

Educational Policy Implementation: A Critical Overview of Education Quality Assurance Policy in Nigeria

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Abstract

Policy implementation ought to be a natural follow-up of policy making. However, the dichotomy between the two in Nigeria's educational system is a matter for concern. This paper did a critical overview of factors that cause poor policy implementation in Nigeria vis-a-vis school inspection policy and the paradigm shift to Education Quality Assurance policy (EQA) in 2015. It noted that the factors that undermined school inspection in recent years including human dereliction of duty and poor funding are still there, and are working against the achievement of the vision of EQA. It also posited that internal self-supervision by the school is being highly underrated in the system in favour of external evaluation whereas teachers with their qualifications and experience can become self-monitoring, self-accountable and self-propelling if empowered and challenged. It was therefore recommended that external evaluation should be combined with internal school-based self-supervision with a detailed handbook spelling out the roles of the head teachers, other staffs and those of the external instructional supervisors as a better means of improving learning outcomes in schools.

Keywords: Education Quality Assurance, Evaluation, Inspection, School-based Self-supervision

Introduction

For ages, policies had always been rightly made as a guide for action in government affairs including education. However, implementation has mostly been the bottleneck of even the most well intended and most well laid out policies. Examples in Nigeria include the taking-over of private schools in the 1970s by the Federal Government, the 6-3-3-4 system of education, the Universal Basic Education (UBE), etc. These well intended policies fell on the altar of poor implementation mostly because they were not backed by sufficient resources like funds, teachers, grandiose plans beyond available resources etc. Paradigm shifts in policies are therefore sometimes blamed on the failure of earlier policies to achieve their aims and objectives but which may not arguably be the flaw in the policy itself but due to human dereliction at the point of implementation. Owolabi (2005) defined a policy as "a doing intentionally undertaken with specific purpose in mind" (p.6). However, distinction must be made between policy on paper and its implementation which is about translating decision making into reality backed by necessary resources. Education policies cannot

be made outside resources otherwise they would have failed before arrival. It is the reasons why many public schools are in deplorable conditions across the country (The Guardian Editor, 2021).

In 2015, the Federal Government did a paradigm shift by replacing the age-long policy of school inspection with a new more comprehensive policy named Education Quality Assurance (EQA) using Whole School Evaluation strategy (FME, 2021). The reason, according to Nigeria's Minister of Education "is because over the years, the mode of inspection of schools did not lead to the expected improvement in learners outcomes" (FME 2021, p.viii). Normally policies are "solutions to emerging problems" (Owolabi, 2005, p. 16). But to blame the problem on one factor may be outlandish. The pertinent question is: has school inspection always been ineffective in what it was set out to achieve? The answer, of course, is no because the good records of school inspection vis-à-vis the school products of those early years of excellent performance are still around. Astute politicians like Chief Obafemi Awolowo, Engineers, Lawyers, Teachers, etc. who took over from the expatriates after Nigeria's independence were concrete examples. If school inspection was good then, what changed the scenario now? How can one be sure that the new policy of EQA would not suffer the same fate as school inspection? It is important to learn from the past to avoid its pitfalls in the new policy. As rightly observed by Syed (2021), "Often, it is by looking at what went wrong that can provide the most vivid pointers about how to get things right" (p.16). This is the direction of this paper. There is no doubt that Nigerian schools are facing serious challenges including dwindling quality as indicated by unimpressive academic and moral performance. But should that be blamed on one factor like school inspection? If the latter truly failed, should the Government not identify the causes first and address them? On the basis of that, this paper examined the following:

- i. School inspection in Nigeria, its gains and challenges;
- ii. The paradigm shift to EQA and its component Evaluation; and
- iii. A Critical overview of EQA policy and Evaluation.

The origin and the practice of school inspection in Nigeria

Western education started in Nigeria as in the rest of Africa South of Sahara as a private venture by the early foreign Christian Missions for the purpose of speeding up the process of evangelism. Fafunwa (1995) stated that between 1842 and 1882, there was rapid development of Christian Missions activities in the Southern Nigeria most especially the establishment of schools to fast track their evangelism activities. Between 1872 and 1876, the colonial administration started assisting some Christian Mission schools with grants ranging from 300 to 600 Pounds annually. This probably necessitated the promulgation of the 1882 Education Ordinance that ushered in the setting up of the General and Local Boards of Education for the first time in British West African colonies (Fafunwa, 1995, pp. 92; 94).

