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# QUALITY ASSURANCE AND SUSTAINABLE SECONDARY SCHOOL EDUCATION DEVELOPMENT IN SOUTH-SOUTH, NIGERIA

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## Abstract
The purpose of this study was to determine criteria for measuring quality assurance in sustainable secondary school education development as imperative for educational managers. The population of the study consisted of 2,000 educational managers in the study area. A sample of 195 educational managers was purposely selected for the study. Two research questions and two research hypotheses directed the study. Mean and standard deviation was used to analyse the research questions, while t-test analysis was used to test the hypotheses. The findings of the study revealed that the criteria for measuring quality assurance for sustainable secondary school education development include status of secondary school education, curriculum and syllabus. It was recommended among others, that secondary school education must have adequate qualification to ensure quality secondary school education, there should be regular intensive training and retraining for head teachers and teachers. Also secondary school education curriculum must be designed to meet global standard to enhance the graduates in labour market.

**Keyword*:*** Quality Assurance, Sustainable Secondary School, Development and Education Managers.

## Introduction
The growth and sustainability of any society depends greatly on the performance of its educational system. Education is held by modern societies as the wheel that drives the process of

development and the light that shades on the path of societal progress. This description is particularly apt in this 21st century knowledge-based dispensation where the development of societies is practically dependent on the level of education acquired by the population of a nation, such schools are the pillars of the education system. No educational system can outperform the standard and qualities of its schools. This implies that the level of performance of any educational system is a direct correlate of the levels of performance of the schools that make up the system. This has been the rationale for the struggle by every developing nation secure and sustain and effective school system with the implied capacity to drive the development process.

Secondary schools occupy a strategic position in the educational sectors. It bridges the gap between the primary and tertiary level of education in Nigeria. Thebroad goals of secondary education are to prepare individuals for useful living and for higher education, which is designed to produce high level manpower or human resources for the development of the country (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2004). It is obvious from the foregoing that secondary schools are significant factors to the effective functioning of individuals in the society, as well as ensure the success and prosperity of higher education which is meant to produce high level manpower. There is no doubt that secondary schools in Nigeria have not achieved stated goals. Gbenu (2012) opined that the state of secondary education in Nigeria largely explains the high level of under development or low rate of development in the country. Uchendu, Ekpoh and Ukpong (2015) stated that he importance of knowledge in the management of schools has become essential ingredient for the success of such school. This means that school administration cannot succeed unless knowledge is properly acquired, disseminated and utilized. The role the leader plays and the relationship the leader develops with their subordinates have been measured as fundamental components for the subordinates' work performance in various organisations. Price (2012) maintain that principals hold the heart of the school organisation and their actions and relationship with their teachers affect the satisfaction, cohesion, and commitment levels of

teachers and principals as well. Gyimah (2013) stressed that these quality relationship between people must be noticeable in schools to encourage effective teaching, learning and administration. Nigerian education system today centresaround the quality of education imparted to the citizenry and the relevance of that education to the life of the individual in particular and the nation in general. Quality education is "measured by the extent to which the training received from an institution enables the recipient to think clearly, independently and analytically to solve relevant societal problems is any given environment (Offem and Edeh, 2019).

There is the general feeling that the quality of education imparted with curricula that are limited to parochial concerns may no longer be adequate in the face of prevailing global situation. The curricula they content have outlived their usefulness and thus have little relevance to the needs, aspiration and values of today's Nigeria and her education system.

The concept quality assurance as "a set of activities or procedures that an organization undertakes toensure that standards are specified and reached consistently for a product or services.Assurance refers to promises by one or agency that eh degree of level of value of service will produce good results usually all the time, hence Esene (2013) defined quality assurance as a plan and systematic activities implemented in a quality system so that quality requirements for a product or service will be fulfilled. Middlehurt (2001) the scope covered by quality assurance in education involves the following dimensions:-

- Regulation (legal framework, governance, responsibilities and accountabilities,
- Educational process (admissions, registration or enrolment, curriculum design and delivery, support for earning, assessment),
- Curriculum design and content (validation and approval frameworks, levels and standard,
- Learning experience (consumer protection, student's experience, complaints and appeals); and
- Outcomes (qualifications, certificates, transcripts, security, transferability, recognition/currency and value).

Quality assurance refers to the planed and systematic activities implemented in a quality system so that quality requirement for a product or service will be fulfilled. It is the systematic measurement, comparison with a standard monitoring of process and an associated feedback that confers error prevention (Wikipedia Dictionary.com). This can be contrasted with quality control which focused on process out puts whose principle includes fit for purpose.

