



**PERCEPTIONS OF PRINCIPALS, HEADS OF DEPARTMENTS AND
TEACHERS REGARDING EFFECTIVENESS OF PRINCIPALS'
INSTRUCTIONAL SUPERVISION IN ASSISTING
TEACHERS IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF
THE CURRICULUM**

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Abstract:

The purpose of this study was to examine the Perceptions of Principals, Heads of Departments and Teachers Regarding Effectiveness of Principals' Instructional Supervision in Assisting Teachers in the Implementation of the Curriculum. This study adopted Developmental Supervision Theory by Glickman et al. Descriptive survey design which embraces both quantitative and qualitative approaches, was used. The study was carried out in public secondary schools in Nairobi and Kajiado counties in Kenya. The sample comprised of the following: 38 principals, 151 heads of departments and 289 teachers. This gave a sample size of 478 respondents. Stratified random sampling was used in selecting schools according to the following strata: boys' public secondary schools, girls' public secondary schools and mixed public secondary schools. Simple random sampling was used to select principals, heads of departments and teachers for the study. The instruments used to collect data were: Interview guide for principals, Questionnaire for principals, heads of departments and teachers. The validity of the content was determined by seeking expert judgment from specialists in the department of educational management, policy and curriculum studies; while the reliability of the instruments were ascertained by using Cronbach's alpha technique. The key finding of this study was that: Majority of principals either performed diligently but did not use appropriate skills or they lacked knowledge and skills on how to implement the curriculum as a task and responsibility in instructional supervision. Based on the findings, the researcher recommends that the TSC in connection with the MoE through the Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development (KICD) and Educational Management Institute should frequently organize in-service

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courses, seminars and workshops to train principals of secondary schools on curriculum development. This would allow them to perform their tasks effectively, and also guarantee effective instructional supervision in curriculum implementation in public secondary schools. The education policy makers also need to re-examine the contents of the policy and guide on how instructional supervision could be improved in the area of curriculum implementation.

Keywords: perceptions, effectiveness, principals' instructional supervision, implementation, curriculum 3-5 keywords

1. Introduction

Education plays an indispensable role as a catalyst that highly influences the economic fortunes and the development of any nation (Baffour-Awuah, 2011). Schools have been hailed to be the most active, suitable and central places where formal education can be accessed and sustained. In order to achieve high standards of education in a country, the utmost aim of schools therefore, should be to improve the quality of teaching and learning. According to Sergiovanni and Starratt (2002), this can only be achieved through an effective supervision in schools' instructional capacity which should improve teaching and also enhance students' performance. The teacher's role as an instructor in promoting curriculum and instruction cannot therefore be underestimated (Kutsyuruba, 2003).

In Kenya, the history of supervision began in 1911 (Ngelu, 2004) with the appointment of the first directorate of education. The duties of the directorate were to inspect, organize and supervise protectorate schools. Later, the Education Ordinance of 1924 reinforced supervision by empowering the government to supervise and take control of education. In order to execute this new responsibility, the inspection of schools through inspectors was then introduced. The school inspectors were to make sure that quality education was offered in Kenyan schools. Reports and papers based on research (Ministry of Education, Science and Technology, 2000a; Republic of Kenya 2003, 2004a, 2005a; Wasanga, 2004) revealed that with time the inspectors became corrupt and their aim was to find faults. The reports further identified ineffective instructional supervision as the main factor resulting in low quality education in Kenya (Kamindo, 2008).

The ministry of education mandated by the Education Act of the Laws of Kenya Chapter 211, through the Directorate of Quality Assurance and Standards (DQAS) recognized the significance of Quality Assurance Standards Officers (QASOs) to perform the role of supervision in improving the quality of education in general, but specifically to improve teachers' performance. This recognition has been manifested through school visits, monitoring, instructional guidance and making sure that quality is provided in public secondary schools. The ministry has also been offering in-service

courses for teachers and providing seminars and workshops for head teachers with an aim to improve curriculum implementation in schools (MoE and MoEST, 2012).

