Quality Control and Quality Assurance as Tools For Quality Education In Public Secondary Schools In Enugu State, Nigeria

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Abstract: The study examined quality control and quality assurance as tools for quality education in public secondary schools in Nsukka education zone of Enugu State, Nigeria. Specifically, the study sought to ascertain the extent to which quality assurance mechanism contribute to school leadership in ensuring quality education in public secondary schools; and the extent to which quality assurance mechanism raise the standard of facilities in public secondary schools. Two research questions and one hypothesis guided the study. A descriptive survey research design was adopted for the study. Out of the total population of 1857 respondents, 186 respondents were used as the study sample. The sample size was randomly selected using balloting sampling technique. The data collected were analyzed using mean and standard deviation to answer the research questions while the hypotheses were tested using the t-test at 0.05 level of significance. Results shows that effective monitoring of students exams, selection of appropriate methods and materials for instruction, effective supervision of curriculum implementation, formulating aims and goals of programme in a thoughtful manner, provision of immediate feedback to teachers and students and for effective guidance and counseling review that instructional supervision has contributed immensely to school administration. The study also found significant difference between school principals and teachers’ mean ratings on the extent quality assurance mechanism contributes to school leadership in ensuring quality education. The difference was in favour of the school principals. The recommendations were given in line with these findings.

Keywords: Principals; public secondary schools; quality assurance; quality control; quality education; Nsukka.
1. Introduction

Education has been described as the bedrock of every society and tool for nation building. For a nation to raise a standard worthy enough for her to compete favorably in the League of Nations, such a nation must ensure that high quality education is attained and sustained. Quality of teachers’ input in the educational sector brings quality education which is an instrument highly indispensable in the transformation of individuals’ values, beliefs and behaviors (Ehusani, 2002). Ehusani opined that it is a means of preserving sociocultural settings and acquisitions of skills that make members of the society useful to themselves and their society. The purpose of educating is to develop the cognitive, affective and psychomotor domain of individuals and groups in order to equip them with knowledge and skills necessary to survive and make society progress. Ijaiya (2009) agreed that trained or educated human resources constitute manpower and personnel that bring about national development. That is to say that the amount of educated citizens is equal to the amount of available quality staff that will contribute to a nation’s development.

The quality of the staff in the school system presupposes the quality of the school output, that is, the human resources that will be available for the nation (Ochuba, 2009). Ochuba stressed that in the school system, some determinants of high quality education include goals of education, quality of the input as well as a well organized school system that ensure the articulation and effective co-ordination of all aspect of school life. The worth of any educational system as an investment lies in its capabilities to continuously serve its customer which is the students, parents, employer, labour or the society better and remain relevant. Ijaiya (2009) said that educational planners are therefore faced with two main challenges: providing for quantity and for quality. The concern for quantity and quality in the school system is that quantity through the admission of many citizens as possible to school within the shortest time allowed should be assessed to ensure quality (Adegbesan, 2010). Adegbesan maintained that quality cannot be achieved without quantity which serves as an assessment. According to Ajayi and Adegbesan (2007), quality means a total of the features of a process, product or service on its performance in customers or clients perception of that performance. It is not just a feature of a finished product or services but involves a focus on internal processes and outputs which includes the reduction of wasted and the improvement or productivity. Fadokun (2005) defined quality by three interrelated and interdependent stands, efficiency in the meeting of its goals, relevance to human and environmental conditions and needs, something more that is the exploration of new ideas, the pursuit of excellence and encouragement of creativity. In this study, quality means the assessment of resources put in education such as finance, teachers, facilities that will enhance quality output. It is in the aspect of qualitative
growth that educational planners can lay claim to some success in restructuring of school system. Despite government effort to restructure public secondary schools in order to reduce wastage and ensure greater quality, a lot is still required from the school administrators to put our educational system in a high standard, that the improvement of teachers’ input.

The declining level of literacy in some public secondary schools in south-east which can be traced to teaching employment given to unqualified applicants and admissions given to some unqualified candidates. Others are bad leadership in most public secondary schools and inadequate facilities that have endanger public secondary schools. Facilities determine the grading of schools to world class. Adegbesan (2010) see facilities as those components that through its availability, school will achieve its goals. These include laboratories, libraries, computers, seats, classrooms among others. The researcher further stated that with the availability of these, the academic standard will be achieved. Ikediugwu (2001) defined facilities in the school system as materials used in both teaching and learning in other to make teaching and learning attractive. The researcher opined that these comprise the seats, laboratory equipment, and classroom, information and communication technology (ICT) among others. The researcher further stated that the school cannot operate without the require facilities in place. In this context, facilities are defined as all the components needed in school in other to achieve maximum objectives. This includes library, laboratories, chalkboard, seats, computers among others.

