

# Assessment of Internal Quality Assurance Practices of Principals in Public and Private Secondary Schools in Anambra State

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**Abstract:-** The main objective of this study was to assess the internal quality assurance practices of principals in public and private secondary schools in Anambra State. The study was a descriptive survey carried out in Anambra state. The population for this study is 739 respondents. The sample size for this study is 370 respondents. This is made up of 129 principals in public secondary schools and 241 principals in private secondary schools in the state. An instrument which was developed by the researchers was used for data collection. The instrument was validated by three experts selected from Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka, Anambra State. The reliability of the instrument was established using Cronbach alpha method. Data were collected by the researchers with the help of six research assistants who are teachers in the sampled schools. Data collected for the study were analyzed using mean and standard deviation to answer the research questions. One of the findings was that principals in both public and private secondary schools practice internal quality assurance with regards to quality teaching and learning to a low extent. Accordingly, it was among others recommended that Anambra State government should organize workshops and seminars for principals in public and private secondary schools on internal quality assurance with emphasis on quality teaching and learning in schools.

**Keywords:-** Assessment; Internal Quality Assurance Practices; Public Secondary School; Private Secondary School; Teaching and Learning; Curricular and Extra-curricular Activities.

## I. INTRODUCTION

The taste in education is earned and evidenced in its quality. Unless quality and functionality is assured in the system, education will lose out to nothing else. The concern for quality is at the core of the motivating forces for reforms in education, secondary schools. In Nigeria, part of the main government policy objective in education is to raise the quality of education at all levels in order to make the recipients of the system more useful to themselves and the society as well. The government stressed that quality assurance in Nigeria education system most especially in secondary schools is a goal to which learners, teachers, staff and school administration should aspire to attain. These goals will not be significantly achieved if the classroom teacher fails in his responsibility.

Quality assurance in education could be seen as the efficient management, monitoring, evaluation and review of the resources and reformation process (teaching and learning) to produce quality output (students) that meet set standards and expectations of the society. This implies that quality assurance focuses on enhancing and improving the processes of teaching and teaming in order to produce students who are worthy in character and in learning.

Improving the learning environment can contribute tremendously in strengthening the quality and standard of education in the Nigerian education system. This is because the quality of the learning environment contributes effectively to learners' progress and achievement. This means that the learning environment in secondary schools in Nigeria must be conducive and safe enough for quality teaching and learning to take place. Part of ways to achieving these include having clear and realistic expectations, communicating with the students, being self-assured, always doing a follow up, understanding your roles as a teacher, personality of teacher and recognition of adolescent nature can improve learning. The question is whether these practices are being utilized by the teachers and to what extent, in secondary schools in Anambra State.

In order to ensure quality education in secondary schools, certain practices (internal and external) have to be adopted. These practices whether internal or external are the programmes and policies put in place to ensure that secondary schools are fulfilling their own purpose as well as maintain standards that apply to secondary education in general and teaching profession in particular.

The internal quality assurance practices are those policies and measures taken internally by the school to ensure that it is fulfilling its purpose as well as the standards that guides its operation (International Institute for Educational Planning (IIEP,2006). A proper use of, or adherence to internal quality assurance practices is critical to successful secondary education in Nigeria. It will enable the school to achieve its goal and objectives (Okojie 2010). It is therefore pertinent for the schools to always embark on practices that can promote quality in the system. In the light of this, educators and practitioners within the secondary school system strive to design and embark on certain internal quality assurance practices to ensure that certain agreed standards of performance in the system are being met.

With reference to internal quality assurance practices, the government of Nigeria has made provisions for quality standards in secondary education. The Federal Ministry of Education (FME) (2014) provided national education quality assurance handbook for basic and secondary education in Nigeria. This handbook contains the national education quality standards.

According to FME (2014:7), Quality standards are the goals to which all learners, teachers, staff and those who lead and manage schools should aspire to achieve. They are sometimes erroneously referred to as minimum standards but these are actually quality standards that focus on improving learning outcomes.... Quality standards include learner's achievement and behaviour, the quality of teaching and learning; curriculum and other activities, care, guidance and safety, the learning environment and leadership....,

The specific quality standards for secondary schools as provided in the document include: the quality of teaching and learning, the quality of the curriculum and other activities; the quality of care, guidance and safety; the quality of the learning environment and leadership effectiveness. This study however focused on the quality of teaching and learning, the quality of the curriculum and other activities. They formed the basis of assessment in this study.

