

Influence of Underfunding and Poor Management on Accreditation of Business Education Programmes in Public Universities and Colleges of Education



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ABSTRACT: The study on influence of underfunding and poor management on the accreditation of business education programmes in public universities and colleges of education in South East, Nigeria was necessitated by the need to ensure that the programmes meet the minimum academic standards in order to achieve its objectives. Two research questions and two null hypotheses guided the study. Descriptive survey research design was adopted and area of the study was delimited to South-East, Nigeria. The population consisted of 197 business educators in 13 federal and state universities and colleges of education in South-East, Nigeria. No sample and sampling techniques was adopted because the population size is manageable for the researchers. The instrument was validated by four experts. Cronbach alpha was used to determine the internal consistency of the instrument, and an overall reliability coefficient of 0.90 was obtained. The t-test was used to test the null hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. The findings of the study revealed that under-funding and poor management affected accreditation of business education programmes to a high extent. Business educators from universities do not differ significantly from their counterparts in colleges of education in their mean ratings on the influence under-funding and poor management on the accreditation of business education programmes in South-East, Nigeria. Based on the findings, it was concluded that under-funding and poor management affected accreditation of business education programmes for quality assurance in university and college of education. It was, therefore recommended; among others that, government should adequately fund universities and colleges of education to enable institutional administrators provide the necessary physical, human and material resources for the enhancement of quality business education programmes in university and college of education in Nigeria while waiting for accreditation.

KEYWORDS: Accreditation, business education programmes, under-funding and poor management.

INTRODUCTION

Education in Nigeria is viewed as an instrument for national development and social change. It is essential for the enhancement of quality life. Perhaps, it is on the basis of this that the Federal Republic of Nigeria (FRN, 2013) states that Nigeria aims at providing education that are qualitative, comprehensive, functional and relevant to the needs of the society. This calls for quality education at all levels in the country to meet the aspirations of individuals and the society, especially in this era of knowledge driven society and global competitiveness. In realization of this fact, the Federal Government of Nigeria has put in place a robust transformation agenda in education intended to put Nigeria in a better position to be a competitive player and in the process transform all sectors of its economy through tertiary education.

Tertiary institutions where Business education programmes are offered such as universities and colleges of education in Nigeria aim at producing high level manpower to man the various sectors of the Nigerian economy. To achieve this goal, the universities and colleges of education need to carry out quality students' intake, quality teaching/learning processes, quality research and provide quality infrastructural facilities, services and resources. They need to provide quality and adequate students' support services to enhance quality learning outcomes. One way of stimulating authorities of universities and colleges of education to provide these services is through accreditation which is a quality assurance process in tertiary institutions.

Accreditation of academic programmes in business education is one of the quality assurance mechanisms initiated by the National Universities Commission (NUC) and National Commission for Colleges of Education (NCCE) to regulate academic standard and enhance quality learning in Nigeria universities and colleges of education respectively. But the dwindling quality of the

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products of university and college of education has become a matter of great concern to the nation. Accreditation, therefore, involves the process of ensuring that curricula, physical facilities, personnel, funds and so on meet the needs of the university and college of education to achieve its stated philosophy and objectives. It is a measure of quality of academic programmes aimed at strengthening business education programmes for quality assurance and quality improvement. According to Obadara and Alaka (2013), accreditation is a process that aids institutions in developing and sustaining effective and functional educational programmes and assuring the educational community, the general public and other organizations that the accredited institution and programmes has met high standard of quality and effectiveness. It is a measure of the quality of academic programmes on acceptable minimum standard provided by the accrediting agency. The objectives of accreditation of higher institutions/programmes as outlined by the NUC (2012) and NCCE (2012) include to ensure that at least the minimum academic standards documents are attained, maintained and enhanced, to assure employers and other members of the community that Nigerian graduates of all academic programmes have attained an acceptable level of competency in their areas of specialization and to certify to the international community that the programmes such as business education offered in Nigerian universities and colleges of education are of high standard and their graduates are qualified for employment and further studies.

