



AFRIJEM

AFRICAN JOURNAL *of* Educational Management (AFRIJEM)

ISSN 1596-6260

VOL.1 NO. 1 JUNE, 2014



Published by

Association of Theorists and Practitioners in Educational Management in Africa (ATPEMA)
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ASSESSMENT OF EFFECTIVENESS OF QUALITY ASSURANCE PRACTICES BY KWARA STATE UNIVERSAL BASIC EDUCATION BOARD

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Abstract

Achieving the goal of Education requires providing an enabling environment that will facilitate the attainment of such goals. This paper examined quality assurance practices being adopted by the Kwara State Universal Basic Education and perceived effectiveness by the stakeholders. Using a sample of 382 stakeholders (teachers and students) randomly selected from 32 basic schools across Kwara State. The Questionnaire titled, "perceived effectiveness of quality assurance practices" and structured interview were used to collect data. Findings of the study revealed that quality assurance practices being adopted by Kwara State Universal Basic Education Board in the areas of monitoring and supervision, provision of instructional materials and recruitment process were found to be fairly effective while that of training of teachers was found to be highly effective. Among the recommendations made are the need for improvement in the monitoring and supervision of teachers, recruitment process and adequate distribution of instructional materials to basic schools for quality assurance practices to be effective.

Introduction

Education is recognized all over the world as the cornerstone of any structure for sustainable development of any nation. It is the fulcrum around which the quick development of economic, political, sociological and human resources of any country revolves (Ogobo, 2008). Thus, quality education as spelt out by the National Policy on Education (2004) should be able to build a free and democratic society, a society that is just, egalitarian, united and strong, a self reliant nation with a great and dynamic economy.

The education of the Universal Education Scheme which was launched by former president Olusegun Obasanjo at the Kangiwa square, Sokoto on the 30th day of September 1999 was received with a pinch of salt when the issue relating to the failure of an earlier secular programme comes to memory particularly when the earlier programme was launched by the same leader some years back. The issue of quality assurance in basic schools became important as a way of safeguarding the nation resources and to prevent the re-occurrence of the failure of the programme. Fasasi (2006), defines quality assurance as a consistent provision and utilization of goods and high standard resources (input) to foster effective teaching and learning in every stage and aspect (process) of the educational system. The huge amount of money been expended in basic education programme may be meaningless and wasteful if measures are not put in place to ensure and guarantee the attainment of the objectives of the scheme. These measures are embedded in quality assurance practices which are expected to facilitate teacher's job performance and consequently lead to the attainment of the goals of the Universal Basic Education.

Review of Related Literature

Quality assurance is defined as the degree of excellence. Olaifa (2010), explained quality assurance as all managerial activities put in place to ensure

conformity to all process and specifications leading to the production of a quality product. Quality assurance literally means the assurance of high quality of a product through quality process i.e ensuring adequate control of all activities to ensure that when the work is completed, there would be a glaring evidence of satisfactory completion, efficient use of resources and customer satisfactory as the goal. It is the concern of every stakeholder in an educational setting particularly in a developing country like Nigeria how to ensure quality in the educational system so as to guarantee the development of the nation economy.

Thus, for education to serve the purpose of turning around the nation's economy, it has to be of quality and high standard. When the quality of education is lowered, then the country would be less productive. It is then, logical to say that emphasis must be laid on how best to increase the standard of education in a country from time to time.

Williams (2010) defines quality assurance as the deliberate attempt of making sure that standard, merit, excellence and perfection are maintained or attained in a given organization's input, process and output. Quality assurance starts with quality control by ensuring that the quality of products are maintained during the production process, eliminating errors before they occur and finding any defective products before they are distributed for customers' consumptions.