Assessment is very essential in school programme implementation. According to Nwankwo (2006), assessment is the process by which job performance is evaluated. Similarly, Adams (2006) explained assessment as the making of value judgment about a phenomenon in relation to specific objectives. In this study, assessment is made in relation to the national education quality standards. Again, quality assurance and quality standards are used interchangeably in this study.

The first quality assurance practice assessed in this work is quality of teaching and learning. This involves targeting the learner and the learning environment. Quality teaching aims at improving the knowledge and skills of the learner. The learner becomes the centre of the teaching process. In this regard, the learning environment needs to be supportive. Thus, appropriate learning resources must be adequately available (Fadokun, 2018). The next quality assurance practice assessed is the quality of the curriculum and curricular activities.

Curriculum, according to Hussan (2011) refers to the totality of experiences; the learners went through under the guidance of a teacher. According to FME (2014) curricular and extra-curricular activities are expected to meet the range of needs and interests of learners. According to this policy statement (FME, 2014), the focus is on the extent the curricular content provide meaning learning experiences to the learner. The point being emphasized here is that the curriculum contents need to take into consideration the needs and aspirations of the recipients and the society.

In Anambra State, the secondary school principal is the administrative head and manager of the school (Udalla, 2012). The school principal is under the supervision of the Post Primary Schools Service Commission (PPSSC) and the Anambra State Ministry of Education. In an effort to improve the quality and productivity of secondary schools in the State, the Anambra State Ministry of Education has encouraged the involvement of the Parent Teachers Associations and School Based Management Committee in the management of schools in the state. The school principals are the principal officers in charge of the daily management of secondary schools in Anambra State. Some of their duties include, ensuring that the multi-faceted problems facing the secondary school system do not hinder the efficient service delivery towards providing quality education in the state, ensuring that funds entrusted on them is properly utilized, ensuring the provision and maintenance of physical facilities, ensuring that teachers are motivated for their total commitment, ensuring the supervision of instructional materials to ascertain effective teaching and learning and also engage in other practices necessary for quality assurance in secondary schools. However, this seems not to be the case in Anambra State.

It appears that most principals in public secondary schools in Anambra State seem not to embark on quality practices in their management. Despite the institutionalization of quality standard in the school system in Nigeria, secondary schools in Nigeria and Anambra State in particular seem to be riddled by management inefficiencies which have resulted in poor quality standard. Duze (2018) observed that the envisaged gaps and challenges of principals include poor learning environment, lack of teamwork, poor communication method, poor instructional supervision and lack of adequate guidance and counselling services, teacher-centred curriculum, poor quality of teaching, poor monitoring of students' academic progress and poor students evaluation. Ezeuchu (2017) also noted that efforts are not made in areas of adequate provision of training facilities to develop teachers for professional growth in order to increase productivity, supply of qualified manpower/learning facilities and coupled with the suspicion of external evaluators' non-check of supervision carried out by principals seem to make their practices appear to be largely procedural, diagnostic rather than remedial. These views are however theoretical in nature and have not been empirically proven to be the determining factor in the quality assurance practices in public and private secondary schools in Anambra State. This is therefore the motivation for this study.

It is expected that the principals in handling of the affairs of schools would adopt quality assurance practices as contained in the quality assurance handbook of the federal government, but contrary to this as evidenced from the researcher's personal observations and reports, one begins to doubt whether principals in public and private secondary schools in Anambra State have been living up to expectations in providing quality education in the state. Some of these observations and reports bother on inability to embark on quality assurance practices. This has resulted

to some problems in most secondary schools in Anambra state. For instance, some students are no longer committed to their studies, some join cult groups while a host of others engage in other indisciplinary behaviours like fighting and stealing in the schools. It is also important to note that some students in the state take their senior school certificate examinations in special centres. These occurrences pose serious threats to achieving quality education in secondary schools in the state.

➤ *Research Questions*

The following research questions guided the study:

- What is the extent principals ensure that teaching and learning are effective in meeting learners’ needs in their schools?
- What is the extent principals ensure that curricular and extra-curricular activities meet the needs and interests of learners in their schools?

