# Workers' Perceptions on the Recruitment of Evaluators in Nigerian Schools

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## Abstract

This study examined certain issues around the recruitment process of school evaluators in primary schools in Nigeria. The study used a descriptive survey design. The study sample was 628 workers made up of 371 school counselors and 257 school evaluators randomly selected from schools and from ministries of education in south-east Nigeria. A 35 item questionnaire developed by the researchers was used for the data collection. One-way ANOVA was used for data analysis. Results revealed that guidance counselors and school evaluators were of the opinion that, to a high extent, recruitment of evaluators in Nigerian primary schools is based on laid down selection criteria.

**Keywords:** assessment; recruitment; evaluators; primary schools.

## INTRODUCTION

Although much progress has been made in improving the employment situation in the education sector as in other sectors, most public primary schools in many parts of Nigeria are still faced with poorly trained personnel recruited into the inspectorate (Ogunu, 2001). Given the country's unemployment situation, the assessment of recruitment process of evaluators for primary schools could be a key to overcoming the challenges of primary education and achieving the national objectives of primary education. The key to ensuring that qualified teachers and the needed resources are in place for pupils' learning could also be by assessing the recruitment of the school evaluators. If so, then, assessment of the recruitment process of school evaluators for primary schools in Nigeria becomes paramount for quality primary education. Generally, education is an important investment no matter the economic reputation of a country (Better Future Foundation Nigeria, BFFN, 2015). Specifically, investing in primary education in Nigeria is a laudable investment for the accomplishment of personal and national development goals (Enaigbe, 2009).

As part of reforms designed to change the Nigerian primary education landscape, the new education policy by the Federal Republic of Nigeria (2013) reiterated that the local governments shall, through their Local Education Authorities (LEAs), have responsibility for the management of primary education within their local government areas. In part, the LEAs shall be responsible for the appointments of primary school teachers and non-teaching staff within their areas of jurisdiction; and the supervision and quality control in all their primary schools in conjunction with federal and state authorities, among other responsibilities. Despite these laudable responsibilities for the LEAs, it is pertinent to note that these responsibilities appear to exist as per policy documentation rather than in implementation as per adherence to the policy statement. This, in part, may account for why quality remains a serious issue in primary education in Nigeria (Federal Ministry of Education [FME], 2009). However, with the setting of and adherence to standards-based criteria for recruitment of qualified school evaluators and their training/retraining, researchers feel that this situation is likely to change.

The criteria used for schools evaluation follows standardization procedure in many countries in which the educational authorities are in charge of school evaluation (Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development [OECD], 2008). However, an evaluator is someone who is trained to form an objective opinion of the value or quality of something after careful considerations, based on data available and personal observation made at a given time. An evaluator is the custodian of quality assurance. An education evaluator is an authorized official of the Ministry of Education who identifies and provides feedback on the strength and weaknesses in educational institutions so that the institutions can improve the quality of education provided and the achievement of their learners. The evaluator also provides evidence of educational standards for the LGA, state and the national evaluation of educational standard (FME, 2010). School evaluators are quality assurance agents, otherwise known as school inspectors. Evidence suggests that the term 'school evaluator', 'quality assurance agents' and 'school inspectors' are now being used interchangeably across nations see, for (Ezenwaji, 2015; Igwe, 2001). While the responsibilities may be same or slightly different in some education authorities, what accounts for the use of any of these terms may be linked to the dynamism of education policies and the emphasis on quality assurance practice in schools. The main goals of school evaluators could be to undertake inspection visits; disseminate information about instructional materials and effective teaching methods and good practices; obtain information on challenges experienced by teachers in schools and institutions, as well as provide advisory solutions through appropriate authorities; monitor, document, and publicize the overall quality of education in schools and proffer practical and positive advice; and organize meetings with, and workshops for, teachers as necessary, with

a view to improving their professional competence (Federal Republic of Nigeria (FRN), 2013).

