

# **Adult Education and Extension Services**

Readings and Cases

*in Memory of*

**PROFESSOR Y. Y. DIBAL**

*Editor*

**Ayodele Fajonyomi**

## **CHAPTER 2**

### **Advocacy for Effective Supervision of Adult Literacy Programmes in Nigeria**

**MURTALA A. YUSUF & ABBAS MAHMUD**

**Yusuf and Mahmud** teach in the Department of Adult Education and Extension Services, Usmanu Danfodiyo University, Sokoto

#### **Introduction**

One major instrument for the re-awakening of the dampened hope of individuals in any nation is literacy. Literacy is of great importance to any nation's development and attracts considerable attention in the past and present dispensation. Adult literacy centres are established to run different literacy programmes so as to alleviate illiteracy rate among adult populace for socio-economic development of individuals and the larger society. Adult literacy programmes are mounted because of their impact on peoples' values and attitudes as well as community development. Oyebamiji (2006:249) has remarked that the actualization of the United Nations Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) no doubt puts adult literacy education at the centre of crusade to remove inequitable distribution of wealth, exploitation of the poor and their low

involvement in the mainstream of national socio-political and economic activities.

The actualization of the precious features of adult literacy as described above lies among other things, in an effective teaching and learning process which requires proper monitoring. One strategy for monitoring teaching – learning in learning centre and for enhancing quality and raising standard of instruction which has received a great deal of attention over the years concerns supervision. Supervision according to Musaazi (1982) is defined as a behavior formally provided by the organization for the purpose of directly influencing the teaching behavior in such a way as to improve school teaching. Through supervision an avenue for advising, guiding, refreshing, encouraging, stimulating, improving and over-seeing the general learning activity and improvement of instruction or teaching process is created.

In adult literacy classes, learners are voluntary and they will continue to attend classes when the instructions given by the facilitators are in line with their needs and peculiarities. One important way of ascertaining the compliance of literacy facilitators to the teaching of the learner's needs and programme's objectives is supervision. Through supervision quality of instruction in literacy classes can be improved.

Today, it appears that the quality of instructions given in literacy centres has deteriorated as many literacy instructors are not professionally trained in the art of teaching adult learners. This lapse certainly requires supervision of our adult literacy centres to ensure quality of instruction.

Evidence abounds however, shows that supervision of our literacy centres is rarely in place. Lending credence to this Adult Basic Education and Training Policy (1997:37) reports that supervisors do not come to the literacy centres to see if whether facilitators are implementing the programme as expected. Sometimes facilitators are not sure if they are doing the right things. They even thought that is reason why many learners drop-out. Certainly, facilitators need supervisors' supports for effective learning environment.

Similarly, Yusuf (2011) reported in his study on adult Literacy programmes and women empowerment in Kwara State that lack of adequate supervision and monitoring of adult literacy centres has contributed to the constraints of adult literacy programme for women in Kwara state.

Drawing from the above evidences it is wise to advocate for proper supervision for efficient results of our literacy activities. This forms the focus of this paper.

### **Conceptual Framework**

Supervision as a concept has been described as a modern term that has come to replace the concept of school inspection. Inspection is judgmental and is of more of fault finding activities of the entire school. Morara (1956) cited in Mahmud (2010), explained that modern supervision is used to describe those activities which are primarily and directly concerned with studying and improving the conditions which surround the learning and growth of learners and teachers.

The need to improve the teaching and learning capability of teaching staff and learners is often the basis for supervision in learning environment. Lending credence to this Ijaiya (1991) perceives supervision as a process concerned with growth and development of both human (i. e teachers, publics and other school personnel) and material resources within the school for ultimate benefit of the learners and the society. It is seen as all legitimate efforts made by a designated professional to assist the facilitator to improve on his/her competence so that he/she becomes a self-propelling practitioner as well as ensuring a favourable setting for effective teaching and learning. To Opadokun (2004), supervision can be defined as that service activity that exists to help teachers do their job better.

