

RESOURCE-AVAILABILITY AS A PREDICTOR OF QUALITY ASSURANCE IN PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES IN ENUGU STATE

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Abstract

This study was conducted to determine resources availability as a predictor of quality assurance in public universities in Enugu State. Two research questions and two null hypotheses guided the study. The study adopted a descriptive survey research design and was carried out in all the public universities in Enugu State, including Enugu State University of Science and Technology (ESUT), University of Nigeria-Nsukka (UNN), Federal University of Allied Health Sciences (Formerly Dental College), and State University of Medical and Allied Sciences (SUMAS). The population constitutes a purposive sample size of 197 (118 males and 79 female) lecturers. The instrument for data collection was an adapted checklist titled "Resources Availability Checklist (RAC)". The checklist contained 29 items from the National University Commission Benchmark minimum academic standards for establishment and operation of undergraduate programme in Nigeria. As an adapted instrument, no further validation was made. In analyzing the data collected, frequencies and percentages were used in answering the research questions while hypotheses were tested using Pearson chi-sq. In decision making, frequencies above 50% were rated available while items whose frequencies were below 50% were rated not available. The hypotheses was not rejected when the chi-square calculated value is more than the level of significance and otherwise not accepted when the t-significant value is less than the level of significance. The findings of the study showed among others that security officer (75.93%), lecturer I (74.07%), professor (72.96%), senior lecturer (70.19%), graduate assistant (66.48%) among others are the available human resources that predicts quality assurance in public universities in Enugu State. Similarly, there is no significant difference in the mean scores of male and female lecturers on the available human resources as a predictor of quality assurance in public universities in Enugu State. This is evident as the chi-square calculated value of 1.300, greater than 0.05 level of significance set for the study was obtained. The study recommends among others that human resource as an integral component of an established should be made available by appropriate authorities for quality assurance, and physical resources should be made available while maintenance measures are put in-check of quality assurance.

Keywords: Resource-availability; predictor; quality assurance

Introduction

The quality of higher education is greatly influenced by the adequacy and effective utilization of institutional resources. In public universities, increasing student enrolment and limited funding have placed growing pressure on available facilities, personnel, and infrastructure. Consequently, the availability of resources has become a crucial factor in ensuring and sustaining quality assurance in the university system, particularly within public institutions in Enugu State. Education can be defined as a veritable instrument for the advancement of man and nature. Education equips an individual with the necessary knowledge and skill for all-round productivity. Education according to Onyebuenyi, Mbah and Odeluga (2017) is the medium of acquisition of minimum ethical standards that can propel its recipient for the development of oneself and the nation at large. Iyamu (2014) defined education is a formal process of inculcating certain desirable knowledge, values, norms, habits, altitudes and other attributes in the individual to enable them understand humanity and become agent of

social change. Education brings about a desirable change in a man's life. It therefore becomes imperative to state that without education, a nation cannot get the much needed manpower for advancement and enlightenment of the citizens. Thus, education takes place at various levels. These include; nursery, primary, secondary and tertiary education.

Tertiary education can be defined as the level of education where one is trained to acquire higher level knowledge and skill for a life-long career. It can be described as last phase/level of education where an individual receives continued training after secondary education. Federal Republic of Nigeria (FRN: 2014), defined tertiary education as the education given after secondary schooling years in colleges of education, polytechnics, monotechnics and in universities, as well as those institutions offering correspondence courses. Tertiary education has its definite goals. These goals gears towards the production of competent individuals that can take part in the development of the nation. The general goals of higher (tertiary) education according FRN (2014) in its National Policy on Education stated that tertiary education provides the recipients the opportunity and potentials to contribute optimally to national development by: (a): Intensifying and diversifying its programme for the development of high level manpower within the context of the needs of nations; (b): Making professional course content reflect on national requirement; (c): Making all students part of general programme at all-round improvement in university education, to offer general study courses such as history of ideas, philosophy of knowledge, nationalism and information technology (IT) and (d): Making entrepreneurship skills acquisition a requirement for all Nigerian universities.

