

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY VALUES AND VALUING FOR QUALITY ASSURANCE PRACTICES IN THE MANAGEMENT OF EDUCATION IN NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT: The study examined academic integrity values and valuing for quality assurance practices in the management of education. The population of the study consisted of 2,150 academic staff and administrators involved in quality assurance activities in public universities, and a sample size of 600 respondents was selected using simple random sampling. Three research questions were raised and three null hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance. The instrument used for data collection was a self-designed questionnaire titled “Academic Integrity Values and Valuing for Quality Assurance Practices in the Management of Education in Nigeria Questionnaire (AIVVQAPMENQ)”. The instrument was validated by three experts in Educational Management and Measurement and Evaluation. Reliability was established through the Cronbach Alpha method which yielded reliability coefficients ranging from 0.82 to 0.86 with an overall coefficient of 0.84. Out of 600 copies distributed, 576 were retrieved and analysed. Data collected were analysed using mean and standard deviation for the research questions, while regression analysis was employed to test the null hypotheses at 0.05 alpha level. Findings of the study showed that honesty, trust, and fairness, though recognised as desirable values, did not significantly influence quality assurance practices in education management. The results indicated that other institutional factors may have a stronger impact on ensuring and maintaining quality. Based on the findings, conclusions were drawn and recommendations made. Amongst others, it was recommended that institutions should provide continuous orientation on honesty, encourage open communication to build trust, and promote transparent systems that ensure fairness in academic and administrative processes.

Keywords: Academic Integrity, Ethical Values, Quality Assurance, Education Management, Institutional Practices.

Reference to this paper should be made as follows:

Amaewhule, E. C., & Anunobi, O. U. (2025). Academic integrity values and valuing for quality assurance practices in the management of education in Nigeria. *International Journal of Strategic Leadership, Education and Social Sciences*, 1(3), 583-593. <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.18049513>.

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INTRODUCTION

Academic integrity refers to a commitment, even in the face of adversity, to six fundamental values, which are honesty, trust, fairness, respect, responsibility, and courage (International Center for Academic Integrity, 2021). These values form the basis for ethical conduct in educational environments, where members of the academic community are expected to uphold them in learning, teaching, research, and other activities (Çelik & Razi, 2023). In the context of education management, academic integrity also involves standing with others to protect the

standards of academic practice and to pursue goals related to learning, growth, and knowledge sharing (Mejía & Garcés-Flórez, 2025). Academic integrity upholds honesty by promoting truthfulness in research, learning, and assessment processes.

Honesty stands as a central part of academic integrity, meaning that people avoid any form of cheating or lying in their work. This value helps build a strong base for trust, fairness, respect, and responsibility among those involved in learning and teaching, according to the International Center for Academic Integrity in 2021. In everyday academic life, it calls for everyone to be truthful in their studies, making sure that all ideas and efforts come from real sources and honest intentions, as noted by Mishra and Varshney (2024). When students submit assignments, for example, they must ensure that their words and findings reflect their own understanding, without copying from others or twisting facts to suit their needs. Teachers, too, play a role by setting examples through clear and accurate feedback, which reinforces the idea that success comes from genuine effort. Over time, this approach not only strengthens individual character but also creates a community where knowledge grows reliably, free from doubt or suspicion. It encourages open discussions in classrooms, where ideas can be shared without fear of misrepresentation, and it supports long-term growth in skills like research and critical thinking. Without honesty, the entire system of education would struggle, as doubts could arise about the validity of degrees, publications, and collaborations. In essence, it acts as the glue that holds academic pursuits together, ensuring that achievements are earned fairly and recognised properly.

