



Context Evaluation of Undergraduate Economics Education Degree Programmes in Selected Nigerian Universities

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ABSTRACT

The study investigated undergraduates economics education degree programmes in selected Nigerian universities. The study employed the utilitarian (practical) evaluation research design. The population of the study consisted of 2,297 respondents (economics education students are 2,061, lecturers are 36, and the employers of Economics Education graduates are 200) were selected from the seven universities in the south – south geo-political zone of Nigeria. The samples consists of 492 subjects (324 students, 36 lecturers, and 132 senior staff of government establishments representing employers of economics education graduates) drawn from the seven universities and the establishments in the cities where they are located. The various strata of the population were subjected to fluid sample survey calculator. The samples were drawn through stratified random sampling technique. Two research questions and two hypotheses were formulated and tested to guide the study. The hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance. The study focused on variables such a context (objectives and curriculum contents). The instruments of data collection for this study were checklists. Two set of research instruments were used for collecting data for this study. Mean scores were computed and used to answer two research questions. Two hypotheses were used to determine the degree of significant difference existing between required and observed variables at 0.05 alpha (α) levels. One-way Analysis of Variance was adopted to analyze the data and test the two hypotheses. The results of the investigation revealed that the objectives were adequate and meet the required minimum academic standards for PHC, UYO, and DELSU. It was recommended that universities offering undergraduate economics education degree programmes should ensure that the objectives are adequately stated.

Keywords: Economics Education,

INTRODUCTION

Economics Education or Education Economics as it is alternatively being referred to is a branch of Economics which uses economic tools to solve educational problems. It involves the systematic application of economic terms, principles, theories and laws in the process of producing and distributing educational services so that the educational system can respond effectively and efficiently to the unlimited educational wants of man (Ajayi, 2005).

Gordon (2014) described undergraduate Economics Education as a standard approach to simplification and summarization. To him Economics is a complicated subject which must be boiled down for university students to grasp the fundamentals that can serve as the basis for more advanced study of the field's various complexities, controversies and nuances.

Economics Education has many areas of attention, though, there is yet to be a consensus among Scholars as to the extent to which it covers. It however focuses on the following areas: Concept of cost of education and the quantitative expression of it, determination of educational product or output and the efficiency of production technology, determination of benefits accruable to educational investment to the firm, household and government, as well as determination of areas of priorities in educational investment and its resource allocation problems, other areas of emphasis are technique of educational production that is most appropriate, distribution of educational places among youth, adult, and the aged (i.e, who will be in what school), problem of educational financing (funding) and method of funding. Economic Education, therefore, is concerned with the use of numerical expressions to measure resources, productivity, income and economic development (Agabi, 2002).

There is a growing concern by stakeholders (students of economics education, the teachers, employers of economics education graduates and curriculum experts) on actualizing the objectives of undergraduate economics education degree programmes of Nigerian Universities. This is attributed to the claims that the objectives of the programme are not properly stated (Agabi, 2002), and resources (both human and material such as trained teachers, facilities, etc) required for effective implementations of the programme are not well provided (Okoh, 2005). The methods of teaching economics education, by the teachers appear to be unattractive or unencouraging to learners, (Agabi, 2002). In such a situation, it appears as though undergraduate economics education degree programme could hardly meet the standards of the society, and employers of labour and the required minimum academic standards of the National Universities Commission. To this extent, there seems to be no proof that the programme is sufficiently implemented due to the previous claim. The absence of empirical proof gave rise to the on-going investigation (or evaluation) of the undergraduate economics education degree programmes of selected Nigerian Universities in order to bridge the vacuum created by investigations or studies in the area. With these in mind, it is very important to evaluate undergraduate economics education degree programmes in Selected Nigerian Universities, in order to endorse the level of success of the programme based on its objectives and the minimum academic standards set by the National Universities Commission (NUC).

The basic objectives or specific goals of economics education is to introduce students to the basic problems of economics, to enable them understand the economic problems when discussed in the media (i.e either in the newspapers, magazines or television) (Ehiamentalor, 1990). He pointed out that the objectives of economics education should reflect what the student is expected to achieve. These objectives are as follows:

1. Knowledge of the economic system of Nigeria should be understood by the student.
2. The student should see himself as a resource in the community ... either as raw material for the school system which forms the base of any economy or as resource for the production of goods and services needed by society to improve the standard of living of its people.
3. Economic knowledge should help students to reason and understand that ' a large portion of the social problems faced by men and nations has economic origin (Daughtrey, 1974).
4. Economic knowledge will provide an understanding of the interdependency of Nigeria and other countries of the world.

