

## **Teacher Attitude to Inspectors and Inspection: Quality Control**

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### **Abstract**

*The study assessed the attitude of teachers in Lagos State to inspectors and inspection. The study took the form of a survey. Two hundred and fifty teachers from public secondary schools were selected as samples for the study using stratified random sampling technique. The instruments used for the data collection was the Teacher's Questionnaire on Evaluation of the Inspectorate Department (TQEID). Analysis of data was done using frequency counts and percentages. The results revealed that teachers have negative attitude to both inspectors and inspection. These findings have implications for the process of quality control within the educational system in Lagos State in particular and Nigeria in general. In view of the findings of this study, it was recommended that only professionally qualified teachers with minimum of ten years teaching experience should be employed or drafted as education inspectors so that they can work with maturity when interacting with the teachers during inspection. The inspectors should be trained regularly on the principles of human relations and effective communication. These will help to change the negative attitude of teachers to inspectors and inspection to positive.*

**Keywords:** Teacher Attitude; School Inspection; Education Inspectors.

### **Introduction**

All over the world various stakeholders –the government, parents, employers, non-governmental organizations etc. invest heavily in education and the story is not different here in Nigeria. This is so because many people believe that education can solve most if not all social problems. In view of this fact, the education system should be accountable to all the stakeholders, that they are getting value in return for their investments. According to Alade (2002), accountability emphasizes finding out the extent to which the education system is achieving its objectives and whether the money being spent on it is being spent

Judiciously, it could also highlight areas where improvement will be required. This is possible if the government continuously monitors the performance of our schools through regular inspection to ensure that they are doing what they were set up to do in accordance with the country's education policies- that is, there should be quality control in our schools.

Monitoring the performance of our schools is a major duty of the inspectors of education which they perform during inspection in schools. The need to make the educational system accountable is therefore very obvious but it has not been given appropriate and adequate attention. Olaniyan (1994) lamented that “one of the areas in education in this country that has not received the attention it deserves is the inspection of schools”.

The nation has not been able to benefit maximally from inspection of schools for various reasons which include:

- Inadequate funding of the Inspectorate Department;
- Inadequate number of inspectors;
- Lack of autonomy for the Inspectorate Department;
- Inappropriate staffing of the Inspectorate Department etc.

(Alade, (2002)).

The poor attention given to school inspection may not be unconnected with the observation that the standard of our education has fallen and it is still falling (Odiete, 1988; Abolade, 1994; Obemeata, 1995; Usman, 2001 and Alade, 2002). In this regard, the teacher is one of the culprits because he is a major factor in the achievement of quality in the Educational system. The teacher’s personality, what he teaches and how he teaches are crucial to successful classroom learning. Teachers need supervision for reasons which include the following:

- some of them were trained through ‘crash’ programmes (Fafunwa, 1974 and Adesina, 1980);
- new entrants into the profession are not equipped to deal with problems teachers encounter in the course of their duties (Obemeata, 1995);
- doubts are being cast on the quality of teachers turned out to teach (Chukwu, 1990);
- the qualities of the programmes in the institutions where the teachers are trained are being queried (Obemeata,(1995).

It cannot therefore be denied that the untrained, the inexperienced and the under-qualified teachers in the educational system also need professional help and guidance. Supervising the teachers is a necessity and it is a major responsibility of the inspectors. Aiyepku, (1982) asserted that only inspectors can give this required professional guidance. He pointed out further that the good, well qualified and competent teachers can still be encouraged to do their work even better, thereby improving the learning and teaching environment in schools. Nwakwo, (1981) emphasized that the inspectors more than the administrator, planner or any other participant in the business of education are most qualified to harmonize and reconcile the various ingredients that make up education, that is, the inputs, the processes and to a less extent, the output.

The National Policy on Education (NPE) has put the responsibility of ensuring uniform standard and quality control of education on the Federal and States Ministries of Education

through the Federal Inspectorate Services (FIS) and the Inspectorate Department of States' Ministries of Education and the Local Government Education Authorities at all levels below the tertiary level (NPE, 2004). However, with all these provisions in place, not much can be achieved without the right attitude of teachers to inspectors and the process of inspection.

