

## **Effective Supervision of Public Secondary Schools: A Panacea toward Ensuring Quality Education in Nigeria Recessed Economy**

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### **Abstract**

The quality of education is adversely affected when the education system is loose. Educationally, the present economic recession in Nigeria calls for the maximization of every available resources, through effective supervision of teaching and learning processes in public learning institutions. Premise on this, this paper explores the concept of school supervision, types, features, methods, obstacles, and remedies. It also explores the concept of recession, and how effective supervision of public learning institutions in key areas like: instructional work, school environment/structures, school records, and extra curriculum activities, among others, can bring about qualitative and quantitative lesson delivery in Nigeria education system. It concludes that, the need for supervision, arose out of the fact that the goals, objectives, and standard of education must be achieved, and maintained through judicious use of the allotted available resources. Few among the recommendations were; government should respond to every supervisory reports, as an urgent matter; bumper incentive e.g. over time allowance etc., should be provided to encourage the supervisors, because of the need to have highly motivated supervisors in the field, who will ensure that the resources sank in to public schools are not wasted or left loose.

**Keywords:** *Public secondary schools, Panacea, Quality education, Nigeria recessed economy*

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### **Background to the Study**

The quality of education is adversely affected when the education system is loose. Humanly, people do not do what is right at the right time if there is no authority that stipulates what is to be done and also monitor them properly on the job. Effective supervision of public schools, will make the achievement of education goals easier at all levels. The dire need to salvage education sector is much more important because of its relevance to nation building. Educationally, the present economic recession in Nigeria calls for the maximization of every available resources, through effective supervision of teaching and learning processes, for the achievement of educational goals and objectives, which is a national priority, and as a matter of fact, no nation can grow above its educational standard. The provision and the application of available resources for teaching and learning need to be effectively supervised in order to discourage unethical practices, and wastages. For example, in areas like: instructional work, school environment/structures, school records, and extra curriculum activities, among others. Through effective supervision, available resources meant for public schools at all levels will be properly channeled to the teaching and learning processes of education, which will in turn give the nation the desired and required graduates, equipped with requisite knowledge and skills to bring about massive economic recovery in Nigeria education industry and serve as a feeder to other sectors of the economy. Therefore, the need to look inwardly through attitudinal orientation, and ethical practices have become very imperative. The Nigeria present economic recession is an obvious condition, and is felt by all and sundry. The dwindling economy came partly as a result of over dependence on crude oil revenue, reckless spending, weak accounting systems, loose supervision, weak critical infrastructures.

### **Concept of Supervision**

Supervision in the school system is the process of ensuring that policies, principles, rules, regulation, facilities and method prescribed for the purpose of implementing and achieving educational goals and objectives are adhered to. According to (Ajani 2001), supervision is a set of activities which are carried out with the purpose of making teaching and learning better for the learners. He further emphasized that effective supervision of instruction can reinforce and enhance teaching practices that will contribute to improved students learning. (Igwe 2001) noted that supervision involves evaluation, monitoring and quality control for the purpose of curriculum and infrastructural improvement and development. More so, supervision involves the stimulation of professional growth and the development of teachers, the selection, revision of educational objectives, materials, facilities of instruction and method of teaching and evaluation of instruction (Ogakuwu, 2010). For the purpose of clarity, the term inspection and supervision is often used interchangeably, however, supervision is preferably use in the school system because it is considered, teacher friendly. According, to Udoh & Akpa (2001), the early concept of inspection is said to be that of judgmental on the performance of teachers rather than suggesting, encouraging, inspiring and assisting teachers to improve teaching and learning as in the case of supervision. Though, the concept inspection has been rooted in the educational system since the British colonial master. Musaazi cited by Udoh et al (2001) state that the concept has in effect been replaced with that of supervision. However, the two concepts are administrative functions which aim at enhancing productivity and serve as tools for educational coordination.