Meanwhile, a cursory look at these objectives reveal that accreditation focuses on the production of quality graduates with needed skills, technical and professional knowledge that would enable them to contribute to national development and compete favourably in the employment market. Therefore, accreditation is supposed to enhance the provision of resources in order to achieve these objectives. The NUC (2012) and NCCE (2012) outlined the criteria for accreditation of academic programmes to include: philosophy and objectives of the programme, the curriculum, teaching staff (quality and quantity), students' admission and graduation requirements, standard of degree examination, financial support, status of physical facilities, administration of department and employers rating of graduates. It can be deduced from these criteria that accreditation of academic programmes is all embracing and involves assessing the appropriateness of business education programme philosophy and objectives, the adequacy and relevance of the curricula to the students in their specific areas of study and the world of work. It involves evaluating the status of physical facilities in terms of office accommodation, lecture halls, library facilities and the report of employers' assessment of graduates in their employ. Accreditation, therefore, is a process that involves peer review and rating of these resources in relation to the accreditation criteria for programmes which business education is a sub set.

Business education (also known as Business Teacher Education) is an educational training which encompasses knowledge, skills, competencies, structural activities, abilities, capabilities and all other structural experiences acquired through formal, on-the-job or off-the-job which is capable of enhancing recipients opportunity for securing jobs in various sectors of the economy or even enabling the person to be self-dependent. Koffi and Etukudo (2016) observed that business education comprises all organized or structured activities that aim at providing people with the knowledge, skills and competencies necessary to perform a job or a set of jobs whether or not they lead to a formal qualification. It is an educational programme which offers specialized instructions for office occupations and general business orientation. According to Osuala in Saliu (2020), it is a programme of instruction which consists of two parts: (a) office education-being a business education programme for office careers through initial refresher, and upgrading education leading to employability and advancement in and occupations and (b) general business, being a programme of instruction to provide students with information and competences which are needed by all in managing personal business affairs and in using the service of the business world. However, Business Education now includes programmes in Marketing and Distributive Education and Entrepreneurship Education. Nwazor and Udegbumam (2016) explained that Business Education programmes are the type of educational programmes that have to do with knowledge and skills which develop students physically and mentally, and finally make them self-dependent.

From the foregoing definitions, it is observed that business education is either needed for occupational purposes or for general business ideas. It is based on this that accreditation of business education programmes is highly needed to enhance quality of learning. But the questions that arise in accreditation of business education programme centre around inadequacies in the curriculum content of business education, non inclusion of the business educators in drafting business education curriculum, under funding, poor management and governance, poor implementation of the curriculum, qualification and quality of teachers and facilities. Koffi and Etukudo (2016) noted that most institutions offering business education programmes have unqualified teaching staff recruited, insufficient facilities and equipment, and incompetent teaching staff. Tunde and Issa (2013) attributed negative influences on accreditation of business education to poor funding of education in Nigeria which makes programme administrators unable to provide adequate and quality infrastructural facilities and equipment for effective teaching and learning. Tunde and Issa further stated that the non-commensurate funding with other growing indices in Nigerian universities and colleges of education have negative impact on the quality of education as the institutions are constantly being shut down as a result of staff unions agitating for one form of demand or the other. This could be why most of their graduates make little or no attempt

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to be self-employed despite the abundant business opportunities in the country. Instead, they continue to besiege government offices and other establishments in search of jobs that are either extremely few in supply or even non-existent.

Under funding by government is the first thing that comes to mind as the availability of money for meeting the need of a given project or programme is critical. It is a system of apportioning available funds belonging to an organization for meeting needs whether the fund is sufficient or not. Funding refers to a form of financial support that is given for the achievement of projects. According to Nwafor, Uchendu and Akani (2015), funding is the provision of financial resources in order to meet needs, projects or programmes. Money needed to run a project or programme in the school may be raised from within or outside the school. When funds are generated, they are usually disbursed based on the needs of the school. The process of making the acquired funds available to the units that require them either in the short or long run is referred to as funding (Ankrah, Burgess, Grimshaw & Shaw, 2013). To Dimunah (2017) the consequences of underfunding includes the increase in tuition, lack of resources for classroom and offices, insufficient finance to cover current and future expenses, overcrowding in teaching and learning environments, inadequate research and teaching materials, brain drain among highly qualified faculty and administrative staff, deteriorating library facilities, among others. Halidu (2015) reported that federal universities were seriously underfunded and the underfunding affected academic performance of students, lack of physical facilities, brain drain among highly qualified faculty members, and administrative staff, inadequate library facilities, laboratory equipment and professional development for staff. Therefore, through adequate funding by government, success of the business education programme and attainment of its goals and objectives will be achieved (Ajoma, 2018).

