

Age and Qualification as Correlates of Quality Assurance Practices of Principals in Secondary Schools in South East, Nigeria

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Abstract: The study investigated age and qualification as correlates of quality assurance practices of principals in secondary schools in South East, Nigeria. Two research questions and two null hypothesis guided the study. The correlational survey design was adopted for the study. The population of the study comprised 1,247 principals in public secondary schools in South East, Nigeria. The sample sizes for the study consist of 819 principals. Balloting without replacement was used to draw three states out of the five states that constitute South-East states. All the principals in these drawn states were used. The instrument for data collection was researchers-developed instrument. The instrument was face validated by three experts from the Faculty of Education, University of Nigeria, Nsukka. The internal consistency coefficients were obtained through Cronbach alpha method. This gave reliability values of 0.68, 0.76 and 0.85 for clusters 1-3. The overall reliability index of 0.87 was obtained. The questionnaire was administered and 797 copies were retrieved. The data collected were analyzed using Pearson to answer the research questions while multiple linear regression analysis was used to test the hypothesis at 0.05 level of significance. There was significant relationship between qualification and quality assurance practices. Age of the principals did not correlate quality assurance. Based on these findings, recommendations were also proffered among which was that principals should be encouraged to go for individual development programmes to acquire higher degrees for better performance in quality assurance practices.

Key words: Age, qualification, quality assurance, principals, secondary schools, programmes

INTRODUCTION

For a nation to rise to a standard worthy enough to compete favourably with other nations such a nation has to ensure that high quality education is achieved and sustained in her educational system through consideration of the demographic variables of school administrators and their quality assurance practices. Demography is a word obtained from Ancient Greek prefix 'demo' meaning 'the people' and 'graphy' which implies 'writing', description or measurement. Demography is the study of populations especially human beings. As a general science, it can analyze any kind of dynamic living population that is one that changes over time or space. Demography encompasses the study of the size, structure and distribution of these populations and spatial or temporal changes in them in response to birth, migration, ageing and death. Demographics are quantifiable characteristics of a given population.

According to Dogan (2016), demography is the study of human populations, their size, composition and distribution across space and the process through which populations change. Births, deaths and migration are considered in demography and they are jointly producing population stability or change.

Demography is the study of human populations, especially with reference to size and density, distribution, and vital statistics which include births, marriages, deaths, among others. According to Meriam (2015), population's composition may be described in terms of basic demographic features which include age, sex, family status and the features of the population's social and economic context include language, education, occupation, ethnicity, religion, income and wealth. The distribution of populations can be defined at multiple levels (local, regional, national, global) and with different types of boundaries (political, economic, geographic). Demography is the study of statistics such as births,

income or incidence of disease which illustrate the changing structure of human population. It is a central component of societal contexts and social change. In this study, demography is the study of both qualitative and quantitative aspects of human population. Qualitative aspects are the sociological factors such as education, quality, development, social class, age, experience, wealth, among others. Quantitative aspects include composition, density, distribution, growth, movement, size and structure of the population and this will lead to the discussion of the demographic variables in the study.

Demographic variables are personal characteristics which include information on age, gender, educational level, location, income level, ethnicity and family background. Annie (2015) pointed out that every survey research carried out seeks to include questions on age, gender and location. Demographic variables can be used to correlate quality assurance practices in educational institutions. There are demographic variables that could impact on secondary school principal's quality assurance practices. Demographic variables are operationalized as information relating to principals characteristics which could impact on their quality assurance practices. This study examines how age and qualification of the principals relate to principal's quality assurance practices. Age as one of the demographic variables of the study is discussed below.

Age is seen as the number of years that an individual has lived, since, the individual was born. This can be viewed in different ways as subjective age, chronological age, psychological age, relative age, biological age, functional age and social age (Sawati *et al.*, 2013). Subjective age can be based on one's own idea or opinion on what he or she takes his or her age to be rather than the actual age. Chronological age is a measure of the time that has passed since an individual's birth. This can be based on the calendar date on which the individual was born. Psychological age refers to an individual's mind and the way in which the person's mind works. Relative age refers to the age considered and judged by comparing with another individual's age. Some years back, people's ages were not written down by their parents for their ages to be known. Their parents normally compare their ages with some happenings that took place at that particular time they were born or other persons born at the same time with them.