### **Types of Supervision**

Supervision is meant to guide the teaching learning process of a teacher, and therefore should not be view as detrimental by the recipients. Educationally, supervision is the mechanism through which meaningful feedbacks on how school curriculum is implemented and the likely challenges associated in the implementation are known and addressed accordingly. Musaazi cited by Udoh et al (2001) categorized supervision in to the following types:

1. **Full Inspection:** is aim at assessing every aspect of school life ranging from: subjects taught, administration, staff, extra-curriculum, record, library, furniture and equipment, building, finance and store with a view of commenting where necessary and advice appropriately.
2. **Recognition Inspection:** this type of inspection is aim at finding out how adequately prepared is a school to present candidates for statutory examination. For examples West African Examination Council (WAEC), National Examination Council (NECO), accreditation of some courses in the tertiary institutions.
3. **Follow-Up Inspection:** this type of inspection is aim at finding out to what extent the recommendations made earlier to the school have been implemented. This is usually conducted two years after full inspection
4. **Routine Inspection:** routine inspection is undertaken to monitor the day today activities of a school, after which the teacher and school administrator are advised accordingly
5. **Casual/Check-up Inspection:** casual inspection is carried out without a prior knowledge of the school. During this visit, the inspector is expected to form a judgment on what he sees and make a confidential report to the appropriate authorities for necessary follow up
6. **Subject/Course Recognition Inspection:** this type of inspection is aim at approving newly introduced subject(s)/course(s) in the school system. For example, the introduction of fisheries, animal husbandry among others.
7. **Appraisal Inspection:** is undertaken to assess whether the objectives for which a particular school was established are been achieved or not. For example, Arabic school, commercial school among others
8. **Investigative Inspection:** as the name implies, it is carried out to look in to specific happenings in the school system, especially those that are detrimental to the smooth running of the school
9. **Quality Inspection:** is conducted to assess and upgrade an institution in various aspects of the school system. For example, inspecting the adequacy of teaching materials, staff, students' population and others.
10. **Government Grant/ School Takeover Inspection:** this type of inspection is carried out in voluntary agencies schools for the purpose of government funding, intervention and school takeover. For example, the takeover of missionary schools
11. **Professional Assessment Inspection:** this type of inspection is usually conducted to ascertain the professional competence of teaching staff. The teachers are assessed on aspects such as: mastery of subject taught; teaching methodology; teaching facilities, classroom control, accreditation of courses etc.

The various type of supervision discussed above are well targeted and purpose oriented, because, they are all meant to achieve relevant educational objectives, in Nigeria schools at all levels.

Arul (2001), classified supervision into five groups as highlighted below:

1. **Corrective Supervision:** in this type of supervision, the supervisor observes to see what is done wrongly by the teachers, school administrator and school work. The supervisor does this in order to criticize, and gives record of the same to educational authorities.
2. **Preventive Supervision:** this type of supervision anticipates the possible difficulties or problems in the school programme and forewarn the school administrator and teachers against possible pit falls. And give suggestion appropriately.
3. **Creative Supervision:** in this type of supervision, the supervisor comes to school with the idea that he is to help school teachers and administrators in solving their problems.
4. **Autocratic Supervision:** in this type of supervision, there are definite tasks laid down for the supervisee. They have to work according to his directions with no choice of their own, because all guidance or directions are given by the supervisor.
5. **Democratic Supervision:** this type of supervision is towed along democratic lines. It attends to the ability and position of all teachers, instead of imposing orders. The teachers are given the freedom to work, develop and progress. Thereby making use of proper human relationship between the supervision and the supervisee.

Meanwhile, in the various groups of supervisions discussed above, for example in correction supervision, there is emphasis on doing nothing other than what is laid down, it makes the teacher cautious in the discharge of his duties. The preventive type of supervision, saves the teacher and school administrator from unnecessary tension, while creative supervision stimulates original thinking which is able to make them independent and effective. In autocratic supervision, as the name implies, demand total obedience. Democratic type of supervision is the best for education because it incorporates the features of corrective, preventive and creative types of supervision by creating a friendly democratic atmosphere. Therefore, the application of whichever types of supervision, is meant to achieve specific educational goals

### **Features of Effective Supervision**

Arul (2001) stressed that supervision should involve the entire education process with the aim of assessing continuously teachers' adequacy, as such effective supervision should have the following the features:

1. Effective supervision provide leadership with extra knowledge and superior skills
2. Effective supervision promotes cooperative educational effort in a friendly atmosphere
3. Effective supervision provides co-ordination, direction and guidance to teachers' activities
4. Effective supervision improve instruction in the teaching-learning process
5. Effective supervision helps in the achievement of appropriate educational aims and objectives
6. Effective supervision stimulates continuous growth of teachers and development of pupils
7. Effective supervision stimulates and develop creative qualities in teachers

8. Effective supervision should be dynamic- that is flexible to adjust, accommodate, and response to relevant change in the curriculum.

