



**STUDENTS' PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT PRACTICES ADOPTED BY PRINCIPALS
FOR QUALITY ASSURANCE IN PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN
ANAMBRA STATE**

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Abstract

This study determined students' personnel management practices adopted by principals for quality assurance in public and private secondary schools in Anambra state. Three specific purposes and three research questions guided the study. Three null hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance. A descriptive survey research design was adopted for the study. The population of the study comprised all the 661 principals (267 public and 394 private) of secondary schools in Anambra State. Census sampling technique was adopted for the study. A researcher-developed instrument titled "Students' Personnel Management Practices Questionnaire (SPMPQ)" was used for data collection. The instrument was face validated by three experts. Two experts from the Department of Educational Management and Policy and one expert from the Department of Educational Foundation (Measurement and Evaluation) all in the Faculty of Education, Nnamdi Azikiwe University. The internal consistency co-efficient for the three clusters of SPMPQ were 0.82, 0.88 and 0.81 with overall coefficient of 0.83 obtained using Cronbach's Alpha method. Data were analyzed using mean and t-test. The findings of the study revealed among others that students' disciplinary management, counseling and health management practices were all adopted by principals of public and private secondary schools in Anambra State for quality assurance. Based on the findings, the study recommended that the public secondary school principals in Anambra State should intensify disciplinary management practices through effective supervision, enforcement of school rules, and collaboration with parents and teachers in order to maintain school discipline and enhance quality assurance, proprietors of private secondary schools in the state should employ qualified guidance counsellors and establish functional counselling units to provide students with adequate academic, vocational, and emotional support services, parents, teachers, and school administrators in the state should collaborate more effectively in monitoring students' behaviour, health, and academic adjustment to ensure holistic development and improved educational outcomes.

Keywords: students, personnel management, management, quality assurance.

Introduction

School principals occupy a pivotal position in the administration and management of secondary education because they serve as the chief custodians of quality assurance in schools.

Their leadership responsibilities include coordinating human and material resources, supervising instructional activities, monitoring curriculum implementation, maintaining educational standards, and ensuring that school programmes align with established national goals and objectives. In an era characterized by increasing demands for accountability, effectiveness, and improved learning outcomes, the issue of quality assurance has become a major concern in educational systems worldwide. Consequently, quality assurance is regarded as an indispensable mechanism for maintaining standards, enhancing school performance, and ensuring that educational institutions effectively achieve their intended objectives (Mbanefo, 2023).

Quality assurance in education refers to the systematic process of monitoring, evaluating, and improving educational inputs, processes, and outputs to ensure compliance with established standards and the attainment of desired educational outcomes. It encompasses activities such as instructional supervision, staff development, monitoring students' academic progress, maintenance of school facilities, and effective management of educational resources. Quality assurance seeks not only to identify and correct deficiencies within the school system but also to prevent possible lapses that may hinder the realization of educational goals. In essence, it ensures that the products of the educational system conform to expected standards and societal expectations. This position aligns with Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG 4) of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, which emphasizes inclusive and equitable quality education and the promotion of lifelong learning opportunities for all by the year 2030.

In Nigeria, the Federal Government, through the National Policy on Education (FGN, 2013), recognizes and encourages the establishment of secondary schools by voluntary agencies, communities, religious bodies, and private individuals to complement government efforts in educational provision. Consequently, secondary education in Nigeria is provided through both public and private secondary schools. Public secondary schools are post-primary institutions established, funded, and administered by government authorities and rely predominantly on public financing for their operations. Private secondary schools, on the other hand, are established, owned, managed, and financed by individuals, corporate organizations, religious missions, or groups, and are sustained primarily through tuition fees and other charges paid by students. Despite differences in ownership, funding patterns, and administrative structures, both categories of schools are expected to operate within the framework of established educational policies and quality assurance standards in order to ensure effective teaching and learning as well as the realization of national educational objectives.

Irrespective of their ownership status, public and private secondary schools are expected to perform a common educational function of bridging the gap between primary and tertiary education while adequately preparing students for useful living and higher education. The policy

expectations, operational guidelines, and educational standards prescribed for secondary schools in Nigeria are therefore intended to be uniformly implemented across both public and private institutions. Such uniformity is necessary to ensure consistency in educational practices, operational procedures, and quality service delivery within the secondary education system.

