

# **Influence of Principals' Management Strategies in the Achievement of Quality Assurance in Public Secondary Schools in Benue State, Nigeria**

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## **ABSTRACT**

The study investigated the influence of principals' management strategies in the achievement of quality assurance in public secondary schools in Benue State, Nigeria. The study was guided by three (3) specific objectives. Three research questions were raised for the study. Also, three hypotheses were formulated and tested at 0.05 level of significance. This study adopted the survey research design. The population of the study is 4888 principals and teachers in all the public secondary schools in Benue State. The sample size is 370 respondents. The instrument used for data collection was a structured questionnaire titled "Influence of Principals' Management Strategies in the Achievement of Quality Assurance Questionnaire (IPMSAQAQ)". An overall reliability coefficient of 0.89 was obtained for the instrument. Mean and Standard Deviation were used in answering the research questions while Chi-square goodness of fit was used to test the null hypotheses at 0.05 level. The findings of the study revealed that principals' instructional, physical facilities and supervisory management strategies significantly influence the achievement of quality assurance in public secondary schools in Benue State. In view of the findings of this study, it was concluded that the utilization of instructional, physical facilities and supervisory management strategies by principals will enhance the sustainability of quality assurance in public secondary schools in Benue state. In view of the findings of this study, it was recommended that; School administrators in Benue State should prioritize the development and implementation of effective personnel management strategies for principals in public secondary schools.

**Keys: Principals' Management Strategies, Instructional Strategy, Physical Facilities Strategies, Supervisory Strategy and Quality Assurance**

## **INTRODUCTION**

Education can be seen as a tool for national progress. Education in essence is the most effective instrument for academic progress, social mobilization, political survival and effective national development of a country, and it also constitutes the single largest enterprise in Nigeria. Nigeria's educational objectives have been mapped out in the National Policy on Education with regards to their importance towards the needs of the individual and the society (FRN, 2014). The National Policy on Education set goals to enhance educational growth in the country. Some of these objectives are acquisition of knowledge, moral development, character development, self-realization, cultural development and personnel/community goals. In general, education aims at transmitting a common set of beliefs, values, norms, and understanding across all spheres of life. Principal management strategy is the way of utilizing human and material resources

through cooperative efforts to achieve educational goals.

It is pertinent to note that for the aims and objectives of education to be achieved, the roles of principals in setting and overseeing academic goals and ensuring that teachers have the equipment and resources to meet those goals of the school are the key. This implies that principals' management strategies are very essential tool for the success of any school. It refers to the ways school principal run the day to day affairs of the school. Proper school management can help the principal to plan, organize staff, control, direct and coordinate school activities to achieve pre-determined goals. Obi (2013) opined that management strategy involves the process of planning, organizing, leading and controlling the efforts of school staff and the use of other school resources in order to achieve the school goals.

Principals' management strategy is defined as the planning of curriculum organization, procedure, style and resources, arranging the environment to maximize efficiency, monitoring students and teachers' progress and anticipating potential problems (Obi, 2013). Principals' management can impact on teachers' attitude to students. In view of this, Ogbonnaya (2009) emphasized that effective management strategy is very necessary for coordinating all the resources of educational institutions through planning, organizing, directing and controlling of the human and material resources to attain pre-determined goals.

Effective management of educational institutions by principals requires that certain strategies need to be carried out for the attainment of goals and objectives. These strategies include: instructional management, personnel management, school community relationship management, physical facilities management, financial management practices, pupils' personnel management, curriculum management, delegation of duties and business management practices (Ogbonnaya, 2015). This study concentrated on three principals' management strategies namely: instructional management strategy, physical facilities' management strategy and supervision management strategy. Instructional supervision strategy is used by principals to improve instruction through regular monitoring of teachers to promote teacher growth in educational practice.