The undergraduate economics education degree programme is a social science programme. It is the study of how economic issues relate to education, including the demand for education, and the financing and provision of education. The objectives of economics education are synonymous with those attributes of NUC (MAS) for Bachelor degree programmes which state that;

- a) A bachelor's degree programme shall be considered to be a foundational educational programme and the programme shall:

- i) Provide a broad knowledge base within a discipline involving critical and analytical understanding of the major theories, principles and concepts in the discipline;
- ii) Provide the learner with a comprehensive range of cognitive and analytical skills and their application to various situations;
- iii) Entail demonstration of adequate problem solving skills; and
- iv) Enhance societal consciousness and contributions to the general development of the society (NUC, 2014).

Meaning of Evaluation

i. Meaning of Evaluation

The concept of evaluation can be likened to the story of the six blind men of Hindustan and the elephant. In other words, evaluation has a plethora of definitions, this is as a result of the attempts made by scholars of the discipline at various times to investigate some challenges in the area of evaluation and draw reasonable conclusions based on the results. For these reasons it is necessary to review the definitions of evaluation.

Okoro (2005:1) saw evaluation as the appraisal of the worth or value of a thing or action and the making of appropriate decision on the basis of such appraisal. This is the most reason why individuals choose between alternatives which is always based on the advantages a particular thing has over another. According to Alonge (2004: 6) evaluation may be defined as a systematic process of determining the extent to which instructional objectives are achieved by pupils. By this definition evaluation includes both quantitative and qualitative descriptions of pupil's behaviour plus value judgement concerning the desirability of that behaviour. Wilde & Sockey (1995) define evaluation as the process of systematically aggregating and synthesizing various types and forms of data for the purpose of showing the value of a particular program. This definition portrays evaluation as a summary of data.

Evaluation Models

An educational programme is made up of such components as content, facilities and methodology for delivery. It aims at enabling the citizens, recipients or clients to acquire attitudes, knowledge and skills for harnessing human and material resources so as to improve their living standard and that of their environment. It therefore implies that an evaluation of such programme must take cognizance of these varied components. It is in the light of this that different evaluation models have been propounded by evaluation experts (Asuru, 2008:94). These are the goal-free evaluation model, countenance model, discrepancy model, and the CIPP model. For the evaluation of undergraduate economics education degree programmes in selected Nigerian Universities, various parts of the programme must be discussed and made subject matter of the evaluation as discussed below:

Goal-Free Evaluation Methods

Goal-Free Evaluation (GFE) is the evaluation of interim and ultimate outcomes, regardless of whether they were intended. Scriven (1978) states that goal-free evaluation involves conducting an evaluation of outcomes without the evaluator being exposed to, or contaminated by, awareness of the purposes or goals. Interest in studying side effects in evaluation did not originate with Scriven's proposal of GFE. He and other specialists in evaluation had noted earlier a need to attend to side effects (Scriven, 1957; Glass, 1969) or unintended outcomes

(Cronbach, 1963; Stake, 1967) as well as to the objectives of educational programs. It was Scriven, however, who coined the term goal-free evaluation and articulated and popularized the concept.

Scriven did not propose that GFE be the only strategy used to evaluate a programme's worth; other evaluative data (including objectives-referenced data) should also be used. His point was that goal-free information would be less subject than goal-based information to contamination by the evaluator's prior knowledge of programme goals, and that it should supplement rather than replace other goal-based evaluation methods.

Scriven's approach to GFE forces the evaluator into serious needs assessment. The evaluator does not look to see if the performance matches the project director's goals. Instead, criteria against which the project is compared reflect the needs of the target population.

Thus GFE begins when the evaluator and client first meet. Assuming interest, the first consideration is the feasibility of using GFE. The evaluator should avoid any questions that would lead the client to disclose the goals or objectives of the project. Instead, the evaluator must determine the context and scope of the project being evaluated by asking questions like these:

1. Where is the project being implemented? If the project is being implemented in inaccessible sites or over a wide geographical area, then the goal-free approach may not be feasible.
2. How long has the project been running? How long will it run? If the project has been running a long time, or is almost over, the goal-free approach may not be appropriate.
3. What is the total number of participants in the project? The number of participants gives the evaluator some indication of the relative size of the project and corresponding budget and personnel requirements.
4. What are the evaluation's cost constraints? Determining cost constraints early is essential in assessing feasibility. For instance, the GFE may require site visitations that prove prohibitively costly given available resources.
5. Can written permission and site-access be obtained? If not, the goal-free approach may not be feasible.
6. What other evaluation work is planned? In most cases, the GFE approach should be used in conjunction with other evaluation strategies.

Goal free evaluation model is discovered to be a useful model to evaluate the undergraduate economics education degree programme but it was not used for this study.

