

PRINCIPALS PERFORMANCE OF SUPERVISION OF INSTRUCTIONS IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT: *The study examined principals' performance of internal supervision of instructions in public secondary schools in Ebonyi State. Principals' internal supervision was delimited to classroom supervision of instruction, monitoring students' achievement, instructional materials and staff development. Two research questions and four hypotheses guided the study. The study adopted the descriptive survey research design. A sample of 605 out of 1640 teachers was drawn using stratified proportionate sampling techniques across urban and rural teachers. A questionnaire titled 'principals' performance of supervision of instruction questionnaire' was used as the instrument. The data collected were analyzed using mean scores, standard deviation and t-test statistics to test the hypotheses at 0.05 alpha levels. The findings showed a significant positive difference between urban and rural teachers on principals' performance of supervisory functions. The study recommended regular internal supervision of instruction since it encourages wider coverage of the curriculum and reduces incidences of examination malpractices by students.*

KEYWORDS: Supervision, Instructional Supervision, Leadership, Urban and Rural Teachers

INTRODUCTION

In any school environment especially the public secondary schools setting, there must be a principal who occupies a high status by virtue of his appointment as the school head. The vitality of the school rests with his functional leadership traits and he should be capable of stimulating and invigorating the teachers and students to achieve institutional goals and objectives. The principal has the primary functions of exhibiting effective instructional leadership for the improvement of diversified curriculum and quality of instructional programme for effective attainment of set school goals. The Federal Republic of Nigeria (FRN, 2004) and Litchfield (2003) identified management of curriculum and instruction, supervision of classroom instruction, monitoring and evaluation of students' progress and achievement, promotion and enhancement of learning environment, establishing and supporting continuous staff development and procuring instructional materials for teaching and learning as major supervisory functions of secondary school principals. Apart from instructional supervisory functions, the school principal performs some other administrative duties. He is faced with extremely difficult challenges emanating from the school, immediate community and environs, Ministry of Education (MOE) and Secondary Education Board (SEB). Jaiyeoba (2004) identified administrative practices of the schools head to include managing, administering the curriculum and teaching, staff, personnel, discipline, planning, staff appraisal, relationship with immediate community and use of practical skills for the achievement of the policies of the organization. Consequently, Gwacham (2005) observed that role conflicts, duplication of functions and task performances that indicate loss of sense of directions is evident in some

schools. This must have been the reason why some school principals avoid their instructional supervisory roles of visiting classes, observing teacher's delivery of instruction in the classroom, organizing in-school conferences/workshop in their schools.

Weller (2001) added that school principals devote more of their time attending to visitors than supervising instructions. Consequently, interference of administrative functions seems an appendage to instructional supervisory function of the school principals in achieving instructional objective of the school. It is therefore unfortunate that instructional supervisory functions recognized as cardinal role of the school principal could be over-looked in the midst of a variety of roles.

Again school location may affect the quality and thoroughness of instructional supervision. School location has far reaching effect on the provision of instructional materials and even distribution of amenities between urban and rural schools. In all educational institutions, teachers are regarded as indispensable instrument because they have many roles to play for effective realization of educational objectives. Donaldson (2007) reflected the importance of the teachers in giving complementary assistance to principal's function when he described teachers as the fulcrum on which the curriculum revolves. Therefore, any school principal that does not care for the welfare of his teachers, is bound to lower the working morale of his teachers and the tone of the school.

The growing demands from stakeholders of education, education reform agenda and the general public seek to ask, what are the solutions to poor academic performance of students, poor instructional improvement, and poor implementation of continuous assessment in the classroom, ineffective implementation of continuous assessment, examination malpractices, students' riot, and high rate of indiscipline among students in Nigerian secondary schools? The answers to these questions may be attributed to apparent laxity within the school administration, inadequate knowledge of internal supervision of instruction skills by school principals. This study therefore, attempts to determine the extent of school principals' performance in supervision of instruction in public secondary schools in Ebonyi State.

