
ACCREDITATION OF PROGRAMMES IN NIGERIAN COLLEGES OF EDUCATION

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ABSTRACT

Accreditation of academic program is a mechanism for ensuring quality in colleges of Education. It is a system designed to promote quality standards in education in general. In the Nigeria public colleges of Education, the NCCE is vested with the power to handle these accreditation. These exercise has brought the management of education institution to seat up to their responsibilities posed on them. The present system of accreditation is face with numbers of critiques to name but a few. These include Appointment and Competence of teaching staff, inadequate funding, Accreditation of Administrative staff, Appointment and Competence of non-teaching staff, poor preparation, Assessment of practical work, inadequate infrastructural facilities, Assessment of methods of teaching, insecurity, the products of the various programmes, strike actions, corruption and the host of other. In addition, the activities of some accreditation agencies where examine, a typical organogram of the Department of psychology, Guidance and counseling structure was presented for assessment. In conclusion, a question of interest was raise for the National Commission for College of Education (NCCE) for response.

INTRODUCTION

Accreditation in the context of the topic under discussion means an official approval given by an organization empowered to do so National Commission for College of Education (NCCE). The NCCE accredits each programme in the college once every five years. However, if any programme receives partial accreditation, the particular programme is re-accredited after two

years. If a programme fails re-accreditation, the college may be advised to suspend that programme.

Public colleges of Education are college owned by the government. Public colleges of Education are college established to provide post-secondary schools education for Nigeria. Public college of Education are established by the state and federal government to train and supervise all aspect of degree and non-degree teacher education and teacher professionalism in Nigeria. Edebu, (2022).

The National Commission for Colleges of Education (NCCE), defines the minimum standards for all programmes of teacher education and accredit their certificates and other academic awards. It was established by decree 13 of 1989. On 1st January 1993, decree No. 12 amended the establishment of NCCE base on the philosophy of National policy on Education (NAPE) which postulates that “No education can rise above the quality of its teachers” in 2018; Nigerian senate proposed a change of NCCE’S Name to National Commission for Teacher Education (NCTE).

Colleges of education in Nigeria is aimed according to Edebu (2020) at producing qualitative manpower in teacher education to man the various level i.e, primary, secondary and at the tertiary level for effective teaching and learning in our education system. To achieve this target, the college need to carry out quality student intake, quality teaching/learning processes, quality research and provide quality infrastructural facilities, services and resource. They need to provide quality and adequate students support services to enhance quality learning outcomes. One way of stimulating authorities of colleges of education to provide these services is through accreditation because no college wants to be denied accreditation.

Okelekele (2014) stated that accreditation of education programmes in Nigerian colleges of Education dated back to 1990 when the first, accreditation exercise was carried out. Since then, accreditation of academic programmes has become a culture and a continuous process to ensure that the provision of the minimum academic standard by NCCE is adhered to.

The NCCE accredits each programme in the colleges once every five years. However, if any programme receives partial accreditation, the particular programme is re-accredited after two years. If a programme fails re-accreditation, the college may be advised to suspend that programme. Also, if in the first instance a programme is adjudged as having failed, the college is required to invite NCCE at her expense and at a date convenient to her for re-accreditation.

