
Effective Supervision: Sine Qua Non for Enhancing Teaching and Learning Process of Nigerian Languages

Anayo Onanwa

Department of Teacher Education, National Institute for Nigeria Languages, Aba

Abstract: *Supervision is a very critical factor in educational Administration. It plays a vital role in the teaching-learning process. That is to say that for students/pupils to learn, teaching and learning process in the schools must be supervised and monitored. It is therefore, one thing to monitor and supervise instruction, it is another to go extra mile in supervising the instruction process. Effective supervision of teaching and learning cannot therefore be over-emphasized if the goals and objectives of education is to be achieved. Nigerian languages as a subject taught in Nigerian schools has suffered major setbacks in the past one largely to lack of effective supervision. This paper therefore, examines the concept of effective supervision and as a prerequisite for the teaching and learning of Nigerian languages in our Schools. As a condition, for instance, teaching Nigerian Languages in Nigerian Language Laboratories would enhance the learning of such languages. Finally, the paper concludes that teaching and learning of Nigerian languages should be encouraged by the governments at all levels by awarding of scholarships to students who may wish to read Nigerian Languages in tertiary Institutions.*

Keywords: *Effective Supervision, Nigerian Languages, Teaching and Learning.*

Introduction

Employees who work in organizations such as schools discharge their responsibilities ineffectively and without the desired dedication and commitment it deserves.

Employers of labour therefore, need to oversee the activities of their employees to ensure that the desired goals and objectives of the organization are achieved. The employees activities like time of arrival to the offices, level of commitment of doing ones responsibilities and the time of departure, the productivity and input each day need to be overseen and supervised. Failure to supervise the activities of employees on a regular basis could lead to loss in productivity and therefore may result to not achieving the set goals and objectives of the organization. It is one thing to supervise schools instruction; it is another to supervise it effectively.

Supervision is an intervention that is provided by a senior member of a profession to a junior member or members of the same profession. This relationship is evaluative, extents overtime and has the simultaneous purpose of enhancing the professional functioning of the junior members, monitoring the effective and

quality of professional services offered to the clients. It also serves as gatekeeper to those who are to enter the particular profession.

Akubue (2008) defines supervision as all efforts of designated school officials towards providing leadership to teachers, stimulating their professional growth and evaluating instructions and curriculum. The designated officials are the Head teachers and principals who are delegated with full powers of supervisory control internally.

Ahmed (2003) defines effective supervision of schools as any educational activity aimed generally at improving the teaching-learning activities aimed at generally improving the teaching –learning situation and identifying the pressing needs of the school with a view of finding appropriate solutions to private quality education. Ibemere (2009) views effective supervision as the comprehensive view of the activities and problems of the institution and take assessment of the extent to which it is fulfilling its basic obligations. Supervision is aimed at the totality of the school environment, facilitating curriculum planning; stimulating and improving professional growth; providing for individual differences and developing techniques to improve pedagogical principles and methods. Generally speaking, supervision is concerned with the total improvement of teaching and learning situation.

The supervisor demonstrates democratic traits or principles with the supervised through dialogue, discussion and intervention, Effective supervision should be active, dynamic, comprehensive and co-operative. This supervision must be result oriented. That is, there must be results after the supervision. The supervisor should be able to identify some challenges confronting the school and teachers with a view of helping them to solve the problems.

Effective supervision in the teaching and learning of Nigerian Languages would help to solve the problem of Nigerian languages teachers as it concern lack of commitment and dedication in their duties. Some Nigerian language teachers feel inferior to their science teachers and English language teachers. Effective supervision by the supervisors would encourage them especially when they are rewarded or honoured specially by government and school administrators.

Effective supervision of the teaching and learning of these Nigerian languages would encourage students/pupils who feel inferior too to their science subject students.

Literature Review

Nigerian Language In Focus.

Nigeria is a multi-lingual country with many diverse languages across the country. Language is the set of element constructed out of a finite set of elements Chomky (1957). It is spoken and written communication. Language is major means used by humans to communicate with one another.

In Nigeria, we have over four hundred and fifty languages spoken by different peoples of Nigeria Asuoha, (2016). These languages are also referred to as Nigerians Languages. They are referred to as indigenous because they are person's first language or native language or mother tongue. These native or indigenous languages are studied as subjects in Nigerian schools.