Today, supervision is seen as a two-way undertaking in which supervisors and supervisees dialogue with an intention of improving instruction which logically should be geared towards improving student learning and success in school (Sergiovanni and Starratt, 2002; Sullivan and Glanz, 2005). In order to attain the goals of supervision, supervisors commonly give advice, assist and support the teachers (Sergiovanni and Starratt, 2002; Hoy and Forsyth, 2006). Nolan (2007) contends that, in both supervision and staff development the centre of attention is teacher effectiveness in teaching. Both processes aim at improving teachers' instructional practices in a collaborative and judgment-free environment. Although the terms assessment, ranking, evaluation, and appraisal are all used together to describe supervisors' role, they do not precisely reflect the process of instructional supervision. Unfortunately, these are some of the approaches used by principals in public secondary schools in Kenya (Wanzare, 2013). The learner being the teacher must be the cause of all the efforts to enhance high standards in classroom instruction (Printy and Mark, 2004).

The quality of schools in a nation therefore depends on the high standards of training given to teachers. Students learn what is directly related to how and what teachers teach which highly depends on the skills and the knowledge they have gained through continuous learning and practice (Feiman-Nemser, 2001). Instructional supervision is therefore an essential tool in staff development (Watson and Supovitz, 2008). According to Glickman, Gordon and Ross-Gordon (2004), long-term objective of supervision is to develop teachers professionally towards a point where the teachers, coached by supervisors, can take complete charge of instructional enhancement. As part of the national education reform movement, accountability has become a familiar term in the Kenyan secondary school education (Musungu and Nasongo, 2008). With standards based and high-stakes testing, educators are required to be accountable for what and how students learn on a daily basis (Mumo, 2010). Nevertheless, quality education to a certain extent depends on the effectiveness of teachers' training and supervision since they are at the core of education delivery (Mitchell and Sackney, 2010).

2. Research Objective

To establish the effectiveness of principal's instructional supervision regarding their tasks and responsibilities as perceived by principals, HoDs and teachers in public secondary schools.

3. Research Question

What are the perceptions of principals of principals, head of departments and teachers regarding principals' effective instructional supervision in implementing the curriculum?

4. Research Hypothesis

There is no significant difference among principals, HoDs and teachers regarding their perceptions on principals' effective instructional supervision in assisting teachers in the implementation of the curriculum.

5. Literature Review

5.1 The Concept of Instructional Supervision

According to Beach and Reinhartz (2000), instructional supervision is a process that concentrates on instruction and how teachers can improve their instructional skills in order to be able to develop professionally. Sergiovanni and Staratt (2002) regards this improvement as focusing on teacher's skills, attitude, knowledge and ability to make informed decisions and solve problems much better; which eventually may lead to quality in teaching and learning. Bays (2001) on the other hand, perceive instructional supervision as specifically concerned with the improvement of the curriculum instruction. This includes giving proficient teachers a chance to discover ways for improving professionally (Hoy and Miskel, 2008).

Glickman et al (2001) views another aspect of supervision and defines it as the act of directing, assessing, overseeing, and evaluating employees in order to achieve the organizational goals. Glickman et al., further add that, it is the link between the needs of the teacher and the goals of the organization, through work done harmoniously to achieve the school's vision. Cogan (2004) and Goldhammer (2008) note that when the environment for supervision is conducive, the supervisor and the teacher are able to develop and experience a strong and lively working relationship. Instructional supervision also aims at providing support, encouragement and guidance. This can only be successful in an environment based on a collaborative culture and the existence of trust between the supervisors and the supervisees (Beach and Reinhartz, 2000). Kutsyuruba (2003) views supervision in an educational perspective and further proposes that teachers should be given an opportunity to engage in teaching processes, and participate in activities that entail professional development with an aim of enhancing instruction. Glickman et al., (2004) add their voices on this and propose instructional supervision as a function that brings together all the elements of instructional supervision involving the whole school system.

5.2 The Role of the Principal in Effective Instructional Supervisory Practices

The concept, instructional supervisory practices revolve around the principal as an instructional leader. Instructional leadership refers to aspects of behaviour designed to affect classroom instruction (Adul, Akinloye and Olabisi, 2014). These behaviour entail activities such as teaching practices, professional competency, curriculum implementation and classroom instruction meant to improve teaching and learning, and providing an atmosphere conducive to the same (Alkrdem, 2011 and Chike-Okoli, 2006). Principals therefore are instrumental in terms of teacher professional development and efficiency. Research has indicated that the principal's role as an instructional supervisor has a direct bearing on the success of teaching as well as learning (Cotton, 2003).