Attitude is a concept that has been variously defined by many. For example, Chukwu, (1990), Araromi, (1987), Corney, (1975), Mehrens, (1973) and Emeke, (1996). For the purpose of this study however, the definition given by Corney (1975) will be adopted. He defined attitude as "a predisposition to act or behave positively or negatively towards an object a person or a group of people". Attitude held by others are not observable, they must be inferred by others from behaviour because while one might conceal one's own attitude, only one's public behaviour can receive objective study (Chukwu, (1990)) Thus, investigators depend heavily on behavioural indices of attitudes like what people say or on their responses to questionnaires or on physiological signs e.g. change in heart beat rate.

Emeke, (1996) asserted that a positive attitude is likely to engender achievement of a goal or objective than a negative attitude. Inspectors are very necessary in the supervision of instructional and administrative activities in the pre-tertiary institutions. It is considered very important therefore that the teachers with whom they interact during inspection should have positive attitude first to them as inspectors and secondly to the process of inspection. This is the only way of ensuring that the inspection exercises will produce desired results.

Attitudes are learned and they can be changed if it is deemed necessary (Mehrens, 1973 and Okosieme, 1990). However, it is the opinion of the researcher that we cannot decide to alter, modify or reinforce attitudes until we know what the current status is, hence we need to find out the status of the attitudes of teachers to inspectors and the process of inspection.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Inspection is a very important process used for ensuring quality control in schools. Inspectors are the education officers who are charged with this responsibility. The different categories of teachers in the school system need the assistance of the Inspectors for various reasons which include correction, information, advice, and even counseling to keep them professionally up-to-date and make them continually effective. The interactions between inspectors and the teachers during inspection are very important to the education system. The success of inspection depends heavily on a positive disposition of teachers towards inspectors and inspection. This study therefore assessed the attitude of teachers towards inspectors and inspection.

### **Research Questions**

The two main questions asked in order to direct the study were:-

- (i) What is the attitude of Lagos State teachers to the process of inspection?
- (ii) What is the attitude of Lagos State teachers to the inspectors of education?

**Methodology**

**Design:** This study is a descriptive survey.

**Sample and sampling technique:** The population of study comprised the teachers of public secondary schools in Lagos State. In all, two hundred and fifty (250) teachers were involved. A two-staged stratified random sampling procedure was used to select the teachers who responded to the questionnaire used for the study. Lagos State Education Districts (LEDs) were first divided into the five geo-political zones of Ikorodu, Badagry, Ikeja, Lagos and Epe. The zones were later reduced to 4 because Epe and Ikorodu zones were merged due to their relatively small number of secondary schools, thus giving Ikorodu, Badagry Ikeja and Lagos zones.

**Table 1: The Distribution of Lagos Education Districts into Zones and the Number of Teachers Chosen from Each Zone**

ZONE	EDUCATION DISTRICT	NO OF SCHOOLS	NO OF TEACHERS CHOSEN
LAGOS	MAINLAND	66	77
	LAGOS ISLAND	20	
	MUSHIN	42	
	SURU-LERE	62	
	ETI-OSA	38	
BADAGRY	BADAGRY	26	48
	OJO	26	
	AJEROMI-IFELODUN	40	
	APAPA	12	
EPE/IKORODU	AMUWO-ODOFIN	38	64
	IKORODU	48	
	EPE	54	
	SOMOLU	34	
	KOSOFE	34	
IKEJA	IBEJU-LEKKI	18	61
	IKEJA	28	
	AGEGE	30	
	IFAKO-IJAIYE	34	
	ALIMOSHO	38	
	OSHODI-ISOLO	60	

The teachers who were included in the sample of this study were selected randomly from each zone. This was based on the assumption that most of the teachers would have had contacts with the inspectors at one point or the other in the course of their duties.

