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

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ABSTRACT

Leadership is a prerequisite for the success of any activity. Since the demand for resources is high and their availability is inadequate there is the need for proper directing of university activities by university administrators for internal quality assurance to be realized. Based on this, this study set out to determine university administrators' directing capacity as it predicts quality assurance. One research question and one hypothesis which was tested at 0.05 level of significance emerged from the study. The population comprise of 3,417 Academic Staff from the six federal universities in the zone from which 683 were sampled for the study. Mean and standard deviation were used to answer the research question. Linear regression statistics was used to test hypotheses. The result reveals that directing capacity of University administrators' significantly predicted internal quality assurance in Federal Universities in North East Geo-Political Zone of Nigeria, (Adjusted R Square = 0.954, p = 0.000). Therefore, University administrators' directing capacity explained 95.4% of the variance in internal quality assurance. The study therefore recommends that; university administrators should supervise, motivate guide and oversee the affairs of staff for internal quality assurance to be achieved. University administrators should equally allocate facilities, lecture halls and offices appropriately for the achievement of universities goals and objectives.

Keywords: University Administrator, Directing and Internal Quality Assurance

Introduction

Directing as a management function is a determinant of quality assurance in the university. The capacity of the university administrator to give specific instructions on what need to be done in order to accomplish tasks, taking appropriate decisions, guiding, motivating and supervising staff are prerequisite for quality assurance to be realized in the university. Amanchukwu and Ololube (2015) assert that quality assurance should be in the heart of educational managers and it should be taken more seriously through regular inspections in schools. Proper supervision of staff, physical and material resources coupled with proper research conduct are responsibilities of university administrator in ensuring quality in university education. Similarly, Ogunruku (nd) opined that the survival of higher education system depends on the objective and transparent commitment to staff recruitment, selection and placement. Administrators' motivation of staff will lead to quality in teaching, research and proper administrative management of the universities. Staff are motivated through personal rewards in form of promotion, workload adjustment, reduction in duties and pay increase (Adu-Oppong, 2014). Directing 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 (Adu-Oppong, 2014). It is against this background that this paper looks in to the directing capacity of university administrators and the realization of internal quality assurance in Federal Universities in North East Geo-Political Zone, Nigeria.

Purpose of the Study, Research Question and Hypotheses

The main purpose of this study is to determine university administrators directing management capacity as it predicts internal quality assurance in Federal Universities in North East Geo-Political Zone, Nigeria. Based on this, the following objective, research question and hypotheses emerged.

1. Directing as it predicts the level of internal quality assurance in Federal Universities in North East Geo-Political Zone of Nigeria.

2. To what level are university administrators able to direct to ensure internal quality assurance in Federal Universities in North East Geo-Political Zone of Nigeria?

3. H_O. University administrators' directing capacity does not significantly predict internal quality assurance in Federal Universities in North East Geo-Political Zone of Nigeria.

Directing for Effective Internal Quality Assurance

Quality is what makes an educational system a success in all ramifications. Quality ensures the production of a buoyant economy, political systems and social system through the training of productive citizens that contributes to the development of the nation. For this reason it becomes incumbent upon university administrators to direct the activities of the university appropriately for internal quality assurance to be realized.

Quality assurance is necessary for the general conduct and success of the university activities. Okebukola (2004) sees quality assurance in Nigerian universities as 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 minimum academic standards are attained, maintained and enhanced. Luckett (2006) define quality assurance as "a systematic internal and external management procedures and mechanisms by which an institution of higher education assures its stakeholders of the quality of its systems, processes, products and outcomes of its ability to manage the maintenance and enhancement of quality."

Internal quality assurance is the responsibility of the university administrator to ensure that all activities going on in the university is carried out in the right direction. Kawday (2019) defines internal quality assurance as 'a self regulated mechanism by the institution with an aim of continuous improvement of quality and acquiring academic excellence which centered on the quest for excellence in curriculum aspect, teaching/learning and evaluation, research innovation and extension, infrastructure and learning resources, student support and progression, governance, leadership and management and institutional values and best practices'. Internal quality assurance according to Dill (2007) are those policies and practices through which the institutions themselves monitor the quality of their education delivery.

