

ASSURING EDUCATIONAL QUALITY: SUPERVISORY APPROACHES IN PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS OF OYO STATE, NIGERIA

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Abstract

The study investigated supervisory approaches employed as means of ensuring quality control in the secondary education system. Survey research design of ex- post- facto type was used in carrying out the study. Stratified random sampling procedure was used to select 250 participants from the population of 9,000 teachers in Ibadan Municipality. A self-constructed questionnaire tagged 'Supervisory Approaches Scale' (SAS) was used to elicit relevant data from the respondents. Test- retest method of reliability yielded a coefficient of .78. The data collected were analyzed using descriptive statistics and One Way Analysis of Variance. The findings revealed that classroom observation approach was the most frequently used supervisory approach with the highest mean of 2.7 while majority of the participants also preferred classroom visitation and observation as the most effective supervisory approach [$F(2, 247) = 8.900$ $P < 0.05$] The study recommended amongst other things that classroom visitation and observation should be employed in the supervisory activities.

Keywords: Education, Quality, Quality assurance, Supervisory approaches.

Introduction

Education as a social service is highly esteemed by the government and other stakeholders in Nigeria. It is therefore, not surprising, that the Federal Government of Nigeria perceived education as an investment per excellence through which the nation can realize its national objectives (FGN, 2013).

The pivotal role of education in national development implies that educational offering should be of high standard so that graduates of Nigerian educational institutions can favourably compete with their

peers from other parts of the world. The success or otherwise of an educational programme hinges on its efficient management. (Tesfaw and Hofman, 2014). One of the tools of management control of educational institutions is school supervision or instructional supervision as it is popularly accepted in the recent times. Sergiovanni and Starratt (2007) were of the opinion that when a school's instructional effectiveness improves, it would have positive effect on students' academic performance. Similarly, Glickman, Gordon and Ross-Gordon (1995) cited in Fritz and Miller (2003) described instructional supervision as the glue which holds together individual teachers' needs and institutional goals. The authors remarked that if the glue does not function properly (i.e instructional supervision) the whole educational structure will crumble. Similarly, Chike-Okoli (2006) described supervision as an activity meant to have a comprehensive view of the activities and problems of an institution and to assess the extent to which it is meeting its obligations.

Supervision is an instrument that can be used to promote teacher's efficiency, effectiveness and self-development. Olowo and Oladimeji (2012) identified a number of the importance of school supervision. These include educational revitalization, school evaluation and prevention of educational problems. Expatriating on the importance of school supervision, the authors remarked that school supervision is carried out in order to revitalize educational system as a result of social, economic and technological changes and the need to reposition the educational system to meet the need of the changing society.

Theoretical Framework

The approaches to instructional supervision are based on the differentiated instructional supervision model, a theoretical framework of instructional supervision by Glickman, Gordon and Ross-Gordon (1998) cited in Rettig, Lampe and Garcia (2000) which opined that both new and experienced teachers have different needs, hence, a particular instructional supervision approach may not meet the instructional needs of all teachers. Therefore, differentiated theory of instructional supervision takes into consideration differing idiosyncratic needs of teachers so as to achieve instructional objectives. In practice, differentiated model of instructional supervision takes care of both

experienced teachers as well as newly employed teachers by giving them instructional attention which suit different categories of teachers. Instructional supervision as an activity can be carried out in a number of ways. That is, certain approaches can be adopted in instructional supervision. This situation arises because teachers who are the recipients of the services of the instructional supervisors have different needs in term of teaching improvement. There are new as well as experienced teachers. In addition, teachers have different level of motivation and ability. Thinking along this line, Fritz and Miller (2003), expressed the view that there is need to change supervisory approach as both the teacher and supervisor develop in the supervisory process. As a result of diverse needs of teachers, Rettig, Lampe and Garcia (2000) have advocated that a one-size-fits-all model of instructional supervision will not achieve the objectives of instructional supervision. The authors opined that though there are models of instructional supervision, the choice should depend on the idiosyncratic needs of the individual teachers. There are several models of instructional supervision. Fitz and Miller (2003) identified clinical supervision, conceptual supervision, developmental supervision, and contextual supervision as approaches to instructional supervision. Rettig, Lampe and Garcia (2000) also isolated directive supervision, directive information supervision, collaborative supervision and non-directive supervision. Similarly, Tesfaw and Hofman (2014) listed clinical supervision, peer coaching, cognitive coaching, and monitoring, reflective coaching as other approaches to instructional supervision.