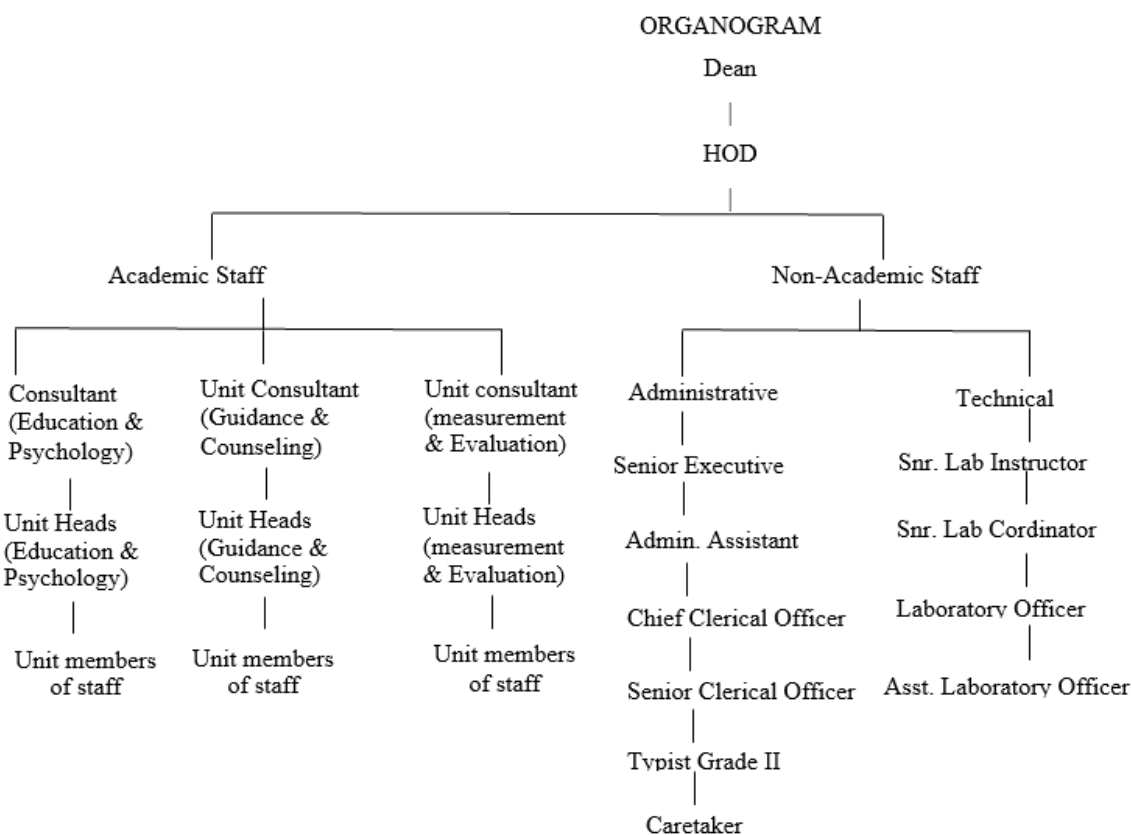
The accreditation carried out by the NCCE is usually done by Senior academic in the various disciplines in the colleges. The NCCE normally constitutes a team for the various programmes and each team has a team leader. Team leaders are given orientation by NCCE before the take-off the accreditation exercise and thereafter, the team leaders brief their members before actual accreditation begins.

Activities by Professional Agency in the Education

Agency	Brief overview
Teachers Registration Council of Nigeria (TRCN)	The major purpose of the agency is to serve as a standards for the public colleges, licensing and certification of professional educators in Nigeria, the enforcement of professional practices of educators, and the discipline of credential holders in Nigeria.
Counseling Association of Nigeria (CASSON)	As a specialize accrediting body recognize by the Counseling Association (CASSON) grants accredited status to graduate level programs in the professional counseling field.
Nigeria Council of Educational Psychologist etc.	The Nigerian Council of Educational Psychologist empowers college psychologists by advancing effective practices to improve student’s learning behavior and mental health.

Structures of the Department of General Education

Department of Educational Psychology, Guidance & Counseling



Theoretical Framework

There are a number of evaluation models which are applicable in education and the social sciences. These include some participant approaches such as Responsive Evaluation, Discrepancy Evaluation, and Evaluation for Decision making Akpe (2019). Stufflebeam in his CIPP (Context, input, Process, Product) model argues that context evaluation should investigate socio-political and other contextual variables; input evaluates the means for achieving the objectives; process evaluates the methodology for implementing the programs while product evaluates the quality and utility of the outcome of the entire programs.

A close examination of the form used by NCCE accreditation teams show that it follows the context-input-process-product model. In evaluating programs in the colleges in terms of the socio-political, academic and non-academic matters which will influence teaching and learning. Where these are lacking or inadequate teaching and learning will suffer and examination of the NCCE evaluation form shows the variables under context to include:

(I) The programs Philosophy and objectives (II) The curriculum (III) Admission requirements and (IV) Academic regulation.

In the evaluation proper, the teams are expected, to assess the above based on already laid down criteria.

A critique of the present system of Accreditation in the Nigerian Public colleges of Education and Suggestions for improvement

Many challenges abound in the effective academic programs accreditation in public colleges of Education in Nigeria. Some of these inadequacies includes:

1) Accreditation of Administrative Staff: The present system is very silent on the issue of principal officers of colleges of Education i.e, the Provost, Registrar, Bursar and the Librarian. The quality of these principal officers determine to a very large extent how both academic and other administrative staff perform their functions in the system.

In some cases, the appointment of these principal officers has been politicized to the extent that an indigene must always emerge. For instance, Obesi (2007: 16) writing on this situation made the following observations:

This polarization introduces acrimony, distrust, envy and even hatred among staff and these tendencies may last long after a new provost has been appointed. How long this rancorous situation will last depends on the magnanimity of the provost to adopt a “no-victor-no vanquished” attitude in his administration.

Another consequence of the appointment of indigenous provost is that they are normally under very serious pressure from both the immediate community and other communities in the state to appoint their sons and daughters into sometimes non-existent position. It is very difficult for many provost to resist such pressures and the result is an over-bloated staff list and salary budget. Obinna (2016).