Specifically, the roles of evaluators as stipulated by FME (2010) are to evaluate all educational institutions regularly and compiling appropriate reports; advise the government on the type and quality of education being offered in the country; advising government on the trends in the learning institution's areas of equity, access, equality, gender, enrollment, wastage (dropout and repetition cases), retention, curriculum delivery, learning and teaching materials, leadership, staffing, governance, health care, career guidance, discipline, curriculum evaluation, pre-service and in-service training of teachers, costs, institution development plan;  review the learners and teaching materials in collaboration with the Nigerian Educational Research and Development Council (NERDC); assist the quality development service with the design of in-service training program for teachers; advise stakeholders on education matters pertaining to curriculum delivery, assessment and  provision of resources; monitor and advise on standards of education based on all round standard performance indicator (benchmark) for the various areas including sports, drama, music, science, academic performance, environmental conservation, health care and nutrition, pupil's welfare, pastoral and spiritual wellbeing of students, provision and optimum use of resources; advise on curriculum evaluation in collaboration with NERDC; advise on the identification, selection, and promotion of teachers and school administrators in collaboration with evaluators; establish and maintain professional linkage with institutions of higher learning on matters of educational standards; and provide career guidance to educational institutions.

According to Faubert (2009), school evaluation systems differ in their characteristics, but share a common universal purpose of improving teaching and learning, and serve two blended purposes – improvement and accountability. In this respect, Nakpodia and Okiemute (2011) argued that school accountability strive to affect the school quality by protecting students from incompetent teachers. However, because nearly all teachers are at least minimally competent, the accountability system directly affects only very few teachers who are not competent. Thus, if the goal is to improve general school quality, and educators use only those strategies that affect a few teachers, overall school improvement is likely to be a very slow process.

Also, school evaluation not an end in itself, but rather it is a veritable tool for attaining improved student learning outcomes (OECD, 2011). Thus, for Igwe and Rufai (2012), school evaluators need to be appointed for a regular check of teachers' activities in Nigerian schools. This is necessary because the retention of quality teachers is not only beneficial for social transformation but also for a sustainable economic growth of Nigeria. In recent times, the recruitment process of school evaluators in Nigerian primary schools seem to be an on-going concern among educators, guidance counselors, educational administrators and managers, policy-makers and the Labour Unions. This is because the criteria for the selection of school evaluators are important as the quality of the service delivery in any sector usually depends on the calibre of the people involved. Previously, the selection of

evaluators for schools was based on a basic qualification which included educational courses and experience in teaching for at least ten years but currently, the recruitment of all evaluators is a prerogative of the Federal Inspectorate Service, State Inspectorate Service and LGA (FME, 2009). The modalities for identifying potential evaluators according to the FME, are based on the track record of the applicants, with respect to past and current performance; the educational level of the applicant who should be at least a graduate, or equivalent, with at least ten years of teaching experience; evidence of potential on evaluators training course; identification of good practice in the field provided by the Coordinating Inspectors, through his office. The FME stated that they intend that in future, the potential evaluators would be screened by the senior management committee of the inspectorate according to agreed criteria, and through using available records on the pedigree of school evaluators.

In many countries (including Nigeria), civil servant status are offered to school evaluators (Faubert, 2009). School evaluation systems are intended to improve achievement (Hamilton, Berends & Stecher, 2005; OECD, 2008). Consequently, the need for the recruitment and use of qualified external school evaluators is very obvious. However, even when school evaluators are recruited for primary schools in Nigeria, Ogbonnaya (2004) decried that the school evaluators lack relevant materials, tools and resources for effective execution of their functions such as recent journals, textbooks, periodicals, among others. Prior to such observation, Nnadozie (2001) stated that financial inadequacies have been the basic factor militating against the planning and implementation of school evaluation programmes.