Countenance Evaluation Model

Stake (1967) postulated another evaluation model known as countenance Model, which emphasized that, the role of an evaluator should be to provide description and judgment data of educational programmes based on formal inquiry techniques. To provide description is to delineate the variables in a phenomenon and to describe all the activities under each variable, while to provide judgment is to provide data on which judgment is to be based. To Stake, it is not the responsibility of an evaluator to pass judgment on a programme; rather his job is to provide data, which will help a decision maker to pass judgment. This purpose statement forms the pivot around which his model is built.

Stake presented three (3) classes of data collection in his model. They are antecedents, transactions and Outcomes. He stressed that there must be logical contingencies among the intended antecedents, transactions and outcomes as well as empirical contingencies among the observed data. Antecedents are simply the conditions that have existed prior to the implementation of the programme or instruction, which may relate to outcomes. They are also data that were brought together to create a programme (input materials). Transactions are simply all that transpired in the programme. Stake viewed them as the "succession of engagements" that constitutes the process of instruction. Outcomes as conceived by Stake encompass the traditional student's learning outcomes. They include immediate, long-range, cognitive, affective, person and societal outcomes (Rose and Nyre, 1977), the impact, which programme have on the learners, teachers, administrators and others as well as wear and tear on equipment and facilities in its conduct. Stake classified descriptive information according to whether they are referred to what was intended or what was actually observed. He emphasized that intentions and what actually took place must be fully described. Stake therefore divided judgmental information according to whether they refer to standards used in reaching judgments or to the actual judgments themselves. He assumes the existence of some kind of rationale guiding the design of an educational programme (Popham, 1975).

In effect, there must be congruence between the intents and the observed data between the relative and absolute criteria (Dike, 1998). Ensuring consistency and congruence means that the variables must not contradict one another.

In his later work on responsive evaluation, Stake (1967) added that rather than personally passing judgement, the evaluator should collect samples of the judgments of many people in the programme – the clients, staff, community and others. His emphasis on the evaluators needed to be fully aware of the concerns and sensitivity of many people affected by the programme became the central theme in several “process-only” evaluation approaches.

From the foregoing therefore, this researcher observed that two (2) bases for judging the characteristics of a programme exist in Countenance Model of Stake. These are the evaluation of a programme either on the basis of absolute standards or relative standards. This implies either standards reflecting personal opinion concerning what the programme should be or standards reflecting other similar programmes. That being so, judgment is involved in making a choice of which set of standards to use, whether absolute or relative, to obtain an overall rating of merit upon which to base recommendations regarding the future of the programme. Countenance evaluation Model was found to be relevant and applicable to this study but it was not adopted for the study.

Discrepancy Evaluation Model

Provus (1969) proposed another systematic approach to evaluation known as the Discrepancy Model. His major emphasis was to identify any discrepancy that may exist between posited programme standards and programme performance. Malcolm Provus did not lay emphasis on rendering judgment during programme evaluation rather he based his argument on the fact that evaluation involves the comparison of performance with standards. According to him, programme evaluation entails the process of:

1. Defining programme standards;
2. Determining whether a discrepancy exists between some aspects of programme performance and the standards governing the aspect of the programme; and
3. Using discrepancy information either to change performance or to change programme standards.

The discrepancy model is consisting of five stages of programme comparison namely; design, installation, process and product of the programme. Each of the stages involves a comparison between reality and performance. Based on this premise, standards and discrepancies are determined by examining the three content categories of input, process and output at each stage and comparing the programme performance information with these defined standards at each stage.

The first stage of Discrepancy Model, which is known as the design of the programme deals with the documentation of the nature of the programme taking into consideration the objectives of the programme, the students, staff and other resources that must be present before the programme objectives can be achieved and the instructional activities presumed to promote attainment of the objectives. The second stage is the installation of the programme, which involves an effort to examine whether an implemented programme is congruent with its installation plans. Process is the third stage of discrepancy Model in which the evaluator serves in a formative role, comparing performance with standards and focusing on the extent to which the interim or enabling objectives have been achieved. The fourth stage, which is the product stage, is concerned with comparing actual attainments against the standards (objectives) derived during the first stage and noting the discrepancies. The fifth and the final stage are concerned with the question of cost. At this stage, a cost-benefit is made of the programme and compared with other similar programmes in nature.

Since the primary function and orientation of the discrepancy Model is to provide information for decision makers, Popham (1975) classified it as a decision-facilitation model. However, he acknowledged that there is an overlap between the categories and the discrepancy Model, which is subject to the same criticisms leveled against the goal-attainment models of evaluation. Discrepancy Evaluation Model is discovered to be a useful model to evaluate the undergraduate economics education degree programme but it was not used for this study.

