

# An Exploration of the Influence of Principals' Interpersonal Skills on Quality Assurance in Government Technical Colleges in the South West Region of Cameroon

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## ABSTRACT

**Introduction:** Quality assurance maintains educational excellence and improves learning environments and outcomes, promoting employment. To attain this, school principals need to possess appropriate interpersonal skills such as communication, collaboration and empathy. The study examines the role of principals' interpersonal skills in promoting quality assurance in government technical colleges in the South West Region of Cameroon.

**Methods:** Using the sequential exploratory design, quantitative data through questionnaires were obtained from a sample of 392 teachers and qualitative data through interviews from 11 principals. Descriptive and inferential statistics as well as thematic analysis were used for the quantitative and qualitative data respectively. The logistic regression analysis was used to test the hypothesis.

**Findings:** The findings revealed that principals' interpersonal skills significantly influence quality assurance ( $\beta=0.335$ ,  $p=0.012$ ,  $<0.05$ ). Effective communication skills enable principals to establish open lines of communication with teachers, students, and other stakeholders. By actively listening, providing constructive feedback, and resolving conflicts, principals create a positive and supportive school environment which influence quality assurance.

**Conclusion:** Cultivating effective interpersonal skills in secondary school principals leverages quality assurance in education. Organizing training to nurture such skills in school leaders is essential in assuring quality assurance.

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**KEYWORDS:** *Principals Interpersonal skills (communication, collaboration and Empathy) Quality assurance; Technical colleges and employability*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Quality assurance is vital in organisations as it ensures that products and services meet customer expectations. Quality assurance is a crucial determinant of an organisation's long-term success (Yasir & Mamdou 2023). In education, student outcomes are considered the finished products of educational institutions. Quality means several things to different people and organisations. To some, it could mean standard, durability, high taste and fashion, value, credibility, worth, transparency, honesty, and truth. In education, quality means no repetition, passing of examinations and acquisition of

desired skills and competencies. (Tamanjong & Fonkeng 2009). Educational institutions have adapted different quality metrics used to evaluate the quality of their products. Quality metrics in education vary but usually include student achievement rates, graduation and retention rates, skills acquisition, and the ability of graduates to perform in the job market or create job. The measurement of quality assurance in education is factored in terms of the monitoring and evaluations of curriculum, pedagogical approaches, policy design, policy choices, policy implementation, teaching staff, teaching and learning

resources, organisation of examinations, and infrastructures. (Lezotte & Mckee, 2006)

The concept of quality assurance (QA) in the Cameroon educational sector, particularly within technical and vocational education and training (TVET), is becoming increasingly pivotal as the country strives for economic growth and development. Certain measures have been put in place to enhance quality assurance by the government of Cameroon. This includes; the establishment of a regulatory framework (National policy on technical and vocational education TVET enacted in 2015, creation of national commission for the accreditation of vocational and technical training programs, implementation of internal quality assurance systems, curriculum development and standardisation, professional development and training for educators, monitoring and evaluation frameworks, stakeholders engagements, collaboration and the use of technology in quality assurance processes. (National development strategy for structural transformation and inclusive development, NDS30, January 2020). The societal expectation of quality outputs from training institutions makes the students the primary focus of attention in any instructional program which warrants the transition from traditional quality matrices to sustainable practices that can guarantee that the final products of technical education contribute to achieving the desired economic growth and development. (Ngugap, 2018).

The principals' role in technical college is multifaceted requiring the integration of various interpersonal skills of communication, collaboration and empathy to effectively address quality assurance challenges. The principals and teachers are expected to make teaching learners-centered as they plan and create an enabling environment for the students to interact with learning materials to become self-confident, self-reliant and overall excellent performance thus, contributing to the socio-economic development of the society (Ewusi, L & Lyonga, A., 2023)

According to Tahir, M. et al (2023)., the interpersonal skills of school principals play a crucial role on quality assurance in schools. Principals' interpersonal skills are essential in creating a positive and supportive learning environment for students and staff resulting to quality assurance. With the increasing focus on quality education and the importance of sustainable development, it's paramount to understand the role of principals in fostering a culture of continuous improvement in education (Yasir & Mamdou, 2023). While various factors contribute to quality assurance, this paper focuses on the influence

of principals' interpersonal skills, emphasizing on communication, collaboration, and empathy. According to Stensaker et al (2018), interpersonal skills refer to skills that principals adopt which give rooms for good human interaction in the school. Also, it refers to the abilities and qualities that educational leaders possess in establishing effective relationships, communicating effectively, collaborating with stakeholders, and fostering a positive work environment within educational settings. Etomes & Molua (2018), further explain interpersonal competences as seen in building trust and collaboration with the school members to achieve the school goals. This competence encompasses a range of abilities, including communication, collaboration, empathy, and conflict resolution which are essential for effective leadership. No institution can meet the needs of its people without proper communication. Focusing on Principals interpersonal skills and quality assurance, information must flow from school principal to the staffs/students and vice versa (Asher & Hindi, 2014). Understanding how principals' interpersonal skills impact quality assurance can provide valuable insights for educational policymakers, administrators and practitioners seeking to enhance the quality of technical education.

### **Background to the study / Literature review**

Technical education in Cameroon is not a new field or venture; technical and vocational education had long existed in Cameroon before the coming of the missionaries and Europeans as seen in Africa's indigenous system of education. More so, this form of education still exists in present day Cameroon. In recent years, an increasing need for a highly skilled and differentiated labour force that would be able to promote and capitalised upon scientific and technological advancement for the economic benefit of the nation, has resulted to an increased concern for the provision of technical secondary education, basic development and the expansion of secondary technical schools in Cameroon (Fonkeng, 2006). As history has it, technical education in Cameroon can be traced from indigenous or traditional African education and this type of education was education that was provided by African societies to their younger generations before the coming of missionaries or colonial masters from Europe. This form of education specifically focused on and encouraged teaching indigenous leadership knowledge, beliefs, practices, customs, models, methods and content within formal and non-formal educational systems (Ebot, 2016).