Supervision is planned for all round improvement of learning environments that seem to affect seriously, the teaching/ learning process especially the programme curriculum, methods of teaching and personality of the facilitators including the learners' involvement in learning process. Thus, according to Opadokun (2004), educational supervision can be seen as an aspect of school administration which focuses primarily upon improvement of teaching and other school activities for ultimate achievement of instructional goals.

The concept of supervision clearly indicates that, it is done in order to make improvement to the learners' growth and development, while to help teacher deliver well teaching. Hence supervision is meant to maintain quality and standard. Paris and Lawton, (1991), argued that no matter the stage a teacher is in, the matter is that, there is need for the person to reflect on

his/her work. Honestly, supervision will contribute to the development of the quality of instructional delivery of literacy facilitators. Thus, supervision is a critical element of professional growth and development of literacy facilitators.

Literacy connotes the ability to acquire the skill of reading, writing and numeracy in any language. Literacy is a peculiar term in education and is frequently used in adult education. There is literacy for children and adults. Normally, at primary school level the children are exposed to basic skills in reading, writing and numeracy. These skills will lay solid foundation for lifelong learning. Normally, every child is expected to acquire basic literacy skills at this level, the inability of many children to acquire these skills has given birth to adult illiteracy later in life. In combating this, adult literacy programme becomes succor. Literacy according to Indabawa (1995) is referred to as the ability to acquire the skills of reading, writing and numeracy in local or foreign language for effective and efficient functioning of individuals in the activities they involve themselves in the society. UNESCO (2002) affirms that literacy is crucial to the acquisition, by every child, youth and essential life skills that enable them to address the challenges they face in life and represents essential step in basic education, which is an indispensable means for effective participation in the societies and economies of the 21st century. In his contribution, Sarumi (2005) opined that literacy can no longer be defined as the ability to read, write and compute or numeric alone, but it must include adaptation to global

information, skills, attitude and knowledge. It can be added that literacy programme should be rich enough to address enormous problems confronting adults in their respective communities.

### **Purpose of supervision in Adult Literacy Programmes**

There are many reasons for carrying out supervision in adult literacy centres. One of the most crucial reasons is to ensure that each individual staff within the learning centre has been performing the duties for which he was scheduled. For example in literacy centre instructors, organizers, supporting staff and learners are found performing different duties directed towards the general goals of meeting the learning needs of the learners. In this case supervision becomes a check to determine the strength and weakness of the quality of adult learning facilitation at literacy centres.

Traditionally, school supervision is focused on teachers and their performance, on the one hand, and administrative efficiency of the school, on the other (Govinda and Tapan, 1999). Moving away from this traditional focus, the system of supervision should be based in addition on the philosophy that every learner should be taken care of. This shift in the focus from the teacher or the school to the learner is significant as, in the final analysis; it is the progress of the learner that matters. Thus adult education supervisor has to ensure that the quality of learning and development of every learner in the literacy centre is supervised.

Benefits of supervision have been mentioned by Wilcox and Gray (1910) in Liman, Aliyulayi, Usman and Ismail (2011) and modified as follows:

- i. It gives supervisors an opportunity to observe learning classes and thereby, a better basis for discussing the development of the centres with literacy organizers.
- ii. It can be a potential learning experience for those involved
- iii. It gives literacy supervisor an opportunity to learn about the literacy centres, the organizers, facilitators, the curriculum and the learners and indicates which way forward.
- iv. It provides useful information for learners in their choice of literacy centres.
- v. It leads to better understanding of literacy centres.

Similarly, Peretomode (1995), identifies the purpose of supervision as:

- i. To influence the behavior of teachers and the teaching process employed to improve learners' learning.
- ii. To ensure that individual teaching staff within the school performs the duties for which he/ she is scheduled.
- iii. To cooperatively develop favourable climate for effective teaching and learning.

