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School Administrators' Quality Assurance Mechanisms and Attainment of Secondary Education Objectives in Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria

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Abstract

This study focused on School Administrators' quality assurance mechanisms and attainment of Secondary Education objectives in Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria. The population of the study was made up of all the principals in 233 public secondary schools in Akwa Ibom State. Two research questions and hypotheses were formulated to give direction to the study. The researchers used ex-post facto research design for the study. The researchers adopted census sampling technique for the study because all the school principals in public secondary schools in Akwa Ibom State were used for the study. School Administrators' Quality Assurance Mechanisms and Attainment of Secondary Education Objectives Questionnaire (SAQAMASEOQ) was the instrument used for data collection. The statistical tool used for data analysis was Pearson product correlation statistics. The findings arising from the results of the study indicated positive and significant relationship between school administrators' quality assurance mechanisms and attainment of secondary education objectives. Based on the result, one of the recommendations was that school administrators should not assume that their teachers do not need internal orientation training, job-instruction training, job rotation, coaching and mentorship. They should make on-the-job training very effective to ensure quality teaching and learning for the achievement of secondary education objectives.

Keywords: School Administrators, Quality Assurance, Mechanisms, Attainment, Secondary Education and Objectives.

Introduction

There is no doubt that education is an excellent and dynamic instrument for effecting national development. It is a tool that is geared towards acquisition of values, knowledge and skills by the recipients to enable them contribute their quotas towards economic growth and national development. This position informs government regular investment in education as well as deregulating the provision and management of education at all levels in Nigeria. Asuquo, Ekpoh & Eton (2018) opined that every educational organization is established for the purpose of teaching and learning. It follows therefore that, without effective curriculum implementation through teaching/ learning processes, instructional supervision, continuous assessment/ examination administration, regular payment of staff salaries, regular staff training and provision of adequate teaching/learning facilities, the attainment of educational objectives at any level becomes a mirage in the society. Provision of opportunity for education of a higher level, offering of diversified curriculum to cater for the differences in talents, provision of trained manpower in science and technology, provision of entrepreneurial skills for self-reliance, promoting the Nigerian languages, inspiring students with a desire for self-improvement, inspiring students for achievement of excellence, fostering of patriotism, fostering of national unity, raising of morally upright and well adjusted individual who can think independently for themselves constitute the specific objectives of secondary education (The National Policy of Education, FRN, 2008).

Achievement of quality education is what informs quality assurance in educational system. Quality assurance at all levels of education is an instrument designed to improve the quality of educational institution, its inputs (human, material and financial resources), activities, programmes, production and the products (outputs). Quality education has received and is still receiving emphasis such that different approaches to ensure and maintain

the system quality are introduced. Introduction of quality assurance mechanisms is one thing and other thing is to ensure that it is sustained in the secondary school system. Generally, the importance of quality assurance in education cannot be over emphasized. In educational organization, quality assurance is a global concept translated into practical activities to facilitate minimum standard and ensure the fitness of education services, activities and programmes for its purpose, customers' (students') satisfaction and the societal expectations in general.

It is expected that government and educational administrators as well as other stakeholders should facilitate and sustain quality of education. According to Longe (as cited in Babalola, Adedeje & Erwat, 2007), the issue that can help to improve the quality of education in Nigeria both in the short and long run depend on factors such as increase in public spending, student's capacity and innovation 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 as well as performance standard. Adegbesan (2011) identified the need for quality assurance in Nigerian school as; to serve as indispensable component of quality control strategy in education, to ensure and maintain high standard of education at all levels, to assist in monitoring and supervision of education, to determine the quality of the teacher input, to determine the number of classrooms needed based on the average class size to ensure quality control of education, and to determine the level of adequacy of the facilities available for quality control.

The Federal, State and Local Government as well as Alumni Associations, Non-Governmental Organizations, Parents Teachers Associations, philanthropists, Dona Agencies, Private Individuals and Religious Organizations have tried and are still directing efforts towards attainment of secondary education objectives. These efforts manifest in the provision of funds, facilities/equipment, building of classroom blocks, renovation of dilapidated classrooms, administrative blocks, employment and deployment of staff as at when necessary and payment of salaries and wages. These are done in a bid to ensure quality in the school system. Going by the perception of customers and the society at large, quality is the performance of a finished products as well as services rendered. Taking a cue from the foregoing position, in the

educational organization, quality is associated with the extent of effectiveness and efficiency of internal institutional processes (admission, teaching/learning, staff training/development and research), availability of facilities and the outputs. Therefore, quality assurance in this context entails actions taken by secondary school administrators to maintain minimum and comparable standard in order to forestall problems associated with educational system and its products in the world of work. It is also a deliberate effort to ensure that educational facilities, equipment, human and financial resources, school programmes and activities (teaching and learning), general administration as well as the end products/outcome (graduates) fit for purposes they are meant for. It takes both internal and external efforts directed at ensuring that school programmes, activities and the resources used in facilitating school processes or operations do not compromise the desired expected results. Quality assurance cuts across every nook and cranny in educational organization.

