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Practices of Internal Quality Assurance Process: Examining Lived Experience of Secondary School Academic Members of Staff within Njombe Region, Tanzania

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Abstract:
The main purpose of the study was to examine the practice of Internal Quality Assurance (IQA) process among secondary school teachers in Njombe Region, Tanzania. The objective of the study was to investigate how IQA is conducted in schools. The study employed a qualitative research approach and descriptive case study design. These research components facilitated the collection of data in real-life situations. The study used 20 respondents, including 10 internal quality assurers, 8 frontline teachers and 2 District Education Officers. Purposive sampling was used to select Internal Quality Assurers and District Education Officers because they were given the opportunity to run IQA in schools. Simple random sampling was used to select frontline teachers because they know how IQA is conducted at school. The study was guided by two theories: constructivism and humanism. Constructivism theory, guided by the aspect of social interaction while socially and culturally constructed in real-life situations, provided the practice of the IQA process. On the other hand, Humanism theory guided the aspect of love, sense of connection, autonomy, respect, recognition, freedom, and friendship to allow concern related to IQA process. Data were generated through interviews and documentary review methods. The interview method employed a semi-structured interview guide to internal quality assurers, frontline teachers and district educational officers while audio-taping each respondent for almost 30 to 45 minutes using phones. A review of the documents was used to check the contribution of IQA practice in the implementation of curriculum objectives. The study revealed that the practice of IQA relies on the preparation of a scheme of work, lesson plan, lesson notes, teaching aid and putting signatures in a class journal. Awareness is still needed on the new reform to allow teachers to understand the practice of the IQA process rather than relying on teaching documents.

Keywords: Internal quality assurers, internal quality assurance practice, frontline teachers, constructivism theory, humanism theory

1. Introduction

Internal Quality Assurance (IQA) refers to those policies and practices whereby academic institutions monitor and improve the quality of their academic provision (Dawud, 2022:3). IQA was introduced during the Bologna process in European countries due to the high demand for quality education in the world (Njui, 2018:352). During Bologna reform, Quality Assurance (QA) was considered a key issue in policy debates for higher education. The combined impacts of globalization and massification influenced policymakers to seek new means for ensuring academic quality in higher education (World Bank, 2002). In 2005, the European Ministers adopted standards and guidelines for QA in the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) prepared by E4 Groups (Sujka & Socha, 2017:37). In 2007, European Countries established the European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education (EQAR) (Rosa et al., 2012). A conference of ministers from 47 countries of the European Higher Education Area was held in Yerevan, Armenia, in May 2015, and policy-making usage was documented (Curaj et al., 2015).

Research and models started to be conducted among European countries. The Netherlands and Germany are among the European countries that have conducted comprehensive research and modals toward IQA implementation (Wilcox, 2000, 2008). Other countries include Belgium, Denmark, Norway, Finland, the United States of America, Thailand, Romania, Italy, Australia, the United Kingdom, India, and France (Wilcox, 2008). Implementation of IQA was mainly

influenced by ERASMUS MUNDUS and Lisbon Strategy of 2000, which both increased the successful initiation of IQA in higher learning institutions (Curaj et al., 2015:7). Well-planned IQA policy was taken as an important area toward IQA implementation (Machumu & Kisanga, 2014; Smidt, 2015; UNESCO, 2018). The practice of IQA observed in higher learning institutions influenced the implementation of the mechanism at all levels of education in the world. In addition, scholars have proved that the mechanism has increased the accountability and responsibility of teachers in the whole process of teaching and learning (Aithal, 2015; UNESCO, 2018; TCU, 2010; Kitosi, 2021).

1.1. Quality Assurance (QA) and Internal Quality Assurance (IQA) in Africa

In Africa, IQA started in higher learning institutions as an international agenda toward quality education. Like the rest of the world, IQA was initiated due to the influence of quality education, which increased the rate of QA. However, the adoption of QA in universities went together with the establishment of IQA and the accreditation agency responsible for checking the quality of education provided in higher education. A number of accreditation bodies were established to ensure that education provided in higher education meets an acceptable level of quality. In Kenya, accreditation bodies were established in 1985, followed by Nigeria in 1993, while in Ghana, enactment of the NAB LAW 1993 (PNDCL 317) occurred (Machumu & Kisanga, 2014). Botswana, Namibia, Lesotho, Nigeria, and Kenya have been practising programmatic accreditation and institutional registration with respective quality agencies. Moreover, the institutions responsible for quality assurance practices to assess the status of IQA in higher education were formed, including the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), which provides school control (Machumu & Kisanga, 2014). Other African countries responsible for assessing IQA practices include Ethiopia, Mozambique, and Kenya.

1.2. Quality Assurance (QA) and Internal Quality Assurance (IQA) in East Africa

Following the Bologna process, East Africa, particularly Kenya, Tanzania, and Uganda, created a linkage between QA and IQA to check and examine IQA implementation (Rosa & Amaral, 2007). However, developing effective IQA in East Africa required overcoming the misconception associated with quality management systems. In March 2006, experts from East Africa were sent to Germany to learn how to implement IQA in higher education (MOEST, 2017). The Establishment of the IQA process went together with the creation of the Inter-university Council for East Africa (IUCEA) to harmonize curricula (Lyamtane, 2013). IUCEA developed a quality assurance handbook called "*A Road Map to Quality*" to guide the establishment of IQA mechanisms and directories in universities (Njui, 2018). Also, IUCEA developed the second handbook, volume 1, called '*Guidance for self-assessment Level*', which led to the development of the IUCEA programmer quality assurance model. The research was conducted in East Africa to check the practice of IQA, including Kenya, Rwanda, and Uganda, at the University of Technology and Arts of Byumba (UTAB) (Niyonzima & Balmoi, 2019). Studies conducted realize that the practice of IQA was observed in higher learning institutions. The effectiveness of IQA observed in higher learning institutions influenced the implementation of the mechanism in schools in East African countries.