CIPP Evaluation Model

CIPP is one of the best-known decision-management-oriented evaluation schemes, Daniel Stufflebeam originated in 1971. Stufflebeam (1971) pointed out that since evaluation is performed in the service of decision-making, its emphasis should be on the provision of useful information to those who make decisions. In this Model, more emphasis is placed on data collection and storage of information to aid decision makers with less emphasis placed on judgement. His model is made up of three steps, namely delineating, obtaining and providing information. In all Stufflebeam believed that delineating and providing operations are carried out collaboratively between evaluator and decision-maker, whereas the obtaining of information is a technical activity carried out mainly by the evaluator Dike (2016). CIPP is an acronym representing the four (4) types of evaluation, which this model identifies, namely: context evaluation, input evaluation, process evaluation and product evaluation. Context evaluation is mainly for decision planning while input evaluation is for decision structuring. Process evaluation and product evaluation are mainly for decision implementation and decision recycling respectively.

Context evaluation provides rationale for determining programmes' objectives by defining relevant environment which the programmes operate, describing what should transpire or exist within the setting, identify needs, unmet needs and unused opportunities and finding out or diagnosing cause for unmet needs and used opportunities Dike (2016). At this point of evaluation, an evaluator relies on conceptual analysis, empirical studies as well as authoritative opinions and theory of experts in order to delineate the problem areas to be solved. For the input evaluation, its aim is to determine resources and how to utilize the available resources in order to achieve the programme's objectives by identifying appropriate agent, strategies for achieving objectives and assessing designs for implementing selected strategies.

Data from context evaluation helps to determine if programmes meet the laid down objectives while data from input evaluation assist to identify strategies for desired changes in the programme. At this juncture, this researcher observed that in order to evaluate undergraduate economics education degree programme of some Nigerian universities, there is the need for any of the examined evaluation models to be used. This is because of their relevance and easy application. However, CIPP Evaluation Model was used to carry out the evaluation study of the undergraduate economics education degree programmes of the universities investigated.

Stufflebeam's CIPP model is the most preferred in this evaluation study because it serves as a "decision facilitation or decision-management-oriented" model which this study is more concerned about. According to Dike (2016:245) this model places more emphasis on data collection and storage to aid decision makers.

Stufflebeam (1971) sees "decision" as the "act of making up one's mind". Thus, in order to make up one's mind, an evaluator has to use systematic techniques to obtain data on alternatives. Dike (2016) described Stufflebeam's attempt to bring in an element of decision setting within which decisions occur" in his model as a change. He identified and discussed the type of change needed for this decision alternative as the homeostatic change. The homeostatic change is one whose objective is to maintain an equilibrium in a system. It is restorative in nature and the commonest of all the changes in education. Homeostatic decisions are intended to correct a programme and change it back to its normal balance. In this decision setting, the amount of change required is small but to be accompanied by high level of information grasp. This is typical of a programme evaluation in education.

Stufflebeam (1971) in Dike (2016) conceptualized four types of decisions under the homeostatic decision settings thus:

1. Decision about intended goals (ends)
2. Decisions about actual ends (attainments)
3. Decisions about intended means (procedural designs).
4. Decisions about actual means (procedures in use).

The idea that gave birth to these four types of decision is whether the decision is for determining "means or ends" or whether it is for determining "intended or actualities". What Dike (2016:252) realized is that

whatever is the decision setting, decisions must always be made about “ means” and “ends” and about “ intended” and “actualities” in a programme. It is based on this realization, that Dike proposed his four decision types (as stated below).

These four decision types have been conferred with technical labels by Stufflebeam (1971) in Dike (2016) thus:

1. Decisions about intended ends is the same as planning decisions-to determine objectives in education.
2. Decisions about actual ends is the same as recycling decisions to judge and react to attainments.
3. Decisions about intended means is the same as structural decisions, to design procedures in education.
4. Decisions about actual means is the same as implementing decisions to utilize, control and refine procedures in education.

Statement of the Problem

Economics is a very important discipline or endeavour as it deals with how basic resources are transformed by producers into all the many commodities that modern consumers wants. It is a branch of the social sciences offered as a conventional programme in most Nigerian Universities. Some universities with the oldest department of economics are; University of Ibadan, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, University of Nigeria, Nsukka, University of Lagos, and Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile Ife. These economics departments were established by the government to play a prominent role in producing generations of Nigerian economists. But it all end there, as the Nigerian economists and the economics departments in the various universities remain a shadow of its expectation; these departments are known for producing critical thinkers and famous scholars who at one time or the other have contributed to formulating government policies.