In spite of governments' and educational stakeholders' efforts to promote quality assurance in educational system at all levels, the researchers observed that all is not well. It is in this regard that researchers deemed it necessary that the school administrators need to beef up their quality assurance mechanisms to practically improve the fitness of the school system to accomplish the goals for which it was established and to maintain its standard to meet with the global relevance. To enhance quality assurance in the output of educational organization, quality inputs in terms of teachers, administrators and supervision would have been made available and effective because quality in output is dependent upon the quality of input. It could be deduced that school administrators have the responsibility of assuring quality of their production resources, production processes and the final products so as to attain the general goal for which the school was established. School administrators have the responsibility of applying both internal and external methods to ensure that quality is promoted in educational programmes and activities that are under their administration. In this study, it is only internal mechanism (teachers' on-the-job training and instructional supervision) that is the focus. On-the-job training and instructional supervision are used in this study as School Administrators' quality assurance mechanisms.

Aswathappa (2002) referred to on-the-job training as method that is applied in the workplace while the employee is actually working. On-the-job training includes orientation training, job-instruction training, job rotation, coaching, mentorship, internship and assistantship. According to Armstrong (2009), training is the use of systematic and planned instruction activities to promote learning. Ikpe (2011) opined that training of personnel whether administrative, technical, or professional gives the workforce fresh interest in their work and build up capacity for increased productivity and provides room for advancement and promotion. The author further stated that training boosts employees' morale and improves their job performance. Mgbekem (2004) stated that if performance or productivity of employee is to be maximized, training in an organization is imperative. The author further opined that on-the-job training is a very important strategy for improving the skills and the performance of an employee in an organization and if the performance of an employee is to be maximized, then on-the-job training in an organization is imperative. Mbipom (2000) averred that principal's major function is that of facilitating maximum teacher participation in self-development and in-service educational programmes.

The need for on-the-job training for teachers as school administrators' quality assurance mechanism cannot be over-emphasized. The National Policy on Education (2004) brought to the lime light the fact that no education system may rise above the quality of its teachers. This is a pointer that indicates that quality of teachers in the school system determine to a large extent the attainment of educational goals. Quality assurance can be achieved if the inputs such as the teachers of the school are of good quality. Aduke (as cited in Asuquo & Chuktu, 2016) stated that quality of education cannot be obtained without quality teachers. By implications, the attainment of educational goals may be attributed to the quality of human resources. For the attainment of educational goals, staff's knowledge and skills need to be upgraded.

Another quality assurance mechanism as used in this study is instructional supervision. Obioma, Chukwuma and Ajudeonu (2007) identified supervision as one of the strategies for effective management of teaching manpower for quality education. They stated that supervision of instruction is necessary for the provision of quality education in Nigeria and that supervision is carried out to ensure maintenance of standard, availability of material resources for teaching, a meaningful exchange of ideas between teachers and administrators regarding areas of problems in the pursuit of teaching and learning, coverage of syllabus. With effective supervision, the policies of the Ministry of Education regarding the administration of schools can be properly implemented.

According to Ogun (as cited in Eziuzo, 2014) supervision is the act of overseeing the activities of teachers and other workers in the school system to ensure that they conform with the general accepted principles of education in order to achieve educational goals. Supervision is a device for improving teachers' knowledge, attitudes and skills which focus on the teaching and learning processes for the purpose of ensuring the achievement of educational and objectives (Ezziuzo, 2014). Asuquo, Ekpoh and Eton (2018) posited that school administrators are in charge of ensuring that teachers effectively carry out their assigned tasks and students' learning is effective. The authors further stated that school administrators' involvement in overseeing teachers' and students' activities during teaching and learning contribute to school goal attainment and that the success of any school as regards goal attainment depends on school administrators' professional responsibilities and application of quality control technique of supervision of teaching and learning. Asuquo, Ekpoh and Eton (2018) conducted a study on quality control techniques and secondary school goal attainment in Calabar Metropolis of Cross River State, Nigeria. Instructional supervision and facilities management were used as quality control techniques. It was found that significant relationship existed between instructional supervision, facilities management and secondary school goal attainment.

From the literature reviewed, evidence abound that teachers' on-the-job-training and instructional supervision is a crucial school administrators' responsibility that boosts teachers' performance directed towards achieving school objectives. Teachers' on-the-job-training and instructional supervision play a vital role in assisting, guiding and stimulating teachers to improve on their teaching skills and experiences as well as enhancing their professional growth. However, the literature reviewed in this work showed that a study on school administrators' quality assurance mechanisms and attainment of Secondary Education objectives in Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria was not conducted. It is based on this that the researchers conducted this work to fill the identified gab.

