

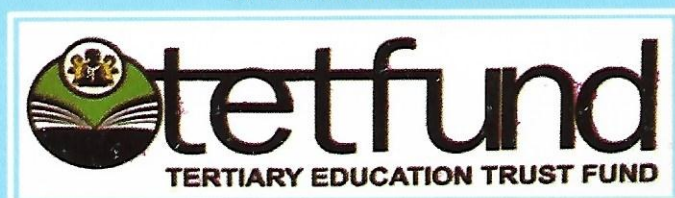
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**ASSESSMENT OF QUALITY ASSURANCE OF
CHRISTIAN RELIGIOUS STUDIES CURRICULUM OF
SENIOR SECONDARY SCHOOLS BY TEACHERS IN
AKOKO DISTRICT OF ONDO STATE, NIGERIA**

Ojo Oludare David(Ph.D)

Abstract

The importance of quality assurance in the school system cannot be overemphasized. Stakeholders have often expressed their concern about how performances of students have not been encouraging especially in Christian Religious Studies and the social malaise expressed by youths these days. This paper deals with quality assurance in Nigerian education with specific focus on Christian Religious Studies curriculum, teachers, and students in the school system.

It is set to assess the strategies employed by teachers in their attempt to provide quality education to students. The research design used was descriptive survey method, the population consisted of CRS teachers in public secondary schools and simple random sampling technique was used to select 60 teachers. Questionnaire was used to obtain data. Data were analysed by the use of descriptive statistics of frequency and mean. It is therefore concluded that teachers should be encouraged to attend seminars, workshops and conferences. There is a high impact on the teaching learning processes on the Christian Religious Studies curriculum and that quality assurance officers should increase the frequency of their visits to schools.

Keywords: Quality Assurance, Quality, Curriculum, Christian Religious Studies

Introduction

Quality assurance in education is the process of building into teaching learning process, carefully selected techniques that can assure the nation to expect world class products who are properly tutored with all the relevant knowledge, skills or attitudes that can qualify them to meet the aspirations and expectations of the nation, society and international community. (Salisu, 2017)

According to the National Education Quality Assurance Handbook for Basic Secondary Education in Nigeria (2016) the Federal Government is not satisfied with the mode of inspection of schools which did not lead to the expected improvement in learning outcomes in institutions below tertiary level. This is because over the years, the mode of inspection did not lead to the expected improvement in learning outcome. It opined that it was devoid of standard evaluation guidelines and largely limited to diagnosis without

helpful support for school improvement. The Nigerian Government therefore, created education agencies for various levels of our educational system and has a unit known as Quality Assurance unit, which is meant to ensure quality in all aspects of the education enterprise.

The term quality does not have a generally accepted definition. However, quality can be said to refer to the standard of a phenomenon when it is compared to other things like it. It can be said to be in the eyes of the beholder. It is that which best satisfies and exceeds customer's needs and wants. This is because the customers who make the judgment on quality do these by reference to the best comparative performance.

Quality assurance can be defined as a proactive means of ensuring quality in any organisation. It may also mean a systematic management and assessment procedure adopted by educational institutions and systems in order to monitor performance against objectives. Quality assurance in education therefore aims at preventing quality problems and ensures that the products of the system conform to standards. (Harman 2002, cited by Abdulkareem, Fassasi and Oyeniran 2012)

Quality assurance in education system therefore, is an umbrella concept for a lot of activities that are enshrined to improve the systems, input, process and output of education (Okebukola 2012). Quality assurance in the education system, therefore, involves the process of monitoring; assessing and evaluating all aspects of the education activities and communicating the outcome to all concerned with a view of improving the products of the education system. It is about continuous improvement. The importance of quality education in nation building cannot be overemphasized. Education has been described as the bedrock of every society and as a tool for nation building. The need for quality assurance in our education system can be stated below:

- (i) To serve as an 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 supervising education
- (iv) To determine quality of teacher input
- (v) To determine 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
- (vii) It would ensure how the financial resources available could be prudently and judiciously utilized. (Adegbesan, 2011)

From the foregoing, quality assurance in Nigeria is a paradigm shift from the former practice of school inspection to a monitoring and evaluating process that provides a new operating mode of evaluation. It ensures that evaluation processes and practices are carried out according to set standards that brings about improvement in outcomes for learners

According to Federal Education Quality Assurance Service (2015) Quality assurance involves systematic monitoring, evaluating, regulating and reporting of educational programmes and practices to ensure that acceptable standards are obtained and maintained. It is a dynamic process that provides for the needed guidance and support to schools for improved learning outcomes for learners. It might not be possible to recommend a specific quality assurance strategy that can be universally adopted to guarantee quality education because of the extent and level of programme, background of clientele, modes of operation, the purpose and scope of programme offered by different institutions. However, the question of quality assurance become a major concern to the government in terms of learners' achievement and behavior, the quality of teaching and learning, curriculum, care, guidance and safety, the learning environment, leadership management and other activities.

