

Enhancing Educational Management through Quality Assurance for School Improvement in Nigeria

Ako Sunday Ochege

Department of Educational Foundation, Benue State University, Makurdi, Nigeria.

REVIEW ARTICLE

How to cite this article

Ako, S. O.(2019), Enhancing Educational Management through Quality Assurance for School Improvement in Nigeria, *Education Reviews Lett.*, 4 (11), Pp 9.

Received: November 7, 2019

Accepted: November 8, 2019

Published: November 8, 2019

Copyright

© 2019 Ako

Corresponding author

Ako Sunday Ochege
akoochege@gmail.com

Distributed under

Creative Commons CC-BY 4.0

ABSTRACT

In this study, enhancing educational management through quality assurance for school improvement in Nigeria is presented. Quality assurance is a new term in education but is one of the most important constructs in the management of education to improve schools. While the design of quality assurance mechanisms such as tools, processes and actors vary across national contexts, their common objective is to improve teaching and learning – with the ultimate goal to support the best outcomes for learners. The development of a country's natural resources is dependent on the quality of its human resources and the quality of human resources in turn depends on education. This means that the teacher must be adequate in quality and quantity, the students must be well trained and facilities must be provided as well. Quality assurance is important for accountability as well as to support ongoing development of schools, teaching and learning. This paper highlighted management with the functions of managers which include planning, organizing, coordinating, controlling and directing. Additionally, basic responsibilities of teachers for assurance of quality were also highlighted as well as the possible ways for establishing quality assurance in education which are monitoring, evaluation, supervision, inspection, quality control as well as access and quality. In Nigeria, it was established among others that in achieving quality assurance, education curriculum and standard in Nigeria should be reviewed to reflect the needs and aspiration of the society. For this reason, this paper assessed the importance of quality assurance in Nigerian schools, one of which is the fact that, it is to serve as an indispensable component of quality control strategy in education.

Keywords: Quality assurance, Education management, Nigerian schools.

INTRODUCTION

In any society, education is a vital instrument for development as it is an instrument for nation building. For quality education to be achieved in a nation the principal actors of learning who the teachers, the learners and the environment must be cooperatively organized. Meaning, the teacher must be adequate in quality and quantity, the students must be well trained and facilities must be provided as well. Recently, the upspring and rapid establishment of private schools and institutions in Nigeria is as a result of lack of confidence in the Nigeria's education system which has adverse effect in the development of the nation.

The development of a country's natural resources is dependent on the quality of its human resources and the quality of human resources in turn depends on education (Alumode, 2005). Education helps in the positive development of human potentials, the human talents, the human intellect, the human attitude and the human skills, it is stressed that education contributes to the individual personal development, increases his/her productivity and income at work, and facilitates participation in economic and social life (Abhimanuyu, 2007). The Federal Republic of Nigeria (FRN, 2004) stressed that the main policy objectives in education in Nigeria is to raise the quality of education at all levels so as to make the products of the system more useful to the society and to maintain education as one of the prime engines for development.

Quality assurance is a new term in education; however it has rapidly become very important. Quality assurance involves the systematic review of educational programmes and processes to maintain and improve their quality, equity and efficiency. While the design of quality assurance mechanisms (tools, processes and actors) varies across national contexts, their common objective is to improve teaching and learning – with the ultimate goal to support the best outcomes for learners (European Commission, Directorate-General for Education and Culture, 2015). Ajayi and Adegbesan (2007) considered quality as the total of the features of a process, product or service on its performance, in 'customers' or clients' perception of that performance. It is not just a feature of a finished product or services but involves a focus on internal processes and outputs and includes the reduction of wastage and the improvement or productivity. Taking a cue from the above definition, Fadokun (2005) characterized quality by three interrelated and interdependent strands. It can include mechanisms that are external and internal to schools. External mechanisms may include national or regional school evaluations and/or large-scale student assessments. Internal mechanisms however may include school self-evaluation, staff appraisal and classroom-based student assessments. These mechanisms have different but complementary purposes. Normally, they are part of a coherent, integrated system, with the different mechanisms supporting and reinforcing each other. According to European Commission, Directorate-General for Education and Culture (2015), this kind of productive synergy can ensure a clear focus on school development, providing data on aspects such as school climate and the well-being of all members of the school community, effective teaching and learning, and the impact of innovations.

