Influence of Monitoring and Evaluation on Students Academic Performance as Relates to Education Trend in Ondo State

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Abstract

Nigerian educational sector is faced with a myriad of problems, prominent among which is students' poor performance in internal and external examinations. In uplifting the State's educational system to be among the frontiers of education in Nigeria. The Ondo State government instituted an education quality assurance agency. Therefore, this study examined the effect of monitoring and evaluation on student's academic performance as relates to the education trend in Ondo state.

The study adopted a non-experimental type of research. It was descriptive research. Three research questions guided the study. Purposive sampling technique used to select 300 SSS II students, 20 teachers and school administrators. Three validated research instruments were used to collect data.

Results show that students' performance in the core subjects was slightly above the average, though they performed better in English Language (X = 27.5; SD = 3.24) than Mathematics (X = 26.5; SD = 2.91). The Agency was reported to be highly effective in systematic monitoring and evaluation of school curricular and co-curricular activities. Its positive impact was evidenced by improved WASSCE ranking where the State moved up from 33rd position (in 2009) to 7th position (in 2016). The Agency's activities have a significant and positive effect on students' academic performance, F (2, 299) = 16.27, p < 0.05.

Based on the findings, it was concluded that the effect of monitoring and evaluation on student's academic performance is positive, vital and noteworthy. It is recommended that other governments in Nigeria are strongly encouraged to replicate this quality education assurance agency in their States.

Key Words: Quality assurance, Ondo State Quality Education Assurance Agency, Senior Secondary School, Core subjects, Academic performance, evaluation, monitoring

Introduction

Education is the aggregate of all the processes by which a child or young adult develops the abilities, attitudes and other forms of behaviours which are of positive value to the society in which he lives. It is a life-long process. It begins with the birth of a child and ends with his death. It is a continuous process. Continuity is the law of life, (Kumer, 2015). Kumar opined that education is not limited to the classroom only; it is not limited to a particular period of life but throughout life. One goes on learning to adjust oneself to the changing patterns of life. Change is the fundamental law of human existence. Life is a continuous process of growth and development and so education is also a continuous process, (Ahmad 2015).

According to Oyekan (2006), education has been recognised as a process of imparting some knowledge, skills and attitude to the learners. This could take place in varying schools with the purpose of ensuring total development of the child. Education is the tool for the integration of the individual into a society so that the individual can achieve self-realization, develop national consciousness, promote unity and strive for social, economic, political, scientific, cultural and technological progress (Adesina, 1985).

In this era of globalization and technological revolution, education is considered as a first step for every human activity; it plays a vital role in the development of human capital and is linked with an individual's wellbeing and opportunities for better living (Battle and Leovis, 2002). Education is the acquisition of knowledge and skills that enables individuals to increase their productivity and improve their quality of life. This increase in productivity also leads towards new sources of earning which enhance the economic growth of a country (Saxton, 2002).

The quality of education is an important issue all over the world. The term efficiency, effectiveness, equity and quality have often been used interchangeably. Fadipe (2000) views quality as the appropriateness of resources available to education. Quality is the baseline standard in education that can be measured on a scale of reference. It is an expression of standard or the means by which to set a standard in which education can be achieved (Moduceresi, 2005). According to Adams (1993), quality education includes:

- Health, well-nourished and supporting learning facilities;
- Environmental factors must be safe, protective and gender sensitive
- Trained teachers and good methods for imparting knowledge and skill and adequate classrooms; and
- Content relevant curricula and skilful assessment.

Quality assurance is the systematic management and evaluation procedure adopted to ensure that the learning environment and the curriculum programme of an educational institution meet the specified standard to achieve the set goals and produce output that will satisfy the expectations of the institutions, customers or the society (Ayeni & Adelabu, 2011).

Quality assurance oriented schools are characterized by core values and elements which were identified by the United Nations Children Educational Fund (UNICEF, 2000) as quality learners, learning environment, curriculum content, teaching and learning processes, and learning outcomes. However, for quality education to be achieved in a nation, the principal actors of learning (teachers and learners) and the environment must be cooperatively organized. In other words, teachers must be adequate, in quality and quantity, the students must be well trained and facilities must be provided as well (Adegbesan, 2010).

The societal expectation of quality outputs from schools makes students the primary focus of attention in any program, and the better the school, the better it can meet the goals that include equipping the students with desirable skills, knowledge and attitudes that enable them to work and live in the society of knowledge (Ayeni et al, 2011).

The teachers are expected to make teaching learners-centred and create an enabling environment for the students to interact with learning materials in order to concretize their knowledge and skills so that they can become self-confident and self-reliant, and contribute meaningfully to the socio-economic development of the society.