According to Ebot (2020), indigenous education had the following characteristics: a lifelong process of

learning which was continuous throughout one's lifetime from childhood to old age. Individuals acquired skills, knowledge and values, that were not separated from the society. It was community oriented, which prepared learners to fit into their community and solve the problems of the community. Instructional activities were geared towards the social life of the community and emphasis was placed on practical learning, what young adults learned by watching, participating and executing what was learned. Skills like carving, masonry, clay-working, cloth-making, canoe-making, cooking, and home management were insisted upon among the children of the community because they were the basic skills, knowledge and attitude that enabled individuals to live and function effectively in the community. It was functional, relevant for immediate and long-term usage in the local community. Learning by doing was paramount since the best way to learn how to sew was sewing, etc. It was not dependent on literacy, no formal exams at the end of a specific level of training but learners were considered graduates when they could practise what they had learned throughout the period of training. It was holistic in nature and a way to protect, preserve, develop cultural values and professional skills to enable people gain employment and participate in the nation's development. During the indigenous period, parents were predominantly responsible for teaching their children, Older siblings and secret societies in which the children were initiated at certain age also taught them.

In pre-colonial Cameroon according to Ihim (2003), societies began with the development of skills within specialised domain like craftsmanship, blacksmithing, carpentry, building, trade by batter (business), with rudimentary tools to solve the immediate problems of the society for economic growth. Children were trained to develop latent physical skills, character, intellectual skills, to acquire vocational training and to promote cultural heritage in order to assume adult responsibility in the family, tribe or clan. Knowledge was acquired through group activities such as building and construction. As children participated in these activities, they acquire knowledge and skills in building and construction. According to MacOjong (2008), technical education was very important in the culture and existence of the people as evident in Agriculture, Professions like priests and doctors, trade and craft (weaving baskets, thatches for roofs), smelting (iron, silver), hunting, carving wood, painting and decorations, carpentry, building, pottery work, glass work, boat making, mat making, dyeing, iron-ore working, dress making, cooking, threshing and many more. Vocational education was taught on apprenticeship basis or by family and upon

graduation from apprenticeship centres there were certified by their masters, and they left to establish on their own, to earn a livelihood.

European missionary societies ushered Western education in Cameroon, with the aim of civilising a primitive people. Their activities focused on school, church, and hospital to develop Cameroonians physically, mentally and spiritually. The curriculum for Vocational Education included: craft, gardening, printing, brick making and carpentry. Vocational Education was to train pupils that would assist in building church houses, schools and to provide food items including vegetables. The foundation of vocational education was laid in Cameroon by the London Baptist missionary society, the very first effort of the educational enterprise. They opened the first school in Cameroon, Saker exposed indigenous Cameroonians to new technologies such as Brick – making and printing. The Basel mission also created Technical Vocational Education (TVE) schools and opened vocational centres. Saker and other missionaries were teachers and later, a teacher training centre was created in Nyasoso and by 1914, 53 teachers had been trained. Textbooks and savage materials were used as teaching learning materials. The German Catholic Pallotine fathers also did much in TVE in the schools in Buea where they taught agriculture, blacksmithing, shoemaking, tailoring and carpentry. It was in these areas and more that constituted what is known today as Technical and Vocational Education (TVE).

According to Endeley and Zama (2021), in the colonial era, African schools' curricula directly served the needs of the colonial master. The subjects taught were limited and directly related to the interest of the colonial masters. Colonial schools sought to extend foreign domination and exploitation of the colony thus Cameroon was not an exception. The German took over Cameroon in 1884 to 1914. During this period great emphasis was placed on vocational and technical education, the prescribed syllabus for schools in German Cameroon from April 25, 1910, included domestic economy (skills). The primary school curriculum involved agriculture and manual craft, post primary courses for vocation and professional schools was 2-3years. Specialized centres were also setup and some equipment provided in which graduate could study carpentry, masonry and shoe making. These were the basis of the creation of the Ombe Trade Center in 1941 which was seen as a milestone in the advancement of technical and vocational training in the territory. There was no proper system for inspecting schools and nothing was efficiently done to ensure that pupils were provided



with favourable circumstances, proper equipment, and other learning facilities. There were eleven trade (vocational) schools during this period (two of which were government owned). Practical work was emphasized in all schools while in-service training facilities were provided in various government departments. In some of the vocational and technical schools a certain amount of theoretical work was offered while in others, no academic work was undertaken by some of the students who ended up only as illiterate artisans - as was the case with the agricultural school in Dschang and the carpentry and brick making school in Kribi (Fonkeng, 2006). The German administrators and missionaries did not place much importance to the so-called comprehensive trade schools, where theory and practical work would have been combined. That notwithstanding, the emphasis placed on vocational and technical schools was worthy of praise despite the short comings (Fonkeng, 2006).

Technical Education in British Anglophone Cameroon (1914-1961), was neglected during the mandate period and Cameroonians were forced to receive such training from Nigeria. During the Trusteeship period the administration developed vocational and technical education. In 1950, a technical college was opened in Ombe (Ombe Trade Center) by the Colonial Government for apprentice type training. The centre was a free boarding training institution and students received a monthly allowance of ten shilling. Admissions were rigorously selective and contingent on passing a medical examination. Staffed by British contract personnel, the centre offered training in Carpentry, bricklaying, welding and metal works, electricity, cabinet making, motor mechanics, woodwork, painting, decoration, and machine fitting. Emphasis was on apprenticeship and not studentship. The training varied from two to five years; at the end, apprentices sat for the London City and Guilds Examination. According to Fangyong (2014), during independence, Southern Cameroon had only one technical college which was Government technical school Ombe that opened in 1950. The centre was designed to produce skilled craftsmen. Technical colleges were few and mostly run by private agencies

Technical Education in French Cameroon (1916-1960). According to Fonkeng (2006), Technical and vocational education was more developed in French Cameroon. Vocational and technical schools began with the reopening of German technical and vocational schools at Foumban in 1918; pupils were offered training in woodwork, iron work, road construction and public works. Technical education

was offered in public works vocational schools as well as regional schools in Ebolowa, Dschang, Ngoundere, and Douala. Specialised trainings were offered in Carpentry (wood work), weaving, ivory trade, basket making, and motor mechanics both in practice and theory. Public work technicians, welders, mechanics, and electricians were equally trained. A teacher training college was opened at Nfoullassi to meet the demand for local qualified staff. In-service training was provided in public workshops to immediately satisfy the needs of qualified personnel. Also, technical schools were opened in Yaoundé for pottery, bookbinding, cookery etc; also, a 3year nursing school was opened in Ajos. There were equally home economics centres for women and upon graduation they were employed. Technical education for boys was offered in 3 types of schools namely: pre-apprenticeship training centres and rural art, which provided multiple training to equip graduates from primary schools with skills to establish as craftsmen in rural areas, while best students were sent to proper training centres; apprenticeship Training Centres. They trained qualified workers recruited from the graduates of pre-apprenticeship centres. The centre offered a 3year cycle; the training comprised of wood work, motor mechanics, electricity, etc and graduates obtained a professional aptitude diploma (Certificat d'Aptitude Professionnelle CAP) and lastly the professional school in Douala which trained semi staff for industries and other professional services of the country, certificate obtained (Baccalaureat Technique).

