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ADMINISTRATIVE STRATEGIES FOR ACHIEVING QUALITY ASSURANCE IN TERTIARY INSTITUTIONS IN ENUGU STATE

VIEHOEVER ONYEKACHI SANDRA, Ph.D
College of Health Sciences and Public Policy
Walden University, Minnesota, USA
&
ONYEAMA KENECHUKWU KINGSLEY, Ph.D
College of Health Sciences and Public Policy
Walden University, Minnesota, USA

ABSTRACT

The researchers investigated the administrative strategies for achieving quality assurance in tertiary institutions in Enugu State. Two research questions guided the study in line with two null hypotheses, while adopting a descriptive survey research design. The study was carried out in all the public tertiary institutions in Enugu State, including University of Nigeria-Nsukka (UNN), Federal University of Allied Health Sciences, Enugu State University of Science and Technology (ESUT), State University of Medical and Allied Sciences (SUMAS), Enugu State College of Education (Technical) (ESCET), Institute of Management and Technology (IMT) and Enugu State Polytechnic (Iwollo). The population constitutes 1194 senior administrative staff from all the tertiary institutions in Enugu State with a purposive sample size of 239 respondents, including 136 male and 103 female senior administrative staff. The instrument used for data collection was a questionnaire developed by the researcher titled "Administrative Strategies for Achieving Quality Assurance Questionnaire (ASAQAQ)". The questionnaire had a 25 items-statement and was structured on a 4-point rating scale with response options of Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (SD) assigned numerical values of 4, 3, 2 & 1 respectively. The instrument was validated by three research experts. The reliability of the instrument was computed using Cronbach Alpha and an index of .71 was obtained after trial testing on a similar population in Ebonyi State. Data pertinent to the study was presented in tables and analyzed using mean and standard deviation for the research questions while t-test was used to analyze the null hypotheses that guided the study. It was found among others, that coordinating strategies for achieving quality assurance in tertiary institutions in Enugu State are vital including paying unscheduled visits to staff, delegation of tasks to appointed staff, issuance of query to any staff caught in any act of misconduct, appointment of capable staff into leadership positions. It was thereafter recommended that measures should be taken by appropriate authorities to ensure the adoption of coordination strategies as proven significant in achieving quality assurance in tertiary institutions in Enugu State.

Keywords: Administrative Strategies, Quality Assurance, Tertiary Institutions.

Introduction

Tertiary institution can be seen as the institution where the highest form of learning is acquired through the adoption of a well-designed curriculum. At the tertiary (higher)

institution, the highest level of manpower development and capacity building is acquired. Ogunode, Edinoh and Okolie (2023) as a planned and organized educational system designed for the total development of man/woman and for the total transformation of society through the utilization of teaching, research and provision of community service. According to Asiyai (2017), a tertiary institution is a higher education sector at which education is given after secondary education, in colleges of education, monotechnics, polytechnics and universities and those institutions offering correspondence courses. The author stressed that these institutions are recognized as fundamental instruments for the construction of a knowledge-based economy and the development of human capitals all over the world. Tertiary education generally culminates in the receipt of certificates, diplomas, or degrees emanating from rigorous training and impact of knowledge in the respective discipline. Tertiary institutions have definite goals.

Goals are predefined objectives set for actualization. According to Federal Republic of Nigeria (FRN (2014) ,the objectives of tertiary institutions include: To contribute to national development through high-level relevant manpower training; to develop and inculcate proper values for the survival of society; to develop the intellectual capability for individuals to understand and appreciate their local and external environments; to acquire both physical and intellectual skills which will enable individuals to be self-reliant and useful members of the society; to promote and encourage scholarship and community services; to forge and cement national unity; and to promote national and international understanding and institutions. The actualization of these goals may be practically impossible in the absence of supervisory bodies.

There are supervisory bodies in-charge of these institutions. According to Ogunode and Atiga (2021), higher education is under the supervision of commissions set up by law and which operate as parastatals of the Federal Ministry of Education. The authors highlighted that the universities are supervised by the National Universities Commission [NUC], while colleges of education are supervised by the National Commission for Colleges of Education [NCCE]. The National Board for Technical Education [NBTE] oversees polytechnic education. These commissions are responsible for policy decisions affecting institutions under their supervision, maintenance of standards through a system of periodic accreditation of courses, distribution and monitoring of government funding, appointment of members of governing councils, and the day-to day running of the institutions which can also be regarded as administration.