Ogunsaju (1983), identified other purpose of supervision as being:

- iv. To know the performance of the teaching staff recruited to teach in the school.
- v. To improve the incompetent facilitators.
- vi. To discover special abilities or qualities possessed by facilitators.
- vii. To provide a guide for staff development.
- viii. To assess the tone of the learning centre and identify some of its most urgent needs.

The pertinent question to ask at this junction is how many of adult education supervisor in the past performed supervision to the benefits given above.

### **Roles and Functions of Adult Education Supervisors**

The nature of supervision demands that every adult education supervisor plays a multifold role. This portrays that adult literacy supervisors can no longer remain outsiders to the literacy centre or to the community, visiting the centre only occasionally and advising the facilitator. They are fully responsible for the quality of functioning of the centre. They are expected to play the following major roles and functions as suggested by Govinda and Tapan (1999: 18), namely:

- As literacy organizer
- As a literacy facilitator
- As a guide and counselor to the facilitator
- As link between the literacy centre, the community and literacy providers
- As key organizer of literacy functioning
- As administrator and academic planner

For a supervisor to be successful, he needs to possess certain qualities that will put him/her over those under his/her supervision. According to Sifawa (2007:6) he must be true to his own ideas but at the same time flexible, loyal, and respectful of the beliefs, rights and dignity of those around him/her.

Additionally, he must be strong willed, consistent and fair in his dealing with other people, especially the facilitators and learners he is supervising. He must be open in his decision making and respect peoples' opinions on matters affecting the learning centre. A good supervisor is also expected to be sincere, firm approachable, ready to help people solve their problems and maintain a relaxing atmosphere that will encourage, stimulate and inspire people around him to work harmoniously.

### **Strategies for Effective Supervision of Adult Literacy Programmes**

In any educational system the aim of supervision is to develop and maintain staff competence, and enhance effective educational services for staff and learners. Every literacy centre regardless of its size and population requires some sort of supervision to function effectively.

In the area of educational supervision, the word "strategy" is often used to refer to the techniques employed by supervisor to make sure that teaching/learning takes place in an ideal atmosphere in schools.

Strategy may also be taken to mean the method used by the adult education supervisor to get the literacy staff and personnel to improve the condition of learning in the literacy centres. Sifawa (2007: 6) acknowledges that strategy of supervision which he called style of supervision is a broad term that covers the general behavior of the supervisor while engaged in his/her official task. Such features according to him include the tone of voice; communication behavior and attitude of the supervisor go along way towards determining the style of the supervisor.

From the above, one can see that the strategy, of the supervision is of great importance in the attempt to improve the quality of instruction. Some of these strategies as suggested by Ogunsaju (1983) shall be considered for effective supervision of our literacy programmes.

### **Literacy Class Visitation**

Literacy class visitation is one of the many useful **strategies** of literacy programmes supervision which can be used to improve instruction. This method can be used to evaluate the literacy staff either by the internal supervisor, that is (literacy coordinator) of the literacy centre or by the external supervisor, **that** is adult education supervisor from the adult education area centre or from the state agency for mass education. This strategy involves the head staff of a literacy centre observing the teaching – learning process with the intension of helping to improve the instructional quality.

During literacy class visitation the supervisor will observe the literacy staff method of teaching, presentation, motivation for learning assignment and verbal interaction in the class, learner interest and classroom atmosphere in general. This type of visit should be unannounced and should be followed by a meeting usually in the coordinator's office so that areas of correction can be pointed out and corrected. It is imperative to note that the class visit should not appear as it is made by a superior person observing an inferior staff. It is not a situation whereby the expert visits the class, discovers what is wrong, and then directs the staff to change certain method of teaching. Rather, the visit should be looked at as if it is being made by a colleague of the staff first to learn what is going on in the centre and literacy class, and second to be helpful to the staff. The head staff through class visit, might discover something that will improve staff teaching.

