

**ASSESSMENT OF THE IMPACT OF NUC ACCREDITATION EXERCISE ON  
LEADERSHIP IN BUSINESS EDUCATION DEPARTMENTS IN  
UNIVERSITIES**

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**Abstract**

*This is a survey research aimed at determining the impact of National Universities Commission accreditation exercise on leadership in the business education departments in the universities in the south-east geopolitical zones of Nigeria. One research question and one null hypothesis guided the study. The survey research design was used for the study. The population comprised 66 respondents made up of 6 directors of academic planning and 60 academic staff of the departments of business education of the six universities in the zone. There was no sampling since the population was not too large. A researcher-developed instrument duly validated by three experts was used for data collection. Test re-test method was used for testing the reliability of the instrument. With the use of the Pearson Product Moment, the reliability co-efficient correlation was found to be 0.86 which was considered adequate for the study. The mean and standard deviation were used to answer the research question while t-test was used to test the null hypothesis. The findings of the study indicated that NUC accreditation exercise had high extent of impact on the provision of effective leadership in business education departments in universities in the south-east geopolitical zone. Based on the findings of the study, it was recommended among others that NUC should continue to encourage efficiency and dedication in the leadership of business education programme.*

**Keywords:** Business Education, NUC, Accreditation and Leadership

## **Introduction**

Business education programme is an aspect of education that is meant to prepare individuals for gainful employment through the acquisition of skills and knowledge needed in the world of work. According to Okpuzor (2012), the goal of business education is primarily to produce competent, skillful and dynamic business teachers, office administrators and businessmen and women that can effectively compete in the business world. For the goals and objectives of the programme to be achieved, there must be a mechanism put in place to ensure proper standards and quality.

Quality control in universities is vested on the National Universities Commission (NUC). The educational agency was established in 1964 and it has vast powers to ensure quality of process, products and services. NUC as a quality assurance agency, among other things, sets standards for Nigerian Universities. According to Okebukola (2010), NUC examines the effectiveness and efficiency of input, process and output elements of the teaching, learning, research and service activities of a higher institution programme. Duties of this regulatory body include to ensure that quality is maintained in the academic programme of universities, to lay down minimum academic standards for universities, to carry out the accreditation of degree and other academic awards of universities as well as carrying out other higher education-related investigations (Okojie, 2010). In the course of accreditation the NUC adjudges the adequacy or otherwise of the programmes' academic content, personnel, library and information, physical facilities, and leadership.

## **Accreditation**

Accreditation is defined as a process leading to the granting of approval or authority to a programme or institution after meeting a set of minimum standards or criteria (Okebukola, 2010). According to Ediagbonya, Agbaje & Suberu (2012), accreditation is an evaluation of whether an institution or programme meets a threshold standard and qualifies for a certain status. Accreditation could also mean the process by which the quality and standard of educational institutions are assessed. The process of accreditation begins with the establishment of a set of minimum standards against which programmes are evaluated. Secondly, a panel of experts evaluates the performance of the programme against the standards. Thirdly, a decision is taken based on the accreditation status whether to permit continued operation of the programme, make minor adjustments to it or cause the programme to be suspended. Ukaoha and Ahia (2004) asserted that programme accreditation is the process whereby a professional group judges its educational programme against a set of consensually derived norms, usually referred to as standards. Professionals are involved in programme accreditation. There must be generally accepted and previously set standards which are criteria for evaluation. The assessment is usually conducted by accrediting agencies set up by the government through the Ministry of education or by Professional organizations. In Nigeria, this quality assurance function is conducted by the National Universities Commission (NUC) for federal, state and private universities. Accreditation is essentially, about quality and standard. Ademiluyi (2013) contended that properly conducted accreditation should be the one which compels currency in academic curricula, thoroughness in instruction, integrity in assessment, sufficiency in infrastructures and equipment; and adequacy in the level of funding. Ademiluyi & Okwuanaso (2010), stated that in the course of accreditation exercise, the NUC adjudges the adequacy or otherwise of the programmes' personnel, administration, physical facilities and equipment.

The above statement is in line with Okebukola (2010) assertion that for educational system to meet up with its expectations both in input, process and output, there is need for the institutions to meet laid down minimum academic standards for personnel, physical facilities, academic content, library and information and leadership.

### **Leadership**

Robbins and Judge (2007) defined leadership as the ability to influence a group toward the achievement of a vision or set of goals. The source of this influence maybe formal, such as provided by the possession of managerial rank in an organization. Leadership is about coping with change. Leadership has been described as a process of social influence in which one person can enlist the aid and support of others in the accomplishment of a common task. In the views of Bass (1990) a good leader needs to follow the following principles: know yourself and self-improvement, be technically proficient, seek responsibility and take responsibility for your actions, make sound and timely decisions, know your people and look out for their well-being, develop a sense of responsibility in your workers and train as a team. Nnabuife (2009) opined that when a leader is elected democratically, it brings about feeling of responsibility within the groups.

In the university system, the heads of departments are expected to promote the academic programmes of their departments, promote physical development, be fair in attending to staff disputes, be able to listen and tolerate divergent views and be trustworthy as head of the department (Okebukola, 2010). The basis of good leadership is honorable character and selfless service to the organization.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The major purpose of the study was to assess the extent to which NUC accreditation exercise has impacted on providing effective leadership in business education departments in universities.

### **Research Question**

The following research question guided the study.

