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ASSESSMENT OF INTERNAL MECHANISMS FOR QUALITY ASSURANCE IN THE MANAGEMENT OF PUBLIC PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN DELTA STATE

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ABSTRACT
This study assessed internal mechanisms for quality assurance in the management of public primary schools in Delta State. The study determined how adequate the schools' academic content and funds were improvised for quality assurance in the management of public primary schools in Delta State. Two research questions and two null hypotheses guided the study. The descriptive survey research design was used as a method of investigation in the study. The study population involved One Thousand and Ninety-Six (1, 096) head teachers and Fifteen Thousand, Eight Hundred and Sixteen (15, 816) teachers in the public primary schools in Delta State. The sample size for the study comprised 440 participants (which constituted 95 head teachers and 345 teachers) selected using the simple random sampling technique through the simple balloting method. The sample represented 20% (percent) of the schools including their head teachers and 5% (percent) of the teachers. Questionnaire titled "Internal Mechanisms for Quality Assurance Questionnaire - (IMQAQ)" and which contained 19 items and structured on a 4-point scale, was used as instrument for data collection. Validation of the research instrument was done by two experts in Educational Foundations and one in measurement and evaluation, at the Faculty of Education in Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu University, Anambra State. A pilot test was conducted in order to determine reliability of the research instrument and this yielded coefficient (r) value of 0.79 and 0.73 for the two clusters, which was added up give an overall coefficient (r) value of 0.76. Data were analyzed using mean, section mean and standard deviation for answering the two research questions, while t-test statistics was used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 alpha level of significance. The findings of the study indicated among others that: the schools' academic content was adequately structured and provided except in some certain areas for quality assurance in the management of public primary schools in Delta State. From the findings, some recommendations were proffered and among such included that: the required admission standards including teacher-pupil ratio and class size proportion as highlighted by the National Policy on Education should be effectively maintained for quality assurance in the management of public primary schools in Delta State.

Keywords: Internal, Mechanisms, Quality Assurance, Management, Public, Primary, Schools

Introduction

Education is a fulcrum which serves as a means to an end in which societies or nations use to eradicate poverty, hunger and starvation, diseases, illiteracy, ignorance, insecurity and enhance/project sustainable development. According to the Federal Republic of Nigeria (FRN, 2013) in the National Policy on Education (NPE), education is generally an instrument 'par excellence' for nation building, social change and national reconstruction. For this reason, the Federal Republic of Nigeria (FRN, 2013) further describes education as an instrument for effecting national transformation, reconstruction, development and progress, whose basic rationale and philosophy has been enlisted in the national policy document. Therefore, there is no gainsaying that education is very vital to the pace of social, political and economic development of any nation. Aliu (2001) asserts that education bestows on the recipients a disposition for a life-long acquisition of knowledge, values, attitudes, competence and skills. Education is thus central to the developmental process of any nation (Aliu, 2001). It is generally one instrument that could effectively be utilized for both national development and environmental sustainability. The

Nigerian formal education system has been structured into different levels of primary, secondary and tertiary education as means of providing education for the entire masses and citizenry.

Primary education, which is the central focus of this study, is the first - initial education given to children at early stages of their lifetime. It is the basic foundation on which all other educational levels are built upon. Primary education is the core of the schooling system. It builds the bedrock for human capital development (Lassibille & Tan, 2003). A child receives primary education first before forging ahead to other levels. The fact is that without the basic foundation of primary education at an early stage of one's lifetime, all other levels of education is meaningless. According to Durosaro (2003), primary education is the foundational level of the educational system which runs for six years, and it is aimed at developing basic literacy, numeracy, communication skills and transmission of the culture of the people to younger generations. To show how important and necessary primary education is at the very first stages of one's lifetime. Section 2, p.9 and 12 of the FRN (2013) in the National Policy on Education (NPE) highlighted that:

> Primary Education is the education given in institutions for children aged 6 to 11 or 12 plus at the duration of six years. It is the key to the success or failure of the whole system, since the rest of the education system is built upon it. Therefore, to enhance teacher effectiveness and quality assurance at the primary level, the teacher-pupil ratio shall be 1:35.

