

The Improvement In The Process Of Supervision and Inspection in Nigeria

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Abstract: This paper examines the issue of the improvement process of supervision and inspection in Nigeria. The paper recognizes quality of education as one of the most widely used and spoken of the concept in Nigeria, although, very little or no unanimity with regard to its meaning has been reach. This is essentially true in lower level of education as compared to industry where clearly definable products with quantifiable qualities exist. The “product” of primary education is intangible and the customer is very difficult to identify. However in Nigeria today, there is mountain concern about the state of schooling at all levels. This is rooted in the realization that literacy levels and academic achievement will determine individual’s job attainment and earning as well as the general economic well-being of the society. Moreover, the quality of life in the society will be affected by the level and quality of social skills acquired in the schools. It is in line with this, the paper looks at the various issues bordering on the improvement processes of supervision and inspection in Nigeria and suggests different options and strategies which can be used to improve the quality stand of education at the primary school levels.

Key words – supervision, inspection, improvement processes, quality, primary education, Nigeria

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I. Introduction

To ensure that effective teaching and learning take place, the school supervisor works with the teachers, pupils and administration. He ensures that the objectives of teaching are met, and he tries, to identify ways of enhancing learning in the schools. The tradition role of the supervisor of paying brief visit to the schools to write reports that could lead to a teacher promotion, retraining or reprimands has changed. The modern supervisor does not behave like a “boss” to the teachers. Rather he plays the role of a facilitator in the teaching learning process. His primary interest is to see that the child learns the task set out for him/her under the most conducive atmosphere. With the change in the supervisor’s role, in some countries including developing countries like Nigeria, new kind of school supervision are evolving. In such a case, the supervisor is very experience teacher within the school system, who still engages in teaching.

If qualitative education is a thing seriously desired in the schools so that standard of education in our schools can be highly improve, school supervision must therefore be accorded high priority. Through inspection and supervision, the inspectors and supervisors assist in improving classroom instructions because teachers are made more competent and efficient, parents are satisfied with the performance of their children, children are motivated to work harder in order to achieve the required standard, hence in a long run, the goal of education is achieved.

Concept of Supervision and Inspection

The supervision of instruction has been described as the improvement of teaching and learning process for utmost benefit of child who is regarded as the center of education. Supervision of personnel is the means by which subordinate staff of the school are mobilized and motivated toward full attainment of the goals and objectives of the school they serve.

Supervision is a way of stimulating, guiding improving, refreshing and encouraging and overseeing certain group with the hope of seeking their cooperation in order for the supervision to be successful in their task of supervision. Ogunsaju (1983).

Supervision is essentially the practice of monitoring the performance of school staff, noting the merit and demerits and using benefiting and and amicable techniques to ameliorate the flaws while still improving on the merits thereby increasing the standard of school and achieving educational goals.

The term supervision is derived from word “super video” meaning to oversee. Adepoju (1998). It is an interaction between at least two persons for the improvement of an activity. It is also an integration of processes,

procedures and conditions that are consciously designed to advance the effectiveness of individuals and group Adepoju (1998) define school supervision as a process of bringing about improvement in instruction by working with people who are working with pupils it has also been described as a process of stimulating growth and a means of helping teachers to achieve excellence in teaching. Supervision in school therefore is a vital process and combination of activities which is concerned with teaching and improvement of teaching learning in the school framework.

The improvement processes of supervision and inspection in Nigeria.

Quality assessment procedure:

Monitoring and maintenance of quality of education in Nigeria is done through informal assessment by the school supervisions or external assessment by inspectors. The school supervisors are on ground at local level that is resident in the schools. They plan, organize, direct, coordinate, evaluate and control all teaching learning processes to ensure that are properly done according to procedures, rules and policies stipulated by the federal government at national level, states and local level. All efforts of the supervisors and their staff to ensure that the processes of teaching and learning progresses are well organized and that the standards are maintained. The inspectors from the state, local and federal ministries of education visit the schools to carryout external assessments to ascertain that educational standards are maintained and that resources are appropriately utilized. School inspectors also act as advisers or counselors on how to improve the process of instruction in various schools. In Nigeria, the federal government has authorized certain bodies to be responsible for quality control of education for various levels and types of education. In primary institutions for instance national commission for universal basic education and state universal basic education boards to performs these functions however, the work of school supervisors and inspectors in Nigeria are hindered by several factors, which in the final analysis, contributed to poor quality and standard of education. Olagboye (2004) listed some of these challenges. Confronting school supervision in Nigeria; such as;

1. Supervisions lack training in supervisory competence because some supervisors were promoted on the basis of seniority and length of service but not on appropriate training and qualification.
2. Inadequate provision of instructional facilities, teaching aids and instruction materials in schools.
3. Poor remuneration of teachers and poor conditions of service, which reduce their commitment to teaching.
4. Poor status accorded to teachers, which dampen their morale and job satisfaction.
5. Present of a large number, of untrained and unqualified teachers in the school system.
6. Teacher's poor attitude to work and lack of interest in teaching.

