

# Accreditation exercise requirements adequacy and quality of resources in South-south federal universities, Nigeria

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**ABSTRACT:** The study determined accreditation exercises requirement adequacy and quality of resources in south-south federal universities, Nigeria. Four research questions and null hypotheses guided the study. Study design was ex-post facto with population of 6667 and sample size of 723 academic staff selected through multi-stage sampling technique in six universities. Data were generated with two validated instruments titled: "Accreditation Exercise Requirement Adequacy Questionnaire (AERAQ)" and "Resource Quality Status Checklist (RQSC)". Reliability coefficient of 0.93 was obtained for AERAQ using Cronbach alpha statistic. Research questions were answered with mean and the null hypotheses tested with independent t-test statistic at significant level of 0.05. The findings show significant difference between accreditation exercise requirement adequacy and quality status of academic staff, library facilities and funding. Recommendations made include; conduct of regular monitoring of programmes by National Universities Commission and provision of adequate funds, infrastructures, facilities and lecturers to ensure the resources meet the benchmark.

**Keywords:** Accreditation requirements, academic programmes, quality status, resource adequacy, benchmark.

## INTRODUCTION

One of the major objectives of university education is to produce qualified, skilled and globally competent workforce for labour market, as well as develop sustainability-oriented competencies in graduates so they could perform effectively in global business environment and industries which is a critical factor for national development. However, it must be stressed that universities can only make meaningful impact on the development of the nation if its inputs, processes and outputs are of high quality. Premise on this knowledge both the government and universities management exhibited concerted efforts in the years preceding 1989, precisely in 1960s and greater part of 1970s at ensuring that all Nigerian universities learning environment are conducive for effective teaching and learning, and the situation during the period was characterized by availability and adequacy of human and material resources which accounted for the quality of the outputs from the system. Consequently, the

need for accreditation of programmes in Nigerian university system was unnecessary (Okebukola, 2012).

The global awareness of the benefits accrue from university education according to Adeola (2006) brought about increase in demand for the university education in Nigeria which paved way for more universities to be established by federal, state government and private individuals. However, the development came with the attendant problems and issues on quantity and quality of resources and outputs. Furthermore, the trend of happenings such as academic brain drain, poor quality of graduates, increasing rates of graduates' unemployment, stunt economic growth etc after 1980s portrayed that all is not well with the Nigerian university system. This confirms the truism of scholars' assertion that no nation can develop beyond the quality of its education (Agbowuro et al., 2017). The universities witnessed bloated students population without corresponding increase in departmental resources

like funds, lecturers in number and quality, well equipped libraries and laboratories, adequate information and communication technology (ICT) facilities and infrastructures in most universities. In addition, there have been steady decline in quality of universities graduates in terms of possessing employability skills relevant to labour market and lack of internationalization of knowledge across boarder which have influenced the purpose and function of university education in Nigeria (Asuquo and Agboola, 2014).

In the process of correcting the anomalies, the federal government through section 10 of Act No. 16 of 1985, incorporated as section 4 (m) of the National Universities Commission (NUC) amended Act No. 49 of 1988 established the National Universities Commission (NUC) under the Federal Ministry of Education (FME) as a regulatory body to oversee the activities and administration of universities, accredited their degree and other academic programmes and ensure that educational resources are sufficient for effective teaching and learning (FME, 2011). The primary objectives of the commission are to ensure the orderly development of university education in Nigeria; to lay down and maintain minimum academic standard (MAS), granting approval for all academic programmes and ensure quality assurance of all academic programmes run in Nigerian universities for the attainment of high academic standard and to meet global competitiveness in education as well as provides channel for all external support to the Nigerian universities (Borishade, 2012; Okogie, 2012). The development of the minimum academic standard and their subsequent approval provided the basis for the accreditation exercise.

Accreditation exercise defined by Okogie (2012) is a process of self-study and external quality review mechanism used in higher institutions to scrutinize the institutions needs for quality improvement. Accreditation exercise as quality assurance mechanism involves the evaluation of quality of programmes to ascertain whether the institution is able to meet certain criteria relating to academic matters, staff-students ratios, staff mix by rank, staff development, physical facilities, adequate library facilities and funding to enhance effective teaching and learning and preparing students for high performance in the world of work. Accredited programme is the one that has been evaluated and granted recognition, as well as permission to admit students as when due.

