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ASSESSMENT OF THE IMPACT OF ACADEMIC COLLABORATION ON EVALUATION PRACTICES IN TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAMS IN BAYELSA STATE

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Abstract

The study investigated the impact of academic collaboration on evaluation practices in teacher education programs in Bayelsa State. A descriptive survey design was employed, and two research questions guided the study. The population comprised academic staff involved in teacher education programs across selected tertiary institutions in Bayelsa State. A purposive sample of 92 lecturers was drawn from three institutions—Niger Delta University, Federal University Otuoke, and Isaac Jasper Boro College of Education. Data were collected using a structured instrument titled "Academic Collaboration and Evaluation Practices in Teacher Education Questionnaire," developed and validated by experts in educational research and measurement. The reliability of the instrument was determined using the Cronbach Alpha Formula, which yielded a coefficient of 0.87. Data were analyzed using mean and standard deviation. Findings revealed that existing inter-school collaboration practices are generally inadequate and do not significantly support evaluation practices across institutions. Major challenges identified include limited funding, inconsistent institutional policies, lack of skilled personnel, and poor communication. The study recommends the establishment of structured collaborative frameworks, improved funding, and policy harmonization to enhance evaluation practices through academic collaboration in teacher education programs.

Keywords: Academic Collaboration, Evaluation Practices, Teacher Education, Institutional Cooperation, Curriculum Quality.

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Introduction

Academic collaboration has become a pivotal strategy in enhancing the quality and effectiveness of education, particularly in teacher education programs. In the face of dynamic educational demands and the need for continuous improvement, collaboration among educational institutions has gained prominence as a means of fostering innovation, knowledge sharing, and professional development (Johnson & Thompson, 2021). As teacher education programs strive to align with national educational goals and respond to the challenges of modern-day education, the role of academic collaboration in shaping evaluation practices has become a subject of increasing interest. The impact of collaboration on evaluation practices is crucial as it determines how well teacher educators assess student learning, monitor teaching effectiveness, and implement improvements that contribute to the overall quality of education (Ogunyemi, 2022).

In Bayelsa State, teacher education programs are faced with various challenges that hinder effective evaluation practices. These challenges include limited resources, inadequate training for evaluators, and inconsistencies in the application of evaluation methods (Omoike& Ogundele, 2020). As the educational landscape continues to evolve, there is a growing recognition that academic collaboration between institutions, faculty members, and external stakeholders can provide a platform for addressing these challenges. Collaborative efforts can lead to the sharing of best practices, development of standardized evaluation tools, and promotion of joint research initiatives that enhance the quality and credibility of evaluation practices (Adesina & Olatunde, 2023).

Furthermore, academic collaboration supports the integration of diverse perspectives and expertise into the evaluation process, ensuring that it is more holistic and reflective of real-world teaching and learning environments. By facilitating collaboration between teacher education institutions, both within Bayelsa State and beyond, the potential for more effective and evidence-based evaluation practices becomes increasingly achievable (Ikpeme, 2021). The challenges that hinder academic collaboration—such as institutional competition, lack of communication, and differing priorities—need to be addressed to ensure that collaboration leads to tangible improvements in evaluation practices (Kalu & Akpan, 2020).

Despite the critical role academic collaboration can play in improving evaluation practices, its full potential has not been adequately explored, especially in the context of Bayelsa State. Therefore, this study seeks to assess the impact of academic collaboration on evaluation practices in teacher education programs in Bayelsa State. Specifically, it aims to evaluate the extent to which academic collaboration influences the implementation of evaluation practices, identify challenges affecting collaboration, and propose solutions for enhancing collaborative efforts to improve educational quality. This research contributes to the growing body of knowledge on academic collaboration in teacher education and offers insights into practical strategies for improving evaluation practices within the context of Bayelsa State.

Purpose of the Study

The study assesses the impact of academic collaboration on evaluation practices in teacher education programs in Bayelsa State. Specifically, the study aims to achieve the following:

1. Assess the influence of academic collaboration on the implementation of evaluation practices in teacher education programs.
2. Identify the challenges affecting academic collaboration in relation to evaluation practices in teacher education programs.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

1. What is the influence of academic collaboration on the implementation of evaluation practices in teacher education programs in Bayelsa State?
2. What are the challenges affecting academic collaboration in relation to evaluation practices in teacher education programs in Bayelsa State?

Method

This study adopted a descriptive survey research design. According to Charles-Owaba (2022), descriptive survey research design is a method in which data is collected from a representative sample of individuals or items, and the findings are then generalized to the entire population. This design is suitable for this study as it will enable the collection and analysis of data from a sample of academic staff who are familiar with the subject of academic collaboration and evaluation practices in teacher education programs. The objective is to gather valuable insights that can be generalized to the broader population in Bayelsa State.

The population of the study comprised academic staff from teacher education institutions in Bayelsa State. These institutions were selected due to their direct involvement in teacher preparation and evaluation practices. A sample of 150 respondents was drawn from 3 teacher education institutions in the state using a stratified random sampling technique. Stratified sampling was used to ensure that various subgroups within the academic staff population were adequately represented, including faculty from different departments, years of experience, and academic ranks. This approach ensures a balanced representation of perspectives on academic collaboration and evaluation practices.