Ezenwaji (2012) noted that the recruitment process of school evaluators for Nigerian primary schools is based on the applicants' years of experience as a teacher and the years of service, and in some cases teachers who have not reached the required level may be co-opted to serve as a result of the large number of schools to cover, whereas in some cases, retired school inspectors and other senior educationists may be invited to apply, become trained and accredited as need arises. However, in a recent study by Ezenwaji (2015), the findings revealed that there is a significant difference between the mean rating of school evaluators and head teachers with regard to the application of criteria guiding the recruitment of school evaluators for primary schools in South-east Nigeria. The findings of the study also indicated that evaluators and head teachers agreed that, to a great extent, recruitment of school evaluators is based on selection criteria that include academic and professional qualifications, and applicants having a minimum of ten years teaching experience. Ogonu (2001) asserted that the criteria for recruitment of school evaluators in Nigeria is based on the applicant's possession of first degree certificate in education with some years of teaching experience without regard to other aspects like the applicant's output as a teacher. In addition, as a result of acute shortage of school evaluators; some teachers without the requisite experience are also recruited as school evaluators, thus not adhering to the necessary qualification and

experience needed for the crucial role of ensuring quality education in schools.

One major factor that seems to be influencing the recruitment of school evaluators for primary schools in Nigeria is corrupt practices. Corruption in education has been described as a major hindrance to achieving the goal of comprehensive primary school education for all the world's children (Transparency International, 2015). According to the report by Transparency International (2014), Nigeria scored 27 out of a maximum 100 marks to clinch 136th position out of the 175 countries surveyed. However, this means that the country has improved by eight points against its 2013 rating as 144th out of 175 countries. Nonetheless, there is little to cheer in this report as it rather shows that the country still needs to do a lot to address corruption in a way that can boost confidence in the citizenry and the international community (The Sun, 2014). In this respect, Hallak and Poisson (2001) stated that one of the main areas in which corruption is observed in the education sector is the recruitment, promotion and appointment of teachers and such corrupt practices (such as favoritism, nepotism, bribes and pay-offs) affects the quality of education. According to the document from U4 Anti-Corruption Resource Centre (2006), corruption in recruitment and promotion of staff in the education sector lowers the quality of teaching; and as criteria for recruitment are frequently bypassed, unqualified personnel are often appointed. The Centre decried that placements in rural schools tend to be unpopular, especially among unmarried and female teachers, and can sometimes be avoided by bribing those in-charge of the placement. To them, skewed posting of teachers can leave some schools overstaffed and others understaffed. In addition, salaries paid to *ghost teachers* also pose a problem. Therefore, the assessment of the recruitment process of school evaluators in the education sector could be one place to begin the clarion task of overcoming corrupt practices in the education sector. However, this can be done effectively in line with what Faubert (2009) remarked, "effective evaluation schemes require the acceptance and support of those being evaluated, whose positions and claims have to be taken into account throughout the development of the evaluation process (p. 48)".

Also, given that the education sector employment is being damaged from bribes paid by teachers to public officials to get preferred posting and promotion, the bypassing of criteria in the approval of school establishment and accreditation, cronyism and nepotism in procurement and teacher appointment, and  the prevalence of *ghost teachers* in primary schools (Alaibe, 2013; Transparency International, 2015) which invariably contributes to the corruption perception index of the country, the employment of school evaluators for Nigerian primary schools ought to be guided by employment counseling for the recruiting education authorities and the applicants in order to create increased understanding of the critical roles and need to adhered judiciously to the proper selection criteria for recruitment of the school evaluators according to government's educational policy. According to the Department of Advanced Education and Skills (2015), employment counseling should be made available to individuals who would benefit from one-on-one counseling or group counseling sessions to sort out career interests; to those who are unemployed but are looking for work; or need help with decision-making and developing an employment plan. In this regard, Service Canada (2014) stated that employment counselors provide assistance, counsel and information to: worker clients on all aspects of employment search and career planning; and to employer clients regarding human resource and employment issues. Thus, employment counseling for recruiters and applicants for the post of school evaluators in Nigerian primary schools can help provide these services.

According to a document from Government of New Brunswick (2015), employment counselors can assist individuals with education upgrading; training; and work experience. It is possible that such services could be offered by guidance counselors to applicants for the post of school evaluators in Nigerian primary schools and when that is done, can yield favorable results. Yet, it seems that there is a paucity of literature, research endeavor and public interest on employment counseling in the Nigerian context. To these end, the main aim of this study was to assess the recruitment process of school evaluators for primary schools in South-east zone, Nigeria with emphasis on its implication for employment counseling for prospective applicants and recruiting education authorities in the region. To our knowledge, no study within the country has laid emphasis on the recruitment process of school evaluators for primary schools. In addition, given the perceived benefits of employment counseling, it may be beneficial to embark on the investigation of this issue with the aim of repositioning primary school evaluation system within the region.