Statement of the Problem

The success of any level of education is hinged on the quality, regular and continuous supervision of instruction in Ebonyi state Nigeria. The problem of ineffective supervision of internal supervision by the school principals in public secondary schools is a phenomenon that has not been given deserved attention. Principals generally seem to spend more of their official hours on administrative functions to the detriment of effective supervision process and programmes of the school. Little seem to have been done by Ministry of Education, stakeholders in education and school principals to arrest the situation. Public outcry, reports and comments in print and electronic media alleging fallen standards of education in public secondary education reveal in part that internal supervision is probably not effectively carried out by school principals in Ebonyi State.

The situation has created some doubts as to whether the school principals fully carry out effective instructional supervision in their schools. Consequent upon this, student's performance have remained at a lower level in Senior Secondary School Certificate (SSCE) and Joint Matriculation Examinations (JME) in Nigeria. This study therefore, sought to establish instructional supervision functions of the school principals; it specifically examined principal's performance in supervision of classroom instructions, monitoring students'

achievement, provision and maintenance of instructional materials and establishing and supporting continuous staff development. It was assumed that ineffective supervision of instruction by school principals seems to affect the realization of educational objectives in Ebonyi State. It was hypothesized that there is no significant difference between the mean response of urban and rural teachers with respect to internal supervision of schools by school principals.

Research Questions

The following research questions were formulated to guide the study.

1. What are the impacts of motivation on principals' supervision of instruction on staff development?
2. What are the impacts of ineffective supervision of instruction by school principals' in public secondary schools in Ebonyi state?

Hypotheses

Four null hypotheses were tested at 0.05 alpha level.

1. There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of urban and rural school principals on principals' supervision of classroom instruction in school in Ebony state.
2. There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of urban and rural school principals on monitoring students' achievement in Ebony state
3. There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of urban and rural school principals on provision of instructional materials in Ebony state.
4. There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of urban and rural school principals on staff development in Ebony state.

LITERATURE/THEORETICAL FRAME WORK

Supervision in this context is an aspect of school administration which focuses on the achievement of appropriate instructional expectations of educational system. Tuoyo (2000) sees supervision as the practice of monitoring the performance of school staff, noting the merits and demerits and using befitting and amicable techniques to ameliorate the flaws while still improving educational goals. Nwaogugbe (2007) concisely stated that supervision affords the teacher an opportunity for knowledge update. Burton, Carper and William (2011:27) summarized supervision as an "efforts made by the school head to support teachers to become more effective in their job and equally access professional development on the job". Therefore, the principal need to improve teaching and learning and the professional growth of the teacher through supervision of instruction. To fully carryout these responsibilities, the school principals should be abreacted with the principals and supervision of instruction.

Ezeocha (1990) asserts that supervision of instruction focuses on the improvement of teaching and learning and to assist teachers to know and accept the objective of the organization. In a similar vein, Norsiri (1997) affirms that supervision of instruction enhances effective teaching

and learning in schools. Obi (2000) added that supervision of instruction is one of the best examples of educational leadership that focuses exclusively on the achievement of the desired instructional practices in educational organizations. Eze (1996) affirmed that supervision of instruction is all programme activities and actions school administrator apply to improve instructional process.

For Kyte (1990) conceived supervision of instruction as the maximum development of the teacher into the most professionally efficient person he/she is capable of becoming. To Acker (1990) supervision of instruction is an in-service education provided by the school system to update and improve teaching.

These definitions depict supervision of instruction by school heads as an agent of change. In this view, the school principal is the change agent whose responsibility is to provide variety of supervisory techniques for the teacher to see the need for change, plan for change and practice new behavior for effective teaching and learning. The implication of supervision of instruction is that the supervisor (school principal) has to supervise the activities of the teacher and resources available for instructions; discover teachers' weakness and offer suggestions for improvement for the achievement of stated school goals.

Theoretical Framework

This study relied on the following theories for its theoretical underpinning.

1. Mayo Elton theory of human relation and
2. Follet Parker's theory of human relation group dynamics and interpersonal relationship.

