

Instructional Supervision for Quality Education Delivery in Nigeria: Innovation Option for Effective Learners' Achievement

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Abstract. The paper examined instructional supervision approaches and management in basic and post basic schools to enhance best learners' achievement as innovation tool for effective learners' outcome. Specifically, the concept of instructional supervision, managers of instructional supervision, why instructional supervision in schools, challenges of instructional supervision, strategies for establishing quality assurance in education and the need to use internal supervisors versus external quality assurance personnel simultaneously in schools in Nigeria and see their impact on learners' achievement in schools were extensively discussed. Conclusion and recommendations among others, were passed, such as the necessity to give more power and even in-service training programmes to the internal school managers as an on-going process in school instructional supervision in order to ensure enhanced academic performance of learners.

Keywords: Instructional supervision, Quality assurance, Education, Service delivery, Innovation.

1. Introduction

Education is the primary agent of transformation towards sustainable quality education delivery and development. It increases people's capacities to transform their visions for the society into

reality. All countries strive for quality education for their sustainable development and learners' performance is one of key way to measure achievement in schools (Kadzamira, 2001). Learners' achievement in the works of educators, scholars, researchers and general public constitutes a challenge. In recent times, education stakeholders have expressed their concern over the poor achievement of students in the SSCE and other external examinations. Teaching constitutes a unique and dynamic process in educational system that is designed specifically to facilitate student's learning (Ajibade, 1993).

Instructional supervision by the concerned stakeholders, would then, be a necessity which must be handled with care. The worth of education is measured by the quality of its output. Unfortunately, there is diminishing quality of outputs of educational institutions at various levels in Nigeria and many of the outputs of educational institutions are now myopic in academic competency and quality thus implying that all is not well with the system that is producing them (Egbebi, 2016). Academic achievement is the core of educational growth (Aremu&Oluwole, 2001). Jansen (2004) defined academic achievement as the process of developing the capacities and potentials of individual pupils so as to prepare them to be successful in a specific society or

culture. Some authorities blamed the school administrators (principals) and the teachers while others blamed the students themselves and even, the parents. Whoever to be blamed, the fact remains that, the school and its organizational management has correlation with the learners' achievement (Olaleye, 2013). Sule (2013) in a response to critics on the quality of education and as a measure of improvement on the glaring downward trend on educational achievement, opined that school supervision (internal or external) has become a veritable instrument for checking teachers' job performance which may influence learners' performance positively or negatively.

The paper examined instructional supervision approaches and management in basic and post basic schools to enhance best learners' achievement. Specifically, the trends in school supervision/quality assurance from the framework of the players of instructional supervision such as Ministry of Education, State Universal Basic Education, Zonal/Local Inspectors of Education, Local Government Education Authorities and their Agencies (remote supervisors) and Head Teachers and their Assistants, Principals and Vice Principals will be treated and see their impact on learners' achievement in schools. Conclusion and recommendations among others, was passed, such as the necessity to give more power and even in-service training programmes to the internal school managers as an on-going process on school instructional supervision in order to ensure enhanced academic performance of learners.

2. The Concept of Instructional Supervision

Instructional supervision occupies a unique place in the entire education system and it becomes absolutely expedient to give it prominent attention. Alabi and Amusan (2001) revealed that supervision of instruction has been recognised as one of the basic staff function of a basic and post basic secondary school administrators. Most authorities, even put it, as the first on the list of tasks of seasoned school administrators. Instructional supervision is

geared towards the improvement of the teaching and learning situation for the benefit of both the teacher and the learners including the larger society. Evidence from previous studies conducted by scholars (Handal & Lauvas, 1987; Gregory, 2010 & Bilesanmi, 2006) showed that instructional supervision has always been regarded as an essential and integral part of school administration and basically geared towards the improvement of all factors in teaching and learning. Supervision of instruction is at the heart of school administration because it helps to ensure that teaching which will facilitate the achievement of objectives of the system is effectively done. In a contemporary Nigeria, instructional supervision is regarded as the process of enhancing the professional growth of the teachers, the curriculum and improving the techniques of teaching in the classroom through democratic interactions between the teacher and the supervisor (Okendu, 2012). Nakpodia (2006) asserted that, instructional supervision in the modern era centres on the improvement of the teaching-learning situation to the benefits both the teachers and learners, helps in the identification of areas of strength and weaknesses of teachers, follow-up activities that should be directed at the improvement of identified areas of teachers' weaknesses and give recognition to the teachers and create a cordial working atmosphere based on good human relations. National Open University of Nigeria (NOUN, 2006) observed that supervision provides opportunities for teachers to be groomed through critical study of instructional processes and classroom interactions to carry out their teaching tasks in line with professional codes of conduct.