The goals of primary education according to the policy statement of the FRN (2013: 12) are to: inculcate permanent literacy and numeracy, and ability to communicate effectively; lay a sound basis for scientific and reflective thinking; give citizenship education as a basis for effective participation in and contribution to the life of the society; mould the character and develop sound attitude and morals in the child; develop in the child the ability to adapt to the child's changing environment; give the child opportunities for developing manipulative skills that will enable the child function effectively in the society within the limits of the child's capacity; and provide the child with the basic tools for further educational advancement, including preparation for trades and crafts of the locality (FRN, 2013). All these goals cannot be actualized in Delta State without adequate provision and placement of all internal mechanisms that will bring about effective management of primary education for quality assurance. Internal mechanisms as regarded in this present study refers to all policy frameworks, strategies, human and materials resources, services, among others adequately provided to ensure effective and smooth management of any school system, just like primary education. Obadara and Alaka (2013) defines internal mechanisms as policies and frameworks of an educational programme like primary education for ensuring that it is fulfilling its purposes as well as the standards that apply to primary education in general. Examples of these internal mechanisms found within the primary school system includes the facilities, policies, academic processes like the curriculum, teaching and learning process, financial activities, among others (Dimson, 2007). Quality Assurance (QA) can be described as a set of predetermined systematic actions applicable within the framework of quality assurance with the purpose of ensuring that the producers or final users get a standard quality product or service. Quality assurance is the means by which an organization confirms that conditions are in place for students to achieve the standards set by the training organization (Tempus & Centrex cited in Harvey, 2004). In describing quality assurance, quality first is creating an environment where educators, parents, government officials and community representatives' work together to provide students with the resources they need to meet current and future academic and societal needs (Arcaro, 2005). Quality has to be seen in terms of relationships rather than intangible and unattainable goals. Igwe (2004) opines that quality assurance in education entails that the output of institutions are acceptable, desirable, beneficial, efficient or effective. It is the level in which education systems maintains high level of standards in their operations. It can be seen as a grade of achievement. Quality assurance therefore deals with the proactive or preventive means of ensuring quality inputs, teaching-learning process, the outcome and the academic achievement of students, (Akudo, 2006; Babalola, 2004).

Quality assurance further aims at getting things done right at the first time and every time. The perverse nature of quality assurance is perhaps its most distinctive characteristics, unlike the traditional quality control methods. It looks beyond the confines of the quality control department and reaches out to management at all cadres. According to Okafor and Ohia (2012), quality assurance (QA) is the guarantee of confidence and certainty by a programme of study given by an institution that standard and quality are being met. Dirk (2011) maintains that quality assurance is an institutional mechanism put in place to monitor and improve outcome through standards, perfections or excellence, fitness for purpose, values, transformation or change. According to him, these can only be achieved by enforcing categories of assessment focused on internal inputs, resources invested and the process for achieving the objectives output. When quality is assured in an education system, just like primary education, this means that such system is capable of providing quality services in order to achieve educational objectives and positive outcomes. It is usually pictured from the internal management system and control of such system. Consequently, in the present study, issues relating to the internal mechanisms in the primary schools, boarders so much on the current internal management practices in the primary schools that led to the guaranteeing of quality assurance - as regards to the relevance and adequacy of the academic contents, school/classroom climate e.g class size and funds. No doubt, there are numerous issues, challenges and problems involved in the management of primary education system in Nigeria including Delta State. Management of primary education refers to the process of planning, organizing, directing, staffing, coordinating, budgeting for and reporting on primary education system (Durosaro, 2003). Management therefore can be regarded as the application, utilization, maintenance of organization of all human and materials resources in education for achievement of desired goals and objectives (Ogunu, 2001). Noting the importance of fostering quality assurance in the management of education, Wokocha (2014) expressed that every nation strives towards the provision of quality education for its citizens because of the realization that education is a major tool for socio-economic and political-cultural development. Without maintaining high level of quality services, functionality, standardization and degree of excellence in education, development will not take place because it is only educated people that can effectively and vibrantly command the knowledge and skills necessary for sustainable socio-economic growth and development. This further implies that all the internal and external mechanisms which will enable proper and effective administration and management of primary education must be adequately provided and put in place in order to maintain quality standards, progress and quality assurance for the realization of the identified aforementioned goals of primary education. The key components or variables of the internal and external mechanisms for guaranteeing quality assurance in the school system have been identified by Yusuf and Alabi (2012) to include: use of standard policies and effective curriculum; system's operation in terms of good governance and leadership; processes involved in students' evaluation; method of programme evaluation and supervision; the teaching force quality and management; availability of educational material resources as regards to the adequate provision of instructional materials, teaching aids, structure, facilities, equipment and basic amenities; and the conduciveness of the teaching-learning environment.

The European Association Network for Quality Assurance (ENQA, 2009) noted the variables that served as the internal mechanisms for determining quality assurance in higher education, which is also a prerequisite for primary education, included the following: internal policy and procedures for quality assurance; approval, monitoring and periodic review of programmes and awards; assessment of students; quality assurance for teaching staff; learning resources and student support; and information systems management. From the works of different scholars and authors like Fadipe (2000), Ajayi (2007), the European Association Network for Quality Assurance (ENQA, 2009) and Mbakwem (2012) the variables, indices or parameters that determines the internal mechanisms for enhancing quality assurance in the management of various school system has been classified using five important indicators to include: proficiency of the academic content, the teaching staff, physical facilities, funds and effective leadership. Among

all these internal mechanisms seen as quality assurance indicators, only two will be understudied in the present study and they include the academic content and funds. Reason for the study of only two quality assurance indicators being that, many studies have been done on teacher factors, physical facilities and leadership, a lot of recent studies have not been carried out in the two other areas. Academic content according to Fadipe (2000), Ajayi (2007), the European Association Network for Quality Assurance (ENQA, 2009) and Mbakwem (2012) includes such components as the curriculum practices, conducts of effective internal assessments procedures (tests and examinations), students' evaluation, effective guidance and counseling system, systems of internal school monitoring, supervision and evaluation of programmes and teachers' work. All the above among others build up internal mechanisms that determine quality assurance for effective management of primary education. Ajayi (2007) and Mbakwem (2012) noted that academic content processes involving teacher-pupil ratio and class size, consistency in the use of instructional materials and teaching aids, adequacy of staff mix, quality assessment and examination processes, among others, are internal quality assurance mechanisms which could be infused in the management of primary education. For instance, Dirk (2011), opined that classroom process which involves having appropriate class-size and teacher-pupil relationships can either promote or dislocate quality in the education system.