In addition, Diksha, (2015), identified the following as the features of modern supervision in education:

1. **Democratic in Nature and Approach:** effective supervision should concern itself with providing effective leadership through cooperative working relations. This implies that in modern supervision the supervisor plays his role as the leader of the group.
2. **Continuous Process:** in that the roles of a supervisor should be continuous, that is – nonstop with the purpose of stimulating, coordinating and evaluating continuously the efforts of teachers.
3. **Comprehensive in Nature:** gone are the days when importance of supervision was to judge, teachers' performance without proffering the way out for effectiveness and efficiency. Modern supervision should be encompassing, to include activities and programmes for ensuring pupils educational development, teachers professional growth, and the improvement of the entire teaching learning processes.
4. **Quality Management:** effective supervision should stress on quality in the total management of the education system as base for the achievement of stated educational goals and objectives.
5. **Communicative in Nature:** supervision should be communicative in nature, because it involves different individuals with different backgrounds and level of understanding. Research, has proved that the exchange of information helps in the collection of data relevant for planning and decision making. All these features discussed above are topical features of effective supervision in the school system. And therefore, should be held in high esteem.

### **Concept of Public School**

A public school is an educational facility (school) that is government operated, funded or subsidized to provide education as a public service for her citizenry. Public schooling is one of the major ways through which government discharge her responsibility to its citizens, as a right. Besides, public school is nota profit making venture.

### **Method of Supervision in Public Schools**

The ministry of education is a major supervisory agency of government and the Nigeria education law made it mandatory for a minister or commissioner of education to cause regular supervision/inspection to be made in educational institutions. In Nigeria, education is on the concurrent list of government. The operations of public schools at all levels are overseen by the ministry of education. Under the provision of the education law, the various supervisory agencies, of the ministry of education have a right of access to schools at all times for the purpose of inspection. Therefore, the method or mode of supervision is the same both in private or public schools. This is so, because, the goals and objectives of education in Nigeria is the same irrespective of who is providing the education. One of the major roles of the ministry of education is supervision. The ministry through its agencies supervises the primary schools via the Local Government Education Authority(LGEA); secondary schools via Zonal

Inspectorate Division presently known as Zonal Education Quality Assurance Unit of the Ministry of Education; technical colleges, polytechnics and universities of technology via National Board for Technical Education (NBTE), colleges of education via National Commission for Colleges of Education (NCCE), universities via National Universities Commission (NUC). The sole aim is to ensure adherence to standard, and delivery of qualitative and quantitative instructions in all Nigeria educational institutions at all levels. However, the mode of supervision varies from one state to another, but the same educational goals.

### **Obstacles of Supervision in Public Schools**

The following obstacles were identified as militating against effective supervision:

1. **Inadequate Supervision Resources:** resources are very fundamental in carrying out supervision exercise. Effective supervision will be difficult to carry out if required human, financial, and material resources, are not adequately provided. The inadequacy of the same is bound to obstruct the effectiveness of supervision in Nigerian schools at all levels.
2. **Technical Issue:** One of the major challenges facing supervision in Nigerian schools is the issue of competence- that is technical knowledge of the supervisors. Most often than not in Nigeria, political affiliation at times dictate who get a particular assignment without recourse to the technical competence of the person. Ajayi & Ayodele, (2006); Eya & Leonard, (2012) revealed that some supervisors lack knowledge and competence to carry out the supervisory exercise.
3. **Corruption:** corruption has become a major cankerworm that has slow down the pace of major projects in Nigeria. Corrupt practices such as: the misappropriation of available funds meant to procure required materials; siphoning of available funds. All these pose as big challenge, when problems identified cannot be adequately tackled because of corrupt practices; the system is bound to face serious lapses in the delivery of qualitative and quantitative instructions.
4. **Instability of Government Education Policies:** then on-implementation of educational policies due to change in political tenure of the incumbent government is not healthy for the school system. There are government educational policies that need to be continued because of its relevance. This frequent changes also bring set back in the areas of how and who should be involved in the supervision. This adversely affects and poses a big challenge to supervision in Nigerian school system.
5. **Integration of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) in Education:** With the current innovation in teaching, it is becoming difficult for supervisor to have access to how teaching is being conducted in some schools. The process of supervision generally occurs in a face-to-face setting with teachers, administrator and supervisor physically present in the same location. According to Glickmein (2011), the traditional method of supervision is being threatened by online learning opportunities that is changing the delivery of instruction to a virtual environment. Anderson, cited by Ekundayo (2013), reveals that the use of ICT permits the individual students to learn at their own convenient time. Therefore, the current innovation in education poses a challenge to supervision in the school systems.

