

*Full Length Research Paper*

# Place of instructional supervision in enhancing public primary school teachers' effectiveness

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The study examined the place of instructional supervision in enhancing teachers' effectiveness in public primary schools in Ebonyi State. Four research questions were formulated to guide the study. Descriptive survey research design was adopted for the study. The population of the study consists of all the 462,186 teachers including the headteachers in the 1035 primary schools in the area of study. Stratified random sampling technique was used to select 300 teachers from 60 primary schools chosen for the study. Researcher-structured questionnaire was used for data collection. The instrument was validated and test retest method was used for the reliability test. The scores were calculated using Pearson moment correlation coefficient and it yielded co-efficient value of 0.81. The data collected were analyzed using mean scores. Major findings of the study include that instructional supervision help teachers to improve their professional growth, use relevant instructional materials, improve their teaching methods and evaluate pupils' learning outcome appropriately. The recommendations were that government should recruit adequate qualified supervisor, provide adequate funds for supervisors support as well as for organizing workshops, seminars and conferences for teachers. Above all, erring staff should be made to face appropriate disciplinary actions.

**Key words:** Instructional supervision, teachers' effectiveness, public primary schools, Ebonyi State.

## INTRODUCTION

Education in Nigeria has been identified as an instrument par excellence for effecting national development. This justifies the huge financial resources being allocated to education by the government, non-governmental organizations and private individuals. Because of the complex nature of the provision and management of education in the world over there is need for a unit designated to oversee the activities going on in the schools to ensure effective realization of educational goals in our nascent society especially at the primary

school level which is the bedrock of other levels of education. It is in line with this assumption that Aleke (2001) maintained that the development of any society starts from primary level of education and that if the foundation of a child is faulty at this level, it usually affects his or her future academic performance. It is in response to this overriding importance of primary education that both the federal and Ebonyi State government have declared free and compulsory basic education and primary/secondary education respectively.

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This gesture of the government was received with much enthusiasm by parents as the number of pupils' enrolment into primary schools increased astronomically without the corresponding number of teachers. Aleke (2001) also observed that Ebonyi State government in the bid to tackle this problem employed people with doubtful academic and professional qualification as teachers thus, increasing the role of school supervisors in order not to compromise quality. The importance of teachers in determining the quality of every level of education cannot be taken for granted since it is obvious that no education can rise above the quality of its teachers (Federal Republic of Nigeria FRN, 2004:38). Hill (1999) observed that teacher effectiveness was the key to improved educational outcome and suggested that the quality of teachers can be improved through effective supervision of instructional programme. The importance of supervision in the educational system cannot be over-emphasized especially faced with the challenging changes in the educational process. Experience has shown that many people are not always willing to do what they are expected to do without external control or monitoring in form of supervision. Ezeocha (1985) in Chike-Okoli (2006) noted that any type of assignments or projects that are undertaken by people and are not carefully supervised run into the danger of being haphazardly finished or not finished at all. He maintained that supervision helps to prevent waste of human/material resources in order to instill discipline in our schools and brings about improved school performance which is the cause of so many hue and cries in our society today. Enemu (2001) stated that instructional supervision is a planned and co-ordinated effort of supervisors to stimulate, help, advice, assist and guide the continued growth of teachers in the better understanding of more effective performance of their instructional functions. According to him, instructional supervision embraces all the activities leading to the improvement of instructional programme, boosting of teachers' moral, human relation, curriculum development and professional growth. Nwaogu (1980) in Nzegbulem and Anyaogu (2016) observed that instructional supervision helps to provide adequate conditions that are essential for effective learning through effective teaching methods. It also helps to improve teachers' capacity and methodology of impacting knowledge to the pupils. Ogbuagu (2016) posits that instructional supervision aims at seeing how the teacher manages the classroom, teachers' mastery of the subject matter and lesson delivery. This implies that instructional supervision makes the teachers to be effectively in-charge of the lesson to be taught and how to make the classroom conducive for the delivery of the lesson. Ukeje (1982) in Nwaneri and Ikwuegbu (2016) remarked that effective supervision of instruction helps to develop highly motivated teaching staff. He added that it ensures adequate use of instructional materials among teachers. Chike (2004)

summarized the roles of instructional supervision under the functions of a supervisor as follows:

- 1) Serves as a resource person, initiate ideas and suggestions and provides individual help to teachers in schools under their area of jurisdiction.
- 2) Acts as adviser to government by providing accurate knowledge of instructions and their suitability through assessment of the quality of teachers and their teaching techniques.
- 3) Provides reports on the progress of the schools in the attainment of the laid-down government objectives.
- 4) Works with the principals to engage in classroom visitation and sometimes demonstrate particular teaching method or use of relevant instructional materials.

