

## **PRINCIPALS' ADMINISTRATIVE STRATEGIES FOR THE ATTAINMENT OF QUALITY ASSURANCE IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN ANAMBRA STATE**

**AMAEFULE FORGIVE NKIRU,**  
Department of Educational Management and Policy  
Nnamdi Azikiwe University Awka, Anambra State, Nigeria  
[fn.amaefule@unizik.edu.ng](mailto:fn.amaefule@unizik.edu.ng)

**AKULUE NNEKA MAUREEN,**  
Department of Educational Foundations  
Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu University, Igbariam Campus  
[nnekaakulue@gmail.com](mailto:nnekaakulue@gmail.com)

**OKOLI CHIDIEBERE ROSE**  
Department of Educational Foundations  
Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu University, Igbariam Campus  
[Okolichidi22@gmail.com](mailto:Okolichidi22@gmail.com)

### **Abstract**

*The study investigated principals' administrative process strategies for the attainment of quality assurance in secondary schools in Anambra State. The design of the study was a descriptive design. The population comprised 262 public secondary school principals in Anambra State. The entire population of principals were used as sample size, consequently, no sampling technique was used for the study because the population size was manageable. A 26-item structured questionnaire was used as instrument for data collection. The structured questionnaire was titled, "Administrative Strategies Adopted by Principals for the Attainment of Quality Assurance Questionnaire" (ASAPAQAQ). The Four-Point Scale of strongly agree, agree, disagree, and strongly disagree were adopted to gather information needed for data analysis. The instrument was validated and the reliability yielded a coefficient of 0.731. Mean score was used to analyse data from the questionnaire. The findings revealed that, the principals in Anambra State adopted planning, organizing and coordinating strategies for quality assurance in secondary schools. Based on the findings, the researcher recommended amongst others the government should employ qualified principals who would be able to maintain close ties with his teachers in the achievement of school goals and achievement of quality assurance.*

**Keywords:** Principals' administrative process, Administrative strategies, Achievement of quality assurance, Quality assurance in secondary schools.

### **Introduction**

The importance of education has continued to permeate every facet of the society and human endeavour. Education is considered as a main driver of human capital, as it assists in enhancing the productivity of labour, increasing efficiency and increasing the output of

economy (Ahmed, Arshad, Mahmood, & Akhtar, 2017). It is on this note that principals are making frantic efforts to ensure that the standard of secondary school meet international standard and develop the nation. Education, according to Akareem and Hossain (2016), is a crucial driving force behind any country's economic progress. Principals have begun to place a premium on improving the educational system, and educational institution management is under intense pressure to maintain high standards of education in order to achieve quality assurance (Zeichner & Bier, 2017).

Quality assurance, according to Borahan and Ziarati (2002) is all those planned and systematic actions necessary to provide sufficient confidence that a product or service will satisfy given requirements for quality. A major characteristic of quality assurance is that it is preventive and operates to prevent mistakes, poor quality and wastages from occurring in the first place (Akagwu, 2012). Similarly, Ajayi and Adegbesan (2007) defined quality assurance in the school system as 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. Quality assurance, according to Okebukola (2010), is an umbrella term aimed at improving the quality of the education system's input, process, and product. It is a term for the process of assuring for purpose, according to Bandele (2011). It has been expanded to cover academic, administrative, and infrastructure quality assurance, all of which is accomplished through efficient administrative processes.

Administrative processes, according to Ogbhnnaya, Oboegbulem, Onwurah, and Enyi (2013), are the sum total of the various planning, organizing, stimulating, coordinating, staffing, budgeting, communication, and evaluating processes that help administrators use resources to achieve organizational goals. Abdulrahman (2016), also defined administrative process as a collection of procedures that deal with the many ways in which people and material resources are used in an organization to achieve established goals. Planning, decision-making, organizing, coordinating, motivating, directing, reviewing, staffing, and budgeting are all part of these processes. These procedures are in place to aid the administrator in his day-to-day tasks. An administrator who disregards these procedures is likely to have difficulties in his or her role as a school administrator.

The administrative processes must be followed to the end in order to achieve quality assurance in Anambra State's education. Planning, decision-making, organizing, and coordinating are only a few of the administrative procedures mentioned above. Planning, according to Oboegbulem and Onwurah (2011), is the process of selecting ahead of time what methods and procedures an individual, group, or organization will use to achieve its goals. The most important aspect of planning is deciding ahead of time what goals need to be met and how to use existing resources to accomplish them. To put it another way, planning entails deciding ahead of time what needs to be done and how it should be done. Because the few available resources must be evenly distributed to serve every competing section, scarcity of resources makes the requirement even more pressing. In order to achieve quality assurance in education, it is vital to organize the planning at this point.