If schools are not supervised adequately, it will have inimical effects on the students' output and the educational objectives may not be achieved, consequently various instructional supervisory techniques should be employed to ensure qualitative and quantities service delivery by the teachers. Since Instructional supervision constitutes the leverage point for instructional improvement, teacher's competence and efficiency of the educational system while an unsupervised instruction may mar the standard

of education, it is therefore expected that head teachers and principals as catalysts should facilitate the implementation of the various sets of instructional activities geared towards an effective, viable, vibrant and qualitative educational system that will improve the teaching-learning situation in the input-process-output framework without which the educational endeavours may be an exercise in futility (Archibong, 2010).

3. The Explanation of Innovation as it relates to Instructional Supervision

According to the Cambridge Advanced Learner's Dictionary (2010), innovation means making changes to something established by introducing something new that adds value to the service and service provider. Applying innovation is the application of practical tools and techniques that make changes, large and small, to school organisation's products, processes, and services that result in the introduction of something new in the area of instructional supervision for the stakeholders that adds value to learners' achievement and contributes to the knowledge store of the stakeholders.

Innovation is a platform for effective realization of sustainable national development effort on instructional supervision in school and colleges. Innovation means 'creation of new ideals, knowledge skills or something new with accompanying new method to achieve goals and hence add value to human lives'. Innovation is as old as the history of man given reference to researches carried out by Skinners, Pavlov among others on the best way learners could learn in schools and colleges (Akinsolu, 2017).

An innovation configuration is a tool that identifies and describes the major components of a practice or innovation. With implementation of any innovation comes a continuum of configurations are organised around two dimensions, essential components and degree of implementation (Hall & Hord, 1987; Roy & Hord, 2004). Essential component of the innovation configuration are listed in the roles of the far left column of the matrix, along with the

descriptors and examples to guide application of the criteria to coursework, standards and classroom practices. The second dimension is the degree of implementation. In the top role of the matrix, several level of implementation are defined. For example, no mentioned of the essential components is the lowest level of implementation and might be assigned a score of zero.

Increasing level of implementation usually are assigned progressively higher scores. Innovation configuration had been used for at least 30 years in the development and implementation of educational innovation (Hall & Hord, 2001; Hall, Loucks, Rutherford & Newton, 1975; Hord, Rutherford, Dittulling-Hustin, & Hall, 1987; Roy & Hord, 2004). These tools were originally developed by experts in a National Research Centre studying educational change and her use in the concerned. Based adoption model lasa professional development tool. They also have been used for programme evaluation (Hall & Hord, 2001; Roy & Hord, 2004).

Use this tool to evaluate course syllabi can help teachers preparation programme ensure that they emphasised proactive, preventive approaches instead of exclusive reliance on behaviour reduction strategy. The innovation configuration is designed for teacher preparation programme, although, it can be modified as an observation tool for professional development purposes. Innovation on instructional supervision approaches and management for effective learners' outcome in basic and post basic schools is expected to be worked upon by stakeholders.

4. Managers of Instructional Supervision in Nigeria

In the opinion of Adesokan and Egbebi (2007), in school administration and or even general management, supervision could be interpreted to mean:

- Within or internal supervision/quality assurance, and;
- External/remote quality assurance/supervision/inspection.

Within or internal supervision is the kind of instructional supervisory exercise that is mandatory to be planned and organized for by the Head Teachers, Principals, Rector, Provost, Vice-Chancellor, and even heads of departments and their deputies in ECCDE, basic and post basic levels of education while external supervision is being done by the remote managers of education such as State Universal Basic Education, Ministry of Education among others (Adesokan and Egbebi, 2010). Supervisors within the school are usually having a close contact with the subordinates to guarantee the productive life of an organization.

External/remote inspectors are indirect school overall/instructional supervisor who work outside of the school system to attain school objective. Examples are:

- The board of governors;
- The local school board;
- The state school board;
- The state Ministry of Education;
- The state Advisory Board on Education;
- The state teachers' Council;
- The Federal Ministry of Education and the National Education Agencies;
- The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization; (UNESCO).
- The Teaching Service Commission
- The State Primary Education Board (SPEB).
- Universal Basic Education Commission (UBEC).

School management is also influenced by the following bodies:

- The Nigeria Union of Teachers (NUT);
- The all Nigerian Conference of Principal of Secondary Schools (ANCOPSS) and Conference of Primary Schools Headmasters and Headmistresses of Nigeria; and
- The West African Examinations Council (WAEC)/National Examination Council (NECO).