1.3. Quality Assurance (QA) and Internal Quality Assurance (IQA) in Tanzania

In Tanzania, QA started in 2016 when the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MOEST) changed the ordinary inspection name to Quality Assurance due to insufficient previous quality control systems (MOEST, 2017). In 2017, the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology introduced Internal Quality Assurance (IQA) for primary and secondary education (MOEST, 2017) after realizing the effectiveness of IQA observed in higher learning educational institutions (TCU, 2010). The effectiveness of IQA in higher learning institutions influenced the government of Tanzania to make official implementation of IQA in secondary and primary schools in 2021 (MOEST, 2021). Changes went together with the formulation of School Quality Assurance Framework (SQAF) containing of six SQA domains. *Student achievement* is the first domain that focuses on the knowledge, skills and understanding of learners in key subjects, including mathematics, science, language and social sciences. The second domain is *Quality of teaching for good learning and assessment* which focuses on learner-centered teaching method, utilization of lesson plan as well as teaching and learning resources. The third domain is called *the Quality of curriculum in meeting learners' needs*, which focuses on the availability, relevancy and utilization of curriculum materials. *Quality of leadership and management, leadership of learning, and leadership of people and resources* is the fourth domain focusing on the assessment of the quality of leadership and management. *Quality of the school environment and its impact on welfare, health, and safety* is the fifth domain, which focuses on learners' safety from harm, including harassment and bullying. *Community engagement* is the sixth domain, focusing on parental improvement and community engagement in school development (MOEST, 2017:16-27).

Despite all these efforts made by the government toward IQA implementation, knowledge related to self-evaluation is not known to most of the teachers in Tanzania. However, the official implementation of IQA in 2021 went together with the IQA Module of training for Regional and District educational stakeholders (MOEST, 2021) while providing a very low opportunity for teachers who are implementers to understand the reform. Nevertheless, practice related to the IQA process is a result of the effectiveness of Internal Quality Assurance observed in higher education institutions in Tanzania (TCU, 2010). In addition, the environment of higher learning institutions that provide the effectiveness of IQA may not be the same as that of secondary schools. We should also remember that IQA implementation was a result of modals and research conducted in European countries (Wilcox, 2008) that may not provide the same result in poor countries like Tanzania due to economic variation.

2. The Issue

Despite the fact that Internal Quality Assurance (IQA) process is a mechanism which increases the accountability and responsibility of staff and students in higher learning institutions (UNESCO, 2018; TCU, 2010; Aithal, 2015; Kitosi,

2021; Njui, 2018), the environment of Tanzania's higher learning institutions which provided the effectiveness of IQA may not be the same with the environment of Tanzania secondary schools. The way internal quality assurers have responded to this new obligation and, ultimately, their effectiveness is likely influenced by their understanding of the quality assurance process concept itself (Fullan, 2001; 2007) and, most importantly, by the environments and the variety of contexts in which they work as internal quality assurers. Moreover, previous studies have been conducted to check the IQA process, including self-evaluation, its implementation, effectiveness and perception of teachers in school (Maguga, 2013; Kakoye & Oluoch, 2015; Kitosi, 2021; Stanley & Mhagama, 2022; Medard & Mwila, 2022; Ngemoyo & Mwila, 2022). Despite the research conducted, there is a lack of studies conducted on the practice of the IQA process in secondary schools. On these grounds, it was crucial to gain a clear picture of the practices of IQA and investigate the *lived experience* of internal quality assurers themselves and of the frontline teachers in their real-life situations regarding the phenomenon.

3. Literature Review

3.1. Theories Underlying the Study
The study was guided by knowledge of two related theories: Constructivism and Humanism. Both these theories have their relevance to this study, as explained below.

3.1.1. Constructivism Theory
Constructivism theory was developed by Jean Piaget (1896-1980) and Lev Vygotsky (1896-1934). Jean Piaget developed the idea of individual constructivism. According to Piaget, an individual constructs new knowledge from previous learning, understanding and experiences. Thus, a person learns by mentally organizing and reorganizing new knowledge. Piaget described learning as an interplay between two mental activities: assimilation and accommodation. Assimilation means adjusting or interpreting new knowledge to fit previous concepts, and accommodation means adjusting or modifying previous concepts to fit new knowledge. Therefore, with Piaget idea of assimilation and accommodation, the researcher gained new knowledge from the respondents based on the practice of IQA in school. In addition, cognitive equilibrium was well achieved when the respondents' perceptions, behaviors, and attitudes were clearly received in the researcher's schema in real-life situations for easy data presentation.

Lev Vygotsky developed the idea of social constructivism. The psychologist believed that social interaction between students and teachers through the application of Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) during teaching and learning process is the source of new knowledge, understanding and learning (Vygotsky, 1962). According to Vygotsky, ZPD is a gap between students performing their tasks without the help of a skilled person and what they can achieve when under teacher support. Vygotsky believed that students performing their tasks independently, determined as '*actual development level,*' aim to check how well students carry out learning practice alone. On the other hand, students performing their tasks under the support of their teachers or skilled peers, termed '*potential development level,*' aim to assist students in performing their tasks which could not be done independently.

Thus, under constructivism theory, the study was guided by the aspect of social interaction where 'respondent's bodies of knowledge' while socially and culturally constructed in real-life situations with preservation of attitude, belief, and interest helped the researcher collect data on the IQA process. The potential data collected by the researcher in social and cultural ways helped the researcher to reach the '*actual development level'*. This level helped the researcher present the information collected after receiving the '*potential development level'*, mainly with the respondents' assistance regarding their belief and perception of the phenomenon. Moreover, under constructivism theory, IQA practice has increased the accountability and responsibility of teachers in their workplaces, hence increasing its implementation. Nevertheless, human beings were needed to allow concerns related to the implementation of IQA to be provided by internal quality assurance and frontline teachers, as explained below.

3.1.2. Humanism Theory
Humanism theory was developed by Abraham Maslow (1908-1970), who believed that all people are born good and can be able to make good decisions when all their hierarchy of needs are met (Maslow, 1943). According to Maslow, the hierarchy of needs levels is graded in its importance, starting from '*physiological need'*, which is essential for a human being to sustain their life, such as food, shelter and clothes. Until these basic needs are satisfied, other levels become important, and these motivate and dominate the behavior of the individual. Other levels include '*security need'*, which is based on protection against danger, threat and deprivation. '*Social need'* relies on association with others, belonging to a group, and giving and receiving friendship and affection. '*Self-*esteem *needs'* with self-respect, ego and status needs mainly depend on how well other levels have been achieved by the individual. '*Self-actualization'* is the highest level which depends on self-development. All these levels are active in actual behavior patterns, meaning they become extremely strong motivators.

In connection to this study, humanism theory guided the aspect of 'human beings' of love, full autonomy, safety, and friendship to allow respondents to express concerns related to the implementation of IQA in school. Respondents with full autonomy were able to express independently the challenges facing the IQA process in school, helping the researcher collect a lot of information for data collection. Moreover, the presence of friendship, a sense of connection, recognition, respect, freedom and positive self-esteem allowed socialization to occur, which increased interaction between respondents and the researcher. At this juncture, socialization acted as a catalyst and ground for data collection on concerns related to the implementation of IQA in school. In addition, through humanism theory, teachers lived together with love while helping each other, increasing their creativity in the whole process of teaching and learning.