In Nigeria today, there are so many departments of economics in the new generation universities (both private and public). The high expectation of the government and the society is that economics is supposed to rescue the society from recession. This gives rise to the question-what is the impact of the undergraduate economics programme in Nigerian universities on the society?

Is the fall in the status of the economics departments in Nigerian universities as a result of the absence of quality teachers?

Is the problem because the curriculum of undergraduate economics programme not relevant?

Is the curriculum content of the programme not anticipatory?

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to evaluate NUC- approved undergraduate economics education degree programmes in selected Nigerian universities. Specifically, the study attempted to achieve the following:

1. Ascertain if the objectives of the undergraduate economics education degree programmes of Nigerian Universities meet the quality required by the employers of graduates of economics education and the required minimum academic standards the National Universities Commission.

Research Questions

This study was guided by the following research questions:

1. How do the objectives designed to implement undergraduate economics education degree programme in Nigerian Universities meet the standard required by the National Universities Commission?

Hypotheses

The study was guided by seven null hypotheses which was tested at 0.05 significant level:

1. There is no significant difference in the stated objectives of undergraduate economics education degree programmes in Nigerian universities asperceived by the employers of graduates of economics education.

Scope of the Study

This study was carried out in South-South geo-political zone of Nigeria. The geographical scope of this study covered the University of Port Harcourt, Port Harcourt in Rivers State, Ignatius Ajuru University of Education, in Rivers State, University of Calabar, Cross River State, University of Uyo, Uyo in Akwa-Ibom State, Delta State University, Abraka in Delta State and University of Benin, Benin in Edo State.

The study covered the following areas: context, input, process and product evaluation of undergraduate economics education degree programme. Context evaluation Seeks for information concerning quality of students at the point of entry into the programme alongside the admission requirements, quantity and qualifications of teaching staff, the available facilities, methods of teaching, the undergraduate economics education degree programme. Process evaluation seeks for data about skill (or ability) of economics education lecturers in using resources (or input) factors, such as method of teaching, materials for the teaching and method of implementing curriculum content of the undergraduate economics education degree programmes. Product evaluation collects data on quality of skill and performance of economics education graduates.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The study adopted utilitarian evaluation research design, Kpolovie (2010:176-179) defines utilitarian evaluation research design as a research methodology that satisfies both scientific and ethical requirements for arriving at and passing value judgments on the way that a programme is planned and executed or implemented for actualization of related societal needs.

Utilitarian evaluation research design investigates the effectiveness, efficiency and accountability of an educational programme as planned and executed for the overall good of the society. It allows for the understanding of the aims and interest of the evaluators, operators of the programme, subjects of the study and the members of the society from their different perspectives or standpoint.

Thus, with utilitarian evaluation design, the interest of even disadvantaged or powerless groups are represented and accorded priority as an ethical matter that the programme should serve or address.

Population for the Study

The population for this study consists of thirty six lecturers of economics education including their heads of departments, and two thousand, two hundred and ninety seven (2,297) undergraduates of economics education degree programmes of the universities investigated. The breakdown of the population- that is, universities with their lecturers and students, are presented in table 3 below.

Table 1: Population for the Study

UNIVERSITIES	LECTURERS	RESPONDENTS 400 LEVEL STUDENTS	CITIES	EMPLOYERS OF ECONOMICS EDUCATION GRADUATES	TOTAL
PHC	2	230			
IAUOE	2	172	PH	36	442
DELSU	11	256	ABRAKA	34	301
CALABAR	4	247	CALABAR	32	283
BENIN	8	221	BENIN	33	262
UYO	5	510	UYO	32	547
NDU	4	425	AMASOMA	33	462
Total	36	2,061		200	2,297

The population of this study also consists of 200 senior staff such as principals, vice principals, heads of departments from secondary schools, senior civil servants from ministries and agencies (Post Primary and UBE Board) located in Port Harcourt, Calabar, Uyo, Benin, Abraka, and Amasoma where the government establishments that employ economics education graduates in the south-south geo-political zone of Nigeria are located. These public establishments are the employers of economics education graduates.

Sample and Sampling Techniques

The samples of the study are divided into three groups. The first group consists of seven heads of departments of economics education and 29 lecturers from university of Port Harcourt (PHC), Ignatius Ajuru University of Education (IAUOE), Port Harcourt, University of Calabar (CALABAR), University of Uyo, Uyo. University of Benin (BENIN), Delta State University (DELSU), Abraka, and Niger Delta University (NDU), Amasoma.

