

QUALITY ASSURANCE STRATEGIES AND UNIVERSAL BASIC EDUCATION INSTRUCTIONAL GOALS ATTAINMENT IN JUNIOR SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN SOUTH-WEST, NIGERIA.

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ABSTRACT

The concern for poor quality of teaching-learning process and dwindling academic fortunes of learners in basic schools across the country necessitated this study. Two research questions were answered while one hypothesis was tested. The Descriptive research design of ex-post facto type was used. The population comprised six State Universal Basic Education Board (SUBEB) Quality Assurance Directors, 2,140 principals, 42,964 teachers and 1,810, and 303 learners in junior secondary schools in South-West, Nigeria. Ogun, Oyo and Ekiti States were randomly selected out of the six States in the zone. One hundred and sixty one (161) public junior secondary schools were randomly selected out of 1,070. A total of 644 subject teachers were purposively selected while 3,220 learners were randomly selected. Three instruments tagged "IQASQ", "EQASQ" and "IGAT" were used for data collection. The analysis of data collected revealed that the level of attainment of the Universal Basic Education (UBE) instructional goals on each of literacy and civic skills was moderate, while recording low level of attainment for numeracy and manipulative skills. Also, Internal Quality Assurance Strategies (IQAS) revealed that monitoring, inspection, and supervision were deployed weekly, while evaluation was deployed fortnightly. For the External Quality Assurance Strategies (EQAS), the findings revealed that monitoring was termly deployed, while inspection, supervision and evaluation were deployed annually. This study concluded that quality assurance is significantly related to UBE instructional goals' attainment. It was recommended that government should motivate junior secondary schools in attaining high UBE instructional goals through conditional grant incentives among other recommendations.

KEYWORDS: Evaluation, inspection, instructional goals attainment, monitoring, quality assurance strategies.

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INTRODUCTION

The basic education is an important programme designed to develop every child, especially in the 21st century. Basic education is universally accepted as one of the crucial indicators for determining national literacy index and categorization of nations as developed, underdeveloped or developing. This appeared to have accounted for some deliberate global and local actions by governments and private bodies towards the provision of qualitative and functional basic education for the young ones. Interestingly, the Federal Government of Nigeria (FGN) through its National Policy on Education (NPE) revised in 2014 emphasized that basic schools are established to inculcate appropriate fundamental knowledge, skills and values into the young ones to make them useful for themselves and the society at large. Ojeleye (2020) noted that learners' proficiency in basic life skills' in basic schools appeared to be a must, being the foundation upon which other levels of education are built. Consequently, schools are under pressure to ensure that learners attain the minimum learning outcome set for the basic education sub-sector.

Accordingly, the Federal Government of Nigeria (FGN) launched the Universal Basic Education (UBE) programme on 30th September, 1999. The Universal Basic Education Commission known as UBEC is an agency of the Nigeria's Federal Government which is saddled with the responsibility of formulating and coordinating all programmes of Universal Basic Education programme. The Commission was established by the Compulsory, Free Universal Basic Education and other Matters Act 2004 to eradicate illiteracy. Essentially, four ambitious instructional goals of attaining minimum proficiency in literacy, numeracy, manipulative and civic skills were set for basic education learners under the UBE programme. It thus appeared that the entire UBE programme revolved round the attainment of the aforementioned essential life skills by the learners. The UBE Act (2004) further outlined the methods of assessing learners' attainment level of the UBE instructional goals through the National Assessment of Learning Achievement in Basic Education (NALABE).

This is expected to be conducted by the Universal Basic Education Commission (UBEC) which was established to oversee the entire UBE programme. The attainment of the UBE instructional goals by basic education learners is usually expressed as performance index obtained by basic education learners in English, Mathematics, Basic Science and Technology, and Social Studies, and had been conducted by UBEC across the country in 2001, 2003, 2006, 2011 and 2017. However, in what appeared to be at variance, UBEC (2015) noted with concern that the NALABE surveys it conducted on the four core subjects of English Studies, Mathematics, Basic Science and Technology, and Social Studies showed results which were far below the expected national average. Also, UNESCO (2020) observed that basic education learners in Nigeria and indeed sub-Saharan Africa are far below minimum proficiency in basic skills. In the same vein, UNICEF (2020) reported in a paper presented at the 2020 Nigeria's Annual Education

Conference (NAEC) that 60% of basic education learners in Nigeria could not read while 80% could barely manipulate figures. Lately, UNICEF (2022) further noted with concern that on the average, 70% of school

children are attending basic schools in Nigeria without learning the essential life skills.