Administration concerns itself with a set activities geared towards the actualization of predefined goals. Administration is a social process concerned with identifying, maintaining, motivating, controlling and unifying formally and informally organized human and material resources within an integrate system designed specifically to achieve predetermined objectives (Akata&Ndep, 2025).Administration can thus, be defined as the process of harmonizing all human and material resources within a system to ensure productivity. According to Modebelu, Eya and Ojunadike (2016), the success of a national education system is heavily dependent on appropriate, timely, efficient, and effective administration and management. Administration is therefore an integral component of a system including the school. Edeani (2022) perceived administrative process as the sum total of the various processes of directing, planning, organizing, supervising, controlling, stimulating,

coordinating, staffing, budgeting, communication and evaluation, which aid administrators in the utilization of resources in the achievement of organizational goals. In this context, coordinating and budgeting strategies would be discussed as administrative strategies for achieving quality assurance in tertiary institutions in Enugu State.

Coordination involves the efficient synchronization of all administrative functions to achieve a common goal. The manager brings about this process as he performs the basic administrative functions of planning, organizing, staffing, directing and controlling. Prachi (2015) stated that co-ordination is an integral element or ingredient of all the managerial functions as: - (a): Co-ordination through Planning - Planning facilitates co-ordination by integrating the various plans through mutual discussion, exchange of ideas. e.g. - co-ordination between finance budget and purchases budget. (b): Co-ordination through Organizing - Mooney considers co-ordination as the very essence of organizing. In fact when a manager groups and assigns various activities to subordinates, and when he creates department's co-ordination uppermost in his mind. (c) Co-ordination through Staffing - A manager should bear in mind that the right no. of personnel in various positions with right type of education and skills are taken which will ensure right men on the right job. (d) Co-ordination through Directing - The purpose of giving orders, instructions & guidance to the subordinates is served only when there is a harmony between superiors & subordinates. (e) Co-ordination through Controlling - Manager ensures that there should be co-ordination between actual performance & standard performance to achieve organizational goals. *Narang (2015) perceived coordination as a process by which the manager achieves harmonious group effort and unity of action in the pursuit of a common purpose including*: (a) to ensure a smooth interplay of the functions and forces of all the different component parts of the organization.(b) operation of business activities in a systematic sequence.(c) to complete the various activities of the enterprise as per planned schedule, among others.

Budgeting is the act of taking to account, financial record that involves future savings and expenditures. According to Emamoke and Nubari (2025), budgeting represents a comprehensive and coordinated plan articulated in financial terms for the future. The authors maintained that budgeting practices in educational institutions adhere to a systematic process, which includes budget planning, budget defence, budget approval and adoption, budget implementation, and evaluation. Amaikwu and Ofojebe (2020) defined school budgeting as a systematic process of preparing and effecting a financial flow forecast of a school or educational organization to achieve the objectives of the school or organization's plans, programmes or projects within an accounting or financial year. Through budgeting, a school administrator becomes aware of his financial obligation throughout the year. Unachukwu and Okoye (2016) argued that a budget regulates and prevents reckless spending of money and wastages in a system like the education system. Budgeting is significant in aiding school administrators in planning and execution of actual operations. Several budgeting practices are essential to ensure judicious use of limited funds in the school. Junge, Bosire and Kemau (2014) listed budgeting practices to include: planning and stakeholders' involvement, budget allocation and implementation and evaluation. Effective administration through coordination and budgeting can invariably be an index for quality assurance.

Quality assurance refers to standards and the act of giving confidence about a product or service. Quality Assurance is a set of activities implemented within a system so as to avert

failure. Oparaji, Igbokwe, Anyanwu and Ugwude (2020) defined quality assurance as the totality of the system's resources and information devoted to setting up, maintaining and improving the quality and standard of teaching, mentoring and monitoring service delivery of learning institution. According to Nwanga and Unachkwu (2019), quality assurance is the process of objectively tracking, evaluating, and reporting on the quality of every facet of school life in order to guarantee that acceptable standards are reached, upheld, and continuously improved. One of the main features of quality assurance is that it ensures the quality of educational output by preventing errors, subpar work, and waste (Nwaelehia, Nwogu& Doro, 2024). Through quality assurance, irregularities within tertiary institutions in Enugu State can be controlled.