**II. METHODOLOGY**

The study was a descriptive survey. Anambra state was the area of the study. All the public and private secondary schools in the area were studied. The population for this study is 739 respondents. This is made up of all the 258 principals in the 258 public secondary schools and 481 principals in the 481 private schools in the State. The sample size for this study is 370 respondents. This is made up of 129 principals in public secondary schools and 241 principals in private secondary schools in the state. The

sample was drawn using proportionate simple random sampling technique. An instrument titled “Internal Quality Assurance Practice Questionnaire” (IQAPQ) which was developed by the researchers was used for data collection. The instrument consisted of two parts: A and B. Part ‘A’ with two options dealt with background information of the respondents while Part ‘B’ contained items that addressed the core subject matter of research.

The instrument was validated by three experts selected from Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka, Anambra State. The reliability of the instrument was established using Cronbach alpha method. Copies of the questionnaire for the study were administered 25 principals of schools in Enugu State. The internal consistency of the items in the clusters was determined using Cronbach alpha. The alpha coefficients of 0.72 and 0.74 were obtained respectively for the sections A and B.

Data were collected by the researchers with the help of six research assistants who are teachers in the sampled schools. The distribution and collection of the questionnaire lasted for two weeks. Despite efforts made to ensure that all the copies of the instrument administered were correctly filled and retrieved, two copies were lost. Thus, 368 copies of the instrument were used for data analysis. The 0.5% loss was not significant and did not affect the analysis adversely. Data collected for the study were analyzed using mean and standard deviation to answer the research questions.

**III. PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS**

**Research Question 1:** What is the extent principals ensure that teaching and learning are effective in meeting learners’ needs in their schools?

S/N	Section A: Quality Teaching and Learning	Public Sec. Schs.			Private Sec. Schs.		
		$\bar{X}$	Sd	Rmks	$\bar{X}$	Sd	Rmks.
	<b>As a Principal of my School, I:</b>						
1	Use teachers’ lesson notes to monitor their instructional delivery in order to ensure quality learning in class.	2.40	1.01	LE	2.34	1.02	LE
2	Review teachers’ instructional delivery periodically to ensure that quality learning is imparted to students.	2.51	1.03	GE	2.04	1.01	LE
3	Mandate teachers to build students’ skills through active participation in class activities.	2.31	1.00	LE	2.22	1.02	LE
4	Direct teachers to provide learning opportunities individually for every student in the class.	2.01	1.02	LE	2.43	1.03	LE
5	Direct teachers to use different teaching methods for effective learning in the class.	1.32	1.03	VLE	2.08	1.01	LE
6	Direct teachers to use home-works to extend students’ learning.	2.36	1.02	LE	2.33	1.03	LE
7	Use supervisory visits to guide teachers to create interactive learning environment in the class.	1.40	1.01	VLE	1.46	1.03	VLE
8	Supervise teachers’ use of instructional materials to guide them improve students’ learning.	1.44	1.03	VLE	1.21	1.00	VLE
9	Inspect teachers’ improvised instructional materials to ensure they contribute to meaningful learning.	1.22	1.00	VLE	1.32	1.02	VLE
	<b>Mean of Means</b>	<b>1.89</b>	<b>1.02</b>	<b>LE</b>	<b>1.94</b>	<b>1.02</b>	<b>LE</b>

Table 1:- Extent Principals Ensure that Teaching and Learning are Effective in Meeting Learners’ Needs in Anambra State

Results in Table 1 indicate the internal quality assurance practices of principals regarding quality teaching and learning. The cluster mean of 1.89 with standard deviation of 1.02 for public secondary school principals indicate that principals in public secondary schools practice internal quality assurance regarding quality teaching and learning to a low extent and their mean ratings do not vary cluster around the mean. Similarly, the cluster mean rating of 1.94 with standard deviation of 1.02 by principals in private secondary schools indicate that they also practice internal quality assurance researching quality teaching and learning to a low extent and their standard deviations did not vary.

**Research Question 2:** What is the extent principals ensure that curricular and extra-curricular activities meet the needs and interests of learners in their schools?

