INSTRUCTIONAL SUPERVISION IN THE ADMINISTRATION OF SECONDARY EDUCATION: A PANACEA FOR QUALITY ASSURANCE

Florence Imaobong Archibong

Faculty Of Education University Of Port Harcourt Nigeria

Abstract

This paper addresses Instructional supervision in the administration of secondary education as a panacea for quality assurance highlighting the concepts of instructional supervision, differences between supervision and inspection, quality assurance/total quality management as well as quality in teaching and learning. Also instructional supervision as a viable tool for quality output in secondary education and the techniques of instructional supervision were treated like classroom observation, teacher visitation, demonstration, workshop, micro-teaching, listening to recordings, guided practice and research. Since an unsupervised instruction may mar the standard of education, it is therefore suggested that principals as catalysts should facilitate the implementation of the various sets of instructional activities that will improve the teaching-learning situation in the input-process-output framework. This is geared towards an effective, viable, vibrant and qualitative educational system.

Keywords: Instructional supervision, secondary education, quality assurance.

Introduction

A simple way of appreciating education is that it is a tool or a necessary weapon for every human being to acquire for the purpose of navigating this complex world without which the individual may get lost in it or live in darkness without being blind. (Aguba, 2009:25).

It is the biggest instrument for academic progress, social mobilization, political survival and effective national development of any country and constitutes the single largest enterprise in the country like Nigeria. (Lomak, (n.d) in Akpa, 2002:54).

Secondary education is the education children receive after primary education and before the tertiary stage within the age range of 12 to 18 years. The broad goals are to prepare the individual for useful living within the society and higher education under the context of the 6-3-3-4 system of education. (Federal Republic of Nigeira, 2004: 18-20).

To be able to effectively provide education, there is need to ensure that the educational system is reliable. Reliability in terms of educational system can only be enhanced through supervision. (Peretomode, 2004:184).

According to Nwankwo (1984) as cited by Peretomode (2004:184) supervision can be divided into two categories. These are instructional and personnel supervision. Instructional supervision has been defined as a set of activities which are carried out with the purpose of making the teaching and learning purpose better for the learner. Personnel supervision on the other hand deals with the set of activities which are carried out by the supervisor with the basic aim of sensitizing, mobilizing and motivating staff in the school towards performing their duties optimally in terms of the achievement of the stated aims and objectives of the educational system.

Ajayi and Ekundayo (2008:217) opined that quality assurance is a proactive means of ensuring quality in any organization. Quality assurance in education aims at preventing quality problems and ensures that the products of the system conform to the expected standards.

Ebong and Efue (2005) as cited by Ajayi and Ekundayo (2008:217) posit that it is a holistic term that is directed towards education as an entity. According to the authors, it entails the suppliers and consumers and all the various activities put in place to produce quality products and services.

Enaohwo (2003) in Ajayi and Ekundayo (2008:217) submitted that the concept of quality assurance in the education system can be looked at from two angles, viz: the internal perspective (within the system) and the external measures (checks and balances by the regulatory agencies).

This paper seeks therefore to highlight instructional supervision in the administration of secondary education as a veritable tool for quality assurance.

The Concept of Instructional Supervision

Instructional supervision is that phase of school administration which focuses primarily upon the achievement of the appropriate expectations of educational system. (Eye, Netzer and Krey, 1971:30 cited in Peretomode (2004:192). Wiles (1967),Alphonso(1975:35-

36), Aderounmu and Ehiametalor (1985:199) and Wiles (1975:5) respectively, cited in Peretomode (2004:192) sees it as those activities which are designed to improve instruction at all levels of the school enterprise and as behaviour officially designed by the organization that directly affects teacher behaviour in such a way to facilitate pupil learning and achieve the goals of the organization. Instructional supervision is basically concerned with supporting and assisting teachers to improve instructions through changing their behaviour. The instructional supervisor does much than inspect. Instructional supervision is a service activity that exists to help teachers do their job better. An instructional supervisor may not be an official sent from the Ministry or Board of Education.

Hoy and Forsyth (1986:3) and Ukeje (1992) respectively, according to Akinwumiju and Agabi (2008:69-70) define instructional supervision as a collaborative effort involving a set of activities designed to improve the teaching and learning process. The purpose of supervision is not to find fault or to punish, but rather to work cooperatively with the teacher. Supervision as the element of the administrative process is concerned with efforts to guide the day-to-day activities of the work group by stimulating, directing and coordinating the workers and their efforts, cultivating good working personal relationships so that they all work towards a more efficient achievement of the task goal.

Difference Between Supervision and Inspection

Akinwumiju and Agabi (2008:70) 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, 2008:68-69).