The provision of the 1882 Educational Ordinance promulgated by the then British colonial administration included the establishment of Her Majesty Inspectorate to cover the whole of the British West African colonies namely Gold Coast (Ghana), Gambia, Lagos, Sierra Leone, headed by Her Majesty's Inspector. Three African Sub-Inspectors were to be appointed, one each for Gold Coast and Lagos, Sierra Leone and Gambia. Also, the Ordinance mandated that "one-third of the salary of the Inspectors of schools for the Gold Coast colony should be paid by the 'Settlement of Lagos'" (Fafunwa,

1995, p.94). Without a Government interest in establishing their own schools for the natives at this period, there was no central policy in place and so each mission managed and supervised its own schools as deemed fit. Some, like the Church Missionary Society (CMS) and the Methodist Mission, had Management Boards in charge of regulation of "the curriculum, teachers' salaries, and conduct" (Fafunwa, 1995, p. 93). Some of the fallouts of this lack of a common policy were lack of:

- (a) a common syllabus, standard textbooks, regular school hours;
- (b) adequate supervision of schools- buildings, teachers, pupils;
- (c) a central examination system;
- (d) uniformity in the condition of service of teachers; and adequate financial support and control (Fafunwa, 1995, p. 93).

With the benefit of hindsight, one could say that the issues in items a, c, and d have been overcome to a large extent as the Federal Ministry of Education, after Nigeria gained independence, has been able to implement policies which had centralized the educational system. The examination Boards like WAEC, NECO, JAMB have also standardized their syllabus and examination across the country. The Condition of Service for teachers is almost uniform though there are some peculiarities in some States. The 'b' part is still a major challenge to the educational system till date.

By 1903, a code was raised which set rules for primary and secondary education in the Southern Protectorate. It made provision for grants for all assisted Mission schools based on the average attendance and performance of each school in annual examination and school inspection. This implies that performance in school inspection in those days brings some reward to the school. No school in those years wished to fail school inspection and miss the grants-in-aid as well as lose its prestige. To that extent, there was subtle but positive competition among school which contributed to excellent performance by school managers and teachers and which robbed in on students' outcomes. There was also some subtle sanctions for under-performing or fraudulent teachers such as written query, transfer to another school, demotion of erring teachers and Head teachers, or dismissal. The sanctions might look negative but it worked to keep teachers working well and schools benefitted.

Fafunwa (1995) again noted that in 1904, a boarding school was established in Benin, Fafunwa again noted that the traditional chiefs were said to have made a donation of 240 Pounds and by 1912, they were taking part in building construction and repairs, something that have diminished in the society today. Inspection for grants then was based on buildings, staff adequacy and efficiency as well as keeping of school accounts. Average attendance, organization and efficiency, individual passes at annual examination in the compulsory and optional subjects were the criteria used for inspection of the primary schools. The passes attracted three shillings per head while that of the secondary schools was a bit higher (Fafunwa, 1995). This system of reward has been stopped long ago.

By 1916, a new education code was enacted by Lord Fredrick Lugard which changed the conditions for grants-in-aid. It empowered inspectors to visit all schools frequently throughout the year to monitor efficiency. Grading of assessment was as follows:

- a) Discipline, organization, moral instruction and general tone of the school — 30%

- b) Adequacy and efficiency of teaching staff–20%
- c) Periodical examination and general progress –40%
- d) Buildings, equipment and sanitation–10% (Fafunwa, 1995, p. 99).

Add points (b) and (c) together, it comes to 60%, both of them measuring teaching and learning proficiency in schools. This implies that the focus was learner-centred. Add 30% of point (a) to 60%, it comes to 90% for learners' development.