The biological age refers to the age of an individual in connection with the processes that take place within the person while the functional age refers to the practical age of the individual. On the other hand, social age can be connected with the society and the way the society is organized (Okonkwo, 2016). For example, when people

organize themselves as age mates and reason together and do things together (age grade club). According to Schwall, an individual's age can be measured in years, months and days from the date that individual was born. Although, there are different kinds of ages discussed, this study is interested on the chronological age which is a measure of time that has passed, since, an individual's birth.

Recent researches on age showed some contradictions. A good example is the one conducted by Okolo and Nweze (2010) which showed that among primary school head teacher's performances, age tend to affect the head teacher's administrative and supervisory performances. The older head teachers had generally spent more years on the job, attended series of professional development programmes that expose them to new techniques of administration and supervision and therefore are in a better position to perform well on the job. However, on the contrary, Luga (2016) stated that age did not affect principal's performance or their leadership lifestyle. According to Nwite (2012), age of school administrators does not influence their supervision of instructions. Ezema (2006) also asserted that school administrators irrespective of their ages have to be encouraged to attend workshop or seminar especially those ones organized during long holidays which is designed to acquaint school administrators with the necessary skills for the present day job. Gede and Lawanson (2011) also opined that age of school administrators do not affect their performance on the job. Walson (2015) stated that age affect job performance of principals. Based on the disagreement on the age and leadership practices of principals, the researchers sets out to determine how age correlates principal's quality assurance practices. For the purpose of this study, age of principals is classified as follows: below 30 years is regarded as young age and above 30 years is regarded as older age and this will lead to the discussion on qualification of the principal as another variable to be considered.

Qualification denotes fit for purpose through fulfillment of necessary conditions which include attainment of a certain age, taking an oath, completion of training or acquisition of certificate. This is what qualifies an individual to be fit for some functions, office or the likes. According to Akpan (2007), qualification can be seen as the knowledge acquired after a period of training and instruction by seasoned experts. These include the skills and high standards of behavior expected of a professional. Onwurah (2008) opined that qualification is the increased growth and advancement in knowledge, skills, attitudes and sophistication needed for continued

effective performance on a profession. Khurshid (2008) stated that performance of the students taught by teachers with BA/BSc in education qualification was better than the students taught by teachers with qualification like NCE. Erez and Judge (2001) observed that qualification had relationship with school management. Davies (2005) opined that professional qualifications were the most important factor influencing student's achievement in the school. Qualification include degrees, diplomas, certificates, professional titles, among others, whether acquired by full time study, part time study, distance learning or private study, whether conferred nationally or internationally and whether given by educational authorities or special bodies.

Qualification is an acquired knowledge that proves one suitable for a job. According to Modile (2008), qualification is a body of knowledge acquired by an individual after a programmed learning designed for performance in a specific task. This is the knowledge and skills acquired which suit a condition or make an individual qualify for a post, office, privilege or status. According to Yemisi (2013), educational qualification was among the variables that had substantial relationship with the principal's performance in secondary schools. The author further stated that this was because those principals who acquire higher qualification like PGDE, MED and PhD have been exposed to better knowledge and understanding of monitoring, supervision of instruction and evaluation in the school than those that acquire lower qualifications. Oku (2010) also opined that professional qualification significantly influence principal's job performance.

Qualification can also be referred to as a body of knowledge acquired by an individual after programmed learning. The programmed learning can be purposely designed for performance of a task or job (Mbaebu, 2002). In this study, qualification is the acquired knowledge and skills for effective performance on the job which after graduation from the specialized training, the individual will be issued with a certificate like West African School Certificate (WASC), National Examination Council certificate (NECO) and General Certificate on Education (GCE), Bachelor of Arts or Science in Education (BED/BSc (Ed), Post Graduate Diploma in Education (PGDE), Masters in Education (MEd), Doctor of Philosophy (PhD), among others and all these certificates are issued after graduation from schools. For the purpose of this study, qualification below BED/BSc (Ed) certificates is regarded as lower qualification while from BED/BSc (Ed) certificates and above is regarded as higher qualification. This classification is necessary due to the facts that it will help to determine whether there is a relationship between