### **Statement of the problem**

Despite the effort of various levels of government to provide quantitative and qualitative basic education in Nigeria, the result of pupils' performance in both internal and external examinations tends to be on a steady decline in primary schools. What this implied is that when the learner has not learnt, it means the teacher has not taught. If this popular saying is something to go by, then the question one would ask is how the expected roles of teachers could be enhanced to improve their professional competence in primary schools. Given this scenario, the problem of this study could be put in question form thus: how could instructional supervision enhance teachers' effectiveness in primary schools in Ebonyi State?

### **Purpose of the study**

The main purpose of the study was to examine the roles of instructional supervision in enhancing teachers' effectiveness in Ebonyi State public primary schools. Specifically, the study sought to:

- 1) Find out how instructional supervision help public primary school teachers to improve in their professional growth.
- 2) Ascertain how instructional supervision help public primary school teachers to use relevant instructional materials.
- 3) Examine how instructional supervision help public primary school teachers to improve their method of teaching.
- 4) Determine how instructional supervision help public primary school teachers in evaluation of learning outcome.

### **Scope of the study**

The study investigated the roles of instructional

supervision in enhancing teachers' effectiveness in Ebonyi State primary schools. It focused on finding out how instructional supervision help teachers to improve their professional growth, use relevant instructional materials, improve their methods of teaching and evaluate learning outcome.

### Research questions

The study was guided by the following research questions.

- 1) How does instructional supervision help public primary school teachers to improve in their professional growth?
- 2) How does instructional supervision help public primary school teachers to use relevant instructional materials?
- 3) How does instructional supervision help public primary school teachers to improve their methods of teaching?
- 4) How does instructional supervision help public primary school teachers in evaluation of learning outcome?

### RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Descriptive survey research design was adopted for the study because data were collected from a sample of the entire population of the study and the result of the findings generalized as the true characteristics of the targeted population (Nwankwo, 2013). The population of the study consists of all the 462,186 teachers including the head teachers in the 1035 public primary schools in Ebonyi State. (Source: Ebonyi State Secondary Education Board (SEB), 2015/2016 session school census).

Stratified random sampling technique was used to select 60 primary schools – 20 schools from each of the Abakaliki, Afikpo and Onueke education zones. The same method was used to select five teachers each including the head teacher from the schools selected. This gave a total sample size of 300 respondents.

The instrument used for data collection was a structured questionnaire developed by the researcher. It has 20 items arranged in four clusters. Each cluster was made up of five items which addressed each of the four research questions that guided the study. A four-point rating scale was the response format adopted with assigned values as follows:

|                        |   |          |
|------------------------|---|----------|
| Strongly Agree (SA)    | - | 4 points |
| Agree (A)              | - | 3 points |
| Disagree (D)           | - | 2 points |
| Strongly Disagree (SD) | - | 1 point  |

A test-retest method was used to establish the reliability of the instrument. The instrument was pilot tested with twenty (20) teachers from (10) primary schools in Enugu state which shared common characteristics with Ebonyi State for two consecutive times at two weeks intervals to establish the reliability of the instrument. The scores of the two tests were compared using Pearson product moment correlation co-efficient. The result showed a correlation coefficient of 0.81 which shows that the internal consistency of the instrument was high. The researcher administered the questionnaire personally to the respondents and collected same after completion. This ensured hundred percent return of the questionnaire administered.

The data collected were analyzed using the mean scores. A

mean score of 2.5 and above was considered as agree while any item with mean score below 2.5 was regarded as disagree.

### RESULTS

#### Research Question One: How does instructional supervision help teachers in their professional growth?

The analysis of the data in Table 1 showed that respondents agreed on items 1-3 as being applied by supervisors to help teachers grow in their profession. This implies that supervision of instruction in schools helps teachers improve their professional growth. They however disagreed with items 4 and 5 which mean that conferences and in-service training opportunities are rarely provided for teachers. This might be as a result of inadequate provision of funds by the government for the programme.

#### Research Question Two: How does instructional supervision help teachers to use relevant instructional materials?

Results of the data analyzed in Table 2 showed that the respondents agreed on all the items except item 8 as activities done by supervisors in the process of supervision of instruction in schools to help teachers locate and utilize relevant teaching materials. It is therefore evident from the result that instructional supervision is useful in enhancing teachers' selection/use of teaching materials in the classroom instructional programme given the grand mean of 2.62.