According to Alabi and Amusan (2001), the following are some of the reasons why supervision of the instruction are expedient in our schools:

- To improve and maintain standards

- To ensure that public fund which is government money are spent judiciously
- To ensure that secondary schools are functioning properly
- To see that schools, conform to the rules and regulations and other directives by the government
- To accredit a school for the conduct of external examination e.g. SSCE, NECO. Etc
- To carry out special investigation on certain issues such as disciplinary, financial problems or even accident,
- To ensure viability (qualified) for the grant in aids for the private schools
- To assist the teachers in various ways with regards to their teaching functions
- To assist students also to take their learning seriously and
- To create a life link between the Ministry of Education and the school

5. Challenges of Instructional Supervision in Nigeria

Omotayo, Ihebereme and Maduewesi (2008) identify poor implementation strategy, management and lack of quality assurance as responsible factors for the failure to realize the goals of UBE (Omotayo, Ihebereme & Maduewesi, 2008). According to Egwu (2009), other problems facing primary education are: wide disparity between the expected school enrolment and the actual enrolment. Poor management of information leads to conflicting statistics about the number of primary schools. One source put it at 54,434 public primary schools another source from school census put the number at 87,941 and an enrolment figure of 24,422,918. Out of which males are 13,302,262(55%) while female figure is 11,120,649 (45%), indicating gender imbalance of (83.6%). The above statistics revealed that there is a shortfall of 10.5 million from the expected target of 34.92 million set. The inability of the country to meet the target set, according the late Professor Fafunwa as quoted by Omotayo, Ihebereme and Maduewesi (2008), include: financial problems, incompetent teachers, overcrowded classrooms, narrow curriculum content, high rate of drop-outs and

lack of quality control. These problems then led to the decline in standard at all levels of education. The reason for the above is that Nigeria still operates the old model of inspection practices that were inherited from the colonial government (Omotayo, Ihebereme & Maduewesi, 2008). Evidence today has shown that this old model is ineffective, weak and out dated Egwu (2009).

Ekundayo, Oyerinde and Kolawole (2013) pinpointed the following challenges of instructional supervision in schools:

Poor incentive: Supervisors at times are dissatisfied with their job because of motivating factors that are minimal. In Nigeria context, several people who are not directly involved in a particular process or a given assignment may receive more compensation and reward more than those who actually carried out the assignment due to the high level of corruption in the country. This singular act may at times affect the way in which instructional supervision is being done in the secondary schools.

Limited educational resources: The issue of scarce resources is an economic one that attempts to rationalise spending in order to avoid waste. Effective instructional supervision however would be difficult to carry out if the funds that are supposed to be available are not there. School administrators as well as instructional supervisors would require certain resources to put things in order before supervision; non-availability of such resources would affect the supervision exercise.

Administrative issue: Administrative inadequacies emerge when planning fails to specify the scope of responsibilities and results that instructional supervision is expected to bring about in a school. Thus, detail planned visits should be made known to the supervisee and the agreement reached between the supervisor and supervisee on the objectives and the procedures. In other words, both instructional supervisor and school administrators must come to term if the instructional supervision is to achieve its objectives.

Lack of pre-professional training for supervisors: Technical issue: One of the major

challenges facing instructional supervision in Nigerian secondary schools is the issue of competence and technical knowledge of the instructional supervisors. Most often than not, in Nigeria, political affiliation at times dictate who get a particular assignment without recourse to the technical competence of the person. Evidence from previous studies (Ajayi & Ayodele, 2006 and Eya & Leonard, 2012) revealed that some instructional supervisors lack knowledge and competence to carry out the exercise. Some instructional supervisors were appointed based on their level of involvement in the government of the day and not as result of their skills they possessed.

Corruption among major stakeholders in the school system: Both the school administrators as well as instructional supervisors are found guilty in this regard. Unholy collaboration between the supervisor and the school administrators on account of funds meant to procure necessary materials for the school system would not augur well for instructional supervision in secondary schools. When funds are misappropriated in schools, instructional supervisors are in the best position to identify this problem but if they are being duly rewarded, such problem will continue unabated which would affect the standards that should to be achieved in the school system.

Political instability: The frequent change of government usually brings about incessant change of government policies regarding instructional supervision. In Nigeria, it is a common thing that the successive administration always discontinues the policy and programmes put in place by the previous administration. This singular act usually affects the effective supervision of instruction in schools. In other words, inconsistent policies on how instruction in schools should be supervised and the categories of people to be involved would adversely affect and pose a big challenge to instructional supervision especially in secondary schools in Nigeria.