Moreover some problems of school inspection were also listed as:

1. Shortage of manpower in the inspectorate
2. Using of unqualified and untrained personnel's in the inspectorate services which result in poor quality control.
3. Lack of adequate statistical computation in the school system.
4. Inadequate fund and resources for inspection.
5. Lack of training for would be school inspection.
6. Inadequate facilities in the inspectorate.
7. Non implementation of recommendations in inspection report which results in discouragement in producing high quality inspection report.
8. Lack of cooperative attitudes by some principals.
9. Political instability and frequent policy change.
10. Over load of administrative duties in addition to inspection tours.
11. Occupational hazard associated with road or rives travels on inspection tours.

Internal and external quality assessment is expected to achieve the same goal, which is maintaining high standard and quality education as stipulated by national education policy. School supervision is done on daily basis in the schools by the school supervisors, while school inspection is done only on scheduled visit by school inspectors from the state, local government or federal ministries of education. The school supervision lay emphasis on activities of staffs in relation to teaching learning process, but school inspection evaluate a school as a whole as a designed place of learning. School supervision areboth guided by rules and regulations and policies stated or implied in the national policy on education. School supervision and inspection are meant to complement each other in education quality control but not contradict each other efforts. Unfortunately as pointed out early the challenges and problems in schools supervision and inspection contribute to inefficiency and ineffectiveness in education quality control in Nigeria.

Quality Improvement and Development in Nigerian Schools

The issues that can help to improve the quality of education in Nigeria in the short and long run boarder, according to Longe (1999), on eight factors, namely:

- Increase in public spending
- Student capacity to motivate to learn
- Subjects to be learned
- Teachers who know and who can teach
- Time for learning
- Requisite tools and technology
- Acquisition and use of inputs
- Performance.

Incidentally “Public spending” tops the list, currently the amount of money Nigeria devotes to education is far lower than 26% of government expenditure as recommended by UNESCO. This illustrates her poor commitment to the development of education and explains in part the progress that has been made in this sector since 1990. In fact, if we focus on primary or universal basic education, the situation is not encouraging because of poor funding and inadequate resources. This situation has led to poor quality schooling at this level. With reliable statistics for the purpose of monitoring and planning simply not available, education improvement in Nigeria, especially at primary level, has not been hindered. However, much as the government of Nigeria may be aware of the need to provide more resources to improve the quality of primary education in the country.

School administration Burton and Brueckner (1955) have suggested that supervision was first conceived as a firm of inspection in its earliest beginnings, for example, dated back to 1909 when groups of citizen were appointed to inspect the school plant and equipment and the level of achievement of pupils in the United States. The town select men serve as inspectors until the other administration arrangement began to evolve. Here in Nigeria, inspection of instruction began with the recognition of formal education and the recognition of the leadership of schools-primary and secondary. With the development of administrative positions of headmasters, principals, inspection was gradually shifted from lay people to professionals. Supervisors of special subjects made their appearance, late in the 19th century supervision took the form of inspection until about 1920. It's to be noted that since 1920, supervision has been characterized by the added dimension of democratic leadership in the supervisory role.

Some writers such as Harris (1963) Curtin (1964) and Wiles (1967) have suggested that fundamental role of the instructional supervisor is to bring about improved instruction. Burton and Bruckner (1955), stressed the involvement of teachers in the process of their own improvement as a goal of supervision. A broader concept was expressed by Neagley and Evans (1964).

The considered that the growth of teachers administrators, parents as well as the child, is a legitimate concern of the supervisor who works toward improved instruction. Dictionary of education, (Good, 1945) defines supervision as: all effort of designated of schools officials toward providing leadership to teachers and other educational workers in the improvement of instruction, involve the stimulation, professional growth and development of teachers a selection and revision of educational objectives, materials of instruction, and method of teaching and evaluation of instructions.

Harmes (1959) summarized the above statement stating that, supervision may be broadly defined as services provided for the improvement of instruction. Harmes further suggest that because the teacher is an agent of instruction, his improvement is also a legitimate goal of supervision. Wiles (1967) supported this by saying that “Supervision is assistance in the development of better teaching/learning situation.”

The primary and secondary school teachers are agent of instructions. They not only give instruction to students, but they also help in evaluating whether or not to help the students. (b) Giving honest accurate and definite report on, the schools he inspect on the teachers, she observes that educational values obtained from expenditure of supervision is part of the school administration. While most people educationalist or writers on education agreed that the improvement of instruction should be the main focus of supervision. There remains some disagreement over the means to best effect improvement. The general public seems to expect that supervision should be done by administrator Davis (1964), however, states that “Where there is a supervisory principal, there is almost always the chief evaluator of his teachers” certainly, the evaluation aspect of supervision has largely come to reside with the principals or headmasters office, for it's from this office more than any other, that recommend actions must come for reemployment, tenure, salary, promotions etc.

The Need for Inspection/Supervision

These are summarized as below:

- a. To provide guidance and help to the teachers
- b. To keep abreast with time, there by keeping in touch with modern techniques of teaching.

