

Educational Supervision as a Catalyst for the Internal Quality Assurance in Secondary Schools

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Abstract

This paper focuses on Educational Supervision as a catalyst for the Internal Quality Assurance highlighting the concepts of Education, Supervision and Educational Supervision, differences between Supervision and Inspection, Purpose of Educational Supervision, Quality Assurance and Total Quality Management (TQM) as well as Quality in Teaching and Learning. Also, Educational Supervision as a viable tool for quality output in schools be it Primary, Secondary and Tertiary education and the Techniques of Supervision were discussed like classroom observation, teacher visitation, demonstration, workshop, micro-teaching, listening to recordings, guided practice and research. Since haphazard unsupervised instruction may disrupt the standard of education, it is therefore suggested that Principals as catalysts should facilitate the implementation of the various sets of Educational Supervision activities that will improve the teaching-learning situation in the input-process-output framework. This is geared towards an effective, viable, vibrant and qualitative educational system.

Keywords: Educational supervision, Internal, Quality Assurance

Introduction

A simple way of appreciating education is that it is a tool or a necessary weapon for every human being to acquire for the purpose of navigating this complex world without which the individual may get lost in it or live in darkness without being

blind. (Aguba, 2009:25).It is the biggest instrument for academic progress, social mobilization, political survival and effective national development of any country and constitutes the single largest enterprise in the country like Nigeria. (Lomak, in Akpa, 2002).

Secondary education is the education children receive after primary education and before the tertiary stage within the age range of 12 to 17 years. The broad goals are to prepare the individual for useful living within the society and higher education under the context of the 6-3-3-4 system of education. (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2013).

To be able to effectively provide education, there is need to ensure that the educational system is reliable. Reliability in terms of educational system can only be enhanced through supervision. (Peretomode, 2004).According to Nwankwo (1984) as cited by Peretomode (2004) supervision can be divided into two categories, these are instructional and personnel supervision. Instructional supervision has been defined as a set of activities which are carried out with the purpose of making the teaching and learning purpose better for the learner while on the other hand, Personnel supervision deals with the set of activities which are carried out by the supervisor with the basic aim of sensitizing, mobilizing and motivating staff in the school towards performing their duties optimally in terms of the achievement of the stated aims and objectives of the educational system.

Ajayi and Ekundayo (2008) opined that quality assurance is a proactive method of ensuring quality in any organization. Quality assurance in education aims at preventing quality problems and ensures that the products of the system conform to the expected standards. Ebong and Efue (2005), as cited by Ajayi and Ekundayo (2008), posit that it is a holistic term that is directed towards education as an entity. According to the authors, It entails the suppliers and consumers and all the various activities put in place to produce quality products and services. Enaohwo (2003), in Ajayi and Ekundayo (2008), submitted that the concept of quality assurance in the education system can be looked at from two angles, viz: the internal perspective (within the system) and the external measures (checks and balances by the regulatory agencies).

This paper therefore seeks to highlight educational supervision as a catalyst of Internal Quality Assurance of Secondary Education in Ilorin Metropolis. Educational Supervision is a branch of Educational Management. Supervision could be defined as a day-to-day guidance of all education operations, coordination of the detailed work and cultivation of good working relationship among all the people involved in the teaching-learning process.

Within the school system itself, the concept of supervision varies, depending on whether the perceived is a subordinate or a superior officer. A subordinate staff working under a leader whose conception of man is that he must be controlled and told what to do, sees supervision as a synonym of control. When a leader is accommodating and recognizes the worth of his subordinates, the junior staffs will interpret supervision as cooperative action.

Supervision is in a sense, the back-bone of educational improvement. Supervision is provided by the inspectorate division of the Ministry of Education to help educators and educational administrators to do better jobs. This service provides educational leadership and guidance to various personnel in the field of education. Supervision is necessary in education to ensure uniformity and effectiveness of educational programmes, it is required to promote teaching and learning in schools. It incorporates checking, enquiry, fact-finding, keeping watch, survey, correction, prevention, inspiration, guidance, direction, diagnosis, and improvement.

According to Owoeye (2002), supervision is “that part of school administration which has particular pertinence for the appropriateness of instructional expectations (products) of educational programmes”. By this definition, supervision can be viewed as the management of personnel to carry out purpose of administration Ajayi (2000), opined that supervision is a helping relationship whereby the supervisor guides and assists the teachers to meet targets.

The conception of supervision changes depending on the leadership pattern and interpersonal relationship with the co-worker/staff members. In the school context, supervision is viewed as the process of observation, discussion and decision-making by principals and inspectors of education to improve teaching/learning process (Ogunsaju, 1983).