Nigerian languages could be classified into two major parts: major languages and minor languages, based on certain criteria Asuoha, (2016). The first group are the major or national languages consisting of three languages, Hausa, Igbo and Yoruba. The major languages are so classified based on their having over 20 million speakers each. They have developed standard orthography and texts, and serve as regional lingua franca. They are also studied as class subjects in some schools. The second are the non-major languages comprising all other indigenous languages. Many of the non-major languages are without orthography and texts. They are only used amongst the communities that own them Aziza, (2015:19). Some of the non-major indigenous languages include: Kanuris, Ibibio, Ed, Efik, etc.

It has been argued that using these indigenous languages to teach the child makes the him/her to learn faster during instruction. Kanu and Eluwa (2016) were of the opinion that children are more likely to succeed in school when they are taught in mother tongues. Through this, the child would fit in and continue with education.

Furthermore, using the learners; home language, learners are more likely to engage in the learning process. The interactive learner-learner centred approach recommended by educationists thrives in the language of instruction.

The use of indigenous language in schools also helps the learner to develop his skills, reading, writing and Arithmetic. It makes the learners to be involved in the teaching learning process.

Concept Of Effective Supervision

Effective supervision is an initial aspect of teaching and learning. Obi (2006), defines effective supervision as the process through which senior members of a profession monitors and oversees what the junior members of the same profession

are doing in ensuring that the goals and objectives of the organization are achieved, while senior members of a profession oversees what the junior members are doing, effective supervision ensures that results are achieved with the limited resources of the organization.

The primary goal of effective supervision is to achieve results and ensure that quality is raised.

Hence, principals, head teachers and other senior members of a school take all necessary steps towards ensuring that standards are maintained in their schools. By doing this, they ensure that the standards set by the Ministry of Education are not lowered. Also, officials of the Ministry of Education go visit schools on regular intervals to maintain standards. Through this, erring schools who do not follow the stipulated guidelines could be sanctioned in various ways.

Nwosu (2010) states that the primary goal of effective supervision is to keep school heads and their teachers on their toes. The process of effective supervision is democratic in modern times. It is interactive and cross fertilization of knowledge and ideas. The supervisor engages the supervisee in a discussion and dialogue. Both sides must listen to the other and offer solutions on how to improve teaching and learning process in the classroom.

The teacher (supervisee) must contribute on the discussion or conversion as a line officer in the classroom.

The primary function of effective supervision is goal realization. To ensure that goals are achieved, every necessary action must be taken. Records must be checked and approved regularly, materials must be provided on time, the teachers must be encouraged and motivated on regular basis. There must be harmonious good relationship that exists between the teacher and the head teacher.

The Concept Of Teaching And Learning

The concept of teaching forms an initial point at which the teacher and the learners come together in the class to impart and assimilate knowledge. The teacher helps the learners who do not know the knowledge or who has not acquired the knowledge to acquire it. However, in the process of teaching and learning, the teacher must be democratic and liberal in his teaching. That is, he must take contributions from the learners and should not see them as mere robots. It is the entire aim of education process.

Teaching and Learning is the process through which the young acquire knowledge and realizes his potentialities and uses them for self actualization, to be useful to

himself and others Oforma (2017,P4). The primary purpose of teaching and learning entails giving people knowledge and skill for lifelong learning to help them find new solution to their environment, economic and social challenges. The primary idea is to implement programmes that are locally relevant and culturally appropriate (MCkeown, Hopkins and Rizzi, 2002).

Teaching and learning cannot be said to have taken place until the learner demonstrates certain changes in behavior and attitudes. In realizing this important fact, tertiary institutions in awarding certificates to their grandauds observed thus’ “These students have been found worthy in character and learning and are hereby awarded the certificate. Teaching and learning metaphorically could be referred to as buyer and seller. In the school classrooms, the students are consumers (buyers) while the teachers are the sellers (producers).

The Role Of Effective Supervision In The Teaching And Learning Of Nigerian Languages

The role of effective supervision in the teaching and learning of Nigerian Languages cannot be over-emphasized. Effective supervision plays the following roles in learning Nigerian Languages.