Instructional management strategy can be defined as adequate measures taken up by principals. This includes but not limited to aspects such as monitoring seat work, structuring daily routine, and allocating materials (Cunha & Mogana, 2019). Instructional management strategy is one of the areas of educational management for promoting instructions in schools. Instructional management strategy refers to the ways principal go about passing instruction to his/her subordinates. According to Mgbodile in (Cunha & Mogana, 2019), instructional management strategy involves planning, organizing, promoting and supervision of instruction by school principals. It is important to note that the principal has the duty of helping the teacher to plan and organize for instruction, sees that the teacher prepares usefulness on notes and ensures that they teach their lessons with useful instructional materials. Nzewi (2014) defined supervision as the maximum development of the teacher into the most professional efficient person he/she is capable of becoming. This recognized that each has potential that needs assistance, directing and guidance. The main purpose of instructional management strategy is to bring about desirable changes in the teachers' and students' behaviours. Ofojebe (2007) stresses that competent supervision of programmes, projects and teachers to ensure they are on the proper course are necessary for the achievement of quality assurance through provision of adequate physical facilities.

Physical facilities management strategy is another core aspect of management strategy as it is primarily concerned with ways principals procure, organize and maintain material resources for the achievement of educational goals and quality assurance. Nzewi (2014) described physical facilities as all the material resources which the teacher utilizes for the purpose of making teaching and learning more effective. Nzewi saw physical facilities as important vehicle through which educational goals can be achieved; and advised that, if not properly managed; the facilities will dilapidate and wear out. Abdurahman (2014) in his view emphasized that educational facilities are needed for developing cognitive area of knowledge, abilities and skills which are pre-requisites for academic achievement. A well planned and organized physical facilities in

schools such as conducive accommodation, libraries, playground and furniture, can foster good interpersonal relationship and effective teaching and learning. In a related view, Onwurah (2014) pointed out that school buildings and equipment are essential aids for effective teaching and learning and where they are inadequate or lacking; the various educational institutions cannot reasonably carry out the instructional objective of their educational programme. The ability of the principals and government to plan, organize and provide adequate physical facilities to schools and effectively supervise these facilities can lead to the achievement of quality assurance as it is a priority in the field of education.

Supervision management strategy can be defined as a way of stimulating, guiding, improving, refreshing, encouraging and overseeing certain groups with the hope of seeking their cooperation in order for the supervisors to be successful in their task of supervision (Osuji & Etuketu, 2019). Supervision is essentially the practice of monitoring the performance of school staff, observing the advantages and disadvantages with the aim of using befitting and good techniques to ameliorate the deficiencies while still improving on the advantages thereby increasing the school standards and achieve educational goals. Basically, the supervisor is primarily a resource person, a teacher of teachers who poses a sound education, well informed about methodology of classroom management, inventive, zealous and acutely sensitive to peoples' cultural values, patient, a good listener and very friendly (Nwakpa, 2014). This according to the author is because supervisors work with human concerns in a school, and are dedicated to the belief that the school should serve the people, rather than the people serving the school their ultimate purpose is human growth, which they promote by supplying continuity and constant re-adaptation in the educational programme. Thus, the quality of education is the degree of excellence of the output (students) which can be achieved through principals' effective management strategy.

Quality assurance involves the systematic review of educational provision to maintain and improve its quality, equity and efficiency. It encompasses school self-evaluation, external evaluation (including inspection), the evaluation of teachers and school leaders, and student assessments (Nwankwo, 2013). Quality assurance is a process of ensuring effective resource input, controlling, refining the processes and raising the standard of output in order to meet the set goals. Ayeni (2012) opined that quality assurance in education is the efficient management, monitoring, evaluation and reviews of their source inputs and transformation process (teaching and learning) to produce a quality output (students) that meets set standards and expectations of the society. Quality assurance in education aims at preventing quality problems and ensures that the products of the system conform to the expected standards. Mckeown (2011) argues that "quality assurance is about shaping the future "and is the human attempt to get to "desirable ends with available means". It also implies the ability of the educational institutions to meet the expectations of the users of manpower in relation to the quality of skills required by their outputs. It refers to all the activities that are conducted in order to achieve or maintain a certain acceptable quality level (Nwankwo, 2013).