Mayo Elton (1950-1953) an exponent of human relation theory and Follet Parker Mary (1924) a leading protagonist of human relation interested in group dynamics and interpersonal relationship, both philosophers took cognizance of socio-psychological aspect of organization life as a factor contributing towards efficiency and effectiveness in organizational management and productivity.

Mayo's focus was on people and their relationship in organization. He drew the conclusion that "when special attention is given to workers by management, productivity is likely to increase regardless of actual changes in working conditions." Parker Mary on the other hand emphasized that "meeting psychological needs of workers is motivating force. Accordingly, meeting psychological needs seems a departure from the strict economic motivation concept.

Emphasis in human relation according to the exponents is the ability of the school principal (supervisor) to create the awareness of human worth, recognition of teachers' worth leading to job satisfaction and teachers' participation in decision-making process of the school.

The relevance of these theories to supervision of instruction revolve around the school principal as internal supervisor, should as much as possible encourage participation and interaction between him (supervisor) and the teacher; adherence to and practice of the principles of equality. Principles of equality demand that supervisors should see their supervisees as colleagues in supervisory process that will lead to improvement in instruction delivery and staff development.

METHODOLOGY

This study was a descriptive survey conducted in Ebonyi Central Education Zone, Ebonyi State, Nigeria. The study was delimited to the 142 public secondary schools within the zone. The study population comprised all the teachers in Onueke education zone numbering 1640 teachers. A stratified proportionate sampling technique (36.8%) of urban and rural teachers used to select 605 teachers as the sample size. This ensured a fair representative of urban (304) and (301) rural teachers in the zone. The instrument for data collection was a questionnaire titled principals' performance of supervision of instruction in secondary schools in Central Education Zone of Ebonyi State (PPSSS). Experts in the department of Educational Foundations and Measurement and Evaluation in Science Education validated the instrument. The data generated from the trial testing of the instrument was used to compute the reliability. A reliability Co-efficient of 0.80 was obtained using Cornbach Alpha formula for internal consistency of the items. The data collected were analyzed using mean (\bar{x}) score, standard deviation and t-test statistics to test the hypotheses at the 0.05 level of significance.

RESULTS/FINDINGS

Table 1: T-test Analysis of Urban and Rural Schools on Principals' Supervision of Classroom Instructions.

S/N	Item	Location	N	\bar{X}	SD	Df	t-cal	t-crit
Decision								
1.	Principals meet regularly with Urban teachers to discuss Rural instructional improvement.		304 301	3.35 2.88	.81 .77		9.80*	1.96
2.	Monitors lesson plan and lesson notes to ensure quality of standard.	Urban Rural	304 301	3.28 2.82	.68 .77		8.04*	1.96
3.	Delegate vice principals to visit classes during lesson periods.	Urban Rural	304 301	3.40 2.88	.49 .77		8.03*	1.96
4.	Instruct vice principals to inspect student's notes to ensure scheme coverage.	Urban Rural	304 301	3.47 2.80	.53 .63		14.29*	1.96
5.	Use incentives and rewards to encourage teachers' input.	Urban Rural	304 301	1.94 2.09	.75 .64		2.67*	1.96
6.	Use appropriate supervisory techniques to improve teaching and learning.	Urban Rural	304 301	3.36 2.94	.49 .76		8.40*	1.96
7.	Often meet with students to discuss instructional problems.	Urban Rural	304 301	3.30 2.80	.55 .69		10.24*	1.96

8. Encourage teachers to utilize supervisor's suggestions.	Urban	304	3.28	.88				
	Rural	301	2,74	.53				
9. Observes classroom instruction to ensures curriculum coverage	Urban	304	304	.50	Reject	13.33*	1.96	
	Rural	301	301	.74				

Table 1: Shows that in tested hypothesis1: there was no significant difference between the mean response of urban and rural teachers on internal supervision of classroom instruction by school principals. The calculated t-value for each of items 1 to 9 was greater than the t-critical value of 1.96; thus our null hypothesis was rejected. This implies that a significant difference existed between urban and rural secondary school teachers on their perception of principals' supervision of classroom instruction in Ebonyi State.