Mbiti (1974) cited in Nwagwu, Ijeoma and Nwagwu (2004:325) views supervision as one of the basic requirements of administration that concerns itself with the tactics of efficiency and effective management of human and material resources. It is a way to advise, guide, refresh, encourage, simulate, improve and oversee teachers with the hope of seeking their cooperation in order that they may be successful in the task of teaching and classroom management. Educational supervision is a process to ascertain that the teachers carry out the task of teaching to an expected level according to the stipulated guidelines, which control the educational system. It is a way of persuading workers to desist from applying wrong methods and procedures in carrying out certain functions of their jobs. While Okoro (1994) in Nwagwu, Ijeoma and Nwagwu (2004:325) opined that inspection is seen as an instrument with which the political and administrative authorities maintain the necessary contact with the schools, teachers, pupils and the community and so ensure that the system is working satisfactorily. In this sense inspection is to be viewed as fulfilling a controlling, coordinating and communicating role as guardian of education standards.

Quality Assurance/Total Quality Management

An attempt to eliminate the inadequacies of quality control gave birth to other terminologies such as total quality management or quality assurance. Quality assurance is seen as a proactive approach to production processes in the manufacturing sector. The origin of quality assurance can be traced to two Americans (W. Edwards Derming, Joseph Juran) and a Japanese (Ishikawa) who were identified as exercising the greatest influences on the total quality approach to management. (Cole, 1996 cited in Babalola and Ayeni (2009:762).

According to Bateman and Snell (1999) cited in Archibong (2008:26) Total Quality Management (TQM) refers to an integrative management approach to customers satisfaction through a variety of tools and techniques meant to achieve high quality of goals and services.

Therefore, Total Quality Management and Quality Assurance are used interchangeably in modern trend to refer to integrative approach of management through the efforts of all, both top and lower employees towards improving the organizational practices that will produce the best output to the satisfaction of customers.

According to Okeke (2001: 23) "quality management is the aggregate of all efforts from the top management to the lowest rung of the organizational hierarchy geared towards doing the right things first and all the time and continually striving for improvement".

Fraizler (n.d) cited in Babalola and Ayeni (2009:743) posit that quality management requires the attention of education managers in the input-process-output framework to

achieve any success since quality encompasses quality in people, process, service and products.

In the same vein Iheonunekwu (2003) cited in Babalola and Ayeni (2009:743-744) state that each element in the input-process-output framework of education enterprise should be of an acceptable quality to ensure high quality in education. This means that if educational inputs (financial and human resources) such as funding, learner enrolment, quality and quantity of teachers are in the right proportion, learner/teacher ratio, curriculum, textbooks, school materials and facilities etc are adequately, proportionately and timely provided for education delivery, quality management is on course. Similarly when the process of delivering the educational service is monitored, checked, encouraged and improved for efficiency and effectiveness, the end product would be of high quality. At this point, how learning is organized and checked, the content and quality of what is taught, the number of teaching hours and contact hours ascertained, assessment and graduation procedures are determined. After this input and process, the output is now evaluated to ascertain attainment and standards which determine their relevance and fitness have been realized.

That is, have the students actually gained the knowledge, skills and attitude required of them (achievement)?. How encouraging is the percentage number of students who completed the course of study and obtained certificate (attainment)? Finally, does the product satisfy societal expectations and customer needs? The feed back or data derived from this input-process-output help the education managers to replan, adjust and improve where necessary for quality outcome so as to measure up with the ever-changing political, social, economic scientific and technological demands.

Simply put, Archibong (2008:33) posits that in social service industry like education, productivity is difficult to measure because it is the same students who go in as raw materials that undergoes the transformational process (teaching/learning) and now come out as finished products (graduates) the unit of measurement is behaviourally.

Quality in Teaching and Learning

Quality in teaching and learning according to Okorie (2002) in Nnabuo, Okorie, Agabi and Igwe (2004:46) results from an inter-play among a broad range of success factors that have important consequence for effective teacher performance and student learning, such factors includes:

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

2.   financing such as provision of funds to schools, staff remuneration, school budget and its implementation.

3.   personnel including quality and quantity, quality mind set and orientation among personnel usually resulting from the organizations motivational efforts, staff satisfaction, commitment and morale and so on.

4.   the schools organizational environment including climate and leadership.

Instructional Supervision as a Viable Tool for Quality Output in Secondary Education

Instructional supervision is an aspect of checking quality output in secondary school hence it is designed to evaluate educational inputs and outputs. The act of teaching and learning is supervised to see if it is achieving the desired objectives. During this supervision, a subject is examined in relation to teaching methods applied, instructional materials available for use and the teacher himself in terms of qualification and training. The standard in each subject area is examined. Ezewu (1987) in Nnabuo et al (2004:217) states that academic inspection should follow the under-mentioned guidelines as in Fig.1 which takes care of input variables (Teacher), process variable (Teaching) and output variables (Achievement).

