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**TOTAL QUALITY MANAGEMENT (TQM) PRACTICES  
ADOPTED BY HEAD TEACHERS FOR SUSTAINABLE  
PRIMARY EDUCATION IN NORTHERN SENATORIAL  
DISTRICT OF ONDO STATE, NIGERIA**

**Ehinola Gabriel Babatunde (Ph.D)<sup>1</sup>**

<sup>1</sup>Senior Lecturer,  
Department of Educational Management,  
Faculty of Education  
Adekunle Ajasin University,  
Akungba, Ondo State,  
Nigeria.

**Akinfolarin Akinwale Victor<sup>2</sup>**

<sup>2</sup>Research Scholar,  
Department of Educational Management  
and Policy,  
Nnamdi Azikiwe University,  
Awka, Anambra State,  
Nigeria.

**ABSTRACT**

*The study determined the total quality management (TQM) practices adopted by head teachers for sustainable primary education in Northern Senatorial District of Ondo State. Two specific purposes were formulated and two research questions guided the study. A descriptive survey design was adopted for the study. The population of the study comprised all the 250 head-teachers and teachers in all the 250 primary schools in the six LGAs in Northern Senatorial District of Ondo State. Proportionate stratified sampling technique was used to sample 200 respondents made up of 50 head-teachers and 150 teachers in the six LGAs. The researchers-developed instrument titled “Total Quality Management Practices adopted by Head Teachers Questionnaire (TQMHQ)” was used for data collection. The 14 items instrument was validated by three research experts. The reliability of the instrument was ascertained using Cronbach alpha which yielded the overall reliability co-efficients of 0.76. Data analysis was done using mean and standard deviation. The findings of the study revealed among others that both head teachers and teachers’ agreed that head teachers adopt most of the teamwork practices for sustainable primary education in Northern Senatorial District of Ondo State by; involving teachers in developing the school vision and mission, encouraging teachers to work in teams to promote continuous improvement, collaborating with teachers to attain the school goals, setting up school committees to enhance teamwork among staff, and encouraging inter-personal relationship with teachers to build healthy team spirit in the school. It was recommended among others that School leaders should partner with the State of Ministry of Education in organizing continuous training programmes for both teaching and non-teaching staff and also sponsor teachers on conferences, ICT proficiency courses, and grant them study leave to update their existing knowledge. Conclusion was drawn based on the findings.*

**KEYWORDS:** *Total quality management, sustainability, primary education*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The realization of sustainable development in many aspects of a nation's economy is a growing concern to stakeholders. Sustainable development in the view of Nnamonu (2018) is multi-faceted in the sense that captures positive political, cultural, social and institutional growth. It is the continuous preservation of growth and achievement of the society or organization in various facets. There are emerging trends in all aspects of the education enterprise which require educational managers to adapt to this changing environment for sustainability (Ezeugbor & Akinfolarin, 2018). School leaders across all tiers of the school system are expected to familiarize themselves with modern approaches and practices of effective school management. In the school system, the primary school is the foundational tier that shoulders all other tiers. Ehinola (2015) also emphasized that primary education is very vital because it is the foundation of education at all levels. The academic achievement of students at the secondary and tertiary facets is made easier through quality primary education. Similarly, Asodike and Ikpitibo (2013) stressed that in order to qualify for other levels of education, one must first pass through primary school, as such it is an institution upon which all other levels of education and educational achievement are built. The head teacher is the head and administrator of primary school level who is entrusted with the managerial and administrative roles in order to ensure quality outputs. He/she work along with available resources' to stimulate and sustain teachers and students towards school improvement. AbdulAzeez and Abari (2016) asserted that fundamental to the sustenance of quality of teachers is the management weapon of total quality management (TQM).

Total quality management (TQM) is a progressive administrative strategy and approach intended to ensure uninterrupted operation and continuous stimulation of all components in an organization to sustain the quality of production. Muntah (2014) defined total quality management as an administrative strategy to deal with work of an educational institution according to certain criteria in order to give the highest and best outcomes in all domains. The adoption and application of TQM practices in the management of education industry is to facilitate steady and unhindered growth and development of the sector. In the view of Ejionueme and Oyoyo (2015), TQM is the cultivation and practice of quality in every person's tasks and activities through which the school focuses on continuous improvement of all operations in the task areas. The goal of TQM in school administration is to foster good leadership and continuous commitment of staff and students in fueling quality educational production process. However, there

are several TQM practices outlined by notable scholars. Hassan, Mukhtar, Qureshi and Sharif (2012) outlined these practices to include: top management commitment to quality, employee involvement in decision making, customer focus, fact-based management, incentive and recognition system process, monitoring and control and continuous improvement/training. According to Ezeugbor (2017), TQMP echoes functionality and competencies of the school administrators in the areas of; creating constancy of purpose, instituting training on the job, developing effective leadership, encouraging teamwork and drive out fear among others in order to continuously improve the education system. TQM practices also include; effective leadership, constant training of personnel, building teamwork, uninterrupted communication, participatory decision making process, monitoring, effective resources management, quality control, customers satisfaction among others. The need to develop an efficient and sustainable educational system necessitates the introduction of TQM to school administration. The TQM practices adopted in this study are; teamwork and continuous training.

