

**THE ROLES OF SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS IN ENSURING QUALITY IN COLLEGES OF EDUCATION IN
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Abstract

The importance of quality in the nation's educational programs cannot be over emphasized. The educational administrators in all the programmes must make sure that, their qualities are in line with the objective/goals of the National Policy on Education so that their outputs can contribute meaningfully to national development. To ensure this, the Provosts, Deans and Heads of Departments in all the Colleges of Education must be awakened to their responsibilities. This paper examines the roles of School Administrators in the Colleges of Education. Some recommendations were made-The government should increase funding in colleges of education. There should be standard in admission requirement, students should be placed in their areas of interest.

Introduction

The National Policy on Education in Nigeria (FRN 2013:13) states that, "Education is to be qualitative, comprehensive, functional and relevant to the needs of society". The Colleges of Education are saddled with the responsibilities of producing quality teaching manpower. In other words, the trained teaching individual will in turn help or contribute to the achievement of the national goals and objectives. On the contrary, when the programme is of low quality, it will also reduce the quality of the system. "For teacher quality to rise

above the educational system, a strong teacher education programme is required" (section 5B, number 92 (a) of the National Policy on education). For the realization of the above goal of the National policy on education on teacher education, the School Administrators, the Provosts, Deans and Heads of Department should be up and doing to ensure quality in the Colleges of Education in order to meet with the demands of the nation for national development. Programmes like sandwich affiliate universities, post graduate diploma in education, distance learning centres should be well

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monitored and supervised by them to ensure standard and quality. They implement policies and programmes formulated by educational managers of the colleges of education. Federal Republic of Nigeria (2004) recognized the importance of educational administration and management when it stated that the quality of education in Nigeria will among other things depend on the efficient administration and management of educational institutions, through the systematic assemblance and development of available human and material resources.

The Concept of Quality and quality Education in Colleges of Education

The quality of an educational system should be judged by both its ability to enable the students perform well in standard examinations and its relevance to the needs of the individual student, the immediate community and society at large. Quality in education should embrace all its functions and activities; teaching and academic programmes, research and scholarship, staffing, student, building, facilities, equipment, services to the community and the academic environment (United National Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, 1998). Quality assurance is 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 school system. It should ensure that the provision of the Minimum Academic

standard (MAS) are attained, maintained and enhanced.

Essentially, the duties of the Quality Assurance Unit include, among others the following:

1. Supervision of curriculum design, content and implementation
2. Supervision of instruction
3. Monitoring of students' progression and achievement
4. Periodic assessment of human and material resources available to each programme.
5. Organizing workshops and seminars for academics
6. Monitoring input, process and output of the system.

Quality Assurance mechanism is the immediate and long-term solution to the problem of poor quality in secondary education in Nigeria. The adoption and implementation of internal quality assurance mechanism will facilitate the actualization of the goals of Colleges of Education in Nigeria.

The Roles of School Administrators in Ensuring Quality in the Colleges of Education

The provosts, Deans and Heads of Department in Colleges of Education are saddled with the responsibilities of ensuring that the quality of the system is maintained. This will make the products from the colleges of education to be useful to themselves and also for national development. Ojerinde (1997) in Ugodulunwa and Mustapha (2005) opined that quality of education has to do with factors like articulated national goals, well-planned curriculum at each

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level, assessment procedure and instrument, capacity for processing examination data, utilization of assessment outcomes, and quality of students enrolled serves as serious pointer to the exact roles of the administrators of colleges of education.

From the foregoing indices, the administrators of colleges of education have both internal and external roles to play to ensure high standard of performance in the system. The entry requirement of new entrants into the college should be adhered to strictly by the provosts, deans and Heads of Department. Other variables like the issue of quota system, god fatherism, state of origin or nationality, should not be a criteria for admission. Every intending candidate should write the entrance examination into the colleges, Only those who passed the examination should be admitted into the school, not only passing but should meet up with the "cut off mark". The examination supervision should be employed with reliable hands. After the examination and results released, successful candidates should be placed in their areas of interest or qualification, for instance, a candidate who has credit in Civic Education should not be given Agricultural Science to read. In adhering strictly to this, there will be maintenance of high standard in the programmes, This method of admission into the colleges of education should also be extended to sandwich, Weekend Post Graduate Diploma in Education (PGDE) since their products are also sent out to teach in the Primary and Junior Secondary Schools.

