

The Implemented Internal School Quality Assurers' Practices in Secondary Schools in Misungwi District, Tanzania

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Abstract

The study assessed internal school quality assurance (ISQA) practices in Tanzanian secondary schools. The study employed a quantitative approach and involved 63 respondents, including school heads, teachers and quality assurance committee members from Misungwi District, Mwanza Region, who were selected through appropriate sampling techniques. Data were collected using structured questionnaires and analyzed through Factor Analysis with Principal Component Analysis (PCA). The study findings revealed that evaluation practices were the most dominant, followed by monitoring, while planning and assessment were less emphasized. Evaluation based on set criteria and lesson note reviews scored highest, whereas planning based on instructional gaps was least applied. The study concludes that there is a need for consistent implementation of ISQA practices to enhance teaching effectiveness and sustain quality education in secondary schools. It is recommended that education stakeholders strengthen teacher professional development, institutional support and resource allocation to improve planning and assessment for sustainable quality education in secondary schools.

Keywords: Quality Assurance and Internal School Quality Assurance.

Introduction

Internal School Quality Assurance (ISQA) has become a critical mechanism for improving educational outcomes, teaching quality and administrative efficiency. Globally, ISQA practices such as teacher evaluations, student feedback, curriculum reviews and self-assessments have been shown to enhance school performance and promote accountability among educators (Shuiyun, 2016). Schools that actively involve teachers and students in the QA process tend to achieve better academic results and higher teacher satisfaction, highlighting the importance of inclusive and collaborative approaches.

In Africa, studies indicate that ISQA mechanisms are effective in both urban and rural contexts, though outcomes vary due to differences in resources, professional development and stakeholder engagement. For example, schools in South Africa, Kenya and Uganda with structured internal QA practices demonstrated improved student achievement and teacher accountability, while those facing resource and training limitations experienced challenges in implementing these systems effectively (Nkosi & Nyembezi, 2022; Kamau & Mutisya, 2022). These findings underscore the role of contextual factors in shaping the success of ISQA.

In Tanzania, ISQA evolved from informal community oversight during pre-colonial times to more structured post-independence systems aimed at enhancing teaching standards and student learning outcomes (Mtitu & Kessy, 2023). Studies in Tanzanian secondary schools and universities show that regular internal assessments, curriculum monitoring and stakeholder involvement significantly contribute to improving academic performance and teaching quality. However, challenges such as limited funding, inadequate professional development for staff and inconsistent implementation across schools continue to affect the effectiveness of ISQA systems (Stanley & Mhagama, 2022). Overall, evidence highlights that well-supported, transparent and inclusive ISQA practices are essential for sustaining high-quality education, particularly in resource-limited settings. The present study addresses this gap by investigating which ISQA practices are most frequently applied in Tanzanian secondary schools. By focusing on practice frequency, it provides insights into schools' priorities, strengths and blind spots, offering a foundation for policy and practice improvements.

Literature Review

This study was guided by the Behaviourism theory, which was founded by John B. Watson in 1913. The theory focuses on observable behaviours rather than internal mental processes. Watson argued that human behaviour is shaped by environmental stimuli and reinforcement rather than innate traits or cognition. The theory was later expanded by B.F. Skinner, who introduced the concept of operant conditioning, emphasizing how behaviour is learned through rewards and punishments. Behaviourism asserts that consistent reinforcement and structured environments lead to predictable and desirable outcomes, making it a key approach in education and institutional management.

The theory is relevant to this study on internal school quality assurance (ISQA) practices in Tanzanian secondary schools by explaining how reinforcement and structured monitoring influence teacher behaviour and school performance. Quality assurance mechanisms such as monitoring teachers' adherence to curriculum standards, evaluating lesson delivery and assessing school leadership reflect the behaviourist principle of reinforcement and conditioning. When school management recognizes and rewards effective teaching practices, teachers are encouraged to maintain high performance, while corrective measures for non-compliance promote adherence to institutional standards and sustain quality education. Therefore, Behaviourism supports the establishment of structured procedures, performance appraisals and accountability systems that reinforce desirable behaviours, enhance teacher performance and improve the overall quality of education.

Research Methodology

Area of the Study

The research was conducted in Misungwi District, Mwanza Region. The district was strategically chosen because it reflected both rural and semi-urban schooling contexts, where issues of resource allocation, teacher motivation and quality assurance were most pressing. Studying Misungwi allowed for a better understanding of how ISQA operated in under-researched settings that mirrored broader challenges across Tanzania.