By late 1970, all grant-aided schools had been taken over by the Government and merged with Government schools for management with grants-in-aid system stopped. Though a well-intended policy, it however remained challenging till date. The system of school inspection was retained and subsisted till 2015 for schools below the tertiary level. The system of private school ownership however, remained till date. Essentially, school inspection is an on-the-site evaluation system, intended for monitoring and judging maintenance of set standard in schools and effective and efficient teaching and learning. Evaluation could be formative or summative. School inspection of old adopted the latter as a quality control measure. Schools were to be inspected at least every three years for full scale inspection, though there could be impromptu visits and follow-up inspection. Up to the early 1980s, school inspection could be said to have been achieving its purpose (Ijaiya & Fasasi, 2008)

Apart from those mentioned above, school inspection then had other advantages:

- i. It kept school administrators, teaching and non-teaching staff on their toes to the extent that schools were delivering good students in character and learning.
- ii. Discipline was high and parental support for teachers was good unlike what obtains today. Students were cleaning their hostels and school compound as part of morning duties and preparation for life.
- iii. The Head teachers, teachers and students felt that they were accountable for school success.
- iv. Education as an individual and national developer was highly respected.
- v. There was unhindered collaboration between the school, its host community and parents.
- vi. The inspectors' recommendations were treated as gospel truth and urgently implemented which was highly encouraging to the school.
- vii. School inspection then was regular and undertaken with all seriousness. Both the team leader who must be a senior to the Head teacher /Principal and his team were carefully chosen. They must be of proven integrity.
- viii. Those were the years when many schools were scoring about 100% in WAEC examinations without examination malpractice. (Ijaiya, 2012).

What therefore happened to change the narrative of a good system like school inspection that lasted over a century? Is it the system or the implementers that failed? Even though the Government is at liberty to change its policy at any time, it ought to dig deeper into the stumbling blocks of earlier policies so as not to repeat old mistakes. The school is a microcosm of the society. They are affected by happenings in the society and they also influence events in the former. The dwindling fortune in the economy, the increasing level of corruption and maladministration in governance, the moral

decadence and get-rich syndrome in the society cannot avoid contamination of the school system. In addition, the writer also noted from recent visits to some public schools that school inspection also suffered from:

- a. Over population in classrooms after the taking-over of schools in 1980s and was compounded by Universal Basic Education (UBE) population influx;
- b. Inadequate classrooms and other structures;
- c. Inadequate number of teachers in many subjects especially English language, Mathematics, Sciences;
- d. Un-conducive environment for teaching and learning such as inadequate classroom furniture as well as stuffy and poorly ventilated classrooms;
- e. Poor instructional supervision of teachers at school level;
- f. Inadequate teaching aids and book especially in the libraries where they exist;
- g. Most important was the non-implementation of inspectors' recommendations by Government, which leads to de-moralization for schools and inspectors. It has gotten to a stage when teachers ask evaluators 'what have you come for again when your last visit yielded nothing good for the school';
- h. Weakened position power of Head teachers and inspectors. They can hardly discipline a teacher nowadays without being reprimanded;
- i. Some teachers have been beaten up by parents or their relations for disciplining a student; and
- j. Favouritism, over-familiarity and corruption in the educational system which were not there in the early years.

A common criticism of school inspection is that it was used for witch-hunting or intimidation of teachers and operated like a policing system characterized by fault-finding (Ijaiya & Fasasi, 2008). According to Ndegwa (2001) teachers used to regard inspection as a dreadful experience because of fear of the unexpected. Findings of a study of three Asian countries, India, Malaysia and Thailand also indicated that teachers perceived instructional supervision by external officers as "just eye wash, a paper completion and punitive process" (Sharma, Yusoff & Kannan, (2011, p. 1). However, while cases of witch hunting could not be ruled out in those days, it could be said that the fear expressed by teachers, from this writer's experience in the system in the 1970s, was more of the strictness of the inspectors and their incorruptible decisions. It could also be due to its summative nature. Schools either pass or fail and lose the rewards if failed. Good teachers and Head teachers would have no fear. Attempts to make school inspection yield to criticisms and be made more relaxed have led to lowering of quality, accountability and discipline in schools. It is because of its usefulness that school inspection is still found necessary to incorporate in the new EQA. The pertinent question however is: has anything changed in the schools to make a difference in quality assurance since the introduction of EQA in 2015? First the policy itself will be addressed.