Another role of school administrators in ensuring quality in the colleges of education is the aspect of the mode of conduct of examination. Most of them are not well conducted, some teachers and students indulge in examination practices resulting from lack of proper supervision by the invigilators. In regard to this, Ugodulunwa and Mustapha (2005) agreed to the fact that to maintain quality in colleges of education, invigilation during examinations should be thorough which may include group examinations, use of only essay, testing only cognitive domain, closed book assessment, paper pencil assessment, continuous assessment, and the use of group work/assessment and project. When students are not properly assessed, the qualities of the programme will reduce. It has been observed too that most students in Colleges of Education undergoing sandwich programmes are not well assessed. Some induce lecturers differently like offering money to write their projects, some do not go for teaching practice, yet they are given arbitrary marks, by so doing, they compromise standard. The graduants cannot bring out quality products because they themselves are half baked Nigeria Certificate in Education graduates. To avoid these ugly occurrences, the Deans and Heads of Department should make sure that the qualitative evaluation or processes of conducting assessment are maintained. They should selector recommend the appropriate testing instrument for evaluating students on what they have learnt. Proper assessment of the

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learners' performances will also help educational managers to find out whether the educational policies and programmes have been implemented as planned.

The administrator of the Colleges of Education should adhere strictly to the policy laid down by the accreditation body. The National Commission for Colleges of Education (NCCE) is in charge of accreditation exercise. During each of the accreditation, all the requirements should be made available; school administrators should desist from the practice of going to hire professors, doctors and instructional materials from other institutions. They also inflate the numbers in order for all the courses in all the Departments to be accredited. This does not give room for standard/quality in such institutions because as soon as the accreditation panel leaves the institutions come back to its former self.

Ugodulunwa and Abbas (2005) also itemized the following ways of ensuring quality in the Colleges of Education.

- a. The moderation of examination questions by Departmental Examination Board and qualified external examiners before their examinations;
- b. Moderation of marking schemes and answers scripts by qualified external examiners in different subject.
- c. Moderation of continuous assessment scores by Departmental Examination Board before they are submitted;

- d. Departmental and Faculty Boards consideration of examinations results before sending them to the college or university senate for consideration and approval.

Nwankwoala, (2007) also highlighted other ways of assuring quality in the colleges of education as follows:

1. Adequately giving the feedback of examination results to students and communicating teachers/lecturers of their performance.
2. Adequately securing the examination materials, questions and results.
3. Providing adequate facilities for teaching and learning in line with the increasing population of students.
4. Prompt payment of lecturers' salaries and allowances
5. Adequate funding of the colleges by the government to avoid corrupt practices by the staff.
6. Making sure that the examinations and continuous assessments given to regular students are of the same standard with those given to sandwich and distant education students.
7. Making sure that one of the criteria of lecturers promotion is students assessments.
8. Not allowing strikes and industrial disputes to disrupt academic works.

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9. Making sure that only lecturers with high integrity are entrusted with examination matters.

The challenges of school administrators in ensuring quality in colleges of education

In carrying out the above role to ensure quality in the colleges of education, the school administrators are saddled with some constraints.

School enrolment

The minimum qualification of admission into the NCE programme as stipulated by the NCCE is 3 credits and two passes at a sitting or four credits at 2 sittings in WAEC or NECO, NBE and other relevant examinations. Going by this, it is below standard. Olusanya (2002) opined that, the admission requirement is below standard. Entrants with this qualifications will turn out to be deficient. Ikejiaku (2002) opined that the low standard of entrant into the Nigeria Certificate in Education affects the standard of the programme generally and the quality of its product. These are students who could not meet with the substandard entry requirement laid down by the NCCE.

In order to maintain quality in the Colleges of Education, the entry requirement needs to be reviewed and adhered to strictly, so that the incoming students can withstand the rigour of the academic programmes, By so doing, the NCE graduates will come out refined and can train the trainees who will also impact functional and effective knowledge into the students.

