Quality Instructional Delivery in Language Education as Correlate for Academic Performance of Secondary Schools in Ogun State, Nigeria

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Abstract

This study assessed the quality of instructional delivery in language education as a correlate to the academic performance of secondary schools in Ogun State. The study employed the descriptive survey design. Respondents consist of 60 principals, 540 teachers, and 1800 students randomly selected using the multi-stage sampling technique from a pool of 599 public secondary schools (now re-articulated into 301) in Ogun State, Nigeria. Research instruments tagged "Teachers' Quality Instructional Delivery" (TQID), "Students' Rating Scale", Interview Guide for Principals and Teachers' Focus Group Discussion Guide (FGD) were used for data collection. The hypothesis was tested for significance at $p<0.05$ probability level of significance, using the Pearson Product Moment Correlation Statistics. T-test was used for the data analysis. Findings revealed that the significant instructional tasks performed by the teachers are the preparation of lesson notes, writing of scheme of work, and periodic assessment of students' learning. While the tasks that teachers least perform are research into teaching and learning activities, improvisation and usage of instructional materials, marking of exercises/assignments, and regular feedback to students. This implies that many schools still strive to achieve quality assurance in students' academic performance. The study recommends an improvement in the tasks of instructional resource inputs, curriculum delivery, and students' learning requires practical and goal-oriented interrelationships between the school and other stakeholders in education.

Introduction

Quality assurance is the set of activities that an organization undertakes to ensure that a product or service will satisfy the given requirement for quality and serve the purpose for which it was produced. This implies that standards are specified and reached consistently for a product or service. In addition, the goals of quality assurance are focused on anticipating and avoiding faults or mistakes. This process involves setting attainable standards, organizing work and monitoring performance so that objectives are achieved, as well as ensuring the documentation of procedures required and communicating them to all concerned to review the attainment of standards. Harvey (1999) views quality assurance as ensuring practical resource input, and control, refining the process and raising the output standards to meet the set goals and satisfy public accountability.

In the context of qualitative education delivery, Ayeni (2010) described quality assurance in education as the systematic management, monitoring and evaluation of the performance of school administrators, teachers and students against educational goals to ensure consistent

documentation, review and decision towards quality improvement in institutional management, and teaching and learning processes for the achievement of set standards in schools. This conception raises the issue of promoting a value system in institutional management that emphasizes producing quality learner outcomes in the teaching-learning process. A critical look at the definitions shows that quality assurance is evidence-based and, as such, depends on efficient and effective management, resource utilization, curriculum delivery, monitoring, evaluation and reviews of the resource inputs and transformation process (teaching and learning) to produce quality outputs (students) that meet set standards and expectations of the larger society. The societal quest for quality teaching, a vital aspect of quality assurance, is imperative because the emergence of new information technologies, the evolution of the global digital economy and the global competition for technically skilled workers create a national urgency to improve the educational standard in secondary schools. This issue of preeminent national importance must serve as a guidepost to principals and teachers to effectively prepare all students to be contributing citizens and productive workers in the 21st century (CEO Forum Policy Paper, 2001).

The increasing demand for high-quality education by the stakeholders in education and society has posed severe challenges to principals, teachers and students in the school environment. The school is expected to strive hard to achieve educational goals (ideal vision) in training the students since effective schools have high expectations of all students and think every child has the potential to achieve. It is this belief that should inform the school principal, most of the time, of the need to be goal-oriented and optimally maximize human and material resources, and be more proactive in monitoring, evaluating and coordinating teachers for effective task performance that will lead to the achievement of the set educational goals (Ogundele, 2002).

The students learning outcome is the quality of knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values acquired in the cognitive, affective and psychomotor domains of educational objectives, which are expected to, amongst other necessary outcomes, build self-confidence, self-reliance, effective citizenship, responsiveness to opportunities and challenges of life (Mishra, 2008). The quality of students' learning outcomes depends on teachers' knowledge, skills and competencies in instructional task performance.