It is important for organizational leaders to transit from the traditional pattern of administration in which leaders assume the position of sole administrators to teamwork oriented approach. Teamwork is the collective effort and action of a group or team with the motive of accomplishing a common goal or task. Dimitriades in Ejionueme and Oyoyo (2015) maintained that the concept of teams and teamwork are of paramount importance for achieving quality education and continuous improvement in schools. Quality education cannot be actualized without building a good team and rigorous teamwork. Teamwork is required in the areas of planning school activities and operations, preparing school budget, students' personnel management, making decisions, monitoring, and successful curriculum implementation among others. Also, Chantathai, Tesaputa and Somprach (2015) asserted that management of curriculum and instruction highly depends on teamwork of the teachers and administrator who run each school. Poor teamwork spirit among school leader, teachers and students often amount to delay in successful implementation of educational policies in the school. A school leader is expected to encourage teamwork by providing moral support and incentive packages for team achievement.

Chantathai, Tesaputa and Somprach further stressed that team members can bring effective decision making to school because they possess the sense of ownership to their organization. School administrators must work with teachers as a team and equally involve teachers in decision making in the

areas of personnel management (staff and students), school financial management, and maintenance of school infrastructural facilities. Over the years, primary schools in Ondo State northern senatorial district appear to have experienced deficit in school administration which is a key threat to sustainable primary education. Encouragement of teamwork is a central focus in total quality management (TQM) practices aimed sustaining the quality of production and development of an organization through collective contributions and efforts of organized team members. The inputs of team members which are crucial to the successful administration of school would be insignificant if the teachers who are core members of the team are not properly equipped and trained on the job.

Adequate knowledge of subject matter, exchange of experience and ideas on new practices on required field or specialization can be derived from continuous training in the areas of workshops, seminars, and conferences, refresher courses among others. Eleje, Maduagwu and Odigbo (2013) pointed out that for a teacher to deliver effective service, he or she must keep track of new ideas, knowledge and development in the world through continuous training and re-training programmes. Training is a supportive programme intended to equip an individual(s) or new and existing employees with relevant professional skills, knowledge, and attitudes required to perform a given role in a desirable manner. The provision of adequate training programmes for teachers and supportive staff offers timely implementation of educational objectives. Quality instructional delivery at the primary level of education which is the foundational stage requires a continuous training of personnel. This is to enable them adjust to changes and modern strategies of transmitting instructions to the learners. Similarly, Onyali and Akinfolarin (2017) highlighted the benefits of staff training to include; updating teachers on changes in the field of education, improving their classroom management and teaching skills, enhancing their positive attitude to work as well as motivating them for better performance for school improvement. Furthermore, Ayeni (2011) stressed that the importance of training and re-training to career enhancement and capacity of teachers for improvement in teaching and learning processes cannot be over-emphasized. When teachers are properly trained, their self-confidence is restored and they will be more knowledgeable on new curriculum contents and innovative teaching strategies. In many primary schools, class teachers are made to teach numerous subjects without considering the role of continuous training in teachers' effectiveness. Continuous training of personnel is an integral aspect of total quality management (TQM) practices that focus on constant exposure of employees to modern techniques in

performing their functions in pursuit of organizational productivity. Training of educators is fundamental for building the 'human capital' of the school as it provides educators with new techniques and practices necessary to implement TQM factors successfully (Gomes & Panchoo, 2017). The poor performance of pupils' in primary schools in northern senatorial district of Ondo State in examinations and inter-school debate and quiz competitions perhaps may be a product of poor staff training.

## 2. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The poor performance of primary schools pupils' in the northern senatorial district of Ondo State in Common Entrance (CE) examination and the inability to compete with their counterparts in inter-school debate and quiz competitions as noticed by the researchers is worrisome. Also, further observation revealed cases of lack of timely completion of administrative tasks, some teachers' complaints of isolation on sensitive matters in the school, disorganized school activities among others. These undesirable challenges perhaps may be as a result of the inability of the head teachers' in the senatorial district to adopt total quality management (TQM) practices in relation to inspiring teamwork and ensuring continuous training and re-training of teaching and non-teaching personnel in the school.