In an educational setting, quality assurance is ensured by putting everything that will guarantee quality product in place right from the stage of input to the stage of process that would lead to quality output. This implies that the inputs in educational system which include human and material resources must be of high quality to pave way for smooth processing and the process must equally be monitored and thoroughly supervised to avoid anything that could jeopardize the quality of the output. Olaifa (2014) is of the opinion that quality assurance ensures that quality standards are

set and applied throughout the business procedures right from the very start of the business activities. The assurance of quality in all processes of production will go a long way to bring about efficiency of resources and efficient realization of organizational goals.

Effectiveness is a relative term when measured in educational sector. It means doing the right thing at every stage of the production in order to get the desired result. Oduwaiye (1997) postulates that effective measures the number of customers one is able to serve, the overall outcome or output of a production, the proportion of service provided without error or the proportion of services provided without a complaint or the rate of complaints to the total services provided.

In education, effectiveness can be easily determined in terms of students academic performance in both internal and/or external examinations, the climate time of the school, leadership and managerial roles of the school head, as well as employability of graduates after school. Effectiveness measures how much of the targeted objectives were reached. They relate actual values to expected values to determine the degree of deviation. Griffin (2002) defines effectiveness as such a means of making right decisions and successfully implementing them and relates them to outputs of the job and what the managers actually achieve. Mullins (2005) conceptualized effectiveness as the capacity to service, adapt, maintain and grow regardless of the particular objectives to be fulfilled. Effectiveness can be seen as the attainment of the predetermined goals of an organisation, it is the end product of an organisation that will determine the effectiveness or otherwise of an organisation.

Oduwaiye (1997) opines that despite the scanty and poor interconnected iterative concept one can define effectiveness in a broad term, that is, effectiveness is the degree to which the organisational goal is achieved. Effectiveness must be related to the achievement of some purpose, objective or tasks to be performed. It is concern with doing the right things. Olawore (2003) defines effectiveness as the accomplishment of the set goals and objectives over a period of time

Objectives of the Study

The study was set to achieve the following objectives:

- ✓ determine the various quality assurance practices adopted by the Kwara State Universal Basic Education Board for basic schools teachers
- ✓ ascertain the perceived effectiveness of the quality assurance practices adopted by the Kwara State Universal Basic Education Board for basic school teachers in the area of monitoring supervision.

- ✓ examine the perceived effectiveness of the quality assurance practices adopted by the Kwara State Universal Basic Education Board in the area of teachers recruitment.
- ✓ Find out the perceived effectiveness of the quality assurance practices adopted by the Kwara State Universal Basic Education Board in the provision of instructional materials.
- ✓ assess the perceived effectiveness of the quality assurance practices adopted by the Kwara State Universal Basic Education Board in the area of training and retraining of teachers.

Research Questions

The following research questions were raised to guide the study:

- ✓ What are the various quality assurance practices adopted by the Kwara State Universal Basic Education Board for basic schools teachers?
- ✓ How effective are the quality assurance practices adopted by the Kwara State Basic Education Board in the area of monitoring and supervision of teachers as perceived by the stakeholder?
- ✓ How effective are the quality assurance practices adopted by the Kwara State Basic Education Board in the area of teachers recruitment as perceived by stakeholders?
- ✓ How effective are the quality assurance practices adopted by the Kwara State Basic Education Board in the area of provision of instructional materials as perceived by stakeholders?
- ✓ How effective are the quality assurance practices adopted by the Kwara State Basic Education Board in the area of training and retraining of teachers as perceived by stakeholders?

Methodology

The study was a descriptive survey with much focus on already existing situation without any manipulation from the researcher. Random sampling technique was used to 32 basic schools across the state while purposive sampling technique was used to select 32 head teachers in the selected basic schools. Three hundred and fifty teachers were also selected as sample from the selected basic schools, making a total of 382 respondents as sample for the study.

Instrumentation

Data for the study were gathered through the use of questionnaire and interview. The interview was structured and conducted to elicit information on

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quality assurance practices adopted by the Kwara State Universal Basic Education Board for teachers in basic schools. The questionnaire was also developed as research instrument for obtaining data from the respondents on perceived effectiveness of the quality assurance practices adopted by the Kwara State Universal Basic Education Board for teachers in basic schools. The questionnaire was tagged "Quality Assurance Practices Perceived Effectiveness Questionnaire".