qualification of the principals and their quality assurance practices in the school when correlated and this will lead to the discussion of principal as the head of educational institutions. The principal occupies a central position in the management of the school and therefore has responsibility for ensuring quality in the school. Principal is the head of an institution that occupies a pivotal position, requiring initiatives and skills for the day to day administration of a secondary school. As school leaders, principals have foresight for effective, efficient and dynamic principles in handling matters between the school, staff and the host community (Ibukun, 2004). Similarly a principal is in a position to guide and provide expertise in curriculum development, teaching methods, and evaluation as well as supervision of human and material resources. Principals serve as consultants to the teachers by stimulating them into providing the students with the best instruction. According to Anuna (2004), this gives synergic effect in the school or means end chains that link the work efforts of teachers and groups to an organization's purpose. In specific terms, Emily (2015) views the functions of the Principal as follows: providing leadership for curriculum development, providing leadership for instruction improvement, creating an environment conducive for the realization of human potentials, influencing the behaviour of staff members and supervising instructional activities in the school system to assure quality. CWS. (2003) also adduced the functions of the principal to include, manage and deploy school resources efficiently, allocate school accommodation appropriately, ensure satisfactory standards of maintenance and cleanliness of school facilities, organize staff development in school and guide curriculum implementation and change.

The principal plays significant role in the school as chief administrator of the school. One of the most critical roles of the principal is organization, management and control of the staff in the school. The principal also influences the attitudes, perceptions and functions of the staff. The style of leadership the principal adopts can foster or frustrate the aspiration, expectation, motivation and productivity of the staff in the school (Mgbodile, 2004). This helps the principal to create good working atmosphere for the personnel and ensure the attainment of the school goal through personnel development. In addition, the principal acts as a liaison officer, between what goes on in the school and those in the general community. The principal meets requests from parents, school board members and government officials which include quality assurance. These people go to the principal with praise as well as complaints. On the other hand, the specific duties of a principal include:

“Being in a supervisory position, the principals assume the responsibility for fulfilling in their capacity as principals in other area of hiring, firing and disciplining teachers and other staff in the school. Those who work in the school answer to the principal should any issue arise and the principal does the interviewing and placement of staff (CWS., 2003)”

The principal has the responsibility of meeting with the teachers for interaction, advice, guidance, counseling and improvement. Staff meetings are power centres for decision making in the school. According to Mulkeen *et al.* (2007), the principal is free to talk to the personnel at any time on matters pertaining to the management duties. Organized staff meeting on the other hand provides another opportunity for communication and exchange of ideas among staff. Principals of the schools do the task of staff advancement and promotion together with the Post-Primary School Management Board (PPSMB) and the teaching service commission. The principal fills the evaluation form and sent to the board who calls for promotion interview. A critical role of a principal is to mobilize the teaching and non-teaching staff towards the achievement of quality assurance and predetermined school objectives of the schools.

With regards to this study, principal is an individual who is a leader within an educational establishment who also provides guidance to teachers, students, staff and members of the community on monitoring, supervision, evaluation and who plans and implements the daily activities of the educational setting and ensures that the set educational standards are maintained and quality assured. The principals are very important in this study because when their demographic variables are correlated with their quality assurance practices, decisions are made whether there is a relationship or not and for this purpose, quality is emphasized.

Quality is the distinguishing characteristics that expose the work of products and services rendered in an organization or educational institutions. Okebukola (2004) opined that quality is fitness for a given purpose. Okolo and Nweze (2010) stated that “Quality is a measuring instrument or tool used for effective implementation of any reform by the government”. The quality of the teacher in area of preparedness to acquire knowledge and skills, use relevant teaching materials and different teaching methods for effective learning, the teacher’s ability to transmit relevant knowledge and skills to the learners contribute to quality in the standard of education in our society. Quality as Okeke (2007) opined is an efficiency level with which standard is achieved.

Alaribe *et al.* (2010) stated that quality is an institutional value that needs not be compromised. In this study, the concept quality is addition of value and attainment of exceptionally high standard and also the level of efficiency possessed by principals in school system in Nigeria and the quality of learners outcomes are the overall effects of the educational system.

