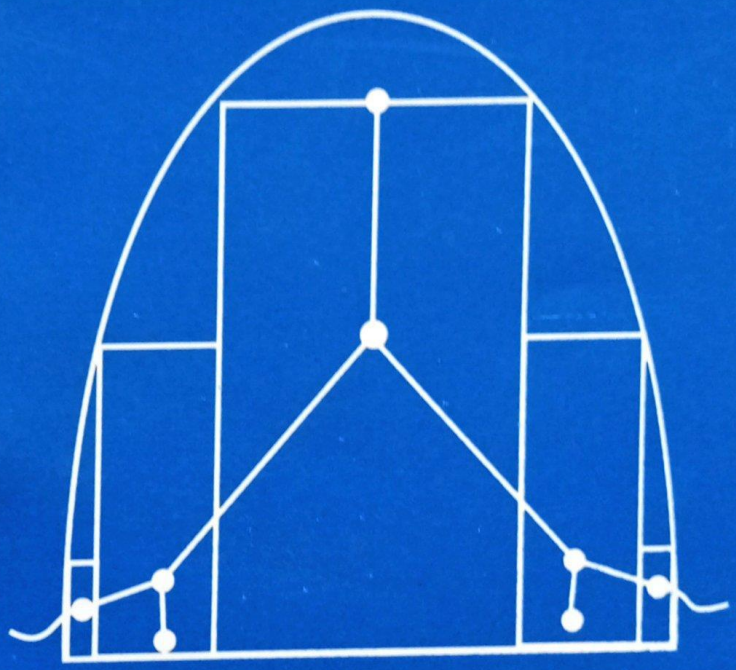
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# School Management and Supervision: A Strategy for Quality Education.

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**Abstract**
*For effective management of educational resources especially the human and material, quality supervision is required. Supervision is one of the fundamental factors for ensuring that the aims and objectives of educational institutions are realized. This paper examined the concept of school management and supervision as an important tool in ensuring that quality education is served. It therefore supported that managers in schools, be it at the primary, secondary or university level should have the necessary experience, qualification and technicality on how to carry out their duties. It was also proposed that the administrators of these educational industries should always be available or present in conferences and seminars in order to build on their expertise in the area of school management and supervision and several other recommendations.*

**Key words:** School managers, supervision, quality education, management.

## Introduction

Education is generally believed to be the basic foundation of the survival of any nation either physically, socially or for economic development. Quality education is crucial for the development and transformation of any nation in the world. Education is seen as a veritable tool for answering so many questions and solving myriad of problems confronting Nigeria. Therefore, there is a greater demand for probity and accountability so as to ensure functional education. To achieve quality education, the maintenance of standards and the confidence of having adequate measures of quality control are now the concern of the nations (Ugwuoke, 2010).

According to Boissiere in Kotirde and Yunos (2014), the concern for quality has been at the core of the motivating forces for reforms in education.

Achieving quality in education has increasingly become crucial in strategic improvement plans of developing countries (European Commission, 2018).Ocho and Nwangwu (2011) summed it up that the ability of a nation to grow and develop depends on the quality of her educational system. It could therefore be said that the importance of education to individuals cannot be overemphasized in terms of acquisition of knowledge, skills and attitude that are necessary for effective living. Various techniques and methods have been adopted for achieving quality education. Supervision is however identified as one of the common but effective means of achieving this.

Supervision according to Kokemuller (2019) is a workplace activity by which a manager oversees the activities and responsibilities of employees s/he manages. It is an important function for managers at all levels throughout an organization in which the education sector is not left out. Coaching, training and employee development are among the common responsibilities assumed by a manager. However, educational supervision focuses on changing the behaviour of staff for an improved performance. In most cases, it is internally arranged by the school head and at times assisted by other agencies and stakeholders.The essence of supervision is to monitor the performance of school staff, noting the merits 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 (Ugwoke, 2010).

Thus, the concern of school supervision is the improvement in teaching and learning environment in order to promote effective teacher performance and learning in the school. Supervision is therefore a combination or integration of a number of processes, procedures and conditions that are consciously designed with the sole aim of advancing the work effectiveness of teachers and other personnel involved in the schooling process. In order to enhance instruction, the role of the supervisors should be supportive, assisting, encouraging, guiding, advisory, improving and sharing rather than directing.