Evaluation is the process of ascertaining the decisions to be made, selecting related information and collecting and analyzing information in order to report summary data, useful to decision makers in selecting among alternatives (Alkin 1970). Also Staff (2012) define evaluation as a systematic determination of a subject's merit worth and significance, using criteria governed by a set of standards. It can assist an organization, program, project or any alternative to help in decision-making or to ascertain the degree of achievement or value in regards to the aim and objective and result of any such actions that has been completed.

The primary purpose of evaluation, in addition to gaining insight into prior or existing initiatives to enable reflection and assist in the identification of future change Sarah (2012).

Evaluation can be seen in two approaches which are formative and summative evaluation.

Odinko 2014 opted that the primary purpose of evaluation of student's learning outcomes in a given educational programme is to provide information for decision making about the programme (summative). It could also be seen as a method of acquiring and processing evidence needed to improve the learning and teaching activities (formative).

Monitoring involves setting targets and milestones to measure progress and achievement, and finding out whether the imports are producing the planned outputs, that is monitoring sees whether the project is consistent with the sign (Odinko 2014).

Also monitoring is an internal activity of programme management the purpose of which is to determine whether programme has been implemented as planned in other words whether resources are being mobilized as planned and whether they are being shared as scheduled. Monitoring means to watch over something especially to ensure they are in good order. To monitor is to check at a regular internal in order to find out how a programme is progressing and developing. Monitoring may involve teaching and learning activities, school facilities for instance chairs, books, laboratory equipment, school infrastructure for example classrooms, library and staffroom disbursement of funds, personnels and output for instance quality of students.

The core subjects covered in this study are English Language and Mathematics. The curriculum of English Language in senior secondary schools in Nigeria is poised to find out how well the school has prepared learning for life outside school.

WAEC examination results over the past two decades indicate a mass failure to gain the required skills in English. The incessant failure recorded in the Ordinary Level English examinations in Nigeria has become worrisome. Parents, school authorities and the examination bodies are still in the race of finding a solution to the problem, particularly because the subject is crucial in the career of the students irrespective of the disciplines the students aspire to take up when they get to tertiary institutions. At present, a credit in English Language is required before admission into any higher institution in the country. It is upsetting that a lot of times students pass

other subjects but fail English Language which is a prerequisite for admission into higher institutions. While some reseat the examination several times, others lose hope.

Mathematics is another core subject which is of interest in this study. It is a science of numbers that deals with quantity, structure, size and space. Mathematics has been described as the key that unlocks the mystery of the subjects that shape and enhance logical thinking with its calculative inference and deductions (Exam Ethics Project, 2002). Some students seem to have problems mastering Mathematics. In fact, it seems some students have a phobia, dislike or negative attitude towards this all-important subject. It is a compulsory subject in which students are expected to have a minimum of credit pass before they could possibly gain admission to study any course in Nigerian higher educational institutions. However, several factors seem to influence students' performance in this subject. Ikeriondu (2006) observed that Mathematics offers the experience needed to develop ways of dealing with problems, not only in school but in all aspects of life. Mathematics is an intellectually stimulating subject that affects every facet of human activity such as politics, economy, science and technology. Salman (2005) described Mathematics as a precursor of scientific discoveries and inventions. The learning of Mathematics has become imperative in every society if the citizens are to cope with the fast-changing development in science and technology. The importance of Mathematics to man may account for its inclusion in school curriculum as a compulsory subject for every child of school age to acquire the appropriate mathematical skills that will enable him cope with life challenges.

In Ondo State, the operational capacity of the Inspectorate Service Department of the Ministry of Education was at the lowest ebb, absolutely weak, ineffective and unproductive due to long periods of neglect. Consequently, the inspectorate output could no longer maintain the natural minimum standard of education in schools. The result is a large scale abysmal performance of students at both external and internal examination that portray glaringly non-achievement of the quality assurance in teaching and students' learning outcome in schools (Mimiko, 2010). The author further stresses that in the determination to rescue the system from a total collapse and repositioning the same for better service delivery in the educational system, the administration of Ondo State should establish a quality education assurance agency to focus the education sector for qualitative and sustainable service delivery.

The vision statement of the agency is: to have a dynamic quality assurance service that will ensure the delivery of high quality education for every child through collaboration with other stakeholders in institutions below the tertiary level. Also, the mission statement of the agency is to support the improvement in the quality of education provision and outcomes for learners in all institutions below tertiary level in Ondo State by:

• Supporting and validating each school's own self-evaluation;
• Undertaking quality assurance external evaluation (inspection) of schools on a regular basis; and
• Providing regular support and challenge to schools.