Provision of infrastructural facilities

For standard / quality to be maintained, there should be adequate availability of instructional materials. To cover the curriculum for the programme, there must be availability of adequate instructional facilities, if there is the objective to maintain quality and standard, in agreement with this, Salisu (2001) stated that, there is significant difference in the academic performance of students in school with adequate facilities and those without adequate facilities. It is observed that, most lecturers concentrate on the theoretical aspect than the practicals of some subjects making the whole programme ineffective and unproductive. Some of the equipment are obsolete. When these students are sent out on industrial training, they meet with modern equipment that are new to them. Such companies too, instead of training them on how to use these equipment, engage them on menial jobs resulting from lack of time to put them through. The NCCE during their accreditation visit make sure that these physical facilities are available and where they are absent, such institutions or courses / department are not given accreditation.

Implementation of Educational Policy

This is another serious issue in maintaining quality in the Colleges of Education. Every government has her own policy and programme, hence every programme is left half hazardly with the out gone administration. In most cases the policies are left on table where they were discussed while some at the verge of implementation, another government takes

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over and that ends that policy giving room for the incoming of another policy and programme. Even the money voted for it, is being carted away by some die hearted politicians making the policy and the programme die. For instance, the introduction of the 6-3.3-4 system of education was a laudable one, but the implementation was faulty. The policy aimed at technical and vocational skills development whereby the graduates will become self-reliant instead of looking for “white collar Job” that are not even available. In line with this Ejide (2000) opined that, “successive government have been unable to implement educational policies that emphasized technical and vocational skills.

The NPE (2004) emphasized that after the Junior Secondary School, the students are expected to be shared into vocational, apprenticeship, technical and secondary school levels depending on the area which they fit into, where they can be well grounded and become useful to themselves and to society after graduation. But, this is not the case with Nigerians, most of them do not believe in manual works or skill development. In the words of Ejide (2000) “Nigerian from the beginning never associate education with manual works.” Thus education becomes empowerment and consumptive rather than useful and productive, with this at the back of their minds, they prefer their children to go to the secondary school education rather than Technical College. To ensure quality is the colleges of education, the National Policy on Education needs to be

reviewed where emphasis should be laid on Technical and Vocational skills development. Graduates from the NCE should be given the same credence with those from other institutions of higher learning. This will attract entrants with high entry qualification with high zeal into the colleges of education, which will result to high maintenance of quality of graduates from the colleges of education.

Funding: Funding is another issue that militates against the effective roles of school Administrators in the Colleges of Education. The money allocated to education is low compared to other sectors like health, security and so on. The little that is given to education sector is still being filtered before it gets to the appropriate venue, for the purchase of instructional materials, payment of teachers salaries, workshop and seminars, libraries, laboratories, tools, computers and so on. Inadequate funding in the colleges of education poses a serious setback in maintaining quality.

Conclusion

Any educational system/programme that lacks quality should be scrapped off. Funding such programme is tantamount to a wasted effort. Every educational programme should aim at contributing to national development through quality education. It is the duty of the school administrators of these institutions especially the colleges of education to ensure quality in their products/outputs so as to be useful to themselves and society at large. Therefore,

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all stakeholders, government, NCCE, voluntary agencies and every individual, students inclusive should put in their best to ensure quality/standard in the colleges of education.

Recommendations

Having discussed some of the roles of school administrators in ensuring qualities in the colleges of education, the author hereby gives the following recommendations.

- ❖ Members of staff should be motivated by regular payment of salaries as at when due.
- ❖ The objective of the educational programme should be at par with the national goals and objectives
- ❖ The school administrators should work hard enough to ensure that all the courses are accredited
- ❖ Sorting or illegal collection of money should be eradicated from the system
- ❖ There should be standardized continuous assessment test.
- ❖ All tests and examination scores must be properly kept to avoid falsification by other teachers/students
- ❖ The institution must be adequately funded
- ❖ Guidance and counselors should place students in their proper area of interest and ability e.g vocational technical and academic.

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*Otomewo, A.G and Ogude E.E
(2019). An overview of educational
administration and management in
schools*