Statement of the Problem

Christian Religious Studies (CRS) on the school curriculum is a compulsory / core subject at the Lower Basic Schools while at the Upper Basic level, it is an elective subject. It has been observed and reported by many researchers that the performance of students at the senior secondary school certificate examination has not been encouraging. (Lawal. 2010, Gabriel, Ethalbert , Monty 2016) It has also been reported that the enrolment has been going down in recent times (Maigwi, 1995) Apart from the decline of students performance in external examination Ojo (2016) observed that the rate of indiscipline, examination malpractice and cult activities at all levels of education are on the increase.

It now seems as if the objectives of the CRS curriculum as set by curriculum developers have not been achieved. The question now is : are there no means to checkmate dwindling performance of students and the social unrest among the students. Or does it mean that the teaching- learning has not been able to yield any result?

It has been observed over the years that the mode of inspection of schools did not lead to the expected improvement in learners' outcome. It was devoid of standard evaluation guidelines and largely limited to diagnosis without helpful support for school development. There is the need therefore to ascertain whether the quality assurance strategies put in place in the teaching of Christian Religious Studies is making any remarkable improvement. This study therefore, is aimed at assessing the quality assurance strategies put in place and how it can be improved upon

Research Questions

1. To what extent does professional competence of teachers impact on the quality assurance of CRS curriculum?
2. To what extent do teaching and learning activities of teachers impact on the quality assurance of CRS curriculum?

3. To what extent does curriculum content used by teachers impact on the CRS curriculum?
4. To what extent do the monitoring and evaluation of teachers impact on the curriculum assurance of CRS curriculum?

Methodology

Descriptive survey research design was used in this study. This design was found to be ideal as it enabled an in-depth study of the relevant variables. Questionnaire was used to obtain responses from the teachers about the areas of the curriculum of Christian Religious Studies where quality assurance strategies were adopted to achieve the objectives of the curriculum. The study was conducted in four local government areas in Akoko district of Ondo State

The population for the study comprised of all CRS teachers in Akoko district of Ondo state while 15 teachers each were randomly selected from each local government making a total of 60 teachers that participated in the study. Simple random sampling was used to select the sample for this study.

Data was collected using questionnaire. The instrument was a four Likert scale type of Always, Often, Seldom and Never with value of 4, 3, 2, and 1 respectively. The questionnaire was suitable as a method of data collection because it allowed the researcher to cover the various aspects of the curriculum like teachers' professional competence, teaching learning activities, curriculum content, learning resources, monitoring and evaluation, rules and regulation, instructional resources, outcome of education among others

To ascertain the validity of the instrument, the researcher presented the questionnaire to two lecturers in the Department of Arts and Social Sciences, Faculty of Education University of Ilorin. Split half technique and Cronbach alpha were used to determine the internal coefficient of the instrument. The questionnaire had a coefficient of 0.83. The data collected was analysed using descriptive statistics

Results

1. **Research Question One** : To what extent does professional competence of teachers impact on the quality assurance of CRS curriculum?

Table 1 : Average mean score of professional competence of teachers impact on the quality assurance of CRS curriculum

S/N	ITEMS	AL	OF	SE	N	Mean
	Professional Competence					
1.	Seminars/workshop/ conferences are organized for teachers	24	34	44	25	2.12
2.	Seminars/ workshops / conferences have impact on my teaching	108	54	24	08	3.23
3.	Opportunity is given for further studies	20	54	38	23	2.03

4.	Your entitlement is given to you as and when due	84	60	40	04	3.13
5.	Learners are taught to apply knowledge to skill	120	57	20	06	3.38

Average mean score 2.79

Result in Tale 1 indicated the mean score for all the items, except that the first and third exceeded the critical value of 2.50. This implies that lack of seminars/workshops and conferences and opportunity for further studies reflects on professional competence of teachers on the quality of assurance strategies of CRS curriculum.

Research Question Two : To what extent do teaching and learning activities of teachers impact on the quality assurance of CRS curriculum

Table 2: Average mean score of teaching and learning activities of teachers' impact on the quality assurance of CRS curriculum

S/N	ITEMS	AL	OF	SE	N	Mean
	Teaching and Learning Processes					
6.	I give assignment to my students	152	45	14	5	3.60
7.	I refer students to books in the library	60	72	32	10	2.90
8.	Periods allocated to CRS are enough	80	72	30	6	3.13
9.	I give periodic tests to my students	160	51	10	3	3.73
10.	Instructional materials are used for teaching	72	51	26	17	2.76
11	Classroom environment is conducive for learning	136	45	20	6	3.45
12.	My students engage in extra curricula activities	164	45	12	3	3.73
13.	I go through the notes of my students	108	45	16	15	3.06
14.	I take care of the learners' welfare, health and safety	104	54	32	5	3.25
15.	I use ICT facilities for teaching and learning	24	30	30	34	1.96

Average mean score 3.16

The result in Table 2 indicated the extent of the impact of teachers' teaching and learning processes on CRS curriculum. All the items show high level impact except item fifteen which indicate low impact.