According to Fonkeng (2006), since the mid-1980s, Cameroon has been undertaking comprehensive school reform programmes in technical and vocational education due to the important role this type of training played in the economic and social life of the people. The sixth 5th year development Plan titled the "The New Deal Plan" emphasises more attention be paid to technical education considering its impact on the socio-economic efforts of the nation. Preference was given to institutionalised technical and vocational education to ensure mastery of technological advances. The objectives were focused on the construction of technical high schools, renovation of existing technical colleges and high schools, qualified teachers, equipped classrooms and many more but the expectations were not met because it was too ambitious. This type of education was not very popular in Anglophone Cameroon; many people considered it as education for the academically weak. In recent years government has made enormous strides creating technical colleges in almost every Division of the Anglophone Regions with the

financial assistance of the Canadian government in construction and equipment.

Despite all what has been done so far, including the efforts of the 1995 forum of Education to ensure quality assurance and relevant link between training, performance and employment, developing partnership between the school system and the socio- professional world, plans of many school leavers becoming self-employed and to eradicate the mad search for white collar jobs, unemployment is still a major challenge amongst youths.

Conceptually, this study looked at how different principals' interpersonal skills; communication, collaboration and empathy skills influences quality assurance in technical colleges in the South West Region of Cameroon. The key concepts for the study included quality assurance (skills acquisition, employability, relevance of skills, infrastructures, teaching and learning processes, resources, learning environments, student performance, growth, and development), and principals' interpersonal skills in government technical colleges.

According to UNESCO (1984), Technical Education is the study of technologies, related sciences and the acquisition of practical skills relating to different occupations in economic and social life which has as main aim to groom students, who are skilled and technically fit for industries; develop their knowledge, skills, attitudes and values by providing special practical knowledge of technologies on a continuous basis, such that they can live and work meaningfully in the knowledge society and improve their quality of life. One basic factor that could assist in achieving meaningful technical education and the acquisition of quality assurance by learners is principals with appropriate interpersonal skills. According to UNESCO/ILO (2002), recommendations for technical and vocational education, to ensure quality assurance, the national authorities that are in charge should establish criteria and standards which are subject to periodic review and evaluation, applying to all aspects of technical vocational education, including amongst others, staff qualifications; the quality of curricula and teaching materials, as well as physical facilities, buildings, libraries, workshop layouts, quality and type of equipment.

In every institution, quality assurance is of utmost importance. Quality Assurance can be described as ways of managing the educational sector and the services provided to ensure that they are kept to a high standard that will positively affect its products continuously. Crosby (1979), highlighted the fact that realising zero defects in the work process is a difficult

one but maintained that it can be achieved using quality assurance system that has laid down procedures on how work should be done to achieve a specified standard. It involves injecting quality into the process of training from the very beginning to ensure that the products meet a specified standard. For vocational education to attain quality, it requires working with already established procedures and standards as established by regulatory agencies in different countries. For example, in Nigeria, they have the National Universities Commission (NUC), the National Board for Technical Education (NBTE), the National Commission for Colleges of Education (NCCE), and so many others. These are agents for ensuring quality in technical education. In Cameroon, we have the Ministry of Employment and vocational training (MINEFOP). The duty of ensuring quality assurance rests on the teachers and Principals who are directly in charge of implementing the educational program. Quality Assurance in technical colleges must be viewed holistically from the requirements of entry into the programme, duration, quality, and number of teachers and lecturers, facilities, instructional materials available, school environment and accommodation, examinations, results, certificates, grading systems, exam question items, supervision, moderation, etc. It must be a total package to ensure a meaningful product. The concept of quality assurance hinges on educational monitoring, which is a complete concept aimed at systematically linking planning, analysis, and control. Quality assurance must, therefore, involve internal and external influences to ensure the efficiency and benefit desired.

According to Vroeijenstijn (1995), the term "quality assurance" can be referred to as "a systematic, structured, and continuous attention to quality in terms of quality maintenance and improvement." Quality assurance is the responsibility of everyone in secondary education, from the top management, which sets the policies and priorities, to the junior staff members. Brennan & Shah (2000), contend that the meaning of quality assurance as equivalent to academic standards is consistent with the emerging focus in secondary education policies on student learning outcomes—the specific levels of knowledge, skills, and abilities that students achieve because of their engagement in a particular education programme. Moreover, quality assurance can be categorised into three main elements: quality, standards, and relevance. Quality is defined, according to the British Standards Institution BSI (2011), as a totality of features and characteristics of a product or service that bear on its ability to satisfy stated or implied needs. The South African

Qualifications Authority Act (Act No. 58 of 1995) defines unit standards as the registered statements of desired education and training outcomes and their associated assessment criteria, describing the quality of the expected performance, together with administrative and other information specified in the regulations. Relevance, on the other hand, indicates that what is taught must be relevant to the requirements and needs of all users, qualifications, and standards.

To achieve quality assurance in education, good interpersonal skills by the leadership of the institution is required. Management is an effort to plan or conceptualize, organize, lead, and control organisational members as well as use all other organisational resources to achieve an organisational goal (Siswanto, 2005). The person who holds a management role in this educational institution is the principal. As a manager, the principal has a lot of responsibility in managing his school. The success of the principal in managing his school will not be separated from his ability as a leader to carry out his roles and functions. Judging from his or her role in managing the workforce and teachers in schools, interpersonal skills will certainly be inherent to a school principal. Principals' interpersonal skills have been recognized as important determinant of effective leadership and organizational success across various sectors Tahir, M. et al (2023). In the context of technical colleges, these skills are equally critical for promoting quality assurance. A review of literature by Khattak, Yaqoob & Basri (2003) reveals several key dimensions through which principals interpersonal skills influence quality assurance efforts sustained over time as elaborated below.

**Communication:** Effective communication is a fundamental interpersonal skill that enables principals to convey their vision, expectation, and goals to various stakeholders, including staff, students and external partners. Research by Ofojebe & Akundo (2021), suggest that open and transparent communication channels foster trust and collaboration leading to improved quality assurance practices. Further, effective communication facilitates the dissemination of quality- related information, feedback mechanisms and continuous improvement processes.