A university is a component of tertiary (higher) institution established for teaching and learning activities. A university according to Haskins (2018) is an institution of higher education and research which awards academic degrees in various academic disciplines. A university is either public or private owned. Public universities on the other hand are those institutions managed by the government at either the state (State University) or federal (Federal University) levels. According to Allen (2019), a public university is one that is predominantly funded by public means; through a national or subnational government. The author maintained qualified "public" as indication that the university's funding comes partly from state taxpayers. In universities, resources are necessary for the actualization of its goals.

Resources can be defined as a composition of human or materials necessary for productivity in a work environment. Resources are vital ingredients for the existence of any organization and are valuable assets which are capable of contributing directly and indirectly to the stock of capital goods and productive services in an economy (Oloko, 2014). Thus, resources are essential in the delivery of quality services. In education, when resources are adequate and judiciously utilized, the actualization of set goals could be said to be eminent. Resources in education as recognized by Isaac, William and Sumaila (2020) include the following: human, physical, time, symbolic and financial resources. Adeogun (2022), educational resource implies the sum total of the input that goes into the educational system.

Human resources can be defined as individuals whose tact, experience and energy are employed in carrying out specific functions in an organization. These individuals can be said to be the most essential and vital resource in teaching and learning, who are considered to be the engine growth of education. Human resources according to Ogunyomi and Bruning (2016) refer to employees in an organization. Harold, Shiju and Bahdin (2020) stated that human resources including teaching staff, non-teaching staff, mail runners, laboratory attendants, clerks, bursar, librarian, guidance counselors, gatekeepers, among others have a significant role in every activity in an institution including educational institutions and need to be available in accordance with the functions as assigned by the institutions. Human resource is significant in an organization, because they plans, acts, and determines the realization of organizational goals. Castetter (2016) opined that there is no organization that can function properly without

adequate and qualified personnel. He stressed that the quality of the personnel determines the quality of the school products. Adequate provision of human resources in schools will help to produce quality students and help to promote good administration in schools. The author maintained that it is the responsibility of the school and the government to provide human and physical resources, among others.

Physical resources are those facilities that constitute the school environment. These resources are significant in ensuring effective teaching and learning activities. Nwuke and Nwanguma (2024) defined physical resources as tangible assets and facilities utilized in the teaching and learning process. The authors maintained that universities and their students benefit greatly from the efficient use of their physical resources, such as classrooms, laboratories, libraries, flower gardens, school gardens, volleyball courts, desks, chairs, and so on. The physical resources play a key role in the attainment of the school's intended objectives. Physical resources are facilities used in the production process or training to achieve the set goal and objective. These may include classrooms, lecture theatres, auditoriums, typing pools, machines, vehicles, typewriters, duplicating and photocopy machines, administrative block, libraries, laboratories, workshops, gymnasias, and assembly halls, computer sets special rooms like sickbay, staff quarters, students' hostels, kitchen, cafeteria, lavatory and toilet.

Physical resources according to Hofflinger and vonHippel (2020) play unique role in student academic engagement as well as the quality of instructions delivered by teachers. LaFortune (2019) identified inadequate physical resources as one of the major setbacks for quality teaching and learning which have led students convening furniture to schools. Stationeries have been skyrocket, inadequate basic school infrastructure, classrooms setting, administrative blocks and other relevant structures have been outdated. These often exert stress on students and make them destructive, noisy and academically less engaged. A well-equipped school with physical resources according to Amadi and Ezeugo (2019) such as buildings, ventilated and spacious classrooms, furniture, instructional materials, electricity, toilet facilities, playing facilities, laboratories, libraries, aesthetics creates a conducive environment for teaching and learning, helps the learners to develop skills through extra-curricular activities, motivates the school teachers in the execution of their duties, helps retain teachers through a friendly teaching environment and reasonable allowances. This is an indication that physical resources are essential components to effectively conduct teaching and learning activity. They are also critical inputs in achieving educational objectives. Thus, for effective teaching and learning in these institutions, there is a need for the availability of the afore-discussed resources.