Enyi (2016) viewed school organization as an administrative process including the creation of a framework and the assignment of personnel to certain positions for the goal of completing

specific tasks. The administrator must have a framework or structure for his school on which posts are formed and assigned to people through effective organization in order to fulfill the defined educational objectives. Organizing is frequently thought of as a procedure in which an administrator defines and groups the work to be done into smaller units, and then assigns individuals to the various units with the necessary resources and authority. Organizing in schools allows the principal to allocate duties to academic and non-academic personnel based on competency, which reduces conflict in schools by ensuring that everyone knows what they are supposed to do.

When it comes to planning and organizing, principals who are in charge of employing human and material resources in schools must be able to coordinate these resources in order to achieve the desired results. Nwankwo, Loyce, and Obiorah (2011) defined coordination as "the process of building an ordered framework of collective effort in order to promote unity of action in the pursuit of common goals." A secondary school with several departments, units, and employees with different functions must be efficiently coordinated to ensure that the stated school objectives are realized. As a result, coordination can be defined as the process of directing and harmonizing resources and group activities such that predefined educational goals can be met with minimal friction.

In Anambra State, the standard of education appears to be good, as most of the results from external examinations, like as the West African Examination Council examination, show that the students perform well. The chart, which was released by the examination board, ranked the performances of all 36 states in the country, including the Federal Capital Territory of Abuja. Anambra State came in second position with 28, 379 applicants out of a total of 46, 385, but Abia State got first place with 63.94 percent of those who have five credits in Mathematics and English Language, compared to Anambra's 61.18 percent out of 100 percent (Vanguard Newspaper 2019, August 16). Despite this endeavor, secondary school education in Anambra State appears to be struggling to keep up with its international counterpart.

It seems the principals are not carrying out their administrative duties such as planning, organizing, and coordinating the affairs of the schools in such a way to compete with other schools globally. From the researcher's preliminary research, there seem to be scarcity of literature on better administrative strategies adopted by principals to achieve quality assurance particularly in secondary school education in Anambra State. This has created gap in knowledge in exploring principals' effective use of administrative processes in secondary schools in achieving quality assurance. In order to fill this gap, this study sought to examine administrative strategies adopted by principals for the achievement of quality assurance in Anambra State.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Secondary school administration in Anambra State is expected to enhance educational quality assurance in order for students to compete globally rather than only locally. The government, parents, and even students expect great education for students in Anambra State secondary schools as a result of principals' use of appropriate administrative strategies. However, observations revealed that administrative strategies either do not exist or are used ineffectively by principals, which appear to have resulted in inadequate quality assurance in

secondary schools in Anambra State. This is evident when principals, among other things, are unable to predict the next task, implement step-by-step plans for school activities, or develop a relationship between leadership and responsibilities. Consequently, these circumstances appear to have resulted in low academic achievement among secondary school students and an inability to compete sustainably with international counterparts. In order to fill this gap, the study sought to examine principals' administrative strategies for the attainment of quality assurance in secondary schools in Anambra State.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The main purpose of this study is to examine principals' administrative strategies for the attainment of quality assurance in secondary schools in Anambra State. Specifically, the study sought to:

1. Determine principals' planning strategies for the attainment of quality assurance in secondary schools in Anambra State.
2. Ascertain principals' organizing strategies for the attainment of quality assurance in secondary schools in Anambra State.
3. Find out principals' coordinating strategies for the attainment of quality assurance in secondary schools in Anambra State.

### **Research Questions**

The following research questions guided the study.

1. What are the principals' planning strategies for the attainment of quality assurance in secondary schools in Anambra State?
2. What are the principals' organizing strategies for the attainment of quality assurance in secondary schools in Anambra State?
3. What are the principals' coordinating strategies for the attainment of quality assurance in secondary schools in Anambra State?