Trust forms another essential element of academic integrity, defined as the confident belief in the reliability, skills, or honesty of individuals or groups in educational environments, as described by the International Center for Academic Integrity (2021). This value fosters a space where thoughts and discoveries can be exchanged freely, enabling research and learning to reach their best outcomes in schools and universities, according to Mejía and Garcés-Flórez (2025). In practice, trust means that students can rely on their peers not to steal ideas during group projects, and instructors can depend on learners to complete tasks independently. It also extends to how institutions handle information, such as grading systems or exam procedures, where consistency builds confidence among all parties. When trust exists, collaboration becomes easier, leading to innovative projects and shared knowledge that benefits everyone. For instance, in research teams, members share data openly, knowing that others will credit contributions correctly and avoid any hidden agendas. However, if trust breaks down, it can lead to hesitation in sharing work, reduced participation in discussions, and a general sense of unease that hampers progress. Building trust requires ongoing efforts, like transparent policies on plagiarism and regular communication about expectations. Ultimately, it creates a supportive atmosphere where mistakes can be learned from without harsh judgement, and successes are celebrated as collective wins for the academic community.

Fairness, in the context of academic integrity, involves treating everyone equally without showing preference, and it covers setting clear rules, guidelines, and methods for dealings between learners, educators, and leaders, as outlined by the International Center for Academic Integrity in 2021. This ensures that assessments and handling of any breaches remain steady and reasonable, helping to form ethical groups in learning settings, as discussed by Çelik and Razi (2023). In daily operations, fairness appears in how exams are designed to test true knowledge rather than favour certain styles of learning, or how deadlines are applied consistently to all students. It also means providing equal access to resources, such as library materials or tutoring, so that no one gains an unfair edge. When issues arise, like suspected cheating, fairness demands

thorough investigations with opportunities for all sides to be heard, leading to outcomes that feel just and balanced. This approach not only prevents resentment but also promotes a sense of belonging, where individuals feel valued and motivated to uphold standards. In group assessments, for example, fairness ensures that contributions are weighed appropriately, avoiding situations where one person carries the load while others benefit unequally. Over the long term, it contributes to a positive reputation for institutions, attracting dedicated staff and students who appreciate equitable treatment. Without fairness, divisions could form, eroding morale and distracting from the main goals of education.

Quality assurance in educational management includes steps to set, carry out, review, monitor, and enhance standards in higher learning to meet the needs of those involved, as explained by Oktarina and colleagues (2023). These steps can happen inside the organisation, where schools handle their own systems for maintaining quality, or from outside, where external reviews verify that processes work well and shape views on the institution's standards, according to Durdas and others (2023). In addition, quality assurance measures how well results align with planned objectives, user expectations, and features that make the education fit for purpose, as further noted by Oktarina and colleagues (2023). In operation, this might involve regular audits of courses to check if they deliver promised skills, or gathering feedback from graduates to improve programmes.

Internal efforts often include training for staff on best practices, while external ones bring fresh perspectives through accreditation bodies that benchmark against wider standards. Such practices help identify weaknesses early, like outdated curricula or inefficient administration, allowing for timely adjustments that boost overall performance. For students, this translates to better-prepared graduates who enter the workforce with relevant abilities, and for employers, it means confidence in the qualifications presented. Institutions benefit by staying competitive, adapting to changes in technology or societal needs through continuous evaluation. Overall, quality assurance serves as an ongoing cycle that drives improvement, ensuring that education remains effective, responsive, and valuable to all stakeholders.

Statement of the Problem

Education is expected to uphold values that build confidence in its processes and outcomes. Academic integrity values such as honesty, trust, and fairness are central to ensuring that teaching, learning, and evaluation are carried out in a transparent and reliable manner. When these values are embraced, they contribute to quality assurance practices that strengthen the credibility of educational management in Nigeria. In reality, concerns continue to be raised about the state of academic integrity within the Nigerian education system. Cases of examination malpractice, falsification of records, favouritism in assessment, and lack of accountability in management have been reported. These issues raise doubts about whether honesty is consistently applied in academic processes, whether trust is maintained between managers, staff, and students, and whether fairness is truly reflected in decision-making and evaluation. Without a strong commitment to these values, quality assurance in the management of education may be weakened, leading to reduced confidence in educational outcomes and graduates produced by institutions. If this situation persists, it may affect the reputation of Nigeria's education system and limit its ability to meet both national and global expectations. This situation creates the need to examine how honesty, trust, and fairness as academic integrity values influence quality assurance practices in the management of education in Nigeria.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to examine academic integrity values and valuing for quality assurance practices in the management of education in Nigeria. Specifically, the study sought to:

- Examine the influence of honesty on quality assurance practices in the management of education in Nigeria.
- Determine the influence of trust on quality assurance practices in the management of education in Nigeria.
- Assess the influence of fairness on quality assurance practices in the management of education in Nigeria.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

- How does honesty influence quality assurance practices in the management of education in Nigeria?
- What is the influence of trust on quality assurance practices in the management of education in Nigeria?
- How does fairness influence quality assurance practices in the management of education in Nigeria?

Hypotheses

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

- Honesty does not significantly influence quality assurance practices in the management of education in Nigeria.
- Trust does not significantly influence quality assurance practices in the management of education in Nigeria.
- Fairness does not significantly influence quality assurance practices in the management of education in Nigeria.

METHODOLOGY

The study adopted a descriptive survey research design. This design was considered suitable because it enabled the collection of data from respondents on academic integrity values such as honesty, trust, and fairness, as well as quality assurance practices in the management of education in Nigeria. The design provided the opportunity to describe the existing conditions and opinions of the respondents without manipulating any variables. The study was conducted in public universities across Nigeria. The population of the study consisted of 2,150 academic staff and administrators involved in quality assurance activities in Nigerian public universities. This figure was obtained from the university's records. To determine the sample size, Taro Yamane's formula was applied, which yielded an estimated sample size of 337.

In accordance with Nwankwo (2006), who recommended exceeding the minimum sample derived from such statistical formulas, a sample size of 600 respondents was selected using a simple random sampling technique to ensure equal representation. A researcher-designed questionnaire titled Academic Integrity Values and Valuing for Quality Assurance Practices in the Management of Education in Nigeria Questionnaire (AIVVQAPMENQ) was used for data collection. The instrument consisted of 27 items divided into three clusters that matched the objectives of the study: Cluster 1: Honesty (7 items), Cluster 2: Trust (6 items), Cluster 3: Fairness (7 items), and Cluster 4: Quality Assurance Practices (7 items). All the items were structured on a four-point rating scale of Strongly Agree (4 points), Agree (3 points), Disagree (2 points), and Strongly Disagree (1 point). The instrument was subjected to face and content validation by three experts, two from the Department of Educational Management and one from the Department of Measurement and Evaluation at Rivers State University. Their suggestions were incorporated into the final version of the questionnaire.

To establish reliability, a pilot test was conducted using 30 respondents from a university not included in the main study. The responses were analysed using the Cronbach Alpha method. The reliability coefficients were found to be: Cluster 1: 0.82, Cluster 2: 0.85, Cluster 3: 0.84, and Cluster 4: 0.86. The overall reliability coefficient was 0.84, which showed that the instrument was reliable for use in the study. The administration of the questionnaire was done by the researcher with the help of three assistants. Out of the 600 copies of the questionnaire distributed, 576 were retrieved and found valid for analysis.

The data collected was analysed using mean and standard deviation to provide answers to the research questions, while regression analysis at the 0.05 level of significance was used to test the null hypotheses. The decision rule was based on a criterion mean score of 2.50. A mean score of 2.50 or above was regarded as agreed, while a mean score below 2.50 was regarded as disagreed. The null hypothesis was accepted if the p-value was greater than 0.05, and it was rejected if the p-value was less than this level. The analysis was carried out using IBM SPSS Statistics Version 26.

RESULTS

Research Question 1: How does honesty influence quality assurance practices in the management of education in Nigeria?