Literature search however reveals that classroom observation, demonstration teaching, clinical supervision and workshops are frequently used approaches in this part of the country. However, in using any of these techniques, a supervisor can vary his or her style of relating to teacher depending on supervisee's experience and level of motivation. This style of relating to teachers is implied in developmental supervision. Hence, a particular supervisory approach can be used alongside developmental principle of instructional supervision.

Classroom Visitation and Observation

This is the most common supervisory approach employed by all categories of supervisors whether from Federal or States Ministries of

education (Abama, 2002). This approach involves paying a visit to a classroom teacher in the course of his teaching activity. The supervisor systematically observes and analyses the teacher's teaching behaviour in relation to classroom management and other aspects of teaching skills. Furthermore, the teachers' personality, enthusiasm for teaching improvement and other general aspects of teaching skills are considered in the course of observation. One of the advantages of this mode of supervisory approach is the fact that it can be used by internal as well as external supervisor.

Clinical Supervision

Clinical supervision according to Jaiyeoba (2006) is a technology conceived for improvement of instruction. According to the author it can be seen as a deliberate intervention into teaching process. Clinical supervision involves a systematic procedure through which a teacher's classroom behavior and feelings are analyzed in a supportive and non-judgmental context.

Clinical supervision is also a form of inquiry designed to encourage reflection on supervisory process in order to improve teaching and learning. There are five major components of clinical supervision (Cook, 1996). These stages are planning conference, classroom observation or data collection, analysis and strategy. Others are post-observation conference and post-conference analysis. The planning conference is meant to establish rapport and intimate the teacher with the procedure of clinical supervision. In addition, during this stage, the teacher and supervisor can jointly prepare a lesson plan. The second stage which is class observation and data collection is the situation where the supervisor watches the teacher's teaching episode and collects relevant data on the teaching methodology and other relevant teaching skills. The information collected at this stage are analysed at the analysis stage. It is at the analysis stage that the supervisor converts the data into readable information to the teacher for future improvement. The major impact of the analysis stage is the fact that the teacher becomes aware of how the supervisor perceives the lesson. According to Fritz and Miller (2003) the post observation allows the instructional leader to discuss with the teacher on how the supervisor perceives the lesson. The conference may also serve as a basis to establish other goals to be accomplished in future lesson

encounters. The post conference analysis is designed for instructional leader who need to do analysis of the whole supervisory episode so as to ensure that the best supervision practice was employed in dealing with the teacher. An added advantage to this post-conference analysis is to improve the instructional leader's supervisory practice for future meetings.

The Workshop Approach

The workshop approach involves use of resource persons who are expected to be experts in their respective disciplines to discuss a particular teaching and learning issue to a group of teachers who desire to learn from the experts. Abama (2002) observed that workshop is generally organized to improve the knowledge and teaching skills of teachers. Olagboye (2004) noted that one particular advantage of this approach is its usefulness to update knowledge of teachers in an era of information explosion.

Demonstration

The basic focus of this approach is a display or a practical application in which a supervisor attempts to assist a teacher or a group of teachers to learn a concept, a principle or a skill. Kochhar (2005) advised that for a demonstration to be effective it has to be planned, controlled and focused. In addition, teachers should be given opportunity to react to the display or practice in the presence of the supervisor to ensure transfer of learning.

Apart from the above specific approaches to influence teachers teaching behavior towards improved teaching and learning, a supervisor can also make use of developmental principle on how to relate with the teachers. The concern of the supervisor here is how he/she interacts with the teacher. The developmental style takes into consideration the classroom experience of the teacher and his readiness and motivation to learn. A supervisor needs to vary his or her supervisory style depending on the teacher's length of exposure to classroom setting, motivation and readiness to acquire new knowledge and attitude.