Again, funds or finances as one of the internal mechanisms for quality assurance constitutes a great deal in the management of primary education. School funds simply mean the available finances for running or management of any particular education system, example, primary schools. Ajuonuma and Ogugua (2012), Emetarom and Okon (2012), Mbakwem (2012), Okeke (2012) and World Bank (2002) opined that qualitative teaching and learning at the primary school level cannot be made possible without adequate funding of the system. This consistently has been one of the greatest challenges facing both management and quality assurance of the Nigerian education sector. Funds are needed virtually for everything like teacher motivation, salaries and other remunerations, management of curricular activities and students' learning; provisions of facilities in the school, funds are required for school maintenance, among others. Its adequacy and sufficiency in primary education helps to promote and enhance the quality of educational delivery and services. Supporting this, Ofojebe, Chukwuma and Onajite (2013) identified that the amount of physical facilities provided which is highly dependent of funds in the educational system also determined the standard of education and ability to achieve quality assurance which determines the quality of instructional delivery, quality teachers and quality learners. Igbinedion (2014) further commented that apart from the application of the Teachers' Code of Ethics (TCE) by teachers, quality assurance in education can also be enhanced by the availability of such internal mechanisms like good quality educational facilities and teaching materials in adequate proportions, recruitment of qualified teachers and creation of good work environment for teachers to enhance their effectiveness and efficiency, which are all highly dependent on adequate funding of the educational system. Additionally, fund availability and adequacy as an internal mechanism for quality assurance will aid effective management of any education system. Funds are necessary in education for running an organization, procurement of resources, human resources management – e.g teacher's maintenance and repair of equipments and infrastructure, among others (Igbinedion, 2014). Ogar (1999) highlighting the efficiency indicators that will enhance good quality education identified financial resources as the most important one and stated that with its adequacy will enable the existence of all other facilities like textbooks, infrastructural facilities, teaching resources, etc. Adequate provision of funds enables proper administration and management of education. Funds help to facilitate the teaching-learning activities which equally lead to attainment of educational goals and production of quality output (Ogar, 1999). Supporting the statements of Ogar, UNESCO also recommended 26% of the annual budget to go to education for any country that wishes to attain high quality standards in her education sector. Despite the importance of education in national development, it is observed that the educational sector, especially primary education, in Nigeria is poorly funded (Durosaro, 2000). Adenegan, Yusuf and Sodipo (2002) agree that primary education plays a great role in

determining the quality of all higher levels of education. Thus, it requires public financial support more than any of the other levels of education. Ayodeji (2004) lamented that the demand of education is growing higher everyday but the available resources are not keeping pace in terms of the development. In support of this UNESCO's Education for all (EFA) Global Monitoring Report (2005), provided a detailed analysis of factors influencing the quality of education in several regions of the world, which it says could prevent many countries from achieving EFA goals. These include poor funding which has contributed to lack of human and material resources for schools, among others. Therefore, for quality assurance in the primary school organization, all these internal mechanisms are of necessity. According to Watson (2006), if all the internal mechanisms are not adequate, then, they cannot control their school situation; effective teaching and learning cannot be achieved.

Notably, some of these key components or variables making up embodiments of the internal mechanisms is rather wanting or not adequately catered for or provided for enhancing quality assurance in the education system. This has been asserted in the statements of Adewuya (2002), Alumode (2006) and Ezenwafor (2006) that it is note-worthy and highly pathetical that for the past three decades Nigerian educational system continues to witness enormous quantitative growth at the expense of qualitative development. Thus, the current education reforms in the education sector in Nigeria in the areas of planning the academic content, funding, resource provision, curriculum innovation and teacher education among others, are internal management mechanisms to revamp education industry to instill sustainable school quality reform. The deteriorating quality of education which has continued unabated impinges heavy traumatic effects on Nigeria citizens and the nation as a whole (Adewuya, 2002, Alumode, 2006 & Ezenwafor, 2006). This further implies an urgent need for fundamental rethinking in order to refocus and to redirect Nigerian educational system (especially at the primary education level) towards achieving dramatic improvement in critical contemporary measures of qualitative performance and effective service delivery (Yusuf & Alabi, 2012). Obviously, the primary education level, being the bedrock of the child's basic education, is a very vital aspect of the nation's educational system that deserves to be handled with great care and caution. Any error committed in the management of this level of education including failure to continually render high level of quality services may reverberate on other levels of education and thus seriously mar the lives of the people and indeed the overall development of the nation. As noted by Gidado (2003), indicators of declining quality in the Nigerian education system can be observed in teacher ineffectiveness and wastages, high dropout and failure rates, rampant examination malpractices and low performance in national survey of achievement. Effective school quality assurance reform that can stand the text of time must go beyond quality control practices. This is one good reason why all the stakeholders must pay adequate attention on those issues that concern - internal mechanisms for quality assurance in the management of our primary education system as highlighted by most scholars like Adewuya (2002), Durosaro (2003), Alumode (2006) and Ezenwafor (2006). Without quality assurance, education becomes a waste. Hence, the need for adequate provision of such internal quality assurance mechanisms in terms of the academic content and funds, that will enhance effective management of the primary education sector (Yusuf & Alabi, 2012). In Delta State, although the State government have provided free, universal and basic education at the primary education level, yet the current scenario shows that the management of this system is also divulged of internal problems and challenges which in turn affects quality assurance and without adequate attention been paid to such issues in order to improve situation of things, can mar the entire system in future. It is therefore upon this background that the present study investigated the internal mechanisms for quality assurance in the management of public primary schools in Delta State.