According to Gumus, E.(2019), communication is a key interpersonal skill for effective leadership. The key element of principals' communication by the above author is listening. In addition, leaders' communication elucidates the school's mission and goals geared towards quality assurance. Hallam (2013), Emphasize that, school's success and

improvement depend on the principals' communication skills. Yulianti (2019), further elaborated that if the principal changes school policies without effectively communicating to stakeholders, quality assurance will be adversely affected.

**Collaboration:** Principals who possess strong interpersonal skills are more likely to facilitate collaboration and teamwork among staffs. when educator work together, they can share best practices, align curriculum objectives, and collectively develop quality assurance strategies. Research by Asher & Hindu (2014), demonstrates that principals who fosters a positive and collaborative work environment contributes significantly to sustainable quality assurance in technical colleges.

**Empathy:** According to Jefferies et al., (2021), empathy is an interpersonal skill, which play a role in educational interventions and development. Qian (2021), explained that empathy is care for educational stakeholders that is conveyed by giving them importance. When principals celebrate the success of students and teachers by appreciating them, then empathy can be practiced in school. Swart et al., (2021), elaborated that empathy in the school environment is intended to encourage and care for the students and teachers, which will bring about a great change in quality assurance. The principals should provide support, feedback, and resources to students and teachers to result to quality assurance. This support includes making resources available in the school classrooms and meeting with teachers to find out their needs and requirements, as well as to help them in hard times. Haslip et al.,(2019) mentioned that the principals support the teachers in difficult times by having an added value of empathy. A recent dimension of creativity in the domain of interpersonal skills. Venus et al., (2019), explained that vision is knowing where the organization is and where it wants to go in the future. Ewusi, L & Lyonga, A, (2023), further expatiates the needs of Principal incorporating personal goals and organizational goals in planning towards quality assurance.

Principals' interpersonal skills have been recognized as important determinant of effective leadership and organizational success across various sectors Tahir, M. et al (2023), In the context of technical colleges, these skills are equally critical for promoting quality assurance.

Theoretically, this study was guided by the following theories: administrative management theory by Henri Fayol (1841–1925), human relation theory (Hawthorne experiment by Elton Mayo, 1924), system theory by (Bertalanffy, 1920), rational



decision-making theory by Herbert A. Simon (1916–2001), and contingency theory by (Fred, 1967).

Firstly, the administrative theory of management focused on principles that could be used by managers to coordinate the internal activities of organisations. The most prominent of the administrative theorists was Henri Fayol. Fayol observed a work stoppage and judged it to be a management failure. He believed that organisational managerial practises were important for driving predictability and efficiency in organisations. Henri Fayol was a French industrialist and a prominent European management theorist. He is known as the "Father of Management," having developed a general theory of management as well as laid down the fourteen principles of management. Any managerial concepts that form the foundation of modern management thought were first articulated by Fayol. Fayol believed that with scientific forecasting and proper management methods, satisfactory and predictable results were sure to follow.

The administrative management theory is significant to this study in that its principles enable the manager, who is the principal, to approach school problems by making use of the five management functions of planning, organising, commanding, coordinating, and controlling. The principal needs to use his interpersonal skills in applying the Fayol principles of management to be able to choose the appropriate principle in the right place for effective management of the individual in school towards quality assurance. For instance, there cannot be any effective use of the principal's interpersonal skills for quality assurance in technical schools if there is no division of work, delegation of authority and responsibility, discipline, unity of command, unity of direction, subordination to the general interest, remuneration, centralization, scalar chain, order, equity, stability of tenure of personnel, initiative, and esprit de corps (harmony).

Secondly, the Human Relation Theory (Hawthorne Experiment) by George Elton Mayo (1924) holds that, the productivity of the employees is not the function of only physical conditions of work and money wages paid to them but depends heavily upon their satisfaction with their work situation. The human relation theory (Hawthorne experiment) is significant to this study in that, for principals in technical colleges to be able to achieve quality assurance, they need to be cognizant of the relevance of good interpersonal relationships amongst staff and leaders, allowing room for participation and good communication, thus increasing overall productivity and quality.

Thirdly, System Theory by Bertalanffy (1920), was considered. It referred to a series of interrelated and

interdependent parts wherein any part of the system affects the whole system. That is, one part of the system must interact with and depend on the other parts around it to function effectively. The system theory is relevant to the education system because the school is a system and the concept of interaction and interdependence of parts with the education system, like all other social systems have identical properties with the other systems (Kelechukwu, 2011). This theory is related to this study in that, the principal as the chief executive of the school deals with people always and is bound to get along with them. For the principal to perform his managerial roles very well, he is expected to ensure that he exhibits the qualities required of him to achieve the school objectives and goals as stipulated in the 1998 Law of Education in Cameroon. This brings to the limelight the idea of the principal's managerial skills in handling the complex school environment with varied components that are interrelated and interdependent for quality assurance.

Also, the Rational Decision-Making Theory by Herbert A. Simon (1916–2001) was used. This theory is based on a cognitive judgement of the pros and cons of various options. It is organised around selecting the most logical and sensible alternative in decision-making that will have the desired effect on the issues being addressed. For each of the administrative functions, decisions are made on specific activities to be performed in the school environment. The school administration takes decisions on the curricular and extracurricular programmes and the human and material resources needed for achieving educational objectives. He also takes decisions on finance, information, time for carrying out a specific program and the environment for executing a particular decision. Methods of teaching, modes of communication and procedures for the acquisition and utilisation of resources are also decided upon. The output of the decisional process is a rule or set of policies to guide subsequent behaviour. The importance attached to decision-making lies in its impact on future behaviour in the organisation.

The implication of this theory for principals' interpersonal skills and quality assurance is that the principal must be very rational in the use of different interpersonal skills and follow a step-by-step process in the selection of the best alternative as they go about performing their functions in school towards quality assurance. In education, decision-making is a vital element of principals' interpersonal skills since what the principal does depends on his choice among alternative paths to his goals as well as how he decides to move along that path by allocating people,

time and resources. Ukeje et al. (1992) further emphasised that, a decision is the result of deliberation, calculation and a thoughtful response to internal and external conditions of the environment. The administrator or school head makes wide consultations and deliberations with the ministry of education, staff and student body on issues relating to curriculum, teaching and learning, school discipline, inter-community relations, etc. He then makes a choice among all the suggestions given to him and is ready to defend their application. Whatever his choice, it must reflect the school's objectives, policies and plans towards quality assurance.