Quality is something good, ideal or of high standard. Quality can also be defined as grade of achievement, a standard with which to judge others. It is the total features of a process, product or service on its performance as perceived by the individual of that performance. According to Anad, quality for example in education relates to the quality of work undertaken by a teacher which has significant effect upon the students. Thus, quality of the teacher is a one of the determinant of the student’s academic achievement. In this case, quality of education can be judged by the student’s learning achievement in terms of curriculum and standard activities of the learner. In other words, quality concerns the relevance of teaching and learning and how effective it satisfies the present and future needs of the learners.

Quality is the degree of compliance of a process with a predetermined standards or target. Normads (2002) observed quality as perceived value reported by individual who benefits from a process or its outcome. Quality is a continuous process not an intermittent concern to address deficiencies that surface. Quality is reflected in criteria and standards of performance and accomplishment which is customer oriented (Anad). In this study, quality refers to the degree of compliance of an output with pre-set criteria which are presumed important to the ultimate value it provides or as reported by the individual that benefited from the product and this determine the quality assurance.

Quality assurance can be defined as desirable changes in knowledge, skills, attitudes and values of individuals due to their experiences in the three main behavioural domains; the cognitive, affective and psychomotor over a period of study. Quality assurance according to Gasey (2007) is the process of ensuring that predetermined degree of excellence is achieved. Quality assurance is a learner centred approach. Quality assurance as Alaribe *et al.* (2010) opined is centred on school administrators or instructors. The ability of the instructors to demonstrate effectively and efficiently the acquired knowledge, skills and attitudes to learners thereby yielding quality assured product is quality assurance. Azubuike *et al.* (2010) explained that quality assurance is a way by which the quality of products are assessed and compared with the already set standards.

Quality assurance is the process of collecting, analyzing and utilizing of relevant educational

information, so as to ensure that pre-determined educational goals are optimally achieved. The quality of student's learning outcomes is directly dependent on the quality of teachers as demonstrated in their knowledge or mastery of the subject matter or content, ability to carry out instructional tasks, facilitate effective learning and increase learner's achievement.

However, the need for quality assurance in education is very important and cannot be over emphasized in order to assure quality teaching and learning. Munachi (2006) stated that in our educational system in Nigeria, the needs of quality assurance include:

“To serve as indispensable component of quality control strategy in education, to serve and maintain high standard of education at all levels, to assist in monitoring and supervision of education, to determine the quality of the teacher input, to determine the number of classrooms needed based on the average class size to ensure quality control of education and to determine the level of adequacy of the facilities available for quality control. It would ensure how the financial resources available could be prudently and judiciously utilized. However, quality assurance in education should be put in place to meet up with these above stated needs”

Applied to education, quality assurance is critical examination of the worth of educational programmes and the dissemination of the best practices in instructional delivery and management. According to Stand, quality assurance in education is a continuous process by which an institution can guarantee that standards and quality of educational provision are being maintained. Quality assurance in education system therefore is an umbrella concept for a lot of activities that are designed to improve the systems input, process and output of education. This implies the ability of the various arms of education, especially secondary education to meet the expectations of the users of the manpower in relation to the quality of skills required by their outputs. According to Osagie and Olugbamila (2009), the assessment of student's teachers and other examination bodies is an important criterion for determining the quality of learner outcomes. There are different types of quality assurance practices of principals but the present study is interested in monitoring, supervision and evaluation. It is therefore, necessary that effective monitoring and supervision takes place, so that student's learning outcomes can meet the set objectives and satisfy the expectations of the society. Monitoring is

part of management functions that focuses on fulfilling quality requirements. Odo (2014) opines that monitoring is a mechanism in the school system used to maintain high degree of excellence in service. Monitoring covers teacher's qualification, adequacy of the curriculum, availability of teaching and learning materials and facilities and skillfulness to ensure that quality education is attained. According to Ojedele, monitoring is seen as the concern of the country in her drive towards technological development. However, if these are being achieved successfully, the finished products of the schools will be of high quality standards and this will help to constantly maintain quality assurance in the school, hence, another quality assurance practices called supervision is considered.