5.3 Curriculum Implementation

Curriculum is the core of a school's existence as an institution. It comprises of what is to be taught although it is not a creation of individual teachers but a design of national goals of education aimed at improving instruction (Glickman et al, 2004). As far as curriculum implementation is concerned, the instructional supervisors should provide teachers with the opportunities for changes in the curriculum and materials in order to improve instruction and learning. This is necessary for instructional improvement due to the need for enhancing collective thinking by the instructional supervisor on one hand, and teachers on the other (Tesema, 2014).

Ousman and Mukuna (2013) in their study on improving instructional leadership in schools, listed down the duties of the principals in curriculum implementation as follows: recommends relevant material resources such as textbooks, work hand in hand with the HoDs to review the curriculum to suit classroom instruction, advise teachers on curriculum changes, encourage teachers to participate in curriculum development through in-service training. In support of Ousman and Mukuna, Ifeoma (2010) posit that, in order to enhance activities for implementation of the curriculum, principals should be at the forefront to make sure that they provide material resources and to encourage teaching and learning. He further indicates that principals should in communicating to teachers about goals and visions to enhance instructional innovations: give support to teachers to brainstorm on curriculum changes that improve academic standards among students and identify main principles that the staff require to learn as a component of core curriculum in any subject domain.

Curriculum implementation has become one of the major functions of instructional supervisor in schools (Morki, 2010). Oghuvbu (2001) claimed that supervision of instruction involves the process of checking the positive implementation of curriculum and assisting teachers who are implementing it. Oghuvbu saw instructional supervision as an assistance concerned with establishing a positive, superior and subordinate relationship, with special emphasis on specialization directed towards the utilization of available teachers in achieving the school's goals. According to McNeil and Dull (cited in Chanyalew, 2005), the major responsibilities of supervisors

in curriculum development process are: to assist individual teachers in determining more appropriate instructional objectives for the learners in a specific classroom so as to improve the curriculum, plan and implement a well-established in-service training program, aid in goal definitions and selections at local, state and federal level and to work closely with administrators to establish roles that are expected of consultants who are outside the school (Tesema, 2014).

In Kenya, the Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development (KICD) Act No. 4 of 2013 is the main body mandated to develop curricular for schools in Kenya. They are expected to liaise with the stakeholders and in particular, the principals to ensure proper implementation of the curriculum. Despite well-defined procedures on how to conduct curriculum instruction, Osman and Mukuna (2013) in their work on improving instructional leadership in schools found out that there is poor instructional supervision in the area of curriculum implementation by principals. They cited laxity among principals in public secondary schools and lack of proper instruction. Effective curriculum implementation can only succeed if experts engage in thorough training of principals in line with emerging trends in curriculum, and how to implement it (Geijsel, Slegers, Stoel and Kruger 2007).

Although majority of scholars have explained and listed the tasks of the principals as far as implementation of the curriculum is concerned, some of them have also expressed their views on the urgent need of in-service training for the principals. This study established that principals worked diligently but did not use appropriate skills and knowledge in implementing the curriculum. The current study further recommended that more in-service courses and workshops to be conducted with the assistance of KICD; mainly to enlighten the principals and the heads of departments on the implementation of the curriculum.

6. Research Methodology

Descriptive survey design which embraces both quantitative and qualitative approaches was used to carry out the study. The sample comprised of 38 principals, 151 heads of departments and 289 teachers in Nairobi and Kajiado counties, totaling 478 respondents. Stratified random sampling was used in selecting schools according to the following strata: boys' public secondary schools, girls' public secondary schools and mixed public secondary schools. Simple random sampling was used to select principals, heads of departments and teachers for the study. The instruments used to collect data were: Interview guide for principals, Questionnaire for principals, heads of departments and teachers. The validity of the content was determined through expert judgment from specialists in the department of educational management, policy and curriculum studies; while the reliability of the instruments were ascertained by using Cronbach's alpha technique. Qualitative data was analyzed thematically, while Quantitative data was analyzed using descriptive statistics and presented in frequencies and percentages. The Null hypothesis was analyzed using Kruskal-Wallis test statistics.