In addition, the attitude during the meeting that will take place after the visit should be that of the head staff as a friendly colleague who is engaged with the staff in a cooperative study of an educational activity.

Literacy class visitation can be a very effective strategy for supervision if properly managed. It gives the supervisor opportunity to see the literacy staff in action. It also allows the supervisor to see for him/her self how effective the primers used in teaching the learners are. The supervisor also has the opportunity to check whether there are adequate instructional materials in the centre, and to examine the quality and quantity

of the assignment given to the learners by the literacy facilitators.

### **Collegial Supervision**

Collegial supervision is another strategy of supervision that can be used to improve instruction. The term “collegial” according to Sifawa (2007: 6) relates to a body of person having a common purpose. It is a team concept. Collegial supervision is a process of involving staff in the supervision of one another. The idea is that, colleagues normally help themselves informally and this can be used to improve instruction. It gives competent staff the opportunity of helping other staff in almost as many ways as supervisor are able to help them. This method works best in an atmosphere where there is trust and where colleagues have good interpersonal relationship. It also works where there are many literacy classes in a literacy centre. Some literacy facilitators can visit other facilitators in their classes. From this experience they can learn how to organize and manage learners in their classes. They can also benefit from the teaching method used by other facilitators and from how resources are effectively used in the classes.

### **Inter-literacy Centre Visitation**

This strategy of supervision is similar to collegial supervision. The difference here is that instead of staff supervising staff in the same literacy centre, staff may be giving permission to visit staff in other literacy centres to observe their teaching method and share ideas with them. In addition, the

interliteracy centre visitation strategy of supervision can also help literacy facilitators to learn new method of teaching that are practice in other literacy centres. Staff can also benefit from the use of new teaching materials, teaching aids and equipment in the class. During interliteracy centre visitation, weak facilitators or experienced facilitators can improve their teaching skills by watching some experienced staff working in other centres. Inter-literacy centre visitation is a very useful technique that can promote good relationship between centres in addition to exposing staff to better method of teaching in more effective classroom management. Literacy coordinator should allow their staff to participate in this system for better result.

### **Micro - Teaching Technique**

Micro-teaching technique is a strategy of supervision that gives staff the opportunity for self-appraisal. Micro teaching according to Dennis (1982) is defined as a scaled down teaching exercise in terms of time, number of learners and content. It is a method which enables student teachers or in-service teachers to practice a skill by teaching a short lesson to a small number of learners usually student teachers colleagues. It is a process that makes it possible for a staff to participate in an actual teaching situation while the staff will have immediate feed back on his or her teaching. The method is also very effective because it allows the staff to try out and practice certain teaching skills and the mistake later, and determine how to correct the error, all without the risk of an actual teaching situation. A supervisor, using an

appraisal guide, usually rates the lesson and then discusses it with the student teacher. The appraisal guide used by the supervisor adds to the comments of the supervisor. After the analysis, the in-service teacher is expected to alter his approach if necessary, and later reteaches the lesson to another group of learners.

The most important point in micro-teaching is practiced in terms of definable, observable, measurable and controllable teaching skills. It equally allows practicing facilitators receive a great deal of feedback information about their performance.

### **Workshop**

The workshop is another strategy of supervision that can be used for improving instruction. The workshop can be organized by adult education supervisor for adult literacy staff and personnel. It offers participants the opportunity to learn about new ideas and practice in their field of specialization. When a workshop is organized or conducted, an expert in the area concerned is usually in attendance. He or she will give demonstration and the group of literacy staff at the workshop will have the opportunity to participate in problem solving activities.

### **In-services Training**

Another technique of supervision that is commonly used to improve instruction is in-service training. In-service training refers to professional learning experiences of people who are employed as staff. It normally takes place after the completion

of some programme of staff evaluation known as pre-service education. Pre-service education is the initial training that staff had before coming in to teaching profession. Most of adult literacy facilitators are pedagogically trained with in-service training in andragogy; they can better serve their clients. Supervisors usually run in-service training course for staff in order to help them become familiar with new method of instruction and better way of reaching learners. In-service training is very effective because, when literacy staff get back to their various centres, as they can practice what they have just learnt in their classes. They can also introduce these new methods to their fellow staff.