The foregoing are worrisome manifestations threatening the integrity and success of UBE programme in terms of learning outcomes which had almost dashed the hope of education stakeholders on the ideal level of attainment of the instructional goals that were set for learners in the UBE programme. This ugly situation has led to serious public outcry and some Nigerians have raised certain questions including: What is the current UBE instructional goals attainment level in Nigeria? What strategies are employed to ensure quality assurance and attainment of UBE instructional goals? Are the learning outcomes in rural schools different from urban schools? These germane questions among others are thought provoking and essentially relevant to this study.

Consequently, the federal government through the NPE (2014) noted that there was the need for mechanisms to be put in place to ensure compliance with the minimum standards set for basic education in the free and compulsory education act, 2004. This is where the concept of education quality assurance and its relevant strategies are essential. Accordingly, FGN (2014) noted that successful implementation of the UBE programme and attainment of high learning outcome in schools rested predominantly on the extent to which quality assurance are regularly deployed to foster strict adherence to the minimum standard of basic education in terms of adherence to curriculum, lesson delivery and school hygiene.

Interestingly, UBEC statutorily conducts quality assurance monitoring and evaluation in basic education institutions across the country at regular intervals. This crucial exercise is usually done in collaboration with the State Universal Basic Education Boards (SUBEBs), Local Government Education Authorities (LGEAs), and principals of Junior Secondary Schools. Moreover, UBEC (2020) expatiated that the modern quality assurance strategies thrived under such terminologies as: whole school evaluation (external evaluation) and school self-evaluation or self-review (internal evaluation), all aimed at producing an effective school and providing necessary support to bring about improvement in learning delivery and outcome.

Also, the FME (2016) stated that the new strategies employed in quality assurance of the UBE programme were designed to allow basic schools evaluate themselves first and complete the School Self-Evaluation Form (SSEF) daily. After the school self-evaluation, the external evaluators visit the schools to validate the school self-evaluation report in line with the approved 8-key indicators of school effectiveness termly. At junior secondary school level, internal quality assurance strategies are expected to be deployed by the principals daily using the school self-evaluation framework.

On the other hand, the external quality assurance evaluation involved teams of evaluators visiting schools through pre-arranged procedures. It is expected to be carried out termly by the Federal Ministry of Education, Universal Basic Education Commission, State Ministries of Education, State Universal Basic

Education Boards (SUBEBs) and Local Government Education Authorities (LGEAs). Consequently, UNESCO (2015) noted that effective quality assurance activities guaranteed confidence and certainty about a programme of study in terms of standard and quality of attainment of the set goal while Moddibo (2014) who studied the influence of quality assurance supervision on Nigerian secondary school effectiveness concluded that quality assurance supervision is an indispensable variable in the teaching learning process as well as the overall attainment of learning objectives. Again, Ogunode, Adah, Wama and Audu (2020) attributed the current significant feat achieved in basic education delivery and outcome in Nigeria to the prevailing quality assurance deployment in basic schools.

In the same vein, UNICEF (2015) and UBEC (2022) concluded that quality assurance is a good check and balance system for basic education actors and that there would have been no justification for the huge investment of government in basic education and quality assurance deployment, if learners are attending schools without learning the essential life skills. However, despite the laudable nature of the UBE quality assurance deployment in secondary schools, a study carried out by Ayara, Essia and Udah (2013) could not establish significant positive relationship between quality assurance and learning outcome in UBE implementation in Cross-River State. Also, a study carried out by Kinyanjui and Ordho (2014) showed results which were a little above average in English Studies, Pre-vocational studies; Religion and national values and poor result in Mathematics despite deployment of quality assurance activities.