Statement of the Problem

Primary education is an important educational level for every child that is starting life in the Nigerian society. Primary education provides basic education including ladder that will help children to adapt to life and other educational levels. However, the observed decline in the devastating state, falling standards and quality of

primary education provided in the public schools throughout the country and Delta State inclusive is so worrisome and this equally creates concern for the researcher in this present study. This poor state of quality education is usually blamed on the teacher factor and proficiency neglecting other internal quality assurance mechanisms such as the academic content and funding. The deplorable state of the primary school level of education in the country relating to the academic content is observable from the large class-sizes in schools, poor teacher-pupil ratio, poor teacher-pupil relationships, poor state of physical and infrastructural facilities as reflected in the school buildings, laboratories, libraries; inadequate provision of instructional materials and teaching aids like chalkboard, dusters, chalks, seats, textbooks; inadequate and well-motivated teachers due partly to irregular salaries and allowances, inactive participation in the decision making process, inadequate staff training and retraining programmes; poor quality instructions; inadequate supervision and constant programme evaluation as well as poor working environment and poor internal quality control system, among others. These are all issues of internal quality assurance mechanisms tailored towards the direction of management of the primary education system. Due to the neglect of the primary education sector, the cumulative result is that, today, education is in a terrible shape, circumscribed by a general persistent and chronic crisis in terms of funding, staffing, curricular, infrastructure and facilities. The quality assurance issues in the primary education remind one of the popular saying that we always would reap what we have sown. In other words, quality should be infused into everything including those internal mechanisms that help to make primary school education (the sowing) so as to ensure that what we get at the end (what we reap) is also enshrined in quality. Unfortunately, it is worthy of note that the variables of these internal mechanisms for quality assurance status of primary schools in Nigeria, in which Delta State is not an exception, has not been systematically assessed in any sustained manner, owing to some challenges (which is equally a management problem) and this need to be addressed seriously. The current scenario and position of the poor and deplorable state of primary schools in Delta State which have equally been observable from the poor quality instructions, poor programme evaluation, poor working environment, poor funding and poor internal quality control system, among others, are all matters of greater concern which consequently and significantly affect quality assurance. These ugly situations and position of things coupled with the challenges at the primary education sector in Delta State, calls the need for an assessment of the internal mechanisms for quality assurance in the management of public primary schools in Delta State, which is also the problem of the study.

Research Questions

The following research questions were raised to guide the study:

1. To what extent are schools' academic contents adequately structured and provided for quality assurance in the management of public primary schools in Delta State?
2. How adequate are funds provided for quality assurance in the management of public primary schools in Delta State?

Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were formulated to guide the study and tested in the study:

$H0_1$: There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of head teachers and teachers on the extent to which schools' academic content are adequately structured and provided for quality assurance in the management of public primary schools in Delta State

$H0_2$: There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of head teachers and teachers on how funds are adequately provided for quality assurance in the management of public primary schools in Delta State.

Research Method

The descriptive survey research design was used as a method of investigation. Thus in the study, this design was used to collect data on the opinions of the participants (head teachers and teachers) with a view to assess the internal mechanisms for quality assurance in the management of public primary schools in Delta State. This design was employed in order to conduct a field survey and gather data from only head teachers and

teachers (participants). According to Asika (1991) and Olujide, Opute-Imala and Ezoem (2002), the descriptive survey design is used in observing what is happening to sample subjects or variables in order to generate necessary primary data for the study. The study population cut across participants selected within the public (State government owned) primary schools in the twenty-five (25) Local Government Areas (LGAs) of Delta State. There were 1, 096 number of public primary schools, including 1, 096 head teachers and 15, 816 teachers spread across the primary schools and their LGAs, according to the State Universal Basic Education Board (2019) of Delta State. Sixteen thousand, eight hundred and eighty- five (16, 885) participants within the 1, 096 public primary schools in the 25 LGAs constitutes the population for the study. The sample for this study comprised 440 participants (which constituted 95 head teachers and 345 teachers). In selecting this sample, the simple random sampling technique was adopted. This was to ensure that the sub-groups in the population participated in the study in the same proportion, as they existed in the population. To do this, the simple balloting technique was to be used to select 11 LGAs in Delta State, which was carried out by writing 'Yes' and 'No' alternatives on pieces of papers, folding them and some research assistants are asked to pick. Those with 'Yes' alternatives were selected for the sampling, while those having 'No' alternatives were not selected and thereafter public primary schools including their head teachers and teachers were randomly selected on the basis of the 11 LGAs where they are located. From each of these 11 LGAs, approximately 20% (percent) of the schools including their head teachers and 5% (percent) of the teachers were selected in order to ensure greater representation of the respondents in the sample. According to Nzeneri (2010, p. 38) "since in most cases it is not always possible to study all the persons or things in your group of study, due to limitations in time, funds and other resources, then one has to select some samples from the large population".