7. Results and Discussion

7.1 Principals' perception on Instructional Supervision with regard to their tasks and responsibilities in implementing the Curriculum

Implementation of the curriculum comprises putting into practice what is to be taught as a design of the national goals of education in a country (Tesema, 2014). The principal's role therefore entails advising teachers on how to implement the curriculum, allow teachers' views and ideas on how to implement the curriculum, direct HoDs to review the curriculum to suit classroom instruction, advise teachers concerning new developments in the curriculum, authorizing the purchase of recommended textbooks for teaching and learning; and encouraging teachers to participate in curriculum development through attending in-service courses. The respondents were required to indicate their responses on a three-point Likert scale as follows: 3-Effective (E) 2-Somewhat effective (SE) 1-Ineffective (I)

The study sought principals' perception on Instructional Supervision with regard to the effectiveness of their performance in the implementation of the curriculum. The results are presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Principals' perception on Instructional Supervision with regard to their performance in implementing the curriculum

Tasks and responsibilities	Effective 3		Somewhat effective 2		Ineffective 1	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
Advise teachers on how to implement the curriculum.	17	50.0	17	50.0	-	-
Allow teachers' views and ideas on how to implement the curriculum.	20	58.8	14	41.2	-	-
Direct HoDs to review the curriculum to suit classroom instruction	27	79.4	7	20.6	-	-
Advise teachers concerning new developments in the curriculum.	21	61.8	12	35.3	1	2.9
Encourage teachers to participate in curriculum development through attending in-service courses.	17	50.0	17	50.0	-	-
Authorize the purchase of recommended textbooks.	28	82.4	5	14.7	1	2.9

Table 1 indicates that 28(82.4%) of the principals perceived their performance as effective in authorizing the purchase of recommended textbooks, 27(79.4%) in directing HoDs to review the curriculum, 21(61.8%) in advising teachers concerning new developments in the curriculum and 20(58.8%) in allowing teachers' views and ideas on how to implement the curriculum. However, 17(50%) principals perceived their performance as somewhat effective in advising teachers on how to implement the curriculum and in encouraging teachers to participate in curriculum development through attending in-service courses, while only 1(2.9%) principal perceived their

performance as ineffective in advising teachers concerning new developments in the curriculum and another 1(2.9%), on authorizing the purchase of recommended textbooks.

The Heads of Departments were also required to rate the effectiveness of principals' performance on the same tasks and responsibilities pertaining to the implementation of the curriculum. Table 2 presents the results.

Table 2: HoDs' perception on Instructional Supervision
 with regard to principals' performance on implementation of the curriculum

Tasks and responsibilities	Effective 3		Somewhat effective 2		Ineffective 1	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
	Advise teachers on how to implement the curriculum.	33	24.6	63	47.0	38
Allow teachers' views and ideas on how to implement the curriculum.	33	24.6	86	64.2	15	11.2
Direct HoDs to review the curriculum to suit classroom instruction	70	52.2	50	37.3	14	10.4
Advise teachers concerning new developments in the curriculum.	73	54.5	50	37.3	11	8.2
Encourage teachers to Participation in curriculum development through attending in-service courses.	39	29.1	76	56.7	19	14.2
Authorize the purchase of recommended textbooks.	82	61.2	48	35.8	4	3.0

According to information in Table 4.6, 82(61.2%) of the HoDs perceived the principals' performance as effective in authorizing the purchase of recommended textbooks by teachers, 73(54.5%) in advising teachers concerning new developments in the curriculum and 70(52.2%) in directing HoDs to review the curriculum to suit classroom instruction. However, 86(64.2%) and 76(56.7%) of the HoDs perceived principals' performance as somewhat effective in allowing teachers' views and ideas on how to implement the curriculum and also in encouraging teachers to participate in curriculum development through attending in-service courses, while 38(28.4%) of the HoDs, perceived principals' performance as ineffective in advising teachers on how to implement the curriculum.

