

Students' Perception of Academic Staff Quality: A Measure of Quality Assurance in South-South Nigerian Higher Institutions

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KEYWORDS Students Perception. Academic Staff Quality. Quality Indicators. Higher Education Institutions. Quality Assurance. Measure of Quality Assurance

ABSTRACT The objective of this study was to investigate students' perception of the quality of the academic staff. Two thousand from 4000 final year students in five faculties from four out of eight institutions in the South-South part of Nigeria were stratified and randomly selected for the study. Quality indicators' checklist and questionnaire called students-perception of academic staff quality (SPASQ) were the instruments used for data collection. Statistical tools such as mean scores, standard deviation, t-test and correlation coefficient were used for the data analysis. The findings indicate that the students rated the quality of the academic staff high, especially in terms of professional competence, but rated their supervision low. The students felt that the lecturers do not have enough time for students and do not prepare their lectures well. Recommendations made include regular seminars and workshops for academic staff to improve their communication skills for effective course delivery, encourage lecturers to make out more time and increase access to students.

INTRODUCTION

Since no education system may rise above the quality of its teachers, the National Policy on Education has placed major emphasis on the quality of teachers in terms of qualification, motivation and commitment to ensure high productivity (Federal Government of Nigeria 2004). As the key functions of higher education are teaching, research and community service, academic staff are required to teach, carry out research and disseminate the information for the development of the society and the educational system. Ascertaining the students' perception of the academic staff, quality can be applied to predict the quality output of the school system and whether the expectations of the society and the needs of the labour market are being fulfilled, thereby measuring the quality assurance in the higher institutions. Quality assurance is the opposite of quality control because quality control is an after event action, while quality assurance is a before event process that involves preventing faults from occurring in the first place. This is done by designing quality into the process so as to ensure that what is produced conforms to predetermined specifications Okorie and Uche (2004). Crosby (1979) who is the chief proponent of fault free products, believes that if the organization has the will, all the inequality indicators such as waste, errors and failures can totally be eliminated from the organization. This notion of zero defects is very attractive to the

providers of higher education services because elimination of errors imply that students failure, as well as wasteful expenditure of the system's resources could be eliminated. Thus, the achievement of the three main goals of higher education depends on the quality of academics who impart the higher knowledge they possess to the students, disseminate their research findings to improve products, services and people and transmit societal values to the students. Since the students directly benefit from the quality of these lecturers, this study aimed at using the students' perception of their quality to measure the quality assurance of the higher institutions.

Literature Overview

Literature shows that students can make accurate ratings of teachers. Their ratings tend to agree with each other and the teachers who are rated best by students tend to obtain the highest student gain (Reiley 1992; Aigboje 2007; Emetarom 2007). However, Awe (2009) has pointed out that students ratings do not often agree with those of administrators and teachers, neither are ratings by supervisors and peers in agreement with those of students.

Students' Perception of Academic Quality

Students' perception of academic staff quality is their feeling of or what they think about

the quality or the standards or level of their teachers (Teachers behaviour, Teacher's teaching competent, Teacher characteristics, Teacher attitude etc). This is a situation where the students who gain directly from teaching, through direct contact with teachers, are involved in rating the teachers by allowing them to express their feelings, perception or what they think and feel about their teachers and their performance. So to get more reliable measure of quality assurance students' perception can be more favourable and consistent than any other in the area of teaching assessment of the lecturers for quality assurance in higher institutions (Sallies 2002; Okorie and Uche 2004).

Academic Staff Quality

Aigboje (2007) observes that quality teaching makes it possible for students to achieve worthwhile educational objectives and outcome to the best of their abilities. Excellence in educational outcome especially in universities demands that quality academic staff are recruited and properly developed to perform their roles in the areas of teaching, research and administrative task. The provision of adequate infrastructure, facilities, equipment, instructional materials, trained and dedicated academic staff, well disciplined and motivated students and relevant curricular programmes will definitely enhance the quality of any institution if properly managed (Awe 2009). The academic staff employed and deployed to teach students are expected to be academically qualified and competent to teach students in their areas of specialization. The major objectives of many countries across the world, developed or developing, is to ensure improved quality of educational development by joining to provide quality academic staff since no educational quality can rise higher than the quality of teacher input (FGN 2004). Thus the educational policy makers are given the task of ensuring that quality education is received by the citizens through high quality academic staff (Agabi and Uche 2000; Nwagwu 2001). However, it becomes imperative that these receivers (students) are in a better position to give a verdict on the quality of these 'givers' of education, the academic staff. In this study the academic staff quality is measured through students' perception using the following teacher quality indicators: professional competence (training and mastery of the course), communi-

cation skill and ability to impart the knowledge, lecturers' attitude to job, accessibility to students, usage of instructional materials, adequate facilities for lecturers, leadership style, method of teaching, quality of students supervision (adopted and modifies from Sallies 2002).