Research Approach and Design

The study employed the quantitative research approach, which involves the collection and analysis of numerical data. The approach facilitated understanding of ISQA practices through systematic measurement of variables and statistical analysis, providing a strong basis for conclusions. The study also adopted a descriptive research design, which allows for the

systematic collection and analysis of data on current Internal School Quality Assurance (ISQA) practices in secondary schools in Misungwi District, Tanzania, providing a comprehensive understanding of commonly used practices. By collecting data in a structured and organized manner, the study reduces the risk of bias and enables the researcher to produce findings with increased validity and reliability.

Participants

In this study, the population included 49 Heads of Schools, 49 Academic Teachers, 713 Teachers (President's Office - Regional Administration and Local Government, 2020) and 215 School Quality Assurers' Committee members. The sample for the study involved 9 Heads of Schools, 9 Academic Teachers, 25 Teachers and 20 School Quality Assurers' Committee members. The sample was selected by using both purposive and stratified sampling techniques. The aim for using purposive sampling was to select participants who possessed specialized knowledge and experience relevant to the study. Stratified sampling was used to ensure that different subgroups within the teacher population were adequately represented, thereby enhancing the reliability and generalizability of the findings. The sample size for Heads of Schools and Academic Teachers was determined using the percentile approach, while the sample size for Teachers and School Quality Assurers' Committee members was determined using Yamane's formula.

Table 1: *Sample Size Representation*

S/N	Categories	Targeted Population	Sample Size
1.	Heads of schools	49	9
2.	Academic Teachers	49	9
3.	School Quality assurers' committee	215	20
4.	Teachers	713	25
TOTAL		1026	63

Source: *Researcher Self-Design, 2025.*

Data Collection Methods

A structured questionnaire survey was employed to collect quantitative data related to the first specific objective of the study, which aimed to assess the internal school quality assurers' practices that were frequently applied in secondary schools. The questionnaire was administered to heads of schools, academic teachers, teachers and members of the internal school quality assurers' committee. It was specifically designed to capture information on the extent to which internal school quality assurance (ISQA) practices namely assessment, monitoring, planning and

evaluation were implemented in schools. The questionnaire consisted of twenty (20) closed-ended items developed from the study objectives and relevant literature. These items were divided into four main domains: assessment practices (5 items), monitoring practices (5 items), planning practices (5 items) and evaluation practices (5 items). Each domain measured how frequently specific ISQA activities were carried out within schools using a five-point Likert scale.

Before the main data collection, the questionnaire was pre-tested in two secondary schools within the same district that were not included in the actual study sample. The pilot test helped to evaluate the clarity, wording and logical arrangement of items and the feedback obtained was used to refine the instrument to enhance its content and face validity. To ensure consistency of the measurement, internal reliability was tested using Cronbach's Alpha. The analysis yielded an overall reliability coefficient of 0.87, indicating a high level of reliability. This confirmed that the questionnaire items were consistent and dependable in measuring the frequency and extent of internal school quality assurance practices applied in secondary schools.

Data Analysis and Ethical Considerations

Data were descriptively analyzed with the aid of SPSS (version 21) tool whereby statistics were computed to analyze demographic information. Factor Analysis using PCA was applied to identify the most dominant ISQA practices. KMO and Bartlett's Test were used to confirm data suitability for factor analysis.

A researcher adhered to ethical guidelines by obtaining informed consent from all participants, ensuring they understood the purpose of the study, their rights, and the voluntary nature of their participation. Anonymity and confidentiality were prioritized, with data being collected and reported in a manner that does not identify individual participants or schools. Additionally, the research aimed to avoid any potential harm to participants by being sensitive to their circumstances and experiences. The ethical approval from relevant institutional review boards to ensure compliance with ethical standards in educational research. This commitment to ethical conducted enhanced the reliability of the findings and promoted trust between the researchers and participants.

Findings and Discussion

Suitability of Data for PCA

The KMO value was 0.699, indicating adequate sampling adequacy, while Bartlett's test was highly significant ($\chi^2 = 714.055$, $df = 190$, $p < 0.001$). This confirmed that the dataset was suitable for PCA and that the variables were sufficiently interrelated.

