

SCHOOL SUPERVISION AND INSPECTION: STRATEGIES FOR QUALITY ASSURANCE IN BUSINESS EDUCATION IN POST COVID-19 ERA

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Abstract

Access to quality education is a fundamental human right of all citizens. The Corona virus 2019 (COVID-19) has devastating effects on the global educational sector. The world is gradually getting out of the pandemic. This paper addresses the concepts of school supervision, school inspection, quality assurance and business education. Furthermore, the paper established that school supervision and inspection are strategies for quality assurance in business education in post COVID-19 era. This is because they could lead to provision of quality inputs for teaching and learning of business education, effective and efficient curriculum implementation, staff training and development and accountability through proper keeping of school records. The paper concluded that effective implementation of school supervision and inspection would lead to human capital development for repositioning the Nigerian economy in the post COVID19 era. On a final note, the paper among others recommended that school supervision and inspection should be well utilised for quality assurance in business education in the post COVID-19 era.

Key words: school supervision, school inspection, business education, quality assurance, COVID-19.

Introduction

Access to quality education is a fundamental human right of all citizens. This implies that assuring quality in business education, which Umoru (2013) sees as a discipline with course offerings that are structured to inculcate into the students, the spirit of resourcefulness, endurance and innovativeness is a right to those who choose to study it. Education is an instrument for human resource development, in the sense that it equips people with knowledge, skills as well as competencies and instils in them moral values



that would make them to become functional members of the society. This shows that education is an instrument for change and development.

This very important sector of the society is however seriously affected by the Corona virus 2019 (COVID-19) which is a deadly virus that has devastating effects on all facets of human life including economic, social, political, and education. It led to a total lockdown of the entire human society, leading to closure of schools. In line with this, a study conducted by Ogunmode in 2020 revealed that closure of schools which was occasioned by COVID-19 has impact on research programmes in tertiary institutions in Federal Capital Territory (FCT), Abuja, Nigeria. Similarly, COVID-19 led to introduction of virtual classroom and other forms of technological application to the teaching-learning process for those that can afford them, especially in the private sector. In the same vein, COVID-19 made some State governments to adopt television and radio for the purpose of teaching and keeping students busy during the lockdown. Furthermore, COVID-19 was responsible for shortening or outright cancellation of school terms in States across Nigeria and made most government-owned tertiary institutions of learning to have interrupted academic calendars which they are struggling to complete and start new ones.

The society is gradually getting out of the pandemic that was occasioned by the virus. To attain the goals of education in the post COVID-19 era, there is need for quality control in form of quality assurance in education which could be attained using school supervision and inspection. School supervision has to do with the designation of school officials for the purpose of providing leadership to teachers and educational workers in order to improve the quality of instruction (Walu, 2010). This shows that supervision is not done by everybody in an educational system, but only restricted to school supervisors. School inspection on the hand, seeks to enhance standard in teaching and learning through examining how they are done. It should be noted that the rationale behind school supervision and inspection is not to punish or witch-hunt anybody, but, their aims as the Federal Government of Nigeria (2013) states in the National Policy on Education, are to enhance quality control, uniformity of policies and curriculum implementation at all levels of the Nigerian education.

From the foregoing, it could be seen that school supervision and inspection could lead to quality assurance in business education. This is because they could ensure that the right things are done in business education programme leading to the attainment of its goals and objectives. Furthermore, they have the tendency of proving and improving the quality of the programme in order to meet the needs of the students and the society. This is because, they could make the teachers to be more committed, competent, efficient and effective in service delivery. They could also make the parents/guardians to get value for their money and serve as stimulants to the learners to be dedicated to their studies. It is therefore, based on the aforementioned that this paper focuses on school supervision and inspection as strategies for quality assurance in business education in post COVID-19 era.

Conceptual Clarifications

The following concepts were reviewed and clarified in order to attain the objective of this paper, which is to bring to the fore, the ways through which school supervision and inspection could enhance quality assurance in business education in the post COVID19-era.

School Supervision

The major concern of school supervision is the enhancement of quality of teaching and learning in schools. It focuses on monitoring of activities of both teaching and non-teaching staff in the school system in order to minimise their weaknesses and take advantage of the strengths so as to improve the quality of instruction in the schools. In line with this, Ogunu in Igbinedion (2014) points out that educational supervision is the process of overseeing the activities of teachers and other workers in the school system in order to ensure that they abide by the policies and guidelines set by the regulating body. To Eziuzo (2014), supervision deals with the process of providing leadership that is designed to help staff to be more competent and overcome some challenges they might be facing, leading to improvement in job performance. Similarly, Tarda (2016) reports that supervision in education deals with the efforts of educational officials in providing leadership to teachers and other workers in the educational enterprise for the purpose of improving quality of instruction. These imply that in education, school supervision is one of the indispensable tools for the effective operation of a good school system. This is because it is concerned with supporting and assisting teachers to improve instruction as well as ensuring that the non-teaching staff discharge their duties diligently through dedication to work and also serves as a quality control system for the educational enterprise at all levels of education. This is because adequate supervision of teachers and teaching activities in the schools is a means which could improve teaching and learning to serve the purpose of the learners and the society at large.