Quality and Quality Assurance

Ijaiya (2001) views quality as a concept concerned with how good or bad a product is, though difficult to deliver. Okorie and Uche (2004) opine that it is often easier to experience quality than to describe or measure it. One of the reasons for this nature or quality as a concept is that people's idea of quality often differs from another's idea of it particularly when it is education. However, even when these views of quality conflict with one another, people recognize the presence of quality, its importance, and the difference it makes between success and failure, and people also recognize its absence with its attendant frustrations and wastages. Thus, quality is something everyone considers good and wants to have. It is about the standard of something when compared with other things. Mutanekelwa and Mweemba (2009) defines quality as excellence or more of societal values, embodied in the school curricular which involves stages and activities (transformational and procedural processes) that take place until certificates are issued. Quality assurance is defined by Mbakwem and Okeke (2007) as a process and product-based concept in which every stage in the manufacture of a product is identified and fine-tuned to the highest possible level in order to ensure that resultant product is fit for the purpose for which it is designed into the process so as to ensure that what is produced conforms to predetermined specifications. Thus, quality assurance is all about ensuring that what is produced is fault-free (Crosby 1979). This notion of zero defects is very attractive to providers of educational services because elimination of errors implies that student failures, as well as wasteful expenditure of systems resource could be eliminated (Okorie and Uche 2004). Crosby emphasized that the achievement of zero error situation is achievable through the use of quality assurance system organization lays down exactly how production should be carried out and the standards that should be carried out and the standards that should be maintained. The standards are maintained by following the pro-

cedure laid down in the quality assurance system. Although the administrators have a role to play in quality assurance, the responsibility for quality in education rests with the workforce - the academic staff usually working in teams or quality circles (Peter and Waterman 1982; Reiley 1992). In education, quality assurance as an error-preventive, before-the-event process is located with the competence of the instructional givers. Thus, academic staff have the operational responsibilities of designing the characteristics and standards of the programmes of study that conform to the needs of their learners - the student who are the primary customers - clients in education industry Creech 1994; Rieley 1992; Sallis 1992).

Statement of the Problem

Global competitiveness has necessitated education industry, especially higher education to attempt to assess quality and performance as basis for planned improvement. With the proliferation of higher institutions resulting in the great number of student turn out, criticisms has increased on the quality of students outputs and the need to develop quality assurance measures to ensure the quality of input and transformational process especially on the side of the lecturers since their quality to a larger extent determines the quality of student output. Generally the way students perceive, or feel about their teachers will determine their attitude to the teacher and the course taught. Their perception in turn will determine how seriously or unseriously they will take the lecturer. This is why it is said that the quality of the teacher determines the quality of the student. The main thrust of this study was to create an opportunity for students to express their feelings about the quality of their teachers in the following areas: professional competence, lecturer's attitude to job, lecturer's accessibility to students, usage of instructional material, adequacy of facilities for lecturers, lecturer's leadership style, quality of lectures' students supervision. This will enable the researcher to determine the measure of quality assurance of the higher institutions.

Purpose of Study

The study aimed at getting the students' perception of the academic staff quality using the following teacher quality indicators:

1. professional competence,
2. lecturer's attitude to job,
3. lecturer's accessibility to students,
4. usage of instructional material,
5. student supervision
6. adequacy of facilities for lecturers
7. lecturers' leadership style in dealing with students
8. method of teaching

Research Questions

1. What do students think about the professional competence of their lecturers?
2. How can students assess the general attitude of lecturers to their job?
3. How accessible to students are the lecturers?
4. What instructional materials do lecturers use in teaching?
5. How adequate are facilities for lecturers?
6. What are the leadership styles normally applied by the lecturers in dealing with students?
7. What is the student perception of the general quality of their lecturers?
8. How do students perceive their lecturers' quality in students' supervision?
9. How do students perceive the methods lecturers use in teaching?

