

## **Quality Assurance and Effectiveness of Lagos State Junior Secondary Schools**

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### **Abstract**

*The study examined the effect of Quality Assurance on the Effectiveness of Lagos State Junior Secondary Schools. The factors of effectiveness that were considered included teachers' input, school leadership and learning environment. A stratified sample of 30 schools was selected from a population of 313 from the six Education Districts of the state on an equal basis of five schools from each district. From each of the sample schools were also selected 30 teachers, again on stratification based on gender, qualification and experience. A questionnaire was designed for the study to collect pertinent data 900 copies of which were administered but 868 or 96.4% of which were returned. The questionnaire was subjected to a test of face validity and test-retest reliability. The reliability coefficient was found to be 0.76. The collected data were then subjected to chi -square analysis and in accordance with the hypotheses generated to guide the study. Results of the analyses indicate that quality assurance has a significant effect on each of teachers' input and school leadership but not on learning environment. Based on the findings, recommendations were made to the effect that quality assurance should be intensified and possibly private participation in the practice should be encouraged.*

### **Introduction**

For a nation to rise to a standard worthy enough for her to compete favourably in the league of nations, such a nation must ensure that high quality in her education is attained and sustained, thus bringing about quality workforce in the nation. However, 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. According to Ehusani (2002), the process of educating is to develop the cognitive, affective and psychomotor facilities of individuals and groups in order to equip them with knowledge and skills necessary to survive and make society progress. Aghenta, as cited by Ijaiya (2009), agrees that trained or educated human resources constitute man power and personnel that bring about national development. This is simply saying that the amount of educated citizen is equal to the amount of available quality work force that will contribute to a nation's development. Meanwhile, the quality of the workforce in the school system presupposes the quality of the school output, that is, the human resources that will be available for the nation.

In the school system, some determinants of high quality education include goals of education, quality of the input as well as a well organized school system that ensures the articulation and effective co-ordination of all aspects of school life (Ochuba 2009).

Ochuba (2009) also states that if the education industry would want to carry out its function of development of quality human capital, there would be need for checks and balances through regular and effective supervision and inspection. This, in essence, is to ensure and maintain quality of output by the teacher.

This situation is what warranted the adoption of Quality Assurance System by the Lagos State Education Ministry to bring about quality in the teaching work force, despite all odds.

### **Differences between Inspection and Quality Assurance**

Inspection is an age long known system of enforcing quality in teaching but has lately been seen as defective because it enforces quality and not assure quality. Inspection is much about employees and their compliance to lay down rules and regulations.

Inspection is a one way assessment system where much concentration is on the teacher, therefore making teaching a teacher centred activity. It is carried out to ensure minimum standard of output from teachers. Therefore, only inspectors of a particular discipline can inspect teachers of that discipline. One major flaw of inspection is that it is a one-day affair and done unannounced. Teachers to be inspected were pounced on without notice, all in the name of ensuring that teachers are attuned to putting in their best always in anticipation of the coming of inspectors anytime. This system has been criticized for its inadequacy to assist teachers to improve their performance (Tuoyo1999). It is believed to be an external imposition which is prone to rejection by teachers (West-Burnham.1994). This is more so when the inspectors behave like tin-gods (Ijaiya. 1991). Further criticism of inspection is on its limitation as a post-mortem examination of certain school activities, it searches for lapse and wastages rather than preventing them (West-Burnham. 1994).

Quality Assurance (QA) on the other hand is a two way system, that is, it involves the whole school on the one hand and Quality Assurer (i.e. inspector) on the other: they both work together to achieve a continuous improvement in standard and not minimum standard as intended by inspection system. In QA, all stakeholders are involved and carried along, that is, students, teaching staff, non- teaching staff, parents, government and the community; here the community includes the opinion leaders, traditional and religious leaders as well as the corporate bodies. QA looks at education improvement from the holistic approach, though, the students are the target, everything in the learning environment is involved in the process of achieving higher standard.

Today, the world over, this modern inspection system plays a much wider and more substantial role in the development of schools; this is real Quality Assurance. This actually involves the school deciding what to teach, how the content would be taught and what parent roles should be as well as what they should be told about their children's performance and progress.

Quality Assurance is a self assessment system where the teachers ask the questions like Where am I? Why am I here? And Where am I going? All these questions are asked vis-à-vis the standard of the learner because QA is learners' centred. At the end, areas that needed improvement are located and worked upon.