4. Empirical Literature Review

4.1. To Investigate Internal Quality Assurance Practice in Schools

According to the study conducted in Indonesia by Wilian et al. (2020), assessing the implementation of internal quality assurance in private Islamic high schools in Mataram-Lombok proves that internal quality assurance is responsible for planning, monitoring, evaluating and assessing academic performance. IQA system evaluation (self-evaluation) needs plans to be carried out to allow effective teaching and learning processes. When there are plans, a monitoring process may easily occur to verify how those plans are implemented in a classroom environment. The plans include teachers preparing their documents, including the scheme of work, lesson plan, management of time, lesson notes, teaching aids, and teaching resources. The assessment comes after monitoring the plans, where quizzes, exercises, and examinations are used to verify pupils' understanding of the objectives that are expected to be achieved.

In addition, a study conducted in Africa by Ezeaku et al. (2021) proves that IQA is responsible for monitoring, evaluating and improving educational activities in the school environment. IQA ensured that the schools have adequate resources for the teaching and learning process, including the availability of books, lesson plans, and schemes of work. Also, the IQA process manages and evaluates resource and educational activities conducted at school, including ensuring teachers' accountability and responsibility to see how well educational resources are implemented in a classroom environment and provide teachers with reports on how to improve more while contracting alternative solutions for improvement in discussion with other teachers through meetings. The IQA process allows teachers to share experiences and individual teachers to make corrections to the results provided after weekly academic meetings.

Moreover, the study conducted in Tanzania by Kitosi (2021) while assessing the implementation of Internal Quality Assurance in Community Secondary Schools in Tanzania indicates that IQA is responsible for providing suggestions to improve delivery and providing reports on students' views, revisiting teachers' notes and schemes of work, assessing the quality of examinations and tests given, providing action feedback, performing self-student assessments, and ensuring that the school timetable is effectively followed. Internal Quality Assurance increases the accountability and responsibility of teachers in the whole process of teaching and learning. However, improvement in teaching and learning toward quality education may need good preparation of internal quality assurers who have the job of overseeing all academic activities at school.

Furthermore, Bura & Fanuel (2021), in their study on the role of school quality assurance in improving curriculum implementation in secondary schools in Tanzania, prove that IQA ensures proper use and coverage of syllabus, effective utilization of learning times, effective methods and teaching techniques; proper record keeping of students' progress and proper use of teaching and learning resources. URT (2006) adds that IQA ensures that students' works are thoroughly marked, corrected and recorded to determine whether students are growing in the direction accepted by society, curriculum planners and teachers. Ensure teachers use syllabi in preparation for scheme of work, lesson plans, lesson notes and teaching aids, providing weekly reports to teachers on the teaching and learning process and sharing constructive advice on how to improve academically (MOEST, 2021).

4.2. Gap in Literature

Despite previous studies conducted to check the process of self-evaluation, implementation, effectiveness and perception of teachers toward IQA implementation in secondary schools in Tanzania, including: Maguga (2013), Kakoye & Oluoch (2015), Kambuga & Dadi (2015), Kitosi, (2021), Stanley & Mhagama (2022), Paulo (2022), Medard & Mwila, 2022; Ngemoyo & Mwila, 2022), not enough studies have been conducted on the practice related to the implementation of IQA process in secondary school. On these grounds, it was crucial to gain a clear picture of the practice related to the implementation of IQA in secondary schools in Tanzania.

5. Material and Method

The study employed a qualitative research approach with a descriptive case study design to check participants' lived experiences, beliefs, attitudes, behaviors, perceptions and interactions, which allowed inner feelings and opinions concerning the practice of IQA in school. The schools were randomly selected because the implementation of the IQA process was done in all schools in Tanzania. Therefore, any school can be a study area. The study used 20 respondents, including 10 internal quality assurers, 8 frontline teachers and 2 District Education Officers. Purposive sampling was used to select internal quality assurers and District Education Officers because they were given the opportunity by the government to implement IQA in schools. Simple random sampling was used to select frontline teachers because they know how IQA is conducted at school. Data were generated through interviews and documentary review methods.

The interview method employed a semi-structured interview guide to provide information on conception, practice, and the concerns related to the implementation of the IQA process in school while audio-taping their information using phones. Almost 30 to 45 minutes were used to record each respondent's information. The review of the document was used to check the contribution of IQA practice in the implementation of curriculum objectives. The documents reviewed include the availability of syllabi, scheme of work, lesson plan, lesson notes, teaching aid, subject logbook, and class-journals. Also, internal quality assurers' documents such as work plans, checklists, minutes, memos, and letters and verifying whether comments and suggestions are provided in the scheme of work and lesson plan as feedback to teachers. All data obtained were analyzed thematically while transcribing their evidence.

5.1. STEP 1: Familiarizing with the Data

The researcher started familiarizing herself with the audio-recorded data obtained through an interview while listening and re-listening several times. Then, transcription is the process of converting speech from audio recording into written text (Kiger & Varpio, 2020; Sgier, 2012; Kumar, 2011; Denscombe, 2010), including changing the Swahili language into English. Translation was done by the researcher herself to prevent someone from changing the meaning, which was not intended by the respondents, and the researchers knew the meaning of each word than anybody else who did not attend in the field. After producing a text, the researcher reads and re-reads it to have a clear understanding before the coding process takes place.

5.2. STEP 2: Generating Initial Codes

Codes were generated after producing text. Coding is a word or short phrase that symbolically assigns a summative, salient, essence-capturing, and or evocative attribute for a portion of language-based or visual data (Saldana, 2009, 2013). The researcher applied mixed types of coding, including *inductive* and *deductive.* The inductive method was used to create code line by line, while the deductive method required the researcher to begin with pre-established codes, which rely on pre-established research questions to apply to the data during the generation of the theme. Table 1 below indicates the coding style used.

Types of Data	Statement	Codes	Theme
INTERVIEW (Internal Quality Assurer 'B School 3)	To make them follow up with the teachers to check whether they prepare schemes, lesson plans, and teaching aids, and they fill their subject logbook. Also, they attend periods on time to check students' discipline and observe teachers in classrooms to verify whether time management is used effectively.	Teachers prepare schemes, lesson plans, and teaching aids, fill subject logbooks, and attend periods of time.	IQA Practices

Table 1: Data Coding Style

5.3. STEP 3: Searching for Themes

Descriptive coding approach was used by researcher to summarize extract using a single word or noun (Saldana, 2013) because of the nature of the data obtained.