Table 2: T-test Analysis of Urban and Rural Schools on Principals' Monitoring of Students Achievement

S/N	Item Location	N	X	SD	Df	t-cal	t-crit	Decision
10	Principals cooperate with Urban teachers to establish	304	3.29	.99		3.67*	1.96	Reject
	Rural criterion for students' assessment.	301	3.53	.58				
11	Encourage teachers to use Urban specific objectives criterion	304	2.47	.65		3.59*	1.96	Reject
	Rural to to assess students.	301	2.61	.73				
12	Display high expectation Urban for students' academic	304	3,50	.44	603	1.80	1.96	Accept
	Rural performance.	301	3.52	.59				
13	Maintains accurate and Urban effective record keeping of	304	1.72	.60		2.29*	1.96	Reject
	Rural continuous assessment.	301	1,83	.58				
14	Address teachers' Urban inefficiency to enhance	304	3.52	.56		3.69*	1.96	Reject
	Rural Students' achievement.	301	3.29	.99				
15	Principals display Urban leadership role and support	304	3.54	.53		.83	1.96	Accepted
	Rural to students discipline	301	351	.56				

*Significant at 0.05 level

Table 2: There was also a significant difference in the mean ratings of teachers on principals' performance in monitoring students' achievement in urban and rural schools in the state for items 10, 11, 13 and 14 but not for items 12 and 15 on table 2. The calculated t-value the null hypothesis 2 was rejected. On the contrary, items 12, and 15 had t-calculated values less than the t-critical of 1.96, thus the null hypothesis of no significant difference between urban and rural teachers on principals' monitoring students' achievement was accepted.

Table 3: T-test Analysis of Urban and Rural Principals Performance on the Provision and Maintenance of Instructional Materials.

S/ N	Item	Locati on	N	X	SD	Df	t-.cd	t-	Decisio n
16	Principals collect lists or instructions materials needed in school by discussing with Teachers.	Urban	304	1.72	.49				
		Rural	301	1.34	.46		9.69		Reject
					1.96				
17	Distributes instructional materials and ensures that each	Urban	304	3.87	.33				
		Rural	301	3.70	.46	10.7	1.96		Reject
18	Provides writing materials to ensure that teachers prepare their lesson plan.	Urban	304	1.89	.46				
		Rural	301	1.26	.46	11.30	1.96		
19	Provides modem instructional materials such as	Urban	304	2.53	.55				
		Rural	301	2.48	.69	603	.85	196	Reject
	ICT to improve teaching/learning.								
20	Pay prompt attention to maintenance of instructional Materials	Urban	304	1.881	.63				
		Rural	301	.89	.90	1.13	1.96		Accept

**Significant at 0.05 level*

Table 3: The perception of urban versus rural teachers with respect to principals' performance on the provision and maintenance of instructional materials is shown on table 3. The calculated t-value for items 16, 17 and 18 were greater than the t-critical value of 1.96, hence the null hypothesis was rejected. Therefore, there was a significant difference between the perception of urban and rural teachers. Items 19 and 20 had t-calculated less than t-critical, thus the null hypothesis of no significant difference between urban and rural schools on the provision and maintenance of instructional materials was accepted.

Table 4: T-test Analysis of Urban and Rural Principals' Performance in Establishing and Supporting staff Development.

