

Quality Assurance for Achievement of the Objectives of Basic Education in Kwara and Kogi State of Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

Basic education is vital to the national development. The government of the federal republic of Nigeria invested financial, human and material resources in it so that its objectives could be achieved. However, two decades after its implementation, the nation is yet to overcome most of economic and socio-political challenges it was meant to address. This could be due to poor quality graduates turned out from basic education institutions in particular and all level of education in general. Thus, there is need to investigate the quality management process in education system. Basic education provides the foundation for other levels of education and its quality would determine, to a large extent, the quality of education at higher levels. This paper therefore examines the quality assurance adopted in the implementation of basic education Programme and the extent of achievement of basic education objectives in Kwara and Kogi State of Nigeria with a view to suggesting possible ways of improvement.

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Received: January 27, 2022; **Accepted:** February 03, 2022; **Published:** February 07, 2022

Introduction

Building a house involves a solid foundation. people spend a lot to ensure their buildings enjoy solid foundation, as a result, whatever build on a solid foundation always last long. The same thing applies to knowledge. Knowledge acquires through solid foundation benefits the person, the immediate environment of the person and the entire world. With this, it shows how significant the basic education is to our community and the world at large. Universal Basic. Stated that Basic Education is the education offered to children ages 3 - 14 years. It comprises 3 years of early childhood care education and the nine (9) years of formal schooling. It is the foundation a child can have for him/her to use throughout life. Bello, stated that, basic education is the bedrock upon which the secondary and higher education system is built in any nation's educational system because it is the foundation or first stage of formal education [1]. Therefore, basic education is the foundation base of our education system and as a result, it requires special attention. Argued that for a nation to rise to a standard laudable enough for her to compete favourably in the league of nations, such a nation must ensure that high quality in her education is achieved and sustained, thus bringing about quality workforce in the nation [2]. They explained further that, quality work force in the education sector brings quality education which is an instrument highly indispensable in the transformation of individual values, beliefs and behaviour; it is also used to preserve societal cultural settings and acquisition of

skills that make members of the society useful to themselves and their society. Concurs that trained or educated human resources constitute man power and personnel that bring about national development. opined that development of human resources is a prerequisite to the development of a nation [3, 4]. He stated further that skills, knowledge and capabilities in the citizens have to be nurtured and developed through education so as to produce the required adequate quality and quantity manpower. This constitutes a major objective of schools, colleges, universities and other educational institutions. The meaning of this is that the higher the educated citizen the more the available quality work force that will contribute to a nation's development. In this sense, there is serious setback to our education system in Nigeria. Argued that low enrollment of school age children in the country in general and northern part in particular has been worrisome to educationists, stakeholders and the federal government [1]. The 1999 Universal Basic Education (UBE) was practical and pragmatic effort by the Government to address this problem. As a matter of fact, it invested financial, human and material resources in it so that its objectives could be achieved. However, two decades after its implementation, the nation is yet to overcome most of economic and socio-political challenges it was meant to address. This could be due to poor quality graduates turned out from basic education institutions in particular and all level of education in general. On this note, there is need to investigate the quality management process in education system.

Concept of Quality Assurance

Quality assurance is a management process through which basic schools activities are monitored as to ensure effective teaching and learning towards driving home the goals of education. ET 2020 sees quality assurance as the systematic review of educational programmers and processes to maintain and improve their quality, equity and efficiency. Quality assurance according to is that which deals with the practical means of assuring quality inputs, quality through-puts, quality outcome, quality academic achievements of pupils and the environment before things get out of hands [5]. This was further explained by that quality input refers to the worth of teachers, trainees, textbooks, technology of delivery and tasks or curriculum. Quality of the process deals with the teaching and learning process that involves lesson plan, delivery methods, classroom organisation and control, student-teacher interactions, pupil's participation, assessment and evaluation, marking etc. Quality of outcome and outputs involves the academic achievement and attainment, value added through education, results of internal and external examinations etc. Quality environment involves the work of all environmental factors and sanitation etc. since education is seen and regarded as services to the society and such a predominant force in our society. In the same vein, Quality assurance is the management of goods, services and activities from the input stage, through processes to the output stage of production. Quality assurance aims at preventing quality problems and ensuring that only conforming products reach the customers. Refer quality assurance as the value added to the overall teaching and learning in schools, leading to measurable improvement in the achievement of individual school and societal goals and objectives [6, 7]. Defined quality assurance as a key component of successful internationalization; a mechanism for building instructional reputation in the competitive local and global arena and a necessary foundation for consumer protection. He also opined that quality assurance is a mechanism used to evaluate the appropriateness of teaching and learning in all level of education so as to ensure the delivery of high quality education. Furthermore, quality assurance is a holistic method of studying, identifying rectifying and resolving problems within the educational system in order to ensure continuous quality improvement.