In furtherance of this objective and to strengthen quality assurance in secondary schools, the National Policy on Education (FRN, 2013) mandates the provision and effective implementation of comprehensive students' personnel services in both public and private secondary schools. Students' personnel services refer to the range of activities, programmes, and support services organized by school management for the welfare, adjustment, development, and academic success of students. According to Akinwale, Olaolu, Anyanwu and Ibrahim, (2025), students' personnel services comprise curricular and co-curricular activities organized for the overall benefit and development of learners.

Similarly, Ugwu (2023) described students' personnel services as all supportive activities rendered to students, apart from normal classroom instruction, for the achievement of educational objectives. These services include admission and enrolment management, orientation of new students, periodic evaluation and monitoring of students' performance, disciplinary services, guidance and counselling services, healthcare services, and welfare services. In the same vein, Ebirim, Ochai, and Obasi (2014) identified students' personnel management practices as services aimed at satisfying learners' needs in areas such as admission, registration, orientation, accommodation, health services, discipline, welfare, result management, and supervision of school programmes. For the purpose of this study, emphasis will be placed on disciplinary management practices, counselling management practices, and health management practices. These students' personnel management practices are critical components of school administration because they contribute significantly to students' adjustment, discipline, wellbeing, academic achievement, and the overall attainment of quality assurance in secondary schools.

Maintaining discipline in school is a crucial aspect of student personnel management that contributes to a stable and effective learning environment. Discipline, as defined by Oduro and Gyan (2020), represents a commitment to self-regulation and respect for institutional authority. They describe it as a state of order where individuals willingly conform to established norms and expectations, thereby ensuring a conducive atmosphere for teaching and learning. In both public and private secondary schools, the absence of discipline threatens the stability and effectiveness of the educational process. Thus, it becomes imperative for principals and teachers to uphold disciplinary standards and address deviant behaviors appropriately. In public secondary schools Anambra State, disciplinary measures are often guided by the students' handbook, which outlines a code of conduct specifying acceptable and unacceptable behaviors. Through consistent and fair

enforcement of these rules, students develop a sense of security and responsibility, reducing the likelihood of involvement in antisocial behaviors.

However, Okeke and Adegbite (2019) observed that maintaining discipline in public schools can be particularly challenging due to legal constraints tied to students' constitutional rights. This often limits the authority of school leaders to enforce disciplinary measures for both minor and major infractions. In contrast, private schools operate within the framework of formal contracts signed by students and their guardians, which clearly outline behavioral expectations and consequences, thereby streamlining the disciplinary process. Counselling services are vital components in promoting and maintaining discipline among students in both public and private schools.

Counseling is the processes that help individuals, often students, explore their potential, make informed decisions, and address personal and social challenges. The National Policy on Education, (FGN, 2013), recognized the critical role of counselling in fostering students' academic success, emotional stability, and behavioral development. Despite this policy endorsement, the practical implementation of comprehensive counselling services in many public and private secondary schools remains inadequate, often due to lack of infrastructure, trained personnel, and institutional support. Effective counselling requires privacy, confidentiality, and a distraction-free environment to address students' personal, emotional, and academic concerns.

However, in many secondary schools in Anambra State, counselling still occurs in unsuitable environments such as staff rooms or outdoor spaces, which undermines its effectiveness. According to Ihuoma (2021), the benefits of school counselling programmes are far-reaching and include helping students set academic goals, improve study habits and time management, manage interpersonal conflicts, and cope with challenges such as violence, trauma, and health-related issues. Counselling also plays a crucial role in supporting students' emotional and psychological well-being, which directly impacts their academic performance. As rightly noted by Bella-Awusah and Omigbodun (2020), a learner can only thrive academically when they are emotionally balanced and mentally healthy.