The validity of the instrument used was ascertained by giving the drafted questionnaire to expert in the field of test and measurement and some lecturers in the Department of Educational Management for face and content validity. While the reliability of the questionnaire was determined using the test-re-test method. The questionnaire were administered twice on the same respondent within an inter of two weeks and these two sets of scores were correlated using Pearson product moment correlation statistics for a test of reliability and an appropriate correlation co-efficient of 0.75 was obtained to establish the reliability level of the questionnaire.

Methods of data collection and analysis

Data were collected by the researchers with the help of two research assistants. The data collected were analysed using descriptive statistics. Rating scales ranging from highly effective, fairly effective to not effective were use to measure responses of the respondents and percentages were calculated.

Results and Discussion

Table 1: Quality Assurance Practices in Monitoring and Supervision of Teachers.

Stakeholders	Perceived Effectiveness	Highly	%	Fairly	%	Not	%	Total
Teachers		31	8.9	254	72.6	65	18.6	350
Head teachers		11	34.4	16	50	5	15.6	32
Total Respondents		42	10.9	270	70.7	70	18.3	382

Answering research questions

Research question 1: what are the various quality assurance practices adopted by the Kwara State Universal Basic Education Board for basic schools teachers?

The identified quality assurance practices by the Kwara State Basic Education Board for basic schools teachers include:

- ✓ Provision of school facilities
- ✓ Monitoring and supervision of teachers
- ✓ Training and re-training of teachers
- ✓ Prompt payment of salaries and allowances
- ✓ Provision of instructional materials
- ✓ Touring of schools to identify their problems
- ✓ Recruitment of qualified teachers.

It is however important to note that, the quality assurance practices being adopted by the Kwara State Universal Basic Education Board are not limited to the above mentioned ones.

Research Question 2: How effective are the quality assurance practices adopted by the Kwara State Universal Basic Education Board in the area of monitoring and supervision of teachers as perceived by stakeholders?

The response of the stakeholders on effectiveness or otherwise of the quality assurance practices adopted by the Kwara State Universal Basic Education Board for basic schools teachers were collated and subjected to percentage analysis as shown in Table 1

Table 1 reveals the analysis of the responses given by the respondents on research question 1. A total respondent of 42 which represents 10.9% of the total respondents viewed the quality assurance practices on supervision and monitoring of teachers as highly effective while 270 (70.7%) and 70(18.3%) of the respondent believed that the practices are fairly effective and not effective respectively. This therefore implies that the quality assurance practices on supervision and monitoring of teachers is fairly effective as being perceived by the stakeholders.

Research question 3: How effective are the quality assurance practices adopted by the Kwara State Universal Basic Education Board in the area of teacher recruitment as perceived by stakeholders?

The response of the stakeholders on effectiveness or otherwise of the quality assurance practices adopted by the Kwara State Universal Basic Education Board in the area of monitoring and supervision of basic schools teachers were collated and subjected to percentage analysis as shown in Table 2

Table 2: Quality Assurance Practices in Teacher Recruitment

Stakeholders	Perceived Effectiveness Of Stakeholders						Total
	Highly Effective	%	Fairly Effective	%	Not Effective	%	
Teachers	16	4.6	71	20.3	263	75.1	350
Head teachers	2	6.3	9	28.1	21	65.6	32
Total Respondents	18	4.7	80	20.9	284	74.3	382

Source: Field work, 2014

Table 2 reveals the analysis of the responses given by the respondents to research question 2. A total of 18 respondents which represent 4.7% of the total respondents perceived the quality assurance on the teachers recruitment by the Kwara State Universal Basic Education Board as being highly effective while 80(20.9%) and 284 (74.3%) of the respondents perceived the quality assurance practices as being fairly effective and not effective. It is therefore concluded that, quality assurance practices on teachers recruitment is not effective and this could be as a result

of the fact that wrong hands are being recruited into the teaching profession at basic school level.

