THE CONCEPT AND PRACTICES OF SUPERVISION/INSPECTION IN KWARA STATE PUBLIC PRIMARY SCHOOLS

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Introduction

The sudden explosion of pupils population coupled with the attendant increased complexity of the school organization and the introduction of the new school basic system of 6-3-3-4 or 9-3-4 (?) system of education in the country has indeed necessitate a greater attention of supervision more than ever before. This is more so because school supervision occupies a unique place in the entire education system.

If qualitative education is a thing seriously desired in schools so that standard of education in our schools can be highly improved, school supervision must therefore be accorded high priority. Through inspection and supervision, the inspectors and supervisors assist in improving classroom instructions because teachers are made more competent and efficient, parent are satisfied with the performance of their children, children are motivated to work harder in order to achieve the required standard, hence in the long run, the goal of education is achieved.
Concept of Supervision

Supervision is a way of stimulating, guiding, improving, refreshing and encouraging and overseeing certain group with the hope of seeking their cooperation in order for the supervisors to be successful in their task of supervision. Ogunsaju (1983).

Supervision is essentially the practice of monitoring the performance of school staff, noting the merit and demerits and using befitting and amicable techniques to ameliorate the flaws while still improving on the merits thereby increasing the standard of schools and achieving educational goals.

The term supervision is derived from word “Super video” meaning to oversee, Adepoju (1998). It is an interaction between at least two persons for the improvement of an activity. It is also a combination or integration of processes, procedures and conditions that are consciously designed to advance the work effectiveness of individuals and group. Adepoju (1998) defines school supervision as the process of bringing about improvement in instruction by working with people who are working with pupils. It has also been described as a process of stimulating growth and a means of helping teachers to achieve excellence in teaching.

Supervision in school therefore is a vital process and combination of activities which is concerned with the teaching and improvement of the teaching in the school framework.
Differences between Inspection and Supervision

Inspection could be described as the critical examination and evaluation of a school as a place of learning, (Ojelabi, 1981). Through inspection, necessary and relevant advice may be given for the improvement of the school. Such advice is usually registered in a report. On the other hand, supervision is distinct from inspection since it can be described as a constant and continuous process of personal guidance based on frequent to a school to give concrete and constructive advice and encouragement to teachers so as to improve the learning and teaching situation in the school. On such visits, attention is paid to one or more aspects of the school and its organization. Therefore, it is normal to refer to both at the same time.

Rationale for school Supervision

The importance of supervision in schools includes the following.
- Improvement of teaching and learning.
- Systematic efforts to help students understand themselves, get in touch with their own feelings and monitor their own behaviour (Adewole and Olaniyi 1992).
- Helps teacher in school management.
- For approval of new school.
- Payment of grant in aids to private and voluntary schools.
- Approval of schools for recognized examination bodies e.g GCE, WAEC.
- Assessment of teaching and learning.
- Linking teachers with the ministry of education.
- Assistance in development of needed teaching competences.
- To obey the education law that makes supervision mandatory.
- Helps to interpret school programme to the community.
- Development of sound education philosophy in teachers.
- Creates confidence in incompetent teachers.
- Identifies good qualities possessed by teachers.
- Determines whether a teacher should be transferred, promoted, retained or dismissed.
- Identifies urgent needs in classroom and schools
- Examines continuously school instructional goals and assesses teacher’s performance in meeting such goals.

Types of Inspection

Routine visits

This is short visit made to school on which no formal reports are written but brief comments are made. The aim depends on why such inspection is made. It may be check on punctuality of teachers or how the school is settling down. One of the aims of such supervisory visits is to look into what is happening, the work being done, the human relationships or the appropriate use of the building and school equipment (Ojelabi, 1981).

Investigation Visits on School Administration

This is to investigate an aspect of administration organization in the school e.g. special problem of discipline, investigation of an allegation of fraud.
Special Visits

This is for an inspection of one or a limited number of aspects of the school e.g. teaching of English.
Follow-Up Visits

This is follow up of previous visits. The inspector investigates whether the suggestions, corrections and recommendation he or she made during the previous visit have been carried out by affected schools. He or she also ascertains to what those corrections and suggestions are helping in achieving the school objectives.

Sampling and Survey Visits

This is for particular aspect of education over a number of schools e.g. teaching of Mathematics, Headmasters duties.

Visits for Approval for opening Schools

Such visits are paid to new schools to find out whether they satisfy the condition necessary to obtain approval for opening.