**Instrument:** - A questionnaire – Teachers Questionnaire on Evaluation of the Inspectorate Department (TQEID) was used to collect the data. The instrument was constructed by the researcher based on the information from related literature and inputs from teachers, principals and inspectors. The TQEID has two sections – A and B. Section A provided general information about the teachers like sex, academic qualifications, LED, and teaching experience. Section B was used to elicit information about the teachers’ attitude to inspection, teachers’ attitude to inspectors, the frequency of inspection carried out on them as teachers, teachers’ ratings of the extent of achievement of the objectives of the Inspectorate Services and what the teachers considered as factors militating against the effective functioning of the inspectors. The content and face validities of the TQEID were established by the assistance of Ph. D Students at the International Centre for Educational Evaluation (ICEE), University of Ibadan, three inspectors, two teachers and two retired school principals. The Cronbach Alpha values for the items on the Teachers’ attitude to inspection scale ranged from 0.79 to 0.88 while those of the items on the Teachers’ attitude to inspectors scale ranged from 0.70 to 0.8

**Administration:** - Copies of the TQEID were given to the teachers used in the study through some lecturers in the School of Education, Adeniran Ogunsanya College of Education Ijanikin who visited the schools to assess their students who were doing teaching practice in these schools. The researcher used this method because it was faster, more economical and it allowed the teachers to respond freely to the questionnaires. If the researcher had taken them personally, the teachers would have introduced some bias in their responses because the researcher was an education inspector in the State. The completed copies of the TQEID were returned through the students-teachers to their lecturers. The researcher collected them from the office of the Dean; School of Education after the teaching practice exercise had been completed. The period of administration was six weeks which was the period used for teaching practice in the school.

**Analysis of Data:** - The data was analyzed using percentages and mean scores.

## **Results**

**Research question 1:** - What is the attitude of Lagos State teachers to the process of inspection?

The responses of teachers to each item on the attitude of teachers to inspection scale are presented in Table 2. The table shows the frequencies and percentages (in parentheses) of their responses to each item. The average total rating on the attitude scale was 42.4. It indicated that the teachers’ attitude to inspection was generally negative.

**Research Question 2:-** What is the attitude of teachers in Lagos State to the inspectors of education?

**Table 2: Responses of Teachers to the Teachers' Attitude to Inspection Scale**

S/N	STATEMENTS	AGREED		DISAGREED	
		N	%	N	%
1.	Inspection helps teachers to teach better.	93	(37.3%)	157	(62.8%)
2.	Inspection brings teachers' lapses under focus.	43	(17.2%)	207	(82.5%)
3.	I do not like inspection.	208	(83.2%)	42	(16.8%)
4.	Inspections should not be allowed in schools.	222	(88.8%)	28	(11.2%)
5.	Inspection will make my efforts as a teacher appreciated.	88	(35.2%)	162	(64.8%)
6.	Inspection puts teachers under stress.	150	(60.0%)	100	(40.0%)
7.	Inspection is necessary in schools.	20	(8.0%)	230	(92%)
8.	I will like to be inspected regularly to be properly focused in my work.	116	(46.4%)	134	(53.6%)
9.	Inspection helps schools to improve generally.	41	(16.4%)	209	(83.6%)
10.	I like inspection.	31	(12.4%)	219	(87.6%)
11.	Inspection is quite interesting.	93	(37.2%)	157	(62.8%)
12.	Inspection should be restricted to particular periods of the term or session.	141	(56.4%)	109	(43.6%)
13.	Teachers are already trained so they do not need inspection.	206	(82.4%)	44	(17.6%)
14.	Inspection is very boring.	118	(71.2%)	72	(28.8%)
15.	Inspection puts teachers on trial.	133	(53.2%)	117	(46.8%)
16.	Inspection keeps me informed professionally.	97	(38.8%)	153	(61.2%)
17.	Inspection makes the principals appreciate their teachers.	116	(46.6%)	134	(53.6%)
18.	Inspection brings more trouble than good in the school.	208	(83.2%)	42	(16.8%)
19.	Inspection day is bad day in the school.	224	(89.6%)	26	(10.4%)
20.	Inspection exposes teachers to ridicule.	193	(77.2%)	57	(22.8%)

Table 3 shows the frequency of teachers who agreed and those who disagreed with each item of the Teachers' Attitude scale. The percentage score of each frequency is indicated within parentheses. The average score of teachers on this scale is 45.2. This indicated that the teachers had a negative attitude towards inspectors.