Furthermore, Nwafor (2015) established that the internal and external quality assurance ratings about schools do not always correlate when compared, and that disparity existed in the instructional goals attainment of learners in rural and urban basic schools especially in Basic Science and Technology. Accordingly, there are growing arguments among Nigerians to improve learners' level of acquisition and proficiency in basic literacy, numeracy, manipulative and civic skills by enhancing the quality assurance strategies of the UBE programme. In promoting this programme, in 2016, the federal government through the Federal Ministry of Education developed uniform quality assurance monitoring and evaluation instrument for basic schools nationwide. Also, 2% of UBEC's operational fund had been earmarked for quality assurance deployment to institutionalise effective and efficient quality assurance strategies at SUBEB and LGEA level. These steps appeared to be bold and promising. However, the challenge of low deployment of UBE quality assurance strategies to schools is still being experienced.

Moreover, there is an ongoing public debate among Nigerians that quality assurance strategies as well as attainment of instructional goals by learners in basic education institutions are usually based on school location. For instance, Denga (2017) stated that school location (rural or urban) is a strong determinant of students' instructional attainment level while Amadi (2018) also noted that school location remained a strong determinant for frequency of instructional supervision and learning outcome. Interestingly, school location (urban or rural) influenced allocation of resources in SUBEBs action plans for the deployment of quality assurance strategies. This factor is therefore crucial for this study.

Again, it is crystal clear that the current status of the UBE instructional goals' attainment level is apparently unknown especially as the last NALABE published by UBEC was conducted last in 2017. In view of the foregoing, this study sought the influence of quality assurance strategies and the attainment of UBE instructional goals in junior secondary schools in South-West, Nigeria.

Statement of the Problem

The issue of attainment of Universal Basic Education instructional goals has suffered many setbacks majorly in the areas of knowledge and skills acquisition. A large number of basic education learners in Nigeria are perceived to be lacking basic proficiency in reading, simple numeracy tasks and effective communication which is at variance with the UBE instructional goals of attaining minimum proficiency in literacy, numeracy, manipulative and civic skills set by the federal government for the beneficiaries of the UBE programme. This has led to public outcry as discussions remained active on the issue at different academic fora across the country. Although, Government and other relevant stakeholders in the education sector are under pressure to address this ugly trend, there are reservations that the national aspiration to produce citizens that are intellectually sound and responsible might be dashed following perceived low deployment of quality assurance strategies in schools. Consequently, the growing concern among Nigerians for reliable empirical studies on how to foster regular and functional deployment of quality assurance strategies irrespective of school location for the attainment of the UBE instructional goals in Junior Secondary Schools led to the conduct of this Study

Research Questions

The following research questions were raised and answered:

1. What is the level of learners' instructional goals attainment of UBE in terms of literacy, numeracy, manipulative and civic skills in junior secondary schools in South-West, Nigeria?
2. To what extent are quality assurance strategies (Internal and External) frequently deployed to foster instructional goals attainment among junior secondary schools in South-West, Nigeria?

Hypothesis

The following hypothesis was formulated and tested:

Null Hypothesis: Deployment of quality assurance strategies (internal and external monitoring, inspection, supervision and evaluation) is not significantly related to UBE instructional goals attainment (Literacy, numeracy, manipulative and civic skills) in junior secondary schools in South-West, Nigeria.

METHODOLOGY

The Descriptive research design of ex-post facto type was adopted in carrying out this study. The population comprised twelve (12) SUBEB Directors of Quality Assurance, Two Thousand One Hundred and Forty (2,140) Junior Secondary School principals, Forty-Two Thousand Nine Hundred and Sixty-Four (42,964) teachers and One Million Eight Hundred and Ten Thousand, Three Hundred and Three (1, 810,

303) learners in public Junior Secondary School in South-West, Nigeria comprising; Ekiti, Lagos, Ogun, Ondo, Oyo and Osun States (2019 National Personnel Audit, validated in 2021). The study adopted a multi-stage sampling procedure to estimate the sample size of the study at state, local government and school levels. For stage one, three (3) states (Ekiti, Ogun and Oyo) were randomly selected out of the six (6) states in the south-west geo-political zone. Total enumeration (intact group) was used to select all the six SUBEB Directors of Education Quality Assurance.