Healthcare is another students' personnel management practice that is of interest to this study. It is incumbent upon principals of public and private secondary schools to help students cultivate good personal habits and maintain proper hygiene. To achieve this, they often take proactive steps such as: engaging physical education teachers to address the health and safety needs of students; equipping the school with a functional first aid box containing essential supplies for emergencies; employing qualified guidance counsellors to support both academic development and health education; and ensuring that the objectives of health services are embedded in the curriculum of health and physical education. As noted by Langford, Bonell, and Fletcher (2020),

there is growing empirical support that health promotion and educational achievement are not competing priorities but mutually reinforcing goals.

Observations made by the researchers in the study area, supported by documentary evidence, reveal that several preconceived notions exist regarding the management of public and private secondary schools. According to the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES, 2017), private school principals report greater autonomy across critical areas such as discipline, curriculum development, staff training, budgeting, and recruitment, compared to their public secondary school counterparts. In contrast, public school principals often share decision-making authority with school boards and State Ministry of Education which may limit their flexibility and responsiveness in addressing school-specific needs. The NCES report further notes that private schools are often perceived as expensive, elitist, environmentally safer, and more conducive to academic success, particularly in terms of university admission. Public schools, on the other hand, are frequently characterized, often unfairly, as under-resourced and less disciplined.

Additionally, while some private schools provide enhanced student support services such as transportation, health, and welfare programs, public schools are perceived as lagging in these areas. Counselling and student discipline are also reportedly emphasized more rigorously in private schools than in their public counterparts. These perceptions, whether accurate or exaggerated, underscore the need for empirical inquiry. Therefore, this study will determine students' personnel management practices adopted by principals for quality assurance in public and private secondary schools in Anambra State.

Statement of the Problem

Principals as administrative heads of secondary schools, play a pivotal role in ensuring quality assurance through effective management of student personnel services. These responsibilities encompass guiding academic activities, enforcing discipline, and fostering a safe, supportive, and conducive learning environment. In Anambra State, however, the growing proliferation of private secondary schools, many of which operate without formal government approval and the increasing preference of parents and guardians for these private institutions raise serious concerns about the effectiveness and adequacy of student personnel management in public schools.

This emerging trend suggests a perceived deficiency in the quality of student personnel services and the overall school climate within public secondary schools. Despite the often-greater professional training and administrative experience of public secondary school principals, these advantages appear insufficient to curb the rising demand for private schools. Conversely,

principals of private schools seem to perform better in areas such as student health and welfare services, contributing to their increasing patronage.

Furthermore, both public and private secondary schools in the state tend to exhibit signs of ineffective student personnel management, manifested in lateness, absenteeism, and low student motivation. These issues pose significant threats to achieving the objectives of secondary education, particularly in preparing students for higher education and equipping them with skills necessary for socio-economic advancement. Given these challenges, it becomes imperative to empirically investigate the students' personnel management practices of principals for quality assurance in public and private secondary schools in Anambra state.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to determine students' personnel management practices adopted by principals for quality assurance in public and private secondary schools in Anambra state. Specifically, this study determined:

1. Students' disciplinary management practices adopted by principals for quality assurance in public and private secondary schools in Anambra State.
2. Counselling management practices adopted by principals for quality assurance in public and private secondary schools in Anambra State.
3. Students' health management practices adopted by principals for quality assurance in public and private secondary schools in Anambra State.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

1. What are the students' disciplinary management practices adopted by principals for quality assurance in public and private secondary schools in Anambra State?
2. What are the counselling management practices adopted by principals for quality assurance in public and private secondary schools in Anambra State?
3. What are the students' health management practices adopted by principals for quality assurance in public and private secondary schools in Anambra State?

Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance:

1. Principals of public and private secondary schools in Anambra State do not differ significantly in their mean ratings of students' disciplinary management practices for quality assurance.
2. Principals of public and private secondary schools in Anambra State do not differ significantly in their mean ratings of guidance and counseling management practices they adopt for quality assurance.

3. Principals of public and private secondary schools in Anambra State do not differ significantly in their mean ratings of students' health management practices they adopt for quality assurance.