S/N	Item	Location	N	X	SD	Df	t-cal	t-crit	Decision
21	Principals encourage teachers to go for in-service training	Urban	304	2.51	.50				
		Rural	301	2.70	.49		4.69	1.96	Reject
22	Sponsors teachers for seminars and workshops	Urban	304	1.79	.79				
		Rural	301	1.78	.79		.30	1.96	Accept
23	Organizes in school conference and seminars on important policy issues	Urban	304	1.65	.78				
		Rural	301	1.81	.80		2.00	1.96	Reject
24	Approves study leave for teachers to acquire relevant qualification in education.	Urban	304	3.49	.57				
		Rural	301	3.44	.54		1.26	1.96	Accept
25	Assign duties and responsibilities to teachers based on professional capabilities.	Urban	304	3.42	.73				
		Rural	301	3.29	.72		2.36	1.96	Reject
26	Recommend teachers who have completed their in-service training for promotion.	Urban	304	3.47	.56				
		Rural	301	3.26	.63		4.32	1.96	Reject
27	Encourage teachers input in scheduling their development Programme	Urban	304	1.56	.59				
		Rural	301	2.13	.73		10.56	1.96	Reject
28	Seek out information in order to help teachers grow and improve as professionals	Urban	304	1.52	.54				
		Rural	301	1.93	.64		8.46	1.96	Reject
29	Recognizes the need to support teachers develop professionally	Urban	304	2.24	.49				
		Rural	301	2.24	.50		6.68	1.96	Reject
30	Direct the activities of teachers towards professional Development	Urban	304	1.64	.68				
		Rural	301	2.19	.76		9.62	1.96	Rejected

**Significant at 0.05 level*

Table 4: Parameters reflecting the disposition of urban and rural principals' disposition to staff development are itemized in Table 4; the calculated t-values for items 21, 23, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30 were higher than the tabulated t-value of 1.96. Thus, the null hypothesis was therefore rejected as far as those items were concerned, therefore there was a significant difference between the mean response of urban and rural teachers on principals performance in giving support for staff development. However, for items 21 and 23 the t-calculated values were less than t-tabulated and the null hypothesis of no significant difference in principals' performance in establishing and supporting staff development in urban and rural schools in the state, was accepted.

DISCUSSION

Hypothesis I stated that there was no significant difference between the mean ratings of urban and rural teachers on internal supervision of schools by principals in Ebonyi central education zone. The data on Table 1 showed that all the items related to principals' supervisory functions on classroom instructions based on location were greater than t-critical value of 1.96. Thus, the null hypothesis 1 was rejected. This means that a significant positive difference existed in the mean ratings of teachers in urban and rural secondary schools in principals' classroom supervision. The difference could be attributed to principals' supervisory dispositions. The urban principals could be busier with other administrative functions, having little or no time to visit the classroom or conduct in-school conferences/seminar workshops for his teachers. The rural principals on the other hand might be confronted with rural challenges at the detriment of supervising classroom instruction. The finding is consistent with the findings of Whitakers, (1997); Hanghey and Mac Elion, (1998); Weller, (2007) and Egwu, (2009) whose separate findings stated that instructional supervision is a fundamental component of instructional leadership of the principal and the principal's role is imperative to improving instruction. If schools are to achieve set educational objectives, the principals should not allow other daily activities to interfere with the classroom supervision functions, given that the operations of the school enterprise lies within the classroom environment and all other activities are supportive; school principals are considered first and foremost to be internal school supervisors of instruction.

In table 2, the result showed that the t-calculated of four (4) out of six (6) on supervisory functions of principals in respect to monitoring students achievement were greater than the t-critical value of 1.96, the null hypothesis was rejected. Where the school principals and teachers refuse to cooperate with each other to establish criterion for students assessment it will affect students' achievement. Again, poor and inadequate record keeping as a result of nonchalant attitude and behaviour of teachers and school management to effectively monitor students' assessments, would likely affect their final assessment results. On the other hand, two out of six items in monitoring students' assessments had t-calculated less than t-critical. The null hypothesis was accepted. This means that principals irrespective of school location monitored students' achievements with respect to display of high expectations and lending of leadership support to them. The finding was in agreement with Fulan (1996), Fulan and Hargreaves (1996) and Brooker (2007) who observed that the effective school principal with higher expectation was more focused on students' achievements. Findings from this study also revealed that principals cannot alone supervise and maintain accurate record keeping or address poor attitude and behaviour of teachers without cooperate assistants of his vice principals, since students are the centre of educational process and all attitude towards their academic achievements should be fully monitored. Principals should as much as possible make use of

their vice principals (academic and administration) and dean of studies to effectively monitor students achievement.

