

QUALITY ASSURANCE AND SKILLS ACQUISITION IN VOCATIONAL OFFICE TECHNOLOGY AND MANAGEMENT EDUCATION**BY****Lasisi Fatai Bolanle: Department of Business Education, School of Vocational and Technical Programmes, Emmanuel Alayande College of Education, Oyo;
E-mail: laisifatai2015@gmail.com****Abstract**

This study examined quality assurance of skill acquisition in vocational office technology and management education programme in Oyo state tertiary institutions. Four research questions and two null hypotheses guided the study. The population for the study was 240 made up of 24 business education lecturers and 216 NCE 111 students of business education offering office technology and management option from the two public colleges of education. Purposive sampling and simple random sampling techniques were used. The entire 24 lecturers were used from the two colleges while 100 students were sampled from Emmanuel Alayande Colleges of Education Oyo and 60 students were sampled from Oyo State College of Education Lanlete making a total of 160. The instrument for data collection was a 55-items structured questionnaire. The instrument was face validated by three experts using Cronbach Alpha. The reliability yielded a co-efficient of 0.84. The data collected were analyzed using frequency, mean and t-test statistics. The result of the data collected and analyzed indicated among others that the need for quality assurance on office technology and management (OTM) is to serve as indispensable component for quality control strategy and determine the level of adequacy of the facilities available for quality control in office technology and management programme. It was concluded, that there is need for quality assurance in office technology and management programme largely as it will serve as indispensable component for quality control strategy and determine the level of adequacy of the facilities available for quality control in office technology and management program. It was recommended, among others, that there is the need for constant and efficient supervision of the educational activities of vocational office technology and management department by both internal and external supervisory bodies for efficient and effective academic delivery.

Keywords: *Quality Assurance, Skill Acquisition, Office Technology and Management, Business Education*

Introduction

Quality in education according to Oladipo, Adeosun and Oni (2009) is viewed as the ability or degree to which educational system confirm to established standard and appropriateness. Therefore quality of education means the adequacy, relevance, suitability and appropriateness of the education programme to the needs of the society to which it is meant. In the same vein, quality assurance can be seen as all the attitudes, objectives, actions and procedures together with quality control activities to ensure appropriate and quality academic programme. Quality assurance refers to the planned and systematic activities implemented in a system so that quality requirement for a product or service is fulfilled. Ididu (2007) describes quality as standards of something as compared to other things, that is, the degree of goodness or excellence. Quality assurance generally means all the procedures, processes and systems that support and develop education (Konto 2012). According to Utoware and Kren Ikidi (2003), quality forms an interrelating part of education, which focuses on the ability to confirm with acceptable and institutional basis with respect to time, periods, practice and locations Okebukola (2010) sees quality assurance in Nigeria tertiary institutions as a process of continuous improvement in the quality of teaching and learning activities that is mostly achieved employing mechanisms, internal and external to the institutions.

Poor academic performance of students in Nigeria territory institutions has been limited to quality of teachers, the methodology of teaching, available resources and the relevance of what is being taught in the classrooms to the society to which the student belongs. It has also been linked to the kind of attitude and

professional disposition of the teachers of the course to the students who are the recipients of the skills and knowledge of the course in the college. All these are issues on the level of quality assurance in teaching of office technology and management courses in Nigeria (Okoro, 2015). Skills acquisition has been described by many as the recipe for eradicating extreme poverty and hunger by creating awareness for employment, thereby creating an avenue for job and wealth creation (Eze, 2011). It has been observed that skills acquisition is the key in the fight for the elimination of poverty, reduction or elimination of joblessness in the society and reduction of crime through effective engagement of youths. Skills acquisition is also the ability to learn a skill, which can be intellectual such as learning to listen, speak, read and write or manual such as learning to build or make something.

Skill acquisition does not depend solely upon a person's fundamental, innate capacities but must be developed through training and experience. Skill according to Bolt Lee and Foster (2003) is the art of possessing the ability, power, authority, or competency to do the task required of an individual on the job. Two fundamental issues are used when a skill is to be acquired. According to Okoro and Ursula (2012), the first is the condition which promotes acquisition and the second is the change that will occur when the skill is acquired.