A self-developed questionnaire titled "Internal Mechanisms for Quality Assurance Questionnaire - (IMQAQ)" and which contained 19 items and structured on a 4-point scale, was used as instrument for data collection. Construction of the questionnaire was guided by the purpose of the study and research questions. Items were structured on a 4-point scale weighted as follows: (a) Highly Adequate (HA) - 4, Moderately Adequate (MA) - 3, Scarcely (rarely) Adequate (SA) - 2, and Not Adequate (NA) - 1 for answering research question 1 and likewise (b) Strongly Agree (SA) - 4, Agree (A) - 3, Disagree (D) -2 and Strongly Disagree (SD) - 1 for answering research questions 2. Validation of the research instrument was done by three experts. Drafted copies of the questionnaire were submitted to two experts in Educational Foundations and one in measurement and evaluation, at the Faculty of Education, Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu University, Anambra State, for them to examine the content in line with the purpose of the study and for appropriate validation. These experts were requested to examine the items in terms of their content relevance, items clarity, as well as ascertain if items were related to the objectives of the study. After scrutinizing the instrument, they offered useful suggestions which led to a modification of the questionnaire before the final draft was produced. A pilot test was conducted on a sample of 5 public primary schools including 5 head teachers and 10 teachers at various LGAs/locations in Anambra State of Nigeria in order to determine reliability of the research instrument. The sets of scores for each participant from the 5 public primary schools used for the pilot-testing in Anambra State were then collated and measured using Cronbach Alpha statistics, this yielded coefficient (r) value of 0.79 and 0.73 for the two clusters, which was added up give an overall coefficient (r) value of 0.76. The result indicated the internal consistency of the instrument, which is considered the instrument satisfactory for the study. Therefore, the reliability of the questionnaire showed that it is trust-worthy. The distribution of the final instrument entailed personal and direct hand-delivery process, on a face- to- face personal contact with the participants. An on-the-spot method was adopted by the researcher in distributing copies of the questionnaire to ensure maximum recovery of the questionnaire administered. Copies of the questionnaire for the public primary school head teachers and teachers were delivered to the participants by the researcher with the help of 5 (five) research assistants. They were individuals trained on how to administer the questionnaire. The training entailed explaining properly

the location of the sampled public primary schools selected in each of the LGAs. Both the researcher and research assistants waited for the completion of the instrument and collected them on the spot in order to obtain the highest possible rate of return. Data collected and collated for the study was analyzed using mean scores rated at 2.50, section mean and standard deviation for answering the research questions. The t-test statistics (measuring the mean rating between variables) was used for testing the hypotheses at 0.05 alpha level of significance. The decision rule was based on only mean scores of 2.50 and above was accepted as an indication of agreeing with the statement while mean scores below 2.50 were regarded as an indication of disagreeing with the statement and therefore not accepted. Data was also coded into the SPSS (Statistical Software Package for Social Sciences) for computer analysis.

Results

Research Question One: To what extent is schools' academic contents adequately structured and provided for quality assurance in the management of public primary schools in Delta State?

Table 1: Mean scores, standard deviation and section mean of Head Teachers and Teachers on the extent to which the schools' academic contents are adequately structured and provided for quality assurance in the management of public primary schools in Delta State

N = 440

S/N	Items	Participants	HA	MA	SA	NA	Total	$(\bar{X})$	SD	Decision
1	Curriculum proficiency	**Head**	40	41	9	5	95	3.22	0.82	**Adequate**
		Teachers	129	190	16	10	345	3.27	0.68	**Adequate**
		Teachers								
2	Effective and constant classroom supervision	**Head**	58	35	1	1	95	3.58	0.57	**Adequate**
		Teachers	176	133	19	17	345	3.36	0.80	**Adequate**
		Teachers								
3	Admissions Processes	**Head**	44	32	8	11	95	3.15	0.99	**Adequate**
		Teachers	156	150	25	14	345	3.30	0.77	**Adequate**
		Teachers								
4	Test and examination conduct	**Head**	10	17	54	14	95	2.24	0.83	**Inadequate**
		Teachers	121	113	84	27	345	2.95	0.95	**Adequate**
		Teachers								
5	Practical/project work	**Head**	26	48	13	8	95	2.97	0.86	**Adequate**
		Teachers	150	164	20	11	345	3.31	0.72	**Adequate**
		Teachers								
6	Students' subject evaluation	**Head**	40	41	9	5	95	3.22	0.82	**Adequate**
		Teachers	129	190	16	10	345	3.27	0.68	**Adequate**
		Teachers								
7	Constant evaluation of student's class work and assignments	**Head**	43	33	11	8	95	3.17	0.94	**Adequate**
		Teachers	160	155	12	18	345	3.32	0.78	**Adequate**
		Teachers								
8	Effective assessment procedures	**Head**	30	38	10	17	95	2.85	1.06	**Adequate**
		Teachers	125	158	37	25	345	3.11	0.86	**Adequate**
		Teachers								
9	Effective guidance and counseling system	**Head**	14	21	38	22	95	2.28	0.98	**Inadequate**
		Teachers	45	63	117	120	345	2.10	1.02	**Inadequate**
		Teachers								