Finally, Hersey and Blanchard (1982), argue that management and leadership styles will depend on the situation thus giving rise to the contingency theory that was used in this study. Fred (1967) is one of the leading researchers in industrial Fiedler Contingency Model (Witzel, 2005). Bloden et al. (2003) concluded that no one leadership style is right for every principal under all circumstances. The contingency theory is therefore significant to this study in that, for a government technical College principal to effectively use his or her interpersonal skills to achieve quality assurance, his/her style of leading should incorporate factors such as the situation, the people, the task, the organization and other environmental variables. Relating the contingency theory to technical school principals as administrators, it can be said that there is "no one best way or approach in collaborating, communication and evaluation of school activities by principals and above all, management of schools." Different situations call for different approaches to handle, manage and solve the arising issues in line with the different interpersonal skills.

Contextually, Cameroon has a diverse educational landscape, encompassing both technical and general education. The topography of this educational system in Cameroon is complex, competitive, and dynamic (Ebot 2021). Therefore, to stand out from these complexities and changes, continuous quality assurance is required as a strategic direction for the achievement of educational objectives (Nchange 2022). According to the National Education Forum (1995), the goal of Technical and Vocational education was to establish a link between education and employment in terms of the socio-economic realities of the country and the teaching of subjects that would support a free-market economy and self-employment. TVET equips people with vocational and technical skills and a broad range of knowledge, skills, and attitudes that are now recognised as indispensable for meaningful participation in work and life. It entails the enrichment of capabilities that

influence the effective psychomotor or cognitive domains of individuals in readiness for entry into the world of work to satisfy their intrinsic and extrinsic needs, values, work and aspirations such that local and national needs would be met (Okwelle, 2017).

To achieve the goal of technical education in Cameroon, certain quality assurance mechanisms are put in place. The government has initiated various reforms to enhance the quality of education such as the National Policy on Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET), enacted in 2015 which lays out strategic objectives aimed at improving the quality of programs offered by technical colleges. This policy emphasizes the need for Quality Assurance mechanisms that can adapt to changing socio-economic conditions and labor market needs (Republic of Cameroon, 2015). Furthermore, the government has adopted the "Vision 2035" plan, which aims to position Cameroon as an emerging economic powerhouse. This vision underscores the importance of quality education, particularly technical and vocational training, in creating a skilled workforce that meets industrial demands thus solving the problem of unemployment. Moreover in 2016, there was the change in curriculum from the New pedagogic approach which was teacher centered introduced in 2001 to the Competence based approached which is learners centered and focused on students developing relevant skills to meet with the demand of the job market thus ensuring quality assurance.

The implementation of quality assurance mechanisms had begun, but progress have been uneven. Several governmental and autonomous bodies are involved in enforcing Quality Assurance standards within the educational system. These include the Ministry of Secondary Education and various accreditation bodies that assess and regulate educational institutions. However, many technical colleges still face challenges in adhering to these standards consistently. A study by Ebot (2021) reveals that while some technical colleges have made strides in establishing internal Quality Assurance processes, there is still a significant disparity in how these practices are implemented across institutions. The principal who stands at the helm of the school needs to effectively use his interpersonal skills of communication, collaboration and empathy to ensure the effective and efficient transmission of knowledge, and skills involving all relevant resources and tools as well as adapt to changing educational demands in maintaining quality assurance. However, Many Cameroonian Technical colleges face challenges of insufficient infrastructure and Resource Allocation,



notable shortage of qualified trainers, poor trainers' attitude in handling the few available workshop equipment, Limited access to modern equipment, technology, and learning materials which severely influences the quality assurance of technical education (Nchange, 2020)

According to degree No 2019/100 of 04 March 2019 there was the restructuring of the technical examinations. Formerly, Secondary Technical and Vocational education in the English sub-system of Cameroon was organised as follows; the students took both technical and grammar school courses for 4 years and sat in for the CAP examination (Professional Aptitude Certificate) or other examinations such as the City and Guilds, 3years in high school with specialization at the end of the 3 years they sat in for the technical "Probatoire" and later, the Technical Baccalaureate or the City and Guilds (Fonkeng, 2006). Due to the recent innovations in the 2019 ministerial degree by professor Nalova Lyonga restructuring technical education in secondary schools, technical schools are now divided into two levels, from class 1-5, in class 5 the students go in for the Intermediate Technical Certificate (ITC) which is the end of 1st cycle. At this level, the more intelligent can continue to the 2nd cycle class 6-7, High school for the Advance Technical Certificate (ATC).

In achieving quality assurance with the influence of principals' interpersonal skills, there is need for a conducive learning environment with relevant human and material resources. But it is worth to note that majority of the technical colleges in the South West Region has insufficient human and material resources for effective skills and knowledge transmission. It is common to find students within the classroom sitting four to five on a desk, 20 to 30 students on a single computer and tailoring machine or gas cooker during practical lessons. Moreover, information from the South West Regional delegation of secondary education (2022) reveals that twenty-eight schools out of 257 are with computer laboratories. This information portrays that information and communication technology equipments are available in very few schools. Twenty-nine colleges have functional libraries in the region. There is shortage of school infrastructures, financial, material and human resources which negatively affects skills acquisition, students performance thus hampers quality assurance to be sustained over time.

Government technical colleges in the south West region of Cameroon normally receives running credits for the management of infrastructures, equipments, pedagogy and staff motivation. Moreover according

to ministerial circular No 23/11/25 of 14th may 1990 PTA was giving the opportunity to support the promotion of education by constructing classroom, recruit teachers, infrastructural development where insufficient. However, it is common to see these running credits, and equipment, developmental projects not used for the interest of the school. Teachers are scarcely sent for in service trainings, didactic materials and good chalkboard, Computers are hardly available or in bad states. These factors may account for school principal inappropriate use of their interpersonal skills in managing resources towards continuous improvement of quality assurance.

Principals of technical Colleges in the South West Region are to use their interpersonal skills to ensure proper manangement, continuous monitoring and control of the usage of financial, material, and human resources provided from payment of fees, donations, PTA and governments aimed at improving quality assurance. Conversely many technical Colleges in Cameroon precisely the South west region is Characterised with outdated tools.example GTHS Ombe Mutengene still has German equipment in workshop which are obsolete. Dilapidated classroom, limited modern equipment, limited classrooms, poor handling attitudes of teacher with the few available equipment, thus limiting effective training and relevant skills acquisition thus negatively affecting quality assurance.