The 29 economics education lecturers were chosen as follows-two from PHC, two from IAUOE, four from Calabar, five from Uyo, eight from BENIN, eleven from DELSU, and four from NDU). The second group of subjects consists of 324 economics education students chosen as follows –36 from PHC, 27 from IAUOE, 39 from CALABAR , 80 from UYO, 35 from BENIN, 40 from DELSU, and 67 from NDU. The third group of samples consists of 132 senior staff drawn from government - owned secondary schools, senior civil servants from ministries and agencies (Post Primary and UBE Boards) located in Port Harcourt, Calabar, Uyo, Benin, Abraka, and Amasoma.

Table 2: Respondents (or samples) from federal and state universities in the South- South region of Nigeria

UNIVERSITY	LECTURERS	SAMPLES OF 400 LEVEL STUDENTS	CITIES	EMPLOYERS OF ECONOMICS EDUCATION GRADUATES	TOTAL
PHC	2	36	PH		
IAUOE	2	27	PH	24	91
DELSU	11	40	Abraka	22	73
CALABAR	4	39	Calabar	21	64
BENIN	8	35	Benin	22	65
UYO	5	80	Uyo	21	106
NDU	4	67	Amasoma	22	93
Total	36	324		132	492

Because of the unpopular nature of economics education curriculum which has also reduced the size of lecturers and heads of departments that formed the first set of the subjects, the whole population of lecturers and heads of departments were used as the sample in one part of the study. The sample for the second set of subjects consists of 324 students from the population across the seven universities which make up the undergraduate students of economics education degree programme.

The heads of departments and lecturers of economic education degree programmes used in this study helped to give accurate data as they carry out the implementation of the academic programme.

At this juncture, they were able to attest to the components of the context, aspect of undergraduate economics education degree programme if it meets the minimum academic standards stipulated by the National Universities commission (NUC) or not. The undergraduates of economics education degree programmes were used as respondents since they are benefiting from the programme. The students involve were able to express their opinion as to whether the programme meets their aspirations, if the input needed for effective implementation of the programme are adequate or not and whether instructional procedures are adequate or not. The population of senior staff of government establishments used for this

study was subjected to the Fluid Sample Survey Calculator. They were chosen randomly from Port Harcourt, Calabar, Uyo, Benin, Abraka and Amasoma, which are the locations for these government establishments and the senior staff were used as respondents.

The samples that were used for this investigation consist of 492 respondents. Stratified random sampling technique was used to select the sample of respondents (492). This method is used because every member of the population belongs to a group. The stratified and purposive sampling technique requires that the entire population be divided into blocks of three (3), then the selection or sampling is carried out in each block or group using fluid sample size formula.

Development of Research Instruments

Two major techniques were used for collecting data for this study. They are observation and inquiry techniques. For the observation technique, five sets of checklist and four sets of rating scales were used for this study. They are Context Evaluation of Economics Education Checklist (CEEEEC) (Appendix 1).

The CEEEC is Checklists modified from the Programme Evaluation form developed by the National Universities Commission (NUC, 2015) and adapted by the researcher for this study. The National Universities Commission (NUC) uses the programme Evaluation form as a checklist in gathering data for the purpose of accrediting academic programmes of Nigerian Universities.

Context Evaluation of Economics Education Checklist (CEEEEC): the CEEEC is a 13-item of four-point numerical scale divided into four parts of a-d with response options of 4,3,2, and 1. Items of this research instrument are structured such that the researcher and the respondents were able to use them to observe the context components (objectives, curriculum contents, and the quality of students at the point of entry in terms of admission requirements into undergraduate economics education degree programmes of the universities investigated.

The researcher used the instrument to record information as observed on the facilities and equipments used for the implementation of undergraduate economics education degree programmes of the universities investigated.

Reliability of the Instruments

To establish the reliability of CEEEC, test retest method was used. The instruments was tested through test re-test method, using 10 economics education lecturers (5 from University of Port Harcourt Rivers State and 5 from Ignatius Ajuru University of Education, Rivers State) and 40 economics education students (20 from University of Port Harcourt and 20 from Ignatius Ajuru University of Education, Port Harcourt).

The internal consistency of CEEEC was determined using the Cronbrach Alpha method with the formula:

$$\alpha = \frac{n}{n-1} \left(\frac{\alpha t^2 - \sum vi}{\alpha t^2} \right) = \text{which yielded } 0.87. \text{ The CEEEC was tested through test re-test method, using}$$

10 senior staff of government-owned secondary schools, ministries and agencies that employ economics education graduates in Port Harcourt, Uyo, Benin, Calabar, Abraka, Amasoma. The internal consistency of CEEEC was determined using Cronbach Alpha which yielded 0.85 which mean that the instrument is reliable. The reliability of the instrument was calculated using Pearson product moment correlation (PPMC).