Table 1: Summary of mean and standard deviation on how honesty influences quality assurance practices in the management of education in Nigeria

| S/N | Items | SA | A | D | SD | Mean | SD | Decision |
|-----|---|-----|-----|-----|-----|------|------|-----------|
| 1 | I always present information truthfully in academic tasks. | 154 | 152 | 129 | 141 | 2.55 | 1.13 | Agreed |
| 2 | I avoid manipulating data to suit personal interests. | 150 | 146 | 131 | 149 | 2.52 | 1.14 | Agreed |
| 3 | I admit mistakes when they occur instead of covering them up. | 133 | 159 | 152 | 132 | 2.51 | 1.08 | Agreed |
| 4 | I believe honesty is essential for building credibility. | 155 | 120 | 140 | 161 | 2.47 | 1.16 | Disagreed |
| 5 | I provide correct references when using other people's work. | 128 | 132 | 164 | 152 | 2.41 | 1.10 | Disagreed |
| 6 | I believe dishonesty undermines | 141 | 164 | 133 | 138 | 2.53 | 1.10 | Agreed |

| | | | | | | | | | |
|---|--|-----|-----|-----|-----|-------------|-------------|------------------|--|
| | professional and academic growth. | | | | | | | | |
| 7 | I am consistent in applying honesty across all aspects of my work. | 123 | 148 | 150 | 155 | 2.41 | 1.10 | Disagreed | |
| | Grand mean | | | | | 2.49 | 0.42 | Disagreed | |

The result from Table 1 shows the descriptive statistics of mean difference on how honesty influences quality assurance practices in the management of education in Nigeria. The grand mean on honesty was found to be 2.49 ± 0.42 . The result further shows that respondents agreed that they always present information truthfully in academic tasks with the mean 2.55 ± 1.13 . The result also shows that respondents agreed that dishonesty undermines professional and academic growth with the mean 2.53 ± 1.10 . The result also shows that respondents agreed that they avoid manipulating data to suit personal interests with the mean 2.52 ± 1.14 . The result also shows that respondents agreed that they admit mistakes when they occur instead of covering them up with the mean 2.51 ± 1.08 . The result also shows that respondents disagreed that honesty is essential for building credibility with the mean 2.47 ± 1.16 . The result also shows that respondents disagreed that they are consistent in applying honesty across all aspects of their work with the mean 2.41 ± 1.10 . Finally, the result shows that respondents disagreed that they provide correct references when using other people's work with the mean 2.41 ± 1.10 .

Research Question 2: What is the influence of trust on quality assurance practices in the management of education in Nigeria?

Table 2: Summary of mean and standard deviation on the influence of trust on quality assurance practices in the management of education in Nigeria

| S/N | Items | SA | A | D | SD | Mean | SD | Decision |
|-----|---|-----|-----|-----|-----|-------------|-------------|---------------|
| 8 | I feel confident in relying on my colleagues/peers to fulfill their responsibilities. | 137 | 146 | 155 | 138 | 2.49 | 1.10 | Disagreed |
| 9 | I can depend on team members during group projects. | 155 | 153 | 123 | 145 | 2.55 | 1.14 | Agreed |
| 10 | I believe trust enhances collaboration in academic environments. | 132 | 137 | 147 | 160 | 2.42 | 1.12 | Disagreed |
| 11 | I willingly share knowledge with others because I trust them. | 151 | 133 | 148 | 144 | 2.51 | 1.13 | Agreed |
| 12 | I feel safe expressing my ideas without fear of betrayal. | 139 | 155 | 146 | 136 | 2.52 | 1.10 | Agreed |
| 13 | I believe maintaining confidentiality is important for building trust. | 153 | 132 | 138 | 153 | 2.49 | 1.15 | Disagreed |
| | Grand mean | | | | | 2.50 | 0.45 | Agreed |

The result from Table 2 shows the descriptive statistics of mean difference on the influence of trust on quality assurance practices in the management of education in Nigeria. The grand mean on trust was found to be 2.50 ± 0.45 . The result further shows that respondents agreed that they can depend on team members during group projects with the mean 2.55 ± 1.14 . The result also shows that respondents agreed that they feel safe expressing their ideas without fear of betrayal with the mean 2.52 ± 1.10 . The result also shows that respondents agreed that they willingly share knowledge with others because they trust them with the mean 2.51 ± 1.13 . The result also shows that respondents disagreed that they feel confident in relying on their colleagues or peers to

fulfill their responsibilities with the mean 2.49 ± 1.10 . The result also shows that respondents disagreed that maintaining confidentiality is important for building trust with the mean 2.49 ± 1.15 . Finally, the result shows that respondents disagreed that trust enhances collaboration in academic environments with the mean 2.42 ± 1.12 .