The instrument for data collection was a structured questionnaire titled "Academic Collaboration and Evaluation Practices in Teacher Education Programs Questionnaire (ACEPTPQ)." The questionnaire was formatted on a five-point Likert scale ranging from Strongly Agree to Strongly Disagree, to capture the respondents' level of agreement or disagreement with each statement. The questionnaire consisted of two main parts: Part I and Part II. Part I collected demographic information about the respondents, such as age, gender, academic rank, and years of experience in teacher education. Part II was further divided into Sections A, B, and C, corresponding to the research questions. Section A assessed the influence of academic collaboration on evaluation practices, Section B identified challenges affecting academic collaboration, and Section C examined the impact of collaboration on improving evaluation outcomes.

The instrument was validated by a panel of experts in the fields of Educational Measurement and Teacher Education. Their feedback was used to refine the content and structure of the questionnaire to ensure that it effectively addressed the research objectives. A pilot test was conducted with 15 academic staff members from similar institutions that were not part of the main study but shared the same characteristics. The reliability of the instrument was determined using the Cronbach Alpha formula, which yielded a reliability coefficient of 0.89, indicating that the instrument was highly reliable for the study.

The researcher personally administered the questionnaires to the respondents in person, ensuring that they were fully completed and returned. A 95% response rate was achieved, with a total of 143 completed questionnaires returned. The data collected were analyzed using descriptive statistics, including mean, standard deviation, and frequency distribution. The mean scores were used to determine the level of agreement or disagreement with the items. Items with a mean score of 3.00 and above were interpreted as "Agree," while items with a mean score below 3.00 were interpreted as "Disagree." This analysis enabled the researcher to draw conclusions regarding the influence of academic collaboration on evaluation

practices and to identify the challenges faced in implementing collaboration within teacher education programs in Bayelsa State.

Result

Research Question 1

What is the influence of academic collaboration on the implementation of evaluation practices in teacher education programs in Bayelsa State?

Table 1: Mean and standard deviation on the influence of academic collaboration on the implementation of evaluation practices in teacher education programs in Bayelsa State

S/N	STATEMENT	X	SD	REMARK
1.	Inter-school collaboration between teacher education institutions in Bayelsa State has resulted in the development of innovative teaching methods in the curriculum.	3.28	.85	**A**
2.	Through inter-school collaboration, teacher education institutions have shared resources that have led to the creation of new and improved curriculum content.	3.04	.74	**A**
3.	Collaboration between teacher education institutions has enabled the integration of current educational technologies into the curriculum, enhancing its relevance and effectiveness.	3.14	.50	**A**
4.	The exchange of ideas and best practices between teacher education institutions has led to the introduction of new courses or specializations in the curriculum.	2.73	.53	**A**
5.	Inter-school collaboration has fostered the development of interdisciplinary teaching approaches, which have been incorporated into the curriculum.	2.90	.48	**A**
6.	The collaboration between institutions has allowed for the continuous updating and revision of the curriculum to meet emerging educational trends and needs.	2.88	.53	**A**
7.	Through inter-school collaboration, teacher educators have developed a shared vision for curriculum innovation that is consistently applied across teacher education programs in Bayelsa State.	2.91	.51	**A**
	GRAND MEAN	**2.98**		**A**

Source: Fieldwork (2025)*D=Disagree, A= Agree

Table 1 above shows the mean and standard deviation of responses regarding the existing inter-school collaboration practices among teacher education institutions in Bayelsa State. All items recorded mean scores below the decision benchmark of 2.50, indicating disagreement among respondents. This suggests that academic collaboration practices, such as joint curriculum development (X = 2.18), sharing best practices (X = 2.13), and developing standardized evaluation tools (X = 1.87), are minimal or non-existent. Respondents also disagreed that inter-school collaboration has contributed to more accurate student assessments (X = 1.94), joint research initiatives (X = 1.74), or a cohesive approach to

evaluating student performance (X = 1.90). The grand mean of 1.92 further indicates that inter-school collaboration practices are weak or lacking across teacher education institutions in Bayelsa State.

Research Question 2

What are the challenges affecting academic collaboration in relation to evaluation practices in teacher education programs in Bayelsa State?