Method of Data Analysis

Descriptive statistics was used to answer the seven research questions. These research questions were analyzed item-by-item with the use of Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS), to show the categories of respondents. Hypotheses one to seven were tested at 0.05level of significance with the use of One-way analysis of variance (ANOVA).ANOVA as it is commonly called compares the influence of the independent Variables (IV) on the dependent variable(s) (DV) at the same time. It measures the variance among variables in different groups and the variance within groups (individual differences). ANOVA can be used for analysis when the variables involve have at least two factors or levels.

RESULTS

Research Questions 1

How do the objectives designed to implement the undergraduate economics education degree programmes in Nigerian Universities meet the required minimum academic standards the National Universities Commission?

To provide solution to this research question, items 1 – 13 on the Context Evaluation of Economics Education Checklist (CEECE) (Appendix 1) provide the data required. The responses are analyzed and the result is presented in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1 The Senior Staff Responses on the extent to which they perceive the objectives of undergraduate economist education programmes

Variable	No. of items	Reponses	Mean (\bar{x})	Standard deviation	Remarks
Govt. Sec. Schl	33	128	3.87	0.35	Adequate
Schools' Board	30	127	4.23	0.40	Adequate
Govt. Min.	32	126	3.94	0.39	Adequate
Govt. Parastatals	37	126	3.41	0.32	Adequate
Total	132	507	3.86	0.37	Adequate

Table 3.1 shows that the mean and standard deviation scores of respondents' responses from Government Secondary School, Schools' boards, government ministries, and parastatals about the extent to which they see the objectives of undergraduate economic education programmes of PHC, UYO, DELSU, CALABAR, BENIN, IAUOE, and NDU are 3.87(0.35), 4.23 (0.40) 3.94 (0.39) and 3.41 (0.32) respectively.

This indicates that the mean scores are greater than the average point of 2.5. To this end therefore, the objectives of undergraduate economics education degree programmes of PHC, UYO, DELSU, CALABAR, BENIN, IAUOE and NDU are adequate and meet the expectation of the employers of first-degree graduates of economics education programmes.

To further provide solution to this research question, items 1 – 13 on the Context Evaluation of Evaluation of Economics Education Checklist (CEECE) (Appendix 1) provide the data required. The researcher's observation rating scores are analyzed and the result is presented in Table 3.1

Table 3.2 Mean and Standard Deviation Computation of Researcher’s Observation Rating of the Undergraduate Economics Education Programme’s objectives and the NUC Minimum Academic Standards.

Universities	No	Rating Score	Mean \bar{X}	Standard deviation	Remarks
PHC	13	49.79	3.83	0.37	Adequate
UYO	13	50.18	3.86	0.35	Adequate
DELSU	13	50.18	3.86	0.35	Adequate
CALABAR	13	30.29	2.33	0.47	Inadequate
BENIN	13	30.68	2.36	0.48	Inadequate
IAUOE	13	30.29	2.33	0.47	Inadequate
NDU	13	30.68	2.36	0.48	Inadequate
Total	91	272.09	2.99	0.42	Adequate

Table 3.2 shows that the mean and standard deviation of the researcher’s observation rating of how he compared the objectives of undergraduate economics education degree programmes of PHC, UYO, DELSU, CALABAR, BENIN, IAUOE, and NDU with the NUC’s minimum academic standards are 3.83(0.37), 3.86 (0.35), 3.86 (0.35), 2.33(0.47), 2.36(0.48), 2.33 (0.47), and 2.36 (0.48) respectively. This implies that the mean scores are greater than the average point of 2.5 for PHC, UYO, and DELSU. That being so therefore, the objectives of undergraduate economics education degree programmes of these universities are adequate and meet the required minimum academic standards of the National Universities Commission.

Hypothesis 1

There is no significant difference in the stated objectives of undergraduate economics education degree programmes in Nigerian Universities as perceived by the employers of first-degree graduates of economics education programmes.

In order to test this hypothesis, items 1-13 on the Context Evaluation of Economics Education Checklist (CEEEEC) (Appendix 1) provide the data required. The responses are analyzed and the result is presented in table 4.1.

Table 4.1: F-ratio Computation Summary of One-way analysis of Variance of the required and observed objectives of undergraduate Economics Education degree programmes of Nigerian Universities.