Availability can be defined as the act of making provisions of teaching learning facilities in sufficient amount to enhance effective teaching and learning activities. The availability and efficient utilization of resources play a crucial role in the actualization of educational goals (Mba, 2014). Thus, resource availability encompasses physical assets, educational materials and personnel which are expected to be provided by the school administrators, when administrators have access to well-maintained facilities, up-to-date teaching materials and competent staff, it may create an environment conducive for effective teaching and learning (Mebratu & Marisennayya, 2022). Hence, Ayodele and Ogbiye (2018) noted that achievement of educational goals may not be possible without the availability of educational resources. Hence, the availability of resources can foster quality assurance in tertiary institutions in Enugu State.

Quality assurance is defined as the process through which an entity ensures that its products or services meets expectation. Offem (2021) defined quality assurance as a set of activities or procedures that an organization undertakes to ensure that its service delivery consistently meets stipulated standards. Quality assurance encompasses the systematic review of educational provision to maintain and improve its quality, equity and efficiency. It involves

school self-evaluation, external evaluation (including inspection), the evaluation of teachers and school leaders, and student assessments. Oparaji, Igbokwe, Anyanwu and Ugwu (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.

It could be stated that no matter how well- packaged a school system is at any level of education, without the availability of adequate resources, the system is bound to fail in achieving its set objectives. However, it is appalling that some tertiary institutions in Enugu State has in recent time suffered setback as a result of the state of resources which is integral for productivity. Chukwu (2015) identified death of learning resources as part of the reasons for the low quality graduates being churned out by institutions of higher learning in Enugu State and elsewhere in Nigeria. Ige (2014) examined the challenges public tertiary students are facing to include: inadequate classrooms, ill equipped library and laboratories, inadequacy and non-commitment of some lecturers, among others. This scenario is worrisome as a number of the graduates of these institutions are found roaming the street while the development of education and the state at large is delayed. Thus, the need by the study, to determine resources availability as a predictor of quality assurance in public universities in Enugu State.

Statement of the Problem

Resource availability plays a pivotal role in determining the quality and effectiveness of higher education delivery. In an ideal situation, universities are expected to have adequate human, material, financial, and infrastructural resources that support teaching, research, and community service. When these resources are readily available and efficiently utilized, they enhance academic performance, promote innovation, and ensure continuous quality assurance across all university functions. In reality, however, many public universities in Enugu State face serious challenges relating to inadequate and poorly maintained resources. Shortages of qualified teaching and non-teaching staff, dilapidated facilities, overcrowded lecture halls, and insufficient instructional materials such as textbooks, laboratory equipment, and ICT tools have become common features. These inadequacies often hinder effective teaching and learning, reduce productivity, and undermine the quality of graduates produced. It is against this background that the present study seeks to examine resource availability as a predictor of quality assurance in public universities in Enugu State, with a view to understanding how the adequacy and utilization of resources influence the attainment of educational standards and institutional effectiveness.

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of the study was to determine resources availability as a predictor of quality assurance in public universities in Enugu State. Specifically, the study sought to determine:

1. Human resources availability as a predictor of quality assurance in public universities in Enugu State.
2. Physical resources availability as a predictor of quality assurance in public universities in Enugu State.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided this study:

1. What are the available human resources as a predictor of quality assurance in universities in Enugu State?

2. What are the available physical resources as a predictor of quality assurance in universities in Enugu State?

Hypotheses

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

- Ho₁:** There is no significant difference in the mean scores of male and female lecturers on the available human resources as a predictor of quality assurance in public universities in Enugu State.
- Ho₁:** There is no significant difference in the mean scores of male and female lecturers on the available physical resources as a predictor of quality assurance in universities in Enugu State.