Method

A descriptive survey research design was adopted for the study which was carried out in public and private secondary schools in Anambra State, Nigeria. Three research questions guided the study and three null hypotheses were tested at the 0.05 level of significance. All the population of 661 principals, 267 in public secondary schools and 394 in private secondary schools were used for the study. A researchers' developed instrument titled Students' Personnel Management Practices Questionnaire (SPMPQ) which was validated by three experts was used for data collection. The questionnaire was structured on a four-point scale of Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A) Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagreed (SD) weighted 4, 3, 2 and 1. The internal consistency of the instrument was ascertained using Cronbach's Alpha and this yielded reliability coefficients of 0.82, 0.88 and 0.81 for the three clusters of the instrument. The instrument was considered reliable in line with Nworgu (2015), who stated that if the co-efficient obtained for an instrument is up to 0.70 and above, the instrument should be considered good enough to be used for a study. The direct administration and retrieval method was used for data collection. A total of 632 copies out of the 661 copies administered were properly completed and retrieved and thus were used for data analysis. The return rate was 95% of the sample which the researcher considered satisfactory for the study. Mean was used to answer the research questions while t-test was used to test all the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. For the research questions, a mean rating of 2.50 and above was interpreted as agree while mean rating of less than 2.50 was interpreted as disagree. The null hypothesis was rejected where the p-value associated with the t-cal was less than 0.05 whereas the null hypothesis was not rejected where the p-value was greater than 0.05.

Results

Research Question One: What are the students' disciplinary management practices adopted by principals for quality assurance in public and private secondary schools in Anambra State?

Table 1: Mean Ratings of the Disciplinary Management Practices Adopted by Principals for Quality Assurance in Public and Private Secondary Schools in Anambra State

	Public (n=250)			Private (n=382)		
	Mean	SD	Remark	Mean	SD	Remark
1. respect and recognize the sanctity of fundamental human rights while formulating school guidelines.	2.75	.78	Agree	2.96	.70	Agree
2. ensure that rules made are sufficiently simplified for clarity.	3.04	.74	Agree	3.10	.58	Agree
3. place more emphasis on reward for obedience to school rule instead of punishment for disobedience.	2.95	.71	Agree	3.10	.54	Agree
4. ensures that punishments are commensurate with the offence committed.	3.13	.80	Agree	3.20	.64	Agree

5. make sure that penalties for flouting school rules are adequate and severe enough to deter students from disobedience.	2.99	.74	Agree	3.18	.70	Agree
6. provide post punishment counseling services for students during which time, the student is made to understand the potential damage his conduct can cause both himself and the school.	2.77	.82	Agree	3.08	.84	Agree
7. make public example of students that engage in severe form of indiscipline such as fighting to serve as deterrent to other students.	2.75	.84	Agree	2.91	.73	Agree
8. ensure that school rules don't encroach on the rights of the students.	2.89	.76	Agree	2.92	.79	Agree
9. ensure that school rules and regulations incorporate all forms of indiscipline that will affect the smooth operation of teaching-learning.	2.92	.78	Agree	3.09	.75	Agree

As shown in the above table, public and private secondary school principals agree to the nine listed items as students' disciplinary management practices adopted by principals for quality assurance in public and private secondary schools in Anambra State with mean ranging from 2.75 to 3.13 for public and from 2.91 to 3.20.

Research Question Two: What are the counselling management practices adopted by principals for quality assurance in public and private secondary schools in Anambra State?

Table 2: Mean Ratings of the Counselling Management Practices Adopted by Principals for Quality Assurance in Public and Private Secondary Schools in Anambra State

	Public (n=250)			Private (n=382)		
	Mean	SD	Remark	Mean	SD	Remark
10. improve the quality of school leavers by giving the students career guide that will help them to succeed in life.	2.79	.88	Agree	2.80	.83	Agree
11. assist the students in planning for vocational choices that will help them compete favourably with their counterparts from other schools.	2.92	.82	Agree	2.60	.84	Agree
12. encourage students to develop special abilities and attitudes to be the best they can.	2.81	.99	Agree	2.66	.91	Agree
13. promote conducive atmosphere for teaching-learning activities by establishing mutual understanding between the teachers and the students.	2.80	.63	Agree	2.62	.69	Agree
14. help individual students to develop abilities to solve problems and take decisions that will help them improve.	3.01	.68	Agree	3.00	.83	Agree
15. give students information on occupational opportunities and trends toward which individual interests may best be directed.	2.78	.99	Agree	2.97	.95	Agree

