

Management of Examination in the University System

Alphonsus Patrick Udoh

udoh.alphonsus@yahoo.com

alphonsusudoh@aksu.edu.ng

+2348037773316

Faith Ejiro Ghene Udoh

Faithudoh81@gmail.com

+2348152314593

¹Department of Science Education, Faculty of Education, Akwa Ibom State University, Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria

²Department of Educational Psychology, Guidance and Counselling, Faculty of Education, University of Port-Harcourt, Rivers State-Nigeria

Abstract

The paper focuses on management of examinations in the university. The paper present education as an expensive social service which requires adequate financial provision from stakeholders, including the government for successful operation of all identified educational program adopted for implementation. The paper further pointed that the decline in quality of university education of the fall in the standard of services rendered by the universities, attributed principally to the inadequacy of funding by the government. The examination is defined as the process or act of testing for knowledge and ability to determine its worth and that an examination is said to be valid if it performs the functions which it is designed to perform. Effective management of examinations requires marshalling and organizing all the materials and human resources needed for smooth examination conduct. The paper highlights several roles of the administration for effective management of examinations as well as role of students, role of examiners and invigilators for effective management of examination. The paper revealed that examination is the responsibility of the university management just like teaching. It has implication for the university plant planning as well as personnel management. The degrees and certificates awarded by universities are recognized because examinations are effectively and efficiently managed. The paper conclude that conducive environments must be established in universities that would promote and enhance effective management of examinations and examination halls must be in order, well equipped and seats arranged appropriately before the commencement of examinations.

Keywords: Funding, Planning, Effective, Management, Examination.

Introduction

The rapid changes and developments in education have signified the role of educational planning and management. The traditional role of educational management must be reconsidered now to rationalize and integrate the management functions in the process. Education is an expensive social service which requires adequate financial provision from the government for successful operation of all identified educational program adopted for implementation. According to Ezeugbor and Udoh (2014), funding is considered as the ultimate and critical determinant of the level of growth of the entire university system if quality would be assured in all the facets of it programmes and projects. The decline in quality of university education and standard of services by the universities is attributed principally to the inadequacy of funding by the government. The main objective of attaining university education as contained in the National Policy on Education (NPE, 2014) is to train students to gain requisite knowledge and skills to enabling them to contribute effectively to the national development. Education and training require periodic assessment and evaluation in form of examinations to ascertain the level of competences developed among graduates who are ultimately employed in a variety of the production sectors.

The term examination in the context of this paper is perceived as the process or act of testing for knowledge and ability to determine its worth. This implies that an examination is a means of measuring knowledge, skills and or aptitude of a candidate (Hornby, 2000). Examinations are generally used for evaluation

of students' progress, evaluation of effectiveness of instruction, effectiveness of the teacher, and the teaching methods employed. Examination results are also used for selection of individuals for a particular educational institution, or specific type of employment. Examinations are further used for certification; and evidence to determine whether a person has achieved a specified standard of attainment or achievement (Hornby, 2000). Due to the crucial roles that examinations play in socio-economic life; examinations need to be well managed. The management of examination should be a vital issue to be seriously considered if we want our examination result(s) to be valid and reliable and at the same time to maintain its value.

Jones and George (2018) define management as the planning, organizing, leading, and controlling of human and other resources to achieve organizational goals efficiently and effectively. Grundei and Kaehler (2018) pointed that management is a steering influence on market, production and/or resource operations in an organization and its units that may address both people, and non-people issues and is exerted by multiple organizational actors through either anticipatory norm-setting (= constitutive or strategic management) or situational intervention (= operational management) with the aim of achieving the unit's objectives. To manage a unit is synonymous with "directing" or "leading" it. Management is a body or a team constituting of different individuals that accept responsibilities to run an organization, they plan how to get things done, organize work to be efficient and effective, direct and control all the essential activities of the organization. Management team does not manage themselves; rather they motivate and coordinate others to execute the work with the target of achieving the objectives of the organization. Management brings together all, men and women, money, machines, materials, methods and markets. Effective management of examinations is the process or act of planning, organizing and administration of examinations. It spans from classroom teaching, setting of examination questions, administration of examinations, marking and grading, to the issuance of certificate. This means that teachers, examination administrators, students and parents are part of effective management of examinations. Effective management of examinations requires marshalling and organizing all the material and human resources needed for smooth examination conduct. The quality of effective management of examinations, therefore, dictates the level of malpractices or cheating in a particular examination and its occurrence or non-occurrence.