The primary objective of the supervision process in schools is to offer teachers direct assistance to improve their performance toward increasing student learning.

To achieve the goals of instructional supervision in schools, efforts must be geared toward overcoming the obstacles mentioned above. Supervision, and supervisors can be improved upon in the following ways:

1. **Adequate funding:** Government at all level must strive to provide adequate funds to education sector to aid effective supervision of instructions, implementation of supervision reports, transportation and others allowances meant for a smooth supervision exercise.
2. **Capacity Building:** In order to ensure adequate and effective supervision in schools in Nigeria, government need to embark on capacity building of supervisors, school administrators as well as teachers to enable them perform their duties effectively. This can be done via regular re- training, induction programmes, seminar and workshop to equip them with supervisory skills such as: evaluative, interactive, disciplinary, motivational, analytical, reportorial, pedagogical, and managerial skills. These skills will make them proficient in the discharge of their duties.
3. **Selection of Qualified Supervisors:** One of the ways of ensuring effective supervision of instruction is to select and appoint personnel who have technical skills. Supervisors, especially in education should be on merit and not on political affiliation.
4. **Disciplinary Action Against Unprofessional or Unethical Conduct of Performance:** appropriate sanctions should be level against any erring or deviant supervisor who tends to undermine the expected standard, to serve as deterrent to others. while supervisors who excel in their assignment should be rewarded accordingly.

### **Concept of Economic Recession**

Recession is a period of significant decline or decrease in economic activity spread across the economy. The period of recession is typically characterized by factors such as: high interest rate, low investment, reduced real wages, increase unemployment, drop in stock market, drop in foreign trade, unstable labour market, and high exchange rate among others. The aforementioned factors are very critical, and serve as indices reflecting the condition of a nations' gross domestic product (GDP). Eventually, if there must be a recovery, the government via the ministry of education must ensure that unethical practices, looseness, and wastages in the public schools are discouraged and penalty meted out without fear or favour.

### **Effective Supervision of Public Schools in a Recessed Economy**

The place of education in a recessed economy in African and particularly in Nigeria cannot be overemphasized. It is obvious that education is a strategic tool. Nigeria national policy on education, (2004, p4) states that, education is an instrument per excellence for effecting national development. The senator chairman on tertiary institutions and TETFund, senator Binta Garba disclosed in one of her speeches (The Nation, 2015), that the Nigerians spend about \$2billion annually on education abroad, she described this trend as embarrassing. But, advised that such capital flight can be stopped and reversed, if we make our educational system concrete, vibrant, equipped with basic teaching learning facilities, in line with international best

practices, there will be an upsurge of students coming to study in Nigeria thereby increasing our GDP. Ochuba (2008) opined that goals of education can only be achieved in a well-organized school system that ensure that all aspects of school life are well articulated and effectively coordinated. He further stress that for education industry, to carry out its function of developing quality human capital, there is need for checks and balances by regular effective supervision.

Therefore, effective supervision in public schools should be carried out in the following key areas for proper accountability of government meager resources in public learning institutions:

1. **Supervision of Qualification of Teaching and Non-teaching Staff:** teaching and non-teaching staff qualifications and experience matters much in the operation of a school. Teachers are said to be the implementer of curriculum at the various levels of education, as such supervisor should ensure that all personnel employed in public schools whether teaching and non-teaching staff are qualified in every sense of the profession.
2. **Supervision of Curriculum Implementation:** the supervision of curriculum implementation is very important, because the curriculum is design to achieve specific educational objectives in the behaviours of the learners. Akpale cited by Yusuf (2012), views curriculum as the planned and unplanned educational experiences in which both students and teachers all work for the attainment of educational goals. Therefore, the supervisor ought to supervise how the curriculum is implemented- that is; is the curriculum implemented using the prescribed curriculum, instructional facilities, infrastructural facilities, etc. such supervision will help to check unhealthy diversion and adulteration of teaching learning processes.
3. **Supervision of Instructional Facilities:** the use of instructional facilities is important, to the implementation of school curriculum. Supervisor ought to supervise the availability and the relevance of the available facilities. Examples of such facilities are: chalkboards, audio-visual aids, equipment, machineries, textbooks, furniture, lesson notes, lesson plans etc. these facilities help in making teaching learning concrete and experiential. Olutola(2000), emphasizes that instructional facilities are ingredients for effective teaching learning.
4. **Supervision of Infrastructural Facilities:** infrastructural facilities are equally important, in that it shows how much structure is ready for the implementation of the school curriculum. The supervisor ought to supervise the availability, and the relevance of the same in public schools. Infrastructures such as: classrooms, libraries, laboratories, toilet facility, health facility, water facility, landscape etc. It is through supervision that the supervisor will get to know whether or not are the available and relevant infrastructures in public schools short of what is expected, and their status. The supervisor should ensure that anything below the expected is not welcomed. Uwereka (2005), study shows that facilities below standard could lead to the reduction in the quality of teaching learning.
5. **Supervision of Extra-curricular programme:** the extra-curricular programme is important, and complementary to school curriculum. It is that activity that is outside the realm of normal curriculum of school or universities education, performed by

students and they are generally voluntary, and windows for useful discussion, and friendship. Sage (2016), explains that, extra-curriculum programme reduces the likelihood of dropping out of school; committing criminal offense; leads to higher educational retention, success and achievement in school work.

6. **Supervision of Statutory and Non-statutory Records:** supervision of school record is of paramount important. Olagboye cited by Ibrahim, (2008), defined school record as books, documents, diskettes, and files in which are embodied information on what goes on in a school (e.g academic, non-academic, and social events etc), as well as other relevant information focusing on the growth and development of a school. School record is divided in to: statutory and non-statutory records. The supervisor should ensure that statutory and non-statutory records are kept in public schools. The statutory record is a compulsory record, which is mandatory by law to be kept for the purpose of accountability and data collection. Example of the statutory records are: national policy on education, education law, class attendance register, visitors' book, financial instructions, capital assets register, admission, progress and withdrawal register etc. while non statutory record include: movement book, staff meeting minute book, master timetable, time book, notice book etc.

### **Conclusion**

Effective supervision makes for, a well-organized school system that is well articulated, and coordinated for a Qualitative and quantitative education. The importance of supervision in learning institutions have arisen out of the fact that the goals, objectives, and standard of education must be achieved, and maintained, through the judicious use of the allotted educational resources. Effective supervision carried out in the following key areas: teaching and non-teaching staff; curriculum implementation; instructional facilities; infrastructural facilities, extra-curricular programme, and statutory and non-statutory records, will definitely bring about qualitative and quantitative lesson delivery in Nigeria education system in this present economic recession.

### **Recommendations**

In view of the importance of education to nation building, and the need to sustain education in a recessed economy, the paper recommends the followings:

1. Government should organize a re-training programme for supervisors, as well as school administrators, and lay greater emphasis on the need for supervision; update them with basic knowledge and skills in order to keep them abreast with the global trends of supervision in the educational system. Through this programme, supervisors will serve as government's eye in curtailing looseness, and wastage of allotted educational resources sank in to public learning institutions;
2. Fundamental resources should be provided to supervisors to enable them perform their duties efficiently and effectively;
3. Government should respond to every supervisory reports, as urgent as possible;

4. Merit should never be sacrificed on the altar of affiliation, the concept of favoritism, nepotism, and corruption during supervision exercise should be discourage and penalize;
5. There should be continuity of relevant educational policies that are meant to ensure qualitative and quantitative instructional delivery irrespective of the change in political tenure;
6. Bumper incentive e.g. over time allowance, transport allowance, hotel allowance etc, should be provided to encourage supervisors. They need to be highly motivated, because their work is in the field(schools). They are thereto ensure that the resources sank in to these schools are not wasted or left loose.

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