Therefore, Ondo State Quality Education Assurance Agency has in its vision to improve quality standards in education in Ondo State through the mechanisms of effective teaching, learning, research, systematic monitoring and evaluation for intellectual advancement, self-reliance of individuals, and sustainable socio-economic development of the State. It is imperative at this juncture to outline the functions or objectives of Ondo State Quality Education Assurance Agency. These objectives were developed around the learning areas and essential skills to be

acquired by both teachers and students in Ondo State. The objectives or functions of Ondo State Quality Education Assurance Agency include:

1. Systematic monitoring and evaluation of the curricula and co-curricular activities of schools, particularly, teaching and learning, through the use of the whole school evaluation process which is the approved global trend for quality education practice.
2. Collecting, analysing and interpreting data collected from monitoring and evaluation activities to make objective decisions for improved education service delivery.
3. Accreditation inspection on schools presenting candidates for public examination for the first time, or presenting candidates for new subjects.
4. Monitoring Learning Achievements (MLA) in educational institutions below the tertiary level.
5. Training of Evaluators and Stakeholders in the modern trends of Quality Assurance Practice and School improvement (ODSG, 2010).

Fasasi (2006) opines that quality assurance in the education sector should be to ascertain the standard of educational inputs such as students, facilities, and curriculum and education policy and to ensure that proper monitoring and evaluation are undertaken by school managers so that proper processing of inputs would be undertaken in the school system to transform them into the required outcome. In this study, the focus was on the effect of monitoring and evaluation on students' academic performance as relates to education trends in Ondo State. Specifically, the study focussed on two of the previously stated objectives of the agency, which are:

a. Systematic monitoring and evaluation of the curricular activities especially teaching and learning;
b. Implementation of curriculum to improve teacher pedagogical practice and students' learning outcomes; and

The overarching aim of Ondo State Quality Education Assurance Agency is to boost the academic achievement of their students in schools below the tertiary educational institutions. In ordinary sense, academic achievement means the level of performance a particular student attains in his or her academic tasks. Elloit, Kratochwil, Crok & Travers (2000) see academic achievement as knowledge and skill taught by schools which individuals have learned with acceptable accuracy. They further stated that academic achievement can adequately be determined by a set of clearly defined instructional objectives. Thus, when the learning objectives are accomplished by individual learners, they are said to have achieved academically. Unfortunately, since the establishment of the Agency in 2010, the academic achievement of students in both internal and external examinations have been fluctuating. This generally poor performance in Ondo State secondary schools are evidenced in the West African Examination Council (WAEC) examinations results, which indicate a consistently below average level of academic achievement of students.

Year	Number Released	Number of Candidates with 5 Credits and above (including English Language and Mathematics	Percentage (5)
2010	22,964	6,928	30.17
2011	27.071	8,438	31.17
2012	24,481	9,482	38.73
2013	27,243	8,150	29.92
2014	22,703	5,354	23,58
2015	27,209	5,951	21.87

Source: Ondo State Ministry of Education, Akure (2017)

From Table 1.1, the overall results of candidates who sat for West African Senior Secondary Certificate Examinations (WASSCE) in Ondo State public secondary schools between 2010 and 2015 show that their general trend of performance was poor, as most of the candidates did have 5 credits and above (including English Language and Mathematics) in the external examinations.

For instance in 2010, only 30.17% of the 22,964 released candidates' results in the State got 5 credits (which are required for admission to higher institutions). As though that was not poor enough, even with an increase in the number of results released over the years (from 22,964 in 2010 to 27,209 in 2015), the percentage nose-dived to 21.87% in 2015. These results reveal an abysmal trend of poor academic achievement in Ondo State public secondary schools; and they provide an empirical baseline against which the impact of Ondo State Quality Education Assurance Agency on senior secondary school core subjects in the State could be measured (since it was established in 2010).

Statement of the Problem

Since the establishment of the agency, several attempts have been made by some educational stakeholders, such as individual parents, school managers, PTAs, interest groups and the government itself to assess the effectiveness and impact of this agency with respect to its mandate. But none of these really related the activities of the agency directly to students' academic performance in English Language and Mathematics as core subjects. Besides, they were not actually impact evaluation studies conducted in a systematic manner. This present study attempted to close this gap. Thus, the study examined the effect of Ondo State Quality Education Assurance Agency on the academic performance of senior secondary school (SSS) students in two core subjects (English Language and Mathematics) between 2010 and 2015 in Ondo State, Nigeria.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:
1. What is the general trend of students' performance in English Language and Mathematics which are core subjects in Ondo State secondary schools?
2. What is the effect of monitoring and evaluation of curricular activities on students' academic performance in core subject areas?

Significance of the Study

The study provides information on effects of monitoring and evaluation on students' academic performance, and effective teaching on the part of the teachers which would bring about quality education in secondary schools in Ondo State.

