

In-Service Training Needs of School Principals in Instructional Supervision for Teachers in Public Secondary Schools in Nigeria

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Abstract: *This study was designed to examine in-service training needs of principals in instructional supervision in public secondary schools in Ebonyi State. To accomplish the purpose of the study, four specific objectives and four hypotheses were posed to verify the study. The design for the study was the descriptive study design. Data were collected from a sample of 605 out of the population of 1640 teachers randomly selected by stratified proportionate technique across urban and rural schools, in Abakaliki Education, Ebonyi state. A researcher developed instrument titled “In-Service Training Needs of Principals in Instructional Supervision for teachers in Public Secondary School Questionnaire (ITPSTPSSQ)” was used data for collection. Data were analyzed using mean scores, standard (SD) and t-test statistics. Results indicated that a significant difference existed between urban and rural teachers on principals’ in-services training need functions on classroom supervision of instruction, monitoring students’ achievement, provision and maintenance of instructional materials, and supporting continuous staff development. The study recommends that the school principals as an instructional leader should give internal supervisions of instructions its rightful place in the school for the purpose of staff growth and development.*

Keywords: *Principal, Supervision, Instructional supervision, internal supervision and Professional development.*

1. INTRODUCTION

In any school organization especially the public secondary schools setting in Nigeria, there must be a principal who occupies a high status position by virtue of his appointment as the school head. Research studies by Bush and Jackson (2002) and Fink (2005) indicate that preparation and development of school principals can lead to school effectiveness and improvement in leadership qualities. The vitality of school lies under his functional leadership traits and his ability to stimulate and same time invigorate his teachers and students to achieve institutional goals and objectives. The principal as an institutional leader is charged with the responsibility of improving instructional programme for effective attainment of set school goals. Teacher’s professional development programmes according to Bua, Dick, Nwajiaku & Okpala (2015) are outlined skills, knowledge and ongoing learning opportunities undertaken to improve teachers ability and grow professionally. Proper application of teachers development programmes by school principals improves teachers’ capacities to fit in assignments optimally for higher achievements which result quality service delivery. The Federal Republic of Nigeria (FRN, 2013) and Litchfield (2003) identified management of curriculum and instruction, supervision of classroom instruction, monitoring and evaluating students’ progress and achievement; promotion; enhancing learning environment, establishing and supporting continuous staff development and procuring instructional materials for teaching and learning as major supervisory functions of secondary school principals. The school principal is expected to perform some other administrative duties like planning, organizing controlling and coordinating the activities of the school. In his study, Lawal cited in Ngala & Odebero (2010) affirmed that professional in-service training development for teachers is an aspect of education process that deal with the art of acquiring skills in teaching profession, enhancing subject mastery, teaching methodology and classroom management. Put differently, the object of in-service training of teacher applied by school principal through instructional supervision is to ensure the promotion of professional growth, improvement of pedagogical skills, keeping teachers abreast with new knowledge, meeting particular needs such as curriculum development and leadership responsibilities. Furthermore, principals assist new entrants to adjust to teaching field and recognize the needs for modern teaching method.

However school principal are faced with other difficult challenges emanating from the school immediate community and environs, Ministry of Education and Secondary Education Board (Nwite, 2010). Again Weller (2001) remarked that school principals devote more of their time attending to visitors more than supervising instructions in the classroom. It is therefore unfortunate that instructional supervisory functions recognized as cardinal role of the school principal could be lost sight of in the midst of variety of roles. Again school location affects the quality and thoroughness of instructional supervisions. 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 in the effective realization of educational objectives. Donaldson (2007) reflected the importance of teachers in giving complementary assistance to principals' 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 this teacher 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, poor implementation of continuous assessment in the classroom, ineffective implementation of continuous assessment, examination malpractices, students riot, and high rate of indiscipline among many others that can explain the situation is the lack of appropriate supervisory skills by principals. This study therefore, sought to determine the level of school principals' performance in supervision of instruction in public secondary schools in Ebonyi State and use it to determine the need indicator for in-service training for improvement.

2. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The success of any level of education is hinged on the quality, regular and continuous supervision of instruction of the education system. The problem of ineffective supervision especially internal supervision of instruction by the school principals in public secondary schools in Ebonyi State is a phenomenon that has not been given much attention it deserves. Principals generally seem to spend more of their official hours on routine administrative functions to the detriment of effective instructional supervision process and programmes of school. Little seem to have been done by Ministry of Education, stakeholders in education to arrest the situation. Public outcry, reports and comments in print and electronic media alleging fallen standard of education in public secondary education seem to reveal in part that internal supervision is probably not effectively carried out by principals in the public secondary schools. This is evident in West Africa Examinational Council (WAEC 2011). Research Division annual Report 2011, stated that less than 50 % of the students had credit pass in Mathematics, 40% in English and 40% in Biology and other Sciences related subjects. In 2013 the same Research Division Report revealed that only 31:28% had 5 credits including English and Mathematics what a decreasing situation? Stakeholders and even parents attributed poor students' academic performance to poor quality of instructions by teachers and ineffective internal supervision of instruction leadership by the school principals.

