The supervisor's role for improving the quality of teaching and learning in Nigeria secondary school educational system

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Abstract: Nigerian secondary schools are faced with problem of supervisions. In this study, the aim is to assess the general roles of school supervisors in improving teaching quality and effectiveness of schools supervisions. Actually the study intends to make a review on some issues related to supervision in Nigerian context, emphasizing professional profiles and roles in educational system, specifically in quality improvement of secondary schools and also highlighting the concepts of supervision, differences between supervision and inspection, quality assurance/ quality management as well as quality in teaching and learning. Therefore, it suggested that supervisors as catalysts should facilitate the implementation of the various sets of roles which will improve the teaching-learning situation in the input-process. this is geared towards an effective, viable, vibrant and qualitative educational system. Hence, the supervisor must seek for genuine cooperation and concern, positive and acceptable disposition among the teachers and their subordinates.

Keywords: supervisors' roles, management, quality of teaching, supervision, improvement,   secondary school, Nigeria

INTRODUCTION

The History of supervision/inspections roles of Supervisors for improving educational programme which helps teachers to achieve both qualitative and quantitative instructional delivery from the foregoing, it could easily be deduced that supervision is an indispensable variable in the teaching learning process as well as the overall school and educational objectives. However, problems of parents and inadequate funding of schools constitute alots of crises in the system. Van Deventer and Kruger (2003) stated that the elements of supervisory roles of principals are defining the school mission, managing the curriculum and instruction, supervising teaching, monitoring learner progress and promoting. According to Boissiere (2004) the concern for quality has been at the core of the motivating forces for reforms in education. Achieving quality in education has increasingly become crucial in strategic improvement plans of developing countries According to Kochhar (2005) View's that supervision includes those activities which are primarily and directly concerned with studying and improving the conditions which surround the learning and growth of pupils. y. According to McLoughlin and Visser (2003) educational quality assurance is a matter of accountability and national interest.
Igbo, (2002).   Ssupervision is the process of helping, guiding, advising and stimulating growth in subordinate in order to improve on the quality of his work, Nwaogu, J. I (2006) Supervision involves the

stimulation of professional growth and the development of teachers, the selection and revision of educational objectives, materials of instruction and methods of teaching and evaluation of instruction Ogakwu, (2010).

The Purpose of Supervision:

According to Fisher (2011), the schools supervision includes all efforts of school officials directed to provide leadership to the teachers and other educational workers in the improvement of instruction. The improvement of teaching and learning in schools is the general purpose of supervision. A basic premise of supervision is that a teacher's instructional behaviour affects student learning. An examination of instructional behaviours can lead to improvement in teaching and learning. The effective school research identifies schooling practice and characteristics associated with measurable improvements in student achievement and excellence among student achievement. These "effective school practices" include elements of schooling associated with a clearly defined curriculum; focused classroom instruction and management, firm consistent discipline, close monitoring of student performance; and strong instructional leadership as follows:

1. To acknowledge that teachers are individuals and professionals with different needs   and interests.
2. To define supervision as an art and science.
3. To consider that taken together, passion for learning and reflective practice provides modelling and the basis for individual perception and insight.
4. To maximize individual growth through reflective practice and professional dialog.
5. To provide time and support for growth and change.
6. To encourage self-initiated professional development.
7. To develop an educational environment characterized by collaboration cooperation, and communicating yielding a supportive, non-threatening environment to foster professional growth.
8. To assert that all faculty have a professional responsibility to continually learn and improve.

Difference between Supervision and Inspection

Akinwumiju and Agabi (2008) highlighting the functional similarities states 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 the authors still find differences, thus: 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 superordinate-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).

The quality of education is adversely affected when the educational system is too loose and stakeholders are allowed to do whatever they like. In Laissez faire supervisory strategy does not help the quality of education in secondary schools as most people do not do what is right at the right time if there is no authority that stipulates what is to be done and also monitor them properly on the job. Achieving the purposes of improving supervision in secondary schools makes the achievement of the goals of secondary education much easier. This becomes more imperative and pressing as the cry all over the federation presently is about degeneracy in the education sector. Federal Republic of Nigeria (2004), Stated the goals of secondary school education as include the followings:

    (1) provide all primary school leavers with the opportunity for education of a higher level, irrespective

of sex, social status, religious or ethnic background.
(2) offer diversified curriculum to cater for the differences in talents, opportunities and future roles.
(3) provide trained manpower in the applied science, technology and commerce at sub-professional grades.
(4) develop and promote Nigerian languages, art and culture in the context of world's cultural heritage.
(5) inspire students with a desire for self-improvement and achievement of excellence.