Once again, Quality Assurance is not a day affair: it takes as long as the inspectors are able to marry the school, especially the teachers in terms of improvement, with its expected achievement. QA requires not that an inspector should be of a particular discipline before he can inspect teachers of such discipline; this is because inspection in quality assurance is not to nail or condemn teachers but to work together to see where improvement is needed, hence, the announcement before visiting a school.

In present day national perspectives, quality is at the top of most agenda. Ways to improve the quality of education is very much the important task facing any educational institution. Quality educating has its significant impact and invaluable contributions to manpower development. Students therefore have the right to education of good quality, hence, the training of inspectors in quality assurance system to be able to work with schools to achieve the expected standard. By so doing, inspectors work with the school in the following areas:

- Achievement and standard
- Learners welfare and participation
- Personal development
- Quality of teaching and learning
- Quality of curriculum and other activities

- Care/guidance and support
- Learning environment
- Leadership and management
- Overall effectiveness of the school
- What school does well
- What school should do to improve

The use of Quality Assurance management system has become popular in the administrative world. The days of quality control practice in industries are over, quality assurance has taken over. The worth of any management is based on its ability to produce quality product and satisfy clients needs (Ijaiya, 1991). In the education industry, the worth of any educational system is based on its ability to produce quality output (students) that can contribute to the development of the society. It is then the functions of the education managers to identify and solve problems that may work against quality delivery of education. This problem solving approach will be directed at taking preventive measures against wastage.

### **Statement of the Problem**

The effectiveness of a school system is measured from the output of the school, that is, the level of students' performance in both internal and external examinations, which is hinged among other things on the quality of teachers' input. Managing teachers for higher quality input, therefore, requires a strategy that will ensure that all aspects of school life are properly dove-tailed and effectively coordinated. The basic questions here are; can QA bring effectiveness in the school through the teachers? What other school process variables are necessary to be effectively coordinated for school effectiveness. This paper, therefore, attempts to look at the extent to which QA can affect teachers input vis-à-vis other variables, to bring about effectiveness in Lagos State Junior Secondary Schools.

### **Research Hypotheses**

The following research hypotheses were generated to guide the study:

1. There is no significant effect of Quality Assurance on teachers' input in Lagos State Junior Secondary Schools.
2. There is no significant effect of Quality Assurance on School Leadership in Lagos State junior Secondary Schools.
3. There is no significant effect of Quality Assurance on Learning Environment in Lagos State Junior Secondary Schools.

### **Methodology**

The study population comprises all the 9,841 teachers in the 313 Junior Secondary Schools in Lagos State. For the purpose of this paper, 30 Junior Secondary Schools were selected from the study population on an equal basis from the six Education Districts that make up the State. Thus, five schools were randomly chosen from each of the Districts. From each of the sample schools were chosen 30 teachers on a stratified basis of gender, qualification and experience ensuring that these categories were fairly equally represented. Nine hundred teachers therefore constituted the sample subjects for the study.

The instrument used was a questionnaire on the Effect of Quality Assurance on School Effectiveness. It has two sections (A and B). Section A sought information on respondents sex, length of service, age, qualifications and other bio-data. Section B obtained varied information; it is made up of thirty items, ten of which were on Quality Assurance and teachers input, ten on Quality Assurance and Leadership and management of schools while the remaining ten were on Quality Assurance and learning environment. While a total of 900 questionnaire copies were administered on the selected respondents of the sample schools, 868 were returned giving a percentage returns of 96.4%.

The instrument was validated by colleagues and other experts in the areas of educational measurement and research design. The reliability was also established using test-retest reliability measure. The reliability coefficient was found to be 0.76.

## Data Analysis and Presentation of Result

Data collected were analysed in accordance with the hypotheses generated to guide the study using chi-square analysis.

**Hypothesis I:** This hypothesis states that “there is no significant effect of Quality Assurance on Teachers Input in Lagos State Junior Secondary Schools”. Table I shows the analysis of the data collected to test the hypothesis.

**Table I: Chi-Square Analysis of the effect of Quality Assurance on Teachers’ Input**

X <sup>2</sup> Calculated	X <sup>2</sup> table	Degree of freedom	Level of Significance	Decision
47.623	40.1	27	0.05	Hypothesis is Rejected

Results of data analysis on Table 1 shows that X<sup>2</sup><sub>calculated</sub> is greater than X<sup>2</sup><sub>table</sub> which implies that there is a significant effect on teachers’ input with the practice of quality assurance. Hypothesis I is therefore rejected.