Full Inspection

An inspection which consist of a team of inspectors visiting a school for several days usually a week or longer enquiring into every aspect of school programme and examining its buildings and surroundings is referred to as full inspection. Such visits are usually followed by a comprehensive report, copies of which are made available to the school and ministry. The frequency of the inspection of a school depends on a number of factors, such as the number of schools in the area, the availability of inspectorate staff, the needs of the school etc. However, the interval between inspections should not be more than 3 to 5 years.
Investigation on Financial Mismanagement Inspection

This is not a common type of inspection, it takes place when there is a misappropriation of funds, professional misconduct and during teachers and students unrest. It can last for two or three days. Report of findings is normally sent to the Ministry of Education for further actions.

Subject Inspection

This type of inspection is conducted under two circumstances. (a) If a school failed in certain subjects during the inspection for recognition and the school applies to the ministry of Education for a reinspection of the failed subjects during the earlier inspection.

(b) If a school wishes to register its final year student for final examinations in certain subject which were not inspected during the inspection for recognition. Application for such inspection is usually granted and the inspection take place before registration for such exam. If the school that applies; passes the inspection, it is allowed to register students for subjects.

Basic Principles for Effective Supervision

1. Healthy Atmosphere

   The environment should be made free of tension and emotional stress. The atmosphere should be given incentives for work.

2. Staff Orientation

   The quality and quantity of the work must be specified in clean clear terms. Staff should be made to understand clearly what are or not expected of them. New staff must be given the necessary orientation.
They should have a schedule to know where to get information and materials to help them perform the work satisfactorily well.

3. **Guidance and Staff Training**

   Staff should be offered necessary guidance. They should be guided on how to carry out the assignment, standard should be set by the supervisor while information should be given ruling out the possibility of rumours. Information should be for everybody and specifics to individuals assigned to a particular task. Techniques of how to do it must be given at all times. The school must always arrange and participate in staff training.

4. **Immediate Recognition of Good Work**

   Good work should be recognized. This implies that the acknowledgement of any good work done must be immediate and made public to others which will then serve as incentive to others. Incentive of merit, recommendation for promotion, etc. improve performances.

5. **Constructive Criticisms**

   Poor work done should be constructively criticized. Advice and personal relationship should be given to the affected staff. It needs to be stated here that such criticisms should be made private and with mind free of bias.

6. **Opportunity for Improvement**

   Staff should be given opportunity to prove their worth and for aspiring higher. They should therefore be allowed to use their initiatives in performing their jobs and taking decision. It will give them the motivation to work much harder.
7. Motivation and Encouragement

Staff should be motivated and encouraged to work to increase their productivity. They should be encouraged to improve their ability to achieve organizational goal.

Problems of School Supervision

There are various factors militating against successful inspection and supervision in Nigeria primary schools. These are identified in (a) Government (b) Teachers and (c) Community and Society.

Government

Government contributes to the problems of supervision through the following ways:

- Poor remuneration of teachers.
- Insufficient staffing/shortage of inspectors.
- Lack of materials and resources.
- Lack of facilities for the inspectors of education to work with e.g. vehicles.
- Bad roads.
- Lack of evaluation system.
- Poor funding.
- Political instability.
- Constant change in educational policies.
- Lack of adequate training for inspectors.
- Politicalisation of appointment of supervisors.

**Teachers**

Teachers contribute to the problem of supervision through the following ways:

- Unprofessional attitudes to work.
- Lack of interest,
- Lack of basic knowledge or formal training.
- Numerous unqualified teachers.

**Community and Society**

Community and Society help in the problem of supervision through the following way:

- Poor perception of the general public on teaching as profession.
- Poor status given to the teachers.
- Lack of proper interest.

**Inspection and Supervision as Practices of Internal Quality Control in Public Primary School**

For anything to be regarded as qualitative in school, it must be geared toward achieving the objectives of the school. Inspection and supervision are special practice that can easily help educational system to achieve its goal if they are properly handled.
Motivate Teachers towards High Performance

If teachers perform excellently well in the classroom, no doubt educational objective would be achieved. It is only through internal and external supervision that this can be achieved, for majority of human beings tend to work harder and better under supervision than otherwise.

In addition, material advice and incentives must be supplied to add more impetus to the performance of class-teacher by supervisors.