Vocational office technology and management as viewed by Osuala cited in Udoudum and Usono (2013) is primarily concerned with the acquisition of mastery of office related skills needed to perform in the business and technicalities that learners will be expected to display on completion their training. Olufunwa (2013) however gave a more practical approach in describing office technology and management. According to him, it is a curriculum that has as its controlling purpose, the preparation of individuals for useful, gainful employment and life-long education hence, it has the potential to effectively empower the citizenry. Olufunwa (2013) submits that vocational office technology and management education in the education system could open wide opportunity to improve industrialization and office procedure in Nigeria. The use of vocational knowledge by the recipients would help on expansion and establishment of more businesses in the society, ultimately promoting national development and security. Thus, vocational office technology and management is aimed at shifting attention from white collar jobs to manipulative skills which will help its beneficiary to be a responsible member of the community.

Statutorily, the body charged by the federal government of Nigeria to regulate, harmonize and set minimum academic standard for the core higher institutions in the country is the National Commission for Colleges of Education (NCCE) established in 1989. The practice of quality assurance in vocational office technology and management department in tertiary institutions can be internal and external. However, external quality assurance measure is the exclusive preserve of the NCCE. This board, apart from setting out a uniform minimum academic standard that all colleges of education are expected to meet and be guided by. The minimum academic standard contains programmes of studies (courses) approved for the NCE programmes, (academic and non-academic), entry requirement and mobility guidelines and basic plants required for effective operation of studies leading to the award of the National Certificate in Education (NCE).

Statement of the Problem

One of the national educational objectives is the acquisition of appropriate skills, abilities and competencies, both mental and physical are important for all Nigeria to live and contribute to the development of their society (Federal Government of Nigeria-FGN 2004). Consequently, the National Educational Policy document (2013) states that the nation's educational activity should be centered on the students in order for them to acquire maximum skills acquisition for self-development and fulfillment in the labour market. Unfortunately, due to certain impediments, the level of practical skills acquired by these students, compared with the demands of the labour market and technological advancement, is nothing to boast of (Oluwalola and Ogundele, 2017).

Abdukarim and Fiberesina (2010) observed that the existence of poor quality and inadequate facilities and equipment for effective teaching and learning of office technology and management at the NCE level shows the weakness of accreditation process as a tool detecting window dressing of facilities and equipment by colleges during accreditation. They also observed that lack of basic facilities needed for training in office technology and management courses among the poor quality of graduates in term of marketable skills and defeats the objectives of the programme.

All the above stated challenges necessitate the need for assessing the input dimension of quality assurance for business teacher education at the NCE level since every quality product is a function of quality input and process. The decline in quality is brought about by a number of factors which include brain-drain, incessant industrial strike, unruly and destructive conduct of students, unsuitable learning environment, poor funding, shortage and outdated equipment and poor laboratory gadgets (Idih, 2013). This the problem the study intend to address for quality assurance and skill acquisition in vocational office technology and management education.

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of the study was to assess quality assurance and skills acquisition in vocational office technology and management (OTM) in Oyo State Colleges of education. Specifically; the study sought to:

- i. Identify available inputs recommended in the minimum standard set by NCCE for vocational office technology and management (OTM) in Oyo state Colleges of Education
- ii. Ascertain the role of government in funding vocational office technology and management (OTM) in Oyo state colleges of education
- iii. Examine the quality of infrastructure and facilities in the vocational office technology and management (OTM) in Oyo state colleges of education
- iv. Assess the management skills possessed by colleges authority in quality assurance, skills acquisition in vocational office technology and management (OTM) in Oyo State Colleges of Education.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study.

1. What are the readily available inputs recommended in the minimum standard for teaching vocational office technology and management (OTM) in Oyo State Colleges of Education?
2. In what ways does the role of government in funding vocational office technology and management (OTM) in Oyo State Colleges of Education?
3. What are the management skills possessed by colleges authority in quality assurance, skills acquisition in vocational office technology and management (OTM) in Oyo State Colleges of Education?
4. What is the role the government is expected to play in funding vocational office technology and management (OTM) in Oyo State Colleges of Education?

Research Hypotheses

Ho₁: There is no significant difference in the mean responses of business education lecturers in Emmanuel Alayande College of Education, Oyo and Oyo State College of education, Lanlate on quality assurance and skills acquisition

Ho₂: There is no significant difference in the mean responses of vocational office technology and management (OTM) male and female students in quality assurance and skills acquisition.