The depreciation that has endangered public schools is undoubtedly the major cause that led to the emergence of private schools (Olayemi 2001). Olayemi however noted that public schools which are schools owned and funded by state government, need to be closely monitored to stem the abuse which is now common among them. Public secondary schools on the other hand according to Ogbonnaya (2009) are those secondary schools owned, managed and controlled by the state. The researcher opined that community owned secondary schools are regarded as public schools because it is run and managed by state government where the community falls. One can deduce that public secondary school in this context is that secondary school under the finance and maintenance of government for the benefit of her citizens. Result has not been achieved in these schools for the fact that majority of the principals in school are not competent to administrative job and put public secondary school at the backward. Apart from such comments, other indicators of declining quality and wastage in the education system include: high drop-out, failure rates, rampart examination malpractices, poor reading and writing skills among students at all levels. Evidence of wastage abounds among the teeming population of students who repeat General Certificate Examination (G C E) and Joint Admission and Matriculation Board (JAMB) Examination every year. There is also
evidence of client reaction as many parents take their children to private schools within or outside the country for those who can afford to. This is as a result of incompetency in some public secondary schools administrators.

Leadership is indispensable in any organization especially in the school system because of its far reaching effects on the accomplishment of organizational goals. School leadership according to Oboegbulem and Onwurah (2011) means the process through which school head influence their followers to act for certain goals that represent the values, needs aspirations and expectations of both leaders and followers. The authors further stressed that those occupying leadership positions especially in schools such principals should be aware that their personality influences their leadership effective. Ikediugwu (2001) defined school leadership as a process in which intention influenced is exerted by the school heads over other people (the teachers and students) to structure and facilitates the activities and relationship in the group or organization. The author opined that in a school system, the principal is expected to posses the necessary leadership style which will enable him perform comfortably. In this context, school leadership involves a process of influencing, directing, acquiring normative personal characteristics power and coordinating group activities to make individuals which are the (staff and students) in the schools system strive willingly towards the attainment of organizational goals.

In recent years, the trend in many countries have been restructuring of school system. Decentralization has received moral attention as a means of reducing wastage and ensuring greater quality. Quality control and quality assurance were introduced to ensure standardization and teachers review. Quality control is a system for setting standards and taking appropriate action to deal with deviation outside permitted tolerance (Cole 1996). The researcher opined that the issue of quality control in the school system cannot be over-emphasized. It is one of the strategies for establishing quality assurance in the education system at all levels. Ojedele (2007) suggested that quality control should be of concern to the country in its drive towards technological developments. For this to be successfully carried out, there is need to examine the qualification of teachers, teachers by gender, the adequacy of the curriculum, availability of equipment in the required number as well as the proper use of the processes involved in the various skills to ensure that the finished products are of high standard. Quality control practices in educational system is based essentially on school inspection, monitoring and control for obtaining data on policy implementation and for strategic planning and aid public accountability.

Quality assurance is related to accountability both of which are concerned with maximizing the effectiveness and efficiency of educational systems and services in relation to their contexts of their missions and their stated objectives. In the words of Ehindero (2004), quality assurance focused on the: learners entry behaviors, characteristics and attributes including some demographic factors that can inhibit or
facilitate their learning, teachers entry qualification, values pedagogic stalls, professional preparedness, subject background, philosophical orientation, the teaching/learning processes including the structure of the curriculum and learning environment. Okeke (2008) said that quality assurance is regarded as a process and practice primarily concerned with conformance to mission specification and goal achievement within the publicly accepted standard of excellence. In such case, quality assurance is all these attitude, objectives, actions and procedures that through its existence and use, and together with quality control activities, ensure that appropriate academic standards are being maintained and enhanced in the public school system.