ET 2020 argued that the design of quality assurance mechanisms (tools, processes and actors) varies across national contexts, their common objective is to improve teaching and learning with the ultimate goal to support the best outcomes for learners. It further explained that quality assurance approaches can include mechanisms that are external and internal to schools. External mechanisms may include national or state school evaluations and/or large-scale student assessments. Internal mechanisms may include school self-evaluation, staff appraisal and classroom-based student assessments. These mechanisms have different but complementary purposes. Ideally, they are part of a coherent, integrated system, with the different mechanisms supporting and reinforcing each other. This kind of productive synergy can ensure a clear focus on school development, providing data on aspects such as school climate and the well-being of all members of the school community, effective teaching and learning, and the impact of innovations.

Statement of the Problem

It is evidence that basic education is the foundation through which other levels of education system are built upon and it is the key to the success or failure of the whole system. It has been concluded that basic education is a preliminary floor for the child to acquire basic life skills that could be of assistance to the child throughout life. It is indeed germane to the national development. For this,

government of the federal republic of Nigeria invested greatly in it so that its objectives could be achieved. Conversely, two decades after its implementation, the country is still wallowing in economic and socio-political challenges it's meant to address. The assumption is that, poor quality graduates turned out from basic education institutions in particular and all level of education in general. Therefore, examining the quality assurance adopted in the implementation of basic education programme and the extent of achievement of basic education objectives in Kwara and Kogi State of Nigeria becomes necessary, as basic education provides the foundation for other levels of education and its quality would determine, to a large extent, the quality of education at higher levels.

Research Questions

The following research questions were formulated to guide the study:

Research Questions

- i. What functions quality assurance performs in improving quality instruction of pupils in basic schools in Kwara and Kogi States of Nigeria?
- ii. Do quality assurance officers enhance teaching and learning activities in basic schools in Kwara and Kogi States of Nigeria?
- iii. Do teachers have opportunities for in-service training, seminar and workshops for improving pupils' academic progress in basic schools in Kwara and Kogi States of Nigeria?
- iv. Do head teachers/principals perceive quality assurance officers as a threat in basic schools in Kwara and Kogi States of Nigeria?
- v. How often do you attend workshop, conference based on the recommendations of quality assurance officers after visitation to basic schools in Kwara and Kogi States of Nigeria?
- vi. What are the challenges facing the successful visitation of quality assurance officers to basic schools in Kwara and Kogi States of Nigeria?
- vii. What are the solutions to the challenges facing visitation of quality assurance officers to basic schools in Kwara and Kogi States of Nigeria?

Research Hypotheses

Ho₁: There is no significant difference in the opinions of head teachers/principals on the influence of quality assurance officers on teaching and learning activities in basic schools based on states

Ho₂: There is no significant difference in the opinions of head teachers/principals on the challenges facing the successful visitation of quality assurance officers to basic schools based on states

Ho₃: There is no significant difference in the opinions of head teachers/principals on the probable solutions to the challenges facing the successful visitation of quality assurance officers to basic schools based on states