To what extent has NUC accreditation exercise impacted on provision of effective leadership in business education departments in universities?

### **Hypothesis**

One null hypothesis was tested at 0.05 level of significance, thus: experienced respondents do not differ significantly from the inexperienced ones in their mean rating of the impact of NUC accreditation exercise on provision of effective leadership in business education departments in universities.

### **Method**

The study adopted descriptive survey design. The study was carried out in universities in the south-east geopolitical zone. The population of the study comprised 66 respondents made up of 6 directors of academic planning and 60 academic staff of the departments of business education of the six universities in the zone. The instrument for data collection was structured on a 4-point rating scale of very high extent (VHE) 4, high extent (HE) 3, low extent (LE) 2 and very low extent (VLE) 1. The questionnaire was validated by three

experts in business education from Nnamdi Azikiwe University Awka. A total of 61 copies of the questionnaire were produced and administered by the researcher with the help of two research assistants.

Mean and standard deviation were used to analyze the research question while t-test statistic was used to test the hypothesis at 0.05 level of significance. Items with mean rating of 3.50 to 4.00 were regarded as very high extent, those that ranged between 2.50 to 3.49 were regarded as high extent, and those that ranged between 1.50 to 2.49 were regarded as low extent while those that ranged between 0.50 to 1.49 were regarded as very low extent. The null hypothesis was rejected where the calculated t-value was equal to or greater than the critical t-value otherwise the null hypothesis was not rejected.

## **Results**

The data collected in respect of the research question for this study are presented in Table I.

**Table 1: Respondents' Mean Rating on the Impact of NUC Accreditation on Provision of Effective Leadership in Business Education Departments in Universities in South-East Geopolitical Zone.**  
(N=61)

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<b>S/N</b>	<b>Minimum Standards for Leadership</b>	<b><math>\bar{X}</math></b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>Remarks</b>
1	Provision of Good departmental structure	3.00	0.67	High Extent
2	Provision of qualified head of department	3.50	0.25	Very High Extent
3	Provision of democracy in departmental administration	3.00	0.33	High Extent
4	Provision of tenureship in departmental headship	3.33	0.21	High Extent
5	Provision of fair distribution of departmental courses	3.16	0.48	High Extent
6	Provision of fair staff appraisal	3.00	0.67	High Extent

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**Table 1 Continued**

S/N	Minimum Standards for Leadership	X	SD	Remarks
7	Provision of effective grievance redress procedure for staff	2.50	0.92	High Extent
8	Provision of effective grievance redress procedure for students	2.50	0.92	High Extent
9	Provision of good relationship among staff	2.66	0.56	High Extent
10	Provision of good relationship among students	2.50	0.92	High Extent
<b>Grand Mean</b>		<b>2.92</b>		<b>High Extent</b>

Data in Table 1 showed that only item 2 had a mean of 3.50 which was regarded as very high extent of impact. The other 9 items on the minimum standards for leadership were rated high extent by the respondents and the mean ratings fell within the real limits of 2.50-3.33. The grand mean of this category is 2.92. This shows that NUC accreditation exercise had high extent of impact on the provision of effective leadership in business education departments. The SD in the group ranged from 0.21–0.92 indicating that the respondents have a common opinion in all the items.

**Table 2: t-test Analysis of the Mean Ratings of Experienced and Inexperienced Respondents on the Impact of NUC Accreditation Exercise on Effective Leadership in Business Education**

Variable	N	X	S <sup>2</sup>	Df	$\alpha$	t-cal	t-crit	Decision
Inexperienced Respondents	25	1.48	0.25					
Experienced Respondents	59	0.05	0.20	1.960				Not Rejected

The t-test result of null hypothesis for the study is presented in Table 2. The results showed that the calculated t-value is 0.20 at 59 degree of freedom at 0.05 level of significance. Since the calculated t-value (0.20) was less than critical value of 1.960, the null hypothesis was not rejected. This showed that experienced and inexperienced respondents did not differ significantly in their mean ratings on the impact of NUC accreditation exercise on effective leadership in business education departments.

**Discussion of findings**

The result of analysis presented in Table 1 showed how the respondents rated the impact of NUC accreditation exercise on provision of effective leadership in business education departments. It was found that NUC accreditation exercise had impacted on provision of good departmental structure, provision of democracy in departmental administration, provision of tenureship in departmental headship and fair distribution of departmental courses. This was in agreement with Nnabuife (2009) discovery that when a leader is elected democratically, it brings about feeling of responsibility within the group and decision making is shared by the leader and groups. The respondents’ ratings also show that the impact of NUC accreditation exercise had ensured fair appraisal, effective grievance redress procedures for staff and students, good relationship among staff and

among students. This is in line with Okebukola (2010) assertion that heads of departments are expected to promote academic programmes of their department, be fair in attending to staff dispute, be able to listen and tolerate divergent views and be trustworthy.

The study also found that experienced and inexperienced respondents did not differ significantly in their mean rating of the impact of NUC accreditation exercise on provision of effective leadership in business education departments.

### **Conclusion**

From the findings of the study, it was concluded that NUC accreditation exercise had impacted on provision of effective leadership in business education departments.

### **Recommendations**

In view of the findings and conclusion of the study, the following recommendations are made:

1. NUC should continue to encourage efficiency and dedication in the leadership of business education programme.
2. NUC should continue to encourage effective communication between the HOD and staff and between students and staff.

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