The Paradigm Shift to Education Quality Assurance(EQA)

Education Quality Assurance (EQA) is conceived by the Federal Ministry of Education (FME) as an innovative alternative to the old system of school inspection for

the purpose of supporting learners' education below the tertiary level in Nigeria. It incorporates new ideas that were hitherto alien to school support services in Nigeria. According to the FME, EQA "involves systematic monitoring, evaluation, regulating and reporting educational programmes and practices to ensure that acceptable standards are maintained based on set standards" and as "a dynamic process that provides the needed guidance and support to schools for improved learning outcomes for learners" (FME, 2021, p.2). It is guided by vision and mission statements, set principles and core values as well as set curricular standards. It defines quality education as one that is "pedagogically and developmentally sound and educates the students in becoming an active and productive member of society" (FME, 2021, p.2). According to the Hon Minister of Education, the adoption of EQA in 2015 was to give more support to improve on pupils' learning outcomes which the old system of school inspection could no longer sustain.

The vision and mission of EQA are as stated below respectively:

"to have a dynamic quality assurance system that ensures effective and efficient education delivery below the tertiary level", and

"to set agreed National Education Standards that ensures optimal attainment in all institutions below tertiary level through quality assurance process that guarantees effective and efficient curriculum delivery and good educational management for improved learner achievement in a globally competitive environment". (FME, 2021, p.2).

EQA's Core Value

EQA is also guided by four core values namely:

- i. Accountability- meaning that evaluators and other stakeholders must hold themselves accountable or responsible for their assignments in schools
- ii. Collaboration - that is the evaluation process would involve major stakeholders including communities where the school is located, the school managers, the Parent-Teachers Association (PTA) the School Based Management Committee, (SBMC). These people must be notified and represented during evaluation exercise and must show interest in school improvement.
- iii. Integrity- evaluators must be conscientious in their assessment and judgment of the evidence they see in schools and conduct their work without bias, fear or favour.
- iv. Quality service – evaluators must work hard and follow all guidelines and processes to the letter (FME, 2021, p.2). Good as these values are, they have not been able to deliver more resources to the schools.

The pertinent question is 'can EQA achieve its vision and mission in the face of diminishing resources in quantity and quality'?

Administration of Education Quality Assurance (EQA)

Education Quality Assurance is a holistic and broader approach to school support and improvement aimed at covering a wider area of school life than previously done. It is controlled by the National Education Quality Assurance Board (NEQAB)

under the Federal Ministry of Education. At State level, SEQAB is expected to function in a similar way to that of NEQAB, and it is expected to collaborate with it to actualize the ideals of EQA in each State. EQA canvases for synergy between the Federal and State education authorities with mutual benefits to both sides. In each State of the Federation and the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) is the Federal Education Quality Assurance Service (FEQAS) whose responsibility is to carry out evaluation functions in their domains but controlled from the headquarters.

Evaluation as a Tool of Quality Assurance

Ordinarily, evaluation adopts a systematic approach to obtain, assess information or data of a particular situation, programme, objects and process and pronounce judgment with the intention of improving it. EQA adopted evaluation as its operational tool. It conceives it as a generic term or process that incorporates several other processes namely Supervision, Inspection, Accreditation and Collaboration. It incorporates diagnosis, analysis of observed situations, synthesis, assessment and recommendations for improvement in the teaching-learning environment. It is expected to be both formative and summative evaluation and incorporates the following:

Collaboration- According to EQA, evaluation is an all-inclusive exercise that involves the active participation of all stakeholders in the education sector. During evaluation exercise, the team from FEQAS is mandated to interview the school head, the staff (teaching and non-teaching), and representatives of the PTA, members of the SBMC, as well as the students as part of the exercise. This is in bid to ensure strict compliance and implementation of the curriculum and the running of the entire school system.

Accreditation- The system of accreditation is not new to the schools below tertiary level. It has been used as a pre-evaluation study and assessment of critical areas of school management and verification of curricular provisions to qualify as a centre for West African Examination Council (WAEC) and National Examination Council (NECO) examinations or for introduction of a new subject. It adopts summative evaluation and is carried out on need basis.

Inspection- This is an age-long system. It is still found useful in the new policy. Inspection involves Whole-school and Follow-through evaluation. The inspection aspect is devoted to how well the school is maintaining set standards. It involves assessment of whole school life: curricular and co-curricular aspects.

It involves going round the school structures and facilities, scrutinizing school records, determining co-curricular activities, talking to learners so as to collect evidence for assessing their quality based on standard set.