At stage two, simple random sampling technique was used to select 28 out of the 69 local government areas in Ekiti, Ogun and Oyo States. At stage three, stratified proportionate sampling technique was used to select 161 out of 1,070 Public Junior Secondary Schools. Further at stage three, total enumeration of Principals of the selected schools was performed since one Principal administered a Junior Secondary School. Still at stage three, simple random sampling technique was used to select 3,220 Junior Secondary School three (JSS 3) learners distributed at twenty (20) per school with 644 teachers of English Studies, Mathematics, Basic Science and Technology, and Civic Education purposively selected at four (4) per school.

Three research instruments: self-developed questionnaires and achievement test titled: Internal Quality Assurance Strategies Questionnaire (IQASQ), External Quality Assurance Strategies Questionnaire (EQASQ) and Instructional Goals Achievement Test (IGAT) on English Studies, Mathematics, Basic Science and Technology and Civic Education. The instruments were validated by experts in Psychometrics and Scale development. The Reliability coefficients of 0.75, 0.75 and 0.84 were obtained for each of the three instruments respectively using Cronbach alpha. The instruments were administered and retrieved with the help of fifteen research assistants, and the return rate was 100 percent. Descriptive Statistics of mean and standard deviation were used to answer research questions 1 and 2. Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) was used to test the null hypothesis at 0.05 level of significance.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Research Question 1: What is the level of learners' attainment of instructional goals of UBE in terms of literacy, numeracy, manipulative and civic skills in junior secondary schools?

Table 1: *Level of Learners' Instructional Goals Attainment of UBE in Literacy, Numeracy, Manipulative and Civic Skills*

Skills	Level	Frequency (f)	% of Learners	Mean level	Std. Deviation
Literacy	High	660	20.5	6.04	1.892
	Moderate	1520	47.2		
	Low	920	28.6		
	Very low	120	3.7		
	Total	3220	100.0		
Numeracy	High	514	15.9	4.36	2.346

	Moderate	713	22.1		
	Low	1011	31.4		
	Very low	982	30.5		
	Total	3220	100.0		
Manipulative	High	518	16.1	4.24	2.188
	Moderate	482	14.9		
	Low	1527	47.4		
	Very low	693	21.5		
	Total	3220	100.0		
Civic	High	205	6.4	5.38	1.503
	Moderate	1635	50.8		
	Low	1342	41.7		
	Very low	38	1.2		
	Total	3220	100.0		

Source: Researcher's Field Study, 2022

Decision Rule: The classification of respondents' scores was evaluated at 10.0, 7.5, 5.0 and 2.5 as high, moderate, low and very low respectively

Table 1 showed the mean levels of learners' instructional goals attainment of UBE in literacy, numeracy, manipulative and civic skills in upper public basic schools in South-West, Nigeria. The overall mean score of 6.04 with standard deviation of 1.892 obtained by respondents indicated that junior secondary school learners possessed moderate level of literacy skill. In terms of UBE goal attainment of numeracy skill, the overall mean score of 4.36 with standard deviation of 2.346 obtained by respondents indicated that junior secondary school learners possessed low level of numeracy skills. With regards to learners' manipulative skill, the overall mean score of 4.24 with standard deviation of 2.188 obtained by respondents indicated that junior secondary school learners possessed low level of manipulative skills. In terms of UBE goal attainment of civic skills, the overall mean score of 5.38 with standard deviation of 1.503 obtained by respondents indicated that junior secondary school learners possessed moderate level of civic skills.

Research Question 2: To what extent are quality assurance strategies (Internal and External) frequently deployed to foster instructional goals attainment among junior secondary schools in south-west, Nigeria?