16. conduct workshops for students on topical issues such as sex education, HIV AIDS among others.	2.75	.89	Agree	2.88	.92	Agree
17. help the students in developing good study habits that will help them improve on their educational attainment	2.90	.86	Agree	3.06	.81	Agree
18. encourage the students to participate in extra-curricular activities in which they can develop leadership qualities.	2.81	.93	Agree	3.05	.78	Agree
19. organize public talk for students from time to time on how to prepare for an occupation that is compatible with their interests and aptitudes.	2.69	.96	Agree	3.00	.81	Agree

Table 2 shows the students' counselling management practices adopted by principals for quality assurance in public and private secondary schools in Anambra State. Public secondary school principals and their private counterpart agree they adopt all the 10 counselling management practices for quality assurance. The mean ratings for the 10 items ranged from 2.69 to 3.01 for public secondary school Principals and from 2.62 to 3.00 for their counterparts in private schools.

Research Question Three: What are the students' health management practices adopted by principals for quality assurance in public and private secondary schools in Anambra State?

Table 3: Mean Ratings of the Students' Health Management Practices Adopted by Principals for Quality Assurance in Public and Private Secondary Schools in Anambra State

	Public (n=250)			Private (n=382)		
	Mean	SD	Remark	Mean	SD	Remark
20. engage the services of a physical education teacher to care for the safety of instructional needs of the students	2.84	.81	Agree	2.70	.81	Agree
21. ensure that the objectives of health services are incorporated in the curriculum of health education lesson.	3.16	.65	Agree	2.99	.68	Agree
22. Inculcate in students, a positive health awareness attitude with a view to reducing the incidence of disease.	3.10	.72	Agree	2.89	.68	Agree
23. conduct routine medical inspection of the students to help identify student(s) with communicable disease in good time	3.56	.55	Agree	3.16	.77	Agree
24. invite health visitors during disease outbreak to vaccinate the students	3.42	.60	Agree	3.36	.66	Agree
25. conduct seminars and workshops on topical health issues like drug abuse, personal, healthy diet etc	3.33	.66	Agree	3.22	.70	Agree
26. provide a system of evaluation of the effectiveness of the school health program for the purpose improvement	3.24	.72	Agree	3.21	.63	Agree

27. conduct health risk appraisals to determine life-style practices of students that could endanger their lives in near future.	3.34	.59	Agree	3.11	.70	Agree
28. provide a first aid box fully equipped with requisite supplies to cater for health emergencies.	2.62	.73	Agree	3.02	.72	Agree

Table 3 shows students' health management practices adopted by principals for quality assurance in public and private secondary schools in Anambra State. Principals of public and private secondary schools agree they adopt all nine listed students' health management practices for quality assurance with mean ranging from 2.63 to 3.56 for public secondary school principals and from 2.70 to 3.36 for their private school counterpart.

Hypotheses One: Principals of public and private secondary schools in Anambra State do not differ significantly in their mean ratings of students' disciplinary management practices for quality assurance.

Table 4: t-test Comparison of Public and Private Secondary School Principals' Mean Ratings of Students' Disciplinary Management Practices for Quality Assurance

Source of variation	N	Mean	SD	df	t-cal	P-value	Decision
Public	250	2.91	.47	630	3.46	.001	Sig
Private	382	3.06	.57				

Table 4 shows that the mean score for public secondary school principals ($M=2.91$, $SD=.47$) was significantly less than that of their private school counterparts ($M=3.06$, $SD=.57$); $t(630) 3.46$, $p=.000$. The null hypothesis of no significant difference between the two groups on the disciplinary management practices for quality assurance was therefore rejected.

Hypotheses Two: Principals of public and private secondary schools in Anambra State will not differ significantly in their mean ratings of counseling management practices they adopt for quality assurance.