Integration of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) in education: This involves the use of modern technological equipment and computer devices for the teaching and learning process. Anderson (2008) stated that technologies and internet offer

students an alternative to traditional education in a classroom in a physical school building. This innovation has broken the traditional way of teaching and learning at all levels of education. However, with the current innovation in teaching, it is difficult for instructional supervisor to have access to how teaching is being conducted in the school system. The process of instructional supervision has generally occurred in a face-to-face setting with teachers and administrators physically present in the same location (Glickmeier, et al, 2001). This traditional model of instructional is being threatened by online learning opportunities that are changing the delivery of instruction to a virtual environment (Anderson, 2004). Thus, since the use of ICT permits individual student to learn at their own convenient time (asynchronous learning), therefore the current innovation in education pose a challenge to instructional supervision in the school system. Funding constitute major problem in the administration of secondary education in Nigeria.

6. Strategies for Establishing Quality Assurance in Education

Supervision of teaching and learning in schools is an indispensable process that requires certain strategies to be put in place for enhancement of higher academic achievement by the learners. The two divisions of quality assurance officials whether internal or external supervisors are expected to apply the following strategies while carrying out their quality assurance service of instructional supervision on both human and non-human material resources in the basic and post basic schools. According to Ajayi (2015), the strategies used for quality assurance in education include:

- (a) **Inspection:** This is a process of assessing available facilities and resources in an institution with a view to establishing how far a particular institution has met prescribed standards. It is more of an assessment than improvement induced exercise.
- (b) **Monitoring:** This refers to the process of collecting data at an interval about on-going project or programme within the school system. The aim is to constantly assess the level of

performance with a view of finding out how far a set of objectives are being met (Ehinder, 2004).

(c) **Evaluation:** This is a formal process carried out within a school setting. It is based on available data which are used to form conclusions. It could be formative or summative. The aim of evaluation, a quality assurance strategy, is to see how the system can be assisted to improve on the present level of performance (Ijaya, 2001).

(d) **Supervision:** Beyond inspection, supervision attempts at bringing about improvement in the quality of instruction. It involves staff as essential part of the process. It is a way of advising, encouraging and stimulating staff (Onocha, 2002).

(e) **Quality control:** Quality control is one of the strategies for establishing quality assurance in the interior educational system at all levels. Forth is to be successfully carried out, there is need to examine the qualification of teachers, adequacy of the curriculum, availability of equipment in the required number as well as the proper use of the processes involved in the various skills to ensure that the finished products are of high standard and not a run-off-the-mill type.

(f) **Access and Equity:** Ojede (2007) as cited in Adegbesan (2011) asserts that the trend of students transiting from the Junior Secondary School to other levels of education has not been encouraging as it has been falling short of the expectation.

7. The Need to use the Internal Supervisors Versus External Quality Assurance Personnel Simultaneously in Schools

On the issue of effective instructional supervision in schools, the direct player is the school administrator that runs the affairs of the basic and post basic education schools on a day to day basis. The school head teachers and principals along with their assistants/head of departments/head of units understand the nitty gritty of instructional administration in their schools.

The school curriculum, syllabus, scheme of work and other lesson planning activities are at

their disposal. They are familiar with the tone of the school and they know the teachers and who is to teach what subject along with the characteristics of such teachers. Experience is the best teachers which such administrators have acquired over the years. The role of the internal supervisor is expected to be performed by them hence the managers of education at the top management level are bound to build the capacities of the internal supervisors'/quality assurers in this dimension. If this is critically adhered to, the supervisory functions of the remote managers of education will become easy and promote enhanced learning achievement in schools.

It is not expected of external quality assurance official to see the internal quality assurance administrators as the subordinate rather they should work together for the facilitation of effective instructional supervision in schools. Most of the remote supervisors do visit schools to observe routine duty on teachers' instructional delivery and not the in depth of the teaching activities of the teachers. Some of them still act as inspectors of old who always are looking for faults of the internal supervisors and their teachers. To attain the goal of supervision, it is expected of both internal and external quality assurance officials to create an atmosphere of mentor/mentee relationships in schools.

8. Conclusions

The paper concludes that instruction quality assurance is an indispensable activity in basic and post basic schools which ought to be carefully handled by the players whether at the internal or remote levels. It is quite certain that effective supervision in schools will promote enhanced learners' achievement among the pupils and learners in our schools. The challenges of instructional supervision in schools were discussed and the internal and external quality assurance administrators are enjoined to work together for easy attainment of the goal of supervision to encourage the learners to learn well in schools.

9. Recommendations

The paper recommends among others that:

- The internal and remote quality assurance administrators working as supervisors should work hand in hand as colleagues for the promotion of effective teaching and learning in schools.
- Recognition should be given to head teachers, principals and their assistants as first internal supervisors in schools and hence build their capacities on continuous basis and remote supervisors should not see them as their subordinates.
- Frequent internal supervision should be enhanced to reduce the cost of supervision in schools.
- External supervisor should visit schools occasionally and start to work on where the within supervisors have stopped.

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