Teachers were also required to rate the effectiveness of their principals' performance on the same tasks and responsibilities pertaining to the implementation of the curriculum. Results are shown in Table 3.

Omondi Everlyn Atieno, Olembo Jotham, Adino G. Onyango
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 EFFECTIVENESS OF PRINCIPALS' INSTRUCTIONAL SUPERVISION IN ASSISTING TEACHERS
 IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CURRICULUM

Table 3: Teachers' perception on Instructional Supervision
 with regard to principals' performance on Implementation of the Curriculum

Tasks and responsibilities	Effective 3		Somewhat effective 2		Ineffective 1	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
Advise teachers on how to implement the curriculum.	55	22.4	146	60.8	41	16.7
Allow teachers' views and ideas on how to implement the curriculum.	99	40.4	110	44.9	36	14.7
Direct HoDs to review the curriculum	119	48.6	95	38.8	31	12.7
Advise teachers concerning new developments in the curriculum.	82	35.5	126	51.4	37	15.1
Encourage teachers to participation in curriculum development through attending in-service courses.	100	40.8	120	49.0	25	10.2
Authorize the purchase of recommended textbooks.	112	45.7	104	42.4	29	11.8

Table 3 shows that 119(48.6%) of the teachers perceived principals' performance as effective in directing HoDs to review the curriculum to suit classroom instruction, 112(45.7%) in authorizing the purchase of recommended textbooks by teachers on curriculum implementation and 100(40.8%) in encouraging teachers to participate in curriculum development through in-service courses. Table 4.7 further shows that 146(60.8%) and 126(51.4%) of the teachers perceived principals' performance as somewhat effective in advising teachers on how to implement the curriculum and also advising them on new developments in the curriculum. Out of 245 teachers, 41(16.7%) perceived principals' performance as ineffective in advising them on how to implement the curriculum.

With regard to implementation of the curriculum, 50% and above of the principals perceived their performance as effective in all the tasks and responsibilities. Heads of departments' and teachers' perceptions were in agreement with that of the principals' in only three areas: authorizing the purchase of recommended textbooks, directing HoDs to review the curriculum to suit classroom instruction and advising teachers concerning new developments in the curriculum. However, there seems to be a departure on HoDs' and teachers' perceptions on principals' performance in advising teachers on how to implement the curriculum of which, they perceived as ineffective.

The findings on authorizing the purchase of recommended textbooks are consistent with a study done by Ifeoma (2010) who concludes that, in order to improve activities concerning implementation of the curriculum, principals should be at the forefront to make sure that they provide material resources and give support to teachers. From the three areas of effective perceptions by all the three respondents, it is clear that principals purchased books as directed by teachers without any knowledge of the curriculum. This was an assumption by the principals that the teachers who are the facilitators and subject matter experts have the skills and knowledge as far as the curriculum is concerned. The principals simply directed the HoDs to review the curriculum to suit classroom instruction. Furthermore, they encouraged the teachers to

participate in curriculum development through attending in-service courses. This is a clear indication that principals did not participate in the implementation of the curriculum due to lack of skills and knowledge to advise and assist teachers in the area of curriculum implementation. This is contrary to Ifeoma's (2010) further findings and conclusions that, the principal should involve teachers to brainstorm on curriculum changes that improve academic standards among students and identify main principles that the teachers require to learn as a component of core curriculum in any subject domain.

A further interrogation was done by the researcher to seek in-depth information from the principals through face to face interview on how they advise and assist teachers on how to implement the curriculum. Some of the principals however, have left the entire process of curriculum implementation to KICD. This can be supported by the following statement from one of the principals:

"Why should I do that? KICD is supposed to be dealing with that. I do not even have time for it."

The following were also some of the comments made by various principals:

"I only discuss students' progress concerning their class work." (Principal 1)

"I provide them with teaching and learning materials. I also allow them to attend workshops and seminars concerning curriculum implementation." (Principal 2)

"I check records of work, lesson plans and class attendance to ensure coverage of the curriculum." (Principal 3)

From the principals' feedback there was further proof that principals had no skills and knowledge on how to implement the curriculum.