S/N	Section B: Quality Curriculum Implementation	Public Sec. Schs.			Private Sec. Schs.		
		$\bar{X}$	Sd	Rmks	$\bar{X}$	Sd	Rmks.
	<b>As a Principal of my School, I:</b>						
10	Direct teachers to use current national curriculum and teachers' guide.	2.53	1.01	LE	2.50	1.00	GE
11	Mandate teachers to draw their schemes of work from national curriculum.	2.51	1.02	GE	2.54	1.01	GE
12	Carry out periodic inspection to ensure that lesson plans for students have clear learning outcomes.	2.45	1.04	LE	1.64	1.02	LE
13	Monitor classrooms to ensure that teachers communicate lesson contents to students using suitable teaching strategies.	2.42	1.01	LE	2.30	1.00	LE
14	Mandate teachers to make their teaching challenging to students.	2.41	1.03	LE	1.58	1.02	LE
15	Provide recreational facilities in the school for students.	1.50	1.02	LE	2.04	1.01	LE
16	Promote sporting activities to enhance students' all round development.	2.51	1.01	GE	2.50	1.02	GE
17	Mandate teachers to build students' skills through active participation in extra-curricular activities.	2.52	1.00	GE	2.58	1.02	GE
18	Invite education experts from universities and other related institutions to come and educate teachers on current trends in lesson delivery.	2.44	1.02	LE	1.52	1.03	LE
19	Regularly organize workshop in my school to equip teachers on the use of technology in classroom.	1.40	1.02	VLE	1.42	1.01	VLE
	<b>Mean of Means</b>	<b>2.27</b>	<b>1.02</b>	<b>LE</b>	<b>2.06</b>	<b>1.01</b>	<b>LE</b>

Table 2:- Extent Principals Ensure that Curricular and Extra-Curricular Activities Meet the Needs and Interests of Learners in Public and Private Secondary Schools in Anambra State

Results in Table 2 show the internal quality assurance practices of principals regarding quality curriculum implementation. The standard deviations for both public and private secondary school principals range between 1.00 and 1.03 indicating the closeness of the ratings to the mean. In the same vein, the cluster mean standard deviations of 1.02 and 1.01 for principals in public and private secondary schools respectively indicate the closeness of the ratings to the cluster mean. Again, the cluster mean of 2.27 for public and 2.06 for private secondary schools indicate that the principals in public and private secondary schools practice quality curriculum implementation to a low extent.

#### ➤ Discussion of Findings

The study assessed principals' internal quality assurance practices regarding curriculum implementation. It specifically assessed extent the principals ensure that curriculum and extracurricular activities meet the needs and interests of learners. Findings indicated that principals in public and private secondary schools in the area of the study, to a low extent, practice internal quality assurance regarding curriculum implementation. Thus, they ensure to a low extent that curricular and extra-curricular activities meet the learner's needs and interest. Data analysis for

hypothesis two indicate that the principals do not differ significantly in their mean ratings on extent they ensure curricular and extra-curricular activities meet learner's needs and interests.

The findings of this study affirmed the fact that there is only one national curriculum for secondary schools and each secondary school, whether public or private derives from it. The similarities in their mean ratings indicate that public and private secondary schools implement the same curriculum. The process of implementation may differ but the contents of the curriculum are the same. It is to maintain this standard or practice that ministry of education is established in each state. Both public and private secondary schools in each state are being controlled by the respective state ministry of education. Accordingly, this central control may account for the similarities in the mean ratings of principals in public and private secondary schools regarding curriculum implementation.

The findings of the study is supported by Boaduo (2010) who found that the level of curriculum implementations in the schools sampled was low and that there is shortage of resources for quality curriculum

implementation by the teachers. The reason that it is implemented to a low extent could mean that quality curriculum implementation is not given the desired attention. This is supported by Okeke (2009) whose study indicated the qualitative of curriculum implementation in secondary school in Kenya is not given desired attention. In the same vein, Goddard and Goddard (2009) found that principals in public and private secondary schools do not differ significantly on the extent they engaged on quality curriculum implementation activities for school improvement.

#### IV. CONCLUSION

The conclusion of this study is that principals in both public and private secondary schools practice internal quality assurance with reference to quality teaching and learning, and quality curricular implementation to a low extent.

#### RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of the study and the discussion that followed, these recommendations were made:

- As part of their internal quality assurance, principals in both public and private secondary schools in Anambra state should ensure that quality teaching and learning is done in their schools by engaging their teachers properly in their teaching job engagement
- The Anambra State government should organize workshops and seminars for principals in public and private secondary schools on internal quality assurance with emphasis on quality teaching and learning in schools.
- Principals in public and private secondary schools in Anambra state should engage quality curricular implementation to high extent as part of their internal quality assurance practices.
- Universities in the State are to float on-the-job training programmes for principals on quality curricular implementation as a way of assisting them to be more engaged in the internal quality assurance practices.

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