Instructional tasks are statutory curricula functions that the teachers perform to enable learners to achieve the school's educational goals. This ultimately depends on the avowed commitment of principals and teachers to make judicious and adequate use of human and material resources to ensure quality assurance in the teaching-learning process. Teacher quality is the ability of the teacher to demonstrate good professional attributes like scholarship through adequate training, and it is pivotal to successful teaching, students' learning outcomes and the attainment of quality education in secondary schools. Teachers' quality is manifested in their knowledge of the subject–matter, skills and competencies in the teaching and learning processes, which leads to accomplishing the stated educational goals. This means that the real teacher must possess the qualities for effective teaching and pleasant learning within the school setting. He must know what he is to teach, how he is to teach, and whom he is to teach. The purpose is to deliver the curriculum efficiently to achieve school goals and standards (Koleoso, 2002; Makinde&Alao, 1992).

The teacher's role is crucial to effective and efficient learning; the teacher is expected to provide essential inputs like adequate planning of lesson notes, effective delivery of lessons, proper monitoring and evaluation of students' performance, providing regular feedback on students' performance, improvisation of instructional materials, adequate keeping of records and appropriate discipline of students to produce and enhance expected learning achievement in secondary schools (Ayeni, 2010). The objective of every teacher in the classroom is to help learners learn, inquire, solve problems, and cope with their own emotional needs and tensions. The teacher promotes quality education from the teaching and learning domain through creative ideas, participation and cooperative learning, research, analysis and critical thinking, problem-solving, innovation and encouragement of creative and divergent thinking. These lead to the proper development of knowledge, skills, attitude and values that enable students to function effectively and live as responsible citizens and contribute to society's development.

In order to ensure effective teaching and learning processes, Withall (1975) opined that teachers must create a psychologically non-threatening, non–inhibiting climate but, at the same time, a cognitively challenging situation to help the learners to predict the consequences of specific courses of action and to identify, if need be, alternative activities. This all adds to the need for the teacher to constantly challenge the learners intellectually without undermining their sense of individual worth or integrity. Aside from the knowledge of lesson

plans, record-keeping, use of audio-visual aids and standardized testing, it is also imperative for the teacher to possess a good measure of self-understanding, psychological awareness and insight to be able to demonstrate expert quality in the performance of instructional tasks (Bottery, 2008).

The quality of students' learning outcomes is directly dependent on the quality and capacity of the teachers as demonstrated in their knowledge of the subject matter and capacities to effectively carry out instructional tasks with the ultimate aim of facilitating the learning of diverse students and raising achievement for all learners to meet the specified standards and satisfaction of the larger society (Middlehurst & Gordon, 1995). The teachers' quality and instructional task performance are germanes to achieving any well-developed quality assurance system in secondary schools.

According to Adeogun in Babayomi (1999), schools whose teachers use more instructional resources perform better than schools whose teachers do not use instructional materials. This corroborated the Study by Babayomi (1999) that private schools performed better than public schools because students and teachers provided good and quality teaching and learning resources. From this importance, schools at all levels of education have been advised to have quality and adequate instructional facilities to raise the academic performance of their students.

The advice emanated from the fact that instructional facilities have a potent factor in qualitative education. The dictum is that "teaching is inseparable from learning, but learning is separable from teaching." This means that teachers do the teaching to make the students learn, but with quality and adequate instructional facilities, students can learn without the teachers. According to Akande (1985), learning can occur through interaction with one's environment. The environment here refers to available instructional facilities to facilitate students' learning outcomes.

Instructional materials such as the classroom size, sitting position and arrangement, availability of tables, chairs, chalkboards, and shelves on which instruments for practical are essential in the teaching transaction (Farrant, 1980 & Farombi, 1998). According to these scholars, the availability of instructional materials can work best if other conditions are met, such as the quality of the classroom. Regarding the quality of teachers using these resources

while acknowledging the importance of instructional materials, there needs to be more agreement on their roles in academic performance and this difference in understanding.