Hypotheses

1. There is no significant difference between male and female students in their perception about the professional competence of their lecturers
2. There is no significant difference between male and female students in their perception about their lecturers' accessibility to students
3. There is no significant difference between male and female students in their perception about their lecturers' quality of students' supervision

METHODOLOGY

Procedure

This study was a descriptive survey designed to collect data on students- perceptions of academic staff quality. Two thousand from 4000

final year students in five faculties from four out of eight institutions in the South-South part of Nigeria were stratified and randomly selected for the study (1140 males and 860 females). Final year students were used because they have had enough interaction with lecturers and therefore had adequate experience to respond intelligently to the questionnaire and the checklist. The results are presented in the tables according to the order of the research questions and hypotheses. Quality indicators' checklist and questionnaire called students-perception of academic staff quality (SPASQ) were the instruments used for data collection. SPASQ is a 66 item questionnaire structure according to the quality indicators to generate data to address the 7 research questions. Research question 1 which bordered on the professional competence of the academic staff as perceived by the students was addressed with items 1 to 7; items 8 to 14 addressed research question 2 (lecturers attitude to job); items 15 to 21 for research question 3 (lecturers' accessibility to students); items 22 to 27 for research question 4 (lecturers' usage of instructional materials); items 28 to 34 for research question 5 (adequacy of facilities for lecturers); items 35 to 39 for research question 6 (lecturers' leadership styles); items 40 to 50 addressed research question 7 (general quality of the lecturers); items 51 to 60 for research question 8 (quality of students supervision) and items 61 to 66 for research question 9 (methods of teaching). The expected mean of 2.50 assigned to the grade for agree or disagree was used. Any grade of 2.50 and above was taken to agree with the point while below 2.50 was disagree. Statistical tools such as mean scores, standard deviation, t-test at 0.05 alpha level were used for the data analysis.

RESULTS

Research Question 1

What do you think about the professional competence of your lecturers?

Table 1 shows the mean scores on the professional competence of lecturers. Male students agree with items 1, 2, 3, 5 and 6 with high mean scores of 3.46, 2.89, 3.5, 2.75 and 3.42 accordingly; they disagree with items 4 and 7 with low mean scores of 2.21, and 1.96 accordingly. Female students agree on items 1, 2, 3, 5 and 6 with high mean scores of 3.54, 2.75, 3.41, 2.89 and 3.11 respectively; they disagree on items 4, and 7 with low mean scores of 2.37 and 2.10 respectively. The aggregate mean scores of 2.89 for male students and 2.88 for female students are greater than the criterion mean of 2.5. Therefore, the result indicates that most lecturers are professionally competent though their communication ability is ineffective, and they do not prepare for their lectures.

Research Question 2

How can you assess the general attitude of lecturers to their job?

Table 2 shows the mean scores on the general attitude of lecturers to their job. Male students agree on items 8-13 with high mean scores of 3.58, 3.65, 3.50, 2.89, 3.75 and 2.96 accordingly; they disagree on item 14 with low mean scores of 1.96. Female students also agree on items 8-13 with high mean scores of 3.46, 3.55, 3.41, 2.98, 3.59 and 3.11 respectively; they disagree on items 14 with low mean 2.10.

The aggregate mean scores of 3.18 for male students and 3.17 for female students are greater

Table 1: Mean scores analysis on the professional competence of lecturers

S. No.	Professional competence of lecturers	Male students			Female students		
		N	\bar{X}	Remark	N	\bar{X}	Remark
1	Shows through their teaching that they are masters of their courses	1140	3.46	Agreed	860	3.54	Agreed
2	Most teachers are professionally competent	1140	2.89	Agreed	860	2.75	Agreed
3	They know the course but cannot impart it to students	1140	3.5	Agreed	860	3.41	Agreed
4	Their communication ability is very effective	1140	2.21	Disagreed	860	2.37	Disagreed
5	They have the ability to transform the students through what they read	1140	2.75	Agreed	860	2.89	Agreed
6	They do not prepare their lectures	1140	3.42	Agreed	860	3.11	Agreed
7	They do not come to lectures because they don't know what to teach.	1140	1.96	Disagreed	860	2.10	Disagreed
	Aggregate mean		2.89			2.88	