Methods

This study adopted a descriptive survey research design and was guided by two research question and two hypotheses. The study was carried out in all the public universities in Enugu State, including Enugu State University of Science and Technology (ESUT), University of Nigeria-Nsukka (UNN), Federal University of Allied Health Sciences (Formerly Dental College), and State University of Medical and Allied Sciences (SUMAS). The population constitutes a purposive sample size of 197 (118 males and 79 female) lecturers. The instrument for data collection was an adapted checklist titled “Resources Availability Checklist (RAC)”. The checklist contained 29 items from the National University Commission (NUC, 2014) Benchmark minimum academic standards for establishment and operation of undergraduate programme in Nigeria. The instrument had two sections, namely: A and B. Part A comprised the respondents; data while B had the Checklist items measured on a scale of numbers and percentages of “Available” and “Not Available”. As an adapted instrument, no further validation was made. In analyzing the data collected, frequencies and percentages were used in answering the research questions while hypotheses were tested using Pearson chi-sq. In decision making, frequencies above 50% were rated available while items whose frequencies were below 50% were rated not available. The hypotheses was not rejected when the chi-square calculated value /t-significant value is more than the level of significance and otherwise not accepted when the t-significant value is less than the level of significance.

Results

Research Question One: What are the available human resources as a predictor of quality assurance in universities in Enugu State?

Table 1: Mean Ratings and Standard Deviations of Respondents on Available Human Resources as a Predictor of Quality Assurance in Universities in Enugu State.

S/N	Available human resources include:	Available		Not Available		Decision
		No	%	No	%	
1	Graduate Assistant	359	66.48%	181	33.52%	Available
2	Assistant Lecturer	346	64.07%	194	35.93%	Available
3	Lecturer II	228	42.22%	312	57.78%	Not Available
4	Lecturer I	400	74.07%	140	25.93%	Available
5	Senior lecturer	379	70.19%	161	29.81%	Available
6	Associate Professor (Reader)	197	36.48%	343	63.52%	Not Available
7	Professor	394	72.96%	146	27.04%	Available
8	Administrative support Staff (Secretary)	221	40.93%	319	59.07%	Not Available
9	Laboratory attendant	343	63.52%	197	36.48%	Available
10	Technical staff	218	40.37%	322	59.63%	Not Available

11	Typist	373	69.07%	167	30.93%	Available
12	Cleaner	192	35.56%	348	64.44%	Not Available
13	Security officer	410	75.93%	130	24.07%	Available

Source: *NUC Benchmark– (2014).*

Data presented in **Table 1** above shows the results on available human resources as predictor of quality assurance in universities in Enugu State on items number 1, 2, 4, 5, 7, 9, 11 and 13 with the percentage scores of 63.52% and above. This indicates that the listed human resources are available while others are not available. Thus, the percentage scores of 63.52% and above denotes that available human resources are predictors of quality assurance in universities in Enugu State.

Hypothesis One

There is no significant difference in the mean scores of male and female lecturers on the available human resources as predictor of quality assurance in public universities in Enugu State.

Table 2: Pearson Chi-Square Statistics on the Mean Scores of Male and Female Lecturers on the available Human Resources as a Predictor of Quality Assurance in Public Universities in Enugu State.

Variables	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)	Decision
Pearson Chi-Square	1.300 ^a	1	0.522	NS
Likelihood Ratio	1.300	1	0.522	
N of Valid Cases	540			

Key: *df: Degree of Freedom; NS: Not Significant.*

Table 2 shows that the chi-square calculated value of 1.300, is not significant at 0.522 level of significance, which is greater than 0.05 level of significance set for the study. Therefore, the null hypothesis is not rejected as stated. This means that there is no significant difference in the mean scores of male and female lecturers on the available human resources as a predictor of quality assurance in public universities in Enugu State.

Research Question Two: What are the available physical resources as a predictor of quality assurance in universities in Enugu State?