However, there seems to be a sharp decline in the quality of education system in most of the public schools in Benue state. Indicators of such declining quality and wastage in the education system may include: high drop-out and failure rates, rampant examination malpractices, poor reading and writing skills among students at all levels. There is evidence of client reaction as many parents take their children to private schools within and outside the state. Also, personal observation by researchers have shown poor quality assurance in public secondary schools in Benue state. This is seen in the areas of inadequate funding, inadequate facilities, poor instructional supervision, conflict among teachers, poor vision of the principals, poor principal teacher relationship and poor management style of the principals among others. These situations seem to have led to poor academic achievement among the secondary school students, high drop-out rate, and high rate of examination malpractice, poor reading and writing cultures among others.

There are conflicting views on how quality assurance can be achieved in the school setting. Some views

asserts that quality assurance in a school setting is made possible through proper planning by the management which involves all the staff in the functions of planning, execution, monitoring and evaluation using set standards and objectives. How true can this be in relation to public secondary schools in Benue state? The problem of this study is therefore put in a question form; what influence does principal management strategy with the following indices: instructional, physical facilities strategies and supervisory management strategy have on achievement of quality assurance in public secondary schools in Benue State?

### **Objective of the Study**

The objective of this study was to investigate the influence of principals' management strategies in the achievement of quality assurance in public secondary schools in Benue State. Specifically, the study;

1. ascertained the influence of principals' instructional management strategy on the achievement of quality assurance in public secondary schools in Benue State.
2. determined the influence of principals' physical facilities management strategy on the achievement of quality assurance in public secondary schools in Benue State.
3. determined the influence of principals' supervisory management strategy on the achievement of quality assurance in public secondary schools in Benue State.

### **Research Questions**

The following research questions were raised to guide the study

1. What is the influence of principals' instructional management strategy on the achievement of quality assurance in public secondary schools in Benue State?
2. What is the influence of principals' physical facilities management strategy on the achievement of quality assurance in public secondary schools in Benue State?
3. What is the influence of principals' supervisory management strategy on the achievement of quality assurance in public secondary schools in Benue State?

### **Statement of Hypotheses**

The following hypotheses were formulated and tested at 0.05 level of significance:

1. Principals' instructional management strategy has no significant influence on the achievement of quality assurance in public secondary schools in Benue State.
2. Principals' physical facilities management strategy has no significant influence on the achievement of quality assurance in public secondary schools in Benue State.
3. Principals' supervisory management strategy has no significant influence on the achievement of quality assurance in public secondary schools in Benue State.

## **METHODOLOGY**

The study investigated the influence of principals' management strategies in the achievement of quality assurance in public secondary schools in Benue State. Survey research design was adopted for this study. The design was considered appropriate for this study because it allows for the collection of data from a sample that is true representative of the population in a systematic manner. It also permits the collection of data from respondents in the natural setting. The design also enables the researcher to collect reliable data from a significant number of the population objectively. The population of the study is a composite of 4888 principals and teachers in all the public secondary schools in Benue State. The sample size is 370 respondents. Multi-stage sampling procedure was adopted for the study. The instrument used for data

collection was a researcher developed questionnaire titled “Influence of Principals’ Management Strategies in the Achievement of Quality Assurance Questionnaire (IPMSAQAQ)”. To determine the face and content validity of the instrument, initial copies of the instrument with the specific purposes, research questions, and hypotheses were given to three experts. One of the experts in Measurement and Evaluation and two in Educational Administration and Planning all from the College of Agricultural and Science Education, Department of Educational Foundations and General Studies, Joseph Sarwuan Tarka University Makurdi. An overall reliability coefficient of 0.89 was obtained for the instrument. Mean and Standard Deviation were used in answering the research questions while Chi-square goodness of fit was used to test the null hypotheses at 0.05 level.

## RESULTS

The results of the study were presented according to research questions answered and hypotheses tested as follows:

### Research Question 1

What is the influence of principals’ instructional management strategy on the achievement of quality assurance in public secondary schools in Benue State?

To answer this research question, the mean and standard deviation of the responses of the respondents were computed and presented in Table 1.