Hersey, Blankard and Johnson's (cited in Fritz and Miller, 2003) theory of situational leadership can be applied by a supervisor to a number of teachers with varying degrees of needs. Depending on the

needs of the teachers in the continuum of staff development, a supervisor can use the following styles of supervision (1) telling, selling, participating and delegating.

In the telling stage, the supervisor gives specific instruction and closely supervises the teachers. This need arises because the teachers at this stage do not appear to possess the necessary knowledge or skill to perform a particular teaching skill and the teachers themselves are not also confident in their abilities. However, as the subordinate or the teacher acquires certain level of proficiency in teaching behavior, the supervisor can move to the selling stage. At the selling stage, according to Fritz and Miller (2003) though the teachers do not display complete knowledge or mastery of a skill but they exhibit self-confidence and commitment towards teaching and learning. The supervisor equally provides guidance at this stage but gives opportunity for dialogue between him and the teacher. At the participation phase, the role of the supervisor or the leader centres more on encouragement rather than being directive. The teachers at this phase are assumed to possess necessary knowledge and skill to perform effectively in the teaching behaviour but may lack motivation and commitment. The final phase which is delegating calls for the instructional supervisor to observe or monitor the subordinates. At this stage the supervisor allows for taking up of responsibility by the teacher and leeway to implement such tasks. It is assumed at this stage that the teachers or followers have acquired mastery of relevant knowledge and skill in addition to being confident and motivated.

The developmental approach of Glickman, Gordon and Ross-Gordon (2001) is similar to the Hersey's et al management style of supervision. According to Glickman et al (2001) an instructional supervisor using developmental model gives three forms of assistance to teachers'.

These are (1) Directive (2) Collaborative and (3) Non-directive. According to Glickman et al (2001) and Fritz and Miller (2003) teachers who lack expertise in teaching and commitment will be given directive assistance. Teachers, who are relatively new on the job, say one to two years of teaching experience, usually have problems on how to make decisions to solve problems relating to teaching and learning. Directive supervision in which the supervisor determines the goals for the teacher will be more appropriate.

Collaborative approach or style of supervision will be suitable for teachers with moderate level of development in terms of expertise and job commitment. The instructional leader and the teacher can at this stage jointly establish goals, how to achieve the goals and the time-frame. Non-directive mode of supervision is often employed for teachers who can engage in reflective thinking about their job and have high expertise. One particular advantage of this style of supervision is the fact that the teacher have ownership of how and what goals to establish and how the goals will be achieved. According to Glickman et al the roles of instructional leader include listening, reflecting, encouraging and solving problems beyond the capacity of the teacher. Other models of supervision tailored towards staff development are the supervisory options for instructional leaders (SOIL) by Fritz and Miller (2003) and differentiated supervision by Rettig, Lampe and Garcia (2000).

Supervisors from Teaching Service Commission as well as officials from Ministry of Education in the country use various approaches of instructional supervision. This study is therefore intended to assess which of these supervisory approaches is most effective in improving teaching and learning according to the perception of the teachers used as subjects. In order to provide a focus for the study the following research question and hypothesis were raised.

Research Question

What is the most frequently used supervisory technique?

Research Hypothesis

Ho1: There is no significant difference in the effectiveness of the supervisory approaches.

Methodology

The study was a survey research but carried out ex-post-facto. This is because the research has no control over the variables of interest as they have already occurred. The population of the study was 9,000 teachers spread across 617 secondary schools in the Ibadan Metropolis of Oyo state, Nigeria. Stratified simple random sampling technique was employed to select 250 teachers who served as the study participants.

Instrument used for the collection of relevant data was the self-constructed 'Supervisory Approaches Scale' (SAS). Section A solicited for biographical data from the respondents while section B requested for information concerning opinion of the subjects on the regularity or otherwise of the use of the supervisory approaches. Furthermore, the questionnaire solicited for data on how the study participants perceived the effectiveness of each of the approaches as a tool for instructional improvement. The instrument was given to experts in the area of educational management for proper scrutiny. The test items were subjected to reliability test through test and retest method. The correlational coefficient through Pearson Product Moment Correlational analysis was 0.78 which can be considered substantial.