Methodology

The study adopted descriptive research design of survey method in carrying out this study. This research design was appropriate for this study because firstly, it is less costly and less time consuming. Secondly, it allows analyzing several factors at one time by giving a snapshot at a particular time. Thirdly, it is easier to collect answers needed since participation does not require long time commitment from participants. Lastly, data obtained from the surveys is easier and faster to analyze with the help of statistical software. The quantitative approach which involves statistical analysis and relies

on numerical evidence to examine relationships between variables and draw conclusions was employed because the study sought to investigate the relationship between quality assurance and achievements of the objectives of basic schools in Kwara and Kogi States [8]. The population consists of all 201 quality assurance officers, 4973 head teachers/principals and 41157 teachers of basic schools in Kwara and Kogi States. The whole population for the study is estimated to be 46372. Then 381 respondents were selected using Krejcie and Morgan table to determine sample size of known population. Simple random sampling was used to select 81 quality assurance officers, 80 headteachers/principals and 220 teachers respectively from both Kwara and Kogi State. Three set of questionnaire (one each for quality assurance, headteachers/principals and teachers) were used to collect data from respondents because the questionnaire is appropriate in obtaining data on quality assurance for achievement of the objectives of basic education in Kwara and Kogi. Simple random sampling techniques was used to select 40 schools, 40 headteachers/principals from each state and 110 teachers across the three senatorial districts of each State and across the 16 Local Government and 21 Local Government Area of each state respectively. Proportionate sampling procedure

was used to select two teachers from lower and middle basic schools and three teachers from upper basic schools. Since the study sought to investigate Quality Assurance for Achievement of the Objectives of Basic Education in Kwara and Kogi State, the use of the questionnaire was deemed appropriate. The first section of the questionnaire collected information on the personal characteristics of the respondents, the second section included items on quality assurance officers, and the third part has items on headteachers/principal role while the fourth section dwelt on teacher. The copies of questionnaire were pre-tested in three randomly selected public basic schools in Niger State. Through the use of test-retest (with two weeks interval) approach, the whole items in each scale yielded high reliability coefficients ranging from .79, .77 to .84. These values further buttressed the reliability of the three measuring instruments in this study.

Analysis and Discussion

Data Analysis and Results

Research Question 1: What functions quality assurance performs in improving quality instruction of pupils in basic schools in Kwara and Kogi States of Nigeria?

Table 1: Functions Quality Assurance Performs in Improving Quality Instruction of Pupils in Basic Schools in Kwara and Kogi States of Nigeria

S/N	Items	All the time	Sometime	Never
1.	Do quality assurance officers play the role of improving quality instructions of pupils in basic schools?	16 (20.5%)	45 (57.7%)	17 (21.8%)
2.	How often is the visitation conducted?	29 (37.2%)	43 (55.1%)	6 (7.7%)
3.	Do quality assurance officers' visits contribute in planning, formulating and implementing curriculum in schools?	14 (17.9%)	36 (46.2%)	28 (35.9%)

As shown in Table 1, on the item 1 which states that, do quality assurance officers play the role of improving quality instructions of pupils in basic schools? 20.5% of the respondents believed that it was all the time, 57.7% opined that it was sometime while 21.8% stated that it was never. On the item 2 which states that how often is the visitation conducted? 37.2% believed that it was all the time, 55.1% opined that it was sometime while 7.7% stated that it was never. 17.9% of the respondents believed that, quality assurance officers' visits contribute in planning, formulating and implementing curriculum in schools all the time, 46.2% opined that it was sometime while 35.9% agreed that it was never.

Research Question 2: Does quality assurance officers enhance teaching and learning activities in basic schools in Kwara and Kogi States of Nigeria?

Table 2: Quality Assurance Officers Enhance Teaching and Learning Activities in Basic Schools in Kwara and Kogi States of Nigeria?