Table 2: Weighted Mean of Internal and External Deployment of Quality Assurance Strategies to Foster Instructional Goals Attainment in Junior secondary Schools in South-West, Nigeria

Internal Quality				Weighted	
Assurance Strategies	N	Mean	S.D	Mean	Remark
Monitoring	161	28.85	4.679	4.12	Weekly
Inspection	161	28.90	5.014	4.13	Weekly
Supervision	161	24.75	5.140	4.12	Weekly
Evaluation	161	18.18	5.084	3.64	Fortnightly
External Quality					
Assurance Strategies					
Monitoring	161	24.96	5.658	3.57	Termly
Inspection	161	24.36	6.932	3.48	Annually
Supervision	161	20.75	6.151	3.46	Annually
Evaluation	161	17.09	4.741	3.42	Annually

Source: Researcher's Field Study, 2022

Weighted mean rating: Daily/Monthly: 4.50-5.00, Weekly/Termly: 3.50-4.49, Fortnightly/Annually: 2.50-3.49, Monthly/Biennially: 1.50-2.49, Termly/Never: 1.00-1.49

Table 2 revealed the extent to which quality assurance strategies (internal and external) have been deployed to foster instructional goals attainment among junior secondary schools in south-west, Nigeria. The weighted mean score of 4.12 recorded for internal monitoring indicated that internal monitoring quality assurance strategy was deployed by school principal on weekly basis to foster instructional goals attainment among junior secondary schools. The weighted mean score of 4.13 recorded for internal inspection indicated that internal inspection quality assurance strategy was deployed on weekly basis to foster instructional goals attainment among junior secondary schools. The weighted mean score of 4.12 recorded for internal supervision indicated that internal supervision quality assurance strategy was deployed on weekly basis to foster instructional goal attainment among junior secondary schools. The weighted mean score of 3.64 recorded for internal evaluation indicated that internal evaluation quality assurance strategy was deployed fortnightly by school principal to foster instructional goals attainment among junior secondary schools.

With respect to external quality assurance strategies deployed by SUBEB/SMoE officials, results showed that the weighted mean score of 3.57 recorded for external monitoring indicated that external monitoring quality assurance strategy was deployed by SUBEB/SMoE officials on termly basis to foster instructional goals attainment among junior secondary schools. The weighted mean score of 3.48 recorded for external inspection indicated that external inspection quality assurance strategy was deployed on annual basis to foster instructional goals attainment among junior secondary schools. The weighted mean score of 3.46 recorded for external supervision indicated that external supervision quality assurance strategy was

deployed on annual basis to foster instructional goals attainment among junior secondary schools. The weighted mean score of 3.42 recorded for external evaluation indicated that external evaluation quality assurance strategy was deployed annually by SUBEB/Some to foster instructional goals attainment among junior secondary schools.

Null hypothesis 1: Deployment of quality assurance strategies (internal and external monitoring, inspection, supervision and evaluation) is not significantly related to UBE instructional goals attainment (literacy, numeracy, manipulative and civic skills) in junior secondary schools in South-West, Nigeria.

Table 3: Correlation between Internal Quality Assurance Strategies, Instructional Goal Subjects and UBE Instructional Goals Attainment in Junior secondary Schools

	SUBJECTS															
	English Studies				Mathematics				Basic Sc. & Tech				Civic Ed.			
IGA	IM	II	IS	IE	IM	II	IS	IE	IM	II	IS	IE	IM	II	IS	IE
LS	.374	.205	.105	.075												
NS					.177	.141	.042	.045								
MS									.081	.038	.013	.029				
CS													.042	.077	.147	.052

Source: Researcher's Field Study, 2022

N=161; IM= Internal monitoring, II= Internal inspection, IS= Internal supervision, IE= Internal evaluation, LS= Literacy skill, NS= Numeracy skill, MS= Manipulative skill, CS= Civic skill, IGA= UBE instructional goals attainment

* p is significant at 0.05

** p is significant at 0.01

Table 3 presented the correlation matrix between internal quality assurance strategies (monitoring, inspection, supervision and evaluation) of instructional goals subjects (English Studies, Mathematics, Basic Science and Technology and Civic Education) and UBE instructional goals attainment (literacy, numeracy, manipulative and civic skills) in junior secondary schools in South-West, Nigeria. The result indicated that internal monitoring of English Studies teachers was significantly related to UBE instructional goal attainment of learners' literacy skills ($r = 0.374, p < 0.05$). Internal inspection of English Studies teachers was significantly related to UBE instructional goal attainment of learners' literacy skills ($r = 0.205, p < 0.05$). Internal supervision of English Studies teachers was not significantly related to UBE instructional goal attainment of learners' literacy skills ($r = 0.105, p > 0.05$). Internal evaluation of English Studies teachers was not significantly related to UBE instructional goal attainment of learners' literacy skills ($r = 0.075, p > 0.05$).