Table 2: Mean and standard deviation on the challenges affecting academic collaboration in relation to evaluation practices in teacher education programs in Bayelsa State

S/N	STATEMENT	X	SD	REMARK
8	Limited funding from both government and institutional sources is a significant challenge to academic collaboration in evaluation practices among teacher education institutions in Bayelsa State.	3.12	.85	**A**
9	Differences in institutional policies and priorities create barriers to effective collaboration between teacher education institutions in Bayelsa State.	3.21	.74	**A**
10	The lack of skilled personnel in some teacher education institutions affects the quality of collaborative efforts related to evaluation practices.	3.08	.50	**A**
11	Inadequate infrastructure, such as limited access to technological resources, hinders academic collaboration in evaluation practices in teacher education programs.	3.03	.53	**A**
12	Resistance to change from academic staff and administrators is a challenge to the implementation of collaborative evaluation practices in teacher education programs.	3.03	.48	**A**
13	Poor communication and lack of coordination between teacher education institutions in Bayelsa State contribute to the challenges in implementing academic collaboration in evaluation practices.	3.14	.53	**A**
14	A lack of standardized frameworks or guidelines for academic collaboration in evaluation practices hinders the uniformity and consistency of evaluation methods across institutions.	3.12	.51	**A**
	GRAND MEAN	**2.98**		**A**

Source: Fieldwork (2025)*D=Disagree, A= Agree

Table 2 above shows the mean and standard deviation of responses regarding the challenges affecting academic collaboration in relation to evaluation practices in teacher education programs in Bayelsa State. All items recorded mean scores above the decision benchmark of 2.50, indicating agreement among respondents. This suggests that respondents agree that limited funding (X = 3.28), differences in institutional policies and priorities (X = 3.04), and the lack of skilled personnel (X = 3.14) are significant barriers to academic collaboration. Respondents also agreed that inadequate infrastructure (X = 2.73), resistance to change (X = 2.90), poor communication and lack of coordination (X = 2.88), and the absence of

standardized frameworks (X = 2.91) contribute to the challenges faced by teacher education institutions in Bayelsa State. The grand mean of 2.98 indicates that these challenges are perceived to significantly affect the effectiveness of academic collaboration in relation to evaluation practices in the region.

Discussion of Findings

The results from Research Question 1 revealed that the existing inter-school collaboration practices among teacher education institutions in Bayelsa State are generally inadequate, particularly in relation to evaluation practices. The findings indicate low levels of academic collaboration aimed at improving evaluation methods, with respondents disagreeing on key indicators such as the development of standardized evaluation tools, joint research initiatives, and the use of shared assessment strategies. This suggests that there is limited exchange of knowledge, resources, and expertise among institutions, leading to disjointed evaluation practices. The results point to a lack of structured and sustained efforts to foster institutional collaboration that could enhance the reliability and effectiveness of evaluation methods in teacher education programs.

These findings align with those of Nwosu and Onuka (2021), who observed that fragmented academic collaboration often results in inconsistent assessment approaches and weak evaluation systems in higher education. Similarly, Egwu (2020) emphasized that without coordinated efforts, teacher education institutions tend to operate in silos, hindering the development of best practices in teaching and evaluation. The lack of cohesion reported in this study underscores the importance of establishing policy-driven frameworks and capacity-building programs that can promote sustainable academic collaboration. This would not only improve evaluation practices but also ensure alignment with national and global standards in teacher education.

The results from Research Question 2 indicated that teacher education institutions in Bayelsa State face several significant challenges that hinder effective academic collaboration in relation to evaluation practices. Respondents agreed that factors such as limited funding, differences in institutional policies and priorities, lack of skilled personnel, inadequate infrastructure, and resistance to change are major barriers to collaboration. Additionally, poor communication, lack of coordination, and the absence of standardized frameworks further complicate efforts to implement unified and effective evaluation practices across institutions. These challenges collectively undermine the ability of institutions to work together towards developing consistent, high-quality evaluation methods in teacher education programs.

These findings are in line with those of Uzoechina and Odo (2021), who highlighted that insufficient funding and infrastructural deficits are persistent impediments to collaborative academic initiatives in Nigerian higher education. Similarly, Afolabi and Aladejana (2022) found that institutional misalignment and administrative bureaucracy often derail collaborative programs, especially in the area of evaluation and assessment. The results also support Okonkwo's (2020) assertion that the lack of a standardized collaborative framework leads to inconsistencies in evaluation standards, reducing the overall effectiveness of teacher training outcomes. Taken together, these findings underscore the urgent need for systemic reforms, including policy harmonization, capacity building, improved funding, and enhanced inter-institutional communication, to strengthen academic collaboration and improve evaluation practices in teacher education across Bayelsa State.

Conclusion

It is evident that academic collaboration among teacher education institutions in Bayelsa State is currently weak and faces several systemic challenges that hinder its effectiveness in improving evaluation practices. The lack of structured collaborative activities such as joint curriculum development, resource sharing, and coordinated evaluation frameworks indicates limited institutional synergy. Moreover, challenges including inadequate funding, infrastructural deficiencies, resistance to change, policy misalignments, and lack of skilled personnel further exacerbate the problem. These findings suggest that without deliberate and strategic efforts to foster academic collaboration—supported by enabling policies, sufficient funding, and institutional commitment—the potential of collaborative initiatives to enhance the quality and consistency of evaluation practices in teacher education programs will remain largely unrealized.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations were given:

1. Teacher education institutions in Bayelsa State should establish formal collaborative frameworks supported by policy guidelines to promote joint evaluation initiatives and resource sharing.
2. Government and institutional authorities should increase funding and invest in infrastructure and capacity building to overcome the logistical and human resource challenges limiting effective academic collaboration**.**

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