PRINCIPALS QUALITY ASSRUANCE PRACTICES IN THE MANAGEMENT OF SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN ANAMBRA STATE

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Abstract
This study investigated the extent of implementation of quality assurance practices in the management of secondary schools in Anambra State. Three research questions guided the study. Descriptive research design was adopted for the study. A total of 153 prinigbozuruikecipals and 3,259 teachers from the three education zones out of the six in Anambra State constituted the population. Out of this number 44 principals and 264 teachers were sampled using proportionate stratified random sampling technique. A 20 item self-constructed questionnaire was used to elicit information from the respondent. Data collected were analyzed using mean score and standard deviation. The findings of the study showed that principals do not maintain and provide adequate infrastructures and that most principals exhibit poor leadership skills as they fail to enforce discipline in their schools. Based on the findings recommendations were made, which include among others that principals should maintain and provide adequate infrastructure and to adequately motivate teachers.

Keywords: Management, Quality assurance, practices, principals.

Introduction

Education is the key to success and a lead way for an individual to compete globally with his or her contemporaries. Therefore, education requires the development of the right skills at its different levels for human endeavour. To achieve this goal, there is need for efficient management of educational institutions by the heads referred to as Head teacher, Principal, Rector, Provost and Vice Chancellor at various levels. The principals of secondary schools which is the focus of this study should be effective and efficient in managing schools as the aim of secondary education according to Federal Republic of Nigeria (2014) is to prepare an individual for useful living within the society and for higher education. This shows that secondary education is the education received after primary education and before tertiary stage. It is a crucial stage in education that helps the child adapt to the society for a better living. Ogbonnanya (2010s) confirmed to this when he

stated that secondary education is of great importance to the nation and individual because it helps to produce good citizens whose greatest pride is in their contribution to the success of the nation, happiness and joy of others and of themselves through hard work, sacrifice, tolerance and diligence. Obanye (2002) beholds that secondary education is the back bone of education in Nigeria. In effect, secondary education should be able to provide quality education to the students and the school administrators will always strive to achieve this as they manage their schools for onward quality education.

Educational management as the process of coordinating, controlling, planning, and organizing human, material and financial resources for the achievement of educational goals requires the school administrators to ensure the arrangement and effective organization of the resources available to them for a functional and qualify education. Though the principal manages the schools, the achievement of qualitative growth of the school is the responsibility of the administrator and the teachers. Odijide (2007) confirmed this when he stated that the principals' ability for ensuring quality assurance rests mainly with the teachers and the educational institutions. Unfortunately, despite all their efforts to achieve this in public secondary schools in Anambra State, a lot is still expected from them to take these schools to higher standards. To this end, Federal Ministry of Education (FME) (2010) introduced "Quality Assurance" in schools and states that quality assurance in education involves the process of monitoring assessing, evaluating, as objectively as possible all aspects of school life including its setting, what is provided, how resources are used and what effect as well as communicating the outcomes to all concerned. In essence quality assurance is brought into practice in order to standardize education and achieve functional education.

Quality assurance according to Chesapeck (2004) requires consciously selected and systematically planned activities carried out by an organization with the view of ensuring that its product or service is the quality needed and expected by its users. Rawan – Yusuf (2005) sees quality assurance as the process of maintaining standards in products and services through inspection or testing of samples. This shows that for any organization to achieve its goals, certain standards must be set, controlled and achieved through quality assurance. In this context, quality assurance is a programme for the systematic suspension, inspection and evaluation of all aspects of the organization in order to ensure that quality is met.

Quality assurance in education is a multi-dimensional concept which involves the various functions and activities of teaching aid management of schools both financially and otherwise, in other words, staff, students, research, structures, facilities and equipment, services to the community and conducive environment must be ensured for the minimum academic standard to be attained and sustained, Oduma and Ile (2013). Yawa in Emeruo (2012) asserts that quality assurance in education reflects all proactive measures adopted by a country to ensure that the system standards remain high enough to produce results set for it. This indicates

that quality assurance should be of major concern to the school administrators in their drive towards quality education as it relates to maintenance and provision of adequate equipment and facilities, quality of the teaching personnel, provision and maintenances of school plant, conducive learning environment, supervision, monitoring and evaluation of school activities, availability of instructional materials, training and re-training of teachers amongst others.