S/N	Items	All the time	Sometime	Never
1.	Do quality assurance officers play the role of improving quality instructions of pupils in basic schools?	3 (3.8%)	28 (35.9%)	47 (60.3%)
2.	How often is the visitation conducted?	6 (7.7%)	26 (33.3%)	46 (59%)

As shown in Table 2, on the item 1 which states that, 3.8% of the respondents believed that, do quality assurance visitations to schools improve on teachers' job performance? 35.9% believed that it was all the time, 35.9% opined that it was sometime while 60.3% stated that it was never. On the item 2 which states that do quality assurance visitations assist to improve the performance of basic school pupils' academic performance? 7.7% believed that it was all the time, 33.3% opined that it was sometime while 59% stated that it was never.

Research Question 3: Do teachers have opportunities for in-service training, seminar and workshops for improving pupils' academic progress in basic schools in Kwara and Kogi States of Nigeria?

Table 3: Teachers’ Opportunities for In-service Training, Seminar and Workshops for Improving Pupils’ Academic Progress in Basic Schools in Kwara and Kogi States of Nigeria

S/N	Items	All the time	Sometime	Never
1.	Have you ever been inspected or supervised by quality assurance officers?	150 (71.8%)	28 (13.4%)	31 (14.8%)
2.	Do quality assurance officers focus on the entire school programmes and activities during visitation?	159 (76.1%)	29 (13.9%)	21 (10%)
3.	Is pupils’ academic achievement making progress during and after visitation?	57 (27.2%)	122 (58.4%)	30 (14.4%)
4.	Do you ever attend and of these refresher courses in respect to your duties? (a) in-service training (a) workshop (a) seminar?	24 (11.5%)	56 (26.8%)	129 (61.7%)
5.	Is there any relationship between quality assurance of instructions and pupils’ academic achievement?	77 (36.8%)	109 (52.2%)	23 (11%)

As shown in Table 3, on the time 1 which states that, have been inspected or supervised by quality assurance officers? 71.8% of the respondents opined that it was all the time, 13.4% believed that it was sometime while 14.8% stated that it was never. On the item 2 which states that Do quality assurance officers focus on the entire school programmes and activities during visitation? 76.1% believed that it was all the time, 13.9% opined that it was sometime while 10% stated that it was never. On the item 3 which states that is pupils’ academic achievement making progress during and after visitation? 27.2% believed that it was all the time, 58.4% opined that it was sometime while 14.4% stated that it was never. On the item 4 which states that, do you ever attend and of these refresher courses in respect to your duties (a) in-service training (a) workshop (a) seminar? 11.5% believed that it was all the time, 26.8% opined that it was sometime while 61.7% stated that it was never. On the item 5 which states that, is there any relationship between quality assurance of instructions and pupils’ academic achievement? 36.8% believed that it was all the time, 52.2% opined that it was sometime while 11% stated that it was never.

Research Question 4: Do head teachers/principals perceive visitation of quality assurance officers as a threat in basic schools in Kwara and Kogi States of Nigeria?

Table 4: Perception of Head teachers/Principals on Visitation of Quality Assurance Officers in Basic Schools in Kwara and Kogi States of Nigeria

S/N	Items	All the time	Sometime	Never
1.	Do you like visitation of quality assurance officers to your school?	43 (55.1%)	26 (33.3%)	7 (9%)
2.	Does the presence of quality assurance officers in your school give you discomfort?	49 (62.8%)	23 (29.5%)	4 (5.1%)
3.	Do you feel disorganized when you receive a letter of visitation to your school from quality assurance officers?	45 (57.7%)	21 (26.9%)	8 (10.3%)
4.	Do you feel bold to interact with the quality assurance officers during visitation to your school?	34 (43.6%)	28 (35.9%)	9 (11.5%)

As shown in Table 4, on the item 1 which states that, do you like visitation of quality assurance officers to your school? 55.1% of the respondents opined that it was all the time, 33.3% believed that it was sometime while 9% stated that it was never. On the item 2 which states that does the presence of quality assurance officers in your school give you discomfort? 62.8% believed that it was all the time, 29.5% opined that it was sometime while 5.1% stated that it was never. On the item 3 which states that do you feel disorganized when you receive a letter of visitation to your school from quality assurance officers? 57.7% believed that it was all the time, 26.9% opined that it was sometime while 10.3% stated that it was never. On the item 4 which states that do you feel bold to interact with the quality assurance officers during visitation to your school? 43.6% believed that it was all the time, 35.9% opined that it was sometime while 11.5% stated that it was never.