Supervision is the overseeing of those who are responsible for teaching, learning, resource utilization, management among others in the process of educating the learner. This is a practice in the school system for improvement of teaching and learning. It includes attempt at bringing about improvement in the quality of instruction and involve staff as essential part of the process. According to Nwagwu (2004), supervision is the process of guiding, advising, refreshing, encouraging, stimulating, improving and overseeing a teacher in order to improve on quality of his teaching and classroom management. This means that supervision is a way of giving advice, refreshing, encouraging and stimulating staff for improved and effective teaching and learning. Supervision is also any assistance given to the teacher for improved teaching and learning with adequate provision of instructional materials and needed facilities. This means that supervision is a phase of school administration which ensures that the teacher acquires maximum knowledge and skills to become professionally efficient in order to improve on quality of his teaching and classroom management. After supervision, comes evaluation to determine the extent of mastering of the contents taught.

Evaluation involves assessment maintained, appraisal, valuation and estimation of the worth of education input, process and output in line with the set standards making judgment and corrective criticism. It focuses on the job and the scientific approach. According to Babalola (2004), evaluation deals with close examination, check, scrutiny and assessment of available facilities and resources in an institution with reference to establishing how far a particular institution has met the set standards.

Quality assurance is a practice or the criteria used to evaluate the efficiency and appropriateness of teaching and learning experiences, so as to ensure the delivery of high quality standard of education and also the process

of monitoring, assessing and evaluating, according to set standards and communicating, the outcomes to all concerned in order to ensure quality with integrity, public accountability and consistent improvement in teaching and learning. According to Eze (2010), quality assurance has mechanisms or measures which can be either internal or external in educational system. Externally are quality assurance measures which are imposed on educational institutions from outside. Gasey (2007) stated that external quality assurance measures are super institutional programmes for assuring quality of higher institutions and their programmes. Internally, quality assurances are intra-institutional activities or practices that are geared towards maintaining and improving quality of programmes in educational institutions.

Secondary education is the education received after primary school which is called post primary or secondary education. FRN (2010) defined it as the education given after primary education in colleges including those institutions offering technical and vocational subjects. From these definitions, it implies that secondary education follows after primary education and whichever level of education, quality assurance is important. This study concentrates on public secondary schools that are owned and managed single handedly by the government of a state or federal government.

In the secondary schools in South East, Nigeria, there have been several situations which created doubts in the minds of people whether secondary school principals practice quality assurance in the school or not. According to Chigbu (2017), this is due to the fact that there has been a public outcry on quality of education, since, teachers are no longer properly supervised by the principals probably because of their ages and qualification. This inadequacy in monitoring, supervision and evaluation manifest in poor instructional delivery by the teachers and increased mass failure in external examinations such as West African School Certificate (WASC), National Examination Council (NECO) Certificate, General Certificate on Education (GCE) and even Joint Admission and Matriculation Board (JAMB) Examination. This deplorable state of education in secondary schools has impacted negatively on the academic progress of instruction. Okpe (2010) noted that the trend of poor performance of students in both internal and external examination are due to poor monitoring, supervision and evaluation of instructional activities in the school. These inefficiencies in administration affects achievement of the predetermined objectives of the school and can be portrayed in the form of high rate of examination malpractice, poor reading and writing culture

of students, among others. This poor performance of students serves as a pointer to the fact that there is a decline in quality of teaching and learning within the school.

The issue of assuring quality cuts across all sectors and levels. Whether in technological sector or general education disciplines, stakeholders are often interested on how best the quality of their products can be improved. Previous research demonstrates that quality assurance issues cannot be overemphasized sectors like aircraft construction and engine-building (Kolodyazhniy). Assuring quality in education is essential for the production high quality manpower for national development. Improving the quality of education is among the greatest priorities in Nigeria's national development agenda. Several factors might undermine the assurance of quality in secondary education in Nigeria. To this effect, the present study examined demographic variables (age and qualification) in relation to quality assurance practices of principals in secondary schools in South East, Nigeria.

Research questions: What is the relationship between principal's age and quality assurance practices of principals in secondary schools in South East, Nigeria? What is the relationship between principal's qualification and quality assurance practices of principals in secondary schools in South East, Nigeria?

Hypothesis: The following hypotheses guided the study and were tested at 0.05 level of significance.