Fig. 1. Guideline for Academic Inspection

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

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

The explanation of the variables are as follows:

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

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

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

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

Techniques of Instructional Supervision

Peretomode (2004:196-200) outlined activities that the skillful instructional supervisor can utilize to bring about desirable effect in teacher behaviour for achieving teaching effectiveness. They include:

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

2.   Demonstration: It involves the presentation of a prearranged series of events to a group for their view. This stimulates teachers' growth and group discussion.

3.   Teacher visitation: This activity also called "intervisiting" or "reciprocal visitations" involves one teacher visiting and observing another teacher in action in another class within the same school (inter-class visitation) or in another school

(inter-school visitation). This method enhances proficiency especially if the beginning or inexperienced teacher watches experienced teacher in action.

4.   Workshop: The activity involves a small group of people temporarily formed to discuss a specific topic or work on a common problem and trying to find solution(s) to a specific problem in a face-to-face situation.

5.   Micro-teaching: It is a teaching situation which is scaled down in terms of time, class size and teaching complexity to allow the teacher focus on a selected teaching strategy. New skills are developed and old ones are refined. Usually it involves a small group of 5-10 pupils where the teacher employs a particular skill within say ten minutes involving content and skill. Emphasis is on the issue of immediate feedback where the teacher is evaluated by the supervisor in form of replaying a recorded lesson or actual discussion (if it was not recorded). When corrections are made the teacher re-teaches the lesson to the same group or a different group for improvement.

6.   Listening to tape, radio or recordings: This involves using sound recordings to present ideas to one or more listeners in such way as to help develop understanding or skills. Also the use of visual presentations through the media film, television, or video tape are increasingly important in the supervisory process.

7.   Guided Practice: This supervision technique involves individualized or small group manipulative activities. It is an approach in which doing is emphasized rather than talking with practice activities arranged out of context.

8.   Research: Research is the systematic and objective collection and analysis of data in order to find solutions to identified problems. Here the supervisor work with and through teachers to finding solutions to problems of teaching/learning that confronts them instead of dictating solutions to or autocratically setting educational problems relating to teaching and teachers.

Summary and Conclusion

The concepts of Instructional supervision, differences between supervision and inspection and quality assurance/total quality management were addressed, including quality in teaching and learning and instructional supervision as a viable tool for quality output in secondary education. Also the techniques of instructional supervision were not left out like

classroom observation, teacher visitation, demonstration, workshop, micro-teaching, listening to recordings, guided practice and research.

It is therefore concluded that the importance of Instructional supervision to quality assurance cannot be over-emphasized as it constitute a vehicle for the delivery of qualitative education.

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

The need for Instructional supervision for quality assurance is a plea for the cooperation of all educational stakeholders towards a more efficient achievement of the task goal.

Therefore quality education can be actualized where the educational system is reliable and this reliability can only be achieved through both instructional and personnel supervision by the principals. The role of the principals is to facilitate the implementation of the various sets of instructional activities that will improve the teaching-learning situation in the input-process - output framework without which the educational endeavours may be an exercise in futility.

References:

Aguba, C.R. (2009). Educational Administration and Management – Issues and Perspectives. Enugu: Tons and Tons PDS Publishers.

Ajayi, I.A., & Ekundayo, H.T. (2008). The Deregulation of University Education in Nigeria: Implications for Quality Assurance. Retrieved April 16, 2011; from http://www.nobleworld.biz/images/AjayiEkundayopdf.

Akinwumiju, J.A. & Agabi, C.O. (2008). Foundations of School Management. Port Harcourt: University of Port Harcourt Press.

Akpa, G.O. (Ed.). (2002). The 21st Century Principal in Nigeria. Jos: Ichejim Publications.

Archibong, F.I. (2008). Quota Admission System and Quality Output in the Federal Government Colleges in Rivers State. Unpublished M.ed Thesis, University of Port Harcourt.

Babalola, J.B. & Ayeni, A.O. (Eds.). (2009). Educational Management: Theories and Tasks. Yaba-Lagos: Macmillan Nigeria Publishers Limited.

Federal Republic of Nigeria. (2004). National Policy on Education. Yaba-Lagos: NERDC

Publishers.

Nnabuo, P.O.M, Okorie, N.C., Agabi, O.G. & Igwe, L.E.B. (2004). Fundamentals of Educational Management. Owerri: Versatile Publishers.

Nwagwu, N.A., Ijeoma, M.E. & Nwagwu, C.C. (Eds.). (2004). Organization and Administration of Education:

Perspectives and Practices. Benin City: Festa Printing Press Ltd.

Okeke, B.S. (2001). Quality Management and National Goal Attainment in Education. The Case of Nigeria. An Inaugural Lecture Series No. 28 of University of Port Harcourt.

Peretomode, V.F. (Ed.). (2004). Introduction to Educational Administration Planning and Supervision.

Lagos: Joja Educational Research and Publishers Ltd.