Furthermore, the study provided empirical information on the effects of proper implementation curricular on academic performance of students in secondary school. Also, the study provided an empirical proof of the importance of training and re-training of teachers towards boosting the academic performance of their students in secondary school.

Quality Assurance in Teaching and Education Effectiveness

The quality determination is a function of what education is expected to provide in terms of skills, attitudes and knowledge. These can usually be looked at from the perspective of stakeholders including students, parents, teachers, policy-makers and community members. Quality assurance is a preventative control; an attempt must be made to show that things produced

are of catalogued descriptions (Afemikhe, Omo-Egbekuse & Imobekhai, 2009); this is preventative control which is referred to as quality assurance.

According to the OECD (2004 & 2008), quality assurance is a planned and systematic pattern of all the actions necessary to provide adequate confidence that a product will conform to established requirements. It involves a review of multiple dimensions of inputs, processes and outcomes that constantly evolve over time. Through quality assurance one is able to establish stakeholder confidence that provision (input, process and outcomes) fulfils expectations and measures up to threshold minimum requirements' (Harvey, 2004–2007). A study looks at the education system with respect to effective programme provision, how the stakeholders perceive the functioning of the system as well as how the provision is useful in meeting future challenges. Towards this end, the quality assurance approaches which are useful in each of these three components were examined. These have been classified as internal quality, interface quality and future quality assurance measures. The possibility of attempting all three quality assurance approaches were examined in the study.

It is pertinent to emphasize provision of education in schools. Formal education is usually provided in schools at pre-primary, primary, secondary and tertiary levels. The provision is effected in schools and educational institutions through teaching and learning processes in an attempt for education to achieve its goals. However, the learning structure within the school plays an important role in this regard with the teacher occupying an exalted position of directing what happens within the classroom as the students learn. Some components that are germane in this regard the teacher factors, management factors, environmental factors, student factors and curriculum factors. These factors within the internal environment of the schools interact in different ways to facilitate learning by students.

Roles of Parents and Teachers for Quality of Sustainable Quality Education

Parental involvement, in general, refers to parental interactions with the schools and with their children in order to encourage academic progress and offer support with school activities (Hill & Tyson, 2009). Nonetheless, the conceptualization of Parental involvement is also described as (a) making sure the child about school, (b) attending parent – teacher conferences (c) regularly talking to the child about school, (d) checking the child has done the homework (e) balancing school work and school activities, (f) having a variety of reading materials in the house, (g) balancing school work with friends, (h) having a set time for home work, (i) attending activities at school, (j) limiting the amount of time the child watch television, (k) reviewing the child's weekly planner, (l) regularly talking with the child's teacher, (m) talking to other parents at school, (n) observing the child's classes, (o) volunteering at school (DePlanty, Couter – Kern, &Duchane, 2007; Hill & Tyson, 2009).

Research studies demonstrate that Africa American children are more likely to fall behind academically than children in other minority groups (Brooks, 2009; Huang & Mason, 2008; Wu & Qi, 2006). The main factors preventing Africa students reaching academic success are (a) the family's low socioeconomic status, (b) single parent – family structure (c) parental involvement in the children's education, (d) parental expectations and beliefs, (e) Parental control, and (f) authoritarian parenting style (Wu & Qi, 2006). According to the Brookes (2009), during the 1970s and 1980s over 50% of Africa Americans moved into the middle class; after the elimination of segregated housing. This new middle class moved out of their old communities, leaving many poor parents alone to raise their children in communities exacerbated by negative influences. The

exodus caused massive pockets of poverty. This event is a denominated theory of social dislocation and the isolation of these communities gave to rise to crime, joblessness, female-headed families, single-parent family structure, welfare dependency, drug dependency, and high dropout rates (Brooks, 2009).

Parents encounter many barriers to being involved in their children's schooling. Amongst the most discussed barriers are (a) low socioeconomic status, (b) psychological barriers, and (c) school and parent's perceptions of each other's roles, mainly. In fact, low–income parents are more likely to be affected by psychological barriers and face barriers related to teacher's attitudes and school climate (Velsor& Orozco, 2007).

Equally, it is pertinent to emphasize the role of teachers for quality of sustainable quality education. It is another important factor that determines learners' performance in various subjects. Rockoff (2004) cited by Oyinlola (2014) conceptualized teachers' effectiveness as the managerial skills essential for enhanced classroom control. It is the teacher's competency, ability, resourcefulness and ingenuity to efficiently utilize the appropriate language, methodological available instructional materials to bring out the best from learners in terms of academic achievement. In the same vein Akiri and Ugborugba (2009) established that effective teachers produced better performing students.