- Effective supervision would help Nigerian Language teachers to plan their work properly. Since principals, head teachers and other line officers oversee the works of teachers, instructional planning should be properly planned by teachers. Officials of the Ministry of Education also visits schools to oversee what these Nigerian Language teachers do. Lesson notes and diaries are checked and monitored. This will help the teacher to improve on this skills towards instructional designs in his teaching Ob (2006).
- effective supervision helps to use modern methods of teaching include audio-visual gadgets in the language laboratories. The learners will know how the letters are pronounced, how words sound and the stress emphasize” children learn when they see practical ways and method of doing things. The effective supervision would ensure that certain topics must be taught using certain electronic gadgets to drive home his points. Effective supervisors should ensure that modern methods are adopted in teaching and learning process.
- Effective supervision helps the students in getting proper guidance. Some students might be good in learning Nigerian Languages. But may be distracted by their science subjects counterparts who may discourage them. Such students could be nicknamed; “Igbo Igbo BK”. In order to encourage

such students, the Language teacher could refer them to the principal who would in turn invite the guidance, Counselor to encourage the student.

- **Lack of In-service Training**

Most of our principals and Ministry of Education officials have not attended training, workshop and conferences on the teaching and learning of Nigerian Languages, when such conferences and workshops are never provided, there is little the supervisor could do. When he supervises the language teacher, he adopts the same method or approach in sciences and other subjects. This is a negation in the supervision of Nigerian Languages.

- **Inadequate Funds**

Funds play a vital role in the administration of schools. There are no funds to cover supervision in the Ministry of Education. Funds are not provided for materials such as diaries, registers, etc needed for supervision of Nigerian Languages.

Conclusion

The role of effective supervision cannot be over-emphasized in the teaching and learning of Nigerian Languages. As a very important aspect of educational administration, it determines whether the goals and objectives of teaching Nigerian Languages could be achieved. The line officers in our schools viz: The principal, Vice principal, Deans and other senior members of the school should take it seriously. Also, governments at all levels through the Inspectorate Division of the Ministry of Education should complement the efforts of school heads in the teaching and learning of Nigerian languages.

Finally, Nigerian Languages should be encouraged in our schools by awarding Scholarships to both the students and the teachers as a way of encouragement. Adequate funds and capital should be provided in procuring electronic equipments and other materials needed in the teaching-learning process of Nigerian language.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are proffered towards enhancing the teaching and learning of Nigerian Languages in schools.

- Government through the Ministry of Education should as a matter of necessity procure enough vehicles for the supervision of Nigerian languages education. This will enhance movement of the supervisors to both the urban and rural schools.

- Supervisors of schools such as principals and vice principals should find time; despite their schedules to go to classrooms and oversee the teaching and learning of Nigerian Languages. Students notes as well as teachers' lesson note should be checked regularly.
- There shall be adequate motivation for supervisors of Nigerian Language teachers teaching. There shall also be motivation for the students and teachers of Nigeria languages. Supervisors of Nigerian languages salaries should be paid promptly and regularly too. The Nigerian language students, should be given bursaries and awards.
- Qualified and trained personnel should be employed to supervise the teaching and learning of Nigerian languages. These supervisors must be specialists in Nigerian languages. This will go a long way in training and returning of Nigerian language teachers.
- Conferences, Workshops and Seminars should be organized at regular intervals. Principals and Nigerian Language teachers should attend with officials from the Ministry of Education. This will make teachers acquire modern teaching techniques in the teaching-learning process.
- Finally, materials needed for effective supervision must be provided early to enable teachers of Nigerian language enter them appropriately. Late arrival of such materials as Register, diaries etc poses danger to the learning of Nigerian Languages.
- Furthermore, effective supervision assists teachers in classroom management, when there is effective supervision in Nigerian Languages, the teacher knows how to manage his class because he knows that the principal could arrive any moment. He equally knows too that the Ministry officials could arrive anytime too. He will be on his toes and ensure that the classroom organization and management is perfect.
- Effective supervision provide dedicated and committed language teachers. Nigerian language teachers who do not show commitment to their responsibilities, will be forced to be as a result of effective supervision. Effective supervision produced result of hard work and industry. It produces hardworking staff. It produces teachers who could put in extra time in research and studies and this could lead to a breakthrough in Nigerian languages. This is the opposite when there is no supervision and laissez-faire attitude by the principal or even the Ministry officials.
- Finally, effective supervision would promote the interest and positive attitude of students and teachers in the teaching and learning of Nigerian languages. When principals and Ministry official visit Nigerian Language teachers, the morale of