Table 3: Mean Ratings and Standard Deviations of Respondents on available Physical Resources as a Predictor of Quality Assurance in Universities in Enugu State

S/N	Available physical resources include:	Available		Not Available		Decision
		No	%	No	%	
14	Lecture hall blocks	276	51.11%	264	48.89%	Available
15	Administrative blocks	280	51.85%	260	48.15%	Available
16	Auditoriums	255	47.22%	285	52.78%	Not Available
17	Furniture	275	50.93%	265	49.07%	Available
18	Computer set room	269	49.81%	271	50.19%	Not Available
19	Staff offices	272	50.37%	268	49.63%	Available
20	Libraries	278	51.48%	262	48.52%	Available
21	Laboratories	273	50.56%	267	49.44%	Available
22	Security posts	278	51.48%	262	48.52%	Available
23	Medical centre	169	31.30%	371	68.70%	Not Available
24	Research centre	358	66.30%	182	33.70%	Available
25	Staff quarters	191	35.37%	349	64.63%	Not Available
26	Students' hostels	172	31.85%	368	68.15%	Not Available

27	Recreational centres	169	31.30%	371	68.70%	Not Available
28	Cafeteria	181	33.52%	359	66.48%	Not Available
29	Lavatory/conveniences	174	32.22%	366	67.78%	Not Available

Source: *NUC Benchmark– (2014)*.

Data presented in **Table 3** above shows that the respondents with respect to the available physical resources as predictor of quality assurance in universities in Enugu State indicated that items number 14, 15, 17, 19, 20, 21, 22 and 24 with the percentage score range of 50.37% to 66.30% as available. This denotes that lecture hall blocks, administrative blocks, furniture, staff offices, security posts, among others are the available physical resources that predicts quality assurance in universities in Enugu State.

Hypothesis Two

There is no significant difference in the mean scores of male and female lecturers on the available physical resources as a predictor of quality assurance in universities in Enugu State.

Table 4: Pearson Chi-Square Statistics on the Mean Scores of Male and Female Lecturers on the available Physical Resources as a Predictor of Quality Assurance in Universities in Enugu State.

Variables	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)	Decision
Pearson Chi-Square	.542 ^a	1	0.762	NS
Likelihood Ratio	0.543	1	0.762	
N of Valid Cases	540			

Table 4 shows that the chi-square calculated value of .542, not significant at 0.762 level of significance, which is greater than 0.05 level of significance set for the study. Therefore, the null hypothesis is not rejected as stated. This simply means that there is no significant difference in the mean scores of male and female lecturers on the available physical resources as predictor of quality assurance in universities in Enugu State.

Discussion

With reference to human resources availability as a predictor of quality assurance in public universities in Enugu State, the study found that security officer, lecturer I, professors, senior lecturers, typists, graduate assistants, assistant lecturer and many more are the available human resources that predicts quality assurance in public universities in Enugu State. By this finding, the place of availability of adequate and competent human resources cannot be underrated. These individuals are found significant in ensuring quality and efficient service delivery in public universities in Enugu State and other establishments. Based on the null hypothesis test, there is no significant difference found in the mean scores of male and female lecturers on the available human resources as a predictor of quality assurance in public universities in Enugu State. This is evident as the obtained Pearson chi-sq significant value is greater than the level of significance set for the study. Thus, the location of the respondents is seen to have no significant influence on their responses to the items. This finding agrees with Saka and Aliyu (2017) who noted that human resources comprise all human beings or resourceful individual who in one way or the other aid effective utilization of resources. These human resources include teachers, learners, resource persons, technologists and non-professional personnel. In addition, Castetter (2016) stated that there is no organization that can function properly without adequate and qualified personnel. He maintained that the quality of the personnel determines the quality of the school products. Adequate provision of human resources in schools will help to produce quality students and help to promote good administration in schools.

