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The Influence of School Inspection to Quality Teaching/Learning of Children in Primary Schools

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ABSTRACT

The study assessed the influence of school inspection towards quality teaching/learning in Primary Schools. The study had an overall population of 140 respondents selected from ten (10) schools and out of the 140 respondents targeted in the 10 schools, a sample size of only 103 respondents was investigated. Questionnaires were used as the main data collection tool. According to the study findings the geographical locations of some schools, limited resources to do inspection, tight schedule of duties by inspectors, weather conditions and other barriers that included embezzlement of funds meant for inspection, late central government remittances were the main barriers to school inspection. The study concluded that Inspectors of schools play an important role of ensuring that learners are prepared, presented, evaluated and have self-motivation. The study recommended that the working relationship between the team is characterised by regular formal and informal meetings to discuss progress in relation to achievement of outcomes with those carrying out inspection. Government needs to increase the budget allocated to school inspection such that the activity can be carried out as the work plans in the education department.

Key Words: School Inspection, quality teaching, motivation, Education system, and barriers

INTRODUCTION

Monitoring of educational quality was an old system in the world's Education system where the first school inspection/supervision originated from France under Napoleon's regime at the end of the 18th Century (Grauwe, 2007). The idea was captured by other European countries and later was embraced in the 19th Century (2007). According to Learmouth, (2000), the first inspection services in the UK were carried out by Her Majesty's Inspectorate (HMI) in 1839, (Wilcox, 2000). School inspection was perceived as a form of accountability in Education (Neave, 1987). In many countries around the globe, School inspection has been used as a mechanism of improving supervision and monitoring the quality of their education standards. Okumbe (1999), agued from an African perspective, that in Kenya, inspection is an old concept in management whose basic concept is that of autocratic management aimed at catching the workers red-handed; a fault-finding attitude in management, and a one-time fact-finding activity. Therefore, in Kenya, school inspection seems to be viewed as a process of checking other people's work to ensure that bureaucratic regulations and procedures are followed and

that loyalty to the higher authorities are maintained. This view of inspection overlooks the professional interests and needs of the teaching personnel. Inspection process conducted with this view in mind of both the teachers and the inspectors may not be effective in facilitating educational quality or in improving teaching/learning educational institutions.

In Tanzania, school inspection system based on the educational evaluation of the colonial rule the British system. The role of inspectors in Tanzania is to control the teachers and their performance in classroom (Grauwe, 2007). Similarly, England considers school inspection as a mechanism to monitor improvement initiatives and offer guidance (OFSTED 2013). In Uganda's system of education, Inspectorate is one of the organs on the Ministry of Education structure. In 2008, the Government of Uganda established the Directorate of Education Standards (DES) with the Ministry of Education and Sports (MoES) to carry out school inspection, document and share best practices within the education system and other related partners. The goal of achieving Inspectorate structure in Education Management System currently put Directorate of Education Standards (DES) as solely focused on setting standards, assuring quality and evaluating performance in Education MOES (2010). However, this was to ensure sustainable support supervision, performance review and inspection for quality assurance and improvement an opportunity to strengthen implementation of the developed education reforms to realize quality assurance and Minimum standards in primary schools.

The maintenance of standards and assurance of adequate measures of quality control are now a concern of all enlightened parents and stakeholders. The significance of school inspection and supervision has now come into the limelight. The National Policy on Education (NPE, 1981), highlight terms and objectives of education supervision as to ensure quality control through regular inspection and continuous supervision of instructional. In this regard, it's paramount for schools to realize regular supervision which entails; advice, guiding, refreshing, encouraging, stimulating, improving and overseeing teachers, head teachers effect what is expected of them. In other wards educational supervision at school pays more attention to personnel (teachers) and instructional delivery more than the pupils in school. The role of supervisors/inspectors should be supportive, assisting, explanative, guiding, encouraging, advisory, improving and sharing rather directing. However, supervision ensures; improvement of teacher effectiveness, performance of their duty schedules, guide for staff development, improvement of incompetent teachers, determine the school organization patterns, determines special abilities possessed by teachers for positive reinforcement or promotion (Harris 1963). Thus, school inspection or supervision is practical in a way that it impacts on the quality of performance of individuals and institutions accordingly hence quality teaching/learning.

