skills, research breakthroughs and community development efforts should be recognized and rewarded in much the same degree as done for athletes and politicians in the country.
- The council of Vice-Chancellors should call on the Federal Government, the state governments and all stakeholders to address the worrisome deterioration in the standard of primary and secondary education to ensure that Nigeria produce high quality materials for our higher institutions.
- Federal and state governments should appoint only professionals to supervisory positions in schools and to the inspectorate in the ministry of education and they should in turn increase their efforts to ensure quality in education.
- Federal and state ministries of education in collaboration with Nigerian Employers Consultative Association (NECA), schools and institutions should review curricula regularly to update them relevant to the current trends and needs of the nation.

The National University Commission (NUC) is statutorily empowered to regulate tertiary education in Nigeria. To a very large extent, the commission has over the years discharged its duties creditably. However, there is need for an amendment of the NUC Act which came into existence in 1974, in order to further empower the commission particularly with regards to the establishment of new universities by state and federal governments. The amendment should provide that before a license is issued by NUC, there should be clear evidence of adequate structures and facilities including modern teaching aids of quality standard. Some state universities which are making use of abandoned secondary schools, rented apartments, converted buildings and operating without requisite facilities like library, laboratory and adequate classrooms and relevant teaching facilities should be closed down.

Conclusion

The improvement of human condition is the goal of any educational endeavour. Quality education at higher institution is the surest way to attain this goal. Quality assurance management in higher education for sustainable development is of utmost importance for the production of graduates who have the capability to quickly and rapidly respond to the changing needs of our communities in particular and nation in general, as well as meeting the demands of the preset and future global realities. The position of the government, academic unions, and the society in relation to quality assurance in higher education has been highlighted considering the role of education in human resources development and the role of human resources in national development.

It seems that there is a consensus amongst academics, university managers, and proprietors of higher educational institutions that there is need for the creation of a certain enabling environment for quality education to thrive. Much needs to be done by all stakeholders to ensure quality in Nigerian higher education service delivery system. Proprietors and top management of our tertiary institutions are therefore challenged to wake up to the sky-rocketing funding needs of these institutions, if quality rebirth movement is to be sustained in our present world of today that is knowledge-driven, it can no longer wait for anyone. This is a veritable condition for achieving quality assurance management in higher education for sustainable development.

Vice chancellors can positively affect sustainable education by properly harnessing of the resources at their disposal towards the achievement of the university's major objective which is teaching. To achieve this, he must ensure that only qualified and dedicated lecturers are employed to teach in the institution. This is because of the importance of education, therefore only qualified teachers should be employed, and that those employed would discharge their duties with utmost zeal and dedication. This is where monitoring, supervision and discipline comes in for implementation on erring lecturers. However, there should be the required facilities and resources to back this up.

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