10	Effective and constant monitoring of teachers lesson notes	**Head**	6							**Adequate**
		Teachers		30	16	13	95	2.94	1.04	**Adequate**
		Teachers	105	182	30	28	345	3.06	0.84	
11	Constant participation in public activities such as debates, quiz etc	**Head**								**Inadequate**
		Teachers	3	15	41	36	95	1.84	0.80	**Inadequate**
		Teachers	52	33	148	112		2.07	1.01	
							345			
12	Active punctuality to class attendance	**Head**					95			**Adequate**
		Teachers	42	41	7	5		3.26	0.81	**Adequate**
		Teachers	168	156	13	8	345	3.40	0.67	
	Section	**Head**					95	**2.88**	**1.00**	
Mean		**Teachers**						**3.03**	**0.94**	
		Teachers					345			

Results from Table 1showed that items 1, 2, 3, 4 (of only the teacher's responses), 5, 6, 7, 8, 10 and 12 of both the head teachers and teacher's responses scored above 2.50 of the acceptable mean score. This showed that both respondents agreed with the statements while the rest of items 4 (of only the head teacher's responses), 9 and 11scored below the acceptable mean score of 2.50, showing that the respondents disagreed with the statements. However, the section mean of both the head teachers of 2.88 and that of the teachers of 3.03 respectively, indicated that all respondents reacted positively in agreement with the statements showing that the schools' academic contents was adequately structured and provided except in some certain areas for quality assurance in the management of public primary schools in Delta State.

Research Question Two: How adequate are funds provided for quality assurance in the management of public primary schools in Delta State?

Table 2: Mean scores, standard deviation and section mean of Head Teachers and Teachers on how adequate are funds provided for quality assurance in the management of public primary schools in Delta State
N = 440

S/N	Items	Participants	HA	MA	SA	NA	Total	($\bar{X}$)	SD	Decision
13	Funds are adequately, consistently and constantly provided in the school for the following: Procurement of educational resources and facilities.	**Head**								**Disagree**
		Teachers								**Disagree**
		Teachers	13	0	39	43	95	1.82	0.98	
			32	68	58	187	345	1.84	1.04	
14	Imprest for emergence and other expenses	**Head**	24	10	23	38	95	2.21	1.21	**Disagree**
		Teachers	35	86	96	128	345	2.08	1.04	**Disagree**
		Teachers								
15	Constant maintenance and repair of equipment, buildings and other educational facilities.	**Head**	5	30	21	39	95	2.01	0.97	**Disagree**
		Teachers	37	82	143	83	345	2.21	0.93	**Disagree**
		Teachers								
16	Provision of adequate instructional materials for teachers.	**Head**	20	15	34	26		2.31	1.09	**Disagree**
		Teachers	67	59	90	129	95	2.19	1.13	**Disagree**
		Teachers					345			

17	Running day to day activities of the school	**Head Teachers**	18	11	29	37	95	2.11	1.12	**Disagree**
		Teachers	60	79	101	105	345	2.27	1.07	**Disagree**
		Teachers								
18	For constant staff training and development	**Head Teachers**	16	23	30	26	95	2.31	1.05	**Disagree**
		Teachers	78	81	88	98	345	2.40	1.12	**Disagree**
		Teachers								
19	Execution of school projects and programmes.	**Head Teachers**	17	21	26	31	95	2.25	1.10	**Disagree**
		Teachers	80	86	86	93	345	2.44	1.08	**Disagree**
		Teachers								
	Section Mean	**Head Teachers**					95	**2.14**	**1.09**	
		Teachers						**2.21**	**1.08**	
		Teachers					345			

Table 3: ***t-test Comparison of mean rating of head teachers and teachers on the extent schools' academic contents are adequately structured and provided for quality assurance in the management of public primary schools in Delta State***

Group	Sample Size	Mean	Standard deviation	Degree of Freedom	t-Cal	t-Crit.	Decision
Head Teachers	95	2.88	1.00	438	- 1.3582	±1.9650	NS
Teachers	345	3.03	0.94				Accept H_0

From Table 3, the t-test calculated/observed value is -1.3582. This value is less than the critical table value of ±1.9650 and thus falls within the acceptable region. The null hypothesis was therefore accepted, indicating that there was no significant difference in the mean ratings of the head teachers and teachers with regards to the extent schools' academic contents are adequately structured and provided for quality assurance in the management of public primary schools in Delta State.

$H0_2$: There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of head teachers and teachers on how funds are adequately provided for quality assurance in the management of public primary schools in Delta State.

