

## **The Role of principals in sustaining/management of quality secondary school education in Nigeria**

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### **Abstract**

The management and sustaining of secondary education in Nigeria sometimes the principals find it not easy to carry out their responsibility accurately and diligently as prescribed by the process of achieving the laid down goals. The main aim of this study is to assess the general roles of secondary school principals in sustaining and management of quality and efficiency of schools principal's roles. The purpose of this paper is to examine the key roles of principal's play in providing quality education in schools as already stated, principals solve many problems in terms of sustaining and maintaing schools catabolic. The roles of the principal in meeting these inverse issues were also examined as the chief executive who manages the school finance and who can use his ingenuity to raise fund to complement government's efforts, provision and maintenance of physical facilities, principal as a curriculum monitor and instructional supervisor do consider himself as a good model to be emulated with an element of dynamisms that can observed drastically motivator and quick change facilitator. Effective instructional delivery and maintenance of standards in the school system are enhanced through regular checking both internal and external supervision of the school and must be fully concerned with the physical environment and other facilities around the school corners. As the chief executive, the principal owes it a duty to modify the attitude of the staff and motivate them to put in their best at achieving educational goals principals. However, it includes the roles of discipline both academic and non-academic staffs performance and adherence of schools rules and regulations with zeal for accepting open doors for other organizations that willing to assists the schools.

Key words: Principal, maintaining, sustaining, secondary school and management

## Introduction

Sustainable quality assurance in secondary education is a continuous process of the best practices in the management and utilization of human and material resources, facilities, finance, and development of positive corporate culture and strategic supervision of teaching and learning activities for the realization of the seted goals in schools Ayeni, (2010). Sustainable quality assurance in an educational institution is also made possible when every member of the institution contributes his/her quota to the quality process Venkaiah, 1995; Zuhari & Suparman, (2002). All these are required to ensure a complete well-rounded education and production of quality students and consistent improvement in secondary school system.

The roles of principal's sustainability in secondary schools in Nigeria cannot be over- emphasized. The principal as a leader of group of teachers in the school system has the function of interacting with the teachers in other to improve teaching and learning situation for the students through instructional supervision. Instructional supervision is one processes by which school administrators attempt to achieve acceptable standards performance and results. It is the tool of quality improvement in the school system and a phase school administration which focuses primarily upon the achievement of appropriate expectation of educational system (Peretomode, 2004).

School administration involves managing, administering the curriculum and teaching, pastoral care, discipline, assessment evaluation and examinations, resource allocation, costing and forward planning, staff appraisal relationship with the community, use of the practical skills necessary for surviving the policies of organisation such as decision-making, negotiation, bargaining, communication, conflict handling, running meetings and so on Okereke, C. (2008). All these tasks can be reduced to the following as planning, organising, directing, supervising, and evaluating the school system. These activities are those of the school principal who must ensure they are all directed towards efficient and effective teaching and learning in the school so as to be able to produce quality outputs. By implication, the principal of a school is a planner, director, controller, coordinator, organiser, adviser and a problem-solver Maduabum, (2002). The principal is the person on whose shoulders rest the entire administration, success or failure of the school. The principal identifies and set goals and objectives of the school, which of course, must be in line with the national objectives, analyses tasks and share responsibilities of the staff according to specialization and expertise (Uyanga, 2008)

Quality education provides students with the knowledge, skills, attitudes and creativity needed to solve problems locally and globally, and actively contributes to the sustainable and democratic development of societies. Thus, our aspirations for quality education must go beyond narrow learning outcomes. Quality education offers, they are far from sufficient. Limiting the outcomes of education may encourage teachers to education had the potential to play a major role in the future realisation of a 'vision of sustainability that links economic well-being with respect for cultural diversity, the Earth and its resources' (UNESCO, 2007).

The successful implementing the government's policy for the educational development in school they must plan ahead and develop strategies to address the issues. These issues should be addressed at every level, especially the national level, state level and the local level to ensure consistent implementation of the policy across the country. Purposeful deliberation and planning around these issues as well as issues particular to each region will increase the likelihood of successfully implementing the planned programs and reorienting curriculum to achieve sustainability.