Quality assurance in education for this paper is defined as the ability to set up effective and efficient education techniques and methods in order to achieve a quality learning outcome. This could be dictated from the learning outcome and performance of students. Invariably, quality is achieved in education by ensuring that standard of learning is improved in order to get quality output. Article II of the World Declaration on Education (2003) stated that quality is a multi-dimensional concept which should encompass all the functions and activities in schools. Such activities of educational institutions include teaching, research and scholarship, staffing, infrastructures, school facilities, school working environment, students and schools' community services.

Uwaezuoke (2011) categorized quality assurance into two types, namely, internal evaluation (school self-evaluation) and external evaluation carried out by accredited external evaluators. Uwaezuoke (2011) defined internal quality assurance as those practice or activities performed by an institution itself in order to ensure high academic standard while external quality assurance are those practices or activities carried out by external controlling agencies to ensure high academic standard in schools. For the purpose of this study, this work will focus on the internal quality assurance as its major concern as it looks at the extent of implementation of quality assurance practices by principals in the management of secondary schools in Anambra State.

Federal Ministry of Education FME (2010) asserted that the strategies to achieve quality assurance in secondary schools include – adequate infrastructure, adequate provision of qualified teachers and their professional development, enrichment of curriculum to the needs and aspiration of the learner, development of incentive structures to attract, motivate and retain high quality teachers, quality leadership and management, amongst others.

From the above, it is clear that the school administrator has major roles to play in implementing these quality assurance practices for a better standard of education in their schools. As a result, the researcher intends to investigate the extent quality assurance practices is implemented by the school principals in secondary schools in Anambra State.

Secondary education is an agent for preparing individual for a useful living within the society and higher education in Nigeria, but it seems that secondary schools are not actualizing these broad goals. This appears to be as a result of poor implementation of quality assurance practices by secondary school principals.

Poor implementation of quality assurance practices in secondary schools most times result to low quality in education. Observation has shown that some principals are faced with challenges in skills required in the management of schools. Periodic seminars are most times not organized and school facilities are often times not maintained regularly.

Obviously, this affects the performance of students in both internal and external examination as the quality assurance practices for ensuring effective teaching and learning has not been put in place by the principals.

It is against this background that the researcher intends to investigate the extent quality assurance practices is implemented in the management of secondary schools in Anambra State.

The main purpose of this study was to determine the extent of implementation of quality assurance practices by principals in Anambra State Secondary Schools. Specifically, the study sought to:

1. Determine the extent principals maintain infrastructure for quality education in secondary schools in Anambra State.
2. Determine the extent principals motivate their teachers for effective teaching and learning.
3. Determine the extent principals practice quality leadership and management for the qualitative growth of the school.

Research Questions

The following research questions were formulated to guide the study.

1. To what extent do principals maintain and provide adequate infrastructure for quality education in Anambra State?
2. To what extent do principals motivate their teachers for effective teaching and learning in Anambra State?
3. To what extent do principals practice quality leadership and management in Anambra state secondary schools?

Method

The study adopted a descriptive survey research design. Three education zones in Anambra State namely, Awka, Nnewi and Ogidi education zones were randomly sampled for the study. The population of the study is 3411 respondents comprising 153 principals and 3,259 teachers in the state. This was as obtained from the Post Primary School Service Commission PPSSC in March 2019.

Multi- stage sampling procedure comprising simple random sampling were used in sampling 308 respondents for the study. Random sampling technique was used in sampling four secondary schools from each of the eleven local government areas in the three sampled education zones, making a total of 44 selected secondary

schools. All the 44 principals of the sampled secondary schools were used, while proportionate stratified random sampling technique was used to sample six teachers from each of the 44 sampled schools, making a total of 264 teachers. This made up the 308 respondents.