**Table 3: Responses of Teachers to the Teachers' Attitude to Inspectors Scale**

S/N	STATEMENTS	AGREED		DISAGREED	
		N	%	N	%
1.	Inspectors are of immense assistance to the school system.	53	(21.2% )	197	(78.8% )
2.	Inspectors encourage teachers to improve their performance.	39	(15.6% )	211	(84.4% )
3.	Inspectors are never satisfied with what they see.	126	(50.8% )	123	(49.2% )
4.	Inspectors are too demanding in their duties.	127	(50.8% )	123	(49.2% )
5.	Inspectors tell teachers off in the presence of their students.	203	(81.2%)	47	(18.8% )
6.	I like inspectors.	68	(27.2% )	182	(72.8% )
7.	Inspectors are friendly people.	97	(38.8% )	153	(61.2% )
8.	Inspectors are fault finders.	125	(50.0% )	125	(50.0% )
9.	Inspectors are dictators.	150	(60.0% )	100	(40.0% )
10.	Inspectors are needed in the school system.	39	(15.6% )	211	(84.4% )
11.	Teachers can perform well without inspectors.	96	(38.4% )	154	(61.6%)
12.	Inspectors dislike teachers.	207	(82.2% )	43	(17.2%)
13.	Inspectors act as colleague of teachers	120	(48.0% )	130	(52.0% )
14.	I dislike the presence of inspectors in my class.	210	(84.0% )	40	(16.0% )
15.	I dislike inspectors.	220	(88.0%)	30	(12.0%)
16.	I appreciate it when I am corrected by inspectors.	44	(17.6% )	206	(82.4% )
17.	Inspectors never see anything good done by a teacher.	190	(76.0% )	60	(24.0% )
18.	Inspectors are good advisers to teachers.	72	(28.8% )	178	(71.2% )
19.	I welcome inspectors in my class.	48	(19.2% )	202	(80.8% )
20.	Inspectors will praise me when I deserve to be praised.	66	(26.4% )	184	(73.6% )

**Discussion of Results**

The result showed that in Lagos State teachers appeared to have a slightly negative attitude to inspection. The teachers' attitude to inspectors is consistent with the findings of Lateef, (1998) who in his study sampled 100 teachers from 10 LEDs in Lagos State. This negative status of the attitude of teachers to inspection is not good for the school system. It seems nothing meaningful can be achieved from the process of inspection since teachers are not favourably disposed towards it. The negative attitude of teachers to inspection could be due

to the fact that people naturally resent being 'watched' or supervised and not just because the teachers see inspection as bad. Ogunsaju, (1988) subscribed to this assertion.

This situation does not appear hopeless because the teacher's responses to some of the items on the scale showed areas where the teachers had their resentment with the process of inspection. For example, more than half of the respondents agreed with statements 6 and 15 on the instrument which say that teachers are always on trial and under stress during inspection. If these areas are looked into and properly addressed, it is likely that the status of teachers' attitude to inspection would be upgraded.

To the first statement on the scale, which says 'Inspection helps teachers to teach better', only 37.3% of the teachers agreed while 62.8% disagreed. Many factors could have accounted for the pattern of responses obtained to this particular statement. For those who disagreed, it is likely that they responded like that because they disliked the inspectors and every thing associated with them. They did not really consider the context and the implication of the statement. Actually, teachers know that inspection helps teachers to teach better because the lapses observed during the inspection process would have been pointed out and suggestions for improvement given. Under the supervision of the Principal, the Vice- principal and the Head of Departments at the internal level, such observed lapses will be corrected hence teaching will be better delivered.