### 1. Management of school admin and finance

In terms of managerial tasks school principals must perform, they are also expected to teach in order to show an exemplary to other staffs. Marishane (2011) pointed out, instructional leadership has gained popularity, by putting their effort to gather for the purpose effectiveness of teaching and learning

as much pressure is placed on academic standards and the need for schools to be accountable. The demand for greater accountability on the part of principals in the quest for high learner achievement resulted in increased attention being paid to the role of the principal as instructional leader and administrators. According to Mestry et al. (2007) argue that developing principals are providing them with the necessary knowledge, skills, values, customs, believe and attitudes have become increasingly important, as the dynamic and changing educational culture have become increasingly complex. Principals' instructional role needs to be asserted and should be supported by specific training and the principal is the chief executive who can be a responsible and accounting officer who is entrusted with the responsibility of controlling the revenue accruing from the school and ensuring judicious utilisation of PTA levy collected by the members. In order to raise, fund to complement the efforts of the government, the principal can establish a very good rapport with the Parents Teachers Association, Board of Governors, Old Students Association and Non-Governmental Organisations for fund raising activities.

## **2. Provision and maintenance of physical facilities**

principals must be fully concerned with the physical environment and other facilities around the school corners. Dilapidated buildings, leaking roofs, abandoned projects, over-grown trees and lawns, dingy and dark buildings that were abandon by the previous government, etc. have demoralising effects of people, especially the adolescents Obidoa, (2006). As a result, the principals have the responsibilities of ensuring that these facilities are in good shape. Even with the meagre resources at their disposal, they have the responsibility of providing teachers and other instructional staff with necessary resources for effective teaching Babayemi, (2006). Principal is expected to wear many hats, he/she must be a manager, administrator, supervisor, instructional, accounting, officer and curriculum leader. According to Phillips (2012) argues that even though instructional leadership is critical in the realisation of effective schools, because it is seldom practised. He adds that among the many tasks that principals perform, only one-tenth are devoted to providing instructional leadership. The principal's instructional leadership role is not given the attention it deserves due some attitudes of some administrators.

## **3. Principal as a motivator**

According to Ajayi and Oni in Babayemi (2006) opined that a school principal must not only be trained in the act of administration but must be well-acquainted with the principles that guides and control administrative processes effectively. As the chief executive, the principal owes it a duty to modify the attitude of the staff and motivate them to put in their best at achieving educational goals through effective teaching-learning process. Motivation enhances job performance Ajayi and Oguntoye, (2003). A lack of indepth training makes the principals' task difficult, as they are not guided on the curriculum expectations by the Department of Education. Ajayi, I. A., & Ekundayo, H. T. (2010).Observed that negligence of this area of responsibility by the administrators/principals seems to hinder effective performance of teaching-learning activities in the secondary schools in Nigeria, that training programmes for principals on curriculum matters are partially at fault for the low priority placed on in-structional leadership by principals so more effort is to be inserted for the general check-up of schools principals .

## **4. Principal as a curriculum instructional supervisor**

The functions of the school principal as a supervisor includes obtaining and making available materials for teachers in all educational information, visiting classrooms often to observe his teachers teaching; basic inspection/supervision of teachers lesson notes and class registers, diaries and teaching aids and offering them professional advice for their proper improvement of teaching and learning in the system where as he can act as a change facilitator. Marlow and Minehira (2011) viewed that school principals must possess a wide array of competencies in order to lead schools effectively towards the accomplishment of educational goals, which has led to changing expectations of what leaders need to know and must be able to do.

Different competencies such as capacity building, vision building and/or a team building required of principals to cope with the changing demands of the education sector have been suggested by experts and researchers comes to efforts to improve the quality of school, the principal is the critical person in making change to occur. According to Uyanga (2008), since a school is known to be an instrument of change and reforms in the society, the principal is said to be the pivot of such reforms and changes. This responsibility is very obligatory and the principals are expected to deploy the managerial skills in adapting to this change and effecting it in the school system. The principal is the key-supporting agent for change.

According to Oniyangi (2008) agreed that the parents Teachers Association (PTA) assists in improving the enrolment of the schools in their communities; helps in maintaining disciplines in the schools; ensure smooth co-existence, understanding and cooperation between the school and the community. Adewumi in Oniyangi (2008) also submitted that the PTA helps in sensitisation and mobilisation of parents on enrolment attendance and retention of their children or wards in schools. Besides, Abdullahi (1996) also reported that the PTA complements governments' efforts in the provision and maintenance of infrastructures in the schools.

These and many more suggestion that the PTA has been participating on matter affecting education in Nigeria. It is to be noted however, that virtually all the secondary schools in the country has the PTA in place. Despite the laudable roles of the PTA in secondary schools it appears that the problems of the schools still thrive. It therefore presupposes that the roles of the PTA can be strengthened in order to enhance better community participation in the schools.