Supervision- Evaluators have to observe teachers teaching in the classroom, assess their lesson plans, their knowledge of subject matter, methods of teaching, classroom management, pupils' behaviour, notes, assignments given and marked as well as interact with the pupils and teachers. Availability of time is a major challenge here.

EQA Principles

In addition, EQA activities are guided by some principles:

- i. The findings of quality assurance evaluation, both Self Study- evaluation (SS-e) and External Evaluation (EE) shall contribute to school improvement;
- ii. The process of quality assurance promotes inclusion of all learners;

- iii. Quality assurance is carried out openly with those being evaluated;
- iv. All quality assurance evaluations use the same quality standards and the quality indicators which must be made known to all stakeholders;
- v. The findings of all quality assurance evaluations are valid;
- vi. The outcomes of evaluation shall inform education policy, planning, training, and intervention for school improvement (FME, 2021, p.5).

For each level below the tertiary (ECCD, Primary, Junior and Senior secondary school), EQA sets its objectives/outcomes (FME, 2021, p.7).

For senior secondary schools, the goal is that "by the end of Senior Secondary school, at least 70% of learners are to achieve at least credit passes in five subjects including English language and Mathematics (p.10). The question is how many public schools are attaining this standard now? The performance in public examination is far from encouraging in recent times.

In addition, EQA also stipulated the requirements for each level. For example, all classes up to the Junior secondary school level must be taught by teachers with a minimum of National Certificate in Education (NCE). For secondary schools, it sets a minimum of Bachelor in Education or its equivalent, or a first degree in appropriate subject with a professional certificate in Education (PGDE). The question must also be asked: how many public schools can boast of 70% permanent teachers or specialist ones? Schools are flooded with temporary teachers: the National Youth Service Corps and PTA teachers.

The Evaluation Schedule (ES)

The Evaluation Schedule (ES) is crucial to EQA. It is considered the heart of Quality Assurance (QA) in schools and is the measuring instrument for quality. It consists of set indicators, criteria and evidence that guide evaluation of school activities. It provides guidance for planning evaluation of schools, how to obtain first-hand evidence, making judgment on the evidence and compiling report of the evaluation (FME, 2021). It is used to determine the quality and effectiveness of education delivery in schools below the tertiary level. It covers the following thematic areas:

National Quality Standards for schools below the tertiary level

EQA policy predicated its quality standard on the following:

- a. Outcomes for learners –answering the question: how well do learners achieve? Key issues are provided and the evidence to look for
- b. The quality of provision –it answers how effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs, e.g. quality of the curriculum, care, safety and guidance, conduciveness of the learning environment, among others (FME, 2021). It also sets class size of maximum of 25 for Nursery classes, 35 for primary classes and 40 for secondary school classes. A minimum of 180 days per year is set for school contact, etc. (FME 2021, pp. 19-11)
- c. The effectiveness of leadership and management- The evaluation covers all the managerial ability of those expected to contribute, by their positions, to learners' achievements and development including the school leader, his management team, school Prefects, SBMC leaders and teachers.

Judgment grades and descriptors- Based on the total evidence collected by the evaluators the overall effectiveness of each aspect shall be determined and graded on a five-point scale ranging from Outstanding (highest) – 1; Good -2; Fair -3; Poor-4; Very poor(lowest)-5. (FME2021, p.15).

Pitched Judgment- This is also stipulated in the Evaluators' Handbook and meant to provide guidance on how to rate each area evaluated on the five-point scale.

The policy also brought in an innovation hitherto unprecedented in school support services below the tertiary level and that is, the use of a comprehensive and well-structured instrument for evaluation of the school performance by External Evaluators and another one tagged Self Study Form (SSF) used by the schools to carry out Self Study evaluation (SS-e). The latter is to be completed before external evaluation begins and which would be submitted to the external evaluators for verification.

EQA would measure quality assurance of a school based on the following:

- i. Overall effectiveness of the school;
- ii. Achievement and standard;
- iii. Learners' personal skills and participation;
- iv. The quality of teaching and learning;
- v. How well the curriculum meets learners' needs;
- vi. How well learners are cared for, guided and their safety provided for
- vii. The quality of the learning environment; and
- viii. How well the school is led and managed. (FME, 2021, pp 47-48)

On site, evaluators are expected to devote 70% of their time collecting evidence first hand. They are also to hold discussions with learners, teachers, the Head of the school, parents, SBMC and PTA members. In addition, they must observe lessons. The success of this would also depend on the size of the school, number of subjects, team members and funding.