Research question 4: How effective are the quality assurance practices adopted by the Kwara State Universal Basic Education Board in the provision of instructional materials as perceived by stakeholders?

The response of the stakeholders on effectiveness or otherwise of the quality assurance practices adopted by the Kwara State Universal Basic Education Board in the provision of instructional materials were collated and subjected to percentage analysis as shown in Table 3

Table 3: Quality Assurance Practices in the Provision of Infrastructure Materials

Stakeholders	Perceived Effectiveness Of Stakeholders						Total
	Highly Effective	%	Fairly Effective	%	Not Effective	%	
Teachers	48	13.7	256	73.1	46	13.1	350
Head teachers	10	31.3	20	62.5	2	6.3	32
Total Respondents	58	15.2	276	72.3	48	12.6	382

Source: Fieldwork, 2014

Table 3 shows the analysis of the responses given by the respondents to research question 3. A total of 58 respondents which represent 15.2% of the total respondents perceived the quality assurance practices in the provision of infrastructural materials being adopted by the Kwara State Universal Basic Education Board as highly effective while 256 (73.1%) and 46 (13.1%) of the total respondents perceived the practices as being fairly effective and not effective respectively. This therefore implies that the quality assurance practices being adopted in the provision of infrastructural materials to basic schools is fairly effective. This, the

researcher attributed to inadequacy of the instructional materials being distributed to schools.

Research question 5: How effective are the quality assurance practices being adopted by Kwara State Universal Basic Education Board in training and re-training of basic schools teachers as perceived by stakeholders?

The response of the stakeholders on effectiveness or otherwise of the quality assurance practices adopted by the Kwara State Universal Basic Education Board in the area of training and re-training of basic schools teachers were collated and subjected to percentage analysis as shown in Table 4

Table 4: Quality Assurance Practices in the Training and Re-training of Basic Schools Teachers

Stakeholders	Perceived Effectiveness Of Stakeholders						Total
	Highly Effective	%	Fairly Effective	%	Not Effective	%	
Teachers	251	71.7	41	11.7	58	16.6	350
Head teachers	21	65.6	8	25	3	9.4	32
Total Respondents	272	71.2	49	12.8	61	15.9	382

Source: Fieldwork, 2014

Table 4 reveals the analysis of the responses given by the respondents to research question 4. A total of 272 respondents which represent 71.2% of the total respondents perceived the quality assurance practices in the training and re-training of basic schools teachers being adopted by the Kwara State Universal Basic Education Board as being highly effective while 49 (12.8%) and 61 (15.9%) of the total respondents perceived the practices as being highly effective and not being effective respectively. It is therefore concluded that the training and retraining as part of the quality assurance practices being adopted by the Kwara State Universal Basic Education Board is highly effective.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following conclusions were drawn:

1. Quality assurance practices in the monitoring and supervision of basic school teachers being adopted by the Kwara State Universal Basic Education Board are perceived by stakeholders as fairly effective.
2. Wrong hands are at times being recruited into teaching profession at the basic school level because the stakeholders perceived the recruitment process as not being effective.
3. Training and retraining of teachers have been contributing positively to teachers' effectiveness in the discharge of their duties as it was perceived as been effective.
4. Provision of infrastructure materials to basic schools as one of the quality assurance practices by Kwara State Universal Basic Education Board has not been yielding desired results and this could be as a result of its shortage.

Based on the findings and conclusions of this study, the following recommendations are made:

1. Effort should be intensified by the Kwara State Universal Basic Education Board to improve in the quality assurance practices in the area of monitoring and supervision so as to yield expected results.
2. More techniques that will help to fish-out best among the applicants in

the recruitment process should be introduced so that the practices will be effective.

3. Infrastructural materials should be adequately distributed to basic schools for quality assurance.

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