Quality assurance is important for accountability as well as to support ongoing development of schools and of teaching and learning. Well-functioning systems have mechanisms to support and balance vertical and horizontal, internal and external accountability. According to European commission, directorate-general for education and culture (2015), quality assurance that is focused on development, supports schools to adapt to the changing needs of learners. The focus is not only on improvement but also on innovation – that is, the development or experimental testing of approaches in different contexts - to support quality, equity and efficiency. Approaches to quality assurance may need to be adapted over time to better meet needs for feedback and decision-making across systems.

Education Quality Assurance (EQA) is a process of monitoring, assessing, evaluating and reporting objectively based on agreed quality standards, all aspects of school life to ensure that acceptable standards are attained, maintained and improved upon continually. Quality Assurance processes and practices are dynamic and provide the needed guidance and support to schools for consistent improvement in learning outcomes. It involves systematic monitoring, evaluating, regulating and reporting of educational programmes and practices to ensure that acceptable standards are attained and maintained. It is a dynamic process that provides the needed guidance and support to schools for improved learning outcomes for learners. Education today must have the effect of making it possible for a country to have a steady supply of highly creative citizens who help to keep improving the living conditions of the general citizenry, and to solve the existential problems that are thrown up from time to time. Such problems are now being further and it is complicated by the theory and reality of the so-called global village. As is

well known, the problem that government has is in reconciling access with quality in the provision of education. But, it is abnormal to describe education as anything that lacks quality. Yoloje (2005) agrees that quality must characterize education at every stage and the real problem that governments have to face is deciding the mix of levels, of how many of its citizens must go beyond the basic education and how many must have higher education.

BRIEF REVIEW OF EDUCATIONAL QUALITY ASSURANCE IN NIGERIA

The developmental history of educational quality assurance in Nigeria began in 1842 when the Wesleyan Methodist Society opened up a Christian mission station at Badagry in Lagos State. According to Ejiogu (1986), the Christian missionaries pioneered the provision of primary and indeed formal education in Nigeria. These missionaries built, equipped and managed schools and colleges single-handedly for over two decades. The colonial government was surely indifferent. During the period of Christian mission monopoly of educational organization and management, there was no distinction between a school teacher and a church catechist, for the teacher was basically an evangelist more than anything else (Taiwo, 1982).

Ejiogu (1886) opined that in 1882 the government made its first formal entry into the educational sector, when it came up with an ordinance regulating education in the Gold Coast colony of which Lagos was part. It was followed by a number of other ordinances and education codes specifically those of 1887, 1903, 1916 and 1926. The Register was created by 1926 education code for teachers in Nigeria so that only those who were properly registered would be allowed to teach, at the office of voluntary agency school inspectors were also to ensure that they monitor quality by this code. According to Ejiogu (1886), this awakened teachers to a realization that theirs was a secular job and not essentially religious and consequently to look up to the government for needed assistance rather than to heaven only. Primary education was popularized in 1948 when the United Nations General Assembly made a "Universal Declaration of Human Rights" which stated that "primary education shall be compulsory and free". Thus, universal primary education became a Nigerian phenomenon like the rest of the world. Shortly before independence, the western and eastern regions respectively embarked on programmes to make primary education free and by the 1970's, the wind of U.P.E. blew across the length and breadth of Nigeria (Fafunwa, 2003). The U.P.E. scheme in the west sky-rocketed pupil enrolment in the primary schools from 446,600 in 1954 to 811,432 in 1955, an increase of over 90 percent in one year (Fafunwa, 2003). Ejiogu (1886) continues that by 1961, primary school enrolment in the west had risen appreciably. While the pursuit of quality was the goal of the scheme, the extent to which this goal was attained failed to fully meet expectations. The preponderance of untrained and uncommitted teachers, too large classes, unsatisfactory syllabus and inadequate supervision of schools constituted the scourge in the system. Interestingly, in 1993 Education Trust Fund (ETF) was introduced to help solve some teething problems in education, this body has it changed the faces of most the government owned tertiary institutions in Nigeria, it later metamorphosed to Tertiary Education Trust Fund TET fund in 2011 (Ogunde 2011).