## 3. PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The main purpose of this study is to determine the total quality management (TQM) practices adopted by head teachers for sustainable primary education in Northern Senatorial District of Ondo State. Specifically, the study sought to ascertain:

1. Teamwork practices adopted by head teachers by head teachers for sustainable primary education in Northern Senatorial District of Ondo State
2. Continuous training practices adopted by head teachers by head teachers for sustainable primary education in Northern Senatorial District of Ondo State

## 4. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The following research questions guided the study:

1. What are the teamwork practices adopted by head teachers for sustainable primary education in Northern Senatorial District of Ondo State?
2. What are the continuous training practices adopted by head teachers for sustainable primary education in Northern Senatorial District of Ondo State?

## 5. METHODOLOGY

A descriptive survey design was adopted for the study. The study was carried out in Northern Senatorial District of Ondo State. The population of the study comprised all the 250 head-teachers and teachers in all the 250 primary schools in Northern Senatorial District of Ondo State. Northern Senatorial District has six local government areas namely; Akoko North East, Akoko North West, Akoko South East, Akoko South West, Owo and Ose. Proportionate stratified sampling technique was used to sample 200 respondents made up of 50 head-teachers and 150 teachers in the six LGAs. The researchers-developed instrument titled "Total Quality Management Practices adopted by Head Teachers Questionnaire (TQMHQ)" was used for data collection. TQMHQ was structured in two versions to suit principals and teachers. The instrument has clusters I and II which were based on the two areas of Total Quality Management Practices. The instrument contains 14 items structured on a four-points rating scale of Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (SD) weighted 4, 3, 2 and 1 respectively. The instrument was validated by three experts comprising two lecturers from the Department of Educational Management, Adekunle Ajasin University, Akungba Akoko, Ondo State and one from the Department of Educational Foundations (Measurement and Evaluation Unit), Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka. The reliability of the instrument was

ascertained using Cronbach alpha and it yielded the reliability co-efficients of 0.82 and 0.70 for clusters I and II respectively and the overall coefficient of the entire instrument was 0.76. The researchers with the help of six research assistants who are primary school teachers in Northern Senatorial District of the State collected data for this study. The research assistants were given instructions and orientation on the purpose of the study and how to distribute, collect and handle the retrieved copies of the questionnaire. Out of 200 copies of the questionnaire distributed, 196 were successfully retrieved indicating 98% return rate recorded. Mean and standard deviation were used in answering the research questions. In answering the research questions, mean responses were adjudged on the basis that any mean score of 2.50 or above is taken to indicate agreement while any mean score that falls below 2.50 is taken as disagreement.

## 6. RESULTS

**Research Question 1:** What are the teamwork practices adopted by head teachers for sustainable primary education in Northern Senatorial District of Ondo State?

S/ N	Items	Head-Teachers (N = 49)			Teachers (N = 147)		
		Mean	SD	Decision	Mean	SD	Decision
1	Teachers are involved in developing the school vision and mission so as to work with direction	2.56	.08	Agree	2.50	1.30	Agree
2	Involving teachers in collaborative teaching method to enable them share knowledge on various teaching strategies	2.20	1.23	Disagree	2.17	1.11	Disagree
3	Encourages teachers to work in teams to promote continuous improvement	2.73	1.16	Agree	2.52	1.09	Agree
4	Head-teacher and teachers collaborate to attain the school goals	2.66	1.18	Agree	2.73	1.12	Agree
5	Involving teachers in decision-making towards sustaining school improvement	2.54	1.08	Agree	2.46	1.31	Disagree
6	Setting up school committees to enhance teamwork among staff	2.50	1.11	Agree	2.52	1.13	Agree
7	Rewarding the achievement of team members for better team performance	2.55	1.20	Agree	2.40	1.03	Disagree
8	Encouraging inter-personal relationship with teachers to build healthy team spirit in the school	2.83	1.34	Agree	2.63	1.27	Agree
<b>Means of Means</b>		<b>2.57</b>	<b>1.05</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>2.50</b>	<b>1.17</b>	<b>Agree</b>

**Table 1:** *Teamwork practices adopted by head teachers for sustainable primary education*

Data analysis on Table 1 revealed that both head teachers and teachers’ responses indicate agreement on teamwork practices adopted by head teachers for sustainable primary education for items 1, 3, 4, 6 and 8. However, teachers disagreed with head teachers on items 5 and 7, while they both disagreed on item 2.

The mean of means’ value of 2.57 for head teachers and 2.50 for teachers respectively, falls above the benchmark mean of 2.50 indicating that head teachers adopted most of the teamwork practices for

sustainable primary education in Northern Senatorial District of Ondo State. The pooled standard deviation scores for head teachers and teachers which stand at 1.05 and 1.17 respectively imply that their responses are homogenous.

**Research Question 2:** What are the continuous training practices adopted by head teachers for sustainable primary education in Northern Senatorial District of Ondo State?