However, it is noteworthy that through tertiary education and skill development, the populace hopes to improve their work prospects and make a significant contribution to society, which is reflected in this rising demand (Ukeje&Aisiku, 2022). But in these tertiary institutions in Enugu State, a number of challenges have plunged into the system, thereby delaying the actualization of its goals. Imo, Egbe and Terfa (2024) identified poor facilities, packed classrooms, out-of-date curricula, and a shortage of academic staff are plaguing many universities in Nigeria and Enugu State is not left out. Due to these structural inefficiencies, education quality is declining and graduates are not adequately equipped to satisfy the demands of the contemporary economy (Osuji&Iheanyichukwu, 2021). These inadequacies have grossly constituted a problem of unwarranted delays in the realization of the definite goals of tertiary institutions in Enugu State. On this note, the study is set to investigate the administrative strategies for achieving quality assurance in tertiary institutions in Enugu State.

Statement of the Problem

Quality assurance has been seen as the totality of the system's resources and information devoted to setting up, maintaining and improving the quality and standard of teaching, mentoring and monitoring service delivery of learning institution. In tertiary institutions in Enugu State, the school administrators are expected to promote quality assurance in education of the citizens for sustainable development. In this regards, it is expected these administrators, through the adoption of appropriate administrative strategies deliver optimum educational standards within these institutions. But regrettably, the reverse has been the case. However, observations have shown that there seems to be unsatisfactory administrative strategies adopted by these administrators which have led to poor quality assurance in these tertiary institutions in Enugu State.

Evidently, the poor and unsatisfactory state of affairs can be seen in the areas of inadequate funding, inadequate facilities, poor instructional supervision and poor staff welfare, among others. These situations seem to have led to poor academic achievement among the tertiary institutions students' in Enugu State, high drop-out rate, and high rate of examination malpractice, poor reading and writing cultures and to the staff, there has been timely conflicts, leading to planned demonstration/protest among others. Whereas these abnormalities can be averted through quality assurance in situations where resources such as human, finances, effort, time, and space are restricted, yet the uses of these resources are virtually endless and concurrently demanding attention. Thus, coordination and budgeting can become the most sensible strategy to address such circumstances. Hence, the need by the study, to

investigate the administrative strategies for achieving quality assurance in tertiary institutions in Enugu State.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to investigate the administrative strategies for achieving quality assurance in tertiary institutions in Enugu State. Specifically, the study sought to determine:

1. Coordinating strategies for achieving quality assurance in tertiary institutions in Enugu State.
2. Budgeting strategies for achieving quality assurance in tertiary institutions in Enugu State.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided this study:

1. What are the coordinating strategies for achieving quality assurance in tertiary institutions in Enugu State?
2. What are the budgeting strategies for achieving quality assurance in tertiary institutions in Enugu State?

Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses guided the study:

1 There is no significant difference in the mean scores of male and female senior administrative staff on the coordinating strategies for achieving quality assurance in tertiary institutions in Enugu State.

2. A significant difference does not exist in the mean scores of male and female senior administrative staff on the budgeting strategies for achieving quality assurance in tertiary institutions in Enugu State.

Research Method

A descriptive survey research design was adopted for the study. The study was guided by two research question and two hypotheses. The study was carried out in all the public tertiary institutions in Enugu State, including University of Nigeria-Nsukka (UNN), Federal University of Allied Health Sciences, Enugu State University of Science and Technology (ESUT), State University of Medical and Allied Sciences (SUMAS), Enugu State College of Education (Technical) (ESCET), Institute of Management and Technology (IMT) and Enugu State Polytechnic (Iwollo). The population constitutes 1194 senior administrative staff from all the tertiary institution in Enugu State with a purposive sample size of 239 respondents, including 136 male and 103 female senior administrative staff. The instrument used for data collection was a questionnaire developed by the researcher titled "Administrative Strategies for Achieving Quality Assurance Questionnaire (ASAQAQ)". The questionnaire consists of 25 item-statements, structured on a 4-point rating scale with response options of Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (SD) assigned numerical values of 4, 3, 2 & 1 respectively. The instrument was validated by research experts; from Educational Management and Measurement and Evaluation Unit of Mathematics and Computer Science Education of Enugu State University of Science and Technology. The reliability of the instrument was computed using CronbachAlpha and an index of .71 was obtained. Data pertinent to the study were presented in tables and analyzed using mean and standard deviation to answer the research questions while t-test was used to analyze the null