Research Question 5: How often do you attend workshop, conference based on the recommendations of quality assurance officers after visitation to basic schools in Kwara and Kogi States of Nigeria?

Table 5: Perception of Teachers on how they Attend Workshop, Conference Based on the Recommendations of Quality Assurance Officers after Visitation in Kwara and Kogi States of Nigeria

S/N	Items	All the time	Sometime	Never
1.	How often do you attend workshop, conference based on the recommendations of quality assurance officers after visitation?	21 (10%)	67 (32.1%)	121 (57.9%)

As shown in Table 5, on the item 1 which states that, how often do you attend workshop, conference based on the recommendations of quality assurance officers after visitation? 10% of the respondents believed that it was all the time, 32.1% opined that it was sometime while 57.9% stated that it was never.

Research Question 6: What are the challenges facing the successful visitation of quality assurance officers to basic schools in Kwara and Kogi States of Nigeria?

Table 6: Challenges Facing the Successful Visitation of Quality Assurance Officers to Basic Schools in Kwara and Kogi States of Nigeria

S/N	Items	All the time	Sometime	Never
1.	Do quality assurance officers encounter challenges during visitation?	10 (12.8%)	51 (65.4%)	17 (21.8%)
2.	Do the school management render all the necessary data required by the quality assurance officers to carry out their work effectively?	58 (74.4%)	17 (21.8%)	3 (3.8%)
3.	Do quality assurance officers enjoy the support of teachers during visitation?	56 (71.8%)	21 (26.9%)	1 (1.3%)

As shown in Table 6, on the item 1 which states that, do quality assurance officers encounter challenges during visitation? 12.8% of the respondents believed that it was all the time, 65.4% opined that it was sometime while 21.8% stated that it was never. On the item 2 which states that do the school management render all the necessary data required by the quality assurance officers to carry out their work effectively? 74.4% believed that it was all the time, 21.8% opined that it was sometime while 3.8% stated that it was never. On the item 3 which states that Do quality assurance officers enjoy the support of teachers during visitation? 71.8% believed that it was all the time, 26.% opined that it was sometime while 1.3% stated that it was never.

Research Question 7: What are the probable solutions to the challenges facing successful visitation of quality officers to basic schools in Kwara and Kogi States of Nigeria?

Table 7: Probable Solutions to the Challenges Facing Successful Visitation of Quality Officers to Basic Schools in Kwara and Kogi States of Nigeria

S/N	Items	All the time	Sometime	Never
1.	Should teachers be cooperative to the quality assurance officers during visitation to schools?	65 (83.3%)	8 (10.3%)	5 (6.6%)
2.	Should school management provide all the necessary data required by the quality assurance officers to carry out their work effectively?	61 (78.2%)	15 (19.2%)	2 (2.6%)
3.	Should quality assurance officers not see visitation to school as a witch hunt?	71 (91%)	5 (6.4%)	2 (2.6%)
4.	Should long serving teachers who are highly experienced be appointed as quality assurance officers?	55 (70.5%)	16 (20.5%)	7 (9%)

As shown in Table 7, on the item 1 which states that, should teachers be cooperative to the quality assurance officers during visitation to schools? 83.3% of the respondents believed that it was all the time, 10.3% opined that it was sometime while 6.6% stated that it was never. On the item 2 which states that should school management provide all the necessary data required by the quality assurance officers to carry out their work effectively? 78.2% believed that it was all the time, 19.2% opined that it was sometime while 2.6% stated that it was never. On the item 3 which states that should quality assurance officers not see visitation to school as a witch hunt? 91% believed that it was all the time, 6.4% opined that it was sometime while 2.6% stated that it was never. On the item 4 which states that should long serving teachers who are highly experienced be appointed as quality assurance officers? 70.5% believed that it was all the time, 20.5% opined that it was sometime while 9% stated that it was never.