The results on Table 3 also indicated that internal monitoring of Mathematics teachers was significantly related to UBE instructional goal attainment of learners' numeracy skills ($r = 0.177, p < 0.05$). Internal inspection of Mathematics teachers was not significantly related to UBE instructional goal attainment of



learners' numeracy skills ($r = 0.141, p > 0.05$). Internal supervision of Mathematics teachers was not significantly related to UBE instructional goal attainment of learners' numeracy skills ($r = 0.042, p > 0.05$). Internal evaluation of Mathematics teachers was not significantly related to UBE instructional goal attainment of learners' numeracy skills ($r = 0.045, p > 0.05$).

The results on Table 3 also indicated that internal monitoring of Basic Science and Technology teachers was not significantly related to UBE instructional goal attainment of learners' manipulative skills ($r = 0.081, p > 0.05$). Internal inspection of Basic Science and Technology teachers was not significantly related to UBE instructional goal attainment of learners' manipulative skills ($r = 0.038, p > 0.05$). Internal supervision of Basic Science and Technology teachers was not significantly related to UBE instructional goal attainment of learners' manipulative skills ($r = 0.013, p > 0.05$). Internal evaluation of Basic Science and Technology teachers was not significantly related to UBE instructional goal attainment of learners' manipulative skills ($r = 0.029, p > 0.05$).

The results on Table 3 also indicated that internal monitoring of Civic Education teachers was not significantly related to UBE instructional goal attainment of learners' civic skills ($r = 0.042, p > 0.05$). Internal inspection of Civic Education teachers was not significantly related to UBE instructional goal attainment of learners' civic skills ($r = 0.077, p > 0.05$). Internal supervision of Civic Education teachers was not significantly related to UBE instructional goal attainment of learners' civic skills ($r = 0.147, p > 0.05$). Internal evaluation of Civic Education teachers was not significantly related to UBE instructional goal attainment of learners' civic skills ($r = 0.052, p > 0.05$).

The above results mean that the null hypothesis one which stated that deployment of quality assurance strategies (internal monitoring, inspection, supervision and evaluation) is not significantly related to UBE instructional goals attainment (literacy, numeracy, manipulative and civic skills) in junior secondary schools in South-West, Nigeria was rejected. This finding implies that deployment of quality assurance strategies (internal monitoring and inspection of English Studies and Mathematics teachers) was significantly related to UBE instructional goals attainment of learners' literacy and numeracy skills in junior secondary schools in South-West, Nigeria.

Table 4: Correlation between External Quality Assurance Strategies and UBE Instructional Goals Attainment (Literacy, Numeracy, Manipulative and Civic Skills) in Junior secondary Schools

Variables	M	I	S	E	LS	NS	MS	CS
Monitoring (M)	1							
Inspection (I)	.739**	1						
Supervision (S)	.622**	.759**	1					
Evaluation (E)	.591**	.749**	.767**	1				
Literacy (LS)	.169*	.181*	.258**	.252**	1			
Numeracy (NS)	.220**	.199*	.266**	.277**	.450**	1		

<i>Manipulative (MS)</i>	.408**	.303**	.292**	.284**	.517**	.339**	1
<i>Civic (CS)</i>	.280**	.216**	.193*	.181*	.518**	.161*	.669**

Source: *Researcher's Field Study, 2022*

* p is significant at 0.05

** p is significant at 0.01

Table 4 presented the correlation matrix between external quality assurance strategies (monitoring, inspection, supervision and evaluation) and UBE instructional goals attainment of learners' literacy, numeracy, manipulative and civic skills in junior secondary schools in South-West, Nigeria. The results indicated that external monitoring was significantly related to UBE instructional goal attainment of learners' literacy skills ($r = 0.169, p < 0.05$). External monitoring was significantly related to UBE instructional goal attainment of learners' numeracy skills ($r = 0.220, p < 0.05$). It was also found that external monitoring was significantly related to UBE instructional goal attainment of learners' manipulative skills ($r = 0.408, p < 0.05$). It was also found that external monitoring was significantly related to UBE instructional goal attainment of learners' civic skills ($r = 0.280, p < 0.05$).