The instrument for data collection was a self-structured questionnaire titled "Quality Assurance Practices in Secondary Schools," (QAPSS). It consists of two sections, A and B. Section A is designed to elicit personal information about the respondent while section B contains 20 items which focus on eliciting information based on the three research questions. The response for the items were based on four points scale of very High Extent (VHE) – 4 points, High Extent (HE) – 3 points, Low Extent (LE) = 2 points and Very Low Extent (VLE) = 1 point.

Validity of the instrument was determined by three experts. One expert was from measurement and evaluation unit and two experts were from educational management unit, all from the Faculty of Education, Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu University. Their comments were used for the modification of the instrument. The reliability of the instrument was also determined by administering the instrument to 10 principals and 15 teachers from 10 secondary schools in Delta State. Cronbach alpha was used to determine the internal consistency of the instrument and this yielded a co-efficient of 0.81. This shows that the instrument is highly consistent, since according to Nworgu (2006), once a test is valid (that is, measures what it is supposed to measure), there is the tendency for it to be reliable.

Three research assistants and the researcher administered the questionnaire on the respondents. Out of the 308 copies administered on 44 principals and 264 teachers, 270 copies were successfully retrieved and used for the data analysis. That is 88% return rate.

The research questions were answered using mean and standard deviation. Mean scores of 2.50 and above were seen as high extent while below 2.50 was seen as low extent.

Result: Mean rating and standard deviation of principals and teachers on the extent principals maintain and provide adequate infrastructures for quality education in Anambra State Secondary Schools.

S/N	Items Statement	Principal N = 30			Teachers N = 240		
		X	SD	Dec	X	SD	Dec
1.	Principals provide and maintain classrooms for students	1.90	0.82	LE	2.00	0.81	LE
2.	Principals provide adequate and standard teaching materials in schools	1.85	0.93	LE	2.10	0.61	LE
3.	There are adequate chairs and desks for students	1.20	0.71	LE	1.95	0.88	LE
4.	Constant maintenance of infrastructural facilities in schools	2.41	0.73	LE	2.15	0.51	LE
5.	Proper and conducive teaching/ learning environment G	2.10	0.92	LE	2.40	0.77	LE
6.	Computer facilities are maintained	1.01	0.57	LE	2.40	0.77	LE
7.	Sanitation facilities are maintained	2.35	0.71	LE	2.49	0.89	LE

Data on table I show that principals and teachers recorded low mean scores in all the items. This reveals a consensus of the respondents that principals do not provide and maintain infrastructure for quality education in secondary schools in Anambra State.

Table 2: Mean rating and standard deviation of principals and teachers on extent principals motivate their teachers for effective teaching and learning.

S/N	Items Statement	Principal N = 30			Teachers N = 240		
		X	SD	Dec	X	SD	Dec
8.	Principals organize internal periodic seminars and workshops for teacher	2.10	0.83	LE	1.42	0.54	LE
9.	Concerned teachers are given opportunity to take part in decision making by the principal.	2.85	0.94	HE	2.41	0.41	LE
10	There is proper staff delegation of duties	2.57	0.99	HE	2.37	0.91	LE
11	Principals use praise, materials and psychological rewards	2.78	0.73	HE	2.58	0.88	HE
12	Good communication network established by the principal	2.33	0.52	LE	2.15	0.62	LE
13	Principals promote teachers welfare by facilitating their benefits	2.61	0.72	HE	2.52	0.81	HE
14	There are enough offices for teachers	2.23	0.83	LE	1.95	0.61	LE

Table 2 shows that the mean respondents for principals ranged from 2.10 for item 1 to 2.85 for item 2. For teachers, the mean responses ranged from 1.42 to 2.58 for items 1 and 4 respectively. Most of the items for teachers' response had mean value of less than 2.50 which is the criterion mean. The overall mean was 2.48 for principals and 2.20 for teachers. Based on the fact that the mean scores were below the criterion mean of 2.50, it indicates that principals in Anambra State Secondary Schools motivate teachers at low extent.

Table 3: Mean rating and standard deviation of principals and teachers on the extent principals practice quality leadership and management in Anambra State Secondary Schools.