In educational settings, resources are used for achieving the objectives of the higher learning institutions. Some of the objectives are producing employable graduates, developing knowledge through research, publications and ultimately attainment of economic development of the entire community or nation. In the context of this paper, effective management of examinations refers to the skillful or resourceful use of resources such as personnel (lecturers, students and supporting staff), teaching and learning materials, time, application of appropriate technique(s) and technology in teaching and examinations processes and maintain ethical practices. If these aspects are effectively practiced, education institutions are mostly like to achieve quality results or set goals.

Effective Management of Examination in the University

Examination management is the act or process of planning, organising and administration of examinations. It starts from classroom teaching, setting of examination questions, administration of examination, marking of scripts, grading, to issuing of certificates. This means teachers, students and administrators are part of the examination management process. In educational institutions, the management of exams plays a crucial role in assessing student knowledge and evaluating their academic progress. Traditionally, this process has been manual and time-consuming, involving numerous administrative tasks such as exam scheduling, registration,

question paper preparation, invigilation, result processing, and report generation. Examinations are regarded as one of the major means of assessing and evaluating students or learners' skills, knowledge and attitude in both general and specific areas of studies. It is on this basis that university had established an examination unit responsible for the administration, conduct and effective management of examinations. The Examinations Unit conducts its examinations under the specify departments in the university. The Examinations Unit works cooperatively with the Examinations invigilators and supervisors (Lecturers).

Effective management of examination bring numerous benefits to students and lecturers alike, making it indispensable at school level student performance evaluation. Benefits of examination are varied; the most important being the competitive environment it creates among students at all levels. It equally enables students and teachers know student achievement levels to inform the necessary remedial action; thus, students who are performing consistently well and those lagging and by how much. This enables teachers to reorient their teaching methods and try to overcome weaknesses in teaching and learning (Mufanechiya, 2013). Additionally, parents needed to be informed about the progress of their children during each new school year. Through these parents and teacher tackled challenges that confronted teaching and learning in school and finally, through examination, teachers identified hidden abilities, capabilities, desires and interests of the students to guide them accordingly.

According to Irira, (2014) determining factors of transformation of management of examinations was the second component of conceptual framework which constituted conducive working environment. The elements in inputs of managing examinations may not be successfully processed without determining factors (such as setting of tests/exams, effective handling of tests, effective invigilation of examinations, moderation of examinations, marking of students' exams, and grading of scores) put in place. The first element that falls under determining factors is effective management and evaluation of assignments/tests, invigilation of examinations and marking of examinations. This implies that adequate, competent, trustful and qualified academic staffs are needed to ensure quality assurance and control during evaluation processes period. The second element that falls under determining factors is examinations moderation that examines and determines the clarity, quality and standards of setting, marking and grading examinations.

However, it has been observed that in almost all examinations, rules, regulations, standards and best practices of examination conduct are sometimes overtly or covertly violated. Examination management therefore requires marshalling, organizing all the human and material resources needed for the smooth conduct of the examinations. The human resource may be construed as lecturers/examiners, invigilators, students, supervisors and administrators. The material resource involves facilities available for teaching -learning process and the assessment process. These include provision of textbooks, library facilities, examination rooms, question papers and answer booklets as well as other examination materials needed for a particular paper. The roles of these inputs in managing examinations according to Aikins, (2019) are discussed below.

a. The Role of Administration in Effective Management of Examinations

The university administration as an examining body is a core of examination management process in the university. The university administration has the onerous task of making the examination process work effectively. It is obligation on the University to provide an enabling environment for the smooth conduct of examinations. To this end, the responsibilities of those involved that is examiners, invigilators, supervisors and others in examination management must include:

- i. Ensuring that adequate arrangements for examinations in the university are made. This involves preparation of examination timetable on time, allocation of examination rooms and assignment of invigilators. Ensuring that copies of examination timetables are made available to staff (examiners and invigilators) and supervisors for adequate preparation and readiness for the examinations. Copies of the timetables for students must be pasted on Students' Notice Boards without the names of invigilators.
- ii. Ensuring total compliance with examinations' regulations by examiners, invigilators, attendants and students as well as the general supervision of examinations in the university. In view this, it is prudent that prior to the commencement of the examinations, a pre-examination orientation should be organized to brief all examination support staff on rules and regulations and code of examination conduct.
- iii. Ensuring security and confidentiality of examination question papers and scripts sent to the examination centres before and after the examinations respectively.
- iv. Ensuring provision of facilities, material resources needed for the examination. Arrangement should be made for provision of adequate examination rooms, examination materials, seats, invigilators, security, vehicles and refreshment. The materials needed to complete an examination apart from answer booklets, for example, graph paper required must be known and supplied before the students are seated.
- v. Maintaining highest academic standards of ethics and integrity in the conduct of examination. Every university desire to uphold the ideals of academic integrity since regulations concerning academic code and ethics together with sanctions for violations are outlined in its academic programmes and students' handbook. Such regulations are also usually communicated to students during orientation programmes for freshmen and women. Some individuals (staff and students) still violate them with impunity. University administration should investigate cases of violation of code and ethics of examination conduct and punish offenders to serve as deterrent to others.