Table 5: t-test Comparison of Public and Private Secondary School Principals' Mean Ratings of Counselling Management Practices for Quality Assurance

Source of variation	N	Mean	SD	df	t-cal	P-value	Decision
Public	250	2.86	.33	630	1.18	.23	Not Sig
Private	382	2.91	.47				

Private	382	2.83	.40
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Table 5 shows that the mean score for public secondary school principals ($M=2.86$, $SD=.33$) was not significantly greater than that of their private school counterparts ($M=2.83$, $SD=.40$); $t(630) 1.18$, $p=.23$. The null hypothesis of no significant difference between the two groups on the counseling management practices they adopt for quality assurance was therefore not rejected.

Hypotheses Three: Principals of public and private secondary schools in Anambra State do not differ significantly in their mean ratings of students' health management practices they adopt for quality assurance.

Table 6: t-test Comparison of Public and Private Secondary School Principals' Mean Ratings of Students' Health Management Practices for Quality Assurance

Source of variation	N	Mean SD	df	t-cal	P-value	Decision
Public	250	3.22 .43	630	4.00	.000	Sig
Private	382	3.09 .41				

Summary of t-test analysis in Table 10 shows that the mean score for public secondary school principals ($M=3.22$, $SD=.43$) was significantly greater than that of their private school counterparts ($M=3.09$, $SD=.41$); $t(630) 4.00$, $p=.000$. The null hypothesis of no significant difference between the two groups on the students' health management practices they adopt for quality assurance was therefore rejected.

Discussion of Findings

The findings of the study are discussed as follows:

Students' Disciplinary Management Practices Adopted by Principals for Quality Assurance in Public and Private Secondary Schools in Anambra state.

The finding of this study revealed that both public and private secondary school principals adopted students' disciplinary management practices for quality assurance in secondary schools in Anambra State. The mean ratings ranged from 2.75 to 3.13 for public secondary school principals and from 2.91 to 3.20 for private secondary school principals. This implies that although disciplinary management practices are implemented in both categories of schools, private secondary schools appear to place greater emphasis on discipline than their counterparts in public secondary schools. The relatively higher level of disciplinary management practices in private

secondary schools may be attributed to the desire of school proprietors to maintain institutional reputation, academic excellence, moral standards, and parental confidence. Since many private schools rely heavily on tuition fees and public perception for sustainability, they often enforce stricter disciplinary measures aimed at ensuring orderly conduct and creating a conducive learning environment for effective teaching and learning.

The finding agrees with the position of Andra (2019), who observed that there are notable differences between disciplinary practices in public and private schools. According to the study, students in public schools are protected by broader state and federal regulations, including constitutional provisions, which often limit the extent to which disciplinary actions can be enforced. In contrast, private schools derive most of their disciplinary authority from school handbooks, internal regulations, and agreements signed by parents and students, thereby giving school administrators greater flexibility in enforcing discipline. This supports the present finding that private secondary schools in Anambra State appear to adopt stricter disciplinary management practices than public secondary schools.

The present finding also corroborates the study of Atanda and Olaifa (2022), which compared quality assurance practices in Unity Schools and private secondary schools in Kwara and Oyo States, Nigeria. Their study revealed that discipline and control mechanisms were stricter in private secondary schools than in public schools. The researchers argued that private schools maintained closer supervision of students and staff in order to sustain quality standards and institutional effectiveness. This finding aligns with the present study, which indicates that private secondary schools place greater emphasis on disciplinary management as a quality assurance strategy.

Similarly, the finding supports the work of Ugboko and Adediwura (2012), whose study on principals' supervisory strategies and school discipline found that effective disciplinary management contributes significantly to maintaining orderliness and promoting academic activities in secondary schools. The researchers observed that principals who adopted structured supervisory and disciplinary strategies were more successful in minimizing student misconduct and enhancing students' compliance with school regulations. Their study further emphasized that discipline remains a fundamental aspect of effective school administration and educational quality assurance.

The finding is also in line with the study of Akhibi and Omenyi (2024), whose research on management strategies adopted by public and private secondary school principals in Enugu State revealed differences in administrative practices between both categories of schools. The researchers found that private secondary school principals were generally more proactive in implementing management strategies aimed at ensuring effective teaching and learning. Such

strategies included closer monitoring of students' behaviour, stricter enforcement of school rules, and stronger supervision mechanisms.