PROBLEM STATEMENT

The central role of School Inspection in Uganda is to promote and assure the quality, effectiveness and efficiency of educational provision (MOES, 2016). The main goal concerns setting systems, defining and reviewing standards and quality of education and sports and to monitor the achievement of such standards and quality to ensure continually improved education and sports in Uganda. Ideally, school inspection encompasses; monthly school visits to supervise the progress on teaching and learning, general school hygiene/sanitation, collection of information/data on teachers and learners attendance, conferencing with teachers for improved teachers and learners performance and to ensure policy implementation (MOES, 2012). It implies that regular school inspection should not only monitor effectiveness of teaching/learning but also ensure quality education indicators. Currently, there is irregular school inspection, low funding, limited staff, and unreliable means of transport, lack of internal support supervision, low motivation and all these raise serious concerns about the quality of teaching/learning in the country. This makes one to wonder

hence the purpose of the study to assess the influence of school inspection on quality teaching/learning in primary schools.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Worldwide Development and learning are dynamic processes requiring that inspection of teachers in order to understand the continuum, observe children closely to match curriculum and teaching to children's emerging competencies, needs, and interests, and then help children move forward by targeting educational experiences to the edge of children's changing capacities so as to challenge but not frustrate them. Human beings, especially children, are highly motivated to understand what they almost, but not quite, comprehend and to master what they can almost, but not quite, do (White 2000). Victoria, (2010), states the process of school inspection and cited the following three reasons for conducting school inspection; (a) report on the effectiveness of education in schools and other educational institutions and to recommend action for improvement; (b) evaluate the arrangements for assuring quality in schools; and (c) provide frank and objective advice to the higher education authorities and to ensure that educational initiatives are implemented effectively.

Clegg and Billington, (1994) hold that Uganda's strategy for monitoring teaching and learning in schools and for enhancing quality and raising standards which has received a great deal of attention over the years concerns supervision by inspection. According to Clegg and Billington in reflecting on the practice of inspection by the Office for Standards in Education (OFSTED), the major purpose of inspection is "to collect a range of evidence, match the evidence against a statutory set of criteria, arrive at judgments and make those judgments known to the public. Wanga, (2000), conceptualized inspection as overseeing, which involves directing, controlling, reporting, commanding, and other such activities that emphasize the task at hand and assess the extent to which particular objectives have been accomplished within the bounds, set by those in authority for their subordinates. Thus, School inspectors play an important role of taking part in improving learning through development of review plans and curriculum throughout the Education system.

The driving force for the provision of school Inspectors was to promote sustainable quality of education in developing communities like Uganda. Maw, (2007), reflecting on the Uganda Education Act, noted that the role of inspection in Uganda is to monitor the standards, quality, efficiency, and culture of the schools and to inform the government and the general public on these matters. Generally, the globe trend of establishment of school inspectors as education managers was associated with efficiency delivery according to the quality indicators, identifying challenges encountered in the system, evaluating and reviewing strategies for improved performance and quality of education. The principle of learning is that children can do things first in a supportive context and then later independently and in a variety of contexts. Rogoff, (2014) commented that, the process of inspector-assisted learning as "guided participation" to emphasize that children actively collaborate with teachers to move to more complex levels of understanding and skill is being realized as indicated in high academic performance of the learners.

Little, (2006) Adopted and modified Kajubi's report on education policy, he credited school inspectors for coordinated learning that has resulted from learners having the same curriculum for all religions which has guaranteed learners achievement as opposed to colonial government that introduced education in Uganda. During that time there was need for the government to put law and order in the way the protestant and Roman Catholic missionaries were establishing schools. Protestant chiefs were forcing all people to build protestant schools in their areas. Similarly Roman Catholic Chiefs were forcing all people to build schools for

Roman Catholic in their areas. A long such lines education became denominational. Roman Catholic children were not supposed to attend protestant schools. In short no children were allowed to attend schools which were not being administered by their particular religious sect. This state of affairs culminated into a state of anarchy as some people started setting on fire some school buildings. This kind of lawlessness was one force which made the government to come in to direct educational development in the country and to introduce school inspection which has been so effective in emphasizing coordinated curriculum.