b. The Role of Students in effective Management of Examination

Students play a significant role in effective management of examination. Students are those who are taught and examined. Students' achievement in the content areas of their academic programmes determines whether the academic standards set by the institution have been achieved. They set the pace for academic excellence in any institution by their performance. Thus, any bad behaviour of students during the conduct of examinations would show on the results obtained from the examinations. Consequently, the role of the student in the examination management process is very important. The following behaviour are expected from students during examination:

- i. It is the responsibility of the student to prepare adequately for the examination by gaining thorough knowledge of the content areas of the subjects to be examined. Lack of preparation puts fear and anxiety in students which make them engage in examination malpractice.
- ii. It is the responsibility of students to check and confirm the final timetable of the examinations.
- iii. It is the duty of students to locate the examination center, hall or room in advance before the examination starts.
- iv. Students should be punctual. They are to be seated in the examination hall accordingly.
- v. Students must give the invigilators, examiners, supervisors and administrators' due respect.
- vi. Protect their question papers, answer scripts. It is the responsibility of the student to ensure that he/she has submitted his/her answer script before leaving the examination hall at the expiration of the time.

c. The Role of Examiners in Effective Management of Examination

University examinations are internal in nature and as such lecturers are the core of examination management process in the university. The lecturers who are involved in the teaching-learning process are also involved in the management of the examination process. Thus, they play the role of teachers as well as examiners. As teachers, they must ensure that the right kind of knowledge and skills are imparted to the students as outlined in the curriculum content prescribed by the university. This is done by teaching the students course contents as designed the course. Besides, the teachers oversee setting examination questions, marking of examination scripts and awarding marks for students which would lead to a decision to be taken for award of certificates. Consequently, when the methods of delivery and content competence of the lecturers are treated with lack of seriousness, it creates enabling environment for cheating in examinations. The two basic assumptions of any examination are that (a) it should be valid and (b) it should be reliable. The two are distinct concepts. An examination is said to be valid if it performs the functions which it is designed to perform. The concept of reliability, of course, refers to consistency of measurement. Examination questions should therefore reflect the objectives and learning outcomes of courses. Examiners must ensure that as much as possible, examination questions should be devoid of mistakes for corrections to be made during the examination period. It is worthy to note that examination is central to the success and recognition of universities. Degrees/certificates are awarded based on the outcome of examinations. University examinations are confidential and, therefore, all examiners must exercise due diligence to ensure sustainability of its confidentiality.

d. The Role of Invigilators in Effective Management of Examinations

An invigilator is a person who watches students while they take examinations to identify and address signs of cheating. When examinations are held, the invigilator secures the room for the students, removing any materials that could be used for cheating, and making available a supply of pencils, scrap paper, calculators, and any other authorized tools (Ogunji, et al 2005). Invigilators also play an important role towards effective management of examinations in the university. The purpose of invigilation is to ensure that all examinations are conducted in accordance with the rules and regulations governing the examinations in line with the directives' of quality assurance to provide students with every opportunity within the rules to complete their examinations; to ensure that all students are treated in a fair and consistent manner; to ensure the examinations are conducted smoothly and successfully and to help deal with any problem(s) that may arise during examinations.

It is the primary role of invigilators to maintain discipline and absolute silence during the examination and to be vigilant for any irregular practices or cheating. Some of the usual tricks employed by students include storing foreign materials in the lavatories, entering the examination room with unwanted materials hidden in their socks, pants, brassiers, artificial hair/wigs, bracelets, copying notes or potential answers on their body, mathematical sets, handkerchiefs, manuals of calculators, tables and chairs, intentionally copying or exposing answers to their colleagues. Others include "giraffing", using sign language to communicate answers to colleagues when multiple choice questions are used. Some students go into the washroom only to read information stored on mobile phones. Students deliberately smuggle out the answer booklets from the examination room. Some ladies dress provocatively to ward off shy invigilators to enable them copy. Impersonation is also common where students hire the services of others either among themselves or from outside to write the examination on their behalf and. students influencing attendants with cash to facilitate cheating. It is expected that invigilators must be punctual to the examination centres. They should arrive at the examination centres at least thirty minutes before

the start of the examination since their actions such as absence or lateness to examination venues contribute to compromising examination standards since they create enabling environment for candidates to cheat.