Quality control and quality assurance mechanisms are those strategies adopted to ensure that goals are achieved. Those mechanisms include monitoring, evaluation, supervision, inspection and control. Monitoring as one of the mechanisms of quality assurance refers to the process of collecting data at interval about ongoing projects or programme within the school system. Supervision is another mechanism of quality control and quality assurance which might involves inspection, but goes beyond inspection and includes attempt at bringing about improvement in the quality of instruction. It is a way of advising, grinding, refreshing, encouraging and stimulating staff (Ochuba 2009). Evaluation is a formal process carried out within a school setting. It is based on available data which are used to draw conclusions. It could be formative or summative. The aim of evaluation as a quality assurance mechanism is to see how the system can be assisted to improve on the present level of performance. Inspection: this usually involves an assessment of available facilities and resources in an institution with a view to establishing how far a particular institution has met prescribed standards. It is more of an assessment rather than an improvement induced exercise.

Quality control and quality assurance practices in secondary schools in Nsukka education zone of Enugu State are yet to rise to its peak. Consequently, in some public secondary schools in the area, the employments of unqualified teachers are still in the system which put their students below from competing with their private school counterparts. Invariably, parents have been complaining about their children inability to perform creditably well in their academics. Also important is the inadequate facilities in many schools in the zone which has characterized poor quality education in public secondary schools. Schools cannot boast to have enough classrooms, laboratory equipment. These have contributed to students’ poor performance in the internal and external examination. Based on the foregoing, the researcher was interested in investigating quality control and quality assurance as tools for quality education in public secondary schools in Nsukka education zone.
1.1 Purpose of the Study
The main purpose of the study was to investigate quality control and quality assurance as tools for quality education in public secondary schools in Nsukka education zone. Specifically, the study sought to:

1. Ascertain the extent to which quality assurance mechanism contribute to school leadership in ensuring quality education in public secondary schools.
2. To ascertain the extent to which quality assurance mechanism raise the standard of facilities in public secondary schools.

1.2 Research Questions
The following research questions were formulated to guide the study.

1. To what extent does quality assurance mechanism contribute to school leadership in ensuring quality education?
2. To what extent does quality assurance mechanism raise the standard of facilities?

1.3 Hypothesis
One null hypothesis was formulated to guide the study and tested at 5% level of significance.

Ho: There is no significant difference between the mean rating scores of principals and teachers on the extent quality assurance mechanism contribute to school leadership in ensuring quality education.

2. Method
A descriptive survey research design was adopted for the study. Descriptive survey design according to Ali (2006) is a process of describing documenting and what exists or the present status of existence or absence of what is being investigated. The reason for choosing this research design was because it was the most appropriate that could helped the researcher to identify the characteristics of the population. The area of the study was Nsukka education zone. Nsukka education zone has three local government areas namely; Nsukka local government, Igbo Etiti local government and Uzo-Uwani local government. The population of the study comprised 236 principals and 1621 teachers in 59 public secondary schools in Nsukka education zone. The respondents were chosen in order to ensure that those used for the study was sufficiently knowledgeable about the variable under study and will supply useful information on the research instrument (PRS Unit, PPSMB, Nsukka Zone, 2015).

The sample size for the study was 186. The sample size was randomly selected using balloting sampling technique. Out of the total population of 1857respondents, 186 respondents were used as the study sample; this amount to 10% of the total population. The rationale for selecting this sample size was in line with Nwana (1992) who stated that, if the population of a study is in many hundred, a 40% or more samples will do, if in
few hundred, 20% sample will do, if in few thousand, 10% will do and if several thousand, a 5% or less will do.

The instrument for data collection was a structured questionnaire designed by the researcher, titled ‘Quality Control and Quality Assurance Instrument (QCAQAI). The instrument was divided into two sections. Section A for Bio-data information of the respondents and section B contain 4 clusters A-D. Cluster A elicit information on the extent of quality control mechanism on teachers input. Cluster B focused on the extent quality assurance mechanism has contributes to school leadership. Cluster C focused on the extent quality assurance mechanism has raise the standard of learning facilities and cluster D focused on the extent quality assurance mechanism has raise the standard of learning environment. The response mode was a four point rating scale of Very High Extent=4, High Extent=3, Little Extent=2, and Very Little Extent=1.

The instrument was subjected to face validation to determine its adequacy and appropriateness for the study. This was done by presenting it to two experts in Education Administration and Planning and one in Measurement and Evaluation all in Faculty of Education, University of Nigeria, Nsukka. Based on their comments and suggestions, the instrument was modified to suit the study.