Effective school supervision requires a good working relationship between the supervisor and supervisee. In tandem with this, Reamer (2009) noted that many problems can be avoided if there is close constructive collaboration between the supervisor and the supervisees. This presupposes that the school manager should create a positive teaching and learning environment as well as build good school climate with high level of interpersonal relationship. School supervisors should therefore develop relationships and create school environments that enable teachers, non-teachers and students to work collaboratively and respond to change. Ducker (2008) observed that such joint performance involve having common goals, values, and the right structures as well as continuing training and development programmes.

## The School and the Management

The complex activities carried out in the school by different people and coordinated by different persons makes the school an organisation (Agih, 2015).

Thus, the necessity of management in schools to co-ordinate the various activities of the units for goal achievement. Management in school entails working with and through teachers, non-teaching staff and students to get things done effectively. School management has its attention primarily on the school. It is more concerned with the institution, its goals, policies and execution of these policies. The primary aim of school management has to do with the improvement of teaching and learning, and all the activities of the school.

The management of schools are performed by the school managers, that is, the head teacher/principal/Vice Chancellor. A school manager is described as an executive head of his organization. He/she is a coordinator who has to organize activities in such a way that things work smoothly, quickly and effectively. The education manager is described as the individual in a school setting who directs the affairs of the school in such a way as to achieve its primary goals and objectives. He/she is involved in effective planning, organizing, supervision, controlling and evaluation. Therefore, for a school manager to successfully accomplish the set objectives, he has to work with other people within the school system and be able to inspire them to work co-operatively with him so as to `achieve the educational objectives (Agih, 2015).

**Roles of Management in the School.**

School managers, leaders and administrators are the executive officers of the school and for ensured high-quality of education, some functions must be performed. People in upper-level school management and leadership positions play a challenging role that shapes the landscape of education for the students and staff in their care. They take on a number of various roles in leadership and policymaking. `They lead the educational institutions; hire and manage teachers and staff; prepare budgets; oversee other teachers; research and determine new curricula; set policies and standards amongst others. Therefore, the following according to Fasasi (2011) are the various functions of management in a school:

1. **Planning:** This is a process of decision- making in advance on activities to be performed, workers to be involved and materials to be utilized in an organization. It also implies decision making on when and how actions are to be taken. In planning, the manager looks into the future and makes necessary preparations for discharge of his responsibilities. The ultimate is to achieve educational objectives effectively. Hence, rational decisions are made on actions to be taken so that resources will be judiciously utilized, and maximum benefits would be attained.
2. **Controlling:** This is a process of ensuring that educational activities are conducted as already planned. It involves regulating, curbing and checking the excesses of members of the organization, so that things are done in accordance with established rules. Supervision, budgeting, records keeping, periodic meetings, informal discussions and evaluation, constitute different aspects of control mechanism in educational institutions.

3. **Organizing:** This is the process of arranging human and material elements appropriately to specific function and position. It also implies identification of jobs within an educational organization, classification of jobs and assignment of employee to specific jobs. Organizing as a managerial function could facilitate a structure and a hierarchy of authority for effective administration.
4. **Staffing:** This is an aspect of personnel services which includes supplying, training and motivating the teaching and non-teaching staff. It is meant to ensure that a right employee occupies a right post. It focuses on the workers' recruitment, welfare and retirement.
5. **Leading:** This refers to an act of influencing employees in a manner that they will work towards the achievement of organizational goals. The manager as a leader serves as a link between the workers and the organizational goals. Using an effective channel of communication, he guides, motivates and directs the workers, so that the organizational goals will be realized.
6. **Co-ordinating:** This is the process of conducting works in different departments, sections and units at the same time without one disturbing another. It is also a process of ensuring that different groups of workers in the educational organization utilize the same facilities at different times without one clashing or conflicting with another. The manager harmonizes all activities and channels them towards desired outcome.
7. **Directing:** Tailoring workers' activities towards organizational goals. The manager must make and implement decisions which will assist in tailoring workers' personal objectives towards those of the educational organization. There should be no deviation between workers' efforts and organizational expectations. Otherwise, the organization will fail to achieve its objectives. This will have adverse effects on the organization and subsequently on its members.

These functions of management of the school heads are also in line with Agih (2015), who identified the various school managers' functions as planning, controlling, coordinating, staffing, leading, organising and directing.