hypotheses that guided the study. For the decision made, items with mean scores of 2.50 and above were regarded as Agree while those with mean scores below 2.50 were regarded as Disagree. For the hypotheses, when the significant value was more than the level of significance, was not rejected and not accepted when the significant value was less than the level of significance.

Results

The results of the study are presented below:

Research Question 1

What are the coordinating strategies for achieving quality assurance in tertiary institutions in Enugu State?

Table 1: Mean Ratings and Standard Deviation Scores of Respondents on the Coordinating Strategies for Achieving Quality Assurance in Tertiary Institutions in Enugu State

S/N	Coordinating strategies for achieving quality assurance include;	Male Admin. Staff N = 136		Female Admin. Staff N = 103		Overall N = 239		Remark
		$\bar{x}_1$	SD_1	$\bar{x}_2$	SD_2	$\bar{x}_G$	SD_G	
1	appoint staff to coordinate social activities like clubs	2.30	1.11	2.52	1.12	2.39	1.12	Disagree
2	holding periodic meetings at different levels with staff	2.56	1.19	2.49	1.16	2.53	1.18	Agree
3	holding periodic meetings with students	2.49	1.17	2.52	1.19	2.51	1.18	Agree
4	delegation of tasks to appointed staff	2.85	1.15	2.63	1.14	2.76	1.15	Agree
5	issuance of query to any staff caught in any act of misconduct	2.75	0.99	2.70	1.11	2.73	1.04	Disagree
6	paying unscheduled visits to staff	2.86	1.06	2.70	1.07	2.79	1.07	Agree
7	adoption of standardized practices of visiting students	2.35	1.11	2.47	1.16	2.40	1.13	Disagree
8	appointment of capable staff into leadership positions	2.72	1.03	2.70	1.08	2.71	1.05	Agree
9	cooperation encouragement among staff through motivational packages	2.57	1.18	2.49	1.09	2.53	1.16	Agree
10	prompt response to the basic needs	2.47	1.04	2.52	1.15	2.50	1.08	Agree
11	clearly defining responsibilities to avoid conflict among staff	2.79	1.22	2.49	1.13	2.66	1.19	Agree
12	maintenance of effective communication through appropriate channels	2.53	1.07	2.84	1.07	2.69	1.07	Agree
	Cluster Mean/SD	**2.60**	**1.11**	**2.59**	**1.12**	**2.60**	**1.11**	**Agree**

Key: SD (Standard Deviation)

Regarding data analysis as presented in Table 1, the mean ratings of male senior administrative staff on items number 2, 4, 5, 6, 8, 9, 11 and 12 are 2.56, 2.86, 2.75, 2.86, 2.72, 2.57, 2.79 and 2.53 denoting that the itemized are the coordinating strategies for achieving quality assurance in tertiary institutions in Enugu State while items number 1, 3, 7 and 10 have the mean ratings of 2.30, 2.35, 2.35 and 2.47 indicating disagree responses by the male senior administrative staff. Similarly, the Table shows that the mean ratings range of 2.52, 2.52. 2.63,

2.70, 2.70, 2.70, 2.52 and 2.84 are obtained for the female senior administrative staff on items 1. 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 9, 10 and 12 indicating that the itemized are the coordinating strategies for achieving quality assurance in tertiary institutions in Enugu State while items number 2, 7 and 11 with mean ratings 2.49, 2.47 and 2.49 shows disagree responses. However, the overall mean rating of 2.60 obtained for all the items denotes that coordinating strategies are integral for achieving quality assurance in tertiary institutions in Enugu State. Thus, the cluster standard deviation of 1.11 obtained shows slim disparity in the opinion of respondents.

