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**AN ASSESSMENT OF SUPERVISOR'S ROLES IN MASS LITERACY DELIVERY IN BORNO STATE**

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***Abstract:** This study assessed supervisors' roles in mass literacy delivery in Borno state. The objectives of the study were in terms of adequacy of visitation of literacy centres by supervisors and supervisors' facilitation of provision of teaching materials to literacy centres. Survey design was used for the study, and a sample which consisted of two hundred and ninety five (295) instructors was randomly selected from a population of five hundred and ninety (590) instructors. Data were gathered from the respondents with a questionnaire prepared by the researcher. The data obtained were analysed using descriptive statistics of frequency counts and percentages. The results of the analysis revealed that: visitation of literacy centres by supervisors was low; the rate at which supervisors facilitate provision of teaching materials to the literacy centres in the state was inadequate and low. On the basis of the findings, it was recommended that, adult education policy makers and administrators, should provide the logistics to enable supervisors visit literacy centres frequently, and that government should provide incentives such as accommodation and better wages so that, the supervisors will give in their best in order to achieve the organizational goal.*

### **Introduction**

Literacy has been variously defined and described simply, as the ability to read, write and compute. This definition was reported to have been expanded by the 1975 Persepolis World Conference. According to Omolewa (1985), the Conference said that "literacy is not only the process of learning the skills of reading, writing and computing, but as a means of contributing to the liberation of man from ignorance and to his full development. In a similar assertion Okeḡara (1981:13) defined literacy in terms of its functionality, hence he posited that;

"a person is literate when he has acquired the essential knowledge and skills which enable him to engage in all those activities in which literacy is required for effective functioning in his group of community, and to continue use these skills towards his own and the community development and for participation in the life of the country" Pg. 13.

As shown in the definitions of literacy above literacy enables individual to develop himself and contribute to the development of his community. It is even observed that a 40 percent rate of literacy is a prerequisite for individual growth and technological take off of nations. On the contrary, illiteracy is found to be associated with inequality, oppression, exploitation, malnutrition and prevalence of preventable diseases. (Yakasai 1996). As significant as literacy is to development, it is unfortunate that Nigeria particularly Borno state has not attained 100 percent literacy rate. The national literacy rate is put at 48.7 percent, (UNESCO 2006). The situation would not have changed significantly in recent time.

In view of the importance of literacy to development, successive governments in Nigeria have launched series of campaigns to eliminate mass illiteracy. As such, Borno state government joined the fight against illiteracy. The state set up Agency for mass literacy on 22<sup>nd</sup> September, 1987 by Edict No. 10 of 1987. The Edict provided legal framework for the Agency to carryout its functions effectively. In line with this vision, the state through the Agency has established many literacy centres across the state. For instance, in 2004, 1,008 literacy centres were established; in 2005, 1,016 centres, 2006 1,158 literacy centres and year 2007 1,405 literacy centres were created. With the increase in the number of literacy centres and the expansion in the enrolment from 25,513 in 2004 to 27,522 in the year 2007, the number of instructors has also increased greatly, from 450 in 2004 to 590 in 2007. (Borno State Agency for Mass Literacy 2007).

The large expansion of the literacy programme brings about the need for supervision if the programme is to succeed. Supervision becomes important in order to ensure quality control through regular and continuous supervision of instructional and other educational services.

### *Statement of the Problem*

While policy makers and administrators make policies and plan mass literacy campaign, supervisors and instructors ensure that policies are executed and plans implemented effectively and efficiently. Yet, many supervisors were not formally trained for their responsibilities and roles. It was as if they learned by "trail and error" which possibly explained why many literacy centres were poorly equipped, performance of learners was poor and turn out rate among instructors was low. Against this backdrop, the study assessed the roles of supervisors in mass literacy delivery in Borno state.

### *Objectives*

The objectives of the study were to determine;

- (i) The adequacy of visitation to literacy centres by supervisors
- (ii) Supervisors' facilitation of the provision of teaching materials to the literacy centres.

### ***Research Questions***

The following research questions were answered:

- (i) How adequate was the supervisors visit to literacy centres?
- (ii) To what extent did supervisors facilitate the provision of teaching materials to literacy centres?

### ***Methodology***

A survey research design was adopted for this study. Survey is usually used to describe a variable or phenomenon, establish its existence or the extent of its occurrence Osuala (2001). In this study the phenomenon being surveyed was supervisor's roles in mass literacy delivery.