The purpose of accreditation of universities be it institutional or programmes is to examine the state of the institutions in relation to the level of educational resources available, and to ensure that programmes and materials as well as institutions, whether private or public, meet the standard as prescribed by the NUC benchmark. It also serves as a measure of some level of performance, quality and integrity which engenders confidence from public and broad educational community. The accreditation is the process of external review used by higher education to scrutinize colleges, universities and educational

programmes for quality improvement and assurance (Kumar et al., 2020). For education programmes to be accredited they must satisfy and meet the prescribed standard which is: minimum floor space for lectures, minimum laboratory facilities per students, minimum library space, and minimum benchmark for academic staff mix by rank and lecturer-student ratio for all degree programmes across the country. It also stipulates a curriculum as well as entry and graduation requirement for each discipline. The programmes to be accredited are evaluated and scored based on the following criteria; staffing (32%), academic content (23%), library (12%), physical facilities (25%), funding (5%) and employer rating (3%) (NUC, 2012).

The NUC in 2007 endorsed Benchmark for Minimum Academic Standard (BMAS) as the revised version of the minimum standards of all the programmes and stipulated that, academic staff mix by rank be structured into acceptable percentage: professor/associate professor (20%), senior lecturer (35%) and lecturer I and others is (45%) respectively for a given degree programme. NUC also stipulated the following benchmark for lecturer/student ratio as follows: Science 1:20, Engineering 1:15, Medicine 1:10, Management Science 1:30, Agricultural Science 1:45, Social Science 1:20, Art 1:30, Education 1:30, Administration 1:30, Law 1:30, Pharmacy 1:10 (NUC, 2012).

Departmental resources status is the level of the department attainment in terms of staffing, staff mix, staff-student's ratio, student enrolment, teaching and non-teaching staff and quality of graduating students in the institution. It also involves the philosophy, objectives, contents adequacy and variability of programmes to enhance the staff productivity and production of competent graduates in the institution. Inadequate departmental resources could lead to low productivity among staff, production of poor quality graduates and delay in the university education goal attainment. Departmental resources are classified into human and material resources. The human resources of the department in universities include students who are the direct and main beneficiaries of the educational system, staff or workers (academic and non-teaching) employed or engaged for the work of administrative process and/or teaching and learning process in the department to ensure that materials resources are effectively utilized for the uplift of departmental status and optimum attainment of the institution's goals (Ibeh, 2011). In essence, human resources in the universities are organizers of other resources in the departments, they form basis for evaluating the effectiveness and efficiency of institutions in terms of their students and staff performance and that of the other educational resources.

The material resources of universities are all departmental resources including everything inanimate objects which are sub-classified into financial and non-financial material resources. Financial resources are

money used in acquiring learning facilities to enhance effective teaching and learning. Physical cash is very important for the achievement of educational goals and when sufficient cash is allocated for procurement of necessary learning and administrative facilities needed in department, it enhances the quality of resources. The non-financial resources of universities are all the material things in the departments that money can buy and price can be stuck on them. They are materials that may disappear as human beings use them in education. Wood (2010) stressed that disappearance of non-financial departmental resources may be due to use, obsolescence, or out datedness on one hand, and the arrival of new or improved materials on the other hand. Some computer software and programmes may be completely obsolete due to the emergency of newly discovered packages that are more efficient in terms of output, cost-saving, attractiveness, and availability. The purpose for the study was to determine how accreditation exercises requirement adequacy influence quality of resources in south-south federal universities, Nigeria.

The situation in Nigerian public universities presently revealed that, the institutional resources were not in line with NUC benchmark. The dearth of quality resources is a key feature in some universities; substandard programmes are run in some of the universities; there are reported cases of inadequacy of lecturers in quantity and quality, high student-teacher ratio and poor infrastructure. In addition, there are complaints about the inadequate funding by the government which has led to poor institutional performance and culminated in the production of incompetent graduates, thus, the call by stakeholders in university education for accreditation exercise to be carried out to avoid undermining the achievement of the university goals (Agboola and Adeyemi, 2012; Ayinchie, 2014).

The worrisome development in recent times is that, the graduates of most accredited Nigerian tertiary institutions are being referred to as incompetent and poor in quality in terms of knowledge, training and skills. Employers of labour have alleged that the qualities of graduates produced lack employability skills which make them unemployable, unmarketable and often times they do not meet the global standard (Eldeen et al., 2018). These problems have been attributed to many factors which are both government and institution related. On the part of the government, lapses have been observed in the provision of adequate resources in some universities while poor institutional management and lack of accountability are displayed by some of the university management and administrators. Furthermore, the researchers have observed overtime that accreditation exercise conducted by the NUC that ought to have yielded positive impact on the university education seems to have failed in achieving the purpose. The accreditation exercise has been subjected to criticisms of politicization in the appointment of the members of accreditation panel, creating room for corruption and incompetency in the delivery of their

assignments, window dressing by most universities management to cover up the gap between resources that actually exist and the ideal resources requirement in the programmes to be accredited before and after accreditation exercise and could compromised the aims and goals of the university education. Thus, the problem this study was on the adequacy of quality of resources in south-south federal universities, Nigeria and how they differ based on before and after accreditation exercise requirements? The objectives were translated into research questions and null hypotheses.

