

Peter Canham (ed.) *Inspectors' Handbook: A Guide for Primary School Inspection and Supervision*, Third Edition, Evans Brothers Limited on behalf of the Institute of Education, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, 1983. 133 pp.

Educational planners and educators are constantly faced with one question: How can the quality of education be improved using the existing structures of monitoring and evaluating education such as the Inspectorate? Placed within a particular context, this handbook makes an attempt to provide the answer.

This handbook has eight parts and five appendices. The object of this book is to provide a working manual for mainly School Inspectors but has also some useful advice for Headmaster. Although the focus is on school inspection in Nigeria, the issues it discusses and the subsequent recommendations it makes have a wider relevance to many primary school systems in Africa. The description of the Nigerian primary school curriculum and its teacher training options gives one some insight into the organisation of primary education in that country, an aspect which should be of interest to some comparativists.

The author begins this book by outlining wider roles for Inspectors. In these roles the Inspector is seen as a professional educator, administrator, representative of government, auditor, inspector of buildings, liaison officer, community officer and external examiner. Looking at this stretch of roles one is compelled to raise some questions about the kind of pre-service training Inspectors should possess. Regrettably the author does not say anything about training for Inspectors.

What follows this part is a step by step treatment of the issues involved in school inspection. First, a distinction is made of the different kinds of inspection: general, curriculum, surprise visit, specific enquiry, and specific investigation. On curriculum inspection he gives a detailed prescription of how and what to inspect in each subject area. Finally the book ends by giving advice on writing an inspection report, making follow-ups and organising in-service courses for teachers. The appendices provide an example of a full inspection report, a guide format on writing a confidential report and an extract on Nigerian national policy on education.

However, throughout the book the conceptualisation of inspection and supervision is not made clear. Although the title of the book suggests that they are separate aspects of educational management the book refers to school inspection only. One would have expected the author to take a clear stand and also to state whether there is a strong case for separate inspectors and supervisors as educational evaluators. Furthermore, in the Nigerian context of the book readers are not told who actually undertakes school inspection. Is it Federal school inspectors or state school inspectors? Lastly, shouldn't we in fact be considering reducing the role of inspectors in an effort to make them effective educational evaluators?

Nonetheless this handbook has in great measure fulfilled its promise (p.2); to provide a checklist on school inspection. Another point of merit is the author's big attempt to depart from the traditional treatment of the subject of school inspection.

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