The target population for the study comprised all the five hundred and ninety (590) instructors of Borno state Agency for mass literacy. Out of the population, two hundred and ninety five (295) instructors were randomly selected. The sample was drawn from the list of instructors obtained from each zone. In each zone every other instructor from the list was picked, having arranged their names alphabetically. Hence, 50 percent of the instructors' population per zone was selected in all 50% of the total population.

A questionnaire was designed by the researcher. The questionnaire comprised of ten (10) items, and it was divided into two (2) sections. The first, section A, was designed to elicit information on the adequacy of visitation to literacy centres by supervisors. It contains five (5) items. Section B, was designed to elicit information on how supervisors facilitate the provision of teaching materials to the literacy centres. The respondents were required to choose options from a Likert-type scale ranging from strongly agreed (4 point), Agreed (3 points), Disagreed (2 points) to Strongly disagreed (1 points). On validation, copies of the questionnaire were given to experts in the field of mass literacy for vetting, face value assessment was done. While in terms of reliability, the split half reliability technique was used in measuring the reliability of the instrument (questionnaire). The test scores of one half was correlated with those on the other half, the split-half reliability coefficient was equal to 0.72. Hence, the questionnaire was found to be reliable. The copies of the questionnaires were administered by the researcher and six (6) trained research assistants. It took the researcher one week to administer and retrieve the copies of questionnaire. All the 295 copies of the questionnaire issued were well filled and returned.

### ***Data Analysis, Results and Discussion***

The analysis of the data was done by descriptive statistics of percentage and frequency counts.

### Research Question 1

How adequate is the supervisors' visit to literacy centres?

Table 1.1: Percentage Distribution on Responses on Adequacy of Supervisors Visit to Literacy Centres

S/No		SA %	A %	DA %	SD %
1.	Supervisors visit literacy centres on regular basis	40 13.6%	50 16.9%	95 32.2%	110 37.30%
2.	Supervisors assess instructors on weekly basis	60 20.34%	45 15.25%	90 39.51%	100 33.90%
3.	Supervisors visit to literacy centres ensures posting of adequate number of instructors to centres	40 13.60%	50 16.90%	95 32.20%	110 37.30%
4.	Instructors realize their weaknesses as a result of weekly assessment by the supervisors	35 11.86%	45 15.25%	105 35.59%	110 37.30%
5.	Regular visiting by the supervisors improves social well being of instructors	53 17.97%	47 15.93%	75 25.42%	120 40.68%

Source: Fieldwork, 2011

The above table (Table 1.1) presented the frequencies and the percentages of the respondents on aspect of adequacy of supervisors' visits to literacy centres. It was revealed that the visits by supervisors were not adequate as evident in terms of regular visits of literacy centres (37.30%), weekly assessment of instructors (33.90%) supervisors' visits ensure adequate posting of instructors realizing their weakness as a result of weekly assessment by supervisors held a score of 37.30%, and regular visit by the supervisors improve social well being of instructors had a score of 40.68%. Generally, the supervisors adequacy of visit to literacy as revealed in the table shows that, the responses disagreed and strongly disagreed, has an overall average score of (69.50%), respondents rate of the items are very low. It means that supervisory practice especially in terms of visitation was low.

### Research Question 2

To what extent do supervisors facilitate the provision of teaching materials to literacy centres?

Table 1.2: Percentage Distribution on Responses on Supervisors Facilitation of Provision of Teaching Materials

S/No		SA %	A %	DA %	SD %
1.	Supervisors ensures that adequate teaching materials are provided	50 16.95%	40 13.56%	100 33.90%	105 37.29%
2.	Supervisors ensures that adequate funding is made available to facilitate mass literacy delivery	50 16.95%	75 25.42%	90 30.51%	80 27.12%
3.	Supervisors ensures that relevant primers and text for use by the instructors are often provided	40 13.56%	25 8.47%	110 37.30%	120 40.67%
4.	Supervisors ensures that timing of the literacy classes by the agency is conducive to instructors	30 10.17%	60 20.33%	95 32.20%	110 37.30%
5.	Supervisors ensures that instructional facilities were adequately supplied	15 5.08%	70 23.75%	90 30.51%	120 40.68%