In exploring teachers' role for quality education, their qualifications, experience, quality, and effectiveness come to fore. Teacher experience in the teaching profession is an important factor which could have a positive effect on learners' performance (Akinleye, 2001; Ogundare, 2001, as cited by Salami, 2013). Again, Egbe (2014) cited in Alexander and Fuller (2014) pointed out the importance of the teacher teaching in the classroom. In the study of Uba (2012) teacher experience among other variables as qualification, years of teaching experience, teacher effectiveness had positive contributions to learning outcomes in the subject of focus. The researcher surveyed school quality variables and teacher personality traits that affect learning outcomes in schools.

Performance Indicators for Qualitative Education

Rowe and Lievesley (2002) postulated that measures of student learning outcomes are prime performance indicators of the education system. Onuka and Amoo (2007) in Lukman (2012) stressed that SBA goes beyond a technique of obtaining a certificate at the end of a course to the verification of learners' performance in every domain with timely adequate feedback mechanism. Hence, in the context of school-based assessment, we can say that the measure of students' progress, readiness, preparedness for learning, success and survival is a performance indicator of students. This actually agrees with Wolf and Zentall (2010) saying, "what gets measured gets done. Anything you produce of value can be measured".

Judging from literature, the rationale for performance indicators and the school-based assessment intersect at the points of measuring/monitoring progress, identifying problems, making feedback for improvements and hitting targets. The expectation of teachers and parents is that the measure of achievement of the students in schools on various subjects they have enrolled for should fall on any of the points ranging from "adequate" to "excellent" in the continuum. In order to realize this, indicators have to be developed and aligned with SBA being embedded in the curriculum. More importantly, Rowe (2013) emphasized the point that mere measurement and location of students on performance scale does not generate improvement without the provision of an indication of the educational 'value' that schools 'add' to students' achievements – over and

above that which could be predicted given the backgrounds, abilities and prior achievement of their student intakes. A statistical model is available to identify the distinct contributions of school to growth of student achievement at a given grade level. He further said that the effort of every country should be to focus on gains or improvements in students rather than simply attainment level at a given point in time.

Sauvageot and Tchatoua (2011) asserted that an indicator is not raw data but is a synthesis of data that can be analyzed. It is calculated from raw data using statistical tools such as percentage, rate, ratio and indices. He also identified ten steps of developing an indicator system as follows:

Step 1:   Identify or define objectives
Step 2:   Create a list of 'policy' issues based on the objectives
Step 3:   Develop a list of indicators
Step 4:   List the data required to calculate the indicators
Step 5:   Locate the data sources available
Step 6:   Calculate the indicators
Step 7:   Verify the results
Step 8:   Analyze the indicators
Step 9:   Select the final indicators for the system
Step 10:   Select the layout of the indicator system document.

Adapting these steps to developing performance of indicator of students with respect to the levels of three domains of learning as revised by Rogers (2010), performance indicator of students can now be defined as the concrete actions the students should be able to perform as a result of participating in the learning programme. These actions must be framed in statements that are observable, measurable and achievable.

Instructional Dynamics and Quality Assurance

It is important to state emphatically that quality assurance cuts across the instructors in schools (teachers), the learners or students, as well as the curriculum factors. These factors are necessarily interrelated in the instructional dynamics towards quality assurance in the school system. For instance, student's learning outcomes result from the interaction between the curriculum characteristics, student learning and teacher's factors (Cheng, 1998; Medley, 1982). The teacher factors include the competence, performance, existing teacher characteristics and training (in-service and pre-service). Looking at closely the competence of the teacher includes the language skills, pedagogic knowledge, information technology skills, 23 subject knowledge, ethical and legal knowledge in education, etc. The teacher performance include teaching styles, teaching attitudes, teaching strategies, behaviours, use of facilities, teaching materials, classroom management pattern, leadership to students, etc. the existing teacher characteristics include academic qualifications, working experiences, personalities, self-concept and self-efficacy, beliefs and values about education and society, personal vision and mission, cognitive styles, age, etc. Teacher development programmes include workshops, experience sharing, collaborative teaching, reflection on teaching, educational visits, job enrichment, etc.

Some learner factors include home background, learning activities, learning strategies, experiences, responses and feelings, interaction with peers, skill practice, affective expression, physical performance, intellectual stimulation and exercise. They also include academic achievements, reading ability, writing ability, developed self-efficacy in learning, computer

literacy, moral development, citizenship, skill and motivation for continuous self-learning, and so on.

The curriculum factors include learning aims and goals, teaching and learning tasks, textbooks, subject syllabus, curriculum design, medium of instruction, teaching materials, etc. School related management factors include instructional leadership, program planning, team support, staff development in the area of instruction, staff professionalism, management of curriculum, school mission and goals, policy of program design and implementation, human relations, school culture, school's physical environment, etc. Some aspects of management related to assessment include supervision, classroom observation, student achievement assessment, teacher self-evaluation, teaching portfolio, evaluation by students, etc. The environment within the school and classrooms requires a consideration of the existing social climate, class size, level and diversity of students' academic ability in the class, teaching and learning facilities, equipment, physical conditions, etc.

