**CHAPTER ONE**

**1.0 INTRODUCTION**

* 1. **Background of the Study**

The demand for higher education, particularly university education is on the increase all over the world. Consequently, there must be a proactive orchestration of efforts to satisfy the yearnings of the people for this level of education. A forward looking government,

no matter what it costs, will ensure that its citizenry is educated; not just any kind of education but a focused and qualitative one. For nations with very high rates of illiteracy levels there could be advocacy for basic education; at least they must start somewhere.

Nevertheless, there is a level a nation cannot go beyond with basic education only, even though it is the foundation on which every other stratum of education rests. Higher education combined with high levels of commitment of the citizenry to national development is therefore the key to technological advancement of any nation. The

developed countries of the world have proved it to be true as most of them have a long history of higher education. Developing nations must take a cue from them.

It is not enough to license a higher education institution to operate; there must be a constant evaluation to ensure that set standards and operational guides are not violated. A system that grows is such that sets standards and disciplines itself to attain them.

However, Accreditation of Universities be it institutional or programme by the National Universities Commission (hereafter referred to as the Commission) implies a system for recognizing educational institutions (Universities and programmes offered in these institutions) for a level of performance, integrity and quality which entitles them to the confidence of the educational community, the public they serve and employers of labour. It is a way of examining the state of the institution in relation to where it ought to be. It is also a quality assurance process. Prior to the licensing of a university, some quality indices are taken into consideration to ensure that they take off on the right footing.

**1.1.1** **Legal Basis for Accreditation**

The legal basis for Accreditation of Academic Programmes in Universities is derived from Decree NO. 16 of 1985. Section 10 of the Decree as amended and incorporated in Section 4(m) of National Universities Commission Amendment Decree No. 49 of 1988 empowers the Commission:

“To lay down minimum standards for all Universities in the Federation and to accredit their degrees and other academic awards after obtaining prior approval therefore through the Minister from the President, Commander-in-Chief of the Armed forces; provided that the accreditation of degrees and other academic awards shall be in accordance with such guidelines as may be laid down and approved by the Commission from time to time.”

**1.1.2 Universities and Their Functions**

Universities are tertiary institutions established to:

1. conduct demand-driven researches;
2. award degrees;
3. generate and disseminate knowledge, skills and competencies at the highest educational level.;
4. provide high level manpower training;
5. provide high quality career counseling;
6. provide life long learning programmes;
7. promote scholarship;
8. provide entrepreneurship programmes;
9. provide community service;
10. promote national and international understanding and collaboration (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2007, Draft National Policy on Education, p36).

However, each university has a way of expressing the same sentiments through institutional statement of vision, mission and strategic objectives. For example, the vision of the University of Ilorin “is to be an international Centre of Excellence in learning, research, probity and service to humanity”, its mission is to provide a world-class environment for learning, research and community service”,its strategic objectives include, among other things: “to encourage the advancement of learning, promote scholarship, conduct research in all fields of human endeavour, produce high-quality graduates, deploy ICT facilities in all university functions, foster linkages, promote global best practices, etc”. (University of Ilorin, 2008-2013 Draft Strategic Plan). The above is just one example of the several examples that could be cited for each of the Nigerian Universities.

Currently, there are 117 legitimate universities in the country which include: 36 Federal Universities, 36 State Universities, and 45 Private Universities. (NUC, 2011).These universities operate within clearly laid down rules and regulations determined by the National Universities Commission (NUC).

**1.2     Statement of Problem**

It has been observed that the manual National Universities Commission Accreditation(NUC) system has many problems associated with it which includes:

1. Delay in accrediting certain programmes in Universities.
2. The manual system of NUC accreditation can lead to loss of vital information about a University.
3. Reports produced in manual system are error-prone and sometimes inaccurate.
4. Immediate access to certain programmes offered by a University is mostly difficult.

As a result of the above outline problems associated with the manual NUC accreditation system, the need arises to introduce an effective form of NUC accreditation system known as a Computer-Based NUC Accreditation System.

**1.3     Objectives of the Study**

This research aims at developing effective and efficient software for NUC accreditation. Specially, the objectives are:

1. To quicken accreditation exercise in Universities;
2. The proposed system allows Universities to view the criteria on accreditation of certain Programmes as well as know their status based on NUC accreditation .
3. Access to the application is done online from any location .
4. Accuracy is maintained, as the system will yield more reliable result

**1.4   Significance of the Study**

This deals with trying to find out the solutions to eliminating the processing of manual system of NUC accreditation.  The world has moved from primitive stone ages in industrial age and of recent to information technology age. Computerized computer based management information system is the fundamental and the bedrock for information technology (IT). Because of the importance of the information technology (IT) age, organizations are concerting from the traditional manual-based processes to computer-based methods. The significance of this research work is to demonstrate how Computer-Based NUC Accreditation system need could be met efficiently and effectively through the application of tools and methods made available by new advances in science and technology.

**1.5  Scope of the Study**

The overall scope of the study covers the problems associated with the manual Nigerian Universities Commission (NUC) accreditation.

The delimitation of the scope is concerned with the design of a Computer-Based NUC Accreditation System that will effectively handle the various activities involving accreditation.

**1.6    Limitation/Constraints of the Study**

This as it concerns this research work is obstacles that hinder the ability to reach at successful end of the project work, to getting a desired result. Such factors include.

1. The ability to have the proficiency to get the ideals needed for the project research
2. Mostly unwillingness of staff in the establishment to give out the require information.
3. Financial cost and power failure also hinders the ability to reach to the successful end of the project work.