Statement of the problem

In recent times, attainment of educational goal has been of concern to educational stakeholders in education sector. However, the attainment of educational goal has been observed to be on a decline particularly in the public secondary school system. Many factors have been responsible for the reason why educational goals attainment is still questionable. For instance, behaviours of some teachers are not in line with teaching ethics. They show nonchalant attitude to work. Again, evidence abound in literature that graduates of secondary education for 40 to 50 years ago were easily employed in commercial establishment like banks, insurance companies, marketing firms, administrative, accounting and secretarial sections in both public and private organizations. Okorie (1991) as cited in Ikpe (2014, p. 25) emphasized that to provide students with the orientation and basic skills with which to start a life of work for those who may not undergo further training and development in the students the basic skills in the office occupation as well as equipping students with the ability to relate the knowledge and skills to the national economy are among the goals secondary education was designed to accomplish.

Currently, the situation is a departure from what was obtainable in connection with secondary education. Instances abound where many secondary school graduates lack entrepreneurial, technical and vocational job skills for self reliance. From observation, many secondary school graduates are not morally upright. In addition, some do not have the desire for self-improvement and achievement of excellence. It has also been noticed that many secondary school graduates could not think independently, rationally, respect the view and feelings of others. All

these are negatively skewed from the achievement of secondary school education attainment. It is as a result of the observed problem that this study is conducted to find out the relationship between school administrators' quality assurance mechanisms and attainment of Secondary Education objectives in Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria.

Purpose of the study

The main purpose of this study was to examine school administrators' quality assurance mechanisms and attainment of secondary education objectives in Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria.

Specifically, this study aimed at determining the relationship between,

1. Teachers' on-the-job training and attainment of secondary education objectives.
2. Instructional supervision and attainment of secondary education objectives.

Statement of hypotheses

1. There is no significant relationship between teachers' on-the-job training and attainment of secondary education objectives.
2. There is no significant relationship between instructional supervision and attainment of secondary education objectives

Methodology

The ex-post facto research design was adopted for this study. The choice of this research design is because the researchers could not manipulate the independent variable of quality assurance mechanisms (teachers' on-the-job training and instructional supervision). According to Kerlinger (as cited in Ndiyo, 2005), an ex-post facto research it is a systematic empirical inquiry in which the researcher has no direct control of the independent variables because their manifestations have already occurred. To further justify the choice of this research design in this study, Isangedighi, Joshua, Asim and Ekuri (2004:67), stated that the ex-post facto research basically studies phenomena after they have occurred. In this study, school administrators' quality assurance mechanisms (independent variable-teachers-on-the-job training and instructional supervision) have already occurred and impacted on the dependent variable (attainment of secondary education objectives).

The area of study was Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria. The Capital City of Akwa Ibom State is Uyo. It is located in the South-South Geopolitical Zone of Nigeria. Two hundred and thirty-three (233) secondary school principals made up the population of the study. The study was a census because all the principals were involved in the study. Furthermore, simple random sampling method was used to select ten (10) teachers from each of the 233 public secondary schools giving a total of 2330 teachers. These teachers were selected to gather data for the study. The teachers assess both school administrators' quality assurance mechanisms and attainment of secondary education objectives. However, the teachers were not part of the study. They were only use for data collection. A questionnaire called "School Administrators' Quality Assurance Mechanisms and Attainment of Secondary Education Objectives Questionair (SAQAMASEOQ) was used for data collection. The instrument was sub-divided into section A and B. Section A was constructed to elicit information regarding school administrators' quality assurance mechanisms. Each of the sub-variables of independent variable (teachers'-on-the-job training and instructional supervision) had six (6) item, while section B collected data with respect to attainment of secondary education objectives in terms of provision of opportunity for education of a higher level, offering of diversified curriculum to cater for the differences in talents, provision of trained manpower in science and technology, provision of entrepreneurial skills for self-reliance, promoting the Nigerian languages, inspiring students with a desire for self-improvement, inspiring students for achievement of excellence, fostering of patriotism, fostering of national unity, raising of morally upright and well adjusted individual who can think independently for themselves. All items on the questionnaire were rated based on modified four-point Likert Scale of Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (SD).

The instrument was validated by three experts in Educational Management as well as Measurement and Evaluation in the University of Calabar. The reliability estimate was established using Cronbach reliability estimate and the reliability index was 0.79. This indexed justified the use of the instrument for data collection. With the help of trained research assistants, the researchers administered 2330 copies of questionnaire to the respondents. However, two hundred and ninety-seven (2097, 90% of 2330) copies of questionnaire were retrieved for data analysis suing Pearson product moment correlation analysis.