5.4. STEP 4: Reviewing Themes

According to Santis & Ugarriza (2000), the review of theme in qualitative literature is divided into some sections, including descriptors of the term theme, the emergence of a theme, finding a theme, and labelling a theme (2000:353) and each was observed during the review of themes.

5.5. STEP 5: Defining a Theme

Ryan & Bernard (2005) provide 12 ways of defining a theme, and these are: (i) Word repetition (ii) Indigenous categories (iii) Key-Words-in- Context (KWIC) (iv) Compare and contrast (v) Social science queries (vi) Searching for missing information (vii) Metaphors and analogies (viii) Transitions (ix) Connectors (x) Unmarked text (xi) Pawing (xii) Cutting and sorting (2005; p, 2-12). Among these 12, the researcher used KWIC to identify keywords through simple text observation

6. Findings

This part provides the research findings obtained from the field through the interview and review of documents to check the contribution of IQA practice in the implementation of curriculum objectives in all five schools (SCHOOL 1, SCHOOL 2, SCHOOL 3, SCHOOL 4 & SCHOOL 5). Each school is presented as a case or single content, and internal quality assurers and frontline teachers responded to the practice of IQA while transcribing their evidence. However, in SCHOOL 5, only Internal Quality Assurers were present. This was because school 5 is a private with only 6 qualified teachers who, due to interference of timetable, other teachers attended as external examiners of Form Four and Form Two examinations in other schools.

6.1. SCHOOL 1

6.1.1. Frontline Teachers

Frontline teachers A1 and B1 reported the practices of IQA in school using activities performed by internal quality assurers. Frontline teacher A1 started by using the word*, "They can collect lesson plans and schemes and put their signature and stamp on it".* The word '*they can collect'* appeared twice in the respondent's statement, providing a question mark to the researcher whether such tasks were done at school. The study revealed that in school 1, teachers prepared their scheme of work and lesson plan, but internal quality assurers did not put any signatures or stamps on them. On the other hand, Frontline teacher B1 reported some of the practices of IQA, including preparing examinations according to the required standards. He added that internal quality assurers were required to verify whether those examinations met the required standards before classroom usage. Despite internal quality assurers' efforts, they were required to write

comments and suggestions in the scheme of work and lesson plans to provide feedback to their fellow teachers. Below is the statement from frontline teachers A1 and B1 to comment on the above explanations:

> *They can collect lessons and scheme of work for the first month and put their signature and stamp. They collect lesson plans every month and check how teachers teach (Frontline Teacher A1, 2023).*
> *To check the performance of teachers and how students receive and secondly, to check examination papers that teachers prepare. Teachers prepare exam papers and give them to them to check whether they meet the required standard. They take it and save it for use during the day of examination (Frontline Teacher B1, 2023).*

6.1.2. Internal Quality Assurers

Internal quality assurers reported that they always remind teachers to prepare themselves before teaching, including teaching aids for the effectiveness of the lesson. Teaching aids may talk more than a teacher in the process of teaching, hence helping students to learn attentively. Teachers can use those aids while traditionally prepared or using visual aids, audio aids, and audio-visual aids, depending on their environment. Also, they wanted teachers to cover their topics and prepare their assessments, including examinations. Practices of IQA in school 1 are explained by internal quality assurers A1 and B1 as follows:

> *First is to make sure that the timetable is followed effectively and that no period is passing loose.*
> *Also, to make sure that teachers attend their period and teach. They not only enter the class but also cover their topics. If a teacher has seven topics, they should make sure that all seven topics are covered by looking at their scheme and lesson plan.*
> *Also, the assessment of students' lesson notes will be done to see if they cover seven topics or if the lesson notes end in the fourth topic.*
> *Also, to ensure that they are based on the competence-based curriculum and they do their exam continuously (Internal Quality Assurer A1, 2023).*
> *First, they make sure that teachers enter classrooms as usual, that students are prepared and follow all examination rules, and that they are checked. Also, to check students' discipline, this goes together with students' performance in the classroom. To check absenteeism, dropouts, and check-ups, they conduct check-ups (Internal Quality Assurer B1, 2023).*

6.1.3. Documentary Review

The study reviewed documents to check the contribution of IQA practice in the implementation of curriculum objectives. Documents reviewed include: the availability of syllabi, scheme of work, lesson plan, lesson notes, teaching aids, class journal and subject log book. Other documents include a work plan, checklist, minutes, memos, and letters, which were required to be prepared by internal quality assurers. In addition, the study aimed to investigate whether internal quality assurers provide comments and suggestions in the scheme of work and lesson plans as feedback to teachers. The study revealed that teachers in school 1 were able to prepare clearly their teaching documents, something which realized curriculum implementation. On the other hand, internal quality assurers did not prepare their work plan and checklist for daily follow-up. Even memos, minutes, and letters were not found. Moreover, internal quality assurers did not provide comments and suggestions in the scheme of work and lesson plan as feedback to teachers. Below is a sample of the scheme of work documents that was reviewed in schools 1.
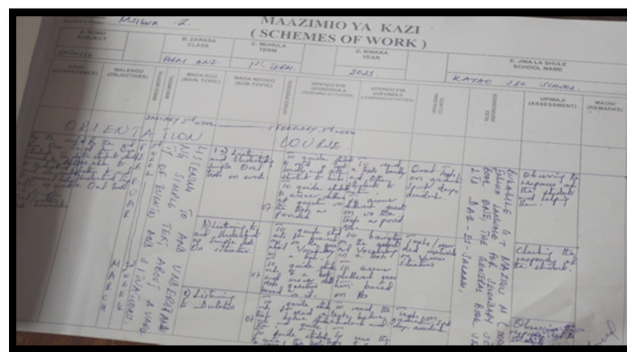

Figure 1: School 1, Schemes of Work
(Photograph Taken by Researcher January, 2023)

6.2. SCHOOL 2

6.2.1. Frontline Teachers

The frontline teachers reported that to ensure IQA practice in school, they always prepare themselves before teaching. According to frontline teacher A2, the preparation of a scheme of work and lesson plan is one of the first activities that help teachers organize their topics for effective teaching and learning processes. The scheme of work helps teachers demonstrate evidence and provide a thorough understanding of the syllabus aims and objectives as they are logically presented. Lesson plans come after to help teachers and students understand the goals of an instructional module

and translate the curriculum into learning activities. In addition, Frontline teacher A2 added the word *''that is what I really see taking place''* while putting '*pause'* in his explanation. The study findings revealed that the practices of IQA were only those tasks outlined. Frontline teacher B2 supports this by adding that teachers should follow their school timetable and teaching aids and fill out their subject logbooks. Below are statements from Frontline teachers A2 and B2 on the above statement:

> *To remind us of lesson plans, scheme of work and other things, and to remind us to enter into our classroom period on time are what I really see taking place as their practices. Either they cooperate with academic teachers for a sense of exam preparation or continuous assessment, which is part of their technique to improve in one way or another (Frontline teacher A2, 2023).*
> *They make sure that the school time table is followed, lessons are taught on time, lesson plan is prepared, teaching aids are used during teaching and logbook is filled on time (Frontline teacher B2, 2023).*

6.2.2. Internal Quality Assurers

Internal quality assurer A2 said she was responsible for implementing the practice of IQA by making follow up to teachers. The woman reported that she was required to see whether teachers prepared schemes of work and lesson plans, observe how teaching and learning were conducted in the classroom, and talk with teachers who had challenges. She explained IQA practices while *'smiling'.* The sign provided doughty to the researcher whether those tasks outlined were performed at school or just her behavior. The researcher was looking at her face to differentiate the respondent's words, which were accompanied by smiling behavior. The study revealed that the behavior of smiling appeared when the woman said some of the words including *"Talking to teachers who have challenges and tell them the truth."* The researcher asked her to outline some of the challenges that make *internal quality assurers* decide to talk with teachers. The woman was not able to outline those challenges. The researcher discovered that the statement was not practically done in their school, and therefore, the woman was lying about the statement. Below is the supportive document from internal Quality Assurer A2 on the above explanation.

> *We check if the teacher has prepared a scheme of work and lesson plan. Therefore, we check and follow up in the classroom to see if teaching is taking place. Other work is to talk with teachers who have challenges and tell them the truth (Internal Quality Assurer A2, 2023).*

On the other hand, internal quality assurer B2 said they make sure that all teachers prepare their lesson plan and make follow up to check teachers who are lazy. The man smiled for a while, then continued talking after saying the term '*lazy*'. The researcher discovered that there was a hidden meaning in the term. The findings revealed that despite their daily follow-up with teachers to foster accountability and responsibility of individual teachers in school, they were not able to face confident teachers who were lazy. Below is the statement from internal quality assurer B2 on the practices of IQA:

> *We made sure all teachers prepared their daily lesson plans before entering the class and followed up to realize who was lazy.*
> *We also made sure all teachers had schemes; teaching in classrooms went together with teaching aids, and teachers entered their classrooms on time.*
> *We check students' lesson notes to see whether teachers provide tasks when teaching in the classroom (Internal Quality Assurer B2, 2023).*

6.2.3. Documentary Review

A documentary review was used to verify the contribution of IQA practice in the implementation of curriculum objectives. Documents, including syllabi, scheme of work, lesson plan, lesson notes, teaching aid, class journal, and subject logbook, were reviewed. Other documents include work plans, checklists, letters, memos, minutes, and checking whether comments and suggestions were provided in the scheme of work and lesson plan as feedback to teachers. The study revealed that in school 2, all teachers prepared their teaching and learning documents. Also, the work plan prepared by the IQA team for the year 2023 included a number of objectives, including making individual follow-ups to teachers on the teaching and learning process. This was the best school among all 5 schools passed, where the IQA team prepared their work plan, realizing their hard work toward IQA implementation. In addition, a checklist for teachers' follow-up was found. Below are the attached documents found in School 2.
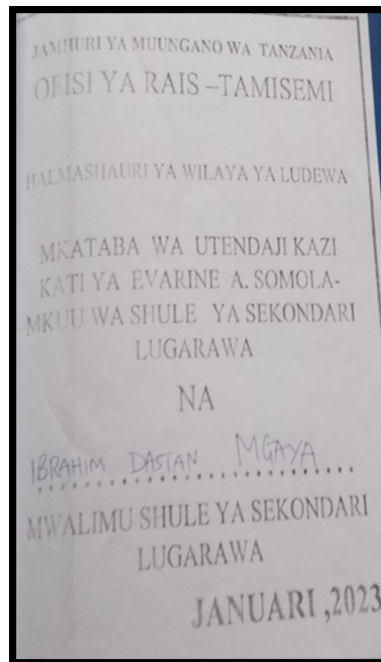
Figure 2: School 2, IQA Team Work Plan 2023
(Photograph Taken by Researcher January, 2023)

Figure 3: School 2, IQA Checklist
(Photograph Taken by Researcher January, 2023)

Figure 4: School 2, Individual Teaching Contract
(Photograph Taken by Researcher January, 2023)

6.3. School 3

6.3.1. Frontline Teachers

Frontline teachers A3 and B3 reported almost the same concerning the practices of IQA while pointing out the number of activities, including making follow-ups to check the quality of work done in school, maintaining student discipline, and relationships between teachers and students in the classroom environment during teaching and learning. Other tasks include making classroom observations and preparing schemes, lesson plans and lesson notes. Nevertheless, when the interview went on, the frontline teacher A3 showed some wrinkles on his face when he was pronouncing the term *'classroom observation'.* The study revealed that he was not ready to be observed by internal quality assurers who have been selected to maintain educational school standards. The statement below comments on the above elaborations:

> To follow up on all tasks done at school, to check the outside environment, hostel, timetable management, and classroom observation and how teachers present lessons and check cooperation between teachers and students while teaching in the classroom and also, to sit together with teachers for advice (Frontline teacher A3, 2023).

6.3.2. Internal Quality Assurers

Frontline teachers A3 and B3 said they were able to enter the classroom to observe teachers starting from the beginning of the lesson up to the end to ensure time management by using a checklist. The study revealed that the statement was in theoretical form because internal quality assurers were teachers responsible for classroom teaching and other documents. That is to say, it was not easy for them to check whether teachers were in classrooms on time though both internal quality assurer A3 and B3 stated the same. The study revealed that *time management* for each teacher, starting from the beginning of the lesson up to the end, was just a deceptive statement, and it was not practically done. Instead of making a follow-up on the availability of teaching and learning documents, it was something easy. Moreover, checking teachers if they have entered the classroom with teaching aids, as reported by internal quality assurer B3, was again difficult for internal quality assurers. It is possible for some of the teachers to prepare their teaching aids just as a rule but may not use them in a classroom environment. It may again be a deceptive statement. Below are their statements connected with the explanations above:

> First, we check the beginning of the periods by passing through each class to verify whether teachers have entered and the time to finish the lesson. Second, we make sure that everyone has the required documents. Third, we make sure that the school environment and classrooms are clean and support learning. We check if lesson notes, lesson plans, and teaching aids are used by teachers in classrooms (Internal Quality Assurer A3, 2023).
> They follow up with teachers to check whether they prepare schemes, lesson plans, and teaching aids and fill out their subject logbooks. Also, they attend periods on time to check students' discipline and observe teachers in classrooms to verify whether time management is used effectively (Internal Quality Assurer B3, 2023).