The findings of this study would be of benefits to the administrators of universities, accreditation panels, government agencies, policy makers and educational planners. Universities administrators in the study area could identify the resources required as well as the impact of those resources in terms of quality and number for programmes accreditation. The accreditation panels could adopt the model as an assessment guide in the process of accreditation and also serve as uniform basis to evaluate institution programmes for credible accreditation. It also has implications for government agencies, planners and policy makers that plan and set goals for university education; they should know that adequate and quality resources well outlay for the entire programmes feature by the universities could engender high performance.

### Research questions

The following research questions are raised to guide the study.

1. What is the status of qualified lecturers before and after accreditation exercise requirements in Nigerian south-south federal universities?
2. What is the status of school buildings before and after accreditation exercise requirements in Nigerian south-south federal universities?
3. What is the status of funds before and after accreditation exercise requirements in Nigerian south-south federal universities?
4. What is the status of school library before and after accreditation exercise requirements in Nigerian south-south federal universities?

### Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were formulated for the study and were tested at 0.05 level of significance.

**H<sub>01</sub>:** There is no significant difference in the status of qualified lecturers before and after accreditation exercise requirements in Nigerian south-south federal universities.

**H<sub>02</sub>:** There is no significant difference in the status of school buildings before and after accreditation exercise requirements in Nigerian south-south federal universities.

**H<sub>03</sub>:** There is no significant difference in the status of funds before and after accreditation exercise requirements in Nigerian south-south federal universities.

**H<sub>04</sub>:** There is no significant difference in the status of school library before and after accreditation exercise requirements in Nigerian south-south federal universities.

## LITERATURE REVIEW/THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This study was premised on the theoretical framework of Goal Setting Theory propounded by Locke (1968) revised by Locke and Latham (1990a) and Latham and Locke (2006) which stated that every individual and formal organization have specific goal set to be achieved when the basic needs (resources) are provided. A goal is what an individual or institution consciously set to achieve and the function of a goal is to provide guidelines for deciding the amount of resources and effort to put into work in order to achieve efficiency in the organization. The theory further stated that: (1) a specific high goal leads to higher performance than an easy goal, no goal or a vague goal such as “do your best”; (2) given goal commitment, the higher the goal, the higher the performance; and (3) variables such as feedback or knowledge of results, incentives, participation in decision-making, and competition only affect an employee’s performance to the extent that they lead to the setting of and commitment to a specific high goal. The theorist stressed that behaviour is regulated and maintained by goals. In other words, intentions to achieve a goal constitute the primary motivating forces behind work behaviour. The theory was based on the assumption that people behave rationally and consciously when they are set to achieve a goal.

Locke maintained that motivational goals need have the following dimensions; clarity, challenge, commitment, feedback and complexity. For goals to influence performance positively, two conditions must be met. First, the person must be aware of the goal and know what must be attained; second, the person must accept the goal as something he is willing to work for. When goals are accepted, it implies that the individual intends to engage in the behaviour needed for its accomplishment. The theory also assumes that specific goals are superior to general goals and that more difficult goals, when accepted, lead to greater effort than easy goals. In addition, the more specific the goal, the more concentration the individual’s effort in its pursuit. Prior studies viewed goal theory as the basis for management by objectives (MBO) technique that is meant to increase performance through goal setting. Since pursuit of some goals by individual or institutions require greater mental concentration and physical effort to achieve. Goal-setting theory is among the most, if not the most, practical theory for increasing performance, employees’ commitment and quality (Heslin et al., 2009; Latham, 2001; Latham and Locke, 2006; Latham and Yukl, 1975).

The theory is relevant to this study because it is known fact that university was established to attain specific goals

and these goals are unachievable without appropriate goal setting on the provision and utilization of the basic needs (resources) to motivate both lecturers and students to carryout teaching and learning process effectively. Thus, university (an organization) goal is reviewed in order to evaluate Locke’s theory of goal setting and to determine the practical feasibility of this theory for increasing quality of resources and institutional performance through accreditation exercise. Management and staff on one hand, constituted critical human resources that possess a higher form of consciousness and the capacity to reason and conceptualize goals and set long range purposes that the university is set up to achieve, thus, the goal set must be to motivate them. On the other hand, accreditation exercise conducted by NUC is about quality assurance for higher performance and also serves as quality measure tool for determining success and/or failure of the established goals and performance impact in the university. In the light of this, accreditation exercise goal setting strategies is to ensure that emphasis is placed on processes, policies, actions performed (internally and externally), accountability and/or continuous improvement as could enables university goals attainment.