Table 2: KMO and Bartlett's Test Results

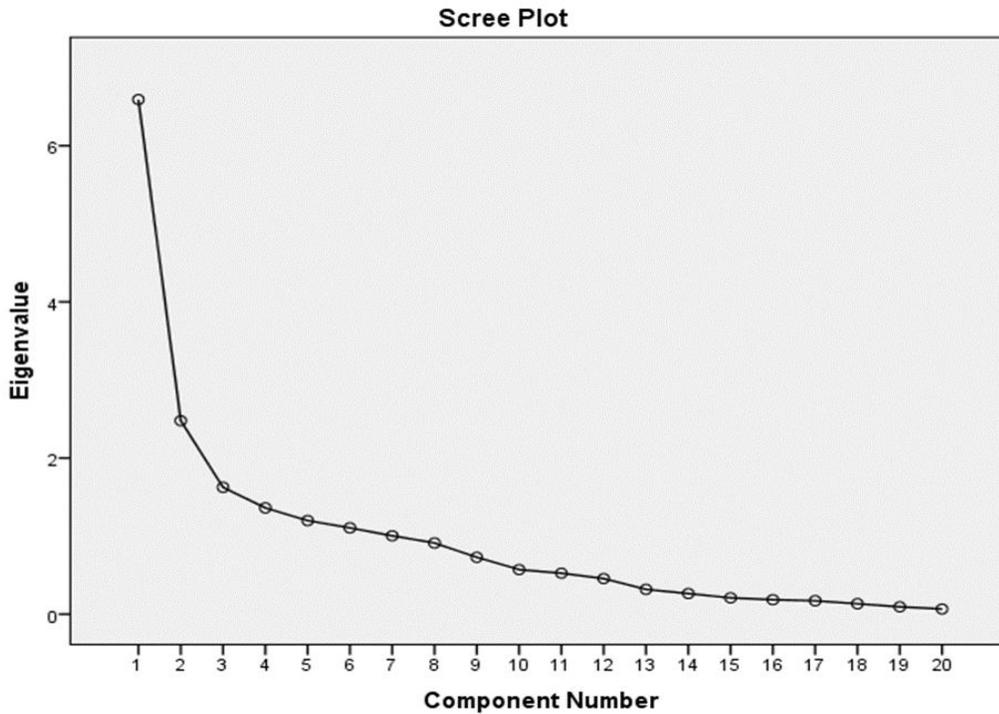
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.699
	Approx. Chi-Square	714.055
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Df	190
	Sig.	.000

Total Variance Explained and Scree Plot

Seven components with eigenvalues above 1.0 were retained, explaining 76.824% of total variance. This suggests that the majority of variation in ISQA practices could be accounted for by these seven factors.

Table 3: Total Variance Explained

Component	Initial Eigenvalues			Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	6.591	32.957	32.957	3.989	19.945	19.945
2	2.478	12.392	45.349	2.717	13.586	33.531
3	1.625	8.125	53.474	2.311	11.553	45.084
4	1.361	6.807	60.281	1.747	8.734	53.818
5	1.199	5.995	66.276	1.662	8.309	62.127
6	1.105	5.527	71.803	1.516	7.581	69.708
7	1.004	5.021	76.824	1.423	7.116	76.824
8	.911	4.557	81.381			
9	.729	3.643	85.025			
10	.571	2.857	87.881			
11	.525	2.624	90.505			
12	.456	2.280	92.785			
13	.318	1.590	94.375			
14	.265	1.324	95.699			
15	.209	1.046	96.744			
16	.185	.924	97.668			
17	.172	.860	98.528			
18	.134	.671	99.199			
19	.094	.470	99.669			
20	.066	.331	100.000			



The Scree Plot showed a steep decline up to the seventh component, after which the curve flattened. This “elbow” indicated that only the first seven components contributed meaningful variance, justifying their retention. Together, they explained 76.824% of the total variance, confirming that the key ISQA practices were well captured within these factors.

Rotated Component Matrix Results

The rotated matrix grouped ISQA practices into four domains: evaluation, monitoring, planning and assessment.