Methodology

The survey research design was adopted for this study. The reason for adopting this design is that the design is concerned with making decisions about the value or worth of programmes, methods and materials on the basis of available data. The population comprised 240 respondents made up of 24

Business Education Lecturers and 216 NCE III students of business education specializing in Office Technology and Management option from Emmanuel Alayande College of Education Oyo and Oyo State College of Education, Lanlate. The instrument used for data collection was a structured questionnaire made up of 53 items elicited responses on the questionnaire item. The use of questionnaire for the study of this nature was justified by Anyeanch (2015) because the study pertained to human and material resources. The instrument was constructed using a four point scale of Strongly Agree (SA) 4points, Agree (A) 3points, Disagree (D) 2points, and Strongly Disagree (SD) 1point. The questionnaire was validated by three experts in Business education. The questionnaire has a reliability co-efficient of 0.85 which was established through a pilot test on 16 business education lecturers in Federal College of Education (Sp.) Oyo and Mufutau Lanahun College of Education, Ibadan. The internal consistency was determined using Cronbach Alpha procedure. Copies of the questionnaire were administered and collected by the researcher with the help of 2 research assistants. However, 93% of the questionnaire was analyzed using mean and standard deviation for the research questions, while t-test statistic was used to test the hypotheses. The decision rule for the research questions was based on the real limit of numbers which is 2.50. The null hypotheses were accepted when the calculated value is less than the t-test value. On the other hand, the null hypothesis was not accepted when t-calculated value is greater than t-table value.

Results

Research Question 1: What are available inputs recommended in minimum standard for teaching vocational office technology and management (OTM) in Oyo state colleges of education?

Table 1: Analysis of readily available inputs recommended in the minimum standard set by NCCE for teaching of vocational office technology and management (OTM) programme

S/N	Available inputs required	Minimum required	No available	Shortfall	X	SD	Remark
A	Personnel						
1	Academic staff	32	24	08	2.58	0.67	Averagely available
2	External examine	04	02	02	2.53	0.61	Averagely available
3	Supporting staff facilities	04	04		3.92	0.47	Highly available
4	Lecture hall/classroom	1:30	1:30	1:50	1.90	0.39	Very low available
5	Typing pool	2	2		4.68	0.48	Highly available
6	Shorthand laboratory	2	2		3.56	0.43	Highly available
7	Model office	2	2		4.80	0.42	Highly available
8	Lecturer's office	1:1	1:3	1:2	2.55	0.52	Averagely available
9	ICT laboratory	2	1	1	2.58	0.67	Averagely available
10	Departmental library equipment	2	2		3.84	0.54	Highly available
11	Manual typewriter	1:30	1:50	1:50	2.54	0.75	Averagely available
12	Computer	1:30	1:30		4.80	0.40	Highly available
13	Swivel Typing chairs	60	50	10	2.68	0.52	Averagely available
14	Typing desk	30	150	150	2.96	0.65	Averagely available
15	Instructor's chair	02	02		3.53	0.44	Highly available
16	Instructor's Demonstration stand	01	08	04	2.50	0.43	Averagely available

17	Stapling remover	06	08		3.64	0.54	Averagely available
18	Stapling machine	06	08		3.85	0.67	Averagely available
19	Punching machine	04	02	02	2.70	0.62	Averagely available
20	Stop watch	04	04		4.41	0.44	Highly available
21	Filling cabinets	52	58		4.68	0.48	Highly available
22	Photocopies	04	02	02	2.54	0.52	Averagely available
23	Overhead projector	02	02		4.68	0.48	Highly available
24	Wall clock	12	12		4.58	0.39	Highly available
25	HOD office	02	02		3.92	0.47	Highly available

Table 1 indicates that 14 out of 25 inputs had a mean range of 4.80 to 3.51. This range was above a minimum required mean of 3.50 indicating that items 3, 5, 6, 7, 10, 12, 15, 17, 18, 20, 21, 23, 24, and 25 were highly available. Item 1, 2, 8, 9, 11, 13, 14, 16, 19 and 22 had a mean value of 2.96 to 2.54 indicating that the inputs were averagely available since the mean was above 2.50 whereas only item 1 had mean range 1.90 which indicate that the items was very low available and the mean was for the minimum value. All others were close together in their responses to each item and were not four from the mean.

Research Question 2: In what ways can quality infrastructure and facilities in the vocational Office Technology and Management (OTM) in Oyo state colleges of education?