Source: Fieldwork, N = 2000

Table 2: Mean scores analysis on the general attitude of lecturers to their job

S. No.	General attitude of lecturers to their job	Male students			Female students		
		N	\bar{X}	Remark	N	\bar{X}	Remark
8	They are committed to knowledge	1140	3.58	Agreed	860	3.46	Agreed
9	They have student-centered approach	1140	3.65	Agreed	860	3.55	Agreed
10	They take responsibility for their own quality	1140	3.50	Agreed	860	3.41	Agreed
11	They always blame authority for non-performance	1140	2.89	Agreed	860	2.98	Agreed
12	They have pride and sense of joy in their work	1140	3.75	Agreed	860	3.59	Agreed
13	They readily respond to student needs	1140	2.96	Agreed	860	3.11	Agreed
14	They have nonchalant attitude to students	1140	1.96	Disagreed	860	2.10	Disagreed
	Aggregate mean		3.18			3.17	

Source: Fieldwork, N = 2000

than the criterion mean of 2.5. Therefore, lecturers have student centered approach, are committed to knowledge, take responsibility for their own quality, have pride and sense of joy in their work, readily respond to student needs and always blame authority for non-performance.

Research Question 3

How accessible to students are lecturers?

Table 3 shows the mean scores on the accessibility of lecturers to students. Male students agree on items 15 and 16 with high mean scores of 3.65, and 3.75 accordingly: they disagree on item 17-21 with low mean scores of 1.95, 2.19, 1.75, 1.96 and 1.86 respectively. Female students agree on items 15 and 16 with high mean scores of 3.56 and 3.78 respectively; they disagree on items 17-21 with low mean scores of 1.41, 2.08, 1.59, 1.11 and 2.10 respectively. The aggregate mean scores of 2.44 for male students and 2.23 for female students are less than the criterion mean of 2.5. Therefore, lecturers' accessibility to students is on the low side, though students can book appointment with lecturers, talk to them anywhere, see them on invitation, and see them in their offices.

Table 3: Mean scores Analysis on the accessibility of lecturers to students

S. No.	Lecturers' access to students	Male students			Female students		
		N	\bar{X}	Remark	N	\bar{X}	Remark
15	We can talk to lecturers anywhere, anytime	1140	3.65	Agreed	860	3.56	Agreed
16	We can book appointment to see lecturers	1140	3.75	Agreed	860	3.78	Agreed
17	We can only reach them in their office	1140	1.95	Disagreed	860	1.41	Disagreed
18	Most lecturers are never around	1140	2.19	Disagreed	860	2.08	Disagreed
19	It is only during lectures that you can see them	1140	1.75	Disagreed	860	1.59	Disagreed
20	Students can only see them on invitation	1140	1.96	Disagreed	860	1.11	Agreed
21	They have nonchalant attitude to students	1140	1.86	Disagreed	860	2.10	Disagreed
	Aggregate mean		2.44			2.23	

Source: Fieldwork , N = 2000

Research Question 4

What instructional materials do lecturers use in teaching?

Table 4 shows the mean scores on the extent lecturers use instructional materials. Male students agree on items 23 and 27 with high mean scores of 3.75, and 3.02 accordingly: they disagree on items 22, 24-26 with low mean scores of 1.12, 1.95, 1.19, and 1.75 respectively. Female students agree on items 23 and 27 with high mean scores of 3.78 and 2.89 respectively; they disagree on items 22, 24-26 with low mean scores of 1.16, 1.41, 1.08, and 1.59 respectively. The aggregate mean scores of 2.13 for male students and 1.99 for female students are less than the criterion mean of 2.5. Therefore, the extent lecturers use instructional materials is very low: they do not use materials except textbooks.

Research Question 5

How adequate are facilities for lecturers?