According to Cheng, (1998) and Medley (1982) student learning outcomes result from the interaction between the curriculum characteristics, student learning and characteristics. The student learning experience is affected by teacher performance and classroom environment among others. The interaction between teacher competence, curriculum characteristics and school organizational environment has an influence on teacher performance. Pre-service teacher education, school-based teacher development programme and pre-existing teacher characteristics can contribute to teacher competence. The evaluation information can be used to facilitate development of teacher competence through staff development activities.

Quality Assurance Process and Students' Academic Achievement

According to Gray, Griffin & Nasta (2001) quality assurance involves procedures and measures for checking that quality is being maintained or improved. The need for emphasis on quality is attendant on the need for organisations to survive in the face of increasing competition and the demand for better services and products (Teeroovengadum, Kamalanabhan & Seebaluck, 2010). The increasing competition has not brought about service improvement in education as noticed in Nigeria where 'miracle examination centres' have become rampant in schools. Harvey (2002) noted that the increase in competition among schools results in lowering of standards. Therefore, it is imperative to know what can be done to assure quality in education. Satisfaction with quality does not end with stakeholders within schools, it extends to others outside the school and services must also cater for the future needs and challenges of the new millennium if education is to be seen as effective and useful for the new generation.

Literature has outlined seven models of quality assurance; namely: goal and specification, process, absence of problem, satisfaction, legitimacy, organisational and quality management models (Cheng, 2001). The goal model assumes that there are core goals which are clearly stated and universally accepted. The goals are normative in nature and the achievement of the stated goals is the concern of quality assurance. The main indicators in the use of this model are achievement, attendance rate, and qualification of staff among others. External examinations have over the years been used to ensure quality of education provision; schools whose students pass well are deemed to be providing higher quality education. This however has led to the unwholesome practice of examination malpractice.

The process model of quality assurance utilises processes to determine goal attainment. Thus components of learning, teaching, management and curriculum processes are examined to find out the quality of educational provision. Relevant indicators here are leadership styles,

decision-making processes, teaching efficacy, attitudes of students and attendance rates among others. Supervision and monitoring are ways through which information on these indicators can be collected.

The absence of a problem model focuses on there being no problems, defects, weaknesses, difficulties and dysfunction in the functioning of the school system. In this model one, attempts to determine whether there are problems with the teachers, students, curriculum, environmental and management factors. Supervision and monitoring are again very relevant here.

The resource–input model focuses on provision of quality inputs to achieve goals and quality within a short time. The inputs are quality teacher, learner, curriculum, management and environmental factors. The starting point is the provision of scarce resources and provision of an adequate environment. The indicators germane here include high quality student intake, more qualified staff, better facilities like laboratories and libraries and more financial support. In Nigeria the Universal Basic Education Commission studies (2001, 2009 & 2013) have focused on this aspect and have attempted to relate these indicators to performance in examinations. 30

The satisfaction model looks at how well the organization provides goods and services that powerful stakeholders cherish and value. The expectations may vary according to the stakeholders and to that extent this model becomes very difficult to implement. If it however has to use an evaluative approach, the 'kernel of truth' methodology could be applied. The focus according to Akpe (1985) is to extract the kernel or the aspects of the programme on which all stakeholders agree upon.

The legitimacy model requires that education institutions have to face the external challenges and demands for accountability and "value for money". The institution can only survive if it has legitimacy within the community. This can be achieved through winning the support of the community and having a good public image. As aptly indicated by Cheng (2001), for education institutions to gain legitimacy, they should operate educational programmes which conform to the ethical and moral norms of the community. One question very relevant then is whether parents would readily and voluntarily choose the institution in a competitive environment?

The organizational learning model posits that organizations can learn like human beings. As a result they should be involved in continuous improvement and development of its members, practices, processes and outcomes. In this model, one needs to be aware of community needs and emergent changes, internal process management and professional development.

On education reforms and quality assurance, this last section outlined some models that have been found useful in quality assurance implementation in education. Education is provided within schools and therefore the quality assurance procedures employed are applicable within schools. Effectiveness is at the core of what happens within the schools. Effectiveness has been defined in many ways; its assessment depends on how it is looked at. That is probably why Firestone (1991) says 'effectiveness is not a neutral term and defining the effectiveness of a particular school always requires choices among competing values… criteria of effectiveness will be subject to political debate.' Bennet, Crawford and Cartwright (2003) define an effective school as 'a school in which students' progress further than might be expected'. This means that we have expectations of how well school can perform because of the inputs we have put into it and the process variables that have been used.