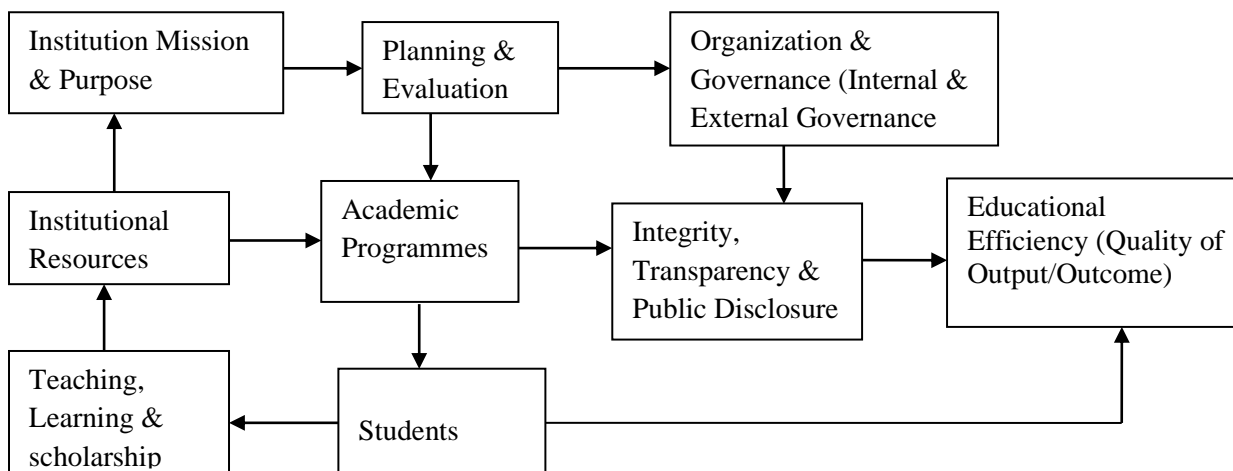
## Conceptual review

The researchers based on reviewed of findings and opinions of researchers on accreditation exercise and higher education developed a model for accreditation as presented in Figure 1 to show the components that give creditability to accreditation exercise and engender assurance of quality for education delivery.

In Figure 1, the institutional efficiency is determined by the process and quality of accreditation exercise that the institution is subjected to. The accreditation exercise is expected to meet nine standards as indicated in the model by New England Commission of Higher Education (NECHE, 2016). These standards are inter-woven and are directed by the institution’s mission and purposes which give focus to its activities and provide a basis for the assessment and enhancement of the institution’s effectiveness. The mission of the institution defines its distinctive character, addresses the needs of society, identifies the students the institution seeks to serve, and reflects both the institution’s traditions and its vision for the future. The accreditation exercise in line with the institution’s mission provides the basis upon which accreditation teams assess the institution success, identify its needs, evaluates its endeavors and plans its future. Furthermore, it provides a basis for the evaluation of the institution against the Commission’s Standards.

## Accreditation exercise and status of lecturers

The critical and most important resource in education system after students is academic staff. Lecturers are



**Figure 1.** Researchers developed model for accreditation adapted from Standards for Accreditation by New England Commission of Higher Education (NECHE, 2016).

regarded as the most imperative school-based factor and major determinant of the universities produce and their eventual impact on the world of work and economic development. They utilize other material and human resources to produce quality outputs (students) and enhance the status of tertiary institutions in terms of efficiency (Rogan, 2013).

Previous research indicated that there are many teacher factors that enhance effective teaching and learning and attainment of educational goals in terms of students' academic achievement and their productivity. The factors are: availability and adequate qualified lecturers, competency in areas of specialization etc (Stronge, 2014; Bassey, 2012; Nonaka, 2012; Al-mutariri, 2011; Orinstein and Hunkins, 2011). However, incompetence of lecturers as the chief implementer of curriculum can be a barrier to effective learning and could in turn hinders student's academic performance (Motati, 2010).

Bassey (2012) conducted a research on students' perception of lecturers' work ethics and commitment to teaching: Implication for quality assurance in Nigerian university education. The study design was ex-post facto. The population comprised all the federal universities in Nigeria and sample of 2650 lecturers was selected from 15 universities using multistage technique. Data were analyzed with simple linear regression analysis. The findings showed that availability of qualified lecturers enhance effective teaching and learning and could lead to the attainment of university goals and objectives.

Sarrico and Alves (2015) studied academic staff quality in higher education: an empirical analysis of Portuguese public administration education. The authors assessed staff quality in public administration education in several dimensions of quality (staff qualifications, research intensity, disciplinary orientation, diversity, international orientation, professional orientation, and inbreeding) along with the interactions that occur between them. A statistical

analysis is made of the indicators for all 21 study programmes in the area of public administration, involving 236 academics in six public universities. The finding revealed that, in general, the quality of academic staff complies with standards, but there are issues regarding qualifications.