Table 5 shows the mean scores on the adequacy of facilities for lecturers. Male students agree on items 31, 32, and 33 with high mean scores of 2.64, 2.89, and 3.39 accordingly: they

Table 4: Mean score analysis on the instructional facilities used by the lecturers

S. No.	Instructional materials used by lecturers	Male students			Female students		
		N	\bar{X}	Remark	N	\bar{X}	Remark
22	Power point presentation	1140	1.12	Disagreed	860	1.16	Disagreed
23	Textbooks	1140	3.75	Agreed	860	3.78	Agreed
24	Computer aided instruction	1140	1.95	Disagreed	860	1.41	Disagreed
25	Projectors and slides	1140	1.19	Disagreed	860	1.08	Disagreed
26	Students as resources	1140	1.75	Disagreed	860	1.59	Disagreed
27	No materials are used	1140	3.02	Agreed	860	2.89	Agreed
	Aggregate mean		2.13			1.99	

Source: Fieldwork, N = 2000

disagree on items 28, 29, 30 and 34 with low mean scores of 2.21, 2.11, 2.32 and 1.52 respectively. Female students agree on items 31, 32, and 33 with high mean scores of 3.34, 3.21, and 3.05 respectively: they disagree on items 28, 29, 30 and 34 with low mean scores of 2.18, 1.24, 2.15 and 1.75 accordingly. The aggregate mean scores of 2.48 for male students and 2.43 for female students are less than the criterion mean of 2.5. Therefore, it is agreed that there are no adequate facilities for lecturers such as good staff offices, good staff workrooms and lecture halls.

Research Question 6

What are the leadership styles of the lecturers?

Table 6 shows the mean scores on the leadership styles of the lecturers. Male students agree on items 36, 38, and 39 with high mean scores of 3.11, 3.39, and 3.52 accordingly: they disagree on items 35 and 37 with low mean scores of 2.42, and 2.32 respectively. Female students agree on items 36, 38, and 39 with high mean scores of 3.24, 3.05, and 3.75 respectively: they disagree on items 35 and 37 with low mean

scores of 2.28, and 2.25 accordingly. The aggregate mean scores of 2.95 for male students and 2.89 for female students are greater than the criterion mean of 2.5. Therefore, it is agreed that the lecturers adopt participatory style, do as I say not as I do style and are friendly to students.

Research Question 7

How can you rate the quality of the lecturers in the following areas?

Table 7 shows the mean scores on the accessibility of lecturers to students. Male students agree on items 40, 42, 43, 44, 45, 47, and 50 with high mean scores of 2.65, 2.55, 2.89, 2.85, 2.66, 2.55 and 3.11 accordingly: they disagree on item 41, 46, 48 and 49 with low mean scores of 2.45, 1.86, 1.89, and 2.27 respectively. Female students agree on items 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 47, 49 and 50 with high mean scores of 2.56, 3.78, 2.61, 2.68, 2.59, 2.81, 2.67, 2.57 and 2.87 respectively; they disagree on items 46 and 48 with low mean scores of 2.10 and 2.01 respectively. The aggregate mean scores of 2.56 for male students and 2.66 for female students are greater than the criterion mean of 2.5. There-

Table 5: Mean scores analysis on the adequacy of facilities for lecturers

S. No.	Adequacy of facilities for lecturers	Male students			Female students		
		N	\bar{X}	Remark	N	\bar{X}	Remark
28	There are good staff offices	1140	2.21	Disagreed	860	2.18	Disagreed
29	There are adequate and appropriate facilities for the lecturers	1140	2.11	Disagreed	860	1.24	Disagreed
30	There are good staff workrooms	1140	2.32	Disagreed	860	2.15	Disagreed
31	Most lecturers do not have their own offices	1140	2.64	Agreed	860	3.34	Agreed
32	Majority of lecturers share offices	1140	2.89	Agreed	860	3.21	Agreed
33	The lecture halls are not adequate	1140	3.39	Agreed	860	3.05	Agreed
34	There are good furniture for staff	1140	1.52	Disagreed	860	1.75	Disagreed
	Aggregate mean		2.48			2.43	

Source: Fieldwork, N = 2000

Table 6: Mean scores analysis on the leadership styles of the lecturers

S. No.	Leadership styles of the lecturers	Male students			Female students		
		N	\bar{X}	Remark	N	\bar{X}	Remark
35	Autocratic	1140	2.42	Disagreed	860	2.28	Disagreed
36	Participatory	1140	3.11	Agreed	860	3.24	Agreed
37	Laissez Faire	1140	2.32	Disagreed	860	2.15	Disagreed
38	Student friendly	1140	3.39	Agreed	860	3.05	Agreed
39	Do as I say not as I do style	1140	3.52	Agreed	860	3.75	Agreed
	Aggregate mean		2.95			2.89	