**Table 2:** *Continuous training practices adopted by head teachers for sustainable primary education*

S/ N	Items	Head-Teachers (N = 49)			Teachers (N = 147)		
		Mean	SD	Decision	Mean	SD	Decision
9.	Sponsoring teachers’ on conferences to enable them withstand the challenges brought about by change and innovation	2.14	1.05	Disagree	1.20	1.10	Disagree
10.	Organizing orientation for teachers to keep them track of new ideas	2.72	1.13	Agree	2.57	1.11	Agree
11.	Sponsoring teachers on ICT proficiency courses to up-date them on current trend in technology advancement in teaching and learning	2.43	1.40	Disagree	1.48	1.29	Disagree
12.	Organizing workshops for teachers so as to improve the quality of their instructional strategies	2.61	1.09	Agree	2.43	1.32	Disagree
13.	Inviting resource persons to enlighten teachers on innovative techniques of instructional delivery	2.64	1.20	Agree	2.50	1.17	Agree
14.	Granting study leave to teachers in order to update their knowledge	1.36	1.10	Disagree	1.02	1.15	Disagree
<b>Means of Means</b>		<b>2.32</b>	<b>1.16</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>1.87</b>	<b>1.19</b>	<b>Disagree</b>

Data analysis on Table 2 revealed that both head teachers and teachers’ responses indicate disagreement on continuous training practices adopted by head teachers for sustainable primary education for items 9, 11 and 14. However, head teachers and teachers’ agreed on items 10 and 13, while teachers disagreed with head teachers on item 12.

The mean of means’ value of 2.32 for head teachers and 1.87 for teachers respectively is less than the benchmark mean of 2.50 indicating that head teachers have not adopted most of the continuous training practices for sustainable primary education in Northern Senatorial District of Ondo State. The pooled standard deviation scores for head teachers which are 1.16 and 1.19 for teachers imply that their responses are homogenous.

## 7. DISCUSSION

Findings of the study on Table 1 revealed that both head teachers and teachers’ agreed that head teachers adopt most of the teamwork practices for sustainable primary education in Northern Senatorial District of Ondo State by; involving teachers in developing the school vision and mission, encouraging teachers to work in teams to promote continuous improvement, collaborating with teachers to attain the school goals, setting up school committees to enhance teamwork among staff, and encouraging inter-personal relationship with teachers to build healthy team spirit in the school. However, teachers disagreed with the head teachers in the areas of; involving teachers in decision-making towards sustaining school

improvement, and rewarding the achievement of team members for better team performance, while they both disagreed on head teachers' involvement of teachers in collaborative teaching method to enable them share knowledge.

The mean of means' value of 2.57 for head teachers and 2.50 for teachers which falls above the benchmark mean of 2.50 indicate that head teachers adopted most of the teamwork practices for sustainable primary education in Northern Senatorial District of Ondo State. This is in line with the findings of Ezeugbor (2017) which revealed that both principals (head teachers) and teachers agreed that all the team work principles of total quality management (TQM) are applied for continuous school improvement.

The study also found out on Table 2 that both head teachers and teachers' disagreed that head teachers do not adopt most of the continuous training practices for sustainable primary education in Northern Senatorial District of Ondo State by not; sponsoring teachers' on conferences, ICT proficiency courses, and not granting study leave to teachers. However, head teachers and teachers' agreed that head teachers organizes orientation for teachers to keep them track of new ideas, and invites resource persons to enlighten teachers on innovative techniques of instructional delivery. Teachers disagreed with head teachers on organizing workshops for teachers.

The mean of means' value of 2.32 for head teachers and 1.87 for teachers respectively is less than the benchmark mean of 2.50 indicating that head teachers have not adopted most of the continuous training practices for sustainable primary education in Northern Senatorial District of Ondo State. This finding is in agreement with Eleje, Maduagwu and Odigbo (2013) who reported that training programmes were largely irregular and inadequate for the teachers in the primary and secondary schools.

## 8. CONCLUSION

The improvement of any organization cannot be sustained a progressive and unrelenting management practices like TQM. Based on the findings of the study, it was concluded that head teachers adopt most of the teamwork practices for sustainable primary education in Northern Senatorial District of Ondo State. The study also concluded that head teachers have not adopted most of the continuous training practices for sustainable primary education in Northern Senatorial District of Ondo State.

## 9. RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations were made based on the findings of the study:

1. School leaders should encourage staff and students to work in team and provide the necessary apparatus and incentives to enhance free flow operation of team members in the school.

2. School leaders should partner with the State of Ministry of Education in organizing continuous training programmes for both teaching and non-teaching staff and also sponsor teachers on conferences, ICT proficiency courses, and grant them study leave to update their existing knowledge.

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