- H_{01} : there was no significant relationship between principal's age and quality assurance practices of principals in secondary schools in South East, Nigeria
- H_{02} : there was no significant relationship between principal's qualification and quality assurance practices of principals in secondary schools in South East, Nigeria

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Correlational survey design was used to determine the relationship between age, qualification and quality assurance practices of principals in South East, Nigeria. South East, Nigeria is made up of five states namely: Abia 207, Anambra 254, Ebonyi 221, Enugu 283 and Imo 282 states. Abia and Ebonyi states have three education zones each while Anambra, Enugu and Imo have six education zones each. These states have some features in common like cultural, political, educational and social

orientation. They have a lot of interest in quality education. The study covered all the principals in public secondary schools in all the states in the five states. The area was chosen due to ineffective attitude of secondary school principals to monitoring, supervision and evaluation of instructional activities. The population of this study was 1,247 principals in public secondary schools (government owned) in the five South-East states. The populations of principals were: Abia 207, Anambra 254, Ebonyi 221, Enugu 283 and Imo 282 giving a total of 1,247 principals (Post Primary School Management Boards of the States). The sample size for this was 819 principals in government owned secondary schools in South East, Nigeria. Balloting without replacement was used to draw three states out of the five states that constitute South-East states. That is Anambra (254), Enugu (283) and Imo (282). All the principals in the sampled states were used for the study. The instrument for data collection was researchers developed questionnaire titled: Principal's Demographic Variables Quality Assurance Practices Questionnaire (PDVQAPQ). The questionnaire was divided into three sections namely A and B. Sections A elicited information on the demographic data of the principals while section B elicited information on quality assurance practices of principals which has three clusters I-III. A four point rating scale of Very Frequently (VF), Frequently (F), Occasionally (O) and Never (N) were used respectively for the study. To ensure that the items of the instrument were valid, the copies of the instruments were given to three experts from faculty of education for face validity. The instrument was trial tested using 20 principals from public secondary schools in Kogi State which is outside the area of study. The researchers with the help of three trained research assistants used on the spot method to administer the questionnaire to the respondents and retrieve them. Pearson r and R^2 were used to answer research questions to determine the extent to which the variables are related. The hypothesis were tested using multiple linear regression analysis to predict the value of the variables.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1 shows the demographic characteristics of the respondents, 7(0.88%) represents principals below 30 years while 790(99.12%) represents principals above 30 years of age giving a total of 797(97%) instrument retrieved from the respondents. The number of respondents that acquired bachelor's degree is 508 (63.74%), Post graduate Diploma in Education is 106 (13.30%), Masters in Education is 94(11.80%) and those that acquire Doctor of Philosophy is 89 (11.17%). The

regression for age 0.188 with 0.000 level of significance. The regression for qualification is 70.593 with 0.000 level of significance.

Research question one: What is the relationship between age and quality assurance practices of principals in secondary schools in South East, Nigeria?

The data collected in respect to items in section B, items 1-30 of the instrument which dwelt on the relationship between age and quality assurance practices of principals in secondary schools in South East, Nigeria were used to answer the above stated research question. Data were analyzed using multiple linear regression. Summary of the result was presented in Table 2.

Table 2 shows that the correlation coefficient for the relationship between age and quality assurance practices of principals in secondary schools is 0.015 with coefficient of determination of 0.000. This means that there is very low positive relationship between age and quality assurance practices of principals in secondary schools. In other words, 0.0% variation in the quality assurance practices of principals can be attributed to their age.

Hypothesis one:

- H_{01} : there is no significant relationship between age and quality assurance practices of principals in secondary schools in South East, Nigeria

Table 3 reveals that the calculated value of F (0.188) for the relationship between age and quality assurance practices of principals in secondary schools had an associated probability value of 0.665. Since, the probability value of 0.665 is >0.05 level of significance, the null hypothesis was accepted. Therefore, there is no significant relationship between age and quality assurance practices of principals in secondary schools in South East, Nigeria.

Research question 2: What is the relationship between qualification and quality assurance practices of principals in secondary schools in South East, Nigeria?