Table 4: Rotated Component Matrix

CODE	Component						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
BE4	.894						
BE5	.872						
BM3	.721						
BP3	.670						
BP4	.656						
BP5							
BM5		.749					
BE3		.733					

BM2	.698			
BM4		.827		
BE1		.611		
BE2				
BA3			-.858	
BA2			.756	
BA4				
BA5				.700
BP1				.617
BP2				-.613
BM1				.902
BA1				.863

Key:

Assessment Practices

- BA1: Classroom observation
- BA2: Examination oversight
- BA3: Review of lesson notes
- BA4: Checking of lesson plans
- BA5: Regular inspection of teaching materials

Planning Practices

- BP1: Periodic revision of school plans
- BP2: Planning based on instructional gaps

Evaluation Practices The most dominant, with evaluation activities

- BE1: Internal teaching evaluation
- BE2: Outcome-based evaluation
- BE3: Feedback to teachers after evaluation
- BE4: Evaluation based on set criteria
- BE5: Evaluation of teachers

and evaluation of lesson notes (loading = 0.894) and evaluation of lesson notes (loading = 0.872). This suggests that schools emphasize formative evaluation processes for QA activities. Budget allocation for QA activities (loading = 0.733) was also strongly present, indicating recognition of teacher performance as a continuous process.

Monitoring Practices)

- BM1: Monitoring of quality assurance goals
- BM2: Identifying instructional gaps
- BM3: Review of teaching progress
- BM4: Committee-based monitoring
- BM5: Lesson review

Evaluation Practices)

- BE1: Internal teaching evaluation
- BE2: Outcome-based evaluation
- BE3: Feedback to teachers after evaluation
- BE4: Evaluation based on set criteria
- BE5: Evaluation of teachers

Monitoring Practices: Strongly applied, with monitoring of quality assurance goals (loading = 0.902) and committee-based monitoring (loading = 0.827) as key indicators. These practices reflect collective accountability and suggest that monitoring has become institutionalized in school operations.

Planning Practices: Moderately applied, with resource planning (loading = 0.670) and audit-based planning (loading = 0.656) showing some integration, though not uniformly across schools. Budget allocation (loading = 0.592) was also present, but planning based on instructional gaps (loading = -0.613) was weakly emphasized, revealing a lack of data-driven planning.

Assessment Practices: Weakest, with classroom observation (loading = 0.863) and exam oversight (loading = 0.756) somewhat strong, but lesson note review (loading = -0.858) poorly emphasized. This suggests that schools conduct assessments inconsistently, limiting their capacity to track instructional practices effectively.

Interpretation

The dominance of evaluation and monitoring practices suggested that schools focused more on compliance and accountability rather than on formative processes such as planning and assessment. While evaluation provided structure, its overemphasis risked reducing ISQA to a checklist activity rather than a tool for continuous improvement. Weak planning practices implied that schools were not adequately using data to guide future actions, while poor lesson note reviews indicated gaps in instructional follow-up.

These findings resonated with Fungilwa (2021), who argued that evaluation dominated Tanzanian schools, but Nguma (2023) cautioned that without strong planning, ISQA failed to drive long-term improvement. The study reinforced the view that ISQA had to balance evaluative practices with proactive planning and consistent assessment to ensure sustainable quality improvement.

Conclusion

This study concluded that Internal School Quality Assurance (ISQA) practices in Misungwi secondary schools were not applied evenly. Evaluation and monitoring were used the most, while planning and assessment were much weaker. This showed that schools focused more on accountability and following rules than on improving teaching and learning. The limited use of planning and assessment meant that schools were not fully using student data, lesson reviews or feedback to make improvements. Overall, the study suggested that ISQA in Misungwi secondary schools could only help improve education if planning and assessment were given as much attention as evaluation and monitoring.

Recommendations:

To strengthen Internal School Quality Assurance (ISQA), schools should institutionalize assessment practices by embedding classroom observations, lesson plan reviews and student feedback mechanisms into routine activities, as these provide timely insights into teaching effectiveness and students' learning progress. Planning should be enhanced through the adoption

of data-driven approaches, whereby evidence from student performance and identified instructional gaps is systematically analyzed and directly linked to future school improvement plans, ensuring that interventions are both relevant and impactful. Capacity building is equally essential, requiring continuous training for teachers and ISQA committees to equip them with practical skills in evidence-based decision-making, problem-solving and adaptive leadership. Furthermore, the allocation of adequate financial and material resources is necessary to guarantee the sustainability and efficiency of ISQA operations, enabling committees to implement initiatives without constraints. Finally, promoting balance across all four ISQA domains of assessment, monitoring, planning and evaluation is critical, as it prevents an overreliance on evaluation and monitoring whilst fostering a holistic approach that supports continuous improvement, accountability and long-term educational quality.

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