## METHOD

### Approval

The necessary approval for conducting this study was obtained from appropriate quarters while participants provided written informed consent.

### Participants

The participants were 257 school evaluators and 371 guidance counselors from schools and from ministries of education in the South-east zone of Nigeria, giving a total sample of 628 respondents.

### Design

The study adopted descriptive survey research design, due to its advantage of not only collecting facts but the enablement of researchers in the formulation of principles and solutions to important problems in the study (Kombo & Tromp, 2006). The descriptive survey design also enables researchers to obtain opinions of the representative sample of the target population so as to be able to infer the perceptions of the entire population (Best & Kahn, 1998).

## Measure

*Assessment of Recruitment Process of Evaluators for Primary Schools Questionnaire* (ARPEPSQ): The ARPEPSQ is a 35 item questionnaire developed by the researchers from some of Nigeria's Federal Ministry of Education's books on quality assurance, supervision and instruction (FME, 2010). The ARPEPSQ has two sections A and B. Section A sought for sociodemographic information of respondents such as rank/position, gender, education and age. Section B has 5 clusters of A, B, C, D and E. Cluster A elicited information on the criteria for recruitment of evaluators, cluster B elicits information on the extent to which the criteria for recruitment of the school evaluators in primary schools are adhered to by the education authorities in the zone, cluster C elicits information on the challenges confronting the recruitment process of school evaluators in primary schools in South-east Nigeria, cluster D elicits information on strategies that can be adopted to facilitate the recruitment process of qualified school evaluators for primary schools in South-east Nigeria, and cluster E elicits information on the influence employment counseling could have on the recruitment process of school evaluators for primary schools in South-east Nigeria. The ARPEPSQ has a 4-point Likert type rating of strongly agree (4) to strongly disagree (1). Three experts validated the instruments, one from educational administration, one from guidance and counseling, and one from measurement and evaluation units, all from our institution.  The questionnaire had an overall reliability index of 0.88 alpha. The instrument was also subjected to confirmatory factor analysis and only factorially pure items were selected.

## Data Collection and Analysis

The researchers self-administered the questionnaires alongside three research assistants. Mean and standard deviation was used to answer the research questions. In answering the research questions, mean score of 2.5 and above for an item indicated acceptance of that statement in the questionnaire by respondents, and real limit of numbers were designated to indicate the extent of acceptance as follows: Very High Extent (VHE) =3.50–4.00; High Extent (HE) = 2.50-3.49; Low Extent (LE) = 1.50-2.49; and  Very Low Extent (VLE)= 0.05-1.49. Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) statistics was used in testing the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance.

## RESULTS

**Research Question 1**: What are the criteria for the recruitment of school evaluators in Nigerian primary schools?

Results which answered research question one showed all the respondents agreed to a high extent that the criteria for recruitment of school evaluators were those stated in the questionnaire. The items had mean acceptance of 3.44±.70 and 3.38±.76 for counselors and evaluators, respectively, on the item 1 which states that evaluators need to possess a minimum of bachelor degree in education or its equivalent. They also agreed to the following items: item 2, that intending evaluators must be registered with the Teachers Registration

Council of Nigeria; item 3, that they must have at least 12 years working experience; have achieved grade level 12 or its equivalent (item 4), must be knowledgeable and well-informed about the relevant government policies and regulations for teachers (item 5);  must be able to collect, collate, analyze data and evaluate judgments (item 6); and must have good communication skills, articulate and able to pursue and influence both orally and in writing (item 7). From items 2 to 7, the guidance counselors and school evaluators had mean scores of 3.42±.75 and 3.49±.68, 3.60±.50 and 3.58±.50, 3.54±.68 and 3.48±.77, 3.37±.75 and 3.32±.75, 3.44±.70 and 3.38±.76, 3.57±.58 and 3.54±.59, respectively.

**Hypothesis 1**: There is no significant difference in the mean response of guidance counselors and school evaluators on the criteria for recruiting evaluators.