It is also likely that the pattern of responses to the statements came up because the teachers could not readily differentiate between real inspection as carried out by the State Inspectors and the activities of the Monitoring & Investigating (M&I) officers from the Zonal Offices of Teaching Service Commission (TESCOM). To them these officers – the Inspectors and M&I officers – are always in schools to 'inspect teachers'. Awe, (2000) and Osinowo, (2000) both agreed that the functions and activities of these groups of officers differ within the school system. The Inspectors are the only ones legally authorized to carry out the functions of quality control in schools by going through the various records kept by the by the teachers, pointing out lapses observed and giving information towards improvement.

The M&I officers on the other hand visit schools more regularly to monitor mainly the personnel at work and to see that the teachers keep their records up to date so as to justify their salaries. As a matter of fact, these two groups of officers deal with the same records but for different purposes. How well these records are kept should not be the concern of the M&I officers because it is not their duty. However, many of them overstep their bounds by dabbling into the area of quality control – a function which they have not been trained to handle – and in the process, they harass the teachers and pass across wrong information and instructions which inspectors readily point out when they visit schools for inspection purposes. It is not uncommon to hear teachers saying that the some of the lapses being pointed out were the results of corrections made at the instance of an "inspector" or some "inspectors" who visited the school before the inspectors' visit.

It is pertinent here, to say that the teachers fear being involved in any way with the M&I officers. They usually wielded the 'big stick' –asking the school Principal not to pay the salaries of erring teachers until, such teachers are cleared by the TESCOM Office. On the hand, Education inspectors can only plead with teachers and the principals to ensure that the observed lapses are corrected as suggested. Inspectors can only 'bark' they cannot 'bite' because they have no disciplinary powers over the teachers. Unfortunately, the inability of the teachers to distinguish between inspectors and the M&I officers have made the teachers to assume the two bodies to be the same (Awe, (2000)). Therefore, the attitude they have towards the M&I officers who can punish their negligence in various ways is the same attitude they have transferred to the inspectors whose main responsibility is to ensure that teaching and learning processes are effective in schools. This definitely, is a case of transferred aggression. It is therefore not surprising that only 12.4% of the teachers agreed with statement 10 on the scale which says "I like inspection" and 83.2% of the teachers agreed with statement 3 which says "I dislike inspection." These two statements showed the consistency of the teachers' feelings towards inspection.

A high percentage of the teachers agreed that inspection brings more trouble than good (82%) and that inspection day is usually a bad day in the school (89.6%). From observations, these statements are true only for erring teachers who would have abandoned their official responsibilities over a period of time, especially in the areas of coverage of the curriculum (which is usually time-bound) and record keeping. The few teachers who are always up to date in their official assignments are not likely to agree with these statements- hence the low percentage recorded for those who disagreed with them (16.8% and 10.4%). This is because they are not likely to face any stress or ridicule in the course of inspection. They would not be found wanting in any way but they would be encouraged to improve in their teaching preparations and strategies. They are also informed if there are changes or innovations in the curriculum. To these teachers, inspections will be interesting and informative. They will also welcome inspection at any time during the academic session irrespective of who the person conducting the inspection is. These teachers will also always be proud to be under focus, knowing that references that will be made to them at the end of the inspection (when oral reports are being given to the school principal) will be for commendation and not condemnation.

On the attitude of teachers to inspectors in Lagos State, the average score on the Teachers' Attitude to Inspectors scale showed the teachers' attitude to be negative. The real feeling of the teachers towards inspectors was captured in their responses to statement 5 – "I like inspectors" (27.2% agreed while 72.8% disagreed) and statement 15- "I dislike inspectors" (88% agreed while 12% disagreed). This result is consistent with the findings of Adegbesan, (1995) who carried out a similar study in Ogun State. That the teachers' attitude to inspection is negative may not be strange because from history, the 'colonial inspectors' went to schools to really harass the teachers and find as many faults as possible with the schools they inspected. They were fond of bullying and insulting teachers even in the presence of pupils (Aiyepku, (1983)). These 'colonial inspectors' have unfortunately given inspectors a bad

image. Also it had been earlier explained that the teachers confused the functions and activities of inspectors with those of the M&I officers (who they fear very much) to be the same.