Government technical colleges in Cameroon in general and the South West Region in particular needs school principals with good interpersonal skills to support the success of education by ensuring teachers appropriately teach and relevant resources are available to make the school a comfortable environment for appropriate learning and relevant skills be acquire to ensure quality assurance. (Urba and Brevis 2002). Principals in Cameroon do not undergo any formal training; appointment into administrative positions is based on teaching experience and output, after obtaining formal training in the higher teachers training college. This indicates inadequate mastery of managerial skills of technical principals which creates a gap in effective management of secondary schools as a whole for quality assurance. The efficient and effective management of quality in any organization lies on the ability of the top management. In the case of secondary technical education in Cameroon and other parts of the world, the principal is the head of the school and the manner in which the principal performs his/her roles and functions are paramount in achieving quality assurance

According to Tamajong & Fonkeng (2009), the job of the educational administrator or school head revolves around decision-making and problem solving in all the educational activities. The success or failure of the entire school system or an individual institution thus depends to a greater extent on the quality of the administrators' leadership, resourcefulness, creativity and ability to move on harmoniously with colleagues and those under him. In other words, the school head must master his or her managerial skills, particularly planning, communication, decision-making, problem solving, which are concerned with identifying and providing teachers with resources required to attain quality assurance, stimulating quality performance, promoting a healthy community-school relationship, sensing modifications necessary to cope with external forces that may distract the institution from achieving quality assurance and overall academic excellence that education and institutions strive to attain (Okorie, 2001).

### Statement of the problem

Quality assurance in technical Colleges is crucial in ensuring that institutions meet or exceeds established standards, ensure consistent delivery of high quality education, enhance employability of graduates by aligning educational outcomes with industry needs, promote continuous improvements and innovation within the institution. However, challenges faced in technical education, including a lack of workshops, poorly equipped workshops, trainers' attitudes towards workshop equipment, inadequate teaching methods, outdated curricula, large class sizes, political instability and lack of alignment with industry needs, hamper the effective delivery of quality assurance sustained over time.

To enhance quality assurance, the government has implemented innovations in Anglophone technical education to improve the quality and relevance of technical education in the country by modify its accreditation policies. According to Degree No 2019/100 of 04 March 2019 with an introduction of a two-level system; the Intermediate Technical Certificate (ITC) at the end of the first cycle and the Advanced Technical Certificate (ATC). Moreover, there is an emphasis on the competence-based approach curriculum, digitalisation, as well as seminar organisation to improve teachers' and principals' skills towards Quality assurance.

Despite the efforts of governments, Students continue to perform poorly in public examinations, high drop out rates, high unemployment rates (Fonkeng 2000). Quality assurance needs to be effectively managed to contribute to the success of technical institutions. The principal plays a pivotal role in sustaining school quality. However, limited research has been conducted exploring principals' interpersonal skills on quality assurance in technical colleges in the South West Region of Cameroon. It is on this gap that the current study aimed to examines the influence of principals' interpersonal skills on quality assurance. Specifically, the study sought to

1. Examine Principals' interpersonal skills such as communication, collaboration, and empathy in influencing quality assurance.
2. Assess teachers'/ principals' perception of principals' interpersonal skills in influencing quality assurance.

Based on the above objectives, the study sought to answer the following questions;

1. Do principals' interpersonal skills of communication, collaboration and Empathy influence quality assurance?
2. How do teachers/principals perceive Principal interpersonal skills in influencing quality assurance?

To verify findings, a general hypothesis was tested using regression analysis.

### Materials and Methods

Methodologically, the mixed method research specifically the exploratory sequential design was used in the study. The purposive, cluster and the random sampling techniques were used to select the sample of the study. The instruments for Data collection were questionnaire and interview guide. Test items on the Questionnaire were designed using the four point-Likert scale. Data was analysed using the statistical package for social sciences (SPSS) version 25.

To better present and discuss findings of the study, the demographic data to explain the sample was presented, preceded by quantitative (descriptive statistics), then qualitative (thematic analysis), discussion and inferential statistics.

**Table 1: Demographic Characteristics of Principals'**

Demographic information		Frequency	Percentages
Age	25 – 35	164	43.9%
	36 – 45	105	28.1%
	46 – 55	75	20.1%
	> 55	30	8.0%
	Total	374	100%
Gender	Male	179	47.9%
	Female	195	52.1%
	Total	374	100%
Longevity in Services	0 – 5 years	105	28.1%
	6 – 10 years	135	36%
	11 – 15 years	75	20.1%
	> 15 years	59	15.8%
	Total	374	100%
Highest qualification	DIPES I/ Equivalent	135	36.1%
	DIPET II/Equivalent	119	31.8%
	Others	120	32.1%
	Total	374	100%

Among the 374 teachers, majority of participants (43.9%) were between the ages of 25 and 35, followed by 28.1% in the 36-45 age range. Participants aged 46-55 accounted for 20.1% of the total, while those above 55 made up 8.0% of the total. The study had slightly more female participants (52.1%) than male participants (47.9%). The largest group of participants (36.0%) had been in their respective services for 6-10 years. Participants with 0-5 years of service accounted for 28.1% of the total, while those with 11-15 years and over 15 years of service represented 20.1% and 15.8% of the total, respectively. With regards to qualification, the largest group (36.1%) held a qualification equivalent to DIPES I, followed by 31.8% with a qualification equivalent to DIPET II. The remaining 32.1% of participants had other qualifications.

**Table 2: Distribution of Principals by Demographics Characteristics**

Demographic information		Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	8	72.7%
	Female	3	27.7%
	Total	11	100%
Highest qualification	DIPES I	2	18.1%
	DIPET II	9	81.8%
	Total	11	100%
Longevity in service	Less than 5 years	4	36.4%
	5 years and above	7	63.6%
	Total	11	100%

Among the 11 principals interviewed, 8 were male and 3 were female. The highest qualification for 9 of the principals was DIPET II while two of the principal's highest qualification was DIPES I. Based on longevity in the post, 4 of the principals have been the head of their school for less than 5 years while 7 of the principals have been principals for more than 5 years.

## Findings and Discussion

### 1. Principals' Interpersonal Skills of Communication, Collaboration, and Empathy on Quality Assurance.

Table 3 below shows how principal interpersonal skills of communication, collaboration and Empathy influence quality assurance. six items were constructed which included feeling for collaborators, reward hard work, information sharing, encourage working in groups, relies on collaborators and listen to others' opinions by the principal towards quality assurance. The test statistics obtained from the responses were presented as follows.