Methodology

This chapter describes the procedure followed in this study. This is considered under the following sub-headings: research design, variables of study, study population, sample and sampling technique, research instruments, data collection procedure, and method of data analysis.

Research Design
This study adopted a non-experimental type of research. It was a descriptive research type.

Population of Study
The population of study consisted of the staff members of public schools and all senior secondary school (SSS) II students in Ondo State, Nigeria.

Research Instruments
Three research instruments were used to collect data for the study. These were properly validated and their Cronbach Alpha reliability coefficients established statistically before they were used for data collection. The instruments were:
i.   Quality Assurance Questionnaire for School Staff (QAQSS);
ii.   English Language Achievement Test (ELAT); and
iii.   Mathematics Achievement Test (MAT).

Research Instruments
Quality Assurance Questionnaire for School Staff (QAQSS)
The Quality Assurance Questionnaire for School Staff (QAQSS) instrument was constructed by the researcher for the purpose of collecting data on the Ondo State Quality Education Assurance Agency. The question has two sections A and B. Section A is the bio-data, such as name of school, respondent's gender, respondent's age, highest academic qualification, work experience, and designation/job function of respondent.

Section B of the questionnaire elicited information on the extent, frequency or regularity of the core functions and effectiveness of the Agency, such as regularity of monitoring, assessment methods, objectivity, feedback mechanism, implementation of recommendations, and monitoring of the curriculum. The instrument was validated and its Cronbach Alpha coefficient was 0.82.

English Language Achievement Test (ELAT)
English Language Achievement Test (ELAT) instrument was constructed by the researcher as well. Copies of the instrument were given to experts in the field for face, content and construct validity. Necessary corrections were made on the instrument before it was used to collect from the field. The ELAT instrument was based on SSS II English Language scheme of work; and it consisted of forty items (multiple-choice objective test with four options A – D).

Mathematics Achievement Test (MAT)
The Mathematics Achievement Test (MAT) instrument was constructed by the researcher and validated by experts to ensure its face, content and construct validity. Necessary corrections were made on the instrument before it was used on the field to collect data. This 40-item multiple choice objective achievement test was based on SSS II Mathematics scheme of work, with four options A – D).

Methods of Data Analysis

Data for the study were analysed using quantitative methods. Which involve, frequency counts, percentages, and analysis of variance (ANOVA)

Results
Research Question 1: What is the general trend of students' performance in English Language and Mathematics which are core subjects in Ondo State secondary schools?

Table 1: Descriptive

Core Subjects	N	Mean	SD	Min	Max
English	300	27.50	3.238	23	32
Mathematics	300	26.50	2.912	23	31
Average	300	27.00	3.075	23	32

Table 2: Frequency Distribution of Students' Scores in the Tests

Scores Range	Core Subjects	Mean	SD
	English (%)	Mathematics (%)	Average (%)
Below 20	0	0	0
21-25	120 (40%)	150 (50%)	135 (45%)
26-30	120 (40%)	90 (%)	105 (35%)
31-35	60 (20%)	60 (20%)	60 (20%)
36 – 40	0	0	0
Total	**300 (100%)**	**300 (100%)**	**300 (100%)**

Results in Tables 1 show the general trend of students' performance in English Language and Mathematics. It can be seen that the students scored over 20 marks in the two core subjects. It is seen that the students performed better in English Language ($X = 27.5$; $SD = 3.24$) than Mathematics ($X = 26.5$; $SD = 2.91$), even though the generality of the students performed well above average in the two achievement tests.

Further results in Table 2 show that the distribution of scores is negatively skewed, as many (60%) of the students scored above 25 marks in English Language, while half (50%) of the students got 25 marks and above in Mathematics. Overall, it is seen that the general level of students' performance is moderately high above average in these core subjects in Ondo State secondary schools.

Research Question 2: What is the effect of systematic monitoring and evaluation of curricular activities on students' academic performance in the core subjects area ?

Table 3: Deceptive

	N	Mean	Std Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Low	90	27.06	2.642	.279	26.50	27.61
Moderate	105	28.43	2.191	.214	28.00	28.85
High	105	26.48	2.767	.270	25.94	27.01
Total	300	27.33	2.667	.154	27.03	27.64

Table 4: ANOVA

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig
Between Groups	210.040	2	105.020	16.274	.000
Within Groups	1916.627	297	6.453		
Total	2126.667	299			

Table 5: Scheffe Post Hoc

(I) (J)	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std Error	Sig	95% Confidence Interval for Mean	
				Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Low Moderate	-1.373	.365	.001	-2.27	-.48
High	.579	.365	.285	-.32	1.48
Moderate Low	1.373	.365	.001	.48	2.27
High	1.952	.351	.000	1.09	2.81
High Low	-.579	.365	.285	-1.48	.32
Moderate	**-1.952**	.351	-2.81	-2.81	-1.09