The National Policy on Education (NPE, 2013), under the broad heading “Planning, Administration and Supervision of Education, contains precise objectives of educational supervision. It is to ensure quality control through regular inspection and continuous supervision of instructional and other educational services.

The National Policy on Education further states that a Federal Inspectorate service section has been set up in order to facilitate educational administration through supervision. The prominence accorded educational supervision in Nigeria’s educational programme tends to reflect the importance of supervision in the education enterprise.

In each case, Educational supervision is not a uni-dimensional concept. It is not the concerns of superiors, principals or education ministry officials alone. It arises from collaborative activities between a designated leader and the led. Indeed, there would be no supervision if there are no people to be supervised. Therefore, it appears that there are four important elements associated with the concept of supervision. They are: supervisor (a designated leader), set tasks and objectives, resources (human/material) and cooperative action. While it is clear that the concept of supervision embraces the first three elements, the element of cooperation is often neglected. This makes the supervisor to become an autocrat with the perception that his/her main role is to prescribe procedures to subordinates rather than cooperate to fashion out alternative approaches to solving crucial problems.

Difference Between Supervision and Inspection

Akinwumiju and Agabi (2008) highlighted the functional similarities that Supervision and Inspection are administrative functions directed towards the efficient achievement of organizational goals. Their central purpose is to enhance productivity and both constitute tools for educational coordination. But there exists differences between Supervision and Inspection as thus among others: the words “Supervision” and “Inspection” are often used to mean the same but they are two different concepts in terms of job content and scope.

Supervision is designed to achieve improvement in instruction, resolution of school constraints, maintenance of super ordinate- subordinate cooperation, professionalism and autonomy of staff and achievement of intrinsic motivation while Inspection is carried out specifically to ensure that minimum standards are maintained in the basic activities of teaching and learning. This is with regards to content coverage, resource provision, maintenance of discipline and keeping of statutory records and accounts. It also provides opportunities to access the challenges confronting the school and the level of success achieved in the pursuit of school goals. (Akinwumiju and Agabi, 2008).

Mbiti (1974), cited in Nwagwu, Ijeoma and Nwagwu (2004:325), views supervision as one of the basic requirements of administration that concerns itself with the tactics of efficiency and effective management of human and material resources. It is a way to advise, guide, refresh, encourage, simulate, improve and oversee teachers with the hope of seeking their cooperation in order that they may be successful in the task of teaching and classroom management.

Educational supervision is a process to ascertain that the teachers carry out the task of teaching to an expected level according to the stipulated guidelines, which

control the educational system. It is a way of persuading workers to desist from applying wrong methods and procedures in carrying out certain functions of their jobs. While Okoro (1994), in Nwagwu, Ijeoma and Nwagwu (2004), opined that inspection is seen as an instrument with which the political and administrative authorities maintain the necessary contact with the schools, teachers, pupils and the community and to ensure that the system is working satisfactorily. In this sense, inspection is to be viewed as fulfilling a controlling, coordinating and communicating role as guardian of education standards.

Purposes of Educational Supervision

There are numerous purposes which supervision is expected to serve in the education system. For any visit to schools to be meaningful, the supervisor should have a clear understanding of what he/she wants in terms of purpose and how he/she would go about it. The modern supervisor of schools should go to schools as a professional to meet the teachers as co-workers in the educational programmes. Some of the purposes of modern supervision includes the following among others:

- To ensure that each individual teacher in the school has been performing the duties for which he/she will be paid or is being paid.
- To promote and develop a favourable setting for teaching and learning.
- To help the teachers improve – their status, skills, and knowledge.
- To ascertain the standard of educational performance.
- To check the available resources in each school.
- Ascertaining whether guidelines on specific government policies have been followed
(e.g. on assessment, school registration, e.t.c.).
- To assess the climate or tone of the school and suggest remedial measures.
- To evaluate the success of new methods and theories.
- To motivate and encourage the teachers to develop healthy attitude towards work.
- For upgrading of schools and,
- For fact-finding when there is crisis in schools.

The types of visit for school supervision can be classified, based on the purpose of the visitation as well as the length or extent of time spent. Based on the purpose, Aiyepoku (1987), in Ibukun, (1991), identified three types of supervision in the school system. These are:

- i. Pastoral visit
- ii. Full general inspection
- iii. Subject inspection

The Pastoral visit is usually done within one or two days. The maximum number of supervisors is between one and three. The visit is advisory. It is to find out what is happening on specific issues and give advice to the school management.