SCHOOL MANAGEMENT

In all countries of the world, education is seen as the corner stone of development. Education forms the basis for literacy, skills acquisition, technological advancement as well as the ability to harness the natural resources of the environment for development. To be able to actualize this, the school organization must be properly managed. According to Allen (2015), the School is an organization of complex activities which are carried out by people and are coordinated by different persons. Thus, management is necessary in school to co-ordinate the various activities of the units for goal achievement. Management in school entails working with and through teachers, non-teaching staff and pupils or students to get things done effectively. School

management has its attention primarily on the school. It is more concerned with the institution, its goals, policies and execution of these policies. In school management, the primary aim has to do with the improvement of teaching and learning, and all the activities of the school. The functions of management in schools are performed by the schools heads (such like head teacher/principal) known as the school manager.

According to Allen (2015), a school manager is described as an executive head of his organization. He/she is a coordinator who has to organize activities in such a way that things work smoothly, quickly and effectively. The education manager is described as the individual in a school setting who directs the affairs of the school in such a way as to achieve its primary goals and objectives. He/she is involved in effective planning, organizing, supervision, controlling and evaluation. Therefore, for a school manager to successfully accomplish the set objectives, he has to work with other people within the school system and be able to inspire them to work co-operatively with him so as to achieve the educational objectives.

Sidho (2002) highlighted some principles that can be of help in the achievement of school objectives. These include consistency with the philosophy of education, democratic approach, optimum contribution by all, respect for individualities, due importance to different programmes, and optimistic outlook.

Functions of a School Manager

The purpose of school management is to enable members of staff of the school and the students to work together with the head-teacher of the school as a team in order to achieve the desired goals and objectives of the school. The school manager is the person responsible for coordinating the activities of the school, using resources at his disposal in such a way that the school's objectives are achieved. He is essentially an organizer and implementer of plans, policies and programmes meant for specific educational objectives. Jaiyeoba (2003) highlighted some of the functions performed by school the manager (principal) as planning, organizing, coordinating and directing.

Planning

The school manager prepares a plan that will embrace the subjects in the school curriculum, the number of students, the number of classes, the number and qualifications of teachers to teach the various subjects as well as the instructional materials that will be required for effective teaching. He requests for personnel ahead of time and ensures that the time-table for instructions is prepared in such a way that clashes are avoided.

Organizing

The school manager organizes both the human and material resources. He organizes the work in the school into units with each unit manned by a specialist. He assigns tasks to the administrative staff and also organizes instructional materials that are necessary to enhance student learning.

Coordinating

This means the tasks of uniting and correlating all activities of the school. The school manager coordinates all activities of the various units within the school. Since the teachers are interdependent, it is the duty of the Principal to coordinate their activities.

Controlling

This is the means by which the manager sees that things are done according to laid-down rules and regulations. In the school, the manager has to ensure that teachers perform their duties as required, which can be done through effective supervision, making corrections where necessary.

Directing

The school manger is expected to provide effective leadership. He accomplishes this task by stimulating his staff to perform and guiding them as to what to do. He also guides the

performance of the students, by telling them what to do on a daily basis through announcements at school assemblies.

Responsibility of Teachers and Students in Ensuring Quality

Teacher and students are frequently at the center of all discourse within the spectrum of quality assurance in education. The teacher functions to build up, instruct, guide and train the young ones for healthy growth and stable adult life style. Often, the teacher provides activities, materials and guidance that facilitate learning. No teaching can therefore, take place without the learners. Students and/or pupils are often defined and seen as the recipients of every teaching process. The interactive process between the teachers and the students therefore, forms part of the fulcrum of this discourse. Nonetheless, they have much role to play in the crusade for quality assurance in the education system.