The data collected in respect to items 2 in section A and items 1-30 of the section B dwelt on the relationship between qualification and quality assurance practices of principals in secondary schools in South East, Nigeria were used to answer the above stated research question. Data were analyzed using multiple linear regression. Summary of the result was presented in Table 4. Table 4 reveals that the correlation coefficient for the relationship

Table 1: Demographic characteristics of the respondents

Characteristics	Number (N) per group (%)	Total No. (N)	Regression (r)	Sig.
Age				
Below 30	7(0.88%)	797(97.3%)	0.188	0.000
Above 30	790(99.12%)			
Qualifications				
B.Ed/B.Sc	508(63.74%)	797(97.3%)	70.593	0.000
PGDE	106(13.30%)			
M.Ed	94(11.80%)			
PhD	89(11.17%)			

N = No. of respondents, r = regression, sig. = level of significance, B.Ed/BSc = Bachelor of Education/Bachelor of Science, PGDE = Post Graduate Diploma in Education, MEd = Masters in Education, PhD = Doctor of Philosophy

Table 2: Correlation coefficient of the relationship between age and quality assurance practices of principals in secondary schools

Model	R	R ²	Adjusted R ²	SE of the estimate
1	0.015 ^a	0.000	-0.001	14.17267

^aPredictors (Constant), Age

Table 3: Regression analysis of the relationship between age and quality assurance practices of principals in secondary schools

Model	Sum of squares	df	Mean square	F-values	Sig.
Regression	37.752	1	37.752	0.188	0.665 ^b
Residual	159687.427	795	200.865		
Total	159725.179	796			

^aDependent variable: Quality assurance practices; ^bPredictors: (Constant), age

Table 4: Correlation coefficient of the relationship between qualification and quality assurance practices of principals in secondary schools

Model	R	R ²	Adjusted R ²	SE of the estimate
1	0.286 ^a	0.082	0.081	13.51082

^aPredictors: (Constant), qualification

Table 5: Regression analysis of the relationship between qualification and quality assurance practices of principals in secondary schools

Models	Sum of squares	Df	Mean square	F-values	Sig.
Regression	12886.244	1	12886.244	70.593	0.000 ^b
Residual	144390.833	791	182.542		
Total	157277.077	792			

^aDependent variable: Quality assurance practices; ^bPredictors: (Constant), qualification

between qualification and quality assurance practices of principals in secondary schools is 0.286 with coefficient of determination of 0.082. This means that there is low positive relationship between qualification and quality assurance practices of principals in secondary schools. In other words, 8% variation in the quality assurance practices of principals can be attributed to their qualification while 92% in variation is attributed to other factors.

Hypothesis two:

H₀₂: there is no significant relationship between qualification and quality assurance practices of principals in secondary schools in South East, Nigeria

Table 5 reveals that the associated probability value for calculated value of F (70.593) for the relationship between qualification and quality assurance practices of principals in secondary schools is 0.000. Since, the probability value of 0.000 is >0.05 level of significance, the null hypothesis was rejected. Therefore, there is a

significant positive relationship between qualification and quality assurance practices of principals in secondary schools in South East, Nigeria.

Research question one focused on the relationship between age and quality assurance practices with respect to monitoring, supervision and evaluation in secondary schools. The principals frequently monitors government set standards, school resources for adequate provision, new trend in education, student’s choice of subjects, teaching methods, selection of relevant textual materials, assignment of subjects to teachers based on their areas of specialization, strategies to improve students reading and writing culture, among others. This indicated that principals who had the opportunity to undergo human resource development programmes were more frequent in demonstrating good knowledge of monitoring, supervision and evaluation in the school not minding their ages. This finding agreed with the result of study conducted by Nwite (2012) that age of school administrators does not influence their supervision of instructions. This finding also supported Ezema (2006) who opined that school administrators irrespective of

their ages should be encouraged to attend workshop or seminar especially those ones organized during long holidays which is designed to acquaint school administrators with the necessary skills for the present day job. This finding is also in line with Gede and Lawanson (2011) who agreed that age of school administrators do not affect their performance on the job. This finding did not agree with Walson (2015) that age affect job performance. Age of the principal when correlated with principal's quality assurance practices did not relate to principal's performance in any of the quality assurance practices which include monitoring, supervision and evaluation.