2) Insecurity: Insecurity has been a problem faced by public colleges of Education in Nigeria overtime. Headman (2008) submitted that insecurity has done the worst as it affect the smooth administration in the **National Universities Commission (NUC), National Commission for Colleges of Education (NCCE) and the National Board for Technical Education (NBTE)** are the institutions in charge of programs accreditation. The Islamic sect called Boko Haram meaning Western Education is forbidden is attacking educational institutions in the Northern part of Nigeria. Many public institutions located in Northern Nigeria have been victims of continuous attacks. This has led to the death of many students, lecturers and school administrators over the years.

3) Appointment and Competences of Teaching Staff: In most institution of learning in the world, qualifications and contributions to knowledge are the major criteria for recruitment of academic staff. This makes it possible for institutions to employ academic staff from all corners of the world in the true spirit of academic pursuit. However, in Nigeria, the idea of Universalism has been very seriously compromised.

4) Poor preparation: The experience of most people who have taken part in accreditation is that the time allowed to the exercise is grossly inadequate. A situation where an accreditation team is given four days to accredit a number of programmes in three college that may not even be contiguous cannot augur well for an effective accreditation exercise. Perhaps, this time constraint is as a result of the funds available for the entire exercise. NCCE should make government realize the importance of accreditation and the budget should specially take care of the funds required for a credible accreditation exercise.

5) Appointment and Competence of Non-Teaching Staff: The appointment of non – teaching staff is another major problem hindering effective program accreditation in public colleges of education in Nigeria. Just as the appointment of teaching staff most often does not follow due process. Many non-teaching staff are appointed purely for patronage not because of need. A close examination of these shows that this statement is true, Ozi (2015) Observed

that the population of the non-teaching staff in many institution in Nigeria is simply out of proportion with the available Job especially at the Junior staff level. Accreditation on non-teaching staff should involve more than assessing their competence. There must be a serious attempt at determining their daily work load to justify the number of staff employ.

6) Assessment of methods of Teaching: A determination of the competence of lecturers must include how they teach. It is true that many lecturers apart from those in the various department of Education does not possess teaching qualifications. Effective teaching involves both mastery of content and methodology but lecturers in these department other than education believe that they are “lecturers” and not “teachers” and they resist every attempt to make them “teachers”. However, the NCCE must begin to insist that lecturers in basic pedagogical skills before they qualify to teach. Lecturer’s lesson notes should be inspected during accreditation to ensure that the contents are adequate, relevant and current. Noel (2019).

7) College Funding: Inadequate funding in colleges of Education has been an intractable problem. Programme accreditation is capital intensive which many financial commitments are required to carry out program accreditation but these funds is absent or not available. The annual budgetary allocated for the administration of tertiary institution in Nigeria is grossly inadequate to meet the various departmental requirement. However, the experience during accreditation is that each Head of Department or program Head when asked about funding easily says that funding is adequate and after that period same, the same people complain about funding.

8) Corruption: many colleges of Education are in their present condition because of the corruption in the system. Fund provided for implementation of the program, provision of Infrastructural facilities, employment of staff and programme development ended up being located or diverted into a private account. Otiti (2004) summarize that the effects of corruption on the public college administration in Nigeria include the following: reduction of funds for administrative functions, shortage of infrastructural facilities, shortage of academic staff, poor quality of education, resources wastage, increase in administrative cost, etc.

ICPC did a system check recently in two institution in the South-South and the result was so shoking, Ovie, (2017). Corruption remain the cankerworm that eat down the mangrove tree and these must be jointly dealt with, cleanse, to get the desired result in the system.

Suggestion for Improvement

Based on the challenges identified, Abraham (2008) write the following

- i) The government should direct all anti-corruption agencies to establish an office in the public colleges to fight corruption
- ii) The government should ensure that all agreement entered with the difference union groups are implemented as signed to prevent strike in the public colleges.
- iii) The government should increase the funding of public colleges. This would make the school administrator access to adequate funds to carry out a program like the academic program accreditation.
- iv) The government should direct TET fund to complete all abandoned projects in the public colleges and commence new ones to develop more facilities in the public colleges.
- v) The government should employ strategies to address the problem of insecurity in the country. Factors causing insecurity like high youth unemployment, injustice, and corruption should be addressed.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, there is no gain saying that accreditation of programme has done a lot in helping institution of learning in the development process, especially it helps the provost to source and release funds during this period. Other critical areas that need to be examined include: a continuous revision of the criteria for accreditation, ensuring that all the major stake-holders-students, parents, lecturers, administrators etc, are all involved in the planning of accreditation. Finally, this article is pointing to some important question which may be of interest in the future planning of accreditation. One of this is; to what extent is the NCCE encouraging the colleges to incorporate entrepreneurial skills development which it advocated in 2004 into their various programmes? The implementation of this programme is expected to improve the competence of the college graduates to be self-reliant.

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