The situations create doubts as to whether the school principles fully carryout effective instructional supervision or provides opportunities for in-service training of the staff in their schools. Consequent upon this, students performance have remained at a lower level in Senior Secondary School Certificate (SSCE) and JAMB Examinations respectively. This study therefore, sought to establish instructional supervision functions of the school principals. It was assumed that ineffective in-service training needs of principals in instructional supervision of instruction by school principals seems to have affected the realization of education objectives in Ebonyi State.

3. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

Specifically the study tend to:

1. Determine principal's performance in supervision of classroom instructions.
2. Examine principals' performance in monitoring students' achievement.
3. Determine principals' performance in provision and maintenance of instructional materials.
4. Ascertain principals' level of performance in establishing and supporting continuous staff development.

Hypothesis

Four null hypotheses were formulated to guide the study:

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Ho₁: There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of urban and rural teachers on principals performance in supervision of classroom instructions.

Ho₂: There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of urban and rural teachers on principals performance in monitoring students achievement.

Ho₃: There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of urban and rural teachers on principals performance in the provision and maintenance of instructional materials.

Ho₄: There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of urban and rural teachers on principals' performance of establishing and supporting staff development.

4. METHOD

This study is a descriptive survey conducted in Abakaliki Education Zone of the State. The study covered 142 public secondary schools within the education zone. The populations of the study were all the teachers in Abakaliki Education Zone numbering 2435 teachers. A stratified sampling technique was used to select 605 teachers (25%) representing 304 urban and 301 rural teachers in the zone. The instrument for data collection was a researcher self-designed questionnaire titled 'In-service training needs of principals in Instructional Supervision Questionnaire (ISTPISQ)'. Experts in the Department of Educational Foundations and Measurement and Evaluation validated the instrument.

The data generated from the trail testing of the instrument was analyzed using Cornbch Alpha formula procedure and was used to compute the reliability which yielded a co-efficient value of 0.85 for internal consistency of the items. The data collected were analyzed using mean (\bar{x}) score, standard deviation (SD) and t-test statistics to test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance.

5. RESULTS

The result of the data analyzed is shown on table 1.

Ho₁: There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of urban and rural teachers on principals performance in supervision of classroom instructions.

Table1. T-test Analysis of Urban and Rural Schools on Principals' Supervision of Classroom Instructions

S/N	Item Statement (Principals)	Location	N	\bar{x}	SD	t-cal	t-cril
1.	Meets regularly with teachers to discuss instructional improvement.	Urban	304	3.38	.81	9.80*	1.96
		Rural	301	2.88	.77		
2.	Monitors lesson plan and notes	Urban	304	3.28	.68	8.04*	1.96
		Rural	301	2.82	.77		
3.	Delegates vice principals to monitor classes	Urban	304	3.38	.81	8.03*	1.96
		Rural	301	2.88	.77		
4.	Instructs Vice Principals to inspect student's notes	Urban	304	3.47	.53	14.29*	1.96
		Rural	301	2.80	.63		
5.	Uses incentives and rewards to encourage teachers	Urban	304	1.94	.75	2.67*	1.96
		Rural	301	2.09	.64		
6.	Uses appropriate supervisory techniques	Urban	304	3.36.	.49	8.40*	1.96
		Rural	301	2.94	.76		
7.	Often meets with students to discuss instructional problems	Urban	304	3.30	.55	10.24*	1.96
		Rural	301	2.80	.69		
8.	Encourages teachers to utilized supervisor's suggestions.	Urban	304	3.28	.88	9.01*	1.96
		Rural	301	2.74	.55		
9.	Observes classroom instruction to ensure curriculum coverage.	Urban	304	3.04	.50	8.33*	1.96
		Rural	301	3.01	.74		

*Significant ($P < 0.5$)

The presentation on table 1, show that the calculated t-value for each item is greater than t-critical value of 1.96. Since the t-calculated values are greater than t-critical values, the null hypothesis is rejected. This implies that a significant difference existed between urban and rural secondary school teachers' perception of principals supervision of classroom instruction in the state.

Ho₂: There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of urban and rural teachers on principals performance in students' monitoring students achievement.