Another serious issue that influences accreditation of business education programmes is poor management. The way and manner some of the Nigerian universities and colleges of education, and their programmes are being managed by administrators also have consequential effects on quality assurance in the education sector to which business education is a sub-set. This problem is found in every sector of Nigerian economy. Meanwhile, bad leaders contribute in having weak managers that administer the institutions. To Amadi (2012), the problem in Nigeria is that the institutions for managing education, whether at the local or national levels, are weak and inefficient because of the democracy deficit in the polity. Akpotohwo and Ogeibiri (2018) noted that the consequences of poor management and governance has resulted to inadequate teaching facilities, inadequate teaching equipment, lack of on-the-job training for business education teachers, effective maintenance of facilities, effective quality control of facilities and programme, effective audit of material, students and staff, effective supervision of staff, effective record keeping/inventories and so on. These institutions are themselves not transparent and accountable. For most of the tertiary institutions (universities and colleges of education), management means little more than playing the role of a "Caretaker." This vital function has been largely reduced to the maintenance of the status quo. This unfortunate development negates the concept of higher education, particularly in a developing country like Nigeria. It seems certain and sure that as long as management continues to play ineffective role, business education quality assurance will continue to be jeopardized in the nation's universities and colleges of education.

The moderator variable used in this study is ownership of institutions. The variable is likely to influence accreditation of business education programmes. Ownership of institutions here refers to Federal and State Governments that own the universities and colleges of education where business education programmes are offered. Obadara and Alaka (2013) in their study reported that a significant relationship was found between accreditation and resources inputs into Nigerian universities and colleges of education, quality of output and quality of process, but no significant relationship was found between accreditation and quality of academic content. Akpan and Etor (2016) reported that school administrators believed that accreditation positively impacted on the quality of education, school improvement and quality of classroom instruction at their schools. It is against this backdrop that the researchers were motivated to find out the influences on the accreditation of business education programmes in public universities and colleges of education in South-East Nigeria.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

In recent times, there is an increasing concern about the quality of Business Education graduates from the public universities and colleges of education in Nigeria among stakeholders and the general public. Observation has shown that some of the graduates are deficient in communication skills and the ability to apply technical and professional knowledge in solving personal and work-related problems. Some of them are deficient in the proficiency for time management and self control. This shows that the quality of university and college of education graduates from business education is deteriorating. This has been blamed on the politics and the poor manner in which accreditation of business education programmes are carried out in Nigerian universities and colleges of education. In some universities and colleges of education, government and management do not release money on time to departments of business education to prepare for the exercise. It seems that the Ivory towers are plagued by under-funding and

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poor management resulting to inadequate infrastructural facilities and teaching personnel for quality instructional delivery. In some institutions, facilities and equipment are borrowed and used for accreditation. The selection of members of the accreditation team is handled only by NUC and NCCE without inputs from the institutions. Similarly some business education programme contents seem to be inadequate and not relevant to the needs of the students and the labour market. Therefore, it seems accreditation of business education programmes in Nigerian universities and colleges of education does not yield any meaningful results.

The problem of this study, therefore, is that under-funding and poor management result to inadequate facilities and technologies needed for achieving quality business education programme. If this ugly situation is not averted, its adverse effects on the socio-economic development of the Nigerian universities and colleges of education (business education programmes) in South-East will persist to the detriment of students, citizens and the government. It is against this backdrop that the study sought to determine the influence of under-funding and poor management on the accreditation of business education programmes in public universities and colleges of education in South-East Nigeria.

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of this study was to ascertain the influence of under-funding and poor management on accreditation of business education programmes in public universities and colleges of education. Specifically, the study sought to ascertain the influence of:

1. Under funding on the accreditation of business education programmes.
2. Poor management on the accreditation of business education programmes.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

1. What is the influence of under-funding on the accreditation of business education programmes in Public universities and colleges of education?
2. What is the influence of poor management on the accreditation of business education programmes in public universities and colleges of education?

Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance:

1. Business educators from public universities and colleges of education do not differ significantly in their mean ratings on the influence of under-funding on the accreditation of business education programmes.
2. Business educators from public universities and colleges of education do not differ significantly in their mean ratings on the influence of poor management on the accreditation of business education programmes.

METHODOLOGY

The study adopted a descriptive survey design. The researchers considered this design appropriate because data would be collected from business educators in public universities and colleges of education. The area of the study is South East Zone of Nigeria. The population of this study comprised of 197 business educators in 13 public universities and colleges of education that offer business education in South-East, Nigeria. A 20-item structured questionnaire was used for data collection. The questionnaire was structured on a five-point Likert rating scale. A pilot test was carried out. Data collected in the pilot test were analyzed using Cronbach alpha to determine the internal consistency. The reliability coefficients of 0.89 and 0.90 for clusters B1 and B2 respectively and an overall coefficient of 0.90 were obtained. The administration of the instrument was carried out personally by the researchers with the help of four research assistants. Out of 197 copies of the questionnaire administered on the respondents, a total of 193 copies were properly filled and retrieved, and used for data analysis. Data collected were analyzed using mean and standard deviation to answer the research questions, while the null hypotheses were tested using t-test at 0.05 level of significance.

RESULTS

Research Question 1

What is the influence of under-funding on the accreditation of business education programmes public universities and colleges of education?

Data collected to answer the research question is presented in Table 1.

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Table 1: Mean ratings of respondents on the influence of under-funding on the accreditation of business education programmes in public universities and COE.

S/N Under-funding by government result to	X	SD	Remarks
1. Lack of resources for classrooms and offices	4.60	0.43	SA
2. Insufficient finance to cover current and future expense	4.20	0.52	A
3. Increases in tuition fees in most institutions	4.70	0.40	SA
4. Inability of institutions to perform their duties effectively	4.69	0.41	SA
5. Overcrowded in teaching and learning environment	3.54	0.58	A
6. Inadequate research and teaching materials	4.24	0.49	A
7. Lack of physical facilities	3.20	0.63	UD
8. Deteriorating library facilities	4.50	0.47	SA
9. Lack of professional development for staff	3.36	0.49	UD
10. Inadequate attention to staff welfare	3.56	0.56	A
11. Inadequate payment of staff salaries	4.50	0.47	SA
Cluster Mean	4.10		A

Data in Table 1 show that from the item-by-item analysis, out of eleven items listed, five have mean scores ranging from 4.50 to 4.70 indicating that the respondents strongly agreed, while they only agreed with four, but were undecided about items 7 and 9. The cluster means score of 4.10 shows that, on the whole, business educators in the area of the study agreed that underfunding influenced the accreditation of Business Education programmes in public universities and colleges of education in the ways listed on Table 1. The standard deviations of 0.40 to 0.63 show that the respondents were not far apart in their mean ratings.

Research Question 2

What is the influence of poor management on the accreditation of Business Education programmes in public universities and colleges of education?

Data collected to answer the research question is presented in Table 2.

Table 2: Mean ratings of respondents on extent of poor management and governance by government towards accreditation of business education programmes.

S/N Poor management influence accreditation	X	SD	Remarks
12. Mismanagement of funds	3.60	0.62	A
13. Frequent Increase in fees payable	4.20	0.57	A
14. Lack of on-the-job training for business teacher Educators.	3.70	0.40	A
15. Ineffective maintenance of facilities.	4.54	0.52	SA
16. Ineffective quality control of the system.	4.58	0.48	SA
17. Ineffective audit of material, students and staff	4.59	0.44	SA
18. Ineffective supervision	4.50	0.63	SA
19. Inadequate teaching equipment/facilities	4.60	0.43	SA
20. Inadequate allocation of funds	3.50	0.69	A
Cluster Mean	4.20		A

From the data in Table 2, the respondents strongly agreed with items 15, 16, 17, 18 and 19; and agreed with items 12, 13, 14 and 20. The Standard Deviation ranging from 0.43 to 0.69 indicate that the respondents were not far apart in their responses on the influence of poor management on the accreditation of Business education programmes.