To determine the reliability of the instrument, 20 copies of questionnaires were trial tested in Obollo- Afor education zone public secondary schools which was outside the study area. Some schools were selected and the instrument was administered to 10 principals and 10 teachers, then the result collected was subjected to the test of internal consistency using Cronbach Alpha procedure. The results for the reliability are as follows Cluster A= 0.83, Cluster B= 0.84, cluster C = 0.84, and cluster D= 0. 87. While the overall reliability was 0.96 showing that the instrument was reliable for the study. The direct delivery and retrieval method was used in administering the instrument to the respondents. To ensure high rate of returns, two (2) research assistants were trained and used in administering and retrieving the instrument from the respondents. The data collected for this study were analyzed using mean and standard deviation to answer the research questions while the hypotheses were tested using the t- test at 0.05 level of significance. The limit of real numbers was used to analyze cluster A-D with responds mode of VGE = 3.50-4.50, GE =2.50- 3.99, LE= 1.50-2.99, GLE= 0.50- 1.99.
3. Results

This study was analyzed according to research questions and hypothesis that guided the study.

3.1 Research Question one: To what extent does quality assurance mechanism contribute to school leadership in ensuring quality education?

Table 1: Mean Ratings of Principals and Teachers on the Extent Quality Assurance Mechanism Contribute to School Leadership in Ensuring Quality Education.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S/N</th>
<th>Item Description</th>
<th>Principals n = 86</th>
<th>Teachers n = 100</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>M₁</td>
<td>SD₂</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>The use of leadership technique is assured</td>
<td>2.93</td>
<td>0.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>There will be free flow of information between the head and the subordinates</td>
<td>2.71</td>
<td>0.93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Involvement of subordinate in decision making is assured</td>
<td>3.05</td>
<td>0.94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Effective motivation of staff and students is assured</td>
<td>2.81</td>
<td>0.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Effective monitoring of students during exams</td>
<td>3.10</td>
<td>0.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Selection of appropriate methods and materials for instruction</td>
<td>3.07</td>
<td>0.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Effective supervision of curriculum implementation</td>
<td>3.01</td>
<td>0.97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Formulating aims and goals of programme in a thoughtful manner</td>
<td>2.84</td>
<td>0.97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Provision of immediate feedback to teachers and students</td>
<td>2.80</td>
<td>0.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>For effective guidance and counseling</td>
<td>3.33</td>
<td>0.97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cluster mean</td>
<td>2.97</td>
<td>0.96</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From the data presented in Table 1, all the principals and teachers that responded to the questionnaire items agreed that quality assurance mechanism contribute to school leadership in ensuring quality education. This agreement of principals and teachers are
expressed by the mean values of each item and then, the cluster means of 2.97 and 3.09 for principals and teachers respectively. This indicates that both the principals and teachers are of the opinion that quality assurance mechanism contributes to school leadership in ensuring quality education.

3.2 Research Question Two: To what extent does quality assurance mechanism raise the standard of facilities in ensuring quality education?

Table 2: Mean Ratings of Principals and Teachers on the Extent Quality Assurance Mechanism raise the Standard of Facilities in Ensuring Quality Education.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S/N</th>
<th>Item description</th>
<th>Principals n = 86</th>
<th>Teachers n = 100</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Provision of well equipped laboratories in the schools.</td>
<td>M1 3.36 SD2 0.98</td>
<td>Dec. GE 2.99 0.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Effective use of modern teaching facilities influences quality education.</td>
<td>M1 2.80 SD2 0.96</td>
<td>Dec. GE 3.05 0.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Provision of current and adequate instructional materials for effective teaching and learning.</td>
<td>M1 2.81 SD2 0.92</td>
<td>Dec. GE 3.15 0.96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Adequate facilities improve Students level of understanding.</td>
<td>M1 2.95 SD2 0.87</td>
<td>Dec. GE 2.97 0.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Standard of facilities raise the reputation of schools.</td>
<td>M1 2.88 SD2 0.91</td>
<td>Dec. GE 3.01 0.82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>The teachers become effective in their job.</td>
<td>M1 3.49 SD2 0.94</td>
<td>Dec. GE 3.11 0.87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Increase of teachers/ students relationship.</td>
<td>M1 3.08 SD2 0.95</td>
<td>Dec. GE 3.07 0.94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Effective use of instructional materials.</td>
<td>M1 2.83 SD2 0.98</td>
<td>Dec. GE 2.76 0.97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Increase students understanding</td>
<td>M1 3.15 SD2 0.88</td>
<td>Dec. GE 2.84 0.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Students cannot rely on teachers for all information.</td>
<td>M1 3.02 SD2 0.99</td>
<td>Dec. GE 2.93 0.93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cluster mean</td>
<td>M1 3.04 SD2 0.94</td>
<td>Dec. GE 2.99 0.93</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The data on Table 2 shows that all the principal and teacher that responded to the questionnaire agreed that quality assurance mechanism raise the standard of facilities in ensuring quality education. This agreement of principals and teachers are expressed by the mean value of each items and then, the cluster mean of 3.04 and 3.09 for principal and teachers respectively. This indicates that the items are how quality assurance mechanism raises the standard of facilities in ensuring quality education.
3.3 Hypothesis Testing: There is no significant difference between the mean rating scores of principals and teachers on the extent quality assurance mechanism contribute to school leadership in ensuring quality education.