Many of the teachers, according to their pattern of responses to the Teachers' Attitude to inspectors scale, see inspectors as fault finders, dictators, too demanding, people who are never satisfied with what they see and who never see anything good done by a teacher (statements 8,9,4,3 and 17). This situation can only be blamed on the nature of the inspectors' assignment in schools. Every inspector visits a school with the intention of leaving such school better than he/she met it. This is why even when the teachers feel they have done everything right especially in the area of record keeping, the inspector must still encourage them not to relent in their effort but to strive towards improvement. This is the only way by which to ensure that standard of education will not fall (Obemeata, J. O, (1995)).

The teachers' response to statement 5 – "Inspectors tell teachers off in the presence of their students" showed that 81.2% agreed while 18.8% disagreed. The 'modern day' inspectors have been trained particularly not to correct or dress down teachers in the presence of students if at all it must be done. So, if anything like this occurs in the school, it is very likely that the culprit in this case will not be a 'genuine' inspector as already mentioned. The inspectors, like school guidance counselors cannot afford to let anything negative destroy the much needed cordial relationship with their clients (teachers) because when this happens, nothing beneficial can result from that inspection and it also affect subsequent inspections too.

To statement 7 – "Inspectors are friendly people", only 38.8% of the teachers agreed. If according to the teachers, the inspectors are not friendly, then there is need for the inspectors to change in this aspect, because it will not enhance the establishment of rapport which is needed for a meaningful interaction between the inspectors and the teachers (Olayinka, (1995)). It is therefore not a surprise that only 17.6% of the teachers agreed with statement 16 on the Attitude to inspection Scale which says "I appreciate it when I am corrected by inspectors".

Another perspective to the explanation of the negative attitude of teachers to inspectors is the characteristics of the inspectors. Alade, (2002) found out that that most of the Lagos State inspectors were young both in age and in service. Many of them were fresh university graduates who had no classroom teaching experience beyond the twelve weeks teaching practice exposure they received as undergraduates. Some of the inspectors did not even have professional qualification in teaching, yet, they were inspecting experienced professionals. It is therefore reasonable for the experienced teachers to say they had nothing to learn from the inspectors.

The teacher's attitude to inspectors is not very negative (with an average score of 45.2). This may not be unrelated with the change in the image of the inspectors to a more favourable one. The 'modern inspector' is more friendly and humane and his primary interest is to help

teachers to do their work in order to improve the learning environment for children (Aiyepku, (1983)). It should be noted that with the 'modern inspectors', the goal of supervision has not changed only the means to achieve the goals have changed.

One reason for the negative attitude of teachers to both inspection and inspectors could be as a result of the fact that they had really not seen changes in the schools resulting from reports sent in by inspectors. Hence, they see the exercise as a waste of time and the inspectors as 'toothless bulldogs' that can only point out lapses but cannot do much to correct them because they are not adequately supported by the Government. Another reason could be that the inspectors are not matured enough for the job.

The negative attitude of teachers to inspection and inspectors should be a matter of concern to educational administrators. Series of seminars and workshops should be organized for this purpose so that their attitude can be changed to positive. This will bring about a healthy working relationship between the teachers and the inspectors. It can be assumed that a positive attitude to inspection can influence positive attitude to inspectors (who conduct inspections) and it should be strongly encouraged.

### **Conclusion and Recommendations**

In concluding this paper, the following recommendations are made to enhance the effectiveness of inspection and upgrade the attitude of teachers to inspectors and inspection:

1. Only professional teachers with not less than ten years of teaching experience should be recruited as Education Inspectors. This will guarantee that the inspector has adequate knowledge to pass across and that they have the maturity with which to relate properly and decently with teachers.
2. Seminars and workshops should be organized for teachers regularly to let them appreciate the need for inspections and the inspectors in the educational system. Such seminars should educate teachers about the functions and the activities of the inspectors and how they are different from other official visitors to the schools.
3. Inspectors should be trained to develop good human relations as this, is important for changing the negative status of the teachers' attitude towards them positively.

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