Source: Fieldwork, 2011

The above table (Table 1.2) presented the frequencies and the percentages of the respondents on aspect of supervisors facilitation of provision of teaching materials, it was revealed that, supervisors ensures that adequate teaching material are provided, were not adequate as evident in terms of the percentage (37.29%), adequacy of funding is made available to facilitate mass literacy delivery (27.12%), supervisors ensures relevant primers and texts use by the instructors are often provided by the Agency (40.67%), timing of the literacy classes by the agency is conducive to instructors (37.30%), and supervisors ensures that instructional facilities were adequately supplied (40.68%). Generally, the supervisors facilitation of the providing of teaching materials to literacy centres as revealed in the table shows that, the responses disagreed and strongly disagreed has overall average score of (69.50%) respondent rate of the items are very low. This shows that, the provision of teaching materials to literacy centres by supervisors was inadequate and was low.

### Summary of Main Findings

The summary of the major findings of the study revealed that;

1. The adequacy of visitation to literacy centres by supervisors was very low
2. The rate of which supervisors facilitate provision of teaching materials to the literacy centres in the state was low and inadequate.

### Discussion

Attempt was made to rate supervisors' adequacy of visit to the literacy centres so as to enhance the general performance of instructors in the centres. The item dealing with supervisors visits to literacy centres on regular basis scored 37.30%. This is very low; the reason for this score may not be unconnected with the fact that, the supervisors

themselves lack necessary logistics which can enable them go round the centres for the purpose of visits.

Similarly, other items in facilitation in provision of teaching materials to the literacy centres in the state was low, the reason for the general low scores may not be unconnected with lack of facilities, resources and lack of techniques of supervision by the supervisors. This dissatisfaction held by instructors could strongly hold, since most aspects of supervisory techniques which were supposed to constitute repertoire to effective supervision were not in practice. However, all instructors of mass literacy were usually exposed to the same rules and regulations. They also followed the same procedure and all their activities were directed towards the same goals as demanded by the National Policy on Education.

This finding is also consistent with the opinion of Ogunsaju (1992) that effective supervision, depends not only on adequacy of visitation by supervisors but also their manipulation. Effective manipulation of supervisor develops and maintains instructors' competence and hence, the supervisors were always charged with the task of developing most appropriate supervisory techniques which could suit each teaching/learning situation. On whether supervisors facilitate the provision of teaching materials of literacy centres, the scores are generally low. The highest score of 40.67% was scored on the item which stated that, supervisors ensures that relevant primers and texts for use by the instructors are often provided by the agency, this scores lies at very low level.

It is believed today that it was lack of adequate instructional facilities that has brought about the failing standard in the mass literacy delivery in Borno state. When instructional materials are not provided for instructors, the learners are at the receiving end and consequently the society. This is contrary to the objectives of mass literacy delivery and the national objectives which formed the bases of mass literacy in Nigeria.

The centres are meant for the learners, all activities should centre around them, thus, learners were considered as one of the major factors when assessing the roles of supervisors in the system. The highest score of 40.67% is considered as very low supervisors are expected to act as catalyst between the government and the mass literacy agency. It is part of the role of supervisors to ensure adequate provision of instructional materials, and above all provision of conducive atmosphere is created for teaching learning processes.

Nwaogu (2000), is of the opinion that, a supervisors is generally expected to be familiar with a variety of instructional materials and methods, this will help him to know and understand how to advise the instructors, he further stressed that, supervisors should be familiar with the traditional items, such as textbooks, primers, workbook etc. which can be

utilized by the instructors for teaching the learners effectively, and see to its adequate provision by authority concern.

Finally, the result showed that all the items, in the various categories were seen as very low. Based on this, strong recommendations are necessary, so that the Agency concern will strengthen supervisors' role in the delivery of mass literacy.

### **Conclusion**

In any educational programme the gap between developed standard of performance and the actual performance have to be close for the programme to yield any fruitful result and for the realization of the programme objective.

Consequently, efforts should be made of be the supervisory capacity of the adult literacy supervisors so that, they could perform their roles effectively and eventually enhance the performance of literacy in the state.

### **Recommendations**

Based on the findings the following recommendations were made:

- (i) The adult education administrators should provide the logistics to enable supervisor visit literacy centres.
- (ii) That government should provide the incentives needed by the supervisors and provide adequate materials so that the supervisors will give in their best in order to achieve the organizational goals.

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