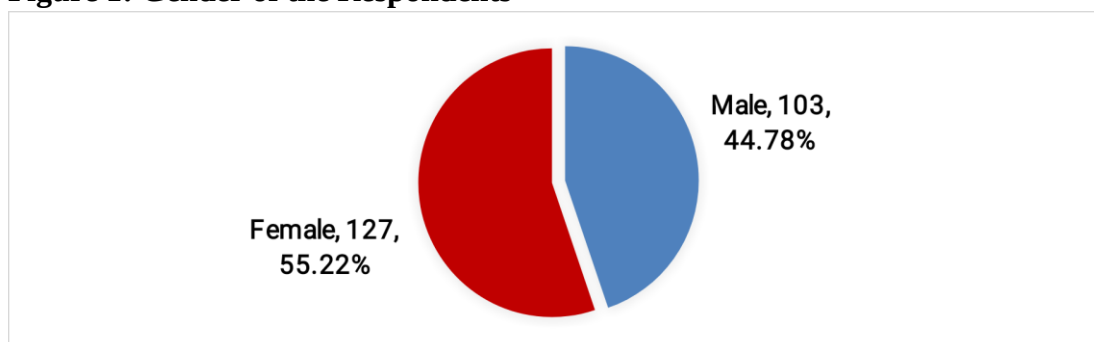
### **METHODOLOGY**

The design of the study was a descriptive design. The population of this study comprised the 262 public secondary school principals in Anambra State. Anambra State has six Education Zones. Thus, the total number of principals in public secondary schools in Anambra State was 262. All the 262 public secondary school principals were used as sampling size for the study. Consequently, no sampling technique was used for the study because the population size was manageable. A 26-item structured questionnaire was used as instrument for data collection. The structured questionnaire was titled, "Administrative Strategies Adopted by Principals for the Achievement of Quality Assurance Questionnaire" (ASAPAQAQ). The instrument was structured on a Four-Point Scale of; Strongly Agree (SA) – 4; Agree (A) – 3; Disagree (D) – 2; to Strongly Disagree (SD) – 1. The questionnaire had an average reliability score of 0.731. The copies of the questionnaires administered were 262 but 230 were collected. Mean score was used to analyse data from the questionnaire. The item mean scores below 2.5 was disagreed and item mean scores from 2.5 and above was agreed.

## PRESENTATION OF RESULTS

### Respondents Demographics

**Figure 1: Gender of the Respondents**



**Source: Field Survey, 2021**

Figure 1 represents the gender distribution of the respondents. The results showed that 55% percent of the respondents were females while 45% of the respondents were males.

**Table 1: Principals' planning strategies for the attainment of quality assurance in secondary schools in Anambra State**

| S/N                                                                            | Item Description                                                      | Mean (X)    | Std. Dev.   |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|-------------|
| <b>Principals' Planning Strategies for The Attainment of Quality Assurance</b> |                                                                       |             |             |
| 1                                                                              | Planning strategies are actions taken to predetermine the next task   | 2.98        | .678        |
| 2                                                                              | It is used to take due steps for the successful execution of function | 2.89        | .766        |
| 3                                                                              | It is used to choose the best option available                        | 2.91        | .550        |
| 4                                                                              | It is used to set aims and objectives to be achieved                  | 2.9         | .772        |
| 5                                                                              | It is an action used for the description of situation                 | 3.06        | .608        |
| 6                                                                              | It is used to set task boundaries                                     | 2.74        | .844        |
| 7                                                                              | Define organizational mission                                         | 3.10        | .687        |
| 8                                                                              | Thinking of ways of overcoming competitors                            | 3.14        | .708        |
| 9                                                                              | Look for ways to assemble human and material resources together       | 3.12        | .642        |
| <b>Average Mean Score</b>                                                      |                                                                       | <b>2.98</b> | <b>.695</b> |

Data presented in Table 1 showed the mean scores of principals' planning strategies for the achievement of quality assurance in secondary schools in Anambra State. Also, the average mean score of 2.98 was above 2.50 and standard deviation was 0.695. On this note, the principals agreed that all the items in the table were principals' planning strategies. These agreements showed that the principals planning strategies for the attainment of quality assurance in secondary schools include: taking action to predetermined task, taking due steps

for the successful execution of functions, choosing the best options available, setting aims and objectives to be achieved, taking action for the description of situation, setting task boundaries, defining organizational mission, thinking of ways of overcoming competitors and looking for ways to assemble human and material resources together.

**Table 2: Principals’ organizing strategies for the attainment of quality assurance in secondary schools in Anambra State**

| S/N                                                                              | Item Description                                              | Mean (X)    | Std. Dev.   |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|-------------|
| <b>Principals’ Organizing Strategies for The Attainment of Quality Assurance</b> |                                                               |             |             |
| 10                                                                               | Identify the work to be performed                             | 3.11        | .905        |
| 11                                                                               | Group the workers where necessary                             | 2.96        | .977        |
| 12                                                                               | Establish a relationship between authority and responsibility | 2.95        | .949        |
| 13                                                                               | Delegate authority to employees                               | 2.99        | .99616      |
| 14                                                                               | Determine activities to be carried out                        | 2.98        | .98924      |
| 15                                                                               | Coordinate the activities                                     | 2.94        | .82892      |
| 16                                                                               | Review plans and objectives                                   | 3.06        | .840        |
| 17                                                                               | Classify activities                                           | 3.05        | .797        |
| 18                                                                               | Assign work and responsibility to personnel                   | 3.00        | .849        |
| 19                                                                               | Ensure the evaluation of results                              | 3.11        | .714        |
| <b>Average Mean Score</b>                                                        |                                                               | <b>3.02</b> | <b>.885</b> |

Data presented in Table 2 showed the mean scores of principals’ organizing strategies for the attainment of quality assurance in secondary schools in Anambra State. The principals agreed on all the items in the table with average mean score of 3.02 above the mean criterion of 2.50 and standard deviation of 0.885. These imply that the principals’ organizing strategies for the attainment of quality assurance include: identifying the work to be performed, grouping the workers where necessary, establishing the relationship between authority and responsibility, delegating authority to employees, determining activities to be carried out, coordinating the activities, classifying activities, assigning work and responsibility to personnel and ensuring the evaluation of results.