Table 4: ***t-test Comparison of mean rating of head teachers and teachers on how funds are adequately provided for quality assurance in the management of public primary schools in Delta State***

Group	Sample Size	Mean	Standard deviation	Degree of Freedom	t-Cal	t-Crit.	Decision
Head Teachers	95	2.14	1.09	438	- 0.5583	±1.9650	NS
Teachers	345	2.21	1.08				Accept H_0

From Table 4, the t-test calculated/observed value is -0.5583. This value is less than the critical table value of ±1.9650 and thus falls within the acceptable region. The null hypothesis was therefore accepted, indicating that there was no significant difference in the mean ratings of the head teachers and teachers with regards to the adequacy of funds provided for quality assurance in the management of public primary schools in Delta State.

Discussion of the Findings

The primary education system has suffered tremendously in Nigeria from poor financing, inappropriate allocation of resources and a host of other problems. A major issue of concern in the management of primary education in Nigeria is that of inadequate funding. The issue of under-funding of education especially at the primary education

level is so endemic that it has now encompassed series of other problems such as shortages of human and material resources. Consequently, if the primary education sector is left with persistent challenges affecting quality assurance, then this could mar the entire system, causing grievous damages and havocs. The indicators of declining quality include high dropout, failure rates, rampant examination malpractices, corruption in the system, administrative incompetence, poor academic performance, low staff morale/commitment, low performance in national survey of achievement and wastages in the system, among others. Generally, the findings of the study indicated that the two internal quality assurance mechanisms when pulled together were grossly inadequate and were grossly to a large extent not adequately improvised for quality assurance in the management of public primary schools in Delta State. The finding further showing that although the academic contents was adequately structured and improvised in the primary schools but effective implementation/application; was always a major problem. The findings of the study found that such internal mechanisms in relation to the school's academic contents which was adequately structured and improvised for quality assurance in the management of primary schools in Delta State included: curriculum proficiency, effective and constant classroom supervision, admissions, test and examination conduct, students' subject evaluation, constant evaluation of student's class work and assignments, effective assessment procedures and active punctuality to class attendance. Other academic content that involved the use of practical/project work, effective guidance and counseling system, and constant participation in public activities such as debates, quiz etc; were however inadequate. This findings agrees with the study of Yusuf and Alabi (2012) which found that the key components or variables of the internal and external mechanisms for guaranteeing quality assurance in the school system to include such indices as: use of standard policies and effective curriculum; system's operation in terms of good governance and leadership; processes involved in students' evaluation; method of programme evaluation and supervision; the teaching force quality and management; availability of educational material resources as regards to the adequate provision of instructional materials, teaching aids, structure, facilities, equipment and basic amenities; and the conduciveness of the teaching-learning environment; were grossly inadequate.

European Association Network for Quality Assurance (ENQA, 2009) confirmed that the variables that served as the internal mechanisms for quality assurance in higher education, which is also a prerequisite for primary education, included the following: internal policy and procedures for quality assurance; approval, monitoring and periodic review of programmes and awards; assessment of students; quality assurance for teaching staff; learning resources and student support; and information systems management. Most times these are found lacking or wanting to some great extent in the schools. This has equally been asserted previously from the findings of Adewuya (2002), Alumode (2006) and Ezenwafor (2006), that it is note-worthy and highly pathetical that for the past three decades Nigerian educational system continues to witness enormous quantitative growth at the expense of qualitative development. Thus, the current education reforms in the education sector in Nigeria in the areas of planning, resource provision, curriculum innovation among others, are internal management mechanisms to revamp education industry to instill sustainable school quality reform. The deteriorating quality of education which has continued unabated impinges heavy traumatic effects on Nigeria citizens and the nation as a whole (Adewuya, 2002, Alumode, 2006 & Ezenwafor, 2006). Mohammed (2012) further comfirmed in a study that the issue of over enrolment leading to overcrowded classrooms has become a common feature in the Nigerian primary education. Many of the facilities on ground are being overstretched and since there is excess enrolment this usually leads to overcrowded classrooms, ineffective teaching and examination malpractices (Mohammed, 2012). The National Open University further supporting this finding, expressed that in a situation where a country has accurate demographic data of citizens (like age distribution) and relies on it for projecting school age population, if projection is based on actual age distribution but at the point of registration children below school age are registered, it results into overcrowding in classrooms. Over utilization of both human and material

resources in school will be the consequence. This will later affect the expected quality of primary education (Mohammed, 2012). Notably, the National Bureau of Statistics (2006), likewise identified that students' academic enrolment trend shows continuous increase and the classrooms are congested. The national statistics on classroom and enrolment further revealed abnormal average class size which has been a serious hindrance to quality education and quality service delivery. The situation was worst in 2003 when average class size (ACS) was 101 causing over-crowdedness in classrooms. The average class size in 2004 and 2005 were above the recommendations of the National Policy on Education and UNESCO recommendation of 35 (National Bureau of Statistics, 2006). However, for quality assurance in the management of primary education all the internal mechanisms as regards to the academic contents should be adequately structured and improvised in the school system.