**Table 1: Mean and Standard Deviation of the responses of the respondents on Influence of principals’ instructional management strategies for quality assurance in secondary school**

S/N	Items	N	Mean	SD	Remarks
1	Regular classroom visitation by the principal encourages teachers to do well and this enhance quality assurance	370	2.92	0.75	Agree
2	Ensuring that teachers make use of instructional materials by principals assures quality in administration	370	2.61	0.68	Agree
3	Coordination of activities of committees during special school programmes by principals assures quality	370	3.10	0.88	Agree
4	Strict monitoring of teachers-students’ activities by principals during lecture periods assures quality in administration	370	3.32	0.95	Agree
5	Issuing queries to staff caught in any act of indiscipline by principals does assure quality in administration	370	3.11	0.89	Agree
6	Holding periodic meetings at different levels with students by principals assures quality in administration	370	2.83	0.64	Agree
7	Carrying teachers along in placing educational programmes by principals guarantees quality in school management	370	2.76	0.79	Agree
	<b>Cluster Mean</b>		<b>2.95</b>		<b>MI</b>

*MI= Moderate Influence, SD= Standard Deviation*

Result presented on Table 1 shows that all the 7 items had mean scores that is above the mean bench mark of 2.50 and this implies that the respondents agree on all the items. The result shows a cluster mean of 2.95 which is also above the mean bench mark of 2.50. This is an indication that principals’ instructional management strategy has moderate influence on the achievement of quality assurance in public secondary

schools in Benue State. The standard deviation as shown on Table 3 ranges from 0.64 to 0.95 and this implies that the respondents were homogenous in their responses.

### Research Question 2

What is the influence of principals’ physical facilities management strategy on the achievement of quality assurance in public secondary schools in Benue State?

To answer this research question, the mean and standard deviation of the responses of the respondents were computed and presented in Table 2.

**Table 2: Mean and Standard Deviation of the responses of the respondents on Influence of principals’ physical facilities management strategies for quality assurance in secondary school**

S/N	Items	N	Mean	SD	Remarks
1	Principals’ provision of adequate educational resources for teachers to accomplish their teaching task enhance quality assurance	370	2.79	0.60	Agree
2	Boosting teachers teaching efficiency by principal enhances quality assurance	370	3.12	0.90	Agree
3	Providing the right maintenance culture in managing facilities in the school by principals assures quality	370	3.05	0.85	Agree
4	Managing learning facilities in the school periodically as the need arises assures quality in administration	370	2.59	0.67	Agree
5	Giving prompt attention by the principal towards repairing educational facilities or resources assures quality	370	2.87	0.73	Agree
6	Principal’s ability to provide sufficient safety during school plant maintenance enhances quality assurance	370	2.95	0.84	Agree
7	Ensuring that facilities in the school are in good conditions to provide the necessary quality services helps in attainment of quality in school management	370	2.99	0.92	Agree
	<b>Cluster Mean</b>		<b>2.91</b>		<b>MI</b>

**MI= Moderate Influence, SD= Standard Deviation**

Result presented on Table 2 shows that all the 7 items had mean scores that is above the mean bench mark of 2.50 and this implies that the respondents agree on all the items. The result shows a cluster mean of 2.91 which is also above the mean bench mark of 2.50. This is an indication that principals’ physical facilities management strategy has moderate influence on the achievement of quality assurance in public secondary schools in Benue State. The standard deviation as shown on Table 4 ranges from 0.69 to 0.92 and this implies that the respondents were homogenous in their responses.

### Research Question 3

What is the influence of principals’ supervisory management strategy on the achievement of quality assurance in public secondary schools in Benue State?

To answer this research question, the mean and standard deviation of the responses of the respondents were computed and presented in Table 3.