Teachers Motivation and Quality Assurance

The National Policy on Education (2004) expressed that no nation can rise above the quality of its teachers. If the quality of existing stock of teachers in Nigeria is inadequate, inefficient and ineffective and teaching is held in low esteem; raising the level of societal enlightenment and the educational standard may be in jeopardy. Fagbamiye (2007) observed that teachers' lack of dedication to duty has led to a fall in the standard of education. This belief goes to reinforce the idea that teachers do not deserve better treatment. However, if the quality of personnel is the capital of the organization, this should be true in the educational system. Teachers are the key actors in curriculum implementation and if they do not have the right competencies and motivation to fulfill their role, it will create pitfalls in the system.

According to Peretomode (1991), motivation is the process of influencing or stimulating a person to take action that will accomplish desired goals. However, teachers' motivation is a way of empowering teachers in their occupation to put in more efforts in their work. It further involves the perceptions, variables, methods, strategies and activities used by the management for the purpose of providing a climate that is conducive to the satisfaction of the various needs of the employees, so that they may become satisfied, dedicated and effective in performing their task. In education, teachers should be motivated in order to boost their productivity, effectiveness, efficiency and dedication in performing their task. This will enhance quality assurance, quality education and quality instructional delivery in the education system. It will also enhance the achievement of educational objectives (Obi, 2017). Thus, the motivation of teachers in the educational system is of crucial importance and significance to the quality of educational innovation and delivery outcome (Pilot, 2007).

Fredriksson (2004) re-emphasized the importance of motivating teachers on their jobs using a study conducted by the Voluntary Service Overseas (VSO) in 2002, whose research report findings pointed out that teachers' motivation was fragile and declining mostly in the developing countries including Nigeria. The study also observed that poor absolute value of the teachers' salaries was a significant factor influencing their motivation. Low salaries and bad working conditions always breed corruption. According to Fredriksson (2004), the research report findings also noted that "there is a strong link between teachers' motivation and quality performance and quality education, all involved in guaranteeing quality assurance in the Nigerian education system. Therefore, teachers' performance in contributing towards learning is strongly influenced by teacher motivation. Motivation which should include good working conditions, promotion, staff training and development, good salary and remuneration, participatory decision making, job security, recognition of performances and the teaching profession, financial rewards, scholarships awards and provision of other facilities are strong tools for improving the status of teachers".

Teachers' motivation has great significance or value to the Nigerian education system especially in guaranteeing and aiding quality assurance. When teachers are highly motivated and adequate attention given to them, it will help to elicit teacher's commitment and dedication to their job of

teaching (Fredriksson, 2004). This will certainly help to add value and quality to the educational system by raising its standards to the expected level, thus, ensuring quality teaching-learning outcomes and output. Teachers' motivation influences such other variables like quality output, quality performance, enhancing quality educational outcomes and instructional delivery. Again, teachers' job satisfaction and productivity are of great significance to guaranteeing quality assurance in the education system (Fredriksson, 2004). However, when teachers influence the educational system positively, they intend to perform their task effectively and efficiently and all educational goals will be achieved with positive outcomes and the outputs from the school system will be competent-vibrant, educated personnel that will contribute immensely towards societal development and nation building, as such quality assurance is guaranteed.

Possible Ways for Establishing Quality Assurance in Education

The possible ways for quality assurance in education are:

- a. **Monitoring:** It refers to the process of collecting data at intervals about ongoing projects 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 objectives are being met (Ehinder, 2001).
- b. **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 (formative) (Ijaiya, 2001).
- c. **Supervision:** Supervision might involve inspection, but it goes beyond inspection and includes attempt at bringing about improvement in the quality of instruction. It includes staff as essential part of the process. It is a way of advising, grinding, refreshing, encouraging and stimulating staff (Onocha, 2002).
- d. **Inspection:** This normally involves an assessment of 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 rather than an improvement induced exercise (West-Burham, 2004).
- e. **Quality control:** The issue of quality control cannot be over-emphasized. It is one of the strategies for establishing quality assurance in the inferior education system at all levels. Ojedele (2007) views that, quality control should be of concerns to the country in its drive towards technological development. For this to be successfully carried out, there is need to examine the qualification of teachers, teachers by gender, the 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. On the qualification of teacher ESA (2005) findings show that about 16.7% of teachers in technical colleges for instances in the country have B.Sc in addition to their professional qualification in education while 22.5 and 6.5% have NCE and HND in education to professional qualification in education, respectively. The overall study reveals that 76.7% of the teachers in the sampled schools are professionally qualified.
- f. **Access and equity:** Ojedele (2007) 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 expectations. He argued further that, the issue at the tertiary level presents a situation that calls for concerns in terms of variation in access at the Universities, Polytechnics and Colleges of education and in terms of gender disparity.