Table 3: t-test Statistics of the Significant Difference Between the Mean Ratings of Principals and Teachers on the Extent Quality Assurance Mechanism Contributes to School Leadership in Ensuring Quality Education.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Groups</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>X</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>t-cal.</th>
<th>t-crit.</th>
<th>level of sig.</th>
<th>Decision</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Principals</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>3.73</td>
<td>0.65</td>
<td>184</td>
<td>2.58</td>
<td>1.98</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>Reject Ho</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>3.42</td>
<td>0.85</td>
<td>184</td>
<td>2.58</td>
<td>1.98</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3 shows that the calculated t-value of 2.58 at 184 degree of difference is greater than the critical t-value of 1.98 at 0.05 level of significance for a two-tailed test. The null hypothesis (Ho), which states that there is no significant difference between school principals and teachers on the extent quality assurance mechanism contributes to school leadership in ensuring quality education, is therefore rejected.

4. Discussion of Findings

4.1 The extent to which quality assurance mechanism contribute to school leadership

Findings of the study shows that effective monitoring of students exams, selection of appropriate methods and materials for instruction, effective supervision of curriculum implementation, formulating aims and goals of programme in a thoughtful manner, provision of immediate feedback to teachers and students and for effective guidance and counseling review that instructional supervision has contributed immensely to school administration. The t-test analysis of the principals and teachers on the extent to which quality assurance mechanism contribute to school leadership shows that the calculated t-value of 2.58 is greater than the critical t-value of 1.98 at 0.05 level of significance for a two-tailed test. The null hypothesis which states that there is no significant difference between school principals and teachers on the extent quality assurance mechanism contributes to school leadership in ensuring quality education is rejected.

The findings also agreed with the findings of Uche (2012) who showed that involvement of subordinates in decision making enhances productivity in the school system.

4.2 The extent to which quality assurance mechanism raise the standard of facilities in ensuring quality education

The findings of the study shows that provision of well equipped laboratories in the school, effective use of modern teaching facilities increase quality education, provision of current and adequate instructional materials for effective teaching and learning, adequate
facilities improve students’ learning of understanding, standard of facilities raise the reputation of schools, the teachers become effective in their job, increase in students/teachers relationship. The findings agreed with that of Oyetola and Kayode (2012) who showed that facilities both in teaching and learning should be provided especially at the core subjects to ensure better learning activities in secondary schools.

5. Conclusions
Based on the result of the study, the researchers conclude that there is no significant difference between the mean ratings of principals and teachers on the extent quality control mechanism influence school leadership. Quality control mechanism contributes to school effectiveness and ensures greater output. It is also revealed that quality assurance mechanism has influence on teachers’ teaching capabilities and infrastructural development. All the identified mechanisms such as supervision, monitoring, evaluating, inspection and control help school system to meet the world standard.

6. Recommendations
On the basis of the findings of the study, the researchers made the following recommendations.
1. Ministry of education should organize seminars and workshops on the need for the teachers to upgrade their teaching techniques.
2. School administrators should be at least attend administrative conferences to enable them acquire leadership skills.
3. More funds should be allocated to schools to enable them provide the needed facilities to enable the students perform better in academics.
4. Government should introduce committee on school mapping to ensure that learning environment is in abundance.

Conflict of Interest
None declared.
RESEARCH ARTICLE

References