According to the Education Act, 2008, the core role of Inspectors of school is to monitor learning achievement. This aspect justifies the importance of inspectors in effecting curriculum management for quality learning at school level. In this regard, supervises the teaching and learning process to ascertain children's involvement and participation in concept understanding. Gentile, (2000) believed that, supervision is relevant in improving standards in education, inspectors will know if the appropriate planning for instruction has taken place when the teacher is able to design a lesson that achieves the objective. This means everything the teacher and students do during in the lesson is related to the objective. Rosenshine & Stevens, (2009).indicated that the learning of facts is greatly facilitated when memories of organized principles and prerequisite concepts related to the lesson are reviewed at the beginning of the lesson. The focus portion, or anticipatory set as it is called by Madeline Hunter, requires the student overtly or covertly have the prerequisites in memory. The activity, supervision is relevant to ensure that lessons are designed effectively to elicit information related to the lesson objective. During the opening it is important for students to know the direction of the instruction, the relevance of what they are learning, and to have a sense of continuity. Students are often not able to see the relationship between today's work and the work from yesterday. Sharing the objective of the lesson informally with students would include teacher statements such as "what we are going to do today" and "the reason we are studying this concept." The body of the lesson includes the presentation of information; what Rosenshine (2009) would call the explanation-demonstration stage of the lesson. To implement this phase of the lesson, administrators should note that teachers have a wide variety of different styles and models of teaching from which to choose. The larger the number of alternative teaching styles teachers is comfortable utilizing, the more likely they will select techniques that match the desired objectives, learning styles, and academic levels of their students, which all come with proper supervision

Borich, (1990) taught that, over a hundred instructional strategies have been identified, there are some attributes common to all strategies. Inspectors of schools are relevant to ensure that each strategy with a set of its activities and role for the teacher and students are carried out. Each strategy has a logical sequence which is necessary if students are to accomplish the objective of the lesson. Therefore, the selection of an instructional strategy is a complex task because there are numerous effective strategies that could be used, depending on the instructional goal. Joyce and Weil (2000) drew from a wide range of teaching studies to organize the methods of instruction into four major categories which they refer to as families of instruction. Holland, (2005), Stated that learning theorists and developmental psychologists have recognized that human beings come to understand the world in many ways and that individuals tend to prefer stronger model of learning. In Kabarole district most schools are lacking instructional materials and inspector's role on their provision is missing. This study will seek information leading to the understanding of the reasons why most schools lack instructional materials yet inspectors of schools are present.

METHODOLOGY

The research used a mixed design of case and survey study designs. It used a case study because 10 schools were selected for intensive study. It is a survey because sampling for the schools and respondents was done within the selected schools (Meyer, 1999). The researcher used a survey research design because it is an efficient method for systematically collecting data from a broad spectrum of individuals and settings. The researcher targeted a population of all persons involved in inspecting primary schools up the District level. These included Head Teachers, school Management Committee Members, class teachers, student leaders, inspectors of schools and local council leaders. All these categories of respondents were selected by the researcher because they were considered to be purposeful in giving information related to the field of study. A total of ten (10) schools were selected from one district to participate in the study. Five schools were selected from Rural Sub County and five (5) schools were also selected from the Municipality. A total population of 140 respondents were selected because this comprises the number of the people who are directly involved in school monitoring and inspection to ensure compliance to education standards. Two Inspectors of schools were selected because one inspects the District schools and the other inspects Municipal schools. One head teacher and his deputy were also piloted per school. One member of the school management committee, five teaching staff, two student leaders and two political leaders were also investigated during the study giving a total of 14 respondents per school, giving a total of 140 respondents in ten schools. However, using Morgan and Krejcie (1970) table of sample size determination, out of the 140 respondents targeted in the 10 schools, a sample size of only 103 respondents was investigated. Therefore, purposive random sampling was employed to enable the researcher deal with people charged with the responsibility of supervising and inspecting District and Municipal primary schools.

The researcher used questionnaires to get information from the respondents. This instrument was applicable since all the targeted respondents were quite literate to read, interpret and fill the questionnaires. A questionnaire containing both closed and open ended questions designed and administered personally to the respondents. The data collected was edited and interpreted to remove errors and put similar responses together respectively. Data was entered in the SPSS (16.0) spreadsheet and thereafter cleaned and Edited for easy interpretation using narrative technique. SPSS and excel packages were used to generate frequency distribution tables for purposes of easy interpretation of findings.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Assessing the influence of school Inspection on quality teaching/learning in Primary Schools