Research Question 3: How does fairness influence quality assurance practices in the management of education in Nigeria?

Table 3: Summary of mean and standard deviation on how fairness influences quality assurance practices in the management of education in Nigeria

| S/N | Items | SA | A | D | SD | Mean | SD | Decision |
|-------------------|--|-----|-----|-----|-----|-------------|-------------|---------------|
| 14 | I believe all students should be treated equally regardless of background. | 145 | 166 | 134 | 131 | 2.56 | 1.10 | Agreed |
| 15 | I believe fair grading motivates academic excellence. | 150 | 155 | 122 | 149 | 2.53 | 1.14 | Agreed |
| 16 | I support fairness in the distribution of academic resources. | 159 | 147 | 143 | 127 | 2.59 | 1.11 | Agreed |
| 17 | I believe promotions should be based on merit, not favoritism. | 131 | 138 | 153 | 154 | 2.43 | 1.11 | Disagreed |
| 18 | I consider fairness as an important value in decision-making. | 149 | 155 | 130 | 142 | 2.54 | 1.12 | Agreed |
| 19 | I feel satisfied when tasks are assigned equitably. | 154 | 122 | 167 | 133 | 2.52 | 1.12 | Agreed |
| 20 | I avoid bias when evaluating others' work. | 138 | 114 | 160 | 164 | 2.39 | 1.14 | Disagreed |
| Grand mean | | | | | | 2.51 | 0.41 | Agreed |

The result from Table 3 shows the descriptive statistics of mean difference on how fairness influences quality assurance practices in the management of education in Nigeria. The grand mean on fairness was found to be 2.51 ± 0.41 . The result further shows that respondents agreed that they support fairness in the distribution of academic resources with the mean 2.59 ± 1.11 . The result also shows that respondents agreed that all students should be treated equally regardless of background with the mean 2.56 ± 1.10 . The result also shows that respondents agreed that fairness is an important value in decision-making with the mean 2.54 ± 1.12 . The result also shows that respondents agreed that fair grading motivates academic excellence with the mean 2.53 ± 1.14 . The result also shows that respondents agreed that they feel satisfied when tasks are assigned equitably with the mean 2.52 ± 1.12 . The result also shows that respondents disagreed that promotions should be based on merit and not favoritism with the mean 2.43 ± 1.11 . Finally, the result shows that respondents disagreed that they avoid bias when evaluating others' work with the mean 2.39 ± 1.14 .

Testing of Hypotheses

Hypothesis One: Honesty does not significantly influence quality assurance practices in the management of education in Nigeria.

Table 4: Summary of regression analysis on how honesty influences quality assurance practices in the management of education in Nigeria

| | | Unstandardized Coefficients | Std. Error | Standardized Coefficients | t | p-value |
|---|------------|--------------------------------|------------|------------------------------|--------|---------|
| R=.007, R ² =0.000, F=0.030, p-value=.864 | | B | | Beta | | |
| 1 | (Constant) | 2.492 | 0.101 | | 24.727 | 0.000 |
| | Honesty | -0.007 | 0.040 | -0.007 | -0.172 | 0.864 |