Who is a school Supervisor

A supervisor could also be the principal of a school, or a senior member of staff of a school (Ani, 2007). However, supervision in a school system implies the process of ensuring that policies, principles, rules, regulations and methods prescribed for purposes of implementing and achieving the objectives for education are effectively carried out. Igwe (2001), Viewed that supervision involves the use of expert knowledge and experience to oversee, evaluate and coordinate the process of improving teaching and learning in schools. supervision, through supporting teachers, controlling schools. Functioning and allowing for regular exchanges between schools, can be a powerful tool for quality improvement. This is rarely the case in Africa, probably even less so than elsewhere. Research on school supervision in Africa (De Grauwe 2001; Diarra et al. 1997; Garforth 2004; Gumbi and Dlamini 1997; Lugaz et al. 2006; Solaux 1997) shows the lack of satisfaction among teachers and supervisors with the impact of supervision on the classroom. The most evident reason and the one that supervisors regularly quote concerns the lack of resources. Many supervisors do not have the necessary vehicles nor the funds to travel, while at the same time the number of schools per officer has grown. Research at the end of the 1990s in four Southern African systems (Botswana, Namibia, Tanzania mainland and Zimbabwe) showed that a supervisor was on average responsible for over 150 teachers under him (De Grauwe 2001).

The effective improvement of instructional delivery and maintenance of standards in the school system are enhanced through regular internal and external supervision. According to Ayodele (2002) argued that secondary schools are presently supervised by two categories of people, viz: (i) internal supervisors those within-the school, supervisors as principals, vice-principals and heads of departments: (ii) external supervisors those outside the school, supervisors as the formally designated officials from the inspectorate division of the Ministry of Education and the various Area or Zonal Education Offices. The primary responsibility of supervisors is to see that high standards are maintained and that schools are run in accordance with the laid down regulations. The supervision of personnel and materials in order to ensure the set minimum standards are attained, sustained and seen to meaningful impact on society. Having a Quality supervisor is important because it will ensures that goods services produced in a country are of highest possible standard, as well as protecting buyers from purchasing sub-standard products (Uyanga, 2008).
According to Oriaife in Maduewesi (2005), quality supervision is a baseline standard in education which can be measured on a scale of reference. It is an expression of standard or a means by which a certain set standard in education can be achieved. It could easily be deduced therefore that quality in education is a totality of the combination of such indispensable variables as quality teachers, quality instructional materials and quality infrastructure (classrooms, seats, tables, chalkboards etc.). Others include, favourable teacher/pupils ratio, favourable pupils/classroom ratio and quality instructional supervision. All these and more surely results quality product (student) who is exposed to a balanced and result oriented education, especially secondary education. The supervisor who is well prepared to face not just the challenges of tertiary education, but the challenge of providing middle level technical and administrative service in any sector of the Nigerian economy.
Educational system as an investment lies in its capability to continuously serve its targeted beneficiaries (students, teachers, parents, employers of labour and the society at large) and consistently remain relevant. Educational planners and other stakeholders saddled with the responsibility of managing the educational

system are therefore faced with the challenge of making schools as good as expected. Quality secondary education can be described as functional education which emphasizes both the theoretical and practical part of the educational system. It is the education that emphasizes social responsibility, job orientation, political participation, spiritual and moral values and most importantly self-reliance after school. One of the major components of quality education is that it is geared towards the building of all round men and women who grow up to become functional and useful to themselves and the society at large.

According to (Meskil, 2005) He observed that without strict adherence to good education it becomes a waste and even poses danger to all the sectors of the nation. It should be noted that good quality delivery begins from policy makers to resource providers, the teachers and the students. It has long been found that quality is never an accident; it has always been the result of high intentions, sincere efforts, intelligent mission statement and focused as well as skilful implementation. In education, there is a broad agreement on a number of issues that define quality. They include higher academic standards, vigorous curricula, skilled and experienced teachers, updated textbooks, state of the arts laboratories and computing facilities, small class sizes, modern buildings and conducive environment for learning, strict discipline, solving parents amongst others. Quality education is needed to guarantee good future for the country. Supervision involves the stimulation of professional growth and the development of teachers, the selection and revision of educational objectives, materials of instruction and method of teaching and evaluation of instruction (Ogakwu, 2010). It is also a process that involves an evaluative, long-term relationship between a "more senior member of a profession" and "a more junior member or members of that same profession" (Bada, 2010).