The full inspection is conducted for a number of days by a team of supervisors. The main purpose is for administrative convenience. A school can subsequently be approved as centre for final examination .e.g. the West African Senior School Certificate Examination (WASSCE) or the National Examination Council (NECO).

Subject inspection is a comprehensive visitation by subject specialists to ascertain the purpose and effectiveness of the teaching of specific subjects in the school curriculum.

Guideline for Academic Inspection

Input variables	Process variables	Output variables
(Teacher)	(Teaching)	(Achievement)
Qualification	Teacher demeanour	Standard of subject at
Experience	Pupils written work	Instructional materials
Textbook in use	(a) assignments	certificate examination
Syllabus in use	(b) corrections	Books on the subject
Scheme of work	continuous	Availability in library
Lesson notes	assessment	
Time allotment	Practice	

Adapted from Ezewu E. (1987), “Academic Inspectoral Functions and Concepts, organizations and Methods of full and follow up inspection”.

The explanations of the variables are as follows:

(a) Input Variables: The supervisor is expected to look at the teacher himself, his qualifications, experience and the materials available to him for use in his subject and also what they have in the library.

(b) Process variables: The supervisor should look into the methods of teaching being used by teacher while delivering his lesson. The pupils’ participation in the lesson and the teachers evaluation methods for continuous assessment.

(c) Output variables: Here the supervisor looks at the way the pupils perform in each particular subject in external examination.

Quality Assurance (QA)/Total Quality Management (TQM)

In the process to eradicate the inadequacies of quality control, it resulted to other terminologies such as Total Quality Management or Quality Assurance Beareau. Quality assurance is seen as a proactive approach to production processes in the manufacturing sector. The origin of Quality Assurance can be traced to two Americans (W. Edwards Derming, Joseph Juran) and Japanese (Ishikawa) who were identified as exercising the greatest influences on the total quality approach to management. (Cole, 1996, cited in Babalola and Ayeni (2009).

According to Bateman and Snell (1999), cited in Archibong (2008), Total Quality Management (TQM) refers to an integrative management approach to customer’s satisfaction through a variety of tools and techniques meant to achieve high quality of goods and services. Therefore, Total Quality Management and Quality Assurance are used interchangeably in modern trend to refer to integrative approach of management through the efforts of all, both top and lower employees towards improving the organizational practices that will produce the best output to the satisfaction of customers.

According to Okeke (2001), “quality management is the aggregate of all efforts from the top management to the lowest rank of the organizational hierarchy geared towards doing the right things first and all the time and continually striving for improvement”. Fraizler cited in Babalola and Ayeni (2009), posit that quality management requires the attention of education managers in the input-process-output framework to achieve any success since quality encompasses quality in people, process, service and products.

In the same vein, Iheonunekwu (2003), cited in Babalola and Ayeni (2009), stated that each element in the input-process-output framework of education enterprise should be of an acceptable quality to ensure high quality in education. This means that if educational inputs (financial and human resources) such as funding, learner enrolment, quality and quantity of teachers are in the right proportion, learner/teacher ratio, curriculum, textbooks, school materials and facilities etc are adequately, proportionately and timely provided for education delivery, quality management is on course.

In addition, when the process of delivering the educational service is monitored, checked, encouraged and improved for efficiency and effectiveness, the end product would be of high quality. At this point, how learning is organized and checked, the content and quality of what is taught, the number of teaching hours and contact hours ascertained, assessment and graduation procedures are determined. After this input and process, the output is now evaluated to ascertain attainment and standards which determine their relevance and fitness have been realized. That is, have the students actually gained the knowledge, skills and attitude required of them (achievement)? How encouraging is the percentage number of students who completed the course of study and obtained certificate (attainment)? Finally, does the product satisfy societal expectations and customer needs?

The feedback or data derived from this input-process-output help the education managers to re-plan, adjust and improve where necessary for quality outcome so as to measure up with the ever-changing political, social, economic scientific and technological demands.

Archibong (2008), posits that in social service industry like education, productivity is difficult to measure because it is the same students who go in as raw materials that undergoes the transformational process (teaching/learning) and now come out as finished products (graduates) the unit of measurement is behaviorally.

Quality in Teaching and Learning

Quality in teaching and learning according to Okorie (2002), in Nnabuo, Okorie, Agabi and Igwe (2004), results from an inter-play among a broad range of success factors that have important consequence for effective teacher performance and student learning, such factors includes:

1. Basic school facilities such as classroom, standard libraries, well equipped laboratories, staff offices, teaching facilities and so on

2. Financing such as provision of funds to schools, staff remuneration, school budget and its implementation.
3. Personnel including quality and quantity, quality mind set and orientation among personnel usually resulting from the organizations motivational efforts, staff satisfaction, commitment and morale and so on.
4. The schools organizational environment including climate and leadership.