Discipline which involves self-control training of the mind of body self-respect to rules and regulation of authority should be the watch word for teachers in their job performance. Thur it most discipline is one of the important criteria for teaching worth. The role of the principals is to facilitate the implementation of the various learning programmes aimed at improving the learning situation. Teachers whether new or old on the job need necessary support in implementing the instructional programmes. Principals as school heads therefore, need to provide this support to teachers, they have to be involved in the implementation of instructional programmes by overseeing what teachers are doing with the students. A good principal should devote himself to supervise the teaching –learning processes in his school. The principal as the supervisor is the one who oversees the activities of teachers and other workers in the school system to ensure that they conform to the generally accepted principles and practice of education.

In the school system, the responsibility of coordinating these activities normally falls on the principal. The principal is a professional leader who holds the key position in the programme of instruction improvement through supervision of instruction. If the teachers are not well supervised effectiveness in instruction will be adversely affected and the instructional purposes may not be well realised. But, negligence in the improvement of instruction through improper supervision by the principal can go on indefinitely without being detected. This may lead to low quality of instruction and invariably, teachers' lack of commitment to job.

The principal is a leader counsellor, a guide, a psychologist, the chief communicator and the teacher of teachers. The question one would ask at this point is whether the principals as instructional supervisors and administrative heads do perform the roles and functions associated to such titles for the overall process of education system. It is often difficult for a principal to oversee every teacher in a school especially now that the school population is extremely large. To ease his supervisory roles, the principal should delegate some duties to the vice principal and senior teachers within the school.

A supervisor is a person appointed to take care or in charge of a group of people to ensure that work is carried out satisfactorily. He is responsible for achieving the objectives of the organization within limits of his authority and for maintaining a good quality of person. The person in the best position to perform these responsibilities in the secondary school system is the principal. The following explanations show

that principals play numerous roles and perform various functions in the course of his work. He works with the teachers and gives them advice and encouragement, coordinates the various parts of the school activities in an effective environment conducive for learning. He is a protector of teachers and services as a buffer between them and the unreasonable demands and pressures from the community. In most opinion, all school principals should include the followings in their supervisory tasks.

- a) Creating of conducive environment where creating and learning takes place for both teachers and students;
- b) Provision of leadership in program development and fostering of team spirit among teachers;
- c) The provision of leadership in the development of the school into an informal organization, where problems and decisions are debated with a view to arriving at rational solutions;
- d) Integration of organization goals to community goals; and,
- e) The introduction of new teacher's performance evaluation, primarily for the development of appropriate skills for the achievement of the goals of the education system.

The motivational advantages of principals' supervisory behaviour on teachers' performance cannot be overemphasized, it involves discipline and dedication. Discipline involves self-control, and respect for others, disciplined teacher is guided in his behaviour, moral and social principles and does what is right and good Edem, (1998). It is true that discipline is one of the important criteria in knowing the worth of a teacher, because in Nigerian schools, the problem of discipline is a cankerworm that has eaten deep into the fabric of the Nigerian society.

According to John Daresh (2007) views that the important of supervision that it requires/urges school leaders to see supervision not as a series of tasks but views it as a sustainable model of cultivation which relates some aspects that can be viewed for the improvement of the educational sector and effective cultures establish more and more progressive interactions in which it demands real processes which will yield both good ideas and social cohesion in the system.

Based on the literature , we may able to conclude that the study was made in order to improve instructional supervision for the achievement of the set educational goals in secondary schools. The school principals should provide adequate instructional materials and facilities through Parents-Teachers Associations, (PTA), Old boys Associations, Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), Communities, Philanthropists and other Development Partners, to enhance effective teaching and learning processes in secondary schools.

The school principals should provide constant and adequate feedback to the teachers on their instructional task performance to ensure periodic review and facilitate further improvement in the teaching-learning process in secondary schools. School principals should collaborate with relevant stakeholders to promote capacity development of teachers through intensive and regular in-house seminar/workshop to improve knowledge, pedagogical skills and competence of teachers in various subjects, and improvisation of instructional materials to enhance teaching- learning process in secondary schools.

Government and professional bodies in the education sector should organize periodic capacity development workshops for educational managers (Principals) on institutional management and instructional supervision to improve the quality of teaching and learning processes in secondary schools.

All the stakeholders in the education sector should collaborate to organise annual education summit for comprehensive review and assessment of the degree of success in school supervision with a view to producing the desired outputs and achieving the overall educational objectives to ensure sustainable improvement in institutional management and curriculum delivery in secondary schools.

## **Conclusion**

The school principal should occupy a central position in educational reform. Owing to challenging circumstances and changing demands in the education sector, principals are expected to be structural issues and curriculum changes need to be provided. This will ensure that principals are conversant with the curriculum changes, Changes in the education sector are inevitable due to the dynamic nature of knowledge and changes in technology and the appropriate mechanisms need to be put in place to ensure that anticipated change is realised and that those affected by change are assisted to experience a swift transition and proper adjustment of the entire system.

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