Anugom (2016) studied accreditation and quality assurance of the Nigerian universities: The management imperative. Three research questions and hypotheses guided the study. The design was a correlation survey with a population of 2,893 universities administrators and sample size of 578 Heads of department and Deans of faculties. The instrument for data collection was titled "programme accreditation exercise scale". The research questions were answered with Pearson's statistic and T-Test statistic was used to test the hypotheses. The findings revealed that the quality of accredited programme depends on the level of funding, physical facilities and positively related to staffing.

On a contrast, Oribabor (2008) examined the impact of NUC accreditation exercise on university administrative structure of four selected Nigerian universities between 1995 and 1999. Data were collected through questionnaires administered to 400 staff and 200 students of four Nigerian universities. One hypothesis was generated for the study. The two sets of questionnaires - one for the students and the other for staff were used to elicit information from the respondents. The responses were tested using chi-square statistic. The study revealed that the accreditation exercise had no impact on administrative structure and efficiency of university staff.

### Accreditation exercise and status of school buildings

Many previous research findings have revealed that school buildings are vital inputs to educational system, the

success of any educational institutions rest on the availability of physical facilities especially the school buildings. Their uses may facilitate or impede the status of the institution. The well-sited school buildings with aesthetic conditions, playground and lavatory usually contributed positively to the educational institutions status, and adequacy of school buildings enhance effective teaching and learning process which lead to good academic performance and high staff productivity (Williams, 2011; Olutola, 2008). The accreditation reports by Adaralegbe (2013) showed evidence of inadequacies in the provision and judicious use of school buildings for instructions. Many classes were held under unhygienic conditions while some school buildings lack modern facilities and amenities which have led to overcrowded classrooms.

Edem (2009) carried out investigation on impact of school building on attainment of educational goals and objectives in Akwa Ibom State. The research design was ex-post facto. The population comprised 4630 and sample of 862 teachers. Multistage approach of purposive and stratified sampling techniques was used to sample the school and the teachers. Data were analyzed using Pearson's  $r$  statistic. The findings revealed that school building has a significant impact on the attainment of educational goals and objectives in Akwa Ibom State.

Similarly, Williams (2011) researched on the effect of school buildings on students' academic achievement in Calabar South Local Government Area of Cross River State. The study used survey research design. Population of the study was 1840 and sample of 682 were selected using simple random sampling technique. Simple regression analysis was used for data analysis. The findings revealed that school buildings well planned and design have positive effect on attainment of high academic status, enhance effective teaching and learning in the school and improve staff productivity.

### Accreditation exercise and status of funds

Financial resources are fundamental in the attainment of educational goals and objectives. As a matter of fact, it has been ascertained that no effective programme can be carried out, nor sustained without sufficient funds for procuring learning facilities to enhance effective teaching and learning and also the degree of financial adequacy determines the effectiveness of the institutions. Historically, the universities in Nigeria have faced several challenges of which underfunding is the most emphasized problem; the underfunding at an operational level has made attracting the best pool of students and staff, achieving the internal and external efficiency elusive. Most Nigerian universities function with the shortage in key educational resources, such as staffing, infrastructures, research materials, library facilities, science lab equipment, and underfunding. Thus, the issue of funding

tertiary institutions in Nigeria has become a matter of grave concern. The available data indicated that for past years, the level of funding education stand at 5-6% of educational budget a far cry from the 26% recommended by UNESCO (Adekwo, 2011). Furthermore, Adekwo (2011) and Oguntade (2010) pointed out that the poor funding of tertiary institutions by the government accounted for inadequate learning facilities and other critical resources which have impacted negatively on the programs taught at universities, quality of outputs and staff productivity. Gractz (2009) affirmed that adequate funding of tertiary institutions has continued to be a major obstacle to educational development in the country; while Kaluma (2012) stressed that excessive spending on recurrent expenditure such as the huge legislators bogus pay, bloated personnel overhead cost and servicing of domestic debts have contributed to the neglect of the higher education and resulted to poor quality of education and productions of incompetent graduates.

On this basis NUC (2012) affirmed that, attainment of educational goals and objectives strongly depend on the amount of fund allocate to the institution to procure basic learning facilities and hiring of qualified personnel. Consequently, NUC makes it mandatory, for all federal universities to generate ten percent of their total annual funds internally through as means to finance their institution (Odebiyi and Aina, 2009).

Ali (2011) carried out investigation on impact of funds management on the performance of specialized federal universities in Nigeria. The study used both primary and secondary sources data, the secondary data utilized are the annual budget estimate while the primary utilized questionnaire. The simple survey design was used for the study, population of 864 and sample of 368 was selected using stratified and simple random sampling techniques. The simple percentage and linear regression analysis were used to analyzed the data. The result of the findings revealed that funds management has significance impact on the physical facilities available in specialized universities in Nigeria.