Table 2: Mean responses on quality infrastructure and facilities in vocational office technology and management

S/N	Items on Quality Infrastructure & Facilities	X	SD	Remarks
1	Providing modern instructional material for use in the department	3.70	0.46	Agreed
2	Effective assessment of lecturers and facilities	3.00	0.45	Agreed
3	Effective provision of adequate textbooks	3.10	0.94	Agreed
4	Effective accreditation of business education department	4.00	0.20	Agreed
5	Effective availability and utilization of facilities	3.80	0.40	Agreed
6	Effective maintenance of facilities	3.00	0.45	Agreed
7	Effective supervision of staff and students	2.80	0.45	Agreed
8	Effective quality control of facilities and programme	3.00	0.45	Agreed
9	Effective monitoring of instruction and staff	2.80	0.45	Agreed
10	Effective record keeping and inventories	3.10	0.94	Agreed

The data in table 2 indicate the mean comprises of quality infrastructure and facilities in vocational office technology and management programme in Oyo state colleges of education. According to the results, director of academic planning, director of quality assurance and office technology and management lecturers agreed that ten items listed above were the means of ensuring quality infrastructure and facilities in office technology and management programme in Oyo state colleges of education. The standard deviation in the group ranged from 0.20 to 0.94.

Research question 3: What are the management skills possessed by colleges authority in quality assurance, skills acquisition in vocational office technology and management (OTM) in Oyo state colleges of education?

Table 3: Mean score on the managerial skills possessed by the college management on quality assurance and skills acquisition

S/N	Management Skills	X	SD	Remarks
1	Exhibiting leadership qualities in the office	3.47	0.57	Efficient
2	Striving to complete a given task	3.25	0.44	Efficient
3	Being innovative in accomplishing a given task in the office	3.35	0.48	Efficient
4	Showing interest in the progress of the department	3.40	0.58	Efficient
5	Making sure that each day's job or task is completed	3.53	0.63	Efficient
6	Identifying the new ideas in the college	3.47	0.57	Efficient
7	Setting target in the college	3.37	0.49	Efficient
8	Coordinating and resolving conflicts in the college	3.30	0.67	Efficient
9	Allocation of resources in the college	3.28	0.67	Efficient
10	Directing and monitoring subordinates	3.52	0.57	Efficient

Data in table 3 shows that directors of quality Assurance and Director Academic planning agreed that college management was efficient. This implies that the management is efficient in management skills. The data indicated that all the items were accepted with mean scores of 3.47, 3.25, 3.35, 3.40, 3.53, 3.47, 3.37, 3.30, 3.28 and 3.52.

Research Question 4: What role is are expected of the government in funding vocational office technology and management (OTM) programme in Oyo State Colleges of Education for quality assurance?

Table 4: Mean responses on the role expected by the government in funding vocational office technology and management (OTM) programme

S/N	Government funding OTM programme	X	SD	Remarks
1	Government provides fund for the implementation of OTM programme for effectiveness and efficiency	4.97	0.15	Highly needed
2	Government provides subvention for pace with the students growth	4.84	0.48	Highly needed
3	Provision of funds for research and development	4.64	0.74	Highly needed
4	Provision of laboratory equipment and facilities	3.73	0.44	Highly needed
5	Workshop and conference for lecturers for effective teaching and administration	3.91	0.28	Highly needed
6	provision of training material with modern equipment like computer to meet job demand after school	3.80	0.40	Highly needed
7	Provision of skilled manpower for self reliance	3.66	0.47	Highly needed
8	Attainment of OTM education programmes goals and objectives	4.93	0.33	Highly needed
9	Curriculum implementation with respect to the content instructional methods and materials	4.61	0.68	Highly needed
10	Upgrading education leading to employability and advancement in office occupation	4.56	0.43	Highly needed

The result of data presented in table 4 above on the role expected by the government in finding vocational office technology and management programme for quality assurance in Oyo State Colleges of Education showed the mean score between 3.66 and 4.97. This affirmed that all ten items were highly needed for the

implemented and running of vocational office technology and management programme for quality assurance.

Test of Hypotheses

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant difference in the mean rating of business education lecturers in Emmanuel Alayande College of Education, Oyo and Oyo State College of education, Lanlate

Table 5: t-test analysis of lecturers in Emmanuel Alayande College of Education, Oyo and Oyo State College of education, Lanlate on the quality assurance and skills acquisition in office technology and management programme in Oyo state colleges of education, Oyo State

Respondents	N	X	SD	Df	P	t-cal	t-crit	Decision
EACOED	15	3.12	0.65	66	0.05	0.41	1.98	Not significant
OYCE	09	3.10	0.67					

Keys: N- No of respondents, X- Mean, SD- Standard deviation, DF- degree of freedom, P-level of significant, t-cal- t-calculated, t-crit- t-critical (table). From table 5, the t-calculated value of 0.41 is less than the t-critical table value of 1.98 at 0.05 level of significance and degree of freedom of 66. The hypothesis is therefore accepted.