A Critical Overview of the EQA Policy in Nigeria

The idea of quality assurance originated from the manufacturing industry and the aim was to avoid rejects or wastage from products that do not meet the set standard and thus result into profit loss. It is thus a preventive measure. This is done by focusing attention on all aspects of production: materials, staff quality, processes, output, etc., (Allais. 2009), not on what external evaluators say as done in EQA. Quality assurance is about getting it right from the beginning. In other words, there is nexus between input, process and quality output.

The Chambers Dictionary, New Edition (1998) defines quality as “that which makes a thing what it is; grade of goodness; excellence”, while it describes quantity as “the amount of anything; size or sum; a determinate amount”. In schools, both quality and quantity (number) are desirable to make education what it is, that is, to achieve its aims and objectives. In the same vein, the Dictionary also defines quality assurance as “confidence; feeling of certainty”. It also sees quality assurance as “to assure; or secure; to give confidence to tell positively”. These definitions imply that for quality assurance in education, there must be feeling of confidence that schools would deliver what they are established for, that is the goals of education. In other words, quality assurance in

education means, all necessary resources must be in place in terms of standard and number (Ijaiya, 2001). For instance, the Head of the school must be a qualified, experienced teacher, trained in school management and appropriate in terms of his character and Grade level. The teachers too must be qualified in their teaching subjects, experience and character to assure quality. Their number for each subject must be adequate against the school population and the minimum of teaching periods for each teacher. Where a Biology teacher is teaching Mathematics or a Social Study teacher is teaching English language due to shortage of experts, cannot be regarded as quality assurance. Where a Grade level 12 Principal is heading a school with Grade level 14 or higher teachers are, cannot promote quality management.

There is no doubt that EQA as a policy is very good on paper. However, as mentioned earlier, the best structured policy may not necessarily meet the target unless well implemented and this is why there is a need for close scrutiny of possible factors that could negate the success of EQA policy. There are a number of factors, some within the policy itself, that could make it difficult to achieve its vision:

1. The power of the Evaluators is severely limited to reporting. They cannot enforce their recommendations. How many reports have been sent to schools or implemented or the anomalies corrected would be a good question for research.
2. As laudable as the policy is, the whole package seems grandiose within the present circumstances of Nigeria's educational and economic challenges. A proof of that is that nothing much has changed in the system vis-à-vis pupil learning or academic performance or even discipline since 2015. On the other hand, indiscipline, crime rate, massive failure, examination malpractices have been on the increase. The percentage of Senior Secondary students who score credits in five subjects plus English and Mathematics is much lower than those who did not in either NECO or WAEC examinations in recent times.
3. According to the Evaluators' Handbook, evaluation would have to cover 45,000 schools per year in a three year cycle based on 2013 FME/NBS data. The strength in terms of trained evaluators is not there yet to support the grandiose idea (FME, 2021). Also, poor funding, vehicles, Evaluators' allowances, poor condition of rural roads and current state of insecurity are among the debilitating factors.
4. Too much is expected of the EE during school evaluation exercise that may make the work cumbersome and haphazardly done. Evaluators are expected to discuss with the Principal, parents, students, SBMC and PTA members, observe lessons in all subjects, supervise teachers, examine pupils' notes and assignments, as well as school records, go round the schools to collect evidence to compare with the SSF, inspect school facilities, all in one or two days visit, how thorough could they be? Otherwise they would have to go with a large team at higher cost. Some evaluators are given schools that are four hours journey apart (in two towns) to cover in one day using public transport.
5. The expected synergy between NEQAB and SEQAB may not be all that smooth as important as it is for sharing of information by the Federal and State

Ministries that could lead to school improvement. The issue of **funding** transportation for Whole-school evaluation or the Follow-through could **cause** lack of cooperation between the two sides.