Nwankwo (2010) investigated the role of funds on staff productivity in Abia State. The study adopted ex-post facto research design with the sample size of 1,200 staff. Multistage sampling technique was used to select the sample. Data were analyzed using Pearson product moment correlation statistic. The findings revealed that, lack of fund to procure basic learning facilities reduce staff productivity.

Agunbiade (2006) carried out research on effect of funds on attainment of university goals in Nigeria. Ex-post facto design was used to conduct the study. Population of 8,694 and sample size of 732, multistage was used to carried out the study, stratified and purposive sampling technique was used to the study. The null hypotheses formulated were tested at 0.05 level of significance, simple linear regression analysis was used to analyzed data collected for the study. The findings revealed that attainment of

education goals in universities depend on the amount of money allocated to the institution to acquire learning facilities.

Okily (2008) conducted a research on the effect of funding tertiary institutions and staff productivity. The study used descriptive survey research design and purposive random sampling technique, Pearson product moment correlation statistics were employed to test the three null formulated hypotheses at significance level of 0.05. The finding revealed that, poor funding of tertiary education has resulted in the deterioration in the quality of education due to lack of basic learning facilities.

### **Accreditation exercise and status of school library**

The academic library played a stirring role in the accreditation process of an institution and it remained the focal points for effective teaching, learning and research. Academic libraries have successfully navigated a paradigm shift from information repositories to learning enterprise by embedding innovative library education, resources, and service in the teaching and learning activities of their institutions and designing facilities that increasingly engaged students in learning (Bennett, 2009). The university library ensures provision of facilities, service and learning/information resources that are appropriate to support teaching, research, and service mission of the institution as well as help to improve students' academic performance and lecturers' productivity (Anunobi and Okoye, 2008). In the same vein, Fowowe (2008) and Emerole and Ogugua (2007) stressed that school library of the 21st Century must be up-to-date, meet the expectations of its users and at the same time allow access to older materials for effective research. In addition, a well equipped library enhances good learning and provides resources to carryout research that will enhance quality education and maintain standard in tertiary institution.

Okiy (2005) opined that the tertiary institutions library is a crucial unit of the institutions and the institutions is as good as its library; Ifidon (2005) assessed the feasibility and need for establishing accreditation standards for Nigerian tertiary institutions and concluded that the most impactful period for library development in many tertiary institutions is during the accreditation exercise. Similarly, Popoola (2009) maintained that institution with well equipped library normally maintain high academic performance because students would make use of the current print and non-prints materials for effective reading and research.

Felly (2014) conducted a research on the impact of library resources utilization on undergraduate student's academic performance in Georgia state university. The study adopted ex-post facto research design and sample of 250 and simple regression were used to test the null hypotheses formulated. The study revealed that effective

utilization of library resources by undergraduate student has positive impact on the academic achievement.

Chan (2008) conducted a research on the impact of school library services on students' achievement and teachers' productivity in Hong Kong Baptist University. The study adopts survey research design and the sample size of 450, using stratified random sampling techniques and Pearson Product Moment Correlation Statistics were employed to test the two null hypotheses formulated and tested at 0.05 level of significance. The study revealed that school library services have a positive impact on students' academic achievement and staff productivity.

Ajibero (2014) conducted a study on effect of academic library on the staff productivity in Abia State University. The study adopted ex-post facto research design, sample of 180 using stratified random sampling technique and simple regression statistic were used to test the null hypotheses formulated and tested at level of significance of 0.05. The findings revealed that academic libraries help in improving lecturer's productivity and uplift the status of the institution.

Umeozor and Emasealu (2016) study was on impact of external quality assurance on academic libraries. Forty nine Librarians of the University of Ibadan (UI), University of Lagos (UNILAG) and Obafemi Awolowo University (OAU) were surveyed by employing a structured questionnaire on quality assurance. All librarians rated improved provision of library services and resources to be the highest impact of accreditation.

### **METHODOLOGY**

The study adopted ex-post facto research design and the area for this study was south-south geopolitical zone of Nigeria. The population of the study comprised 6,667 academic staff in the six federal universities in south-south, Nigeria while the sample size was 723 academic staff (Heads of Departments-HODs, lecturers and librarians) selected from two public universities using multi-stage sampling technique. Simple random sampling technique was used to select two out of the six federal universities in south-south zone. Purposive sampling technique was used in selecting four faculties and eight departments which offered same programmes. The simple random technique of cap and draw was used in selecting academic staff from the two universities used for the study. Data were generated with two faced and content validated instruments titled: "Accreditation Exercise Requirements Adequacy Questionnaire (AERAQ)" and "Resource Quality Status Checklist (RQSC)". The AERAQ consisted of 20 items to seek information from staff on accreditation requirement adequacy and quality of resources with response options of very high, high moderate and low. The HODs provided information resource items listed in RQSC. To ascertain the internal consistency of AERAQ, it was subjected to inter-item method and analyzed with

Cronbach alpha statistic which yielded reliability coefficient of 0.93. Research questions were answered with mean and the null hypotheses tested with independent t-test statistic at significant level of 0.05.

## DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

**Research questions 1:** *What is the status of qualified lecturers before and after accreditation exercise requirements in Nigerian South-south federal universities?*

**Ho<sub>1</sub>:** *There is no significant difference in the Status of qualified lecturers before and after accreditation exercise requirements in Nigerian south-south federal universities.* The results in Table 1 revealed that the mean score for after accreditation exercise requirements in Nigerian south-south federal universities was 14.76 which was greater than before accreditation exercise with the mean score of 12.04. In addition, the calculated t-value of 13.88 was greater than the critical t-value of 1.96 at  $p=0.05$  which indicated that significant difference exists in the status of lecturers based on accreditation exercise. Hence, the null hypothesis was rejected thus indicating that there was improvement in status of qualified lecturers based on the accreditation exercise requirement.

**Research question 2:** *What is the status of school buildings before and after accreditation exercise requirements in Nigerian south-south federal universities?*

**Ho<sub>2</sub>:** *There is no significant difference in the status of school buildings before and after accreditation exercise in Nigerian south-south federal universities.* In Table 2, the results reveal the mean difference in the status of school buildings in Nigerian south-south universities. The mean score after accreditation exercise requirements was 13.00 and it was greater than before accreditation exercise requirements with mean score of 11.71. The status difference was also significant which could mean that there is improvement in the status of school buildings after accreditation exercise requirements in Nigerian south-south federal universities.

**Research question 3:** *What is the difference in the status of funds before and after accreditation exercise requirements in Nigerian south-south federal universities?*

**Ho<sub>3</sub>:** *There is no significant difference in the status of funds before and after accreditation exercise requirements Nigerian south-south federal universities.* The results in Table 3 indicate that the mean difference in the status of funds with the mean score of 14.35 after accreditation exercise requirements was greater than before accreditation exercise with mean score of 11.21 in Nigerian south-south federal universities. The difference was also significant at  $p \leq 0.05$ . It therefore means that the status of funds improved after accreditation exercise requirements in Nigerian south-south federal universities.

**Research question 4:** *What is the difference in the status*

*of school library before and after accreditation exercise requirements in Nigerian south-south federal universities?*

**Ho<sub>4</sub>:** *There is no significant difference in the status of school library before and after accreditation exercise requirements in Nigerian south-south federal universities.* The result in Table 4 indicated the mean difference in the status of school library before and after accreditation exercise requirements in Nigerian south-south federal universities. The mean score after accreditation exercise requirements of 14.99 was greater than before accreditation exercise requirements with mean score of 12.15. In addition, the difference in status was significant. Thus, it means that there is improvement in the status of school library after accreditation exercise in the Nigerian south-south federal universities.

## DISCUSSION

### Accreditation exercise and status of qualified lecturers

The finding of hypothesis one showed that significant difference existed between accreditation exercise requirements and status of qualified lecturers in Nigerian south-south federal universities. This result means that accreditation exercise influenced the quality status of lecturers in the universities. This finding could be attributed to the fact that most universities lack required lecturers in quantity and quality before accreditation exercise. Thus, it is during accreditation exercises that more lecturers are employed or deployed to meet the NUC benchmark requirements and to avoid denial or loss of programmes in all the departments.

The findings agree with finding of Bassey (2012) on students' perception of lecturers' work ethics and commitment to teaching: Implication for quality assurance in Nigerian university education which showed that availability of qualified lecturers enhances effective instructional delivery. Similarly, Anugom (2016) findings on accreditation and quality assurance of the Nigerian universities: The management imperative, revealed that the quality of accredited programme positively related to staffing. It could be affirmed that qualities of lecturers play a key role in the attainment of university goals and serves as critical determinant of accreditation exercise outcome.

### Accreditation exercise and status of school buildings

The finding showed that there is a significant difference in the status of school buildings before and after accreditation exercise in universities. This means that before accreditation exercise, school buildings were not sufficient to accommodate students during lectures. However, during accreditation exercise school buildings are renovated, assigned names of department to lecture



**Table 1.** T-test analysis of the difference in the status of qualified lecturers' accreditation exercise requirements in Nigerian south-south universities (n= 723).