As put forward by Igbinedion (2014), school supervision could be done using techniques including but not limited to classroom visitation, conferences, micro-teaching, educational workshops and inter-school visitation. As for the functions/purposes of school supervision, Igbinedion (2014) and Tarda (2016) point out they include; improvement of teaching and learning, helping teachers to discover their special creative abilities, helping to identify areas of needs in schools and making provisions for the needs, creating opportunity for exchange of knowledge between the supervisor and teachers or among teachers in different schools, improving teaching and learning, making sure that teachers are present at their duty posts, motivating teachers to work hard, making students to conduct themselves politely, making sure that school records are properly kept, enhancing proper implementation of curriculum, assessing teachers' effectiveness in the classroom and determination of teachers that should be rewarded with promotions, commendations and those that are to be reprimanded, demoted or disengaged.

School Inspection

School inspection deals with official investigation and examination of a school activities in order to ensure that they conform with the set standard. It also monitors and evaluates academic activities in schools. These show that it focuses on maintenance of standard in teaching and learning in the school system. Based on these, a deduction from Igbinedion (2014) points out that school inspection is an established process of sending staff to examine different activities going on in a school, so as to make sure that there is conformity to rules and regulations in relation to policy and curriculum implementation and giving feedback to the regulatory body which could be Ministry of Education or any of her agencies such as the National Commission for Colleges of Education (NCCE), National Board for Technical Education (NBTE) and National Universities Commission (NUC). In the same vein, Sobah, Anyanwu and Yahaya (2014) see school inspection as a series of activities in which the inspectorate unit of ministries of education guide, assist and advice schools on how best to improve quality of instruction through assessment of human and material resources to ensure that standard is maintained and corrections made where necessary. They further state that inspection is done for the purpose of getting government approval, operational improvement, programme recognition, and situational demand. School inspection is of different types. According to Igbinedion (2014) and Sobah, Anyanwu and Yahaya (2014), the following constitute some of the types of school inspection:

Full Inspection: This involves an inspection of the entire activities of a school and it is usually followed by a comprehensive report.

Routine inspection: This is done at regular intervals in order to determine the level of compliance of a school to the established standard.

Check-up inspection: This is an impromptu visit of an inspector to a school in order to ensure that right things are always done

Development inspection: This is done for the purpose of up-grading a school through ascertaining what is on ground in order to make provision for what is required for the up-grade.

Emergency inspection: This is done when there is an emergency in a school or a petition is written against a member of a school (an administrator(s) or staff).

Follow-up visit: This is done after a report has been furnished to the Ministry of Education by inspectors in order to ensure that all recommendations of the inspectors are adhered to.

Quality Assurance

Quality is an accepted standard. It is therefore, the yardstick used in determining whether something is high or low in standard. In education, quality assurance looks at the extent to which educational standards are sustained (Nanbam, 2010). This implies that sustainability of standard describes an assurance of attainment of quality. In the same vein, Igbinedion (2014) states that quality assurance is a way of guaranteeing standard. Through this, everything that is required has to be done to ensure that a product meets the requirement of the buyers. The author further states that in education, quality assurance gives a guarantee that an output of the educational system can relatively exhibit all the

skills expected of the level of education they successfully passed through. Furthermore, a deduction from Oludare and Suberu (2020) shows that quality assurance in education is crafted for the purpose of proving and improving the quality of methods, educational process and products of an educational system by taking measures that would ensure that it is better able to satisfy the educational needs of the society. Similarly, Aluko and Bolanta (2020) report that quality assurance is seen as a series of activities set up deliberately to make sure that an entity fulfils the requirement of quality that is needed by using standard process like funding, training and quality control. Quality assurance therefore entails getting the right inputs (competent manpower, qualified students and material resources such as classrooms and textbooks) which if well blended, would give the desired result. However, for this to be achieved there is the need for continuous evaluation in order to ascertain whether or not there is the need for additional resources for the purpose of maintaining or improving standards. This explains why some schools have internal quality assurance units responsible for ensuring that the right thing is done before the coming of external assessors which could be announced or impromptu.