Source of Variation	Sum of square	Df	Mean square(\bar{X})	F-ratio	Sig.
Government-owned secondary schools					
Between Group	0.083	3	0.028	0.220	0.883
Within Group	16.182	128	0.126		
Total	16.262	131			
Schools’ Board					
Between Group	0.061	3	0.020	0.153	0.928
Within Group	16.909	128	0.130		
Total	16.970	131			
Government ministries					
Between Group	0.023	3	0.008	0.051	0.985
Within Group	18.970	128	0.148		
Total	18.990	131			
Parastatals					
Between Group	0.030	3	0.010		
Within Group	18.303	128	0.143	0.071	0.976
Total	18.333	131			

N = 132 P > 0.05 df = (3,128)

The sum of square and mean square of responses of the senior staff representing the Government Secondary schools, Schools' Boards, Government Ministries and Government parastatals that employ economics education graduates, on the required and stated objectives of undergraduate economics education degree programmes of the seven universities investigated in this study are presented in Table 4.1. With $N = 132$, based on a degree of freedom of 3 and 128 for the employers of first-degree graduates of economics education at 5% level of significance, the calculated F-ratio were 0.220, 0.153, 0.051, and 0.071 respectively across Government Secondary Schools, Schools boards, Government ministries and Government parastatals. At this juncture, therefore, the calculated F-ratio is not statistically significant at $\alpha=0.05$ level of significance since P is greater than 0.05 (i.e. $P>0.05$). The hypothesis (H_{01}) is thus accepted in favour of the required and stated objectives of undergraduate economics education degree programmes and the conclusion is that no significant difference exists in the stated objectives of undergraduate economics education degree programmes of these universities. It does not make a difference in respect of the stated objectives of undergraduate economics education degree programmes in the universities investigated.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

a) Objectives of the undergraduates economics education degree Programmes

The responses to research question 1 and hypothesis 1 (shown in tables 3.2 and 4.1) indicated that the objectives of undergraduate economics education degree programmes of PHC, UYO, DELSU, CALABAR, BENIN, IAUOE, and NDU investigated are well stated and meet the required minimum academic standards of the National Universities Commission to a large extent. Table 3.2 revealed that PHC, UYO, and DELSU have well stated objectives which is shown by the mean score of 2.99 among the seven universities investigated in this study. This finding (Table 3.2) reveals that the objectives of economics education programmes of these universities are adequate and meet the required minimum academic standards of the National Universities Commission. Table 3.2 also indicated that CALABAR, BENIN, IAUOE, and NDU have their objectives stated as it is in economics (in the faculty of social sciences).

The statement of objectives of every university for the undergraduate economics education degree programme affects the skills acquired by the graduates of the programme and even their performance in the labour market. It also affects the nature of the course and knowledge delivered to the students in course of the programme. Despite these problems observed with the objectives of the programme, it is adequate and meets the required minimum standards of the National Universities Commission (NUC). Thus, the null hypothesis that there is no significant different in the stated objectives of undergraduate economics education degree programmes in Nigerian universities as specified by the NUC was accepted (Table 4.1). The calculated F-ratio for the seven universities were Government establishments were not statistically significant at 0.05 level of significance since P is greater than 0.05 (i.e. $P>0.05$).

This finding is in agreement with NUC (2014) and Ubulom (2006) which observed that the statement of objectives for the economics education degree programme in implementing undergraduate economics education degree programmes in Nigerian universities is adequate and no deficiency was recorded against the philosophy and objectives aspect of the undergraduate economics education programmes.

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of the study, the researcher concluded that many deficiencies exist in the undergraduate economics education degree programmes in the universities located in the south-south geopolitical zone of Nigeria. The deficiencies are common in the areas of inadequate/qualified teaching staff of economics education, inadequate, non-functional and unavailable facilities and equipment, and inadequate curriculum contents of undergraduate economics education degree programmes. These deficiencies were discovered in the course of evaluating the undergraduate economics education degree

programmes of these universities, it is glaring that most of the undergraduate economics education degree programmes offered by the universities in the South-South geo-political zone of Nigeria are not accredited or are partially accredited.

The researcher observed that despite the deficiencies that are common to the undergraduate economics education degree programmes, the first-degree graduates were able to acquire adequate skills. This is an indication that the stated objectives of the undergraduate economics education degree programmes of the universities investigated have been adequately achieved.

From the findings of this study, the researcher noted that apart from PHC, UYO and DELSU other universities offering the undergraduate economics education degree programmes do not have the required facilities and adequate teaching staff for the implementation of this programme. For this reason they depend on the economics department in the faculty of social sciences for successful implementation of the undergraduate economics education degree programmes.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations were made:

1. Universities offering undergraduate economics education degree programmes should ensure that the objectives are adequately stated. This will assist the programmes implementers to work efficiently towards achieving the objectives by producing graduates who will be able to acquire the necessary attitudes, knowledge, skills and competencies in economics education.
2. Universities offering undergraduate economics education degree programmes should engage the services of experts in educational evaluation to constantly evaluate and ensure that all components of the programmes are updated regularly to meet the required minimum academic standards of the National Universities Commission.

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