#### Research Question Three: How does instructional supervision help teachers to improve their methods of teaching?

Table 3 analyses showed that the respondents agreed that supervisors employ all the methods contained in items 11-15 in the process of supervising them except item 14 which indicates that slides are not used to show appropriate teaching method. However, the grand mean of 2.76 as shown in the table attests that instructional supervision helps to improve teachers' method of teaching.

#### Research Question Four: How does instructional supervision help teachers in evaluation of learning outcome?

From the analysis of data in Table 4, it is evident that the respondents agreed with the statements in items 16, 17, 18 and 20 but seem to disagree with item 19. This means

**Table 1.** Mean response of teachers on how instructional supervision help in improving their professional growth.

| S/N               | Item Statement  | SA  | A   | D   | SD  | N   | FX  | x          | Decision | X          | Decision |
|-------------------|---|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|------------|----------|------------|----------|
| 1                 | Teachers grow professionally through classroom visitation by supervisors        | 600 | 270 | 90  | 15  | 300 | 975 | 3.25       | Agree    | 3.25       | Agree    |
| 2                 | Teachers grow through workshops organized by supervisors                        | 300 | 360 | 150 | 30  | 300 | 840 | 2.8        | Agree    | 2.8        | Agree    |
| 3                 | Supervisors organize seminars to educate teachers on their condition of service | 360 | 315 | 120 | 45  | 300 | 840 | 2.8        | Agree    | 2.8        | Agree    |
| 4                 | Teachers are provided the opportunities to attend conferences                   | 300 | 10  | 150 | 90  | 300 | 720 | 2.4        | Disagree | 2.4        | Disagree |
| 5                 | Instructional supervisors inform teachers of in-service training opportunities  | 240 | 180 | 150 | 105 | 300 | 675 | 2.25       | Disagree | 2.25       | Disagree |
| <b>Grand mean</b> |   |     |     |     |     |     |     | <b>2.7</b> |          | <b>2.7</b> |          |

**Table 2.** Mean response of teachers on how instructional supervision help them in the use of relevant instructional materials.

| S/N               | Item Statement   | SA  | A   | D   | SD  | N   | FX  | X           | Decision | Decision |  |
|-------------------|--|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-------------|----------|----------|--|
| 6                 | Supervisors emphasize the use of instructional materials during supervision                    | 480 | 360 | 120 | 0   | 300 | 960 | 3.2         | Agree    | Agree    |  |
| 7                 | Supervisors demonstrate the use of relevant instructional materials                            | 360 | 270 | 120 | 30  | 300 | 780 | 2.6         | Agree    | Agree    |  |
| 8                 | Supervisors provide relevant instructional materials during supervision                        | 240 | 225 | 120 | 105 | 300 | 690 | 2.3         | Disagree | Disagree |  |
| 9                 | Supervisors help teachers improvise relevant instructional materials                           | 300 | 270 | 150 | 60  | 300 | 780 | 2.6         | Agree    | Agree    |  |
| 10                | Special workshops are organized for teachers on the selection / use of instructional materials | 240 | 270 | 180 | 60  | 300 | 750 | 2.5         | Agree    | Agree    |  |
| <b>Grand mean</b> |  |     |     |     |     |     |     | <b>2.62</b> |          |          |  |

**Table 3.** Mean response of teachers on how instructional supervision help to improve their method of teaching.

| S/N               | Item Statement   | SA  | A   | D   | SD | N   | FX  | X           | Decision | Decision |  |
|-------------------|--|-----|-----|-----|----|-----|-----|-------------|----------|----------|--|
| 11                | Appropriate method of teaching are emphasized during supervision               | 360 | 450 | 90  | 15 | 300 | 915 | 3.05        | Agree    | Agree    |  |
| 12                | Supervisor demonstrate appropriate teaching method during classroom visitation | 300 | 360 | 180 | 45 | 300 | 885 | 2.95        | Agree    | Agree    |  |
| 13                | Supervisors organise special course for teachers on teaching skills            | 240 | 450 | 150 | 15 | 300 | 855 | 2.85        | Agree    | Agree    |  |
| 14                | Teachers are shown appropriate teaching method with projectors                 | 180 | 225 | 180 | 90 | 300 | 675 | 2.25        | Disagree | Disagree |  |
| 15                | Teachers are given orientation on the appropriate teaching methods             | 240 | 360 | 180 | 30 | 300 | 810 | 2.7         | Agree    | Agree    |  |
| <b>Grand mean</b> |  |     |     |     |    |     |     | <b>2.76</b> |          |          |  |

that supervisors rarely demonstrate test administration process to teachers during supervision but other measures are applied by supervisors to help teachers understand the need and procedure of evaluation in the teaching- learning process.