Frequent and Regular Visits

Visits made randomly and rarely solve little or no problem. Visits should be as frequent and as regular as assessment and examination in schools.

Follow Up Studies on Visits

The visits should not be made without verbal and written feedback to the teachers. Corrections should not be made out of bias or prejudice. The supervisor should only bear in his mind the “improvement of school” and the “improvement of teaching and learning” Visits should be both internal and external always.

Supervision as Product of Promotion, Dismissal, Warning, Special Awards, Transfer etc

If teachers find out that supervision and inspection are more of formalities than quality control, they would not be gingered towards high performance. If the external and internal supervision yield concrete control which will transfer to promote teachers etc, teachers would strive very hard
to perform better as they would like to be promoted or even recognized as performing well.

The problem is that teachers seem not even commended when they perform well, how much being promoted. No teacher has ever boasted of being very weak practice.

**Stimulation of sense of Competition**

The desire to be the best will inspire schools to com among each other and hence perform better. Each year a sp award can be given to the school who perform best in the Examinations, quiz and drama competitions etc. Teachers can even be rewarded by being transferred to the best school of year. Schools can be inspired from how teachers from the schools are performing.

**Orientation course for Inspectors**

When it has been decided that a group of experienced teachers shall be posted from classroom to the field as inspectors of education, arrangements must be made for proper orientation by the inspectorate division of KWASUBEB.

For internal quality control to be maintained, what we doing today is in the right direction. The inspectors and sc managers must be constantly refreshed on quality supervision training. This will go a long way in improving and maintaining quality of teaching and learning in the Kwara State public primary schools.
Effective Monitoring of Inspectors

It is very essential that inspectors should be monitor higher authorities. There is need to ascertain the authenticity of their report. It is important that reports are not made out or prejudice. Justice must be exercised in writing inspection reports.

Re-Structuring of Inspectorate Division

It is important to re-structure the inspectorate division so as to accommodate further decentralization. It will entail the distribution of schools into geographical school district which will make possible, frequents visits to school, proper supervision and a sound quality control machinery. Through this re-structuring about 10-15 schools can be placed under one inspector, 5 inspectors under a senior inspector, and 3 or more senior inspector, under a principal inspector.

An administrative unit of the inspectorate, responsible for evaluation and research can be created. The chief inspectors and the deputies will have to delegate more authority to their subordinate and administrative staff and encourage initiative. Ideally they should relinquish the details of day to day administration to their administrative officers as well as attendance at the numerous irrelevant committee meetings rather, they should concentrate their effort on important professional issues relating to educational policies implementation.
Inspection Guidelines
Inspectors should be given guidelines by the administrative unit of inspectorate to enable them know what to look for and what type of advice, corrections etc. to give.

Seminars and Workshop
Inspectors need to do more than visit schools if they are to have maximum impact in raising the standard of education. They should organize and run seminars and workshops for teachers and head teachers, during vacation.

If new schools were to be opened in a state by young inexperienced head-teachers, inspectors should quickly see the need to run workshops or seminars for the head-teachers in the areas of school organization and administration. Similarly a Mathematics workshop may be mounted for mathematics teachers to improve the teaching of Mathematics in the state, on yearly basis. Sincere supervision is the solution to quality education.

Conclusion and Recommendations
The paper having explained the meaning of supervision and comments of rationale for school supervision, types of supervision, principles, and finally discusses in detail the practice of inspection and supervision as quality control in education.

It is not encouraging to note those teachers are not accorded the type of treatment and motivation required of them to excel higher.
**Recommendation**

In view of the problem in supervision and inspection of schools, the following recommendations are advised:

- Teachers have to be well remunerated and motivated.

- Head teachers should be serious in internal supervision.

- The inspectorate section should be highly motivated too. They should be given logistics of work such as cars and roads leading to all schools should be properly maintained for easy access.

**Conclusion**

Educational activities need supervision and inspection to achieve educational objective. Supervision and inspection are good machineries to up-grade teachers into required standard. Teachers need supervision and inspection to work harder no matter their level of experience and devotion. Without supervision both teachers and school administrators backslide rapidly in their performance.

Though the political, economical and social problems of Nigeria may affect effective supervision and inspection of Nigeria schools, yet a lot of efforts can be made to give supervision and inspection special attention.

The inspectorate division should as well come up with innovations and be truly concerned with the enhancement of learning and learning in Nigeria schools. The government on the other hand should motivate the inspectors with attractive remuneration and logistics.
References


