

Management Capacity of University Administrators as a Predictor of Quality Assurance in Federal Universities in North East Geo-Political Zone, Nigeria

Abstract

Quality in education has become the major concern of the world. For this reason; universities all over the globe has been making efforts to achieve the best quality in their programmes. However, it is a known fact that no university can succeed in the achievement of its quality assurance without dedicated university administrators. University administrators proper planning, organizing, directing, coordinating and controlling of university resources is paramount for internal quality assurance to be realized. The objective of the study is to determine university administrators Planning, Organizing, Directing, Coordinating and Controlling capacity as it predicts the level of internal quality assurance in Federal Universities in North East Geo-Political Zone of Nigeria. Based on this a research question and a hypothesis (tested at 0.05 level of significance) emerged. The population of the study comprise of 3,417 Academic Staff from the six federal universities in the zone. Six hundred and eighty three (683) staff was sampled for the study. Mean and standard deviation was used to answer the research question while multiple regressions and one way ANOVA statistics was used to test hypotheses. The result reveals that planning; organizing, directing, coordinating and controlling management capacity explained 99.1% of the variance in internal quality assurance and is therefore significant predictors of internal quality assurance in federal universities in north East Geo-Political Zone, Nigeria. The study therefore recommends that; University administrator should emphasise on proper planning and implementation of university activities, share duties and responsibilities appropriately to staff, supervise and monitor the activities of the universities in the right manner, harmonise all work activities of academic staff and constantly check on the work carried out by academic staff to identify areas of deviation and equally take proactive measures in correcting them for internal quality assurance to be realized.

Keywords: University Administrators, management capacity and Internal Quality Assurance.

Introduction

Daramola and Amos (2016) viewed management as the “ability to cope with complexity, to device structures and systems that produce order and harmony. Management involves leading and directing the ‘knowledge drivers’”. University management is carried out in two ways, internal and external. The internal control is from the university management through the vice chancellor while the external control is from the federal government through the National Universities Commission a body responsible for the coordination and assessment of university education (in Nigeria) through programme accreditation (Adetunji (2015) and (Ademola & Adewale, 2017).

The administrative theory of the five functions of management by Henri Fayol was created in 1916 and focus on the relationship between workers and the management in trying to ensure effective productivity in an organization (Van Vliet, 2011). Henri Fayol popularly known as the father of modern operational management, developed and defined five distinct functions of management that are very essential for managers to be well acquainted with. The five functions define the relationship between the layers of management and personnel and also form a basis for the management of work and production while facilitating decision making in an organization. These management functions according to Fayol as cited in Pratap (2017) are: planning, organizing, directing, coordinating and controlling.

The five functions of management by Henry Fayol give a direction to the tasks needed to be undertaken by managers and the main function they should focus on in their day to day management of their organization. The capacity of the university administrator in the management of university requires that these functions are performed in the day to day management process; and the performance of such functions can be done unanimously at the same time. According to Rahman (2012), Fayol maintains that to carry out these management functions effectively, managers must possess physical qualities, mental qualities, moral qualities, general education, special knowledge of the function concerned and experience.

The justification for this study centered on the poor management of school plant, school infrastructures, staff, research and development observed in some universities. Poor management of university resources has a devastating effect of hampering on the achievement of quality assurance in the universities. This necessitate the need for this study on the management capacity of university administrators in planning, organizing, directing, coordinating and controlling the university activities for internal quality assurance to be achieved.

Purpose of the Study, Research Question and Hypotheses

The objective of this study is to determine university administrators' management capacity as a predictor of quality assurance in Federal Universities in North Geo-Political Zone of Nigeria. Based on this the following objective, research question and hypotheses emerged.

1. To determine university administrators planning, organizing, directing, coordinating and controlling capacity as it predicts the level of internal quality assurance in Federal Universities in North East Geo-Political Zone of Nigeria.