Hypothesis 1

There is no significant difference in the mean scores of male and female senior administrative staff on the coordinating strategies for achieving quality assurance in tertiary institutions in Enugu State.

Table 2: t-test analysis in the mean ratings of Male and Female Senior Administrative Staff on the Coordinating Strategies for Achieving Quality Assurance in Tertiary Institutions in Enugu State

Respondents (Admin. Staff)	N	$\bar{x}$	SD	t-value	Df	Sig. (2tailed)	Decision
Male	136	2.60	1.11	0.151	237	0.503	Not
Female	103	2.59	1.12				Significant

NB: NS (Not Significant), SD (Standard Deviation), Df (Degree of freedom)

In Table 2, the t-value of 0.151 is obtained at 0.05 level of significance and 237 degree of freedom with the significant value of 0.503. Hence, since the significant value (0.503) is more than the level of significance (0.05) set for the study, the null hypothesis is statistically not significant and hence, not rejected. This by implication means that there is no significant difference in the mean scores of male and female senior administrative staff on the coordinating strategies for achieving quality assurance in tertiary institutions in Enugu State.

Research Question 2

What are the budgeting strategies for achieving quality assurance in tertiary institutions in Enugu State?

Table 3: Mean Ratings and Standard Deviation Scores of Respondents on the Budgeting Strategies for Achieving Quality Assurance in Tertiary Institutions in Enugu State

S/N	Budgeting strategies for achieving quality assurance include;	Male Admin. Staff N = 136		Female Admin. Staff N = 103		Overall N = 239		Remark
		$\bar{x}_1$	SD_1	$\bar{x}_2$	SD_2	$\bar{x}_G$	SD_G	
13	describe the predetermined goals to be achieved by the proposed budget	2.73	1.09	2.52	1.12	2.63	1.11	Agree
14	submit the reviewed budget proposal for approval by relevant authority	2.56	1.19	2.49	1.16	2.53	1.18	Agree
15	submit the school budget proposal for review by stakeholders	2.61	1.17	2.42	1.19	2.52	1.18	Agree
15	stick to the budget period of the each year.	2.85	1.15	2.63	1.14	2.76	1.15	Agree
16	call for input from staff during budget planning	2.75	0.99	2.70	1.11	2.73	1.04	Agree

17	clarify relevant authorities on the budgetary monitoring strategies	2.86	1.06	2.70	1.07	2.79	1.07	Agree
18	make sure that various departmental needs are forwarded by heads of department	2.35	1.11	2.47	1.16	2.40	1.13	Disagree
19	describe the proposed expenditure in the budget	2.72	1.03	2.70	1.08	2.71	1.05	Agree
20	involvement of experts like the school bursar or accountant in the preparation of school budget	2.55	1.19	2.40	1.10	2.49	1.16	Disagree
21	career coaching	2.57	1.04	2.51	1.15	2.54	1.08	Agree
22	explain the expected sources of income to relevant stakeholders	2.79	1.22	2.49	1.13	2.66	1.19	Agree
23	prepare a supplementary budget when the need arises	2.70	1.12	2.54	1.11	2.63	1.11	Agree
24	set up budget monitoring team in the school	2.88	1.13	2.39	1.13	2.64	1.13	Agree
25	source for funds from stakeholder for budget implementation	2.41	1.19	2.65	1.11	2.50	1.17	Agree
	Cluster Mean/SD	**2.67**	**1.22**	**2.54**	**1.13**	**2.61**	**1.23**	**Agree**

Table 3 shows that the mean ratings range of 2.55 to 2.88 are obtained for the male senior administrative staff on the items numbered 13 to 24, denoting agree responses while item number 25 with the mean rating of 2.41 depicts disagree response by the male senior administrative staff. From the female senior administrative staff, the mean rating range of 2.51 to 2.70 obtained indicates agree responses while the items with the mean ratings of 2.49, 2.42. 2.47, 2.40, 2.49 and 2.39 denotes disagree responses respectively. Hence, the cluster mean rating of 2.61 was obtained, depicting that the listed budgeting strategies are required for achieving quality assurance in tertiary institutions in Enugu State whereas, the cluster standard deviation of 1.23 depicts that the respondents' opinions did not differ remarkably regarding their responses to the said items.