Fadokum in Oguejiofor (2013) characterized quality by three interrelated and inter-dependent strands;

- Efficiency in the meeting of its goals,
- Relevance to human and environmental conditions and needs,
- Something more that is the exploration of new ideas, the pursuit of excellence and encouragement of creativity. Chukwuma (2013) refers to a programme for the systematic monitoring and evaluation of the various aspects of a project, service or facility to ensure that standards of quality are being met. Therefore, quality assurance in the instruction and learning entails a systematic identification of the various constraints inhibiting students' achievement of the learning objectives in education programme and recommending measures to eliminate them to ensure students' quality standard performance Ekwue (2009) opined that quality assurance refers to systems or processes that are designed to encourage all that is involved in the production or supply of a product or service to review that work constantly so as to assure the quality of the output.

**Statement of the problem**

Over the years educational sector particularly secondary school education has suffered an unquantifiable amount of decay such as lack of essential facilities for effective teaching, lack of qualified teachers which lead to ineffective, and inefficient in the teaching and learning process. Since the global connectivity becomes the order of the day, hence quality assurance practices find its way into the sector clean all forms of abnormality to boost the education

sector for global competition and cohesion.

## Research Questions

The following research questions directed the study

1. What are the criteria for measuring quality assurance for sustainable secondary school education?
2. What are the instruments for ensuring quality assurance in sustainable secondary school education development?

## Hypotheses

Two hypotheses formulated to guide the study and tested at 0.05 level of significance

$H_{01}$: There is no significant different in the mean ratings of male principals and female principals on the criteria for measuring quality assurance for sustainable secondary school education.

$H_{02}$: The instruments for assuring quality assurance in sustainable secondary school education development do not significantly differ by gender.

## Research Method

The study was carried out in South-south, Nigeria. The research design adopted in the study is a survey research design. The population was made up to 1,000 male principals and 1000 female principal given a total of 2,000 principals. The instrument used for data collection was quality assurance and sustainable secondary school education development questionnaire (QASSSEDQ). It had three sections- A, B and C. section A consist of A demographic variables, section B consists of criteria for measuring quality assurance in sustainable secondary school education development, section C consists of instrument for ensuring quality assurance for sustainable secondary school education development. The instrument contain 28 items on a 4 – point scale of Strongly Agree (SA) = 4 pints, Agree (A) = 3 points, Disagree (DA) = 2 points and strongly Disagree (SD) = 1 point. In assessing the opinionsand preferences of educational managers (principals) on the criteria for measuring quality assurance and instruments for ensuring quality assurance in sustainable secondary school education development. Mean values were interpreted as follows; Strongly Agree (SA) 3.50 – 4.49, Agree (A) = 2.50 – 3.49, Disagree (DA) = 1.50

– 2.49 and Strongly Disagree (SD) = 0.05 – 1.49. The instrument was validated by two experts, one in educational management and one in measurement and evaluate, all from University of Calabar. Eight items were agreed as criteria for measuring quality assurance for sustainable secondary school education. This is because their means were above the cut-off point of 2.5 indicting agree

Research question 2: What are the instruments for ensuring quality assurance in sustainable secondary school education development?

**Table 1: Mean and standard deviation of respondents' rating of the measuring quality assurance in sustainable secondary school education development N = 195**

| S/N | Criteria | X | SD | Decision |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Labour market demand for secondary school graduates | 4.16 | 1.41 | Active |
| 2 | Quality secondary school graduates | 3.38 | 1.38 | Active |
| 3 | Practical studies | 3.94 | 1.34 | Active |
| 4 | Overall administration of the school | 3.33 | 1.31 | Active |
| 5 | Inter-house sport | 2.41 | 1.33 | Not Active |
| 6 | Dancing competition | 2.46 | 1.32 | Not Active |
| 7 | Status of curriculum/syllabus | 3.91 | 1.31 | Active |
| 8 | Regular supervision | 3.44 | 1.40 | Active |
| 9 | Ability to deliver and flow with current trends | 3.37 | 1.49 | Active |
| 10 | Status of infrastructures | 3.46 | 1.45 | Active |
| | Grand x | 3.30 | 1.38 | |

Table 1 revealed that two items with means less than 2.5 were not agree as a criteria for measuring quality assurance for sustainable secondary school education development.

**Hypothesis**

$H0_1$: There is no significance difference in the mean ratings of the respondents by gender on the criteria for measuring quality assurance in sustainable secondary school education while the trail test using the spearman rank order correlation coefficient reliability method gave rise to coefficient (v) of 0.69. These figures were considered reliable for use in conducting this study. Data collection was carried out by the researchers with five research assistance by administering 200 copies of questionnaire to the respondents. However, a total of 185 were found usable representing 92.5%. The data collected were analysed using mean and standard deviation. From the calculation of the means of the respondents to the research questions, any items with a mean cut-off pint that is equal or below 2.49 rejected.