Table.1 Influence of school inspection on the quality of teaching/learning

Variable (s)	Frequency (n = 103)	Percentage (%)
Learning requires supervision of teachers	33	32
Absenteeism of learners is controlled	20	19
Discipline of learners is ensured	30	29
Our schools have enough models as teaching aids	11	10
Others	9	10
Total	103	100
How inspection affects the school curriculum	Frequency (n = 103)	Percentage (%)
Children encouraged to participate during inspection	41	40
Teachers motivation is emphasized	24	24
Relevance of subjects is emphasized	10	10
Emphasis on co-curricular activities in the syllabus	8	7
Others	20	19
Total	103	100
Barriers to regular school inspections	Frequency (n = 103)	Percentage (%)
Geographical location of some schools	36	35
Limited resources to do inspection	18	18
Tight schedule of duties by inspectors	26	25
Weather conditions	12	11
Others	11	10
Total	103	100

Source: Primary data

Influence of school inspection on the quality of teaching

Table: 1 shows the influence of school inspection on the quality of teaching. According to the study findings, (32%) Learning requires supervision of teachers, (19%) noted that Absenteeism of learners is controlled, (29%) noted that discipline of learners is ensured, (10%) noted that schools have enough models as teaching aids while (10%) cited other factors that include focusing on the school curriculum among others.

On how inspection affects the school curriculum, the findings in Table.1 above, it can be observed that (40%) of the respondents noted that school inspection affects the curriculum by encouraging children to participate in the inspection exercise, (24%) noted that teacher's motivation is emphasized, (10%) relevance of subjects is emphasized, (7%) noted Emphasis on co-curricular activities in the syllabus while (19%) cited other ways school inspection affects the curriculum which includes scheduling of games and sports instead of class work.

On barriers to regular school inspections, the table also shows the barriers to regular school inspections among schools in Kabarole District. The study findings show that (35%) of the respondents cited geographical locations of some schools, (18%) limited resources to do inspection, (25%) cited the tight schedule of duties by inspectors, (11%) cited weather conditions while (10%) of them cited other barriers that could include embezzlement of funds meant for inspection, late central government remittances among others.

DISCUSSION

According to the study findings, (32%) Learning requires supervision of teachers, (19%) noted that Absenteeism of learners is controlled, (29%) noted that discipline of learners is ensured, (10%) noted that schools have enough models as teaching aids while (10%) cited other factors that include focusing on the school curriculum among others. The findings of the study concur with (White, 2000) who stressed that Worldwide Development and learning are dynamic

processes requiring that inspection of teachers in order to understand the continuum, observe children closely to match curriculum and teaching to children's emerging competencies, needs, and interests, and then help children move forward by targeting educational experiences to the edge of children's changing capacities so as to challenge but not frustrate them. Human beings, especially children, are highly motivated to understand what they almost, but not quite, comprehend and to master what they can almost, but not quite, do (White, 2000). The principle of learning is that children can do things first in a supportive context and then later independently and in a variety of contexts. White concurs with Rogoff, (2014) who commented that, the process of inspector assisted learning as "guided participation" to emphasize that children actively collaborate with teachers to move to more complex levels of understanding and skill is being realized as indicated in high academic performance of the learners.

According to the Education Act, 2008, the core role of Inspectors of school is to monitor learning achievement. This aspect justifies the importance of inspectors in effecting curriculum management for quality learning at school level. In this regard, supervises the teaching and learning process to ascertain children's involvement and participation in concept understanding. This is in agreement with Gentile, (2000) who believed that, supervision is relevant in improving standards in education; inspectors will know if the appropriate planning for instruction has taken place when the teacher is able to design a lesson that achieves the objective. This means everything the teacher and students do during the lesson is related to the objective.

CONCLUSION

Inspectors of schools play an important role of ensuring that learners are prepared, presented, evaluated and have self-motivation. One of the aspects of quality teaching that they inspect is ability of the teacher to plan for the subjects particularly throughout the term. The working relationship between the team is characterised by regular formal and informal meetings to discuss progress in relation to achievement of outcomes with inspectors. However, the barriers to school inspection that include geographical locations of some schools, limited resources to do inspection, the tight schedule of duties by inspectors, weather conditions and other barriers that include embezzlement of funds meant for inspection, late central government remittances among others should also be emphasized.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Government should increase the budget allocated to school inspection such that the activity can be carried out as per the work plans in the education department
- Government should strive to ensure that money meant for school inspection is remitted in time in order to make the exercise a success
- Government should train other stakeholders i.e. Head Teachers, senior teachers with supervision skills to strengthen the chain of inspection at school level
- CCTs should be empowered to manage school inspection at sub county level such that the gap between the inspectors and hard to reach schools can be closed.
- Salaries of school inspectors should be increased such that they are motivated to even improve their services among the rural schools.

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