Responsibilities of Invigilators for Effective Management of Examinations in the University

- i. It is the responsibility of every invigilator to ensure that the examination materials are collected at least thirty minutes before the scheduled time and distributed to the students in time to enable the examination to start at the time specified on the examination timetable. When distributing examination materials, it is important that invigilators put the examination paper on the desk face down and then cover it with the answer book, which should also be placed face down.
- ii. Invigilators are to ensure that no student is allowed to leave the examination room until thirty minutes after the examination has begun.
- iii. Whilst invigilating an examination, it is invigilator responsibility invigilators not do anything that will disturb any of the students. They are not supposed to do the following: eat, talk, read, do their own work or use a mobile phone. They must inform the students when they may start writing and when the examination period is over. Invigilators are not expected to instruct students to begin the exams before schedule. Invigilators must sit in front of the examination hall or sit at the back.
- iv. During the examination, invigilators need not to read other materials, leave the examination hall or do anything that might compromise their observation of the examination and the students taking it.
- v. It is invigilators responsibility to walk around the room on regular basis always observing students, deal with any queries or problems any of the students have. Invigilators must ensure that only examination stationery (answer booklets, question paper, log tables and writing implements) are allowed by students in the examination room. The use of electronic calculators should not be permitted in university examinations except where specified in the examination paper that they could be used.
- vi. It is the responsibility of invigilator not to allow students take into the examination hall any of the following: book, paper, hat, headgear, bag, mobile phone, scanner, radio, palm-top computer, programmable calculator, etc. unless specifically authorized by the examiner.
- vii. It is the responsibility of invigilator to confiscate any items and make a written report of the alleged breach of examination regulations to the University Examination Section.
- viii. It is the responsibility of invigilator not to allow students to borrow any item during examination. Invigilators must ensure that the attendance list is appropriately signed by the respective students during the examination. The names of absentees should be noted.
- ix. It is the responsibility of invigilator to ensure that the counting of all examination scripts in the examination hall at the end of the session tallies with the attendance list, enveloped, sealed, signed and submitted to the Examiner or the Faculty Examination Officer.
- x. It is the responsibility of invigilators to ensure that they announce to students regularly about the time, example every thirty minutes and five minutes to the end of the paper and they stop the examination at the appointed time and give instructions for the collection of scripts. At the end of the examination, students must remain in their seats until the examination scripts have been collected from each desk.
- xi. It is the responsibility of invigilator to ensure that the script is handed by any student who leaves the room before the end of the period of the examination. They must ensure that scripts are counted and well

packed in an envelope at the end of each session. The scripts, together with all unused copies of the examination papers and answer booklets and the attendance list should be returned to the University Examination Section.

- xii. It is the responsibility of invigilator not to allow any student to take any paper/sheet out of the examination room except when authorized. To check the incidence of impersonation, invigilators must inspect the identity cards of students before they enter the examination halls. Students without the identity cards should not be allowed to enter the examination halls.

Conclusion

Conducive environments must be established in universities that would promote and enhance effective management of examinations and examination halls must be in order, well equipped and seats arranged appropriately before the commencement of examinations. Examinations is the responsibility of the university management just like teaching. It has implication for the university plant planning as well as personnel management. Despite its importance, especially in making decisions about many aspects of the education system, it has always been denied its budgetary allocation and careful planning and implementation which will reflect in poor management of examinations. There must be adequate qualified and disciplined personnel for invigilation who should report at the examination centres on time and work according to the regulations of the examination process.

References

- Aikins, E. D. (2019). Effective management of university examinations. *International Journal of Research and Innovation in Social Science (IJRISS)* 3(11)
- Ezeugbor, C. O. & Udoh, A. P. (2014). Financing university education in nigeria for quality assurance: problems and prospects. *Proceedings of the 29th Congress of the Nigerian Academy of Education held at Onyema Ugochukwu Hall, Town Campus, University of Uyo, Uyo, Akwa Ibom State* (52-59).
- Grunde, J and Kaehler, B. (2018): Corporate governance – Zur Notwendigkeit einer Konturschärfung und betriebswirtschaftlichen Erweiterung des Begriffsverständnisses; *Der Betrieb* 11/2018. 585-592
- Hornby, A.S. (2000). *Oxford advanced learners dictionary*. Oxford: Oxford university press.
- Jones, G. R. and George, J. M. (2018): *Contemporary management* (10th edition). New York: McGraw-Hill Education.
- Ogunji, J et al (2005). *Prevalence, perceptions, precursors and prescription for examination malpractice in higher education: Case study of Babcock University*. Babcock University Academic Congregation Colloquium series 74-81