**Hypothesis II:** This hypothesis states that “there is no significant effect of Quality Assurance on School Leadership in Lagos State Junior Secondary Schools”. A test of the hypothesis was carried out using the appropriate data generated for the purpose and applying chi-square analysis as presented in Table II.

**Table II: Chi-square Analysis of the effect of Quality Assurance on School Leadership**

X <sup>2</sup> Calculated	X <sup>2</sup> table	Degree of freedom	Level of Significance	Decision
57.867	40.1	27	0.05	Hypothesis is rejected

With calculated X<sup>2</sup> value greater than the table value, there is a significant effect on leadership of school with the application of the Quality Assurance System. The second hypothesis is therefore not accepted, too.

**Hypothesis III:** Hypothesis III states that “there is no significant effect of Quality Assurance on Learning Environment in Lagos State Junior Secondary Schools”. The data collected to test this hypothesis are analyzed using the Chi-square test as presented in Table III.

**Table III: Chi-square Analysis of the effect of Quality Assurance on Learning Environment**

X <sup>2</sup> Calculated	X <sup>2</sup> table	Degree of freedom	Level of Significance	Decision
30.412	40.1	27	0.05	Hypothesis is accepted

Table III shows that the calculated chi-square value is greater than the table value. Therefore, the hypothesis is accepted and quality assurance has no significant effect on learning environment.

## Discussion

This study looked at Quality Assurance and its effects on the effectiveness of the school system in Lagos State Junior Secondary Schools. The study was however limited to three factors of school effectiveness namely teachers input, school leadership and learning environment.

From the data analysis and results, it was revealed that Quality Assurance plays an important role in school effectiveness. The study shows that quality assurance has effect on teachers’ academic input in the classroom thereby promoting the effectiveness of the school. This was attested to by 71% positive response of the respondents and the results of the chi-square analysis of Hypothesis I. This is further corroborated by Ochuba (2009) who observes that the level of performance in school system is determined by the quality of the teachers input. This is also in consonance with the observation of Ijaiya (2009) who sees the input as contributing to the quality of products.

The leadership of school is a major factor in the attainment of effectiveness in school. The ability of the leadership to create conducive relationship between it and the workforce is necessary to qualitative education. It is the function of the leadership to harness all influencing variables in the school system for the attainment of effectiveness. According to Ijaiya (2009), the worth of any management is based on its ability to identify and solve any problem that militates against quality delivery. The accessibility of the head, cordial principal- teachers relationship plus staff welfare all come together to assist the leadership in his quality attainment. The importance of quality assurance in leadership is attested to by 82% of the respondents who indicated quality assurance as part of leadership from those items presented. The result of the chi-square analysis in respect of Hypothesis II also shows that with the introduction of Quality Assurance, the leadership of Lagos State Junior Secondary school has improved.

The study however reveals that Quality Assurance System has no significant manifest in the improvement of the learning environment. With respect to the pertinent items, 64% of the respondents disagreed that the learning environment is conducive for teaching/learning. This is not saying that conducive learning environment is not important to school effectiveness but that the present learning environment in Lagos State Junior Secondary Schools is everything but conducive to learning. It can then be stated that the practice of quality assurance system has not been felt in learners' environment and therefore may affect effectiveness to some degree.

### **Conclusion and Recommendations**

Based on the findings of the study, the conclusion can be reached that quality assurance is a necessity to school effectiveness in terms of teachers' inputs and school leadership. That is, teachers input and school leadership would improve with quality assurance. However, quality assurance may not necessarily engender the learning environment.

The following are therefore recommended for Quality Assurance to warrant school effectiveness:

1. The quality assurers must work together with the teachers almost on a regular basis to impinge on school effectiveness.
2. The school head as the accounting officer of the school must ensure teachers' promotion as and at when due, and provide other incentives relevant to the effectiveness of his school in terms of students' achievement.
3. Provision of classrooms, furniture, equipped libraries and laboratories and teaching materials should be adequately made to promote a conducive learning environment.
4. Public-Private-Participation in school system should be taken seriously to promote effectiveness in terms of providing a conducive learning environment.
5. Teachers must be properly remunerated to awaken in them latent potentials.

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