It was further found that funds were grossly not adequately provided for quality assurance in the management of public primary schools. The findings further indicated that funds for procurement of educational resources and facilities, imprest for emergence and other expenses, constant maintenance and repair of equipments, buildings and other educational facilities, provision of adequate instructional materials for teachers, running day to day activities of the school, for constant staff training and development and for execution of school projects and programmes; were grossly inadequate for quality assurance, that is, not adequately provided in the management of primary education. Moreover, these findings does not concur with and also deviates from the finding of Mbakwem (2012) who identified that the funds as important mechanisms in the school which also play a great role in determining the level of attainment of quality assurance in the education sector. Their adequacy and sufficiency in education helped to promote and enhance the quality of educational delivery and services. In line with the above finding, Ofojebe, Chukwuma and Onajite (2013) confirmed that the amount of funds provided in the educational system also determined the standard of education and ability to achieve quality assurance which determines the quality of instructional delivery, quality teachers and quality learners. Take for instance, a well ventilated and conducive classroom environment including other facilities are very important for illuminating students' understanding and creating enabling teaching and learning atmosphere (Ofojebe, Chukwuma & Onajite, 2013). Igbinedion (2014) confirmed that apart from the application of the Teachers' Code of Ethics (TCE), quality assurance in education can also be enhanced by the availability of such mechanisms like adequate funding which will foster quality educational facilities and teaching materials in adequate proportions, recruitment of qualified teachers and creation of good work environment for teachers to enhance their effectiveness and efficiency. Additionally, fund availability and adequacy is also another internal quality assurance mechanism that influences effective management of any school system. Funds are necessary in education for running an organization, procurement of resources, human resources management – e.g teacher's maintenance and repair of equipments and infrastructure, among others (Igbinedion, 2014). Ogar (1999) also agrees and concurs that financial resources is one of the efficiency indicators that enhanced good and quality education and stated that as one of the most important, its adequacy will enable the existence of all other physical facilities like textbooks, infrastructural facilities, teaching resources and aid facility maintenance and repairs, etc. Adequate provision of funds enables proper administration and management of education. Funds help to facilitate the teaching-learning activities which equally lead to attainment of educational goals and production of quality output (Ogar, 1999). Ajuonuma and Ogugua (2012) found that under funding is one of the greatest challenges that appear to face the Nigerian primary education. Finance is so crucial to any organization as it continues to dominate discussions on the state of primary education in Nigeria. Running institutions require significant investment in providing and maintaining a basic level of infrastructure – such as facilities, staff salaries, and residential housing. Due to underfunding of education this has led to overcrowded classrooms, ineffective teaching, incessant strike, students' unrest and examination malpractices.

Emetarom and Okon (2012) attested through their finding that to attain full development of human

personality and attain quality output from our primary education level, adequate funding is a sine qua non. Gross underfunding has drastically compressed per student expenditure and budgetary allocation to education since 1999 has generally been low. Examples are as follows: 1999 (11.2%), 2000 (8.36%), 2001 (7.0%), 2002 (5.9%), 2003 (1.83%), 2004 (6.18%) and 2005 (6.58%). The current (2010) budgetary allocation of 15% to education sector generally is a far cry from UNESCO's recommendation of a minimum of 26 percent of annual budget for developing countries like Nigeria. In line with the above, Durosaro (2003), also observed that the major problem in primary education management is inadequate funding. The World Bank survey report on Nigeria rightly pointed out that, the Federal expenditure on education seems to be below 10% of its overall expenditures. For instance, between 1997 and 2002, the total share of education in total Federal expenditure ranged between 9.9% and 7.6% with the trend showing a downward plunge (World Bank, 2002). Generally, from the findings of the study, in assessing the extent to which these internal quality assurance mechanisms understudied guaranteed effective management of the primary schools in Delta State, one would conclude that these internal mechanism to great extent were not adequately provided for quality assurance in the primary school system. This is evident on the situation of public primary schools in the area of study which showed that a lot of public primary schools in the area are in a deplorable state and condition; and this situation needs to be solved in essence for enhancement of quality assurance in the schools. The issues of quality assurance in the area of study are affected by such factors like: poor implementation of most of the school's academic contents and inadequate funding which significantly affect the management of primary schools. This situation calls for the intervention of all education stakeholders, including the P.T.A. to quarantine, remedy and save the situation of things because when all these problems are solved then quality assurance will be highly enhanced and guaranteed.

Conclusion

Management of primary schools is highly dependent on effective and efficient utilization of some internal quality assurance mechanisms. This will enable primary schools to sufficiently achieve their goals and objectives. The findings of this present study has shown beyond reasonable doubt that the internal mechanisms are important and beneficial towards the development and advancement of the primary schools and likewise promoting quality education that enhance quality assurance, not only in Delta State but Nigeria as a whole. The study therefore submits that the stagnation in the growth and development of primary schools in the area of study is as a result of the negligence to adequately provide some internal quality assurance mechanisms as regards to improvising some academic contents and funds. The researcher also proffered some recommendations based on the findings of this study as solutions to save the deplorable situations.

Recommendations

The following recommendations have been proffered below:

1. The required admission standards including teacher-pupil ratio and class size proportion as highlighted by the National Policy on Education should effectively be maintained for quality assurance in the management of primary school system.
2. Delta State government including all other financial institutions and private sectors should support primary schools for quality assurance in the management of schools through adequate funding and financing. If possible, they should consider the 26% budget allocation of funds to education as recommended by UNESCO.

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