**Table 3: Principals’ coordinating strategies for the attainment of quality assurance in secondary schools in Anambra State**

| S/N                                                                                 | Item Description                                               | Mean (X)    | Std. Dev.   |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|-------------|
| <b>Principals’ Coordinating Strategies for The Achievement of Quality Assurance</b> |                                                                |             |             |
| 20                                                                                  | Assign everyone a specific project role                        | 2.98        | 1.041       |
| 21                                                                                  | Ensure the human and material resources work together          | 2.94        | 1.005       |
| 22                                                                                  | Assign team members to complete section of plan                | 3.10        | .574        |
| 23                                                                                  | Involve in direct supervision of classroom activities          | 3.14        | .631        |
| 24                                                                                  | Ensure the quality of instructional materials                  | 3.12        | .729        |
| 25                                                                                  | Ensure that identified works to be performed starts performing | 2.98        | .960        |
| 26                                                                                  | Ensure each task is carried out in step by step                | 3.05        | .905        |
| <b>Average Mean Score</b>                                                           |                                                                | <b>3.04</b> | <b>.835</b> |

Data presented in Table 3 showed the mean scores of principals' coordinating strategies for the attainment of quality assurance in secondary schools in Anambra State. The principals agreed on all the items in the table with the average mean score above the mean criterion of 2.50 and standard deviation of 0.835. These showed that the principals coordinating strategies for the attainment of quality assurance include: assigning everyone a specific project role, ensuring the human and material resources work together, assigning team members to complete section of plan, involve in direct supervision of classroom activities, ensure the quality of instructional materials, ensure that identified works to be performed starts performing and ensure each task is carried out in step by step.

### **Discussion of Findings**

The findings of this study revealed that , the principals planning strategies for the attainment of quality assurance include: taking action to predetermined task, taking due steps for the successful execution of functions, choosing the best options available, setting aims and objectives to be achieved, taking action for the description of situation, setting task boundaries, defining organizational mission, thinking of ways of overcoming competitors and looking for ways to assemble human and material resources together. In line with the findings, Manafa (2019), stated that planning is the tool which is used in gaining control of the future through current acts by studying comprehensively the current problems, apply appropriate solutions, anticipating similar events, preparing for contingencies by formulating directions, mapping out activities and providing orderly sequence for achieving stated goals. This study indicates that the principals are adopting good planning strategies for the attainment of quality assurance in secondary schools.

The findings revealed that, the principals organizing strategies for the attainment of quality assurance include: identifying the work to be performed, grouping the workers where necessary, establishing the relationship between authority and responsibility, delegating authority to employees, determining activities to be carried out, coordinating the activities, classifying activities, assigning work and responsibility to personnel and ensuring the evaluation of results. Enyi (2016) perceived organizing in schools as an administrative process of having a structure and assigning people to the posts for the purpose of performing specific duties. According to him, no administrator can function alone without the assistance of others, in other to achieve the set educational objectives, the administrator he said must have a frame work or structure for his school on which posts are created and assigned to people through effective organization. The study indicates that the principals are adopting good organizing strategies for the achievement of quality assurance in secondary schools.

The findings also revealed that, the principals coordinating processes for the achievement of quality assurance include: assigning everyone a specific project role, ensuring the human and material resources work together, assigning team members to complete section of plan, involve in direct supervision of classroom activities, ensure the quality of instructional materials, ensure that identified works to be performed starts performing and ensure each task is carried out in step by step. This is in agreement with Nwadani (2008) who asserts that, the principal is the fulcrum upon which the success or failure of school administration revolves around, noting that, the principal must maintain close ties with his teachers in the

achievement of school goals. The study also implies that the principals adopt the coordinating strategies for the attainment of quality assurance in secondary schools.

### **Conclusion**

Based on the findings of the study, the researcher came to the conclusion that the principals are adopting good planning, organizing and coordinating process in the school will go a long way in the achievement of quality assurance which will in turn help the students to compete with their colleagues worldwide.

### **Recommendations**

Based on the findings of this study, the researchers recommended that:

1. School administrators should look for ways to assemble human and material resources together.
2. The principals should assign work and responsibility to personnel under them.
3. The government should employ qualified principals who would be able to maintain close ties with his teachers in the achievement of school goals and achievement of quality assurance.

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