The results also indicated that external inspection was significantly related to UBE instructional goal attainment of learners' literacy skills ($r = 0.181, p < 0.05$). External inspection was significantly related to UBE instructional goal attainment of learners' numeracy skills ($r = 0.199, p < 0.05$). It was also found that external inspection was significantly related to UBE instructional goal attainment of learners' manipulative skills ($r = 0.303, p < 0.05$). It was also found that external inspection was significantly related to UBE instructional goal attainment of learners' civic skills ($r = 0.216, p < 0.05$).

Also, the results indicated that external supervision was significantly related to UBE instructional goal attainment of learners' literacy skills ($r = 0.258, p < 0.05$). External supervision was significantly related to UBE instructional goal attainment of learners' numeracy skills ($r = 0.266, p < 0.05$). It was also found that external supervision was significantly related to UBE instructional goal attainment of learners' manipulative skills ($r = 0.292, p < 0.05$). It was also found that external supervision was significantly related to UBE instructional goal attainment of learners' civic skills ($r = 0.193, p < 0.05$).

The results also indicated that external evaluation was significantly related to UBE instructional goal attainment of learners' literacy skills ($r = 0.252, p < 0.05$). External evaluation was significantly related to UBE instructional goal attainment of learners' numeracy skills ($r = 0.277, p < 0.05$). It was also found that external evaluation was significantly related to UBE instructional goal attainment of learners' manipulative skills ($r = 0.284, p < 0.05$). It was also found that external evaluation was significantly related to UBE instructional goal attainment of learners' civic skills ($r = 0.181, p < 0.05$). The results from the null hypothesis stated hereby discovered that deployment of quality assurance strategies (external monitoring, inspection, supervision and evaluation) is not significantly related to UBE instructional goals attainment (literacy, numeracy, manipulative and civic skills) in junior secondary schools in South-West, Nigeria. This means that the null hypothesis was rejected. The overall implication is that the deployment of quality assurance strategies (external monitoring, inspection, supervision and evaluation) was significantly related

to UBE instructional goal attainment of learners' literacy, numeracy, manipulative and civic skills in junior secondary schools in South-West, Nigeria.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The discussion of the findings on the research questions raised and the null hypothesis formulated to guide the study are provided as follows: The analysed results of research question one showed that the instructional goals attainment of learners in the junior secondary school learners was low in terms of literacy, numeracy, manipulative and civic skills. These results corroborated UNICEF's (2020) report that 60% of basic education learners in Nigeria could not read while 80% could barely manipulate figures and aligned with the position of UNESCO (2020) that learners in Nigeria and sub-Saharan Africa are far below target and standard in terms of minimum proficiency in basic skills especially literacy and numeracy. Again, the results reaffirmed the recent submission of UNICEF (2022) that about 70 percent of basic education learners in Nigeria are attending schools without learning the essential life skills of literacy, numeracy, manipulative and civic. Since the the Universal Basic Education programme aimed at eradicating illiteracy, ignorance and poverty, the finding implies that the junior secondary schools in South-West of Nigeria have not attained its goals put in place by the programme. The reasons for the failure of the junior secondary schools in attaining the goals identified could either be poor implementation strategy, inadequate funding, paucity of qualified teachers, poor programme supervision or unconducive and unenabling environment for UBE programme.