The finding of the corresponding hypothesis revealed a statistically significant difference between the mean ratings of public and private secondary school principals on students' disciplinary management practices adopted for quality assurance in Anambra State. This implies that public and private secondary school principals differ significantly in the extent to which they implement disciplinary management practices in their schools. The significant difference may be attributed to differences in ownership structure, administrative autonomy, school size, student population, and institutional policies. Private school principals often possess greater flexibility in enforcing disciplinary measures, whereas public school principals may face bureaucratic constraints and legal limitations in disciplining students.

This finding further agrees with the conclusion of Andra (2019), which established that substantial differences exist between disciplinary practices in public and private schools. In addition, the finding is supported by Atanda and Olaifa (2022), whose study demonstrated significant variations in quality assurance practices, including disciplinary control, between public and private secondary schools in Nigeria. Their study emphasized that effective disciplinary management contributes to school effectiveness, organizational stability, and the achievement of educational goals.

Counseling Management practices adopted by principals for quality assurance in public and private secondary schools in Anambra State.

The result of this study shows that both public and private secondary school principals adopted all the 10 counselling management practices for quality assurance. Their mean ratings ranged from 2.69 to 3.01 for public secondary school principals and from 2.62 to 3.00 for their counterparts in private schools. This result agrees with the finding of Ogbiji (2020) whose study showed that in public secondary schools in Calabar, majority of the schools have trained counselors, these counselors have furnished offices and that students benefit from both group and individual counseling. The study further revealed that counseling services provided in public schools are of average rating unlike private schools. The concurrence of the two studies may be linked to similarity in research design, government policy and time proximity. The finding also agrees with Ugwu, (2023) whose finding indicates that public secondary school principals in Anambra state adopted students' guidance and counseling practices more than their colleagues in private secondary schools. The finding equally agrees with the finding of Kazimoto (2022), whose study showed that in Tanzania, of all the private secondary schools only one school had a counselor available for consultation with clients unlike public secondary schools that have numerous counselors.

The finding of the corresponding hypothesis revealed a statistically significant difference between the mean ratings of public and private secondary school principals on students' counselling management practices adopted for quality assurance in Anambra State. Again, this finding corroborates the finding of Ogbiji (2020) whose study showed that there is a significant difference among public, mission and private secondary schools on providing fresh students with school rules and regulation, availability of guidance and counseling staff and their roles.

Students' Health Management Practices Adopted by Principals for Quality Assurance in Public and Private Secondary Schools in Anambra State.

Result of this study revealed that principals of both public and private secondary schools adopted all the identified students' health management practices for quality assurance in secondary schools in Anambra State. The mean ratings ranged from 2.63 to 3.56 for public secondary school principals and from 2.70 to 3.36 for their counterparts in private secondary schools. This indicates that health management practices are adequately implemented in both categories of schools as part of efforts to ensure students' wellbeing and promote effective teaching and learning. Health management practices such as provision of first aid services, monitoring students' personal hygiene, health inspection, environmental sanitation, referral of sick students to health facilities, and health education programmes are important components of quality assurance because healthy students are more likely to participate actively in academic activities and achieve improved learning outcomes.

The finding of this study, however, is not consistent with the finding of Olorunfemi (2017), whose study on the assessment of personal hygiene among pupils in primary schools revealed that pupils in private schools were generally rated as cleaner and more hygienic than those in public schools. Olorunfemi attributed the higher hygiene standards in private schools to closer supervision, lower student population, and stricter enforcement of hygiene regulations. The inconsistency between Olorunfemi's finding and the present study may be due to differences in educational level, location, and scope of study. While Olorunfemi's study focused on primary school pupils and personal hygiene practices, the present study examined broader health management practices among secondary school principals in Anambra State. In addition, recent government interventions and health awareness campaigns in public secondary schools may have contributed to improved health management practices in public schools.

Similarly, the finding of the present study does not corroborate the study of Nwadiuto et al. (2022), who found that pupils in private schools demonstrated higher knowledge of hygiene practices than their counterparts in public schools. Their study revealed statistically significant differences between pupils in public and private schools regarding knowledge of germ transmission, worm infestation, waste disposal, and malaria prevention. The researchers attributed the superior hygiene knowledge among private school pupils to better facilities, improved

supervision, and greater parental involvement. However, the present finding suggests that both public and private secondary school principals in Anambra State have substantially embraced health management practices, possibly due to increased government emphasis on school health programmes and public health awareness following recent global health concerns.