2. **At** what level are university administrators' management capacities able to ensure internal quality assurance in Federal Universities in North Geo-Political Zone of Nigeria?
3. **H₀**. University administrators' management capacities (planning, organizing, directing, coordination and controlling) do not significantly predict internal quality assurance in Federal Universities in North East Geo-Political Zone of Nigeria.

Quality Assurance Defined

Oduma (2013) is of the view that quality assurance in education involves many functions and activities such as teaching, research, staffing, academic environment, facilities, equipment and the quality of education delivery necessary to make teaching and learning effective and efficient. Machunu and Kisanga (2014) opined that Quality assurance can be viewed as the measures taken by an institution to satisfy itself and demonstrate to its clients that it has constant capacity to keep its promise to deliver goods and services of the desired standard.

Akpan (2014) sees the internal quality assurance mechanisms as those frameworks put in place by the university which involves the evaluation and promotion of quality within the university. Banji (nd) asserts that internal quality assurance are the internal policies and mechanisms of a university or a programme put in place to ensure that it is fulfilling its purposes and the standards that apply to tertiary institutions, a profession or a discipline.

Quality indicators comprise of inputs, process and outputs (Clarke, 2002). Inputs comprise of human and material resources put in place for effective teaching and learning, process refers to the teaching quality while the outputs are the product of the institution; that is the graduates. Ibara (2008) outlined four criteria mostly applied to measure quality. These include;

Input of Resources: this has to do with the grade point average or standard test scores of entering students; terminal degrees in the faculty; number of books in the library and of the institutions endowment.

Outputs: which include such items as the overall graduation rate; the number of faculty publications or research grants; the number of scholarly awards; or the number of graduates in blue-chip companies.

Value added criteria defined not by some national standard but through a comparison of the state of affairs before and after a process, such as the intellectual development of a student from the point of entry to year to graduation.

Improvement and effectiveness of the internal processes: this comprises of teaching, research and development, school plant, school infrastructure, administration and other related aspects.

University Administrators Management Capacity and Quality Assurance

The university administrator uses the management capacity (planning, organizing, directing, coordinating and controlling) to manage the activities of the universities for quality assurance to be realized. These management functions will guide the university administrator to manage staff, infrastructure, facilities and research for effective quality delivery.

The administrator's capacity to manage both human and material resources for quality assurance is crucial to the effective management of higher education institutions. Adu-Oppong (2014:135) explains these functions:

Planning: This is the general outline of the activities required to accomplish the goals of an organization necessary for good management. Planning determines the direction the organization is going and the general approach it will use to reach there. It takes care of the future and arranges the necessary plans of operations for goals to be achieved. The Administrator should be able understand the organization in order to formulate and select appropriate objectives and procedures to be followed within the administrative system. To ensure quality administrative management, administrators should take active roles in planning and managing activities.

Organizing: This brings together the effort of both human and material resources to accomplish the goals of an organization. It is the ability of the administrator to create structural work. It requires the administrator to focus attention on the structure and process of allocating duties to staff so as to ensure that common objectives are realized. Administrators share responsibilities, define duties, methods and procedures, training the staff and putting in place all the necessary resources needed to accomplish the task. Works and duties of each individual is combined together to form an organizational structure which accomplish the goals.

Directing: this requires the school administrator to provide and initiate leadership in all the plans being carried out by making decisions, giving specific instructions on what need to be done to accomplish tasks. It also involves guiding, motivating and supervising staff.

Coordinating: this involves uniting and correlating all work activities to form a whole. This requires that it should be ensured that each part of the work is carried out effectively because it has a direct relationship to the entire work. This will ensure that the overall plan is carried out effectively and the goals of the organization are achieved.

Evaluating: This requires the administrator's ability to review performance and Outcomes of activities in line with the aims and objectives to ensure that, set down goals and objectives are achieved through quality control system.