Research carried out by Sumra and Rajani (2006) indicated that many learners need to acquire essential skills needed in life to finish secondary education. This shows that an increase in the number of students has been prioritized over the number and quality of instructional materials (Hakielimu, 2007; Makombe, Kihombo, Sesabo, Hodgson & Spours, 2010). Some studies have shown explicitly that teaching in community secondary schools is poor as these schools lack necessary teaching facilities such as furniture for staff and students, books, science equipment, games and sports equipment (Benell & Mukyanuzi, 2005).

Moreover, teachers lack the skills to make quality teaching and learning aids. According to a National Audit report, some schools need more material resources such as textbooks, charts, maps, and audio-visual and electronic instructional materials such as radio, tape recorder, television and videotape recorder.

The teachers' professional tasks and effectiveness indicators/traits highlighted by Ameen (2007), Buttery (2008), Koleoso (2002), Makinde & Alao (1992), Middlehurst and Gordon (1995), and Withall (1975) include understanding of educational goals, continuous learning, professional competence, sound knowledge of the subject matter, proper planning of lessons, regular curriculum implementation, optimization of instructional resources, class management, assessment of students' learning outcomes, expectations of success for all students, record-keeping, self-understanding and control, psychological insight and collegiality. These are considered relevant to the development of the instrument for the present study, which is intended to examine teachers' instructional tasks in the context of quality assurance in secondary schools.

The need for more quality instructional materials is more comprehensive than in Tanzania, as this is a worldwide phenomenon. Even in developed countries, for example, the United States of America, especially in schools whose majority of the population is poor and minority students are less funded and lack essential quality instructional materials. In addition, policies associated with school funding, resource allocations, and tracking leave minority students with fewer and lower-quality books, curriculum materials, laboratories, and computers (Post & Darling, 2000).

Objective of the Study

This study aims to assess the quality of instructional delivery in language education as a correlate to the academic performance of secondary schools in Ogun State. Specifically, the objective of this is to;

i)   Determine the relationship between teachers' quality instructional delivery and students' academic performance.

Research Hypothesis

i)   There is no significant relationship between teachers' quality instructional delivery and students' academic performance.

Methodology

The study employed the descriptive survey design. The target population comprised all principals, teachers and students in Ogun State, Nigeria, secondary schools. Using a multi-stage sampling technique, the respondents comprised 60 principals, 540 teachers, and 1,800 students randomly selected from 60 secondary schools. The 60 secondary schools were selected from the existing 599 public secondary schools (now re-articulated into 301) using a stratified random sampling method from five (5) Local Government Areas (LGAs) that were randomly selected from the existing five educational zones in Ogun State. The instruments used for data collection were self-developed questionnaires tagged: "Teachers' Quality Instructional Delivery." (TQID), "Students' Rating Scale" (SRS), Interview Guide for Principals and Teachers' Focus Group Discussion Guide (FGD) used for data collection. One hypothesis was tested for significance at a $p<0.05$ probability level of significance.

The questionnaire contained the TQD instrument of a total of 12 items developed by the researcher for the principals to rate the quality of teachers on the following variables: planning and delivery of lessons, instructional material, learning resources, class management, record keeping, students' academic assessment, feedback and reviews of academic programs while TQD contained 6 items constructed for the teachers to rate students' academic performance. The SRS instrument elicited information on gender and class, while the instrument contained 20 items constructed for the students to rate teachers' instructional task performance in the areas of delivery of lessons, evaluation of learning

outcomes, classroom management and feedback. The research instrument utilized a 5-point Likert scale questionnaire of Highly Agree, Agree, Fairly Agree, Disagree and Highly Disagree.