Results revealed that there is no significant difference between the guidance counselors and school evaluators on the criteria for recruiting evaluators at 0.05 level of significance, $F(1, 626)=.382$, $P=.537$.

**Research Question 2**: To what extent are the criteria for recruitment of the school evaluators in primary schools adhered to by the education authorities in South-east Nigeria.

Results which answered research question two revealed that both counselors and evaluators agreed that the criteria for recruitment of evaluators are adhered to strictly. This can be seen in their mean responses of both guidance counselors and school evaluators such as 3.42±.72 and 3.42±.74, respectively, for item 1 that education authorities employ evaluators with the minimum education qualification, mean responses of 3.42±.73 and 3.48±.71, respectively, for item 2,  that only persons registered with teachers registration council of Nigeria are often recruited as evaluators; mean scores of 3.58±.49 and 3.60±.51, respectively, for items 3 which is that the recruited evaluators often meet the 12 years minimum working experience; mean scores of 3.56±.66 and 3.45±.79, respectively, for item 4 which is that all recruited evaluators are of grade level 12 and above; item 5 with mean scores of 3.36±.77 and 3.33±.72, respectively, indicating that evaluators are often examined on their statistical application abilities, mean scores of 3.42±.72 and 3.42±.74, respectively, for item 6 which is that evaluators are interviewed to ascertain their proficiency in oral and written communication; and item 7 with mean scores of  3.57±.59 and 3.55±.57 respectively, which is that evaluators are recruited on the basis of their knowledge about education policies and government policies and regulations for teachers. Generally, all of them agreed to a high extent that there is adherence to the criteria for recruitment of evaluators.

**Hypothesis 2**: There is no significant difference in the mean response of guidance counselors and school evaluators on adhering to the criteria for recruiting school evaluators.

Results revealed that there is no significant difference in the mean response of school counselors and school evaluators on adherent to the criteria for recruiting evaluators, $F(1, 626)=.343$, $P=.733$

**Research Question** 3: What are the challenges confronting the recruitment process of school evaluators in primary schools in South-east Nigeria?

Results revealed that some of the challenges faced in the recruitment of evaluators are lack of qualified personnel (item 1), bribery and corruption (item 2), lack of good record on the experiences and competences of outstanding teachers (item 3), lack of reliable information about would-be evaluators' skills and competencies (item 4), lack of quality guideline for recruiting evaluators (item 5),  lack of good advertisement media (item 6), and lack of uniform standard inspection recruitment guideline (item 7) with mean responses of 3.40±.73 and 3.44±.71, 3.41±.75 and 3.41±.67, 3.58±.49 and 3.61±.51, 3.53±.69 and 3.49±.77, 3.32±.81 and 3.39±.66, 3.40±.73 and 3.44±.72, and 3.55±.59 and 3.59±.56 respectively for guidance counselors and school evaluators.

**Hypothesis 3**: There is no significant difference in the mean response of guidance counselors and school evaluators on the challenges facing the recruitment of school evaluators.

Results revealed that there is no significant difference in the mean responses of guidance counselors and school evaluators on the challenges faced in the recruitment of school evaluators at 0.05 level of significance, $F(1, 626)=.519, P=.638$.

**Research Question 4**: What strategies can be adopted to facilitate the recruitment process of qualified school evaluators for primary schools in South-east Nigeria?

Results revealed that the respondents agreed  to the following strategies that can be adopted to facilitate the recruitment process of qualified school evaluators for primary schools in South-east Nigeria: provide a uniform standard inspectors recruitment guide with mean scores of 3.47±.66 and 3.40±.73, respectively, (item 1); advertise properly for recruitment of inspectors with mean scores  of  3.47±.71 and 3.53±.67, respectively, (item 2);  mean scores of 3.60±.51 and 3.58±.53, respectively for open and transparent the process of quality assurance (item 3); mean scores of 3.42±.84 and 3.41±.78, respectively, for the recruitment process to be objective (item 4); 3.36±.73 and 3.34±.71, respectively, for avoid bribery and corrupt practices (item 5); mean scores of 3.47±.66 and 3.40±.73 respectively for education experts to be used in the recruitment process (item 6); and mean scores of 3.55±.60 and 3.52±.63, respectively, for only evaluators that meet stated standards to be recruited (item 7). Generally, the level of agreement amongst them on these strategies was high.