Hypothesis 2: There is no significant difference in the mean rating of vocational office technology and management (OTM) male and female students in quality assurance and skills acquisition in Oyo state colleges of Education.

Table 6: t-test analysis of male and female students on the quality assurance and skills acquisition in office technology and management programme in Oyo state colleges of education, Oyo State

Respondents	N	X	SD	Df	P	t-cal	t-crit	Decision
Male	100	3.16	0.57	66	0.05	0.21	1.98	Not significant
Female	60	3.13	0.54					

Keys: N- No of respondents, X- Mean, SD- Standard deviation, DF- degree of freedom, P-level of significant, t-cal- t-calculated, t-crit- t-critical (table). From table 6, the t-calculated value of 0.21 is less than the t-critical table value of 1.98 at 0.05 level of significance and degree of freedom of 66. The hypothesis is therefore accepted.

Discussion of Findings

The findings in table 1 indicate that 14 input were highly available and 10 averagely available and 1 low averagely available. The fourteen inputs met the minimum standard set by the NCCE. The remaining eleven inputs are largely average in availability relative to the minimum standards recommended by NCCE. Only few inputs fell below minimum standard requirement. This shortfall could limit the ability of teachers from implementing the NCCE minimum standard. Undoubtedly, this could result in the production of substandard vocational office technology and management.

The data on table 2 indicate the means of ensuring quality infrastructure and facilities in vocational office technology and management programme in Oyo state colleges of education. According to the results, director of quality assurance, director of academic planning and business education lecturers agreed that the ten items listed above were the means of ensuring quality infrastructure and facilities in vocational office technology and management programme.

The results in table 3 of the study revealed that vocational office technology and management programme in Oyo state colleges of education should be funded by government private sector, and money realized from internally generated revenue, school fees, education tax and endowment funds. This is in line with

Odigbo (2009) who advocated that the responsibility of financing education should not rest on the federal and state government alone. Education is an expensive business and for the reason money is needed for payment of staff salaries and allowances, provision of infrastructure, procurement of instructional materials etc.

The data presented in table 4 provided answers to research question 4. The findings revealed that there is the need for funding of vocational office technology and management programme in Oyo state college of education which enhance quality assurance of its graduates and quality delivery of its lecturers. The finding is in consonance with George and Iliya (2005) and Asugwe (2005) who justify the need for greater funding of the programme: and argued for the need to establish high standard. Furthermore, the government and the NCCE are expected to have a share responsibility with the institution's management in addressing key areas such as minimum academic standards, accreditation, carrying capacity, admission quota and students' enrolment, product/research programme, structures, utilities and infrastructures. The study also revealed the following roles expected of government and other stakeholders for enhancing quality assurance and skills acquisition on vocational office technology and management programme: funds for implementation of office technology and management programme, provision of subvention for research and development, procurement of equipment and facilities, workshop and experience for lecturers and provision of manpower development among others. The null hypotheses revealed that there is no significant difference in the mean responses of both male and female students in the colleges on the quality assurance in promoting skill acquisition in office technology and management programme.

Conclusion

Vocational office technology and management is a programme for and about business which prepares learners to acquire relevant skills and knowledge for employment, career aspiration in order to function effectively in the world of work and to contribute to national development. Thus, quality assurance is aimed at promoting the quality of teaching and learning for the acquisition of relevant skills and knowledge in vocational office technology and management programme in Oyo State Colleges of Education. In order to achieve the goals and objectives of establishing office technology and management programme for sustainable national development in Nigeria

Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusion of the study, the following recommendations were made:

1. Quality assurance and skill acquisition established by this study should be implemented for promoting quality teaching and learning in office technology and management programme that will enable students to contribute effectively to the development of the society for sustainable national development in Nigeria upon graduation.
2. The government should ensure effective supply of fund to the colleges of education to enable the institutions to acquire the required infrastructure facilities for the effective and efficient operation of the programme
3. The College management and the Heads of Department of the Colleges of Education should ensure that capable hands should be employed in the department to foster proper acquisition of skills that will help the graduate to be self-employed
4. There is the need for constant and efficient supervision of the educational activities of vocational office technology and management at the college of education level.

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