The scale values allocated were 5, 4, 3, 2 and 1, respectively. To ensure the instrument's validity, the researcher gave the questionnaire draft to the experts to restructure the instrument in line with the research questions. A pilot test was conducted to determine the instrument's reliability, and the scores were tabulated. The Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient formula was applied, and a correlation coefficient of 0.72 was obtained. Based on the corrections done on the questionnaire items and the test-retest reliability coefficient computed, the instrument was judged adequate, valid and reliable for gathering relevant data for the study. In addition, the study made use of an interview guide to collect information from principals and teachers on variables such as the nature of teachers' tasks, classroom management, instructional materials, learning resources, learning spaces, capacity building, students' learning outcomes, instructional feedback and reviews, and challenges of instructional practices. Student's t-test was used for the data analysis.

Results

Research Hypothesis One: There is no significant relationship between teacher's quality instructional delivery and students' academic performance.

Table1: Teacher's quality instructional delivery and students' academic performance

Teachers' Instructional Task Performance	Very Effective		Fairly Effective		Non-effective		Mean score
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	
Delivery of lessons	1451	82.0	201	11.0	124	7.0	2.75
Evaluation of learning outcomes	1261	73.0	305	18.0	156	9.0	2.64
Classroom management	1284	74.0	232	13.3	220	12.7	2.61
Feedback on learning outcomes	1309	75.3	239	13.7	191	11.0	2.64

Total	5305	76.0	977	14.0	691	10.0
Cumulative mean						**2.66**

The null hypothesis (Ho) of no significance is rejected. This shows a significant relationship between teachers' instructional task performance and students' academic performance. A high mean score of 42.17 was recorded on teachers' instructional task performance, which implies that teachers accorded the desired attention to teaching and learning processes. By implication, it is clear that teachers occupy centre stage in the teaching and learning processes; consequently, students' academic performance is dependent significantly on teachers' content knowledge, pedagogical skills and competence. However, a mean score of 2.73 was recorded on students' academic performance, which implied that the percentage of students that achieved quality assurance standards in the SSCE was below average.

Discussion

The relationship between teachers' quality instructional delivery and students' academic performance was significant. The result showed that most teachers accorded the desired attention to curriculum delivery; however, the mean scores of 2.73 recorded on students' academic performance indicated that the percentage of students that achieved quality assurance standards in the external examinations was below average, indicating that many schools were still striving to achieve quality assurance standard in students' academic performance.

The interview with some teachers revealed that most students were lazy and could hardly spend 30 minutes reading; they preferred to watch films and games on television/video clips. Most of the students need more relevant textbooks and other learning materials. For instance, out of a population of 130 students in senior secondary class two in a particular school, only 13 (10%) had recommended textbooks in the English Language. This is in line with the study of Ameen (2007), Buttery (2008), Koleoso (2002), Makinde and Alao (1992), Middlehurst and Gordon (1995), and Withall (1975) that this situation portends grave danger to the education system since no meaningful learning can take place without students having relevant textbooks and other learning materials to read, study and practice.

Aside from earlier identified challenges, the other ones affecting teachers' quality instructional delivery and students' learning include many secondary schools' lack of well-equipped libraries. The affected subject was the English Language.

Conclusion

The study concluded that the gaps in the input-process-output system were challenges that principals and teachers faced in resource inputs, quality instructional performance and students' learning which require precise and active goal-oriented interrelationships between the school and other stakeholders in its environment. This ensures continuous improvement in resource inputs, transformational processes and outputs since the school can only achieve the set educational goals in collaboration.

Recommendations

The school principals should provide constant and adequate feedback to the teachers on their quality instructional task performance to ensure periodic review and facilitate capacity development for further improvement in classroom management and curriculum delivery in secondary schools.

The school authority should provide constant and comprehensive feedback on students' academic performance to parents in order to sensitize and encourage them to provide the required textbooks and other learning materials for their children/wards.

School principals should promote healthy academic competitions such as intra and inter-class/school debates, quizzes and essays among students to improve their knowledge, skills, competence and performance.

The government should employ an adequate number of teachers and ensure equitable distribution to all secondary schools to maintain reasonable teachers' workloads and adequate coverage of all subjects on the school curriculum.

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