**Hypothesis 4**: There is no significant difference in the mean responses of school counselors and school evaluators on strategies that can be adopted to facilitate the recruitment process of qualified school evaluators for primary schools in South-east Nigeria?

Results revealed that there is no significant difference in the mean responses of school counselors and school evaluators on strategies that can be adopted to facilitate the recruitment process of qualified school evaluators for primary schools in South-east Nigeria, $F(1,626)=1.903, P=.168$.

**Research Question 5**: Can employment counseling influence the recruitment process of school evaluators for primary schools in South-east Nigeria?

Results showed that all the respondents agreed to the fact that counselors could actually exert some form of influence in the recruitment process of school evaluators. Their mean responses were 3.40±.73, 3.44±.71; 3.40±.73, 3.43±.71; 3.58±.49, 3.61±.51; 3.53±.69, 3.50±.77; 3.32±.81, 3.40±.66; 3.41±.75, 3.51±.67; 3.55±.59, and 3.59±.56, respectively for school counselors and evaluators, corresponding to these statements: counselors could help vet potential evaluators according to agreed criteria (item 1), ensure that only evaluators with attitude, knowledge and skills that contribute to effective teaching and learning in schools are recruited (item 2), ensure that only evaluators with excellent interpersonal skills are selected (item 3), ensure that only evaluators with love for the career are recruited (item 4), ensure that only those with expert curriculum knowledge are recruited (item 5), ensure that only those that are well-prepared for the job/function are recruited (item 6), and ensure that only those with experience as outstanding teachers are recruited (item 7) respectively.

**Hypothesis 5**: There is no significant difference in the mean response of school counselors and school evaluators on the influence of employment counseling in the recruitment of school evaluators.

Results revealed that there is no significant difference in the responses of the guidance counselors and school evaluators on the influence of employment counseling in the recruitment of school evaluators, $F(1, 626)=.287, P=.592$. Based on the decision rule for testing the hypothesis, the null hypothesis was not rejected.

## DISCUSSION

The main focus of this study was to assess the recruitment process of school evaluators for primary schools in Nigeria with its implication for employment counseling. The findings of the study indicated that guidance counselors and school evaluators agreed that, to a high extent, recruitment of evaluators is based on evaluators' selection criteria that include academic and professional qualifications, and evaluators having a minimum of 12 years teaching experience, among others. Thus, the criteria for recruitment of evaluators are crucial as the quality of service depends on competences of those recruited. This finding is in line with some authorities (Ezenwaji, 2012; FME, 2010; Ogonu, 2001), that the criteria for appointment of evaluators are based on the possession of first degrees in education with some years of teaching experience. The finding also supports Wasanaga (2004) who noted that the modalities for identifying potential qualified school evaluators are based on the track records of the applicant in relation to previous and present performance. Wasanaga (2004) stated further that the applicant should be a degree holder with at least 3 years teaching experience, and evidence of potential in quality assurance in education courses. Similarly, Ochuba (2001) stated that a good evaluator should have the appropriate qualification and experience.

The study's finding revealed that there is no significant difference between the mean ratings of counselors and evaluators on the criteria for recruitment of evaluators in primary schools in South-East Zone of Nigeria. This implies that respondent's position or status was not a strong determinant of their view of recruitment criteria for school evaluators. The respondents agreed unanimously that the criteria for recruitment of evaluators are strictly adhered to. This was shown in their mean responses that showed a high level of agreement. Also, there was no significant mean difference in their responses on adherence to the criteria for recruitment as the hypothesis was rejected. This finding is in agreement with the FME (2010) which stated that the FME intends that in future, the potential evaluators would be vetted by the senior management committee of the inspectorate division according to agreed criteria, and through using available records on pedigree of evaluators. The findings contradict those of Ezenwaji (2015) who found that there is a significant difference between the mean rating of school evaluators and head teachers with regard to the application of criteria guiding the recruitment of school evaluators. The observed differences in the studies may be due to sampling error, statistical analysis or respondents' bias at the time of each study. Whilst Ezenwaji's study compared the opinion of school evaluators and teachers, the present study took another dimension by comparing the opinion of the school evaluators and guidance counselors which might have also influenced the outcome of the study.