**Table 3: Assessing Principals' Interpersonal Skills of Communication, Collaboration and Empathy on Quality Assurance in Technical Colleges**

Items	Strongly Agree (SA)	Agree (A)	Disagree (D)	Strongly Disagree (SD)	Collapsed	
					SA/A	D/SD
Principal feels for his collaborators.	74 (19.8%)	225 (60.2%)	45 (12.0%)	30 (8.0%)	299 (79.9%)	75 (20.1%)
Principal reward hard work	179 (47.9%)	120 (32.1%)	45 (12.0%)	30 (8.0%)	299 (79.9%)	75 (20.1%)
Principal effectively shares information with teachers	75 (20.1%)	224 (59.9%)	30 (8.0%)	45 (12.0%)	299 (79.9%)	75 (20.1%)
Principal encourage working in groups.	60 (16.0%)	195 (52.1%)	75 (20.1%)	44 (11.8%)	255 (68.2%)	119 (31.8%)
Principal relies on collaborators.	90 (24.1%)	104 (27.8%)	90 (24.1%)	90 (24.1%)	194 (51.9%)	180 (48.1%)
Principal attentively listens to teachers' opinion	120 (32.1%)	105 (28.1%)	74 (19.8%)	75 (20.1%)	225 (60.2%)	149 (39.8%)
Multiple Response options	598 (26.6%)	973 (43.3%)	359 (16.0%)	314 (12.0%)	1571 (70.0%)	673 (30.0%)

In aggregate most (70.0%) of teachers agreed that principals' interpersonal skills of communication, collaboration and empathy influenced quality assurance. This finding corroborates with Leithwood & Jantzi (2000), who emphasised that effective communication, which includes listening skills, is considered a very critical variable for quality assurance. When examining the individual items as to principals' interpersonal skills such as communication, collaboration and empathy on quality assurance, the items about principal feels for his collaborators, principal reward hard work, and principal effectively shares information with teachers received same and majority weighted (79.9%). When principals' feels for collaborators, reward hard work and effectively shares information, this ensures school operates effectively and efficiently in attaining its goals. This finding concurs with Saraniya & Thevaranjan (2015). Ewusi, L & Lyonga, A, (2023), further mentioned that the principal is accountable for academics in the school therefore, he is the one who encourages and motivates the teachers, students and other stakeholders towards quality assurance. One intriguing finding is that 68.2 percent of respondents agreed with the statement that, principals encourage working in groups, indicating this as strength shared by principals in the area. According to this research, principals of technical colleges in the South West region of Cameroon can interact with teachers and other stakeholders in a way that fosters trust and good feelings. This was supported by Majluf & Abarca (2021), who opined that, leadership that promotes a positive organizational climate and professional development is derived from soft skills, such as communication, collaboration, and empathy.

## 2. Assessing Teacher Perception of Principals' Interpersonal Skills in influencing Sustainable Quality Assurance

Table 4 below depicts teachers' opinion on principals' interpersonal skills in influencing quality assurance. four items were constructed which included punishment, respect to hierarchy, no attention to others opinion, responsible behaviour by the principal towards quality assurance. The test statistics obtained from the responses were presented as follows.

**Table 4: Assessing Teachers Perception of Principals' Interpersonal Skills on Quality Assurance in Technical Colleges.**

Items	Strongly Agree (SA)	Agree (A)	Disagree (D)	Strongly Disagree (SD)	Collapsed	
					SA/A	D/SD
Principal punishes laziness.	120 (32.1%)	165 (44.1%)	45 (12.0%)	44 (11.8%)	285 (76.2%)	89 (23.8%)
Principal is respected by teachers due to his good interpersonal relationship, image, and trustworthiness.	179 (47.9%)	150 (40.1%)	0 (0.0%)	45 (12.0%)	329 (88.0%)	45 (12.0%)
Principal never give attention to teachers' opinions.	119 (31.8%)	135 (36.1%)	105 (28.1%)	15 (4.0%)	254 (67.9%)	120 (32.1%)

Principals demonstrate responsible behaviours in school.	105 (28.1%)	179 (47.9%)	60 (16.0%)	30 (8.0%)	284 (75.9%)	90 (24.1%)
Multiple Response options	523 (34.9%)	629 (42.0%)	210 (14.0%)	134 (9%)	1152 (77.0%)	344 (23.0%)

Table 4 provides information on how teachers in technical colleges in the South West region of Cameroon rate their principals' interpersonal abilities to influence quality assurance. Most respondents (77.0%) agreed and strongly agreed that the principals showed strong interpersonal skills in influencing quality assurance, while only 23.0% disagreed and strongly disagreed. This study was converse to the findings of Bolei (2012), who revealed a mild relationship between teachers perception of head teachers practice of human skills practice on teachers work commitment in secondary schools in Kenya. When examining the individual items, the item about the principal being respected by teachers because of their positive interpersonal relationships, reputation, and reliability received the highest percentage of strongly agreed and agreed responses (88.0%), followed by the item about the principle of penalising laziness with a percentage of strongly agreed and agreed responses (76.2%). When Principal punish laziness, teachers involved, and others will abstain from committing same error resulting to quality assurance. Finally, it is worth noting that the finding that principals demonstrate responsible behaviours in school received a percentage of strong agreement (75.9%). When principals demonstrate responsible behaviour there is that friendly environment for good interpersonal relationship thus promoting cooperative participation towards quality assurance. This finding was consistent with Mugisa, C.K, (2017), who emphasised on cooperative participation in ensuring quality in school.

The data on tables 3 and 4 demonstrate the importance of excellent interpersonal skills for principals in the South West Region of Cameroon, as well as the importance of on-going professional development and training to strengthen these skills. Principals can benefit from practises such as creating a cooperative climate, good communication, and responsible behaviour, as well as applauding and rewarding work. By promoting a courteous, trustworthy and collaborative environment, these strategies can improve educational results and long-term quality assurance in technical schools as suggested by Robles (2012)