## School Management and Operational Areas

1. **Shaping the vision for students' academic success:** It is of general knowledge that researchers who have examined leadership or management in education, agree that effective managers are responsible for establishing a school wide vision of commitment to high standards and the success of all students. Success in school management could be defined as entry-level manufacturing work for students and staff. An effective principal also makes sure that notion of academic success for all gets picked up by the faculty and underpins what researchers at the

institutional level describes as a school wide learning improvement agenda th`at focuses on goals for student progress. Therefore, developing a shared vision around standards and success for all students is an essential element in the management of the school.

2. **Hospitable climate to Education:** Effective managers of the school ensure that both teachers and students put learning at the center of their daily activities. Such healthy school environment as is characterized by basics like safety and orderliness, as well as less tangible qualities such as a supportive, responsive attitude toward the students and teachers that they are part of a community of professionals focused on good instruction.

3. **Curriculum and Instruction:** This is the core area of the school system that is, the essence of teaching–learning process. It is therefore crucial that the school managers pay adequate attention not only to the planning of the curriculum but also to the effectiveness of the delivery of instruction and also, the execution of the instructional programmes. Managers have to create conducive working environment for teaching and learning. This, they can achieve through dynamic leadership, provision of material and instructional resources, provision of co-curricular activities for the students, motivation of staff, innovative instructional methodology and good human relations.

4. **Physical Facilities:** It consists of the school buildings, school grounds, equipment and other education facilities that are provided in the school which aid the stimulation of teaching-learning process. It is usually assumed that effective learning can occur regardless of the type of school facilities provided. Ill-ventilated classroom cannot support optimum learning and a pleasant school layout produces measures of psychological effects on the learner. The manager must make sure that the buildings are kept safe for the students' use and that they are under good sanitary conditions. Worn-out equipment should be repaired, leaking roofs and chairs should be repaired as well. The whole school should be made attractive so as to boost the morale of the teachers and students in the school.

5. **General Duties:** The school head is expected to summon staff meetings in order to provide a forum for direct communication with both teaching and non-teaching staff. This is important so that the teaching and learning goals could be achieved. The school principal has the responsibility for projecting the image of the school through functions like sporting events, literary and cultural displays by the school and so on.

**School Management and Quality Education**

The importance of quality of education in Nigeria cannot be over

emphasized. Quality education in the context of the school includes the learners, learning environment, content of learning, processes and outcomes. Quality in service delivery is one of the key building blocks in any education system. Only if services are delivered with certain quality, will learners access and use them and ultimately improve their knowledge and skills status. In simple terms, quality means performance according to standards or doing the right thing in the right way and at the right time. In the delivery of education, quality is considered as a degree of performance in relation to a defined standard of intervention known to be safe and have the capacity to improve education within available resources.

According to Masozi (2016), quality improvements focus on identifying, implementing and maintaining the best instructional and organizational practices that ensure appropriate services to students for positive education outcomes. UNESCO (2012) pointed out that the quality of education service delivery should be guided by several principles. These are:

(a) Standard of the students : service should be designed so as to meet the needs (both education and others) and expectations of clients (learners) and communities;

(b) Standard of the learning systems and processes: the supervisors must understand what needs to be done, which steps have to be taken and in which order as regards to the learning environment;

(c) Standard of the content delivered: reflection in relevant curricula and materials for the acquisition of basic skills and knowledge education workers;

(d) Standard of supervisors: Teachers, heads of schools and so on need support from the system, such as clear job descriptions, clear and immediate feedback on performance, equipment and supplies, good working environment, recognition and motivation in the frame of regular supportive supervision; and

(e) Focus on the teamwork: quality is best achieved through a team approach to problem solving and performance improvement.

**Concept of supervision**

Organisations and institutions that have recorded phenomenal changes in effective service delivery prioritize giving their personnel all the needed assistance, mentoring, guidance, advice and support so that they can put in their best for the attainment of the targets set by the establishment or institution using supervision. This practice of supervision is the key to the success of any establishment or institution. Supervision in establishments or institutions is purposefully carried out to ensure that personnel or workers maximally perform duties officially or otherwise assigned to them for the achievement of set goals. Workers who are constantly supervised in their places of work tremendously improve both in speed and efficient mastery of their jobs so much that they

quickly become assets to their institutions and establishments and by implications drivers of human and national development.