**Presentation of Results**

Research question 1: What are the criteria for measuring quality assurance for sustainable secondary school education?

**Table 2: Mean and standard deviation of respondents' ratings on the instrument for ensuring quality assurance in sustainable secondary school education development N = 195**

| S/N | Instrument | x | SD | Decision |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Adequate/qualify teachers | 3.55 | 1.58 | Active |
| 2 | Quality of PTA members | 3.27 | 1.30 | Active |
| 3 | Quality f syllabus/curriculum | 3.31 | 1.39 | Active |
| 4 | Adequate facilities/plant | 3.48 | 1.46 | Active |
| 5 | Good administration | 3.62 | 1.41 | Active |
| 6 | Discipline of students/staff | 3.21 | 1.48 | Active |
| 7 | Proper screening before admission | 3.39 | 1.48 | Active |
| 8 | Constant supervision | 3.32 | 1.56 | Active |
| 9 | In-service training for teachers | 3.45 | 1.48 | Active |
| 10 | Adoption of effective supervision technique | 3.31 | 1.51 | Active |
| | Grand mean | 3.39 | 1.46 | |

In table 2, the result revealed that all the instruments are factors that ensure quality assurance for sustainable secondary school education development. In other words, if these instruments are available in any given secondary school, such secondary school education will be adjudged as having quality assurance in secondary school education development.

**Table 3: T-test summary significant difference between male principals and female principals on the criteria for measuring quality assurance for sustainable secondary school education development**

| Variables | No | Mean | SD | df | t-cal | t-crit | Decision |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Male principals | 57 | 3.37 | 1.39 | | | | |
| | | | | 183 | 1.337 | 1.90 | Agree |
| Female principals | 126 | 3.36 | 1.43 | | | | |

From table 3, the test of the hypothesis shows that there is no significant difference as perceived by the male and female principals on the criteria for measuring quality assurance for sustainable secondary school education development.

**Hypothesis 2**

$H0_2$: The instrument for assuring quality assurance for sustainable secondary school education development does not significantly differ by gender.

**Table 4: T-test summary for significant difference between male and female principals on the instruments for ensuring quality assurance for sustainable secondary school education development**

| Variables | No | Mean | SD | df | t-cal | t-crit | Decision |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Male principals | 57 | 3.30 | 1.38 | | | | |
| | | | | 183 | 1.337 | 1.96 | Agree |
| Female principals | 126 | 3.39 | 1.46 | | | | |

The hypothesis testing in table 4 shows that there is no significant different as perceived by both male and female principals.

**Discussion of findings**

The findings of the study in table 1, revealed that both male and female principal agreed that measuring quality in secondary education is an indicator of many variables which among others include: Quality secondary school professional exposure, status of curricular and syllabus, ability to deliver and flow with current trend in secondary education. This is in line with Chukwuma (2013) stating that a programme for the systematic monitoring and evaluation of the various aspects of a project, service or facility ensure that standards of quality are being met for sustainable secondary school education development.

However, quality assurance contributed positively for the development of secondary education which students make way of their career paths, because the value of graduates is determined by the school where they are training.

In table 2, findings indicated that there are several instruments that can be used to ensure quality in sustainable secondary school education development among which are quality teachers, quality syllabus and curriculum, use of PTA members, governance, availability of relevant infrastructure and facilities, teachers and students discipline, being selective in admission. Training and development of teachers assessing quality of class work classroom management, good governance and available infrastructure and facilities. This is in line with the study ofNyakundi (2012) that generally in schools, the challenge for administrators is to develop highly motivated teachers who are actively engaged in teaching and learning, open to new ideas and approaches, and committed to students and change over the lifetime of their teaching careers.

Furthermore table 2, revealed that both male and female principals that all the items are relevant instruments for ensuring quality assurance in secondary education goal attainment. This is because they have means between 2.5

and above which was within the cut-off point agreement.

**Conclusion**

Sustainable Secondary school education development is the backbone of any nation for adequate middle manpower development and supply and this can only be achieve through proper funding, effective supply of school plant and effective quality assurance practices for overall development of sustainable secondary school education for national transformation.

**Recommendation**

Based on the finding of the study the following recommendations were proffer;

1. Government at all level should put proper quality assurance mechanism to fast-tract sustainable secondary school development which prepare young school leavers for higher institution
2. Adequate modern learning facilities should be provided by the government in conjunction with stakeholders to achieve the aim of sustainable secondary school development
3. There should be training workshop for both educational administrators and the teachers to update the knowledge in ordinance with globalization.

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