These findings are shared by the following scholars' sentiments who explained that curriculum implementation can only be effective if experts engage in thorough training of principals in line with emerging trends in curriculum, and how to implement it (Geijsel, Slegers, Stoel and Kruger, 2007). This explains the reason why principals only advised teachers concerning new developments in the curriculum but shied away from advising and assisting teachers on how to implement the curriculum. Similarly, Dawo (2011) asserts that, a principal should be at least a quasi-curriculum expert in order to be able to plan and carry out the implementation of the curriculum; for example as a facilitator, counselor, coach, role model and more significantly as an instructional supervisor.

This study also sought to establish whether perceived differences among principals', HoDs' and teachers' responses were statistically significant. Kruskal-Wallis H test was used to test the hypotheses after ranking the data from all the groups

together and assigning them whichever tied values of the total average ranks they would have otherwise received if they hadn't been tied (Kothari, 2004).

The formula below was used to test the hypotheses:

$$H = (N - 1) \frac{\sum_{i=1}^g n_i (\bar{r}_i - \bar{r})^2}{\sum_{i=1}^g \sum_{j=1}^{n_i} (r_{ij} - \bar{r})^2}$$

Where:

n_i is the total number of all observations in i group;

r_{ij} is the total rank among all observers of j observation from group i ;

N is the total of all the numbers observed in all the groups;

$\bar{r}_i = \frac{\sum_{j=1}^{n_i} r_{ij}}{n_i}$ is the total average rank which include observations in i group;

$\bar{r} = \frac{1}{2} (N + 1)$ is the total average including all the r_{ij}

P-value was estimated by $\Pr(\chi_{g-1}^2 \geq H)$ (Kothari, 2004).

The hypothesis was tested using Kruskal Wallis H test: There is no significant difference among principals, HoDs and teachers regarding their perception on principals' effective instructional supervision in assisting teachers in the implementation of the curriculum.

The findings are shown in Table 4.

Table 4: Kruskal-Wallis Test on HoDs', Principals', and Teachers' perceptions on Principals' Instructional Supervision regarding Implementation of the Curriculum

Tasks and responsibilities	Kruskal - Wallis Test	
	Chi-Square	P-Value
Advise teachers on how to implement the curriculum.	17.567	0.000
Allow teachers' views and ideas on how to implement the curriculum.	14.259	0.001
Direct HoDs to review the curriculum to suit classroom instruction	12.458	0.002
Advise teachers concerning new developments in the curriculum.	22.328	0.000
Encourage teachers to participation in curriculum development through attending in-service courses.	9.603	0.008
Authorize the purchase of recommended textbooks.	22.566	0.000

Table 4 shows that there was significant statistical difference among principals', HoDs' and teachers' perception on principals' effective instructional supervision in all the tasks and responsibilities under curriculum implementation. All the P-values 0.000, 0.001, 0.002, 0.000, 0.008 and 0.000 were less than the level of significance 0.05. This

meant that although there were no difference among principals', HoDs' and teachers' perceptions on principals' effective performance in authorizing the purchase of recommended textbooks by teachers, directing HoDs to review the curriculum to suit classroom instruction and advising teachers concerning new developments in the curriculum as well as HoDs' and teachers' perceptions on principals' ineffective performance in the implementation of the curriculum, the statistically significant differences were small and therefore the null hypothesis was rejected.

8. Recommendations

For school's instructional supervision to excel in implementing the curriculum, the study made the following recommendation: The TSC in connection with the MoE through the Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development should frequently organize in-service courses, seminars and workshops for principals of secondary schools to train and acquire knowledge and skills. This would allow them to perform their tasks effectively, and also guarantee effective instructional supervision in curriculum implementation in public secondary schools.

9. Conclusion

The study summarizes that principals performance was effective in authorizing the purchase of recommended textbooks, advising teachers concerning new developments in the curriculum and directing HoDs to review the curriculum to suit classroom instruction. The study also summarized that principals' performance was ineffective in advising teachers on how to implement the curriculum. With regard to implementation of the curriculum, this study therefore concludes that, principals did not have adequate skills and knowledge on how to implement the curriculum.

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IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CURRICULUM

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