## DISCUSSION

The result in Table 1 showed that teachers learn from the supervisors during classroom visitation, conferences, seminars and in-service training programmes though not

**Table 4.** Mean response of teachers on how instructional supervision help in their evaluation of learning outcome.

| S/N        | Item Statement   | SA  | A   | D   | SD | N   | FX  | x    | Decision | X    | Decision |
|------------|--|-----|-----|-----|----|-----|-----|------|----------|------|----------|
| 16         | Teachers are given formats for class tests during supervision  | 300 | 360 | 150 | 30 | 300 | 840 | 2.8  | Agree    | 2.8  | Agree    |
| 17         | Teachers class evaluation reports are checked during supervision   | 240 | 315 | 180 | 45 | 300 | 780 | 2.6  | Agree    | 2.6  | Agree    |
| 18         | Workbooks are provided to teachers for class tests during supervision                                      | 240 | 270 | 210 | 45 | 300 | 765 | 2.55 | Agree    | 2.55 | Agree    |
| 19         | Supervisors demonstrate appropriate test administration procedure to teachers in slides during supervision | 180 | 270 | 210 | 60 | 300 | 720 | 2.4  | Disagree | 2.4  | Disagree |
| 20         | Special sessions are organized for teachers on the correct recording of tests by supervisors               | 360 | 270 | 180 | 60 | 300 | 870 | 2.9  | Agree    | 2.9  | Agree    |
| Grand mean |  |     |     |     |    |     |     | 2.7  |          | 2.7  |          |

regular, the condition of service that will help them grow in their profession. This finding is in consonance with Enemuo (2005) who observed that instructional supervision embraces all the activities leading to the improvement of instruction and teachers' professional growth.

The results in Table 2 revealed that supervisors emphasize and demonstrate the use of instructional materials during supervision. Supervisors also help teachers improve their use of relevant instructional materials through special workshops on selection and use of instructional materials. This is in agreement with Atanda and Lameed (2006) who opined that instructional supervision can help to improve teaching and learning situations by advising and stimulating interest in teachers and pupils on the use of instructional aids.

The result of the data analyzed in Table 3 showed that supervisors emphasize and demonstrate appropriate teaching methods to teachers during supervision. Supervisors also organise orientation courses for teachers to educate them on the appropriate teaching skills and methods. This findings lead credence to Nwaogu (1980) in Nzegbulem and Anyaogu (2016)'s opinion that instructional supervision helps to improve teachers' capacity and methodology of impacting knowledge to pupils. The result of the data analyzed in Table 4 indicated that teachers are given formats for class tests during supervision. Teachers' class evaluation reports are checked and workbooks for class tests provided during supervision. It was also observed that supervisors' organise special sessions for teachers on the correct administration and recording of tests. However, it was equally gathered that supervisors do not use equipment like projectors and slides to relay to teachers their performance during supervision of instructional process. These findings were in tandem with the views of Ezeocha (1985) in Chike-Okoli (2006), who observed that evaluation is so vital that school supervisors must be satisfied and ensure that all facts of

the instructional program are evaluated and such record well preserved to serve as a feedback to parents, teachers, pupils, supervisors and the whole education system for the purpose of making references and improvement.

### Conclusion

The results of the data analyzed revealed that teachers are rarely given opportunities for in-service training and supervisors do not carry out their supervisory roles regularly. It was also observed that the supervisors do not look for relevant instructional materials during supervision nor demonstrate appropriate teaching methods test administration with projectors/slides during supervision so as to relay it to them for correction and above all, teachers are not given opportunities for conferences and in-service training supervisors do not to help them grow in their profession. However, it was obvious from what was observed that instructional supervision if carried out effectively will help teachers grow in their profession, locate and use relevant instructional materials, improve their methods of teaching and evaluation of pupils' learning outcome.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made; that:

- 1) The government through its agencies should overhaul the units in-charge of supervision of instruction in primary schools so that the desired goals of the system will be achieved.
- 2) Supervisors should be equipped with necessary materials and logistics that will enable them carry out their duties effectively.

3) Special funds should be provided by the government for organising regular teachers' conferences, workshops, seminars and in-service training programmes in order to keep them abreast of the desired changes in school system.

4) Supervisors and teachers should endeavour to discharge their duties according to their professional demand while erring staff should be made to face appropriate disciplinary measure.

5) Parents should assist in the monitoring of school activities and reporting observed lapses to the appropriate authority for necessary action.

## CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

The authors have not declared any conflict of interests.

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