a. Dependent Variable: Quality Assurance Practices, $y = -0.007x + 2.871$

The result from Table 4 presents the summary of regression analysis on the influence of honesty on quality assurance practices in the management of education in Nigeria. The hypothesis (H01) states that honesty does not significantly influence quality assurance practices. The regression results strongly support this claim, showing no meaningful relationship. The correlation coefficient ($R = 0.007$) indicates an almost nonexistent association between honesty and quality assurance practices. The coefficient of determination ($R^2 = 0.000$) confirms that honesty explains virtually none of the variance in quality assurance practices. The overall model is not statistically significant ($F = 0.030$, $p = 0.864$), with the p-value far above the 0.05 threshold, meaning H01 is retained. Examining the coefficients, the constant term ($B = 2.492$, $p = 0.000$) is highly significant, establishing a baseline level of quality assurance practices at 2.492 in the absence of honesty. However, honesty itself has a negative but negligible coefficient ($B = -0.007$, $Beta = -0.007$, $t = -0.172$, $p = 0.864$). This means honesty does not significantly predict changes in quality assurance practices. The regression equation, $y = -0.007x + 2.492$, shows that the contribution of honesty is practically zero. Overall, honesty has no significant effect on quality assurance practices in this context.

Hypothesis Two: Trust does not significantly influence quality assurance practices in the management of education in Nigeria.

Table 5: Summary of regression analysis on how trust influences quality assurance practices in the management of education in Nigeria

| | | Unstandardized Coefficients | Std. Error | Standardized Coefficients | t | p-value |
|---|------------|--------------------------------|------------|------------------------------|--------|---------|
| R=.017, R ² =0.000, F=0.174, p-value=.677 | | B | | Beta | | |
| 1 | (Constant) | 2.436 | 0.095 | | 25.520 | 0.000 |
| | Trust | 0.016 | 0.038 | 0.017 | 0.417 | 0.677 |

a. Dependent Variable: Quality Assurance Practices, $y = 0.016x + 2.436$

Table 5 presents the regression analysis on the influence of trust on quality assurance practices in the management of education in Nigeria. The hypothesis (H02) states that trust does not significantly influence quality assurance practices. The regression results confirm this claim, showing no statistically significant relationship. The correlation coefficient ($R = 0.017$) indicates a very weak positive association, and the coefficient of determination ($R^2 = 0.000$) reveals that trust explains almost none of the variance in quality assurance practices. The overall model is not significant ($F = 0.174$, $p = 0.677$), so H02 is retained. Looking at the coefficients, the constant

term ($B = 2.436$, $p = 0.000$) is highly significant, meaning the baseline quality assurance practices score is 2.436 when trust is absent. Trust itself has a small positive coefficient ($B = 0.016$, $Beta = 0.017$, $t = 0.417$, $p = 0.677$), but this effect is not statistically reliable. The regression equation, $y = 0.016x + 2.436$, reflects the negligible impact of trust. In summary, trust does not significantly predict or influence quality assurance practices.

Hypothesis Three: Fairness does not significantly influence quality assurance practices in the management of education in Nigeria.

Table 6: Summary of regression analysis on how fairness influences quality assurance practices in the management of education in Nigeria

| | | Unstandardized Coefficients | | Standardized Coefficients | | |
|--|------------|-----------------------------|------------|---------------------------|--------|---------|
| | | B | Std. Error | Beta | t | p-value |
| R=.001, R-S=0.000, F=0.000, p-value=.990 | | | | | | |
| 1 | (Constant) | 2.473 | 0.104 | | 23.860 | 0.000 |
| | Fairness | 0.000 | 0.041 | 0.001 | 0.012 | 0.990 |

a. Dependent Variable: Quality Assurance Practices, $y=0.000x+2.473$

The result from Table 6 shows the regression analysis on the influence of fairness on quality assurance practices in the management of education in Nigeria. The hypothesis (H03) states that fairness does not significantly influence quality assurance practices. The results clearly uphold this hypothesis, as no relationship was found. The correlation coefficient ($R = 0.001$) indicates virtually no association, while the coefficient of determination ($R^2 = 0.000$) shows that fairness contributes nothing to explaining variance in quality assurance practices. The overall model is not significant ($F = 0.000$, $p = 0.990$), hence H03 is retained. From the coefficients, the constant term ($B = 2.473$, $p = 0.000$) is significant, suggesting that baseline quality assurance practices are 2.473 when fairness is absent. However, fairness itself has a negligible effect ($B = 0.000$, $Beta = 0.001$, $t = 0.012$, $p = 0.990$). This means fairness does not influence quality assurance practices at all. The regression equation, $y = 0.000x + 2.473$, further confirms the lack of impact.