S/N	Items Statement	Principal N = 30			Teachers N = 240		
		X	SD	Dec	X	SD	Dec
15	Principals carry out periodic internal supervision	2.41	0.71	LE	1.68	0.41	LE
16	Discipline is maintained in the school	2.29	0.81	LE	2.15	0.75	LE
17	ensure accurate record keeping	2.83	0.71	HE	1.07	0.72	LE
18	School budget is prepared on time	2.53	0.62	HE	2.28	0.81	LE
19	Principals ensure implementation of school curriculum in their schools	3.41	0.88	HE	2.74	0.78	HE
20	Principals ensure teachers and students punctuality	2.73	0.89	HE	2.25	0.77	LE

The data presented in table 3 shows that the mean response for principals ranged from 2.29 for item 2 to 2.83 for item 3 and for teachers, the mean responses ranged from 1.07 for item 3 to 2.74 for item 5. All the items for principals has mean valve greater than 2.50 which is the interior mean except item 2 that has mean response of 2.29. All the items for teachers have below 2.50 except item 5 that has 2.74. The grand mean on the extent principals practice quality leadership and management was 2.70 and 2.02 for principals and teachers respectively. It implies that principals are of the opinion that they practice quality leadership and management in their schools, while, teachers disagree with the principals opinion.

Discussion of Results

The result of the data analyzed revealed that principals do not provide adequate infrastructures in their schools as both the principals and teachers are of the same opinion. The findings show that quality education may not be achieved in these secondary schools as their principals are having problem on provision and maintenance of school infrastructure. This finding was in tandem with the findings of Wokocha (2009) who stated that to ensure quality education in schools,

academic institutions require quality students, conducive physical environment, well equipped laboratories, workshops, libraries, instructional materials in the ideal quality and quantity as well as funds for research and community service. The findings also agree with Okoli and Okorie (2015) who found that adequate materials should be provided for effective implementation of an education programme and for achievement of quality education in schools. The views, contributions and findings of the authors cite above helped to justify the findings of the study. The findings is also in line with Oyetola, Kayode and Okunuga (2012) who opined that there is significant influence of quality assurance and its effectiveness in raising the standard of facilities in secondary schools.

The findings of research question 2 shows that principals in Anambra State Secondary Schools motivate their teachers at low extent. The findings include: that principals don't organize period internal seminars for teachers, poor communication network established by principals, no enough offices for teachers and not involving concerned teachers in decision making amongst others. In line with this, Adebayo (2009) asserted that educational facilities at all levels are in a terrible shape, schools are littered with dilapidated structures and worn out equipments, they suffer from inadequate manpower both in quality and quantity and low staff morale due to poor pay and poor working conditions. All these result to poor quality in education. This finding also agree with FGN (2004), when it noted that no education system will rise above the quality of its teachers and emphasized that training and production of manpower for our education should be framed on the quality and quantity of teachers. This implies that principals need to motivate teachers adequately as teacher factor is the most important factor for the successful teaching and learning activities.

From table 3 which presented data on the extent principals practice quality leadership and management in secondary schools in Anambra State. The finding shows that principals are of the high extent that they practice quality leadership and management in their schools while teachers are of low extent that principals don't practice quality leadership and management in schools. This is in conformity with Adegbasan (2011) who asserted that Nigeria's educational system is totally in shambles as inadequacies are the order of the day with human and materials resources. He again noted that evaluation are not carried out by school managers, even heads of schools are not concerned with the set objectives of the school any longer, under these conditions, quality can never be assured. This means that the role of educational managers in achieving quality education cannot be over emphasized.

Conclusion

Principals' quality assurance practices in managing secondary schools in Anambra state are faced with challenges. Inadequate teaching materials, low maintenance of school facilities, poor communication flow, not organizing

periodic seminars for teachers and inadequate periodic internal supervision are some of the challenges principals have in achieving quality education. This in essence has affected the quality of education.

Recommendation

Arising from the study, recommendations are made:

1. Principals should most of the time provide and maintain school infrastructures for a better and functional education.
2. Motivation of teachers is of utmost important and should be done by principals periodically in order to bring out the best in the teachers for effective teaching and learning and improved performance of students.
3. Principals to always practice quality leadership and management style for the qualitative growth of the school.

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