Ho₁: There is no significant difference in the opinions of head teachers/principals on the influence of quality assurance officers on teaching and learning activities in basic schools based on states?

Table 5: Difference in Opinions of Head teachers/Principals on the Influence of Quality Assurance Officers on Teaching and Learning Activities in Basic Schools Based on States

State	N	X	SD	Cal. t-value	p-value	Decision
Kogi	39	3.68	1.24			
						Ho ₁
				.93	.068	Accepted
Kwara	39	3.67	1.19			

Not Significant @p >.05

Table 7 shows the calculated t-value (.93) while the p-value (.068) is greater than the significance level (.05). Therefore, the null hypothesis (Ho1) is accepted. This implies that there was no significant difference in the opinions of head teachers/principals on the influence of quality assurance officers on teaching and learning activities in basic schools based on states?

Ho₂: There is no significant difference in the opinions of head teachers/principals on the challenges facing the successful visitation of quality assurance officers to basic schools based on states.

Table 8: Difference in the Opinions of Head teachers/Principals on the Challenges Facing the Successful Visitation of Quality Assurance Officers to Basic Schools Based on States

State	N	X	SD	Cal. t-value	p-value	Decision
Kogi	39	3.89	1.47			
						Ho ₂
				2.22	.003	Rejected
Kwara	39	3.51	1.31			

Significant @p <.05

Table 8 shows the calculated t-value (2.22) while the p-value (.003) is less than the significance level (.05). Therefore, the null hypothesis (Ho2) is rejected. This implies that there was significant difference in the opinions of head teachers/principals on the challenges facing successful visitation to basic schools based on states?

Ho₃: There is no significant difference in the opinions of head teachers/principals on the probable solutions to the challenges facing the successful visitation of quality assurance officers to basic schools based on states?

Table 9: Difference in the Opinions of Head teachers/Principals on the Probable Solutions to the Challenges Facing the Successful Visitation of Quality Assurance Officers to Basic Schools Based on States

State	N	X	SD	Cal. t-value	p-value	Decision
Kogi	39	3.89	1.47			
						Ho ₂
				2.22	.003	Rejected
Kwara	39	3.51	1.31			

Not Significant @p >.05

Table 9 shows the calculated t-value (.85) while the p-value (.061) is greater than the significance level (.05). Therefore, the null hypothesis (Ho3) is accepted. This implies that there was no significant difference in the opinions of head teachers/principals on the probable solutions to the challenges facing successful visitation of quality assurance officers to basic schools based on states?

Conclusion and Recommendations

This study investigated the quality assurance adopted in the implementation of basic education programme and the extent of achievement of basic education objectives in Kwara and Kogi State of Nigeria. The finding made us realized that quality assurance officers play significant role towards ensuring towards achieving the goals of the basic schools in Kwara and Kogi State. They contribute towards improving quality of instructions and pupils academic achievement in basic schools. as justified by the findings,

it was revealed that quality assurance officers do visit the schools towards ensuring quality in our school and ensure curriculum are followed to letter. However, there are some challenges facing quality assurance officers towards realization of the stated objectives; one of which is inadequate number of quality assurance officers compare to the number of schools and teachers available in Kwara and Kogi. It is therefore recommended that;

1. The number of quality assurance officers should be increased reasonably to match up to number school available in Kwara Kogi.
2. There is need to train both quality assurance officers and basic school teachers. Quality assurance officers are to be trained on latest trend towards ensuing quality in our school while teachers are expected to be trained on the need of quality assurance to see to their school activities in relation to instructional delivery and the reason why they need to

- cooperate with quality assurance officers.
3. The State government, local government, NGOs and inspectorate department should provide mobility, that is, source of adequate transportation facilities to the officers to ease their movement.
 4. There is need for government to make funds available to quality assurance officers during visitation to schools.
 5. There should be regular follow -up visit to find-out how far things have improved.
 6. Both the teachers and quality assurance officers should be regularly motivated

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