Source: Fieldwork , N = 2000

Table 7: Mean scores Analysis on the quality of the lecturers

S. No.	Quality of the lecturers	Male students			Female students		
		N	\bar{X}	Remark	N	\bar{X}	Remark
40	Professional competence	1140	2.65	Agreed	860	2.56	Agreed
41	Positive attitude towards students	1140	2.45	Disagreed	860	3.78	Agreed
42	Positive attitude towards work	1140	2.95	Agreed	860	2.61	Agreed
43	Leadership by example	1140	2.89	Agreed	860	2.68	Agreed
44	Mentorship	1140	2.85	Agreed	860	2.59	Agreed
45	High Quality	1140	2.66	Agreed	860	2.81	Agreed
46	Low quality	1140	1.86	Disagreed	860	2.10	Disagreed
47	Currency	1140	2.55	Agreed	860	2.67	Agreed
48	More interested in selling books	1140	1.89	Disagreed	860	2.01	Disagreed
49	More interested in teaching	1140	2.27	Disagreed	860	2.57	Agreed
50	More interested in personal business	1140	3.11	Agreed	860	2.87	Agreed
	Aggregate mean		2.56			2.66	

Source: Fieldwork, N = 2000

fore, the general quality of lecturers in the above listed areas is high.

Research Question 8

How do you perceive lecturers' quality in students' supervision?

Table 8 shows the mean scores on the perception of lecturers' quality in students' supervision. Male students agree on items 51, 52, 53,

54, 56, 58,59 and 60 with high mean scores of 3.65, 3.25, 2.95, 3.19, 2.96, 2.65, 2.58 and 2.88 accordingly: they disagree on item 55 and 57 with low mean scores of 1.75, and 1.86 respectively. Female students agree on items 51, 52, 53, 54, 56, 58,59 and 60 with high mean scores of 3.56, 3.18, 3.41, 3.08, 3.11, 2.87, 2.78 and 2.79 accordingly: they disagree on item 55 and 57 with low mean scores of 1.59, and 2.10 respectively.

Table 8: Mean scores analysis on the perception of lecturers' quality in students' supervision

S. No.	Perception of lecturers' quality in students' supervision	Male students			Female students		
		N	\bar{X}	Remark	N	\bar{X}	Remark
51	Students' supervision is part of lecturers' work	1140	3.65	Agreed	860	3.56	Agreed
52	Lecturers discuss with students frequently	1140	3.25	Agreed	860	3.18	Agreed
53	They collect money to read students' project	1140	2.95	Agreed	860	3.41	Agreed
54	They give students other people's works to copy	1140	3.19	Agreed	860	3.08	Agreed
55	They are thorough in supervising students	1140	1.75	Disagreed	860	1.59	Disagreed
56	They do not have time to read students' works	1140	2.96	Agreed	860	3.11	Agreed
57	They create interactive section with students	1140	1.86	Disagreed	860	2.10	Disagreed
58	Inadequate and incompetent lecture preparation	1140	2.65	Agreed	860	2.87	Agreed
59	Lack of integrity in conduct of exam and continuous assessment	1140	2.58	Agreed	860	2.78	Agreed
60	Participation in exam misconduct and malpractice	1140	2.88	Agreed	860	2.79	Agreed
	Aggregate mean		2.77			2.85	

Source: Fieldwork, N = 2000

Table 9: Mean scores analysis on the approach used by lecturers

S. No.	Approach used by lecturers	Male students			Female students		
		N	\bar{X}	Remark	N	\bar{X}	Remark
61	Mainly lecture method	1140	3.42	Agreed	860	3.28	Agreed
62	Participatory and group work	1140	3.11	Agreed	860	3.24	Agreed
63	Assignment method	1140	3.32	Agreed	860	3.15	Agreed
64	Read on your own method	1140	3.39	Agreed	860	3.05	Agreed
65	Chapter Sharing to students	1140	1.52	Disagreed	860	1.75	Disagreed
66	Story telling all the time	1140	2.59	Agreed	860	2.78	Agreed
	Aggregate mean		2.89			2.88	

Source: Fieldwork, N = 2000

The aggregate mean scores of 2.77 for male students and 2.85 for female students are greater than the criterion mean of 2.5. Therefore, students perceive supervision as part of lecturers' work. However lecturers' quality in performing this duty is very low as majority of the students from their responses agree that some lecturers collect money to read students' project, give students other people's works to copy, do not have time to read students' works, participate in examination misconduct and malpractice, lack of integrity in conduct of examination and continuous assessment and have inadequate and incompetent lecture preparation.