The questionnaires were administered with the assistance of research assistants. This is to ensure quick retrieval of the questionnaire. Method of data analysis used includes simple percentage, weighted mean and One Way Analysis of variance (ANOVA). The weighted mean was used to determine the most frequently used supervisory approach.

Research Question 1: What is the most frequently used supervisory approach?

Table 1: Perception of the Respondents on the Frequency of use of the Supervisory Approaches

Supervisory Approaches	Range	N Sample	N Items	Mean	S.D
Classroom observation	1-4	250	5	2.78	1.08
Demonstration	1-4	249	4	2.17	.81
Clinical supervision	1-4	250	4	1.08	.86
Workshop	1-4	248	5	2.00	.61

The items in this section assessed the actual frequency of the use of selected supervisory approaches as indicated in the above table namely classroom observation, demonstration, clinical supervision and workshop. The table reveals that classroom observation is the most

frequently used supervisory approach followed by demonstration with the means of 2.78 and 2.17 respectively.

Ho1: There is no significant difference in the effectiveness of the supervisory approaches.

Table 2(a): One Way Analysis of Variance of the Difference in the Effectiveness of the Supervisory Approaches.

Sources of Variance	Df.	Sum of Square	Mean Square	F	Sig F.
Main effect	2	641.900	30.561	8.900	.000
Explained	2	641.900	320.966	8.900	.000
Residual	247	1230.06	35.700	8.900	.000
Total	249	13042.888	38.55		

Table 2(b): Multiple Classification Analysis of the Difference in Effectiveness of Supervisory Approaches

Supervisory Approaches	Unadjusted Dev' N	Adjusted r Indep. Dev. N.	ETA	BETA
Classroom observation	1.47	1.27		
Demonstration	1.12	.80	.22	17
Clinical supervision	1.1	-1.27		
Workshop	1.52	1.17		

The table 2(a) above reveals that there is a significant difference in the effectiveness of the supervisory approaches as perceived by the respondents.

[$F(2,247) = 8.981, P < .05$] However, the multiple classification analysis [Table 2(b)] showed that classroom observation technique with an adjusted mean of 1.27 appears to be most effective among the four supervisory approaches as perceived by the subjects. Furthermore, 22% of the variance in instructional supervisory effectiveness is accounted for by classroom observation.

Discussion

The study revealed that classroom visitation is the most frequently used among supervisory approaches. This finding was in line with the submission of Olagboye (2004) that classroom visitation provides opportunity for both the supervisor and the supervisee to interact at an intimate level where actual teaching takes place. Abama (2002) also observed that classroom observation could be used by both internal as well as external supervisor. The author also remarked that the approach can be scheduled or unscheduled. These advantages no wonder made it attractive to supervisors.

The result of the hypothesis which stated that there is no significant difference among the supervisory approaches in term of effectiveness as perceived by the respondents showed that there was a significant difference among the supervisory approaches. The multiple classification carried out to further process the data revealed that classroom observation was rated as most effective by the respondents. The multiple classification analysis showed that classroom observation has highest adjusted mean value than other supervisory approaches. Among the supervision techniques that can enhance quality assurance, classroom observation was the most rated as alluded to by Okandeji and Otomewo (2012) which further buttressed the veracity of the finding in this study.

In summary, the study examined supervisory approaches in terms of frequency of usage and relative effectiveness. Related literature were reviewed. A research question and an hypothesis formulated for the study were tested. The study, based on review of related literature and findings concluded and made recommendation.

Conclusion

The study revealed that a number of supervisory approaches are currently being used in the sampled schools; however, classroom observation technique appeared to be the most frequently used approach. The study also found that classroom observation appeared to be the most effective as a supervisory method according to the perception of the subjects. The study therefore concluded that even though classroom observation was the most prominent among that the four identified supervisory techniques, the three other studied approaches were equally popular with the supervisors.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are made:-

Supervisors should be well grounded in classroom observation approach as a result of its advantages over others. Besides, supervisors should be exposed to seminars or workshops where they will learn more about the process of classroom observation approach.

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