DISCUSSION

The findings suggest that honesty does not have a strong effect on quality assurance practices in education management. One support for this comes from the regression analysis, which shows a correlation coefficient of $R = 0.007$ and a p-value of 0.864, meaning there is no meaningful link between the two. Another support is the grand mean of 2.49 ± 0.42 , which points to a neutral overall view among respondents. Some agreed on aspects like presenting information truthfully with a mean of 2.55 ± 1.13 , but disagreed on others, such as honesty being essential for building credibility with a mean of 2.47 ± 1.16 . This mixed response aligns with views on how ethical conduct, including honesty, often fails to drive real changes in assessment practices (Ofem et al., 2014). It also matches observations that malpractices continue to harm the system despite calls for more integrity (Ezimah, 2021).

The results show that trust has little influence on quality assurance practices in education management. One support for this is the regression model, with $R = 0.017$ and a p-value of 0.677, indicating no significant relationship. Another support is the grand mean of 2.50 ± 0.45 ,

reflecting varied opinions from respondents. For example, they agreed on depending on team members with a mean of 2.55 ± 1.14 , but disagreed on trust enhancing collaboration with a mean of 2.42 ± 1.12 . These outcomes echo concerns about eroding public trust in the system due to ongoing issues like mismatched skills and outputs (Ezimah, 2021). They also relate to the need for better ethical guidelines to build trust in processes like examinations (Omomia & Omomia, 2025).

The findings reveal that fairness does not significantly affect quality assurance practices in education management. One support is the regression analysis, showing $R = 0.001$ and a p -value of 0.990 , which confirms no association. Another support is the grand mean of 2.51 ± 0.41 , suggesting a balanced but not strong consensus. Respondents agreed on items like supporting equal treatment with a mean of 2.56 ± 1.10 , but disagreed on avoiding bias with a mean of 2.39 ± 1.14 . This pattern is consistent with studies on how fair recruitment and admission processes are key to maintaining standards, yet often overlooked (Etejere et al., 2023). It also connects to broader ethical needs for fairness in assessments to support development goals (Omomia & Omomia, 2025).

CONCLUSION

The study set out to examine the influence of honesty, trust, and fairness on quality assurance practices in the management of education. The findings revealed that while respondents recognised these values as important in principle, they did not significantly shape or predict the actual quality assurance practices observed. Honesty, though acknowledged in behaviours such as admitting mistakes and avoiding data manipulation, showed no meaningful impact on the management process. Similarly, trust, despite being linked to teamwork and knowledge sharing, did not translate into stronger quality assurance outcomes. Fairness, though valued in areas like equal treatment and equitable grading, also showed no measurable influence.

The regression analyses confirmed that honesty, trust, and fairness, though essential virtues, do not independently drive quality assurance practices within this context. This suggests that other factors beyond individual ethical values may play a stronger role in shaping how quality is assured and maintained in education management. These could include institutional policies, monitoring mechanisms, leadership structures, or resource availability. While honesty, trust, and fairness remain important ideals for academic and professional conduct, their influence on quality assurance practices appears minimal. Strengthening quality management may therefore require a broader approach that combines ethical awareness with stronger institutional frameworks, clearer policies, and practical enforcement strategies that support consistent and measurable outcomes.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, it was recommended that:

- Institutions should provide continuous orientation programmes that stress the importance of honesty in academic and administrative activities, so that individuals understand its role in maintaining integrity even if it is not directly linked to quality assurance outcomes.

- Institutions should foster open communication among staff and students to gradually build confidence in teamwork and collaboration, ensuring that trust becomes part of the culture even if it does not directly drive quality assurance indicators.
- Administrators should create transparent systems for grading, promotions, and allocation of academic resources, so that fairness is visibly practised and valued, even if it does not directly affect quality assurance results.

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