6.3.3. Documentary Review

A review of documents was used to check the contribution of the IQA process toward curriculum implementation, including the availability of syllabi, scheme of work, lesson plan, lesson notes, teaching aid, class journal, and subject logbook. In addition, internal quality assurers' documents such as work plans, checklists, letters, memos, and minutes, and checking whether the comments and suggestions were provided in the scheme of work and lesson plan as feedback to teachers was also reviewed. The study revealed that in school 3, all teachers prepared their teaching documents. Also, in school 3, internal quality assurers prepared their checklist for teachers' follow-up, signatures, and stamps, which were also found in the teachers' scheme of work and lesson plan, realizing the effort of the team toward IQA implementation. Other documents, including work plans, memos, letters, minutes, comments, and suggestions for the work and lesson plan scheme, were not found. Below are some of the documents reviewed in school 3.
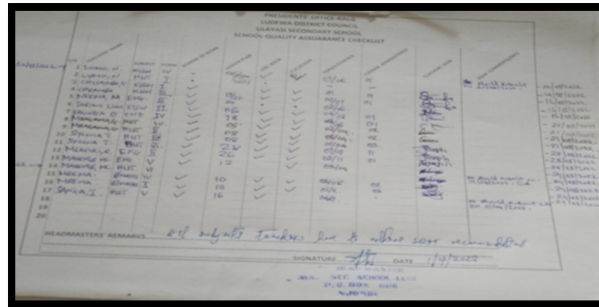
Figure 5: School 3, IQA Team Document No. 1
(Photograph Taken by Researcher January, 2023)

Figure 6: School 3, IQA Team Document NO. 2
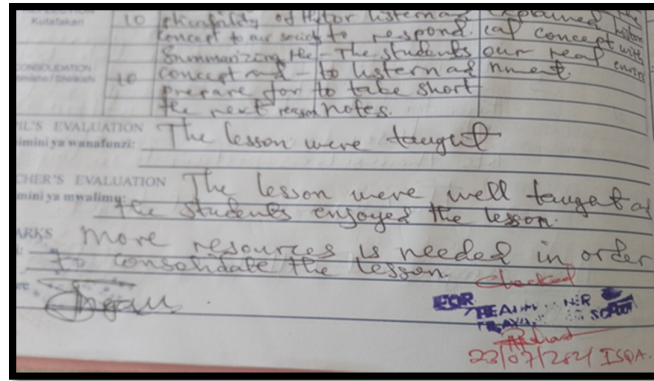*(Photograph Taken by Researcher January, 2023)*

Figure 7: School 3, IQA Team Signature & Stamp No. 1
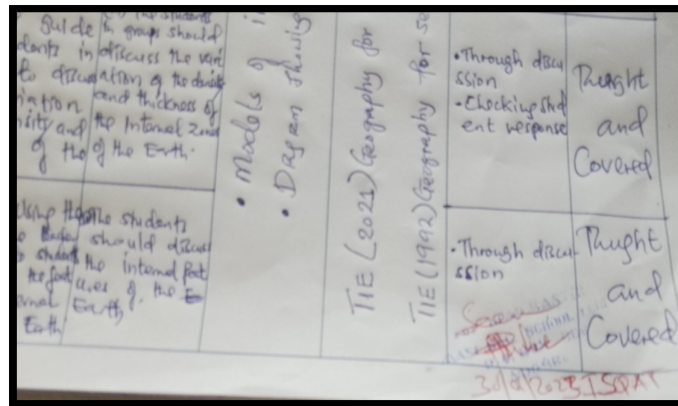(*Photograph Taken by Researcher January, 2023*)

Figure 2: School 3, IQA Team Signature & Stamp NO. 2
(*Photograph Taken by Researcher January, 2023*)

6.4. School 4

6.4.1. Frontline Teachers

According to Frontline teachers A4 and B4, IQA practice relies on the preparation of teaching and learning documents. Frontline teacher A4 said IQA practice wants all teachers to attend lessons, cover topics, provide lesson notes to students, mark students' tasks and provide feedback through corrections and emphasize teachers to write notes themselves to escape student errors. On the other hand, Frontline teacher B4 reported that the IQA process aims to emphasize teachers on their teaching profession, including the preparation of a scheme of work and lesson plans, covering topics on time, and the use of teaching aids in classrooms. The scheme of work should reflect the syllabus, and teaching aids should be attractive in relation to the topic and should match the students' level of understanding. Teachers should mark students' work and provide corrections as feedback to students who did not do it well. Despite the respondents' explanation, the study revealed that it was not easy to check how teaching aids were attractive and connected to the topic to all teachers during the classroom, as stated by Frontline teacher B, unless extra time was used. Below are statements from frontline teachers A4 and B4 to support the explanation above:

> To make sure that teachers attend lessons, cover their topic, provide lesson notes to students, mark student's tasks, correct them and emphasizing teachers to write lesson notes themselves to escape student's mistake (Frontline teacher A4, 2023).
> To check how schemes are prepared and if they are correct and completed on time.
> To count the number of lesson plans that a teacher is required to have per month and check the level reached.
> They verify whether teachers use teaching aids in classes and how attractive they are in relation to the topic. They also check student cooperation, tasks given to students, and whether those tasks are marked (Frontline teacher B4, 2023).

6.4.2. Internal Quality Assurers

Internal quality assurers reported the same with frontline teachers while outlining the preparation of the scheme of work, lesson plan, and teaching in accordance with the syllabus as the main activities of IQA. Also, Internal Quality Assurance makes sure that students attend the classroom and write everything that teachers present to them, memorize themselves and be able to use it in their examination. It also makes sure that pupils write what they have been taught

while using teachers' notes and check whether they relate to the scheme. It also checks students' notes in relation to the scheme, lesson plan and syllabus connection.