6. The guidelines which set up the SBMC expect it to contribute to school support and improvement in their locality in cash or kind. But this is hardly so. The effect of this is yet to be seen in many old community-established schools. In spite of the positive correlation between school facilities and internal efficiency, infrastructural decay is quite visible in many schools (Afolabi & Sofoluwe, 2021; Atolagbe, 2021; The Guardian editor, 2021). Research findings have shown that many schools have no structure to support Science, Introductory Technology, Music, etc. (Ojeje, & Adodo, 2018; Dare-Abel, & Ago-Vaughan, 2014).
7. Classrooms are still crowded in many schools due to inadequacy. Many pupils lack essential textbooks while four or five pupils sit on benches meant for two. Only a terse number of schools are lucky with their Alumni Associations' contribution.
8. Many schools are still short of adequate numbers of permanent teachers and making do with PTA and NYSC teachers who come and go every year and who are under-paid and whose commitment is doubtful. An important omission in the Evaluation Instrument set by EQA is the assessment of number of teachers available to teach each subject in a school.
9. The incorporation of accreditation and self- evaluation to quality assurance cannot automatically help the school. There are two sides/roles for accreditation success. The school management is to implement the curriculum while the owner, that is, the Government/Proprietor makes provisions available. If the owner fails to play its part, how can a school make progress? From self-evaluation, some schools would have failed before the evaluators' arrival. This is why some schools resort to window dressing by borrowing equipment from other school.
10. On funding issue, that there is a strong nexus between funding and quality education is no gainsaying. Availability of funds is basic to procurement and utilization of all resources and internal efficiency of a school (Pitan, 2012). In Nigeria, education is suffering from poor and dwindling budgetary allocation annually as shown: 2019–7.10%; 2020–6.50%; 2021–8.60%; 2022–7.90%. This is far below UNESCO's recommendation of 25% (Okeowo, Agunloye, Jolayemi, Adeniyi & Fatoba, 2021). On UBE funding, up to 41.6 Billion of the matching grants remained un-accessed by States as at March, 2021 with adverse effects on the schools while administrative projects consume the available funds instead of capital projects (Erunke, 2021). All the Quality Standard set by EQA can only be achieved if resources were well funded by the stakeholders. Misuse of available funds also contributes to worsening quality of education (Asuquo, & Ogar-Ikewu, 2021).

Meanwhile, there seems to be some confusion in the literature in the concepts of both school inspection and school supervision that needs clarification. This confuses some readers especially, students, teachers and educational administrators. Attempts at mixing or combining the two roles in one person do not always make for effectiveness. The nomenclatures as well as their functions need to be clarified. In practice, three categories can be identified namely: i. School inspectors or External Evaluators whose main function by law is to periodically gather information and identify weaknesses in schools that may hinder educational progress and report such. The methods for doing this could be by questionnaire, tests, interview, direct observation, checklists Kilayko (ud). This is best done by external educational managers. and; ii. External supervisors otherwise called Instructional Supervisors who operate usually at the local level and are charged with working with teachers in the classroom to improve the latter's quality of teaching. They are to pay weekly visits to schools if not daily; and iii. Internal supervisors usually called school management. This comprises of the Head teacher or Principal and his management team. The primary responsibility of any Head of a school is both administrative and instructional supervision for the ultimate purpose of promoting effective learning. Unfortunately this aspect of school management is usually played down by laize-faire style of supervision which has contributed greatly to poor management and learners' poor outcomes. In some cases External /instructional supervisors are blamed for behaving like External Inspectors to the chagrin of teachers (Sharma, Yusoff & Kannan, 2011). Supervision is more or less a fact-to-face interaction between the supervisor and the supervisees (teachers) in which the relationship is based on improving skills that can enhance pupil learning outcomes. It is formative, cordial and on continuous basis. Supervision is normally conducted in three phases or more for effectiveness namely Pre-lesson conference, Lesson observation and Post-lesson conference and consumes time that inspectors cannot afford (Ijaiya, 2012). Interviewing or interacting with students, teachers and SBMC members does not amount to supervision.

From the above analysis, it is clear that supervision and inspection/ evaluation are not synonymous and better if separated but they could cooperate since they have similar goals. Supervision is however better performed internally, i.e. by the school itself if empowered to do so. No external evaluators/inspectors can claim to know a school or the teachers more than the Head teachers. Besides, the teachers are mostly University graduates, some with Masters and Ph.D training, and NCE certificate holders as well as experienced adults. While it is not possible for a teacher or any trainee to learn everything about their profession during training, the teachers must be granted some credit to be able to monitor and improve their performance when challenged and empowered like the External Evaluators. External evaluators cannot make meaningful impact on teachers' professional development with sporadic appearance in the school. Therefore an alternative approach should be explored and a paradigm shift to Internal School-based Self-supervision (ISS-s) has been proposed (Ijaiya, 2012) Internal School-based Self-supervision is defined as a situation in which the schools become more self-monitoring, self-propelling and self-accountable for pupils' learning outcomes (Ijaiya, 2012). The school managers and the rest of the school are strengthened or empowered in such a way that the performance of their students, in both character and learning, are accepted as their responsibility.