Directing is a management function of a university administrator that involves supervision, motivation, monitoring and guiding staff towards the achievement of the university's goals and objectives. Bihar (2015) is of the view that Directing involves leading, influencing and motivating employees to perform the responsibilities assigned to them. This involves creating an enabling environment that encourages staff to carry out their duties effectively. It is the managerial function of guiding, supervising, motivating and leading people towards the attainment of goals and objectives of management. Bihar (2015) asserts that this includes the following activities:

Issuing order and instructions;

Supervising people at work;

Motivation that is creating the willingness to work for the attainment of objective; Communication that is establishing understanding with employees regarding plans and their implementation; and Leadership or influencing the behaviors of employees

Ugwulashi (2012) asserts that Directing offers guide to task as body of rules in regulating individual role performance. It is a leading process and without directing organizational activities properly, staff roles may conflict and efforts will not be effectively channeled to the right direction and this will make resources to be wasted. It helps in unifying the effort of staff members towards achieving school objectives and goals. School administrators are expected to direct the school activities through good leadership which will enhance school growth through staff, students and community effort, and increased cooperation and participation in carrying out their statutory functions. The school administrator will be able to realize mistakes in the planning process through organizing, directing and staffing and also make modifications that help to meet set out target.

Directing involves the supervision of work to ensure compliance towards the realization of goals and objectives. According to Mohammed (2016) to supervise means to direct, oversee; guide and to ensure that expected goals and objectives are attained. Supervision is regarded as the everyday guidance of all educational operations, coordination of the detailed work and the development of good working inter-personal relations among all people involved in the teaching-learning process. Similarly, Chiovere cited in Mohammed (2016) asserts that supervision involves the assessment of proper implementation of policy, correction of identified weaknesses, direction and redirection of defects, attainment of stated aims, objectives and goals of an education system at a given level**.**

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 federal 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 under study. 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 and 0.81administrators' management capacity and the quality assurance items. Mean and standard deviation was used to answer research questions. Linear regression statistics was used to test hypotheses.

Data Analysis

Research Question: To what level are university administrators able to direct to ensure internal quality assurance in Federal Universities in North East Geo-Political Zone of Nigeria?

The results of data analysis in respect of research question as presented in table 1 indicate the number of respondents, mean and standard deviation.

Table 1: Level of University Administrators' Ability to Direct

Item	N	Mean	S. D	Remarks	Internal Quality Assurance
Supervising lecturers	530	3.17	.90652	Moderate	Moderate
The usage of instructional facilities	530	3.09	.73073	Moderate	Moderate
Decision on allocation of school buildings	530	3.13	.95331	Moderate	Moderate
Motivating staff on research activities	530	2.96	1.04641	Low	Low
Average Mean		**3.09**		**Moderate**	**Moderate**

S.D: Standard Deviation

Source: Field Survey, 2019

Table 1 shows the level to which university administrators are able to direct the activities of Federal Universities in North East Geo-Political Zone of Nigeria. A grant mean of 3.09 which is slightly above the cut off point for the weighted mean 3.00 indicates moderate level to which university administrators are able to direct the activities of Federal Universities in North East Geo-Political Zone of Nigeria. However, university administrators rated low in their ability to direct the research activities of the universities under study. Internal quality assurance due to directing is also rated moderate on the average.

H_O. University administrators' directing capacity does not significantly predict internal quality assurance in Federal Universities in North East Geo-Political Zone of Nigeria.

Table 2: Directing Capacity as a Predictor internal Quality Assurance

Model	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	477.976	1	477.976	10931.968	.000[b]
Residual	23.086	528	.044		
Total	501.061	529			

a. Dependent Variable: Internal Quality Assurance

b. Predictors: (Constant), Directing

Table 2 indicates whether University administrators' directing capacity is a significant predictor to internal quality assurance in Federal Universities in North East Geo-Political Zone of Nigeria. The results revealed that University administrators' directing capacity is a significant predictor to internal quality assurance in Federal Universities in North East Geo-Political Zone of Nigeria, $F(1, 529) = 10931.968$, $p = 0.000$. Since the p – value (0.000) is less than 0.05 alpha level, we can conclude that the null hypothesis is rejected. This means that University administrators' directing capacity significantly predict internal quality assurance in Federal Universities in North East Geo-Political Zone of Nigeria.

Table 3: Model Summary of Hypotheses Three

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.977[a]	.954	.954	.20910

a. Predictors: (Constant), Directing

Table 3 reveals how the independent variable explains the variance in the dependent variable. The result shows that the University administrators' directing capacity explained 95.4% of the variance internal quality assurance in Federal Universities in North East Geo-Political Zone of Nigeria.