6.4.3. Documentary Review

Documents including syllabi, scheme of work, lesson plan, lesson notes, teaching aid, class journal, subject logbook, work plan, checklist, letters, memos, minutes, and checking whether comments and suggestions were provided in scheme of work and lesson plan as a feedback to teachers were reviewed. The study revealed that in school 4, all teachers prepared their teaching documents. However, internal quality assurers' work plans, checklists, memos, letters, and minutes were not found, and even comments and suggestions in the scheme of work and lesson plans as feedback to teachers were not provided. Below are some of the figures reviewed in school 4.
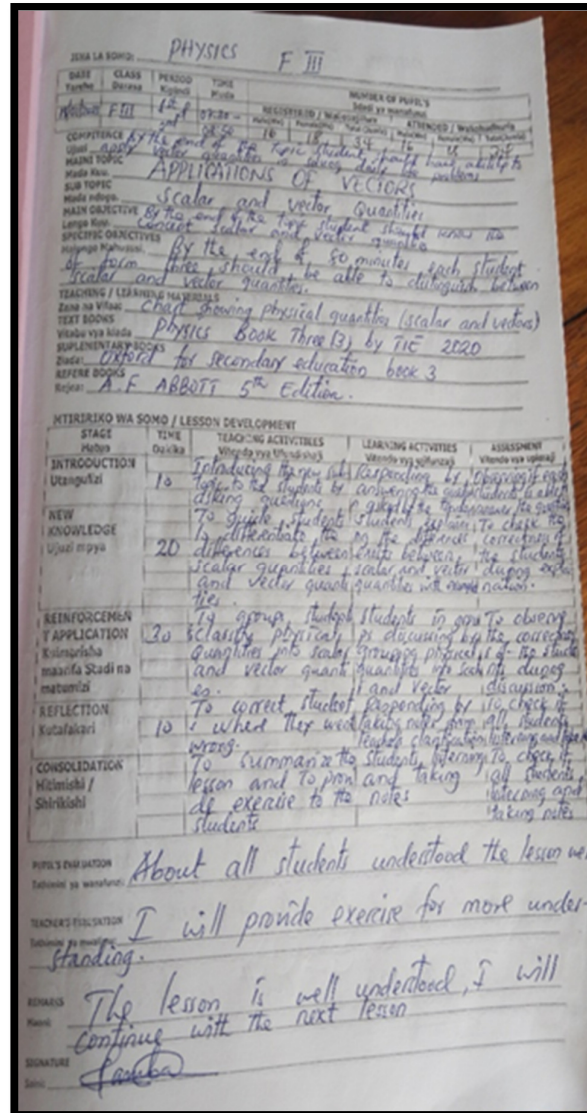
Figure 9: School 4, Lesson Plan
(Photograph Taken by Researcher January, 2023)

6.5. School 5

6.5.1. Internal Quality Assurers

Internal quality assurer A5 reported that the practice of IQA aims:

- To observe teachers in the classroom to see how materials are derived for students.
- To check whether teachers provide lesson notes and exercises for their students and
- To verify how well those exercises are marked by their subject teachers.

Also, internal quality assurers make sure that all teachers prepare their work scheme, lesson plan, and lesson notes while checking to see whether those documents relate to their syllabus. The explanation above is supported by internal quality assurer A5 in school 5, saying: *It is important to observe how teachers teach in classrooms, deliver materials to students, prepare notes, scheme of work, lesson plans and other things (Internal Quality Assurer A5, 2023).*

Internal Quality Assurer B5 said they make sure that teachers prepare lesson plan and their lessons are taught on time. Moreover, teachers should prepare lesson notes according to the scheme of work and make sure that those notes are in every student's exercise books and marked on time. Other things include having discussions with teachers through meetings, specifically with those teachers who face challenges and telling them the truth about their mistakes. The statement below verifies the explanation above:

To make sure that teachers prepare themselves before teaching, lesson plans are prepared, and lessons are taught on time in such a way that students read and understand them. Lesson notes prepared by the teacher are given to pupils on time to make sure that students are given tasks and marked on time to allow feedback to students after completing the topic or continuing to teach the same topic. Moreover, we have discussions with individual teachers about the teacher challenges, and if the teacher fails to make changes, we must prepare meetings to keep each other straight because through meetings, we learn a lot (Internal Quality Assurer B5, 2023).

6.5.2. Documentary Review

Review of documents such as syllabi, scheme of work, lesson plan, lesson notes, teaching aid, class-journal, subject logbook and internal quality assurers' document including work plan, checklist, letters, memos, and minutes were reviewed. Moreover, the study aimed to check whether commendations and suggestions were provided in the scheme of work and lesson plans as feedback to teachers. The study revealed that in school 5, all teachers prepared their teaching documents. However, internal quality assurers' work plans, checklists, memos, letters, minutes, and even comments and suggestions in the scheme of work and lesson plans as feedback to teachers were not provided. Below are some of the figures reviewed in school 5.


Figure 10: School 5, Scheme of Work
(Photograph Taken by Researcher January, 2023)

7. Discussion

The outcome of this study shows that practices of Internal Quality Assurance in all 5 schools aimed to monitor teachers in preparation of their teaching and learning documents to increase their accountability and responsibility. The documents reported in this study include the scheme of work, lesson plans, lesson notes, teaching aids, putting signatures in class journals, revisiting teacher's notes, and filling their logbook. Scholars commend that IQA practice ensures accountability and responsibility of teachers in school. According to Kitosi (2021), IQA practice provides a good methodology for instructional delivery, assesses the quality of examinations and tests, and provides actionable feedback and reports on students' reviews. Elbadiansyah and Masyni (2021) supported the idea that IQA is responsible for lesson planning, semester planning, classroom scheduling, lecturing schedule, and assessment of semester learning schedule. Also, Stanley & Mhagama (2022), cited by Oyo (2003), state that IQA is responsible for monitoring as one of the strategies of providing quality education where each individual keeps a watchful eye on students, school activities, the environment of the school as a good way to measure the effectiveness of school quality assurance.

Madikida (2016), cited by Stanley & Mhagama (2022), report on Internal Quality Assurance practices at school, including making an evaluation of the teaching and learning processes, monitoring students' academic performance, ensuring the availability of adequate instructional materials, and creating conducive teaching and learning atmosphere to school. Other scholars have added that the strategic way of ensuring the provision of quality education in secondary school is to have a strategic framework, which is vital to the success of IQA. The framework should begin with the quality education policy to give power to the IQA team automatically. The policy provides the IQA team autonomy in their responsibilities to take the required action to achieve educational goals. Semester plans, lesson plans, and lecturing schedules are work required to be performed by internal quality assurers. Despite internal quality assurers' efforts in ensuring curriculum implementation, they were required to perform other tasks, including teaching. By so doing, it was not easy to make effective IQA practice. Lack of time, to most internal quality assurers, contributed to them putting their signature and stamp in teachers' schemes and lesson plans instead of providing comments and suggestions as a way of

providing feedback to their fellow teachers. Moreover, teaching documents were checked effectively by internal quality assurers, but minimum follow-up was given to students.