In response to the hypothesis one and the summary of Pearson R analysis on the relationship between age and quality assurance practices with respect to monitoring, supervision and evaluation in secondary schools, the correlation coefficient for the relationship between age and quality assurance practices of principals in secondary schools is 0.015 with coefficient of determination of 0.000. This means that there is very low or no positive relationship between age and quality assurance practices of principals in secondary schools. In other words, 0.0% variation in the quality assurance practices of principals can be attributed to their age. Age did not predict any of the quality assurance practices of principals. The implication is that all the principals irrespective of their ages have the same potentials.

Research question two focused on the relationship between qualification and quality assurance practices with respect to monitoring, supervision of instructions and evaluation in secondary schools. There was a significant positive relationship between qualifications and quality assurance practices. The higher the qualification the proficient the principals were in monitoring, supervision of instructions and evaluation. This was because principals with higher qualification like PGDE and Masters in Education had acquired better knowledge and skills for effective monitoring, supervision and evaluation of instructional activities in the school thereby maintaining quality assurance. This result was in agreement with that of Yemisi (2013) that educational qualification was among the variables that had substantial relationship with the principal's performance in secondary schools. This was because those principals who acquire higher qualification like PGDE, M.Ed and PhD have been exposed to better knowledge and understanding of monitoring, supervision of instruction and evaluation in the school than those that acquire lower qualifications. This result supported Oku (2010) that professional qualification significantly influence principal's job performance. The findings of this study indicated that qualification was significantly related to quality assurance

practices of principals.

The result further indicated that qualification predicted quality assurance practices of principals. This finding of the study supported Nwite (2012) that school administrator's qualification greatly influenced their instructional task of supervision and evaluation. Khurshid (2008) findings showed that performance of the students taught by teachers with BA/B.Sc in education qualification was better than the students taught by teachers with qualification like NCE. This finding was in line with Erez and Judge (2001) who observed that qualification had relationship with school management. This finding also supported Davies (2005) who opined that professional qualifications were the most important factor influencing student's achievement in the school. The researcher further stated that the implication of this was that the higher the qualification of school administrators the better the knowledge and skills for effective and efficient performance on the job. Qualification predicted quality assurance practices of principals. This implied that the possession of higher educational qualifications is required for active participation in monitoring, supervision of instructions and evaluation.

In response to the hypothesis two and the summary of Pearson R analysis on the relationship between qualification and quality assurance practices with respect to monitoring, supervision and evaluation in secondary schools, the correlation coefficient for the relationship between qualification and quality assurance practices of principals in secondary schools is 0.286 with coefficient of determination of 0.082. This means that there is a significant positive relationship between qualification and quality assurance practices of principals in secondary schools. In other words, 18.2% variation in the quality assurance practices of principals can be attributed to their qualification while 81.8% was attributed to other factors. Therefore, the associated probability value for calculated value of F (70.593) for the relationship between qualification and quality assurance practices of principals in secondary schools is 0.000. Since, the probability value of 0.000 is >0.05 level of significance, the null hypothesis was rejected. Therefore, there is a significant moderate relationship between qualification and quality assurance practices of principals in secondary schools in South East, Nigeria.

CONCLUSION

Qualification of the principals had a significant positive relationship with quality assurance practices of principals in secondary schools in South East, Nigeria. The higher the qualification the proficient the principals were in monitoring, supervision of instructions and

evaluation. This was because principals with higher qualification like PGDE and Masters in Education had acquired better knowledge and skills for effective monitoring, supervision and evaluation of instructional activities in the school thereby maintaining quality assurance. Therefore, possession of higher educational qualifications is required for active participation in monitoring, supervision of instructions and evaluation in the school. There was no significant relationship between age and quality assurance practices of principals in secondary schools in South East, Nigeria. Therefore, the quality assurance practices of the principals were not predicted by their ages.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Principals should be encouraged to go for individual development programmes to acquire higher degrees for better performance in quality assurance practices. The government should subject and sponsor principals in South East, Nigeria to compulsory in service training on quality assurance.

IMPLICATIONS

Principal's knowledge of monitoring, supervision of instructions and evaluation indicated high quality assurance in the school. The implication is that the principals must have had enough training and development that enhanced their quality assurance practices in the functional areas.

Qualification predicted quality assurance practices of principals. This implied that the possession of higher educational qualifications is required for active participation in monitoring, supervision of instructions and evaluation. Age did not predict any of the quality assurance practices of principals. The implication is that both male and female principals irrespective of their ages have the same potentials.

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