In-service training according to Sifawa (2007:6) has been widely used to train staff, head staff and even supervisors when ever new systems or courses are being introduced into the school system. When members of teaching staff return to their schools, they then start to practice the new techniques and use them to improve teaching and learning.

### **Conclusion**

The actualization of an effective and efficient literacy delivery depends among others in an ineffective supervision. Supervision leads to delivery of quality instruction. It improves teaching competence of literacy facilitators and helps to monitor the involvement of adult learners in the teaching/ learning process. To effectively carry out supervision of adult literacy programmes in Nigeria agencies for mass education must wake

up to their responsibilities by taking supervision exercise of their programmes more seriously. Government must be convinced why supervision of literacy programmes in particular and other adult and non-formal education programmes in general must be financed. Honestly, with application of the proposed supervision strategies in this paper can go a long way to improve the teaching/learning activities in our literacy centres.

### **References**

- Adult Basic Education and Training Policy Document (1997). *Policy document on adult basic education and training*. Pretoria: Department of Education.
- Dennis, L. (1982). *An introduction to teaching and learning*. London: Hodder and Stoughton.
- Govinda, R. and Tapan, S. (1999). *Quality education through school-based supervision and support: the case of GSS primary schools in Bangladesh*. Paris: UNESCO
- Ijaiya, N. Y. S. (1991). *A guide to supervision of instruction*. Ilorin: My Grace Graphics.
- Indabawa, S. A. (1995). "Literacy and development in the developing World: A Critique of the position of the German Adult Education Association (D.V.V.)" *Kano Journal of Education Studies (KAJEST)*.

- Liman, A., Aliyulayi A., Usman, M. M & Ismail, M. M. (2011). *Problems and prospects of school inspection. A case study of State Universal Basic Education Board Sokoto.* Unpublished B.Ed project submitted to the Department of Adult Education & Extension Services, Usmanu Danfodiyo University, Sokoto.
- Mahmud, A. (2010). *Assessment of the achievement of nomadic education programme in Kaduna State.* Unpublished M.Ed Dissertation submitted to Department of Education, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria.
- Musaazi, J. C. S (1982). *The theory and practice of education administration.* Hongkong: Macmillan press limited
- Ogunsaju, S. (1983). *Educational supervision: perspective or practices in Nigeria.* Ile-Ife: University Press
- Opadokun, O. A.(2004). *Introduction to educational planning, administration and supervision.* Ilorin: Integrity Publication
- Oyebamiji, M. A. (2006). Impact of non- governmental organizations on the promotion of literacy education for women in Rivers State of Nigeria. *Adult Education in Nigeria. 11, 249-258.*

- Paris S. C and Lawton, T. A (1991). *A development perspective on standard achievement testing*.
- Peretomode, V. F. (1995). Introduction to educational planning and supervision. Lagos: Joja
- Sarumi, A. (2005). Historical antecedents of adult literacy education in Nigeria: Key issues and challenges in *African Journal of Historical Sciences in Education*, 1 (2) 7-18.
- Sifawa, H. K. (2007). *Supervision of staff*. Being a paper presented at a 3-day training workshop for principals, vice principals, Head of Departments and Teachers of Junior secondary school on Human Resource Management skills organized by Usmanu Danfodiyo University, Sokoto, Faculty of Education and Extension service in collaboration with Sokoto State. Universal Basic Education Board.
- UNESCO (2002). EFA global monitoring report 2002. Education for All- is the World on Track? Paris: UNESCO.
- Yusuf, M. A. (2011). *Adult Literacy programmes and women empowerment in Kwara State*. Unpublished M/Ed Dissertation submitted to Department of Adult Education and Community services, Bayero University, Kano.