Regarding available physical resources as a predictor of quality assurance in public universities in Enugu State, the study showed that lecture hall blocks, administrative blocks,

furniture, staff offices, security posts, among others are the available physical resources that can predict quality assurance in universities in Enugu State. Physical resources are evidently seen here to constitute the resources that foster smooth operation of the school. For instance, the administrative building within which decisions and other planning activities takes place, lecture rooms through which students acquire knowledge, among others are paramount in ensuring the quality. This finding, in accordance with the corresponding hypothesis, showed that there is no significant difference in the mean scores of male and female lecturers on the available physical resources as a predictor of quality assurance in universities in Enugu State.

The finding above concurs with Mebratu and Marisennayya (2022) who acknowledged that physical resources in schools are the primary component of well-organized educational systems. More so, poor academic performance may be linked to inadequately available of physical resources. Amadi and Ezeugo (2019) added that a well-equipped school with physical resources such as buildings, ventilated and spacious classrooms, furniture, instructional materials, electricity, toilet facilities, playing facilities, laboratories, libraries, aesthetics creates a conducive environment for teaching and learning, helps the learners to develop skills through extra-curricular activities, motivates the school teachers in the execution of their duties, helps retain teachers through a friendly teaching environment and reasonable allowances..

Educational Implications of the Study

The findings of this study have several important educational implications for policymakers, university administrators, lecturers, and other stakeholders in higher education. The study underscores that the availability of adequate and competent human resources such as professors, lecturers, administrative staff, and support personnel is essential for achieving and sustaining quality assurance in public universities. This implies that university management should prioritize the recruitment, development, and retention of qualified staff to enhance effective teaching, research, and administrative performance. The results also highlight the importance of sufficient and well-maintained physical resources such as lecture halls, administrative buildings, offices, furniture, and security posts as critical elements that support the smooth operation of universities. Adequate physical facilities contribute to a conducive learning environment, motivate staff, and improve students' academic performance. Therefore, government and university authorities should ensure continuous investment in physical infrastructure to sustain quality standards. Moreover, since no significant difference was found in the views of male and female lecturers regarding resource availability, it implies that the challenge of inadequate resources affects all categories of staff equally. Hence, interventions aimed at improving human and physical resources should be comprehensive, inclusive, and evenly distributed across institutions and faculties. In general, the findings call for deliberate and sustained efforts from relevant stakeholders to provide and manage both human and physical resources effectively as key components of quality assurance in higher education.

Contribution to Knowledge

This study has contributed to knowledge by providing empirical evidence that the availability of human and physical resources predicts the level of quality assurance in public universities in Enugu State. It has demonstrated that adequate staffing and well-equipped facilities are vital for maintaining academic excellence and institutional effectiveness. The study further shows that gender and institutional location do not significantly influence lecturers' perceptions of resource availability, suggesting a

uniform experience across public universities in the state. Overall, this research strengthens understanding of the relationship between resource availability and quality assurance and provides a practical guide for educational planners and administrators in developing strategies that promote sustainable quality in public universities.

Conclusion

Conclusively, this study examined resource availability as a predictor of quality assurance in public universities in Enugu State, with particular emphasis on the availability of human and physical resources. The findings revealed that adequate provision of these resources is vital for the attainment and maintenance of quality education in the university system. Conversely, the lack or inadequacy of such resources poses a serious challenge to effective teaching, learning, and administration, thereby undermining institutional performance and educational standards. The study also found no significant difference in the mean responses of male and female lecturers regarding the availability of human and physical resources as predictors of quality assurance, indicating a common experience among academic staff. Therefore, the study calls for the active involvement of all stakeholders government agencies, university administrators, academic and non-academic staff, and the wider society in ensuring the adequate provision and effective management of human and physical resources necessary for sustaining quality assurance in public universities in Enugu State.

Recommendations

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

1. Human resource as an integral component of an established should be made available by appropriate authorities for quality assurance.
2. Physical resources should be made available while maintenance measures are put in-check of quality assurance.

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