Educational Supervision as a Catalyst of Internal Quality Assurance

Educational supervision is an aspect of checking internal quality output in schools be it Primary, Secondary and Tertiary institutions hence it is designed to evaluate educational inputs and outputs. The act of teaching and learning is supervised to see if it is achieving the desired objectives. During this supervision, a subject is examined in relation to teaching methods applied, instructional materials available for use, the mastery of the subject matter and the teacher himself in terms of qualification and training. The standard in each subject area is examined. Ezewu (1987), in Nnabuo et al (2004), states that academic inspection should follow the under-mentioned guidelines as in Fig.1 which takes care of input variables (Teacher), process variable (Teaching) and output variables(Achievement)

Okeke (1997), in Archibong (2008:36), states that quality output in secondary schools does not connote the number of graduates produced in a session, their grades or even the ones produced within the available budgetary limits, but in addition, it borders on the quality of such graduates in character and in learning. This is because if quality students are exposed to quality teachers and instruction within an enabling environment, definitely it will yield quality students who will be quality output for tertiary institutions and finally may likely occupy quality positions in the society.

Techniques of Educational Supervision

Peretomode (2004) outlined activities that the skillful educational supervisor can utilize to bring about desirable effect in teacher behaviour for achieving teaching effectiveness. They include the followings:

1. **Classroom observation** which involves live observing of a teacher and analyzing his or her classroom practices, the teaching - learning process, teachers' personality, student-teacher interactions, lesson note and lesson presentation. All these are observed by the supervisor who is present as a witness.

2. **Demonstration:** It involves the presentation of a prearranged series of events to a group for their view. This stimulates teachers' growth and group discussion.
3. **Teacher visitation:** This activity also called "inter-visiting" or "reciprocal visitations" involves one teacher visiting and observing another teacher in action in another class within the same school (inter-class visitation) or in another school (inter-school visitation). This method enhances proficiency especially if the beginning or inexperienced teacher watches experienced teacher in action.
4. **Workshop:** The activity involves a small group of people temporarily formed to discuss a specific topic or work on a common problem and trying to find solution(s) to a specific problem in a face-to-face situation.
5. **Micro-teaching:** It is a teaching situation which is scaled down in terms of time, class size and teaching complexity to allow the teacher focus on a selected teaching strategy. New skills are developed and old ones are refined. Usually it involves a small group of 5-10 pupils where the teacher employs a particular skill within say ten minutes involving content and skill. Emphasis is on the issue of immediate feedback where the teacher is evaluated by the supervisor in form of replaying a recorded lesson or actual discussion (if it was not recorded). When corrections are made the teacher re-teaches the lesson to the same group or a different group for improvement.
6. **Listening to tape, radio or recordings:** This involves using sound recordings to present ideas to one or more listeners in such way as to help develop understanding or skills. Also the use of visual presentations through the media film, television, or video tape is increasingly important in the supervisory process.
7. **Guided Practice:** This supervision technique involves individualized or small group manipulative activities. It is an approach in which doing is emphasized rather than talking with practice activities arranged out of context.
8. **Research:** Research is the systematic and objective collection and analysis of data in order to find solutions to identified problems. Here the supervisor work with and through teachers to finding solutions to problems of teaching/learning that confronts them instead of dictating solutions to or autocratically setting educational problems relating to teaching and teachers.

Summary and Conclusion

The concepts of educational supervision, differences between supervision and inspection and quality assurance/total quality management were addressed,

including quality in teaching and learning and educational supervision as a catalyst of internal quality assurance. Also the techniques of educational supervision were not left out like classroom observation, teacher visitation, demonstration, workshop, micro-teaching, listening to recordings, guided practice and research. It is therefore concluded that the importance of educational supervision to quality assurance cannot be over-emphasized as it constitute a vehicle for the delivery of qualitative education.

Quality management entails proper planning, organizing, controlling, coordinating and evaluating by the school managers to achieve quality result. If education managers are unable to properly harness, utilize and develop the necessary educational resources such as finance, personnel, facilities information (data) and time, the system is bound to witness a very poor quality educational output.

The need for educational supervision for quality assurance is a plea for the cooperation of all educational stakeholders towards a more efficient achievement of the task goal. Therefore quality education can be actualized where the educational system is reliable. The role of the principals is to facilitate the implementation of the various sets of educational activities that will improve the teaching-learning situation in the input- process - output framework without which the educational endeavors may be an exercise in jeopardy.

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