The study revealed that there was also a unanimous agreement on the challenges facing the recruitment of evaluators. Some of the challenges include bribery and corruption, lack of qualified personnel, lack of uniformity in the recruitment standard and a host of others. This is particularly true and as corroborated in this work despite the vital role that evaluators play in maintaining standards in our schools.  There was also no significant difference among the respondents' mean responses on these challenges which supports those works (Alaibe, 2013; Hallak & Poisson, 2001; Ogbonnaya, 2004; Nnadozie, 2001; Transparency International, 2015; U4 Anti-Corruption Resource Centre, 2006) in which similar challenges have been noted. Their finding is also in line with one study which indicated that due to acute shortage of evaluators, some teachers without the requisite experience are recruited as evaluators, thus not adhering to the necessary qualification and experience needed for the crucial role of ensuring quality primary education in Nigeria (Ezenwaji, 2012).

Regarding the strategies, it was found that all the respondents agreed strongly to the following strategies that can be adopted to facilitate the recruitment process of qualified school evaluators for primary schools in South-East Nigeria, including to: provide a uniform standard inspectors recruitment guide, advertise properly for recruitment of inspectors, ensure that the process of quality assurance should be open and transparent, be objective in the recruitment process, avoid bribery and corrupt practices, insist that education experts should be used in the recruitment process, and only evaluators that meet stated standards should be recruited. There was a generally high level of agreement amongst them on these strategies. In the hypothesis, there was no significant difference in the mean responses of counselors and school evaluator at 5% level of significance on this issue. This outcome agrees in part with Elliot (1999) who stated that state-funded schools which are judged through inspection by an appointed team, to be failing or likely to fail to provide an acceptable standard of education are made subject to 'special measures'. The findings based on the opinion of the respondents are in tandem with some of OECD countries standards (see OECD, 2011).

Findings from the study also show that all the respondents – guidance counselors and school evaluators – strongly agreed to the fact that counselors could have influence in the recruitment process of school evaluators. They agreed that counselors could help vet potential evaluators according to agreed criteria to ensure; that only evaluators with attitude, knowledge and skills that contribute to effective teaching and learning in schools are recruited, ensure that only evaluators with excellent interpersonal skills are selected; ensure that only evaluators with love for the career are recruited; that only those with expert curriculum knowledge are recruited; that only those that are well prepared for the job/function are recruited; that only those with experience as outstanding teachers are recruited. This was further proven by the results of hypotheses that showed no significant difference in the paired responses. This finding supports the opinion of several authorities (e.g. Department of Advanced Education and Skills, 2015; Government of New Brunswick, 2015; Service Canada, 2014) regarding the potential benefits of employment counseling.

## CONCLUSION

The maintenance of quality in primary schools education has been the focus of every nation including Nigeria. Effective school evaluation is key to achieving this mandate. For school evaluation to be effective, the evaluators being employed must be carefully and judiciously selected. As shown from the findings of this study, it is clear that the criteria for the recruitment of evaluators should be strictly adhered to, problems facing recruitment of evaluators should be tackled, only qualified evaluators should be recruited, and employment counselors can contribute meaningfully in the recruitment process of school evaluators. The implication, therefore, is that school evaluators should be considered as very vital part of our monitory system in schools and their roles should not be underestimated. Primary school evaluators should be selected not only considering academic and professional qualifications and available vacancies but other variables like the grade level and competences in oral and written English as well as statistical knowledge of how to collect and analyze data for quality and whole school evaluation. If the problems confronting the recruitment process are not adequately tackled, it could deter some school evaluators from carrying out their duties effectively in schools; it may also discourage some teachers and school head from putting in their best, thus impeding the overall primary education objectives. Above all, employment counseling should be mounted to facilitate the recruitment process of qualified personnel and this will

invariably help assure quality and standards in Nigerian primary schools.

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