Apart from teaching documents, the study also checked whether internal quality assurers prepare themselves to allow the practice of Internal Quality Assurance to be well-achieved in school, including preparation of their work plan as a roadmap guiding their duties planned per annual or per year. Other documents observed include verifying whether internal quality assurers provide comments and suggestions to teachers in their scheme of work and lesson plans as a way of providing feedback. Moreover, the study aimed to check the availability of checklists, minutes, memos and letters. The study revealed that the IQA team in most of the schools that passed did not plan what to do toward Internal Quality Assurance implementation, which affected the management of educational activities. Scholars commend that IQA should have the opportunity to plan, evaluate, promote, encourage, and sustain students' positive attitudes toward academic activities that enhance good performance (Asuquo & Onyinye, 2022; Mensah, 2022; Agatha, 2015). According to Hampel et al. (2020), a work plan facilitates the IQA team in the whole process of daily monitoring and evaluation of educational activities. Work plans ensure the availability and proper use of syllabi, books and all teaching and learning documents (Burra & Fanuel, 2021). A work plan assists school management in interpreting daily educational activities well and evaluates how well curriculum objectives are implemented (Huber, 2006). Moreover, accountability for teachers may occur when a work plan is prepared (Doherty & Shield, 2012).

Also, the study sought to verify whether the IQA team provided comments and suggestions in the scheme of work and lesson plan as feedback to their fellow teachers. The study found that the IQA team was not able to provide comments and suggestions in the scheme of work and lesson plan rather than putting their signature and stamp in some of the schools. Pieces of literature argue that comments and suggestions in the scheme of work and lesson plans help enhance collaboration among teachers, increase creativity and accountability and improve performance while comparing what they see written as a comment with what they wrote (Anderson et al., 2005; Jacobs & Morita, 2002). Comments and suggestions in teachers' schemes of work and lesson plans improve the attention and creativity of individual teachers in terms of resources, techniques, teaching aids and strategies that may help share experiences with students (Yang et al., 2006). Another piece of literature adds that feedback enables teachers to collaborate effectively in developing the pedagogical intention to directly address students' needs and outcomes (Warwick et al., 2016). Also, feedback improves teachers' motor performance, improves retention of memory, creates teacher attention, motivates teachers depending on the nature of the feedback given, and enables teachers to teach in a systematic way (Kija & Msangya, 2017). Generally, feedback in the teacher's scheme of work and lesson plan provides effective communication among teachers, which creates a conducive environment for workers, leading to creativity and effective teaching and learning processes.

Furthermore, the study found that the IQA team did not prepare checklists for teachers' follow-up, and memos, letters, and minutes were not found. The pieces of literature advise that checklist should be taken into consideration as it helps to organize activities expected to be performed daily. Checklists provide a detailed daily step in the process by keeping things organized while simplifying the process of monitoring and evaluation (Jenkins & Sheehey, 2011). Moreover, the checklist is not just a way of outlining things to be performed per day. Instead, the IQA team should be able to provide detailed descriptions and recommendations on how each item outlined has been performed to reflect the aspect of quality (Tomaszewski et al., 2017). Other scholars support that an organized list of work will be performed easily with close follow-up for each item calling for educational organization development (National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC), 2006; Mobegi et al., 2010). Checklists help the IQA team evaluate how the teaching and learning process is performed and find ways to improve.

Minutes was another document used to check how the meeting was conducted in school as one of the practices of the IQA process used by staff to share educational experiences related to their topics and other issues surrounding the school community. The study revealed that minutes were not found in each school, which means that either the meeting was not conducted or, if it was conducted, then documentation was poor. Scholars comment that meeting is the best way of providing innovation among staff if teachers are ready to put aside their personal concerns, which mainly comprise much of their subjective matters (Berg et al., 2000). According to Dogan et al. (2018) meeting is a reflective dialogue that promotes teachers' talk, interaction, discussion, teacher's professional growth and teacher's effectiveness through reflection and conservation. Also, Makwinya (2020) adds that meeting is a platform that brings staff members together to grasp, share experiences, communicate and make collective agreements and possible ways of improving their teaching and learning, hence being the ground-root for effective curriculum implementation (2020:197, 212). The meeting is a place for professional learning as it acts as a catalyst to understand oneself in cultural and social aspects by providing self-awareness where a teacher thinks and re-thinks fundamental issues in teaching and learning (Dogan, et al., 2018). Generally, the meeting is an adaptive learning environment for teachers with full of social and emotional aspects.

8. Conclusion and Recommendation

Internal quality assurers and frontline teachers provide the practice of Internal Quality Assurance, which relies on the teaching profession. Preparation of the scheme of work, lesson plan and lesson notes, teaching aid, covering the topics, marking student exercises, ensuring lessons are taught, and following the school timetable are the main practices of IQA to most teachers. The study advises regional educational officers and external quality assurance officers to check how to provide continuous awareness to teachers and provide guidelines to allow the IQA team to follow in implementing the Internal Quality Assurance process in schools. Moreover, the government of Tanzania may see how to motivate internal quality assurers in schools, as they are performing multiple activities at once compared to other teachers, and providing resources and infrastructure for better Internal Quality Assurance implementation.

IQA team gave the mandate to oversee and monitor all educational activities conducted at school while the team did not have sufficient capacity in academic leadership and experienced human resource skills to undertake and handle serious quality assurance process self-assessment, and quality audit. There is a need for the IQA team to acquire knowledge and skills on how to prepare themselves for Internal Quality Assurance implementation. The preparation of the work plan with a well-planned vision, mission, goal, and objectives may need teachers who are knowledgeable in reflecting educational needs in relation to the school community. Also, the IQA team should be able to provide comments and suggestions in the teacher's scheme of work and lesson plan as feedback to their fellow teachers. In addition, the IQA team should learn how to provide memos and letters and be able to document what they discuss in the meeting with other staff members. Also, the IQA team should be able to advise their fellow teachers to provide any difficulties encountered during the teaching process in their scheme of work instead of just writing 'topic covered' or 'topic taught' to allow teachers to share their experiences on those topics.

Moreover, formulation of IQA policy is highly needed to allow the IQA team to follow the rules, regulations and guidelines in running Internal Quality Assurance process in school. The policy will automatically increase the accountability and responsibility of not only teachers but also the IQA team in performing their tasks toward Internal Quality Assurance implementation. Guidelines will help teachers know what they are required to do and how and to what extent they should perform their tasks. Moreover, there is a need for specific ministries dealing with quality assurance to be formulated to allow close check-ups and effective quality control to be easily conducted toward Internal Quality Assurance process implementation.

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