The analysed results of research question two showed that internal quality assurance strategies were deployed by principals weekly and fortnightly while external quality assurance strategies were deployed termly and annually to foster instructional goal attainment among junior secondary schools in south-west, Nigeria. This result reechoed Federal Government of Nigeria (2014) declaration that successful implementation of the UBE programme rested predominantly on the extent to which quality assurance strategies are regularly deployed in schools to ensure that stakeholders adhered strictly to the minimum standard of basic education and high level of attainment of the UBE instructional goal. The result however negated the position of UBEC (2015) that internal quality assurance are expected to be deployed daily by principals of basic schools while external quality assurance undertaken by the Universal Basic Education Commission, State Universal Basic Education Board and Local Government Education Authority are expected to be deployed termly. The implication of this finding is that the principals of the junior secondary schools have not been complying with the directives of the UBEC on deploying their quality assurance measure daily since they are the ones that carry out daily administration and management of their schools. This could be one of the reasons while the goals of the programme had not been properly achieved.

The Pearson's Correlation Coefficients between Internal Quality Assurance Strategies (Monitoring, Inspection, Supervision and Evaluation) of Instructional Goal Subjects and UBE Instructional Goals Attainment (Literacy, Numeracy, Manipulative and Civic Skills) in Junior secondary Schools in South-West,

Nigeria showed that deployment of quality assurance strategies (internal monitoring and inspection of English Studies and Mathematics teachers) was significantly related to UBE instructional goals attainment of learners' literacy and numeracy skills in junior secondary schools in South-West, Nigeria. This implies that if adequate monitoring, inspection, supervision and evaluation are well deployed over English, Mathematics, Basic Science and Technology, and Civic Education, it would lead to the attainment of literacy, numeracy, manipulative and civic skills which are the instructional goals of the UBE. Suffice it to say that these four subjects are the core subjects that other subjects rest upon.

Also, the results of Pearson's Correlation Coefficients between External Quality Assurance Strategies (Monitoring, Inspection, Supervision and Evaluation) of Instructional Goal Subjects and UBE Instructional Goals Attainment (Literacy, Numeracy, Manipulative and Civic Skills) in Junior secondary Schools in southwest, Nigeria showed that deployment of quality assurance strategies (external monitoring, inspection, supervision and evaluation) were significantly related to UBE instructional goals attainment of learners' literacy, numeracy, manipulative and civic skills in junior secondary schools in South-West, Nigeria. This finding is in line with the study by Olaleye and Babatope (2013) who described the roles of the supervisors (external quality assurance agents) in the UBE as follows:

1. *Inspection of all aspects of the programme to ensure they are run according to the philosophy and the objectives of the scheme;*
2. *Ascertain that the programme is functioning optimally and that public funds are used judiciously;*
3. *Assessing and reporting on the efficiency of the teaching learning process in different schools;*
4. *Offering professional advice and guidance to teachers and lead teachers and principals to improve the teaching learning process, the school tone and improvement with a view to raising the standard of education.*

All these four roles provide ways to maintain quality assurance in the basic schools by the external quality assurance agents. This implies that monitoring, inspection, supervision, and evaluation by the supervisors or officials of SUBEB and UBEC (as agents of the external quality assurance) are crucial towards the attainment of literacy, numeracy, manipulative and civic skills in the junior secondary schools. The finding portrays that it is not only the school principals that are saddled with the responsibility of the quality assurance, but the SUBEB and UBEC officials also do.

CONCLUSION

This study established the significant positive relationship among quality assurance strategies and learners' instructional goals attainment in junior secondary schools in South-West, Nigeria. Furthermore, the quality assurance strategies for the Universal Basic Education instructional goals attainment are the responsibilities of both the school administrators or principals and the supervisors from the State Universal



Basic Education Board and Universal Basic Education Commission. It was also discovered in this study that, the UBE stakeholders, especially the principals and the teachers had not done enough in the implementation of the programme towards the attainment of the minimum standard of the basic education.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are hereby suggested that:

1. All stakeholders of the Universal Basic Education programme must muster resources together to ensure the learners acquire literacy, numeracy, manipulative and civic skills during their basic education.
2. The principals of junior secondary schools should ensure daily deployment of internal quality assurance strategies of monitoring, inspection, supervision, and evaluation of instructions in their schools.
3. The principals must also ensure high level of attainment of the UBE instructional goals;
4. Supervisors from the SUBEB and UBEC should not relent in their efforts at monitoring, inspecting, supervising and evaluating modes of instructions in the junior secondary schools. They must also ensure the deployment of of the external quality assurance strategies appropriately as required in the UBE policy document.

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