**Table 5: Thematic Analysis of Principals' Perspective of Interpersonal Skills and Quality Assurance**

Discussion Topic	Themes	Quotes
Interpersonal skills and quality assurance	Belonginess and interactions Networking	"Good interpersonal skills, such as conflict resolution, empathy, listening, and a positive attitude, can help influence quality assurance." "Interpersonal skills are important for successful collaboration among staff and relating to colleagues. This helps promote a positive working environment and enhances quality assurance." "The Supreme coordinator. of the College is the principal. This therefore means that the Head of the College is responsible for the maintenance and improvement in quality assurance."
	Teamwork	"Interpersonal skills of a principal will help influence quality assurance in technical colleges because this helps you to read the true mindset of collaborators and interpreting them accurately in order to form effective response to analysis of team evaluation."
Interpersonal skills and quality assurance	Flexibility and adaptability	"No, but to a lesser extent, yes. This is because the world and its technology science included is fast changing at an unpredictable rate."
	Change	"There is a continuous and a constant change in the Planning, Modification, Problem solving, Interpersonal Skill due to continuous advancement in new ideas technology." "Continuous change is necessary for ensuring quality assurance, as education is constantly evolving." "Principals need to constantly innovate to ensure quality assurance in technical colleges."
	Feedback	"Active environment learning, advocating zero waste, and starting a school garden project are some ways to ensure effective implementation of school objectives towards sustainable quality"

	Control	<p>assurance."</p> <p>"Ensure the implementation of the designed working program. ‘</p> <p>“Follow up and evaluate the effectiveness of the design working program. Feedback should be analysed in accordance with a team of staff and modification be done on perfection of the program.”</p> <p>"Regular follow-up and supervision are important for effective implementation of school objectives towards quality assurance in technical colleges."</p> <p>“ Quality assurance involves evaluating teachers assessing students and encouraging practical learning in school”.</p> <p>“Checking teachers’ performance daily is important for modifying the curriculum towards quality assurance. It ensures that teachers are fulfilling their responsibilities and teaching effectively”.</p>
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Table 5 above explored the impact of principals' Interpersonal skills on quality assurance in technical colleges within the South West Region of Cameroon. The thematic analysis of interviews conducted with principals revealed several key themes, shedding light on the importance of belonging and Interaction, Networking, teamwork, flexibility and adaptability, change, feedback and control which influences quality assurance sustained over time.

In exploring the individual themes, that of "Belonginess and interaction" highlighted significance of good interpersonal skills in influencing quality assurance. Principals acknowledged that skills such as conflict resolution, empathy, active listening, and maintaining a positive attitude played a crucial role in fostering effective relationships and collaboration among staff which promotes effectiveness and efficiency towards goal attainment of quality assurance.

Moreover, the theme of "flexibility and adaptability" focused on the role of principals' interpersonal skills in ensuring quality assurance. Some principals recognized the fast-changing nature of the world, including technological advancements and acknowledged the need for continuous innovation and adaptation. This finding is consistent with the contingency theory by Fred Fiedler (1967), which emphasis on adaptability and situational leadership. Effective planning, modification, problem-solving, and interpersonal skills were seen as vital for navigating the evolving landscape of education and ensuring quality assurance. Continuous change was viewed as necessary to keep up with the changing world and to match the strategies of the curriculum with the evolving needs of education.

Furthermore, the theme of "Feedback" emphasized Follow up and evaluate the effectiveness of the design working program. Feedback should be analysed in accordance with a team of staff and modification be done on perfection of the program."

Moreover, the theme “control” focused on evaluating teachers assessing students and encouraging practical learning in school. Checking teachers’ performance daily is important for modifying the curriculum towards quality assurance. It ensures that teachers are fulfilling their responsibilities and teaching effectively.

The theme of "Ensuring Quality Assurance" highlighted the key elements involved in the process. Principals mentioned daily checks of teachers' performance as seen as crucial for modifying the curriculum and ensuring that teachers are fulfilling their responsibilities effectively. Principals recognized the need for continuous adjustments and adaptations in response to the changing phases of education.

In conclusion, the thematic analysis revealed the importance of principals' interpersonal skills in influencing quality assurance in technical colleges. Good interpersonal skills were recognized as essential for fostering collaboration, maintaining a positive working environment and encouraging academic excellence. The study also highlighted the significance of interpersonal skills in navigating the changing educational landscape and ensuring continuous innovation. Effective implementation of school objectives, regular follow-up and evaluation were identified as crucial for achieving quality assurance which corroborates with Tahir, M. et al [1]. The findings contribute to a better understanding of the impact of principals' interpersonal skills on quality assurance in technical colleges within the South West Region of Cameroon



**Table 6: Impact of principals' interpersonal skills on quality assurance in government technical colleges.**

Hypotheses	Regression Weight	$\beta$	t	P - value	Results
Ho4	<i>IS &gt; SQA</i>	0.0335	6.924	0.012*	Rejected
<b>R<sup>2</sup></b>	<b>0.685</b>				
<b>F(3,369)</b>	86.800				

Note: \* $p < 0.05$  IS: Interpersonal skills index; SQA: Sustainable quality assurance.

Regarding the general research hypotheses, the analysis showed that principals' Interpersonal skills ( $\beta=0.0335$ ,  $p=0.012<0.05$ ), positively and significantly associates with quality assurance. This study provides evidence that good interpersonal skills are critical to achieving quality assurance in technical colleges. Morgan (2002) lamented that, the most vital and fundamental elements in the management process is based on working with people, which is done through some form of communication.

### Conclusion and Recommendation

Based on the findings of the study, it was concluded that interpersonal skills are critical for principals in government technical Colleges, as they must work closely with a wide range of stakeholders, including teachers, students, parents, and community members. Ebot -Ashu (2025). The study found that principals who possess strong interpersonal skills are better able to communicate effectively, to build strong relationships and to work collaboratively with others to achieve common goals. Overall, the study suggests that the development of these key skills is essential for promoting quality assurance in government technical colleges in South West of Cameroon. Principals who possess these skills are better equipped to manage their institutions effectively, to address challenges and issues as they arise to work collaboratively with others to promote quality assurance of their institutions. It was generally recommended that; Principals should endeavour to keep a high level of professional spirit and good moral standard of the schools. Policy makers and educational institution should prioritize the development of principals' interpersonal skills, promote a culture of innovation and consider evaluation activities. These recommendations can help to promoting quality assurance in technical education and ultimately contribute to the development of human capital and economic growth. One important contribution of this paper is the empirical evidence it provides on the importance of principals' interpersonal skills in promoting quality assurance. Findings highlights the need for soft skills in leadership and management, which are often overlooked in technical education.

### Limitation of the Study

No study can be completely without limitation there were some issues that could be said to have constituted the limitation of this study

Some teachers did not want to fill out administered questionnaire, some even misplaced the questionnaire

and the researcher had to be running and pleading to get back the instruments that did not come in on time. The findings of the study might change if all the teachers were committed to filling the instruments. Also, some administrators did not want to give out vital information to the study and to even see some of the administrators for interview was a hurdle with countless visit to their school and offices this too might have affected the findings of the study

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