The supportive and educative process of supervision is aimed toward assisting supervisees in the application of theory and techniques to their works (Association for Counsellor Education and Supervision, 2003). Numerous developmental models of supervision have been proffered in an attempt to further advance the sound application of supervisory services (Loganbill, Hardy; Delworth et al,. 2002 ; Watkins, 2004). Developmental models of supervision have in common a focus on supervisee change from novice to experienced professional through a delineated stage process with representative challenges facing supervisees at each level. The characteristics of each developmental stage afford supervisors the opportunity to enhance effectiveness through interventions aimed at facilitating further supervisee development Watkins, (2004)
.The sudden explosion of students population coupled with the attendant increased complexity of the school organization and the introduction of the Universal basic education programme of education in the country has indeed necessitated a greater attention of supervision more than ever before. This is more so because school supervision occupies a unique place in the entire education system. Just as the personality of each supervisor differs from the other, the supervisory strategies adopted are varied and so their effects on the educational system.

SUPERVISION AS A TOOL FOR SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT

School supervision exists nearly everywhere. Its origins date back to the birth of public education, when young nations used education to forge a common language and culture. Supervision was a key tool to ensure that all education staff respected the same rules and regulations and followed a similar programme De Grauwe, Anton. (2005.) A function is when a teacher sees his/herself as developmental in nature and not merely to impact knowledge parrot fashion Butin, D. 2004). The tasks that teacher has to face include rendering direct assistance to individual students by helping the students to better understand the lessons. The teacher has to develop the class through group assignments and discussions the final product of all this efforts is an improvement in the students' achievement (Butin, 2004).

Characteristics of a Supervisor:

Good supervisors seem to have many of the same qualities of good teachers and good counsellors. They are empathic, genuine, open, and flexible. As they respect their supervisees as persons and as developing professionals, and are sensitive to individual differences (e.g., gender, race, and ethnicity) of supervisees. They are comfortable with the authority and evaluative functions inherent in the supervisor role, giving clear and frequent indications of their supervision of the counsellor's performance. Even though, good supervisors really enjoy supervision, are committed to helping the counsellor grow and evidence commitment to the supervision enterprise by their preparation for and involvement in supervision sessions. These supervisors' evidence high levels of conceptual functioning, have a clear sense of their own strengths and limitations as a supervisor, and can identify how their personal traits and interpersonal style may affect the conduct of supervision.

Low staff morale:

Teachers are the centre-piece of any educational system. No education system can rise above the quality of its teachers. Teachers whose morale is low are not likely to perform as expected in the school system. According to Ajayi and Oguntoye (2003), the numerous problems permeating the entire educational system in Nigeria such as cultism, examination malpractices, drug abuse, indiscipline, persistent poor academic performance of students in public examinations and many more seem to suggest that teachers have not been performing their job as expected. Fadipe (2003) posited that teachers, apart from students, are the largest most crucial inputs of an educational system. They influence to a great extent the quality of the educational output. Teachers irregular promotion, low pay package (when compared to other public workers), societal perception of the job and many more have dampened the morale of teachers. When teachers are not motivated, their level of job commitment may be low and the objectives of the school may not be accomplished.

Frequent changes in policies on education

The term policy can be explained as statement, which expresses aims or goals, and the means of achieving them. Policy provides a road-map for actions tailored towards achieving or meeting specific goals. According to Jaiyeoba and Atanda (2005), education policy represents definite courses of action proposed by the government in power or an executive authority and adopted as expedient to the issues and problems of education. Education policies, which may take the form of ordinance, code or even an act, have been observed to change with changes in the political leadership of Nigeria. Principals of schools are often caught in this web when government changes existing education policy. The consistencies in educational policies have been argued to be responsible for the poor service delivery in the system.

Inadequate facilities for supervision

School facilities are the material resources that facilitate effective teaching and learning in schools. Jaiyeoba and Atanda (2005) posited that educational facilities are those things which enable a skilful teacher to achieve a level of instructional effectiveness that far exceeds what is possible when they are not provided. The state of infrastructural decay in many secondary schools in Nigeria is a manifestation of poor funding and management of the system. Ahmed (2003) revealed that in most of the nation's secondary schools, teaching and learning takes place under a most unconducive environment, lacking the basic materials and thus hindered the fulfilment of educational objectives.

Conclusion

This paper examined the outputs from the secondary school system in Nigeria and concluded that they were of poor quality. The poor quality, however, had been linked with the numerous problems bedevilling the system, such as inadequate funding, inadequate facilities, low morale of staff, poor supervision of schools and frequent changes in policies. So there is a great need for the entire system to team up for the acknowledgement for dynamism of education and adaptation of some related changes in schools system.

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