EDUCATIONAL MANAGERS AND QUALITY ASSURANCE

The role of educational managers centers mainly on administration. Administration in the education industry should be concerned about how they manage the educational resources allocated to them for use as well as the control of their schools and students. The teacher's

managerial functions by the same token should go beyond those of the classroom teaching. He should be responsible not only to himself and his pupils but also to other staff members and their pupils. Again, the teacher is faced with the responsibility of determining the priorities of management and the management style to be used for achieving qualitative educational results. Arikewuyo (2004) had highlighted the following tasks which must be done by education managers in order to have qualitative education. These include:

- i. Measurement and standardization of academic attainments.
- ii. Evaluation of quality of work during supervision.
- iii. Use of competent teachers and administrative/supervisory personnel.
- iv. Dissemination of information to teachers and students.
- v. Use of educational technologies with a view to increasing the efficiency of teaching.
- vi. New research and development to invigorate all educational activities.
- vii. Guidance and counseling.
- viii. Providing students with suitable employment information.
- ix. Efficient management of all resources available.

However, educational managers are classified by their functions, that is, by the roles they play in their position as managers. To fulfill our purpose of quality assurance in Nigeria education system, there is need to identify educational management as a body of systemized knowledge, based on general principles which are certified in terms of schools practices. Ogunsaju (2006) argues that, a school manager may manage with good or bad judgment, with great or little experience, with exemplary or undesirable character traits. Educational management functions for quality assurance in our education systems should be handled by experts who experienced in all aspects of educational practices.

Importance of Quality Assurance in Nigerian Schools

The importance of quality assurance in Nigerian schools cannot be overemphasized in order to ensure quality of teaching and learning. However, the following are the major needs of quality assurance in our education system in Nigeria:

- i. To serve as indispensable component of quality control strategy in education,
- ii. To ensure and maintain high standard of education at all levels,
- iii. To assist in monitoring and supervision of education,
- iv. To determine the quality of the teachers' input,
- v. To determine the number of classrooms needed based on the average class size to ensure quality control of education, and
- vi. To determine the level of adequacy of the facilities available for quality control
It would ensure how the financial resources available could be prudently and judiciously utilized.

Achieving Quality Assurance in Nigerian Education System

For quality assurance in Nigerian education system to be achieved, the following recommendations are to be considered:

- i. Education curriculum and standards of education in Nigeria should be reviewed to reflect the needs and aspiration of the society.
- ii. There is need to harmonize the internal and external criteria of quality assurance raising standard of excellence of the education systems.
- iii. There is need to improve or employ modern teaching methods and techniques in the classroom.
- iv. A more developed and reformed curriculum content is highly desirable. There is also the need for curriculum evaluation to allow innovations and new techniques/methods to be incorporated.
- v. Effective supervisory system should be injected into the system.

- vi. Full professionalization of teaching in the country to set a standard under which a qualified and well trained teacher must operate is highly imperative.
- vii. Government should endeavour to properly fund education institutions in the country to meet the expectation of the society.

CONCLUSION

A cursory look at the quality assurance in education system shows very clear and evident that the educational managers' role in achieving quality education cannot be over emphasized. Educational system in Nigeria is totally in shambles as inadequacies are the order of the day with human and material resources. Teachers are not employed on quality basis. Rather, they are now being employed on political basis. This paper suggested the possible ways for establishing quality assurance in education as well as ways of achieving quality assurance in Nigerian education system and recommending that education curriculum and standards of education in Nigeria should be reviewed to reflect the needs and aspiration of the society among others.