Hypothesis 2

A significant difference does not exist in the mean scores of male and female senior administrative staff on the budgeting strategies for achieving quality assurance in tertiary institutions in Enugu State

Table 4: t-test analysis in the mean ratings of Male and Female Senior Administrative Staff on the Budgeting Strategies for Achieving Quality Assurance in Tertiary Institutions in Enugu State

Respondents (Admin. Staff)	N	$\bar{x}$	SD	t-value	Df	Sig. (2tailed)	Decision
Male	136	2.67	1.12	0.533	237	0.177	Not
Female	103	2.54	1.13				Significant

Table 4 shows that the t-value of 0.533 is obtained at 0.05 level of significance and 237 degree of freedom with the significant value of 0.177. Hence, since the significant value is more than the level of significance set for the study, the null hypothesis is therefore not significant and by extension, not rejected for these items. Thus, this means that a significant difference does not exist in the mean scores of male and female senior administrative staff on the budgeting strategies for achieving quality assurance in tertiary institutions in Enugu State.

Discussion of the Findings

The study found coordinating strategies for achieving quality assurance in tertiary institutions in Enugu State as: paying unscheduled visits to staff, delegation of tasks to appointed staff, issuance of query to any staff caught in any act of misconduct, appointment of capable staff into leadership positions, maintenance of effective communication through appropriate channels, among others. Coordination as seen to involve itself with the harmonizing resources and activities of a group for achieving set goals is hereby made a significant as an administrative strategy as it covers a number of techniques employed in an establishment to unity within an establishment. Hypothetically, there is no significant difference in the mean scores of male and female senior administrative staff on the coordinating strategies for achieving quality assurance in tertiary institutions in Enugu State. By this note, coordinating strategies are paramount for achieving quality assurance in tertiary institutions in Enugu State. This finding agrees with the findings of *Narang (2015) stated that coordination is a process by which the manager achieves harmonious group effort and unity of action in the pursuit of a common purpose. The author stressed that in coordination, the manager brings about unity as he performs the basic administrative functions of planning, organizing, staffing, directing and controlling.*

Similarly, the study showed budgeting strategies for achieving quality assurance in tertiary institutions in Enugu State as clarifying relevant authorities on the budgetary monitoring strategies, sticking to the budget period of the each year, calling for input from staff during budget planning, describing the proposed expenditure in the budget, explaining the expected sources of income to relevant stakeholders, setting up budget monitoring team in the school, among others. Hence, it is important to state that budgeting can keep an individual abreast with the financial needs and available fund to carter for necessary needs. Considering the place of gender in respect to the respondents' opinions, a significant difference does not exist in the mean scores of male and female senior administrative staff on the budgeting strategies for achieving quality assurance in tertiary institutions in Enugu State. The findings are in harmony with Amaikwu and Ofojebe (2020) who found giving priority to the most pressing needs of the school in budgeting planning, setting target to be achieved by the school budget, adhering to the official fiscal calendar in budget planning and forecasting the expected income in the school budget among others as budget planning practices for enhancing financial management.

Conclusion

The study investigated the administrative strategies for achieving quality assurance in tertiary institutions in Enugu State with emphasis on coordinating and budgeting strategies. The findings of the study through data analysis have shown that directing and budgeting strategies when adopted can enhance the achievement of quality assurance in tertiary institutions in Enugu State. Hence, the null hypotheses tested showed that gender of the respondents had no significant influence on their responses to the said items as there was no significant difference found in the mean ratings of male and female senior administrative staff on the coordinating and budgeting strategies for achieving quality assurance in tertiary institutions in Enugu State. On the basis of the above findings, it is believed that the adoption of the afore-discussed strategies would foster the achievement of quality assurance in tertiary institutions in Enugu State.

Recommendations

Based on the findings, the following recommendations were made:

1. Measures should be taken by appropriate authorities to ensure the adoption of coordination strategies as proven significant in achieving quality assurance in tertiary institutions in Enugu State.
2. Timely assessment of administrative strategies should be made by appropriate authorities to ensure capacity development and effectiveness of administrators of tertiary institutions in Enugu State.

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