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Testing of Hypotheses

Hypothesis 1

Business educators from Federal and State owned universities and colleges of education do not differ significantly in their mean ratings on the influence of under-funding on the accreditation of business education programmes.

Table 3: Summary of t-test analysis of the responses of business educators from public universities and colleges of education in their mean ratings on the influence of under-funding on the accreditation of business education programmes.

Ownership of Institution	N	\bar{X}	SD	α	df	p-value	Decision
Federal	131	3.21	.19	0.05	191	.10	Not Significant
State	62	3.17	.14				

Data in Table 3 indicates that at 191 degree of freedom, p-value obtained was 0.10. Since the p-value of .10 was greater than the alpha value (0.05), it means that business educators from Federal and State owned universities and colleges of education do not differ significantly in their mean ratings of the influence of under-funding on the accreditation of business education programmes. The null hypothesis was, therefore, not rejected.

Hypothesis 2.

Business educators from Federal and State owned universities and colleges of education do not differ significantly in their mean ratings on the influence of poor management on the accreditation of business education programmes.

Data collected to test the hypothesis is presented in Table 4.

Table 4: Summary of t-test analysis of the mean responses of business educators from federal and state owned universities and colleges of education on the influence of poor management on the accreditation of business education programmes.

Ownership of Institution	N	\bar{X}	SD	α	df	p-value	Decision
Federal	131	3.07	0.17	0.05	191	0.35	Not Significant
State	62	3.46	0.19				

From Table 4, at 191 degree of freedom, the p-value obtained was 0.35. Since the p-value of 0.35 was greater than alpha value (0.05), it means that business educators from Federal and State owned universities do not differ significantly from their counterparts in colleges of education in their mean ratings of the influence of poor management on the accreditation of business education programmes. The null hypothesis was, therefore, not rejected.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Findings of the study revealed that under-funding influenced accreditation of business education programmes in public universities and colleges of education. This finding is in line with Dimunah (2017) who noted the consequences of underfunding to include increase in tuition fees, lack of resources for classroom and offices, inadequate finance to cover capital and recurrent expenditures, overcrowding of teaching and learning environment, inadequate research and teaching materials, brain drain among highly qualified faculty members and administrative staff, deteriorating library facilities, among others.

The test of the first hypothesis revealed that business educators from public universities do not differ significantly from their counterparts public colleges of education in their mean ratings on the influence of under-funding on the accreditation of business education programmes in South-East, Nigeria. This is in line with the findings of Obadara and Alaka (2013) who found a significant relationship between accreditation and resources inputs into Nigerian universities and colleges of education, quality of output and quality of the process, but no significant relationship between accreditation and quality of academic content.

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Findings of the second research question revealed that poor management affected accreditation of business education programmes in South-East, Nigeria. This finding is in line with Akpotohwo and Ogeibiri (2018) who revealed that the consequences of poor management included inadequate teaching facilities, inadequate teaching equipment, lack of on-the-job training for business education teachers, ineffective maintenance of facilities, lack of effective quality control of facilities in the programmes, ineffective audit of material, students and staff, ineffective supervision of staff, ineffective record keeping/inventories and so on.

The test of the second hypotheses revealed that business educators from universities do not differ significantly from their counterparts in colleges of education in their mean ratings on the influence of poor management on accreditation of business education programmes in South-East, Nigeria. **This is in line with the findings of Akpan and Etor (2016) who reported that school administrators believed that accreditation positively impacted on the quality of education, school improvement and quality of classroom instruction at their schools.**

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of this study, it was concluded that under-funding and poor management affect accreditation of business education programmes for quality assurance in public universities and colleges of education. In other words, accreditation of business education programmes with positive results could enhance quality business education graduates, while negative influence of the result of accreditation can also negatively affect the quality of the products of Business Education programmes.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are made:

1. That the National Universities Commission (NUC) and the National Commission for Colleges of Education (NCCE) should intensify efforts in ensuring that accreditation of business education programmes is carried out regularly in order to ensure quality improvement in business education programmes in public universities and colleges of education in Nigeria.
2. Government should adequately fund universities and colleges of education to enable institutional administrators provide the necessary physical, human and material resources for the enhancement of quality business education programmes in Nigeria while waiting for accreditation.

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