the students are boosted as well as that of the teacher. In such visits, Principals and Ministry officials make positive and encouraging statements that could encourage the continued learning of Nigerian Languages. Principals could give scholarships. The Ministry officials could take the names of best students in Nigerian languages and recommend them for awards and national competitions problems of effective supervision of Teaching and Learning of Nigerian Languages.

- There are certain challenges facing the teaching and learning of Nigerian Languages in our schools. According to Anukam (2010), some of the problems are as follows:
- **Inadequate transportation system for visiting the schools.** There are none or few vehicles for the Ministry of Education officials who usually and regularly visit schools for routine supervision. This problem does not allow supervisors to go to schools and see what teachers and students do in the classroom.
- **Insufficient time for thorough supervision exercise.** The ministry officials who normally go to schools to monitor instruction could hardly have enough time to go round all the schools to monitor language instruction. Principals and head teachers too could hardly find time to monitor instruction as a result of their busy schedule.
This is a major setback towards teaching and learning of Nigerian languages in schools.
- **Inadequate incentives and motivation for the supervising officers.** Our supervisory officers are not well motivated to go and supervise the teaching and learning of Nigerian Language in school. Salaries are not regular. There are no allowances such as transporting, wardrobe etc. In most cases, these supervisors beg for money to go to these schools.
- **Unqualified and untrained supervisors.** Most of our supervisors in Nigerian Languages are not qualified. Some of them are not trained officially. A supervisor of Igbo language who cannot speak Igbo from the Ministry of Education could hardly achieve his/her goals when he/she goes out for supervision. Ironically, most of the supervisors in the ministry did not read education in the tertiary institutions. One does not give what he/she does not have

Reference

Ahmed, T.M (2003). *Education and National Development in Nigeria*.

Journal of studies in Education 10(1), 35-46.

Anukam, I. L., Okunamiri, P.O. & Ogbonna, R.N.O. (eds) (2010). *Basic Text*

- on Educational Management*. Owerri: Eethech versatile Publishers.
- Akubue, A.U (2008). *Relevant issue in Supervision of Instruction*. Unpublished Memograph, University of Nigeria, Nsukka.
- Aziza, R.O. (2015). *ICT and the development of Nigerian Languages*, In Ijioma, N.P. (Ed) *Nigerian Languages*, In Ijioma, N.P. (Ed) *Nigerian Languages studies*, NILAS. Vol. 2, No 3, pp 19-24.
- Asuoha, J.C (2010). *Assessment of the implementation of language education policy in some school*. In Ijioma, N.P. (Ed). *Nigerian Languages studies*, NILAS. Vol.3, No.1, Pp. 75-84.
- Chomsky, N. (1957). *Syntactic structure*. The Hague: Mouton.
- Ezeocha, P.A (2005). *School Management Supervision*. Owerri: International University Press.
- Federal Republic of Nigeria (2013). *National Policy on Education* Lagos: NERDC Press.
- Ibemere, C.J. (2009). *Supervision of Instruction. A vital factor in Achieving objectives of Education for Self reliance*. *Journal of Education Foundation*. 4 (1), 10-17.
- Obi, C.N. (2016). *Instructional Supervision: Sine quo Non for Improving Teaching and Learning process in Nigeria*. *Journal of Technical Education and Research* 1 (1), 93-97.
- MCKeown, R; Hopkins, C.A & Rissi, R. (2002). *Education for sustainable Development*. Retrieved from <http://www.commdev.org/userfiles/180/files/tookitv2.Pdf>.
- Nwosu, Osita (2010). *Supervision of Instruction in Nigerian Schools*. Onitsha: Osyora Educational Publishers.
- Offormas G.C. (2017). *Language Education and sustainable Development: Lead paper presented at a five-day National Conference held at the National Institute for Nigerian Languages, (NINLAN), Aba, Abia State, Nigeria. 5th-9th June, 2017.*