REFERENCES

- [1]. Adegbesan S.O. (2010) Establishing quality assurance in Nigerian education system: Implication for educational manager. *Educational Research and Reviews* Vol. 5(7), pp. 380-384.
- [2]. Ajayi T, and Adegbesan S. O. (2007). Quality assurance in the teaching profession. Paper presented at a forum on emerging issues in teaching professionalism in Nigeria (14-16 March) Akure, Ondo State.
- [3]. Allen, A.A. (2015) Effective School Management and Supervision: Imperative for Quality Education Service Delivery. *An International Multidisciplinary Journal, Ethiopia* 9(3), Serial No. 38, 2015:62-74
- [4]. Arikewuyo MO (2004). Effective funding and quality assurance in the Nigerian education system. A paper presented at the 1st National Conference of the Institute of Education, Olabisi Onabanjo University, Ago-Iwoye Jan. pp. 12-15.
- [5]. Bamiye (2017) Inspection, education and quality assurance. Washington D.C U.S.A, Department of Education. Office of Educational Research and Improvement.
- [6]. Burham, (1994) *Quality assurance in Nigeria tertiary education*. Seminar paper presented at Ahmadu Bello University Zaria.
- [7]. E.S.A.(2005). Educational assessment and quality assurance implication for principal instructional leadership roles. Paper presented at the 31st Annual Conference of International Association for Educational Assessment 4-9 September, Abuja.
- [8]. Ehindero S. (2001). The pitfalls of UPE and the need to enhance quality in the implementation of Universal Basic Education. Paper presented at the National workshop on Universal Basic Education (UBE) organized by the faculty of Education, University of Ilorin.
- [9]. Ejiogu, M.E. (1986). Landmarks in Educational Development in Nigeria. Joja Publishers Ltd., 1-4.
- [10]. European Commission, Directorate-General for Education and Culture (2015) *Comparative study on quality assurance in EU school education systems: Policies, procedures and practices: final report*.
- [11]. Fadokun J. B (2005). Educational assessment and quality assurance implication for principal instructional leadership roles. Paper presented at the 31st Annual Conference of International Association for Educational Assessment 4-9 September, Abuja.
- [12]. Fafunwa, Babs (2003). *New Perspectives in African Education*. London: Macmillan Education Ltd., 55-57.
- [13]. Fagbamiye, E.O. (1987 ed). *The Nigerian teacher in the 1980's. University of Lagos series in education. The art and science of education (2) 101*. Lagos: Nelson Publishers limited.
- [14]. Federal Government of Nigeria (2004). National Policy on Education, Abuja.
- [15]. Fredriksson, T. (2004) *Teachers and teaching*. London: George Allen and Union Limited.
- [16]. Ijaiya Y (2001). From quality control to quality assurance: A panacea for quality education in Nigeria schools. Paper presented at the third annual conference of the national association of educational administration and planning held at University of Benin.
- [17]. Jaiyeoba, A.O. (2003). Perspective in school administration. In Babalola, J.B. & Adediji, S. O. (Eds.) *Contemporary issues in educational management: A book of honour*. Ibadan: Awemmark Industrial Printer.
- [18]. Obi D.B. (2017). *Teaching competence and teacher education in Nigeria*. Lagos: Macmillan and Co.
- [19]. Ogunde (2011) Curriculum implementation in Nigeria: Strategies for the 21st century. Lagos State University.

- [20]. Ojedele PK (2007). Vocational and technical education in Nigeria: Issues and challenges. Paper presented at the international conference of the Nigerian association for educational management administration and planning (NAEP) held at University of Lagos.
- [21]. Onocha CO (2002). Quality Assurance in teacher education. A discussion paper presented at the NTI's 25th anniversary celebration, Kaduna.
- [22]. Sidho, K.S. (2002). *School organization and administration*. New Delhi: Sterling Publishing Limited.
- [23]. Taiwo, C.O. (1982). *History of Education in Nigeria*. Lagos Macmillan.
- [24]. Yoloye E. A. (2005). The relevance of Universal Basic Education in the development of primary education system in Nigeria. In: Adepoju, T. L. (Ed) *Planning and implementation of Universal Basic Education in Nigeria*. Ibadan. Educational industries Nig. Limited.
- [25]. Nichterlein, K., (2011) "*Vigna subterranean*". Ecoport. Retrieved 16th March, 2018.