Research Question 9

What do you think about the methods lecturers use in teaching?

Table 9 shows the mean scores on the approach used by lecturers. Male students agree on items 61, 62, 63, 64 and 66 with high mean scores of 3.42, 3.11, 3.32, 3.39, and 2.59 accordingly: they disagree on item 65 with low mean score of 1.52. Female students agree on items 61, 62, 63, 64 and 66 with high mean scores of 3.28, 3.24, 3.15, 3.05 and 2.78 respectively: they disagree on item 65 with low mean score of 1.75.

The aggregate mean scores of 2.89 for male students and 2.88 for female students are greater than the criterion mean of 2.5. Therefore, it is agreed that the lecturers adopt lecture method, read on your own method, participatory and group work, assignment method, and story-telling.

Hypothesis 1

There is no significant difference between male and female students in their perception about the professional competencies of their lecturers.

Table 10 shows the mean score difference between male and female students in their perception about the professional competencies of their lecturers. The result shows that there is no significant difference between the mean score of male and female students in their perception about the professional competencies of their lecturers. This is evidenced from the fact that the t-calculated value of 0.16 is less than the t-tabulated value of 2.00 at 0.05 significant level. Hence, the null hypothesis is accepted. Therefore, there is no significant difference between male and female students in their perception about the professional competencies of their lecturers.

Hypothesis 2

There is no significant difference between male and female students in their perception about their lecturers' accessibility to students

Table 11 shows the mean score difference between btw male and female students in their perception about their lecturers accessibility to students. The result shows that there is a significant difference between the mean score of male and female students in their perception about their lecturers' accessibility to students. This is evidenced from the fact that the t-calculated

Table 10: Mean difference between male and female students in their perception about the professional competencies of their lecturers

Sex	N	\bar{X}	δ	S.E.M	p-value	Critical value	T-calculate	Remarks
Male	1140	2.89	1.37	0.062	0.05	2.00	0.16	Accepted
Female	860	2.88	1.38					

Table 11: Mean difference between male and female students in their perception about their lecturers accessibility to students

<i>Sex</i>	<i>N</i>	\bar{X}	δ	<i>S.E.M</i>	<i>p-value</i>	<i>Critical value</i>	<i>T-calculate</i>	<i>Remarks</i>
Male	1140	2.44	1.29	0.059	0.05	2.00	3.56	Rejected
Female	860	2.23	1.33					

lated value of 3.56 is greater than the t-tabulated value of 2.00 at 0.05 significant level. Hence, the null hypothesis is rejected and the alternative accepted. Therefore, there is a significant difference between male and female students in their perception about their lecturers' accessibility to students.

Hypothesis 3

There is no significant difference between male and female students in their perception of lecturers' quality in students' supervision.

Table 12 shows the mean score difference between btw male and female students in their perception of lecturers' quality in students' supervision. The result shows that there is no significant difference between the mean score of male and female students in their perception of lecturers' quality in students' supervision. This is evidenced from the fact that the t-calculated value of 1.33 is less than the t-tabulated value of 2.00 at 0.05 significant level. Hence, the null hypothesis is accepted. Therefore, there is no significant difference between male and female students in their perception of lecturers' quality in students' supervision.