**Table 3: Mean and Standard Deviation of the responses of the respondents on Influence of principals’ supervisory management strategy on achievement of quality assurance in secondary school**

S/N	Items	N	Mean	SD	Remarks
1	Ensuring that teachers are regular in class by principals enhances quality assurance	370	2.75	0.66	Agree
2	Ensuring quality learning environment by principals improves quality assurance	370	3.41	0.98	Agree
3	Supervision of instructional delivery by principals enhances quality assurance	370	2.78	0.62	Agree
4	Participation in internal classroom supervision of teachers by principals influences quality	370	3.02	0.83	Agree
5	Monitoring of instructional delivery by principals helps in attainment of quality assurance	370	2.84	0.74	Agree
6	Participation in internal classroom supervision of student by principals facilitate quality assurance	370	3.36	0.96	Agree
7	Ensuring that teachers teach according to prescribed curriculum by principals enhances quality	370	3.27	0.91	Agree
	<b>Cluster Mean</b>		<b>3.06</b>		<b>MI</b>

*MI= Moderate Influence, SD= Standard Deviation*

Result presented on Table 3 shows that all the 7 items had mean scores that is above the mean bench mark of 2.50 and this implies that the respondents agree on all the items. The result shows a cluster mean of 3.06 which is also above the mean bench mark of 2.50. This is an indication that principals’ supervisory management strategy has moderate influence on the achievement of quality assurance in public secondary schools in Benue State. The standard deviation as shown on Table 4 ranges from 0.62 to 0.96 and this implies that the respondents were homogenous in their responses.

**Research Hypothesis 1**

Principals’ instructional management strategy has no significant influence on the achievement of quality assurance in public secondary schools in Benue State

To test this hypothesis, Chi-square Goodness of Fit was used and presented in Table 4

**Table 4: Chi-square goodness of fit on the influence of Principals’ instructional management strategy on the achievement of quality assurance in public secondary schools in Benue State**

	Observed N	Expected N	df	Asymp. sig	Sig. value	Remark
SD	36	92.5	3	0.00	0.05	S, Reject H <sub>03</sub>
D	64	92.5				
A	130	92.5				

SA	140	92.5			
Total	370				

df= degree of freedom, S= significant

The result presented on Table 4 shows that the Asymp. Sig value of 0.00 is less than the set significant value of 0.05 and this shows that the test of hypothesis is significant. This implies that principals’ instructional management strategy has significant influence on the achievement of quality assurance in public secondary schools in Benue State. Therefore, the hypothesis is rejected.

**Research Hypothesis 2**

Principals’ physical facilities management strategy has no significant influence on the achievement of quality assurance in public secondary schools in Benue State

To test this hypothesis, Chi-square Goodness of Fit was used and presented in Table 5

**Table 5: Chi-square goodness of fit on the influence of Principals’ physical facilities management strategy on the achievement of quality assurance in public secondary schools in Benue State**

	Observed N	Expected N	df	Asymp. sig	Sig. value	Remark
SD	61	92.5	3	0.00	0.05	S, Reject H <sub>04</sub>
D	74	92.5				
A	93	92.5				
SA	142	92.5				
Total	370					

df= degree of freedom, S= significant

The result presented on Table 5 shows that the Asymp. Sig value of 0.00 is less than the set significant value of 0.05 and this shows that the test of hypothesis is significant. Therefore, the hypothesis is rejected. This implies that principals’ facilities management strategy has significant influence on the achievement of quality assurance in public secondary schools in Benue State.

**Research Hypothesis 3**

Principals’ supervisory management strategy has no significant influence on the achievement of quality assurance in public secondary schools in Benue State

To test this hypothesis, Chi-square Goodness of Fit was used and presented in Table 6

**Table 6: Chi-square goodness of fit on the influence of Principals’ supervisory management strategy on the achievement of quality assurance in public secondary schools in Benue State**

	Observed N	Expected N	df	Asymp. sig	Sig. value	Remark
SD	62	92.5	3	0.00	0.05	S, Reject H <sub>05</sub>



D	76	92.5			
A	98	92.5			
SA	134	92.5			
Total	370				

df= degree of freedom, S= significant

The result presented on Table 6 shows that the Asymp. Sig value of 0.00 is less than the set significant value of 0.05 and this shows that the test of hypothesis is significant. This implies that principals’ supervisory management strategy has significant influence on the achievement of quality assurance in public secondary schools in Benue State. Therefore, the hypothesis is rejected.

## SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

The following findings emerged from the study.