According to Nwaokugha and Danladi (2016), there are three groups of persons in the society who perform the functions of supervisors in the educational sector and they are: The Ministry of Education, Principals and their vices and parents and community leaders. In their supervisory functions, the ministry of education ensures timely provision of general rules and regulations for the education system generally, ensures timely planning of school calendar and curriculum, availability of fund especially to public schools and instructional materials to schools, supervises schools and teacher education programmes as well as advises teachers, students and school managements on possible lines of actions for achieving set-targets. No doubt, every head of an educational institution is a supervisor- be it a Vice Chancellor, Provost, Rector, Principal, headmaster or headmistress and the supervisory roles of these persons unfold in their abilities to render and provide quality guidance, mentoring and advice to lecturers, teachers learners and other classes of stakeholders in their institution in the hope of improving service delivery that can lead to the attainment of set objectives.

**Qualities of a good supervisor**

Various scholars identified the competence of teachers in relation to effective planning, management and evaluation. Nnabuo in Agih 2015 came up with several characteristics of a supervisor. A good supervisor must:

1.adapt to helping young people control themselves and even more adapt at controlling himself;
2. be a good listener and less talker;
3. be attuned to the needs of others;
4. be a good counsellor;
5. know how to be fair and firm;
6. lead without appearing to dominate; and
7. be able to share the process of planning and directing others.

Other qualities of a good supervisor according to Mack(2019) include: Interactive communication skill; Empathy and flexibility when possible; display of confidence; and maintaining a positive attitude.

**Types of Educational Supervision**

With emphasis in the need for supervision in order to achieve quality of education, Foretsall (2019) stated five types of supervision. They include:

1. *Corrective Type* : This type of supervision seeks out faults or problems and brings these to the attention of the authorities. Because of the negative focus, this type of supervision typically does not serve a positive function.

2. *Preventative Type* : This type of supervision looks forward and helps the supervisee anticipate upcoming situations and plan accordingly.

3. *Creative Type* : This type of educational supervision is often peer-to-peer and is highly encouraging. This type supports experimenting and trying things in new and innovative ways.

4. *Training Type*: This type of educational supervision focuses on specific techniques and ways to improve them. It often involves practice and training on specific skills.

5. *Laissez-Faire Type*: This is the least helpful form of educational supervision because there is no focus on improvement, feedback or guidance. Practitioners are observed but essentially left to do whatever they prefer.

**Challenges of School Management and Supervision**

Some of the recurring problems in the management of schools, which are general to almost all the levels of education in the country, are:

i. Human relations issues
ii. Poor infrastructure
iii. Excessive workload
iv. Poor teaching/learning facilities
v. Low morale of staff v. Politics
vi. Poor planning
vii. Implementation problems
viii. Inexperience personnel (Supervisors)
ix. Inconsistency in government policies

**Recommendations**

a. The Ministries of Education and Proprietors of schools should ensure that qualified and seasoned teachers are employed, who eventually grow to be head teachers in `schools.

b. There should be at least two Vice Principals in every secondary school. These personnel will help the Principal in his/her administrative duties so that more attention is given to supervision.

c. Adequate facilities required for supervision should be made available in schools to enhance the effectiveness of the supervisor.

d. Principals or supervisors should be sponsored to attend trainings, conferences, seminars, workshops onschool administration in order to be abreast with current best practices.

e. School managers and supervisors should focus their functions based on constructive analysis and the reinforcement of successful patterns rather than on the condemnation of unsuccessful patterns. (Most supervisors often indulge in fault finding and negative feedback rather than been

corrective).

g. Supervisors should try not to be teacher of teachers but rather help teachers to become co-supervisors, so that the teachers and supervisors are likely to have common responsibility as colleagues for the improvement of teaching and learning.

## Conclusion

This discussion has made it possible to examine the concept of management as regards to school supervision and its impact on the quality of education in Nigeria. When supervision functions are thought as an organizational necessity, business relationships, behaviors, attitudes and task awareness of the supervisors affect the quality of supervision process while supervision system and supervisors are carrying out system operation. Problems guide practitioners to present the failing points of the supervision system. Supervisors as the agents of the supervision system can correct both themselves and the incorrect functioning of the system by observing the results of their behaviors.

This invariably impacts positively on students' achievement and educational development of the society. Without proper school management and supervision, the rationale for effective instructional services in the schools is therefore underscored. Unfortunately, the inadequacies of effective school management and supervisory practice in the country generally have been revealed, given the dearth of qualified personnel and other education facilities to enhance teaching and learning. Therefore, this paper has critically examined the concept of supervision in school management and its impact in delivering an effective quality of education looking at the various roles of school heads, which if properly done will enhance the primary goals and objectives of teaching and learning in the school.

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