At the organizational level, the management forms a system within which the organization's activities are managed by developing a set of principles and conditions under which the organizational goals are set and achieved. Within good governance systems the organization is stimulated to create added value by acting within a framework of clear responsibility and control principles that allow its operation to be ethical, predictable, strategic and consistent with the long-term interests of the organization's management and all stakeholders; internal and external. In the case of universities, organizational culture is directly linked to the development of the university; and the quality policy provides a framework for the implementation of the strategy; pathways for improving research, study process and organizational development. Therefore, a significant role in achieving organizational excellence is allocated to implementation of quality management principles in the operations of the university (Lapina, Kairišab, & Aramina, 2015).

Natarajan (2000) maintains that educational administrators must be persons with integrity and knowledgeable in the practice of modern types of management leadership styles. He or she must be visionary and ready to adjust to situations in the system. The performance of the administrator should reflect in the proper utilization of material and human resources in the achievement of the institutional goals and objectives. The administrators should be capable of supervising instruction effectively so as to identify the quality of lecturers in the institution. The supervision will also check and balance academic staff, non-academic staff and students. This can be done through constant monitoring and evaluation of the system activities in terms of effective control by the different heads of units or departments and constant Feedback to management and good utilization of reports; this in turn would raise the standard of the system.

Methodology

The research design adopted for this study is the correlational survey research design. A Correlational study tries to find out whether an increase or decrease in one variable corresponds

to an increase or decrease in the other (Siegle, 2015&Kabir, 2017).The Area of the study is the North East Geo-Political Zone of Nigeria which comprises of six states namely Adamawa, Bauchi, Borno, Gombe, Taraba and Yobe states.The population comprises of the entire 3,417 Academic staff of all six universities under study. 20% of the population of the Academic staff of each university was sampled reaching a total of 683 academic staff from the six universities where the research was conducted. A researcher-developed questionnaire called University Administrators Management Capacity and Quality Assurance Questionnaire (UAMCQAQ) was used to generate primary data. The instrument has a reliability coefficient of 0.88 for administrators' management capacity items and 0.81 for the quality assurance items. Mean and standard deviation was used to answer the research question. Multiple regression statistics was used to test for composite prediction in the hypotheses where the level to which five independent variables (planning, organizing, directing, coordinating and controlling) predicts the dependent variable that is internal quality assurance. One way analysis of variance was used to determine the relative contribution of each variable.

Data Analysis

Research Question: At what level is university administrators' management capacity able to ensure internal quality assurance in federal universities in North Geo-Political Zone of Nigeria?

Results on table 1 shows the mean and standard deviation from the data collected in respect of the research question on internal quality assurance.

Table 1: Level of University Administrators' Management Capacity

ITEM	N	Mean	S. D	Remarks	Internal Quality Assurance
Planning					
Recruitment of qualified lecturers.	530	3.43	.81362	Moderate	Moderate
Adequate instructional materials	530	3.06	.87854	Moderate	Moderate
Adequate school buildings	530	3.18	.75449	Moderate	Moderate
Good research culture	530	2.96	.84671	Low	Low
Average value		3.16		Moderate	Moderate
Organizing					
Division of labour among lecturers	530	3.39	.95928	Moderate	Moderate
Provision of instructional materials	530	3.17	.88542	Moderate	Moderate
Sharing of school building	530	3.23	.96521	Moderate	Moderate
Research activities towards excellence	530	3.00	.91201	Moderate	Moderate
Average value		3.19		Moderate	Moderate
Directing					
Supervising lecturers	530	2.98	1.00077	Low	Low
The usage of instructional facilities	530	3.07	.94956	Moderate	Moderate
Decision on allocation of school buildings	530	2.96	.97147	Low	Low
Motivating staff on research activities	530	2.90	1.05185	Low	Low
Average value		2.98		Low	Low
Coordinating					
Specifying lecturers duties based on tasks	530	3.11	.90494	Moderate	Moderate
Effective sharing of instructional facilities	530	2.86	.91279	Low	Low
Specifying allocation of buildings on need	530	3.09	.92036	Moderate	Moderate
Building positive attitude towards research	530	3.07	.86938	Moderate	Moderate
Average value		3.03		Moderate	Moderate
Controlling					
Measuring lecturers performance	530	3.07	1.02611	Moderate	Moderate
Monitoring instructional facilities usage	530	2.94	.96076	Low	Low
Maintenance of school building	530	2.96	.99074	Low	Low
Correcting deviations in research standards.	530	2.83	.88542	Low	Low
Average value		2.95		Low	Low
Average Mean		3.07		Moderate	Moderate