DISCUSSION

From the general overview of the findings to the study, the students' perception of the academic staff quality is on the low side. Though the lecturers can be perceived as being professionally competent (may be by their training and area of specialization) and have positive attitude to their job, the students feel that majority of them lack the competence to prepare and deliver appropriately as many of them resort to use of text book as instructional material and

lecture method in teaching. This is the era when a lot of emphasis is laid on practicality, computer usage and the need to teach students through examples how to create technology for sustainable development (Uche 2007). Another worrisome finding is that students feel that lecturers do not make out enough time for students supervision and they lack integrity in conducting examination. This also brings the quality of lecturers to question. Academic staff should play a role model and mentorship model to students, but if they are not accessible to students and do not have time for students (as indicated in the findings) the students will lose confidence (Sallies 2002). The quality of facilities for lecturers were rated low also. If the office space, lecture halls, laboratories and other tools for the lecturers are inadequate and of low quality, the lecturers cannot perform magic (Aigboje 2007). This may have contributed to their inability to deliver as perceived by the students. Though students have rated the general quality of their lecturers high, however they feel that most lecturers are more interested in their personal business and so not enough time is given to students and preparation of lectures. This is an offshoot of the general poor condition in the country today and it reflects in the quality of the higher institutions as a whole. That only one out of the three null hypotheses formulated was rejected shows that there is no significant difference in the perceptions of both male and female students. They all get in direct contact with the level at which their lecturers perform and feel the impact at the same time. Lecturers' quality indeed plays a major role in the quality of students' output. This is in line with the ideas expressed by Mbakwem and Okeke (2007); Awe (2009) who emphasize that their personal characteristics play a major role in influencing the

Table 12: Mean difference between btw male and female students in their perception of lecturers' quality in students' supervision

<i>Sex</i>	<i>N</i>	\bar{X}	δ	<i>S.E.M</i>	<i>p-value</i>	<i>Critical value</i>	<i>T-calculate</i>	<i>Remarks</i>
Male	1140	2.77	1.33	0.060	0.05	2.00	1.33	Accepted
Female	860	2.85	1.35					

students. Being the master of their subjects, quite knowledgeable and with skills and techniques to impart such knowledge are important to the academic staff. Academic staff also set the tone and classroom climate that the students will follow. The lecturers' expectations, perceptions and attitude affect the teaching and learning process. If they hold a positive expectation and attitude about the students, they tend to achieve more. Lecturers' development and motivation enhance the quality of their delivery system and also have positive correlation to students' achievement. This is most important at this time that higher education is being challenged by new development concepts such as globalization, ICT and entrepreneurship education for sustainable development. If the lecturers are not trained and developed to understand the emerging role of the higher education due to these concepts, they will not be able to impart the knowledge to their students and their students will not be able to face the global competitiveness. The students on the other hand occupy a prime place in higher education because the institutions primarily exist for their benefit. These students come from different background with different values, abilities, expectations previous experiences and personal characteristics. But then, they have clear idea of what they want and when they are getting it or being denied of it. Students will appreciate lecturers who know their courses and can deliver them well, at the same time quickly recognize those who do not prepare for classes. For later, students will decide whether to continue going to their class or resort to 'sorting them'. Students know when they are being supervised properly, they know when they are being treated in friendly manner. Most importantly, students know the academic staff whose general job performance and personal conducts are so low that they should not be in the higher education system at all. They also know those who have proved their scholarship in both learning and character and have taken such ones as role models and mentors.

CONCLUSION

The finding of this study is a clear indication that students are very sure of what they want and that their perception can be used as a measure of quality assurance for higher institutions. Students' perception of the academic staff qual-

ity generally indicates that there is need to increase efforts both on the side of the authority and the lecturers themselves to improve the quality of the academic staff and by extension the quality of the higher institutions.

RECOMMENDATIONS

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

1. Regular seminars and workshops for academic staff to improve their communication skills for effective course delivery
2. Encourage lecturers to make out more time and increase access to students
3. There is need to use more practical approach and examples in teaching to prepare students for realities of life
4. Improvement on the quality of facilities for lecturers
5. Encourage lecturers to pay more attention to students' supervision
6. Lecturers should develop personal qualities such integrity, honesty and leadership styles that are worthy of emulation if they have make positive impact on the students' transformational process
7. Lecturers must make personal effort to improve their quality and the quality of what is given to students so that the two major components (teachers and students) that determine the quality of the higher institutions will stand on the high side of the bench
8. Lecturers require enough motivation and incentives to put in their best in the teaching and supervisory duties.

Time has come when Nigerian higher institutions can start involving students in the assessment of the lecturers' performance. This will help the lecturers show a higher level of accountability thereby assuring their quality, that of the students output and that of the institutions.

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