Business Education

Business education is the most preferred educational course in Nigerian colleges of education and universities and it is designed to meet both the general and vocational educational needs of the society (Ademiluyi & Oyedele, 2020). This could result from the benefits the parents/guardian and students perceived from the discipline in relation to its job prospects and the self-reliant skills which it equips the learners with. As put forward by Adejare (2020), business education is fashioned in such a way that it equips students with knowledge and skills that are required in the world of work by developing in them, marketable skills, knowledge and attitudes that are required for employment and advancement in business and related occupations. In the same vein, Ugwoke in Utoware and Kren-Ikidi (2014) sees business education as a skill-based, work-focused, result-oriented and technology-based discipline as well as an element of vocational and technical education that prepares the recipients for career in business and developing them to become intelligent consumers of goods and services through equipping them with required competencies, skills, knowledge, understanding and attitudes that would lead to efficient and effective performance as employees in industries and civil service as well as business proprietors. A look at the aforementioned shows that business education curriculum has the potential of enabling its products to properly package and promote themselves for jobs in both the public and private sectors of the economy. It could also make them to forget about white-collar jobs and choose to be self-reliant and create jobs for other people. Furthermore, the discipline is capable of making its products to be rational in utilising their available resources and also become functional members of the society.

School Supervision and Inspection and Quality Assurance in Business Education in Post COVID-19 Era

School supervision and inspection are effective strategies for enhancing quality in education. Quality assurance is highly desirable in business education but, it is more

required in the post COVID-19 era due to problems and obstructions that COVID19 caused in the educational sector. The following are some of the ways through which school supervision and inspection could lead to quality assurance in business education:

School supervision and inspection could lead to provision of quality inputs for teaching and learning of business education. These inputs are teaching and non-teaching staff, students, instructional materials, textbooks, classrooms and laboratories. This is because; the monitoring and examination exercises of the supervisors and inspectors would give rise to reports that would ensure that the inputs that are provided are in the right number and quality. It would also see to the fact that only qualified candidates are admitted to study the programme. All these would lead to quality assurance through making sure that round pegs are inserted in round holes as far as business education programme is concerned, put back the missing links created by COVID-19 and continue to attain its objectives in post COVID-19 era for the betterment of the society.

School supervision and inspection would lead to effectiveness and efficiency in curriculum implementation. This implies that supervision and inspection would lead to quality assurance by making business education teachers to be more hardworking, dedicated and committed to their duties in the post COVID-19 era. This is because supervision and inspection would make the teachers to have it at the back of their minds that failure to be at their duty posts and be dedicated to curriculum implementation through effective teaching could make them to be reprimanded, demoted or even lose their jobs. Furthermore, the fact that the reports of supervisors and inspectors could be used for teacher promotion could also make teachers to strive toward efficiency and effectiveness in curriculum implementation which are needed for societal progress in the post COVID-19 era.

Reports of school supervision and inspection could be used for staff training and development in post COVID19 era. This is because, both school supervision and inspection could be used in determining the strengths and weaknesses of the teachers and as such determine those that need training and development. This would therefore lead to quality assurance in business education because the trained teachers would be exposed to new skills and techniques that would lead to attainment of goals and objectives of business education. Furthermore, the nominated teachers would be motivated to work hard and it would serve as a stimulant to others to be dedicated to their duties. This because in most cases, only dedicated teachers are nominated for training and development.

School supervision and inspection could lead to accountability that would lead to quality assurance in business education in the post COVID-19 era. This is due to the fact that both supervision and inspection ensure that school records are properly maintained. Through this, information in relation to school finance, school enrolment, staff strength and the challenges business education is facing would be made available. This would eliminate corrupt practices and enhance effective utilisation of funds that are voted for teaching and learning of business education. It would also make government to make provision for facilities that would take care of the students and know whether there is need to deploy more staff to a given school, so as to make the desired quality to be attained in business education programme.

Conclusion

The Corona virus 2019 pandemic dealt severely with the educational sector leading to closure of schools and disrupted academic calendar. It also led to adoption of new teaching techniques that would suit the social/physical distancing requirement for staying safe from being infected by the virus. The impact of the pandemic has made quality assurance to be needed in business education programme more than ever before. This paper established that school supervision and inspection are potent strategies for quality assurance in business education in post COVID-19 era. The implication of this is that strict application of these quality control mechanisms (school supervision and inspection) in post COVID-19 era, would lead to human capital development in business education, focusing on skill areas such as accounting, marketing, business management, office technology management, communication, business law, risk management and entrepreneurship. The use of school supervision and inspection as quality control mechanisms is therefore expected to lead to production of skilful people that would help in repositioning the Nigerian economy in the post COVID-19 era and put it on the path of recovery.

Recommendations

Based on the foregoing and the conclusion which was drawn, the following recommendations are suggested:

1. School supervision and inspection should be well utilized for quality assurance in business education programme.
2. All teachers should be equally supervised and inspected without fair or favour.
3. The school supervisors and inspectors should be polite and avoid dictatorial tendency when dealing with teachers.
4. The supervisors and inspectors should ensure that schools abide by COVID-19 guidelines.
5. Credit should be given to those that deserve it and only the hardworking and dedicated staff should be nominated for staff training and development.

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