Results

Table 1

Pearson’s product moment correlation analysis of the relationship between teachers’ on-the-job training and attainment of secondary education objectives (N = 2097)

Variables	X	SD	R	Sig
Teachers’ on-the-job training (X)	10.02	2.849		
Attainment of secondary education objectives (Y)	1.22	3.31	0.72*	.000

*p<.05; df = 2095; critical r = 0.062

The result of the analysis presented in Table 2 revealed that the calculated r-value of 0.72 is greater than the critical r-value of 0.062 at .05 level of significance with degrees of freedom 2097. With this result the null hypothesis was rejected and the alternate hypothesis retained. This result therefore shows that teachers’ on-the-job training had a significant relationship with attainment of secondary education objectives.

Table 2

Pearson’s product moment correlation analysis of the relationship between instructional supervision and attainment of secondary education objectives (N = 2097)

Variables	X	SD	R	Sig
Supervision of instruction (X)	11.72	2.349		
Attainment of secondary education objectives (Y)	1.22	3.31	0.74*	.000

*p<.05; df = 2095; critical r = 0.062

The result of the analysis presented in Table 2 revealed that the calculated r-value of 0.74 is greater than the critical r-value of 0.062 at .05 level of significance with degrees of freedom 2097. With this result the null hypothesis was rejected and the alternate hypothesis retained. This result therefore indicates that instructional supervision had a significant relationship with attainment of secondary education objectives.

Discussion

The result of the analysis of hypothesis one as presented in Table 1 revealed that there was a significant relationship between teachers on-the-job training and attainment of secondary school objectives. This result is in line with Armstrong (2009) who is of the view that training is the use of systematic and planned instruction activities to promote learning. The finding also collaborates the position of Ikpe (2011) that on-the-job training of personnel whether administrative, technical, or professional gives the workforce fresh interest in their work and build up capacity for increased productivity and provides room for advancement and promotion. The result as well collaborates Mgbekem (2004) that on-the-job training is a very important strategy for improving the skills and the performance of an employee in an organization and if the performance of an employee is to be maximized, then on-the-job training in an organization is imperative. There is no doubt that on-the-job training in terms of orientation training, job-instruction training, job rotation, coaching, mentorship, internship and assistantship improve quality of teachers. Quality assurance can be achieved if the inputs such as the personnel of the system are of good quality (Adepoju and Akinola, 2007).

The possible explanation of the above result is that, quality in on-the-job training for teachers facilitates curriculum implementation through effective teaching and evaluation of students in order to ensure that they (students) are well prepared for education of higher level, their talents are catered for, they are trained manpower in science and technology, they are provided with entrepreneurial skills for self-reliance, they are inspired with the desire for self-improvement and achievement of excellence, they embrace national unity and are morally upright and well adjusted to think independently for themselves. The result also implies that in a school system, attainment of secondary school objectives depend on the quality of input (teachers) who know what, when, where, why and how to impart knowledge/skills which constitute the basic product every educational institution has to offer to the students. Since it is known that no education system can rise above the quality of its teachers, this therefore indicates that quality of teachers in the school system correlates with the attainment of educational objectives.

The second finding in this study showed a significant relationship between instructional supervision by the school principals and attainment of secondary school objectives. The finding is in line with the result of the research carried out by Asuquo, Ekpoh and Eton (2018) that significant relationship existed between instructional supervision, facilities management and secondary school goal attainment. The finding also supports the position of Obioma, Chukwuma and Ajudeonu (2007) that supervision is one of the strategies for effective management of teaching manpower for quality education and that that supervision of instruction is necessary for the provision of quality education in Nigeria. They also stressed that supervision is carried out to ensure maintenance of standard, availability of material resources for teaching, meaningful exchange of ideas between teachers and administrators regarding areas of problems in the pursuit of teaching and learning, coverage of syllabus and that the policies of the Ministry of Education regarding the administration of schools are being implemented. This result is an indication that supervision of instruction is a quality assurance mechanism for improving teachers' pedagogical methods, professional skills, knowledge and commitment to facilitate effective teaching/learning processes in order to achieve educational and objectives.

Conclusion

Examining the relationship between school administrators' quality assurance mechanisms and attainment of secondary education objectives was the concern of this study. It was concluded that, quality assurance mechanisms in terms of teachers' on-the-job training and instructional supervision facilitated by secondary school administrators had significant relationship with attainment of secondary education objectives in Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria,

Recommendations

1. School administrators should not assume that their teachers do not need internal orientation training, job-instruction training, job rotation, coaching and mentorship. They should make on-the-job training very effective to ensure quality teaching and learning for the achievement of secondary education objectives.
2. To ensure that school goals are attained with available resources, there is need for school administrators to intensify effort with regard to instructional supervision as internal quality assurance mechanism for the improvement in curriculum contents delivery by the teachers.

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