- c. Through supervision, the ministry, local school boards, teachers, pupils, and the general public are able to know the progress of the school.
- d. To see minimum standards are maintained in schools
- e. To see that funds are used judiciously. Structure of organization. The inspectorate division of state ministry of education is solely responsible for the conduct of inspection throughout the state. The division is headed by the chief inspector of education (as the chief adviser on professional aspects of education.)

Responsibility for the advancement of primary education in the state as a whole falls within the schedule of duties of the chief education officer (Primary). Directly under him are field are inspectors of education (senior inspectors, assistant inspectors) charged with responsibilities for advice on professional and administrative matters affecting primary education, supervision and inspectors of primary schools in the respective areas of jurisdiction. The area, inspector is the head of the inspectorate division of the local education authority. He is assisted by a number of assistant area inspectors. Responsibility for the advancement of post primary education is direct function of the ministry of education under the direction of the chief inspector of education. He is assisted by the chief education officer (secondary) and host of inspectors the inspectorate division of the federal ministry of education for federal institutions in all the states of the federation. Supervisory techniques first of all, it's necessary to say that there are the teachings – learning situation in helping to achieve the desired objective.

Traditional Concept of Inspection and Supervision

The terms “inspector” and “supervisor” are sometime used to mean the same thing. In the past, the two terms meant different things. Inspection was used to mean the specific occasion when a school was visited, examine and evaluated as a place of learning in such a way that advice may be given for its improvement, and that advice embodied in a report. Used in this way, inspection is distinct from supervision, which is a constant and continuous process of more personal guidance based on frequent visits when attention was directed to one or more aspects of the school and its organization. The inspector was therefore regarded as a superior to the supervisor. The inspector was, in all cases, an official of ministry of education, the controller of education, while the supervisor were by and large, representative of the voluntary agency institutions overseeing the administration of education in their various agencies. The inspector was looked upon as a fault finder and his behavior and attitude were similar to those of Policeman. He was rigid, stern looking in his attitude and he was concerned finding out whether what was supposed to be done has been done no more, no less! It was therefore not his duty to give advice even when and where one was needed. The supervisor however, had a wider meaning which included not only inspection but also supervisory duties.

Modern Concept

Today, supervision in education includes all those efforts designed for a leader, a head teacher, head master or principal to stimulate, coordinate and guide the growth of teachers so that, they can better stimulate and guide the growth of their students. The supervisor, who now has inspectoral functions, is first and foremost, and an adviser to teachers. It's therefore pertinent to say that both “inspection” and “supervision” aim at the same goal and are therefore used inter changeably to mean the same thing in the present day educational administration.

The main function of supervisor therefore includes:

- a. The provision by every possible means of concrete and constructive advice to teachers so that the quality of education may improve. He help the teachers to cooperatively develops favorable climate for effective teaching and learning.
- b. He directly influences the behaviors of teachers and the teaching processes employed to promote pupils learning.
- c. He ensures that each individual teacher within the school system has been performing the duties for which he is scheduled.
- d. To improve the incompetent teachers.
- e. He helps them to improve on their effectiveness of classroom management and assess the “tone” of the school and identify some of its most urgent needs.
- f. He cooperatively assists the teachers to discover special abilities or qualities possessed by the teacher in the school.
- g. He ensure that teachers conduct classes using child centered method and according to the teachers in the school.

- h. He ensure that teachers conduct classes using child centered method and according to the lesson plan, he should observe the different activities of the teacher, example story telling styles conducting reading or learners presentation of project work, etc. and should see whether they are keeping reading record properly.
- i. He should provide a forum through which a purposeful and constructive advice can be rendered for the sake of improving the quality of teaching and learning in schools through improvement of educational facilities.

II. Recommendations

To this end, the following recommendations are made:

1. Federal and state government should appoint only professionals to supervisory positions in schools and to the inspectorate in the ministry of education.
2. Schools supervisors and inspectors should increase efforts in school supervision/inspection to ensure quality in education.
3. Federal and state governments should make the teaching profession attractive by paying commensurate salaries and give other fringe benefits to teachers.
4. Federal and state governments, authorities in schools and in institutions should employ more of professional trained teachers and make opportunity for training those already employed.
5. Management and leadership in schools/institutions should set up school culture, values and standards in order to provide an all-round training of learners.
6. Federal government should increase expenditure on education system.
7. Federal and state government, schools and institutions should initiate efforts to implement total quality management (TQM) ideas or principles in the education system.
8. Federal and state ministry of education in collaboration with schools and institutions should review curricular regularly to update them and make them relevant to current trends and needs of the nation.

III. Conclusion

This paper examines the concept school supervision and inspection and highlights its place in school administration. Some suggestions are offered for its improvement without adequate school supervision and inspection, there cannot be improvement of instructions. The supervisors must understand that supervisory practices are changing and as a good supervisor, he must prepare to grow with changing situations and of the school system. The political, economic and social problems of Nigeria may affect effective supervision and inspection of Nigerian schools, yet a lot of effort can be made to give supervision and inspection special attention.

The inspectorate division should as well come up with innovations and be truly concerned with the enhancement of teaching and learning in Nigerian schools. The government on the other hand should motivate the inspectors with attractive remuneration and logistics.

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