1. Principals’ instructional management strategy has moderate influence on the achievement of quality assurance in public secondary schools in Benue State
2. Principals’ physical facilities management strategy has moderate influence on the achievement of quality assurance in public secondary schools in Benue State
3. Principals’ supervisory management strategy has moderate influence on the achievement of quality assurance in public secondary schools in Benue State

## DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The findings of this study based on research question one and hypothesis one revealed that Principals’ instructional management strategy has moderate and significant influence on the achievement of quality assurance in public secondary schools in Benue State. The findings revealed that; Regular classroom visitation by the principal encourages teachers to do well and this enhance quality assurance; Ensuring that teachers make use of instructional materials by principals assures quality in administration; Coordination of activities of committees during special school programmes by principals assures quality; Strict monitoring of teachers-students’ activities by principals during lecture periods assures quality in administration. The study also found that; Issuing queries to staff caught in any act of indiscipline by principals does assure quality in administration; Holding periodic meetings at different levels with students by principals assures quality in administration; Carrying teachers along in placing educational programmes by principals guarantees quality in school management. The findings agree with that of Abdurahman (2014) who conducted a study on principals’ administrative process strategies for the achievement of quality assurance in public secondary schools in Kogi State and found that principals’ instructional management strategies like planning and organizing enhances quality assurance in the school.

The findings of this study based on research question two and hypothesis two revealed that Principals’ physical facilities management strategy has moderate and significant influence on the achievement of quality assurance in public secondary schools in Benue State. The findings revealed that; Principals’ provision of adequate educational resources for teachers to accomplish their teaching task enhance quality assurance; Boosting teachers teaching efficiency by principal enhances quality assurance; Providing the right maintenance culture in managing facilities in the school by principals assures quality. The study also

found that; Managing learning facilities in the school periodically as the need arises assures quality in administration; Giving prompt attention by the principal towards repairing educational facilities or resources assures quality; Principal's ability to provide sufficient safety during school plant maintenance enhances quality assurance; Ensuring that facilities in the school are in good conditions to provide the necessary quality services helps in attainment of quality in school management. The findings of this study align with that of Ekundayo (2010) who examined the relationship between school facilities and students' achievement in the affective and psychomotor domains of learning as a measure of quality assurance and found that lack of physical facilities impair the academic achievement of students. The finding of this study is because, when principals cannot manage school physical facilities, it will affect students' academic achievement which is a measure of quality assurance of the school.

The findings of this study based on research question three and hypothesis three revealed that Principals' supervisory management strategy has moderate and significant influence on the achievement of quality assurance in public secondary schools in Benue State. The findings revealed that; Ensuring that teachers are regular in class by principals enhances quality assurance; Ensuring quality learning environment by principals improves quality assurance; Supervision of instructional delivery by principals enhances quality assurance; Participation in internal classroom supervision of teachers by principals influences quality assurance. Monitoring of instructional delivery by principals helps in attainment of quality assurance; Participation in internal classroom supervision of student by principals facilitate quality assurance; Ensuring that teachers teach according to prescribed curriculum by principals enhances quality. The findings of the study agree with that of Muraina (2014) who conducted a study titled "Relationship between Principals' Managerial Skills and Administrative Effectiveness in Public secondary schools in Oyo State, Nigeria and found that there was significant relationship between principals' managerial skills (supervisory) and administrative effectiveness which is a measure of quality assurance.

## CONCLUSION

In view of the findings of this study, it was concluded that the utilization of instructional, physical facilities and supervisory management strategies by principals will enhance the sustainability of quality assurance in public secondary schools in Benue state

## RECOMMENDATIONS

In view of the findings of this study, the following recommendations were made;

1. Educational authorities and school administrators in Benue State should focus on providing professional development opportunities for principals that specifically target instructional leadership and management skills.
2. Principals should ensure adequate maintenance, improvement, and proper utilization of school infrastructure as these will enhance quality educational output
3. Government should provide principals with regular and targeted professional development opportunities for principals to enhance their supervisory skills. Training should focus on effective classroom observation techniques, providing constructive feedback to teachers, and fostering a culture of continuous improvement.

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