S.D: Standard Deviation

Source: Field Survey, 2019

Table 1 indicates the level to which university administrators are able to plan, organize, direct, coordinate and control the activities of federal Universities in North East Geo-Political Zone of Nigeria. A grand mean of 3.07 which is greater than the cut off point for the weighted mean 3.00 indicates moderate level to which university administrators are able to ensure internal quality assurance in public Universities in North Geo-Political Zone of Nigeria. However,

university administrators rated low in directing and controlling the activities of the universities studied. Internal quality assurance due to university administrators' management capacity is also rated moderate on the average.

H₀. University administrators' management capacities (planning, organizing, directing, coordination and controlling) do not significantly predict internal quality assurance in Federal Universities in North East Geo-Political Zone of Nigeria.

Table 2: Management Capacity as a Predictor of Internal Quality Assurance

Model	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	410.166	5	82.033	11344.237	.000 ^b
Residual	3.789	524	.007		
Total	413.955	529			

a. Dependent Variable: Internal Quality Assurance

b. Predictors: (Constant), Planning, Organizing, Directing, Coordinating, Controlling.

Table 2 reveals University administrators' management capacity (planning, organizing, directing, coordination and controlling) as significant predictors to internal quality assurance in Federal Universities in North East Geo-Political Zone of Nigeria. The results revealed that University administrators' management capacities (planning, organizing, directing, coordination and controlling) are significant predictors of internal quality assurance in Federal Universities in North East Geo-Political Zone of Nigeria, $F(5, 529) = 11344.237$, $p = 0.000$. Since the p – value (0.000) is less than 0.05 alpha level, **it is concluded** that the null hypothesis is rejected. This means that University administrators' management capacities (planning, organizing, directing, coordination and controlling) significantly predict internal quality assurance in Federal Universities in North East Geo-Political Zone of Nigeria.

Table 3: Model Summary of Hypotheses

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.995 ^a	.991	.991	.08504

a. Predictors: (Constant), Planning, Organizing, Directing, Coordinating, Controlling.

The results in Table 3 indicate how the independent variable explains the variance in the dependent variable. The result shows that University administrators' management capacities

(planning, organizing, directing, coordination and controlling) explained 99.1% of the variance in internal quality assurance in Federal Universities in North East Geo-Political Zone of Nigeria.

Table 4: Result on Planning, Organizing, Directing, Coordinating and Controlling Capacity as it predicts Internal Quality Assurance

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	-.361	.021		-17.560	.000
Planning	.233	.026	.195	9.007	.000
Organizing	.330	.023	.316	14.182	.000
Directing	.101	.030	.100	3.343	.001
Coordinating	.197	.025	.183	7.888	.000
Controlling	.232	.022	.216	10.524	.000

Dependent Variable: Internal Quality Assurance

The result on regression analysis on Planning, Organizing, Directing, Coordinating and Controlling as a predictor of internal quality assurance in Federal Universities in North East Geo-Political Zone was presented in table 4. The result show standardized coefficient of 0.195, 0.316, 0.100, 0.183 and 0.216 respectively, t-value of 9.007, 14.182, 3.343, 7.888 and 10.524 respectively, p-value of 0.000. Since p-value 0.000 is less than 0.05 alpha level, the null hypotheses is rejected and the alternative upheld. **Therefore, university administrators' management capacity significantly predicts** internal quality assurance in Federal Universities in North-East Geo-Political Zone, Nigeria.