In table 3, there was a marked difference between urban and rural schools with respect to principals' supervisory functions in the provision and maintenance of instructional materials. Reasons that could be adduced to this may include uneven distribution of school amenities between urban and rural schools and special attention not given by government to providing adequate fund and modern instructional materials, including ICT. The finding is consistent with Aduwa and Ede (2006) who noted that teaching and learning required appropriate enabling environment, basic infrastructure and teaching/learning materials that are necessary for educational challenges of the twenty-first century. Therefore no meaningful teaching and learning can take place under a situation of scarce and inadequate instructional materials, or outdated materials.

As shown in Table 4, 8 out of 10 indices of principals' performance in establishing and supporting staff development varied significantly with location. The significant variation may be ascribed to laxity of the school administrator and therefore the extent of goal achievement tends to be less in rural schools. The school heads should strive to reverse this situation because teachers are regarded as fulcrum on which the curriculum revolves and no school can function effectively without the teachers. The school principal should strive to encourage teachers' development for better discharge of duties and competency.

Educational Implications

Findings from this study reveal that failure of the school principal to effectively supervise classroom instructions as a result of some administrative problems would impact negatively on teaching and learning as well as curriculum implementation. If the curriculum content is not covered students are liable to get involved in examination malpractices. Therefore, school principals, irrespective of school location should endeavour to carryout effective supervision of classroom instruction, monitor and support staff development through seminars and conferences, which will in turn improve teaching/learning and good coverage of curriculum. This will ultimately improve students' academic achievement and general standard of education.

The findings also revealed that principal's lacked supervisory techniques and inability to regularly supervise and maintain accurate record keeping indicates incompetency on the part of the principals. Principals should always seek the assistance of their vice principals (academic and administration) and deans of studies for effective supervision of instruction. Active participation of sub-ordinates in supervisory activities does not only enhance but improve teaching and learning instruction and contribution to knowledge in the school system. Participation of vice principals in supervision of instruction establishes cordial relationship thereby creating good rapport between the principals and their vice principals.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Arising from the findings of the study, the discussions made, conclusions drawn, and the importance attached to supervision of instruction and expected improvement in student's achievement, the following recommendations are made:

1. The school principal as an instructional leader should emphasize internal supervision of instruction in the school. Adequate and effective supervision will not only improve curriculum implementation but will reduce incidence of students' involvement in examination malpractices both at internal and external examinations.
2. School principals should strive to combine administrative functions with classroom instructional duties in order to foster effective teaching and learning process using appropriate strategies of supervision by delegating some duties to their subordinates.
3. The Ministry of Education (MOE) in collaboration with the State Secondary Board (SEB) should constantly organize workshop, conferences and seminars where instructional supervisory roles and staff development are discussed and their importance emphasized. The workshop and seminars should be made compulsory for principals, vice principals and teachers. This encourages staff development and acquisition of new skills/methods for effective delivery.
4. Government at both Federal and State levels should provide more funds to schools to enable principals to provide and maintain available instructional materials for effective teaching and learning.

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings and discussion the following conclusions were drawn from the study:

1. A significant positive difference existed between urban and rural secondary school principals in classroom supervision of instruction as a result of principals' supervisory disposition. The urban schools are better supervised than the rural schools.
2. A significant difference was established between urban and rural secondary schools in monitoring students' assessment/ achievement. Rural schools are mostly affected
3. A significant positive difference was found between urban and rural principals in the provision and maintenance of instructional materials. Urban schools are better off because of a large number of parents (PTA). Poor funding and uneven distribution of available instructional materials constitute a problem.
4. There is a significant difference in most of the supervisory functions of school principals on staff development with particular reference to school location. The urban principals encourage staff development because of urbanization.

Future Research

From the findings, discussion and recommendations for future research works should be carried out in other state of the federation on the following sub-scheme:

1. Teachers' perception of principals' supervisory behavior in public and private secondary schools in Nigeria.
2. Principals' instructional leadership and teacher education in Nigeria: Teachers' perspective.

3. Supervision of instruction as a cooperative action: Impact and challenges.
4. Supervision of instruction in Nigeria secondary schools: Issues in quality assurance.

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