Discussion of Findings

Results from the study show the general trend of students' performance in English Language and Mathematics. The students generally performed well above average in the two core subjects. The results indicate that overall, the general trend of students' performance is moderately high above average in these core subjects in Ondo State secondary schools. This finding may be as a result of the unrelenting efforts of all stakeholders in the State who want high quality education for their children and wards. In particular, the impact of the Agency in fostering effective teaching and learning is worth commending. This aligns with earlier findings that students' academic performance has improved since the establishment of the Agency (ODSG, 2010; OSQEAA, 2014). However, this result contradicts Taiwo (2014) and Ajileye (2006) who reported that students generally performed poorly in their academic work. It also contradicts WAEC Chief Examiners' Reports who submitted that students' general performance in English Language has been usually poor (WAEC, 2005, 2011, 2014)

Besides, a one-way analysis of variance showed that the Agency's systematic monitoring and evaluation of curricular activities have significant effect on students' academic performance in the two core subjects. The results showed that the observed difference among the three groups of students was an important one which was due to the activities of the Agency to some extent. The import of this is that quality assurance is always a value-added service to education, as earlier asserted by Gray, Griffin and Nasta (2001), Teeroovengadum, Kamalanabhan and Seebaluck (2010), Harvey (2002), and (Cheng, 2003). Furthermore, findings imply that teachers have important roles to play in their students' learning and achievement. The teacher holds the axis upon which the world of education rotates. That is why the National Policy on Education emphasizes that no educational system can rise above the level of its teachers (FGN, 2004). This result aligns with Taiwo (2014) who established a link between teachers as important school human resources

and students' academic achievement. It also corroborates Akiri and Ugborugba (2009) who found that effective teachers produced better performing students. Also, Akinleye (2001), Ogundare (2001) and Salami (2013) explored teachers' role for quality education and found that their qualifications, experience, quality and effectiveness come to fore as important factors which could have a positive effect on learners' performance. The finding also confirms Egbe (2014), and Alexander and Fuller (2014) who emphasized on the importance of the teacher teaching in the classroom. It also corroborates Michaelowa (2001) who asserted that teacher quality is the most important factor affecting quality of education in the study on learning achievement. This result also lends support to earlier findings that teacher teaching style affects the extent to which students learn and achieve (NTI, 2010; Zeeb, 2004; De Vita, 2001; Nwagbo, 2001; Harb& El-Shaarwi, 2006).

Summary of Findings
The summary of the major findings of this study is thus:
- The general trend of students' performance in core subjects (English Language and Mathematics) is slightly above the average in Ondo State secondary schools.
- These students performed better in English Language (X = 27.5; SD = 3.24) than Mathematics (X = 26.5; SD = 2.91).
- Ondo State Quality Education Assurance Agency is reported to be highly effective in the systematic monitoring and evaluation of school curricular and co-curricular activities.
- In particular, the Agency's positive impact on students' academic performance was evidenced by improved WAEC rating of Ondo State in WASSCE ranking where the State moved up from 33rd position (in 2009) to 7th position (in 2016).
- The Agency's systematic monitoring and evaluation of curricular activities has a significant and positive effect on students' academic performance in the core subjects, $F (2, 299) = 16.27$, $p < 0.$

Conclusion
Based on the findings in this study, it could be concluded that the impact of Ondo State Quality Education Assurance Agency on Senior Secondary School core subjects (English Language and Mathematics) in the State is positive, important and noteworthy. Moreover, if the challenges confronting the Agency are tackled immediately, it will continue to deliver on its core functions or mandates towards uplifting the standard and quality of education in the State.

Recommendation
The following recommendations are thus made:
i. The Agency should be unrelenting in its systematic monitoring and evaluation of curricular and co-curricular activities in the schools.
ii. The Agency should be well motivated so that it would not be distracted from performing its all-important core roles.
iii. Efforts should be made to extend the activities of this Agency to cover privately-owned educational institutions in the State so that there would be holistic improvement in the educational sector across the State.
iv. Teachers should endeavour to constantly improve on their pedagogical skills to enhance better and more effective teaching and learning in school.

v. Other governments of the federation are strongly encouraged to replicate this quality education assurance agency in their States so that they could tackle the problems of falling educational standards that have bedevilled our school systems.

vi. Students should be courageous enough to report any observations they have with the teaching and learning process in their individual schools. This is because these could be possible threats that may jeopardize their academic performance.

vii. Parents and guardians should ensure that they have much confidence in this Agency, cooperate with it and perform their roles well as partners in progress towards entrenching quality in every facet of the school system.

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