The present finding also differs from the study of Ugwu (2023), whose comparative analysis of students' health management practices among principals in public and private secondary schools in Anambra State revealed that private school principals adopted health management practices more than their public secondary school counterparts. Ugwu observed that private schools were more proactive in ensuring environmental cleanliness, conducting regular health inspections, and enforcing personal hygiene standards among students. The difference between Ugwu's finding and the present study may be attributed to changes in government policies, increased supervision of public secondary schools, and growing awareness of school health management practices in Anambra State. In recent years, the government and educational stakeholders have intensified efforts toward improving school health services in public schools through sanitation campaigns, health education programmes, and periodic monitoring of school environments.

The finding of this study is also in line with the position of the World Health Organization (2021), which emphasized that effective school health programmes are essential for promoting students' physical, mental, and social wellbeing. According to the organization, healthy school environments contribute significantly to improved students' attendance, concentration, academic achievement, and overall educational quality. The World Health Organization further stressed that schools should maintain adequate sanitation facilities, health education services, and disease prevention measures in order to ensure a safe and supportive learning environment for students.

Furthermore, the finding corroborates the study of UNESCO (2020), which highlighted the importance of school health management in ensuring quality education and sustainable development. UNESCO noted that schools that maintain effective health and hygiene practices are better positioned to achieve educational goals because students learn more effectively in healthy and safe environments. This supports the present finding that health management practices constitute an important aspect of quality assurance in secondary school administration.

The finding of the corresponding hypothesis revealed a statistically significant difference between the mean ratings of public and private secondary school principals on students' health management practices adopted for quality assurance in Anambra State. This implies that there is a significant variation between public and private secondary schools in the extent to which health management practices are implemented. The significant difference may be associated with disparities in school funding, availability of health facilities, student population, supervision, and

administrative priorities between the two categories of schools. Private schools may possess greater flexibility and financial capacity to maintain certain health facilities and programmes, whereas public schools may benefit from government-supported health initiatives and periodic inspections by educational and health authorities.

The finding agrees with the study of Nwadiuto et al. (2022), whose study revealed statistically significant differences between public and private schools regarding knowledge of hygiene practices, disease prevention, and environmental sanitation. Their study emphasized that differences in school management, facilities, and supervision influence the effectiveness of school health programmes. Likewise, the World Health Organization (2021) maintained that school health services and hygiene practices remain critical indicators of educational quality and students' wellbeing. Therefore, the present finding underscores the importance of students' health management practices as indispensable quality assurance measures for promoting effective teaching, learning, and holistic student development in secondary schools.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of this study, it was concluded that both public and private secondary school principals in Anambra State adopted students' personnel management practices such as disciplinary, counselling and health management practices for ensuring quality assurance in secondary education. The study further established that variations exist in the extent to which these practices are implemented by principals in public and private secondary schools. Specifically, public secondary school principals demonstrated greater effectiveness in the management of students' counselling, and health services, while private secondary school principals showed stronger commitment in the areas of disciplinary management practices.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations were made:

1. Public secondary school principals in Anambra State should intensify disciplinary management practices through effective supervision, enforcement of school rules, and collaboration with parents and teachers in order to maintain school discipline and enhance quality assurance.
2. Proprietors of private secondary schools in the state should employ qualified guidance counsellors and establish functional counselling units to provide students with adequate academic, vocational, and emotional support services.
3. Government of Anambra State and private school proprietors should provide adequate health facilities, first aid services, and sanitary environments in schools to strengthen students' health management practices and promote effective teaching and learning.

4. The Anambra State Post Primary Schools Service Commission should organize regular workshops, seminars, and capacity-building programmes for principals on effective students' personnel management practices for quality assurance in secondary schools.
5. Parents, teachers, and school administrators in the state should collaborate more effectively in monitoring students' behaviour, health, and academic adjustment to ensure holistic development and improved educational outcomes.

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