Table 4: Result on Directing Capacity as it Predicts Internal Quality Assurance

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	-.357	.033		-10.767	.000
Directing	1.081	.010	.977	104.556	.000

Dependent Variable: Internal Quality Assurance

The result on regression analysis on directing 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 0.977, t-value of 104.556, 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 showing that directing capacity significantly predict internal quality assurance in Federal Universities in North-East Geo-Political Zone, Nigeria.

Discussion of Result

Directing capacity of University administrators' significantly predicted internal quality assurance in Federal Universities in North East Geo-Political Zone of Nigeria, (Adjusted R Square = 0.954, p = 0.000). Therefore, University administrators' directing capacity explained 95.4% of the variance in internal quality assurance. There was a significant relationship between university administrators directing capacity and internal quality assurance in federal universities in north east geo-political zone of Nigeria. The result shows that directing capacity of University administrators' significantly predicted internal quality assurance in Federal Universities in North East Geo-Political Zone of Nigeria. This signifies that university administrators in federal universities in north east geo-political zone of Nigeria leads, influence, motivate, supervise and communicate properly with employees for effective internal quality assurance in the universities. This finding concurred with the findings of Owino, Ogachi and Olel (2011) in their study on the role of institutional managers in quality assurance in Kenya university education which shows that public universities have effective team among staff. The study concludes that appropriate steps should be taken by university management to boost staff motivation, commitment and working conditions in public universities. Management should also boost their managerial skills as a significant step for quality education delivery in the universities.

The findings of Onyeike and Jaja (2015) also contradicts the findings of this study when it reveals that university administrators in south-south Nigeria has failed to realize the universities goal of being a fertile ground for the effective training of academic leaders in the country due to inadequacy of infrastructure. The study concludes that employee welfare should be improved, new university administration technique be developed to improve teaching, learning and research and university administrators to be given remuneration and compensation packages to motivate them for proper contribution in their job. This study reveals that despite the inadequacy of infrastructure, university administrators have done very well through directing the activities of the university effectively.

In a similar vein, Nakimuli and Abanis (2015) found out that the extent of administrative behavior and institutional efficiency in the universities of Uganda are high. The study further reveal that efficient administration in the academics is the biggest advantage a university can have in resource highly competitive higher education environment and that there are a lot of inefficiencies with low research programme in universities in Uganda. In essence therefore, these findings signify that adequate facilities and infrastructure is a prerequisite for proper directing of university activities for effective internal quality assurance. Similarly, it indicates that university administrators need to improve staff welfare, device new administration technique for quality education delivery and government need to encourage the university administrators in order to put in their best for the universities development.

Udu and udo (2016) in their study found out that principals have quality assurance competence in personnel management and involvement of stakeholders in decision making, instructional management and management of school plant. The study concludes that principals should improve on school and self evaluation and also enhance their supervision role. This falls in line with the findings of this study which shows that university administrators direct activities such as staff development, school plant, proper decision making and instructional management of the federal universities in north east geo-political zone of Nigeria which ensures internal quality assurance.

The study of Wanza, Ntale and Korir (2019) found out that management support is necessary for any key decision and that there is a significant relationship between quality management practices and performance of universities. In a similar study, Yakubu, Laar and Ansolenang (2019) found out that management of universities should prioritize the use of resources of the universities to reflect the qualities of teaching and learning. Admission committee should ensure that admission is based on the quality of applicants to have good input which determine the quality of graduates to have good output. These studies concur with the findings of the current study because the directing capacity of university administrator will give employees an insight in to what is expected of them and enable them to carry out their work effectively which in turn will enhance internal quality assurance.

Conclusion

Directing capacity of University administrators' significantly predicted internal quality assurance in Federal Universities in North East Geo-Political Zone of Nigeria, (Adjusted R Square = 0.954, p = 0.000). Therefore, University administrators' directing capacity explained 95.4% of the variance in internal quality assurance. Based on this university administrators should improve their management capacity in the supervision, monitoring, motivation, guidance and overseeing the affairs of staff in the universities. The following is recommended for the way forward:

1. University administrators should supervise the activities of staff effectively so as to make the more dedicated to their duties for the realization of the universities goals.

2. University administrators should ensure that facilities needed for teaching/learning is provided to staff for effective lesson delivery.

3. University administrators should allocate lecture halls and offices appropriately to avoid clash and inconvenience in carrying out responsibilities.

4.   University administrators should motivate staff in carrying out research activities so as to keep up to date in the fast changing educational sector.

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