Research Question Three : To what extent does curriculum content used by teachers impact on the CRS curriculum

Table 3 : Average mean score of impact of curriculum content used by teachers on the CRS curriculum

S/N	ITEMS	AL	OF	SE	N	Mean
	Curriculum Content					
16.	I finish the syllabus within the stipulated time	132	54	20	4	3.50
17.	There are journals /books related to what I teach my students	64	75	34	7	3.00
18.	My students possess competences to aspire for further studies	176	42	10	2	3.83
19.	The curriculum prepares students to compete favourably with colleagues globally	124	54	20	6	3.40
20.	The Curriculum content is able to meet the needs of the learners	92	81	16	7	3.27

Average mean score 3.40

Table 3 revealed the results of the items. The average mean score of 3.40 is greater than the criterion mean score of 2.50. This implies that the curriculum content used by teachers has a very high impact on the CRS curriculum.

Research Question Four : To what extent do the monitoring and evaluation of teachers impact on the curriculum assurance of CRS curriculum

Table 4: Average mean score on the monitoring and evaluation of teachers impact on the quality assurance of CRS curriculum

S/N	ITEMS	AL	OF	SE	N	Mean
	Monitoring/ Evaluation					
21.	My Head of Department checks through my lesson note	136	45	20	6	3.45
22.	My Head of Department checks through students' notebooks	112	48	18	12	3.17
23.	Monitoring is conducted by the Ministry of Education	136	45	26	6	3.55
24.	The feedback of monitoring conducted is made known to teachers	104	54	32	5	3.25
25.	Those that come for monitoring are experts in your discipline	129	54	20	6	3.48

Average mean score 3.38

Table 4 revealed the result of the items. The average mean score of 3.38 is greater than criterion mean score of 2.50. This implies that the monitoring/evaluation strategies applied on teachers has an impact on the quality assurance of CRS curriculum.

Discussion of Findings

The results showed that professional competence is necessary to the realization of the objectives of CRS curriculum. Staff quality is an essential pre requisite in the issue of quality assurance. There is the need therefore to continue to encourage staff training and development strategies. This is in agreement with Oduma(2013) who suggested that teachers should continually be assisted to undergo refresher courses, workshops, seminars and conferences especially in their areas of specialization. By so doing they will be able to apply the skills acquired to improve themselves and uplift the standard of the students. In line with this assertion, Ayeni (2012) corroborated that there should be regular dissemination of information on innovative and progressive educational principles and practices in the school system through publications, workshops, meetings, seminars and conferences.

The results in Table 2 revealed that the teacher and the students are at the centre of all discourse in quality assurance in education. The teacher functions to build up instruction and guide the students. In order to support teaching and learning processes, Dohaty (1993) observed that the teachers should ensure quality curricular supervision and provision of adequate physical resources in order to improve the quality of instruction. According to Leonard (2014) most teachers and students find it difficult to make use of ICT materials like computer. It is therefore imperative that teachers should use educational technologies with a view to increasing the efficiency of teaching and learning. These findings of this study are supported by Salisu (2012), quality does not just happen in teaching- learning process; quality requires effective teachers, good monitoring, adequate and relevant foundation, mature learners, appropriate and adequate instructional materials conducive learning environment and the right system. By the time all these things are put in the quality of the curriculum is being enriched.

The result in Research Question 3 revealed that for the curriculum content to be of good standard and quality, certain things needed to be put in place. The items have also shown that quality assurance can only be achieved through the commitment of the teachers. According to Salisu (2014) any education system that is committed to excellence will do everything possible to ensure that its school products are internationally competitive and it is only quality assurance that can do this perfectly

The results in Table 4 revealed that monitoring is to assess the level of performance with a view to finding out how a set of objectives are being met. The aim of evaluation as a quality assurance strategy is to see how the system can be assisted to improve on the present level of performance. According to Salisu (2017), monitoring /evaluation involves teaching on how quality can be

ensured. It requires rebuking where a person is deviating from the norms of quality assurance, correcting where a person is getting it wrong on sequences of activities that lead to quality assurance and training in quality assurance skills that are indispensable. This implies according to Olombo (1992), that on daily basis Ministry officials and heads of department have the responsibility to ensure that teachers implement the set curriculum and that learning activities take place

Conclusion

It is clear and evident that there is the need for quality assurance in order to assess the CRS curriculum for effective achievement of its set objectives: the teacher must be adequate in quantity and quality; the students must be well trained and facilities must be provided. Provision of in-service education for teachers must be ensured. Quality assurance should be carried out periodically in order to meet global best practices. Effective supervisory system should be injected into the school system. The use of computer in this age is important and not to be neglected.

Recommendations

1. The government should give orientation via conferences and workshops on how to improve knowledge of teachers in the teaching- learning process
2. Opportunities should be given to teachers for further studies based on study leave with pay as a way of encouraging teachers.
3. The use of ICT should be encouraged and emphasized among teachers and students to meet up with the technological age.
4. School principals and heads of department should take up their roles as quality assurance officers in their schools and ensure that there is adequate departmental supervision

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