Variable	Qualified lecturer	Mean	SD	t-cal	t-crit	Remark
Accreditation exercise requirement	Status before	12.04	4.05	13.88	1.96	Improved status * Sig, Ho <sub>1</sub> Rejected
	Status after	14.7	2.88			

\*Significant at P =0.05, df = 721.

**Table 2.** T-test analysis of the difference in the status of school building before and after accreditation exercise in Nigeria south-south Universities (n=723).

Variable	School buildings	Mean	SD	t-cal	t-crit	Remark
Accreditation exercise requirement	Status before	11.71	3.20	11.61	1.96	Improved Status, *Sig, Ho <sub>2</sub> Rejected
	Status after	13.00	3.32			

\*Significant at P =0.05, df = 721.

**Table 3.** T-test analysis of the difference in the status of funds before and after accreditation exercise requirements in Nigerian south-south universities (n=723).

Variable	Funds	Mean	SD	t-cal	t-crit	Remark
Accreditation exercise requirement	Status before	11.21	3.24	19.04	1.96	Improved *Sig, Ho <sub>3</sub> : Rejected
	Status after	14.35	2.78			

\*Significant at P =0.05, df = 721.

**Table 4.** T-test analysis of the difference in the status of school library before and after accreditation exercise in Nigeria south-south universities (n=723).

Variable	Library	Mean	SD	t-cal	t-crit	Remark
Accreditation exercise requirement	Status before	12.15	4.17	14.09	1.96	Improved *Sig, Ho <sub>4</sub> Rejected
	Status after	14.99	2.80			

\*Significant at P =0.05, df = 721.

halls, school buildings were painted and offices well arranged to accommodate all lecturers to avoid lost of accreditation of programme in the departments. In addition, many lecture halls were well equipped with chairs properly fixed and other facilities.

The findings are in agreement with the findings of Edem (2009) and Williams (2011) who studied impact of school building on attainment of educational goals and objectives in Akwa Ibom State and the effect of school buildings on students' academic achievement in Calabar South Local Government Area of Cross River State respectively. The authors' findings showed that availability, well planned and school buildings designs and adequate facilities have positive effect on attainment of high academic status and institution effectiveness. This connotes that school buildings and facilities give physical framework for effective instructional delivery and serve as one of the key requirements for accreditation exercise; without provision of adequate buildings and facilities, approval of programmes for accreditation may be denied.

### Accreditation exercise and status of funds

The finding showed that there is a significant difference in the status of funds before and after accreditation exercise in south-south universities. This result could mean that before the accreditation exercise, the institution' management does not release adequate funds to the departments and units which may affect the procurement of required resources. However, during and shortly before the exercise, adequate funds are released for procurement of needed resources, maintenance of school buildings, and stocked library with current and adequate materials to secure approval of programmes.

This finding supported the findings of Ali (2011), Nwankwo (2010) and Agunbiade (2006) which revealed that attainment of education goals in universities in terms of staff productivity, institution performance and the success of accreditation depend on the funds allocated to the institution to acquire the requisite resources. Thus, provision of adequate fund could make or mar the

accreditation of programmes in the universities because it is a critical requirement.

### Accreditation exercise and status of school libraries

The finding showed that there is a significant difference in the quality status of school library before and after accreditation exercise in south-south universities. This means that accreditation exercise has impact on the provision of school library services and resources. The reason that could be adduce for this finding is that, before accreditation exercise most universities libraries lack adequate library resources, but shortly after accreditation exercise it was observed that school library and resource rooms are well stocked.

This finding is corroborated by the finding of Umeozor and Emasealu (2016) which revealed that accreditation exercise has highest impact on the provision of library services and resources. In addition, Ajibero (2014) finding on effect of academic library on the staff productivity showed that, school libraries have a significant impact on the students' academic performance and staff productivity as well as improvement of the institution status. Therefore, it could be infer that library services is the hub of activities during accreditation and could spelt success or denial of programme(s), as each accreditation team is obliged to visit the library to ascertain the quality of library holding in relation to every programme being accredited.

### Conclusion

The findings of the study revealed that difference exists between adequacy and quality of lecturers, school buildings, funds and libraries before and after accreditation exercise requirements. It was therefore concluded that accreditation exercise requirement adequacy has significant influence on status of quality of resources in south-south federal universities, Nigeria

### Recommendations

The following recommendations were made based on the findings:

1. Government and institution management should join their efforts to improve upon the state of resources in the universities by providing all the critical resources required in quantity and quality.
2. The NUC as agent of the government should adopt global strategic plans on how to effectively monitor the universities especially before and after accreditation exercise in order to curb window dressing approach that is being put up by many universities during accreditation.
3. All other stakeholders in university education including the government should adopt globally acceptable financial models that are all inclusive if the problem of

funding university education adequately would be holistically addressed.

### CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

The authors declare that they have no conflict of interest.

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