Whereas the external evaluators come once in three years or occasionally for follow-through if any, the school managers and teachers are operationally there every school day. If challenged and empowered, they are in better position to improve their schools from day to day. They would hold regular meetings, discussing their students' performance, learning from their mistakes, and making amends without waiting for external body to tell them what to do in three years. (Ijaiya, 2012). Teachers would become mentors to each other. The prospects are many:

1. In-service training is part and parcel of career development and on-the-spot ones are usually more effective and less costly if properly organized especially if self- or internally originated;
2. Intrinsic motivation when teachers challenge themselves is said to be stronger than extrinsic one;
3. Good and experienced senior teachers could lead internal supervision in the school;
4. Head teachers would feel challenged and instead of struggling for positions, teachers would think twice before cheating to get headship positions;
5. Professional relationship among teachers would improve and replace staff room gossips, waste of time talks, etc.,
6. It can assist Head teachers to measure the ability of his staff and help in planning of school activities as well have thorough grasp of his administration;
7. It would encourage critical thinking and quality leadership among teachers; Departmental relationship would be more professional and
8. Finally, the school would transform itself to a learning community with the prospect of increasing effectiveness and efficiency (Ijaiya, 2012).

However, for that to happen, there is a need for another policy and a Handbook on ISS-s, as detailed as EQA document. In other words, EQA policy is not complete until it also includes the aspect of internal supervision to balance the equation. The ISS-s document would spell out step-by-step guidelines for responsibilities of Head teachers, their Deputies, Heads of Departments, other teachers and non-teaching staffs as well as those of External supervisors towards school improvement. There would be criteria for measuring teachers' performance.

In conclusion, there is no doubt that EQA is more comprehensive on paper than school inspection in terms of scope, or context and concept. However, school inspection as a quality control system could be said to have made significant contributions to educational development in Nigeria in spite of its limitations and its recent weaknesses were more of human dereliction than the concept itself. The issues that derailed it in recent years are still in the system and already plaguing EQA itself. All the elaboration in EQA cannot improve pupil outcomes when provisions on ground in schools are grossly inadequate. Quality is what makes a thing what it is. Therefore quality will be assured or ascertained when all the school needs are on ground for teachers and students to work with. Also, no amount of external evaluation can change the narrative of poor learner outcomes in schools without holding the Government and the school managers accountable. External Evaluation is one side of the coin in quality assurance, Internal Supervision is the other. There must be synergy between them to be able to improve learners' outcomes.

Based on the analysis and synthesis above, the followings are therefore recommended:

- i. The Federal, State and the UBE Boards must play their part creditably in the quality equation by making adequate provisions available for schools. States should be sanctioned when they fail to service their UBE matching grant.
- ii. The problems in the schools are multi-dimensional and the solution must also be so. One important solution is to give strength to internal supervision. A new paradigm is needed to empower Head teachers and their teams to be accountable for their learners' outcomes.
- iii. A new Hand Book with step by step Guidelines on Internal School-based Self-Supervision is very necessary as done for EE.
- iv. Some subtle sanctions are necessary for under-performing Head teachers and their teams should be incorporated to evaluation policy.
- v. Expected numbers of teachers per subject in a school based on the school's population should be specified among set standard for the Government/Proprietors to comply with.
- vi. Motivational rewards should be given to schools who meet the required standard on all criteria. Evaluation reports should be published.
- vii. Communities should be encouraged to take responsibility for the development of their schools instead of leaving everything to the Government. Those that do well should be acknowledged publicly and be giving some motivational reward possibly on 'doone, get one free' basis.
- viii. There is a need for the Federal Ministry of Education to carry all stakeholders along at all times especially with new policies like EQA. The evaluators' Handbook should have been circulated to all teacher training Faculties and Colleges.

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