Discussion of Result

The University administrators' management capacities (planning, organizing, directing, coordination and controlling) significantly predicted internal quality assurance in Federal Universities in North East Geo-Political Zone of Nigeria. The result reveals Adjusted R Square = 0.991, p = 0.000. University administrators' management capacities equally explained 99.1% of the variance in internal quality assurance. This signifies that planning, organizing, directing,

coordination and controlling capacity(of staff, school plant, school facilities and research activities) by university administrators in federal universities in north east geo-political zone of Nigeria is directly related with the achievement of internal quality assurance in these universities.

This finding concurs with the findings of Akosile and Akinselure (2016) which shows that properly established and implemented internal control has significant relationship with prudent management of organizational resources in Nigerian universities. The study concludes that attainment of universities goals and objectives can be made easy if the staff of the universities are regularly trained. Similarly, the study of Seyfield and Pohlenz (2018) agree with the findings of this study; the study revealed that the effectiveness of quality manager's work is characterized by their individual efforts and also by the existing rules, norms and the institutional environment. For these to be achieved three factors are significant and among the three is the support from higher education institution higher management. The study concludes that quality assurance unit should be working closely with higher management.

In a study of Adetunji (2015) on the university management perspectives on quality, it reveal that quality have different meaning to different people depending on the person and what he intends to achieve and taking in to account what the environment can offer. By implication, the study of Adetunji (2015) concur with the findings in this study which reveal that university administrators management capacity in planning, organizing, directing, coordinating and controlling significantly predicts the achievement of internal quality assurance in federal universities in North East Geo-Political Zone of Nigeria. This signifies that when university administrators create a harmonious environment for work to take place effectively, staff will put in their best and internal quality assurance will be achieved.

The study of Akpan (2012) agree with the findings of this study for it reveal that proper management of human, physical and financial resources is a prerequisite for lecturers job involvement. The study concludes that university administrators should develop strategies for effective management of these resources to enhance lecturer's job involvement which in turn will lead to internal quality assurance. By implication, when lecturers' job involvement is on the high side, work will be done effectively and internal quality assurance will be achieved.

The findings in the study of Daguang, Zionu, Fan and Yanjie (2017) reveal that academic staff gave relatively high ratings on the use of internal quality assurance instrument to the improvement of administrative processes of improved strategic planning, more evidence based decision making, service orientation and effectiveness of administrative operations. The study concludes that internal quality assurance must be accountable to various stakeholders. Similarly, Njie and Asimiran (2016) reveal that quality assurance initiatives bring about improvements. Quality assurance systems are derived by accountability and improvements mechanisms. By implication, the internal quality assurance instruments put on ground by university administrators will enhance strategic planning in the universities which in turn will lead to the achievement of internal quality assurance.

Conclusion

University administrators' management capacities (planning, organizing, directing, coordination and controlling) significantly predicted internal quality assurance in Federal Universities in North East Geo-Political Zone of Nigeria. University administrators' management capacities (planning, organizing, directing, coordinating and controlling) explained 99.1% of the variance in internal quality assurance. This signifies that the management capacity of university administrators in planning, organizing, directing, coordinating and controlling has direct impact on academic staff job and job related issues and this in turn impact on internal quality assurance of the universities. Based on this, it is recommended that:

1. University administrator should emphasise on proper planning of university activities to enhance internal quality assurance.
2. University administrators should share duties and responsibilities appropriately to staff for internal quality assurance to be realized.
3. University administrators should supervise and monitor the activities of the universities in the right manner for internal quality assurance **to be enhanced**.
4. University administrators should harmonise all the work activities of academic staff to ensure that internal quality assurance is achieved.
5. University administrators should constantly check on the work carried out by academic staff to identify areas of deviation and equally take proactive measures in correcting them for internal quality assurance to be realized.

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