Table2. T-test Analysis of Urban and Rural Secondary Schools on Principals' Performance in Monitoring Students' Achievement

S/N	Item Statement (Principals)	Location	N	\bar{x}	SD	t-cal	t-cril
10.	Cooperates with teachers to establish criterion for students' assessment	Urban	304	3.29	.99	3.67*	1.96
		Rural	301	3.53	.58		
11.	Encourage teachers to use specific objectives criterion for students' assessment.	Urban	304	2.47	.65	3.59*	1.96
		Rural	301	2.61	.73		
12.	Display high expectation for students' academic performance	Urban	304	3.50	.44	1.80*	1.96
		Rural	301	3.52	.59		
13.	Maintains accurate and effective record of CA	Urban	304	1.72	.60	2.29*	1.96
		Rural	301	1.83	.58		
14.	Addresses teachers' inefficiency	Urban	304	3.52	.56	3.69*	1.96
		Rural	301	3.29	.99		
15.	Principals display leadership role and support to students discipline	Urban	304	3.54	.53	.83	1.96
		Rural	301		.56		

*Significant ($P < 0.5$)

As indicated on table 2, t-calculated for items 10, 11, 13, and 14 are all greater than the t-table of 1.96, therefore the null hypothesis stood rejected. This means that there is significant difference in the mean ratings of teachers on principal's performance in monitoring students' achievement in urban and rural schools in the state. On the contrary, the t-calculated for each item 12 and 15 is less than t-critical value; the null hypothesis is therefore accepted. This implies that there is no significant difference in the mean ratings of teachers in principals' in-service training needs in monitoring of students achievements in urban and rural secondary schools in the state.

Ho₃: There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of urban and rural teachers on principals performance on the provision and maintenance of instructional materials.

Table3. T-test Analysis of Urban and Rural Principals' Performance on the Provision and Maintenance of Instructional Materials

S/N	Item	Location	N	\bar{x}	SD	t-cal	t-cril
16.	Collects lists of instructions materials needed in school	Urban	304	1.72	.49	9.69*	1.96
		Rural	301	1.34	.46		
17.	Distributes instructional materials to classes.	Urban	304	3.87	.33	10.74*	1.96
		Rural	301	3.70	.46		
18.	Provides writing materials	Urban	304	1.89	.46	11.30*	1.96
		Rural	301	1.26	.49		
19.	Provides modern instructional materials such as ICT tools.	Urban	304	2.53	.55	2.29*	1.96
		Rural	301	2.48	.69		
20.	Pay prompt attention to maintenance of instructional materials.	Urban	304	1.88	.63	1.13*	1.96
		Rural	301	1.89	.90		

*Significant ($P < 0.5$)

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In table 3, the t-calculated for items 16, 17 and 18 are greater than t-critical value of 1.96. Since the t-calculated for the items are greater item t-critical the null hypothesis was rejected. The conclusion is that a significant positive difference existed. Items 19 and 20 had t-calculated less then t-critical, the null hypothesis was accepted. This implies that there is no significant difference in the urban and rural schools on the provision and maintenance of instructional materials.

Ho₄: There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of urban and rural teachers on principals’ performance of establishing and supporting staff development.

Table4. T-test Analysis of Urban and Rural Principals’ Performance in Establishing and supporting Staff Development

S/N	Item	Location	N	\bar{x}	SD	t-cal	t-cril
21.	Encourage teachers to go for in-service training	Urban	304	2.51	.50		
		Rural	301	2.70	.49	4.69*	1.96
22.	Sponsors teachers for seminars/workshops	Urban	304	1.79	.79		
		Rural	301	1.78	.79	.30	1.96
23.	Organizes in house conference and seminars	Urban	304	1.68	.78		
		Rural	301	1.81	.80	2.00*	1.96
24.	Approves study leave for teachers	Urban	304	3.49	.57		
		Rural	301	3.44	.54	1.26*	1.96
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
26.	Recommends teachers who have completed their in-training for promotion	Urban	304	3.47	.56		
		Rural	301	3.26	.63	4.32*	1.96
27.	Encourages teachers’ input in scheduling their development programme	Urban	304	1.56	.59		
		Rural	301	2.13	.73	10.56*	1.96
28.	Seeks 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
29.	Recognizes the need to support teachers to develop professionally	Urban	304	2.24	.49		
		Rural	301	2.51	.50	6.68*	1.96
30.	Directs the activities of teachers towards professional development	Urban	304	1.64	.68		
		Rural	301	2.19	.76	9.62*	1.96

*Significant ($P < 0.5$)

In table 4, the t-calculated for each item 21, 23, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30 is higher than t-table for 1.96. Since the t-critical value is greater than the table value, the null hypothesis is therefore rejected. That shows that there is a significant difference between the mean ratings of urban rural teachers on principals’ performance in establishing support for staff development. Whereas, in item 22 and 24 the t-calculated value is less than t-table value, the null hypothesis is accepted. This means that there is no significant difference in principals’ performance in establishing and supporting staff development in urban and rural schools in Ebonyi state.

6. DISCUSSION

The result of the data analyzed as shown on table 1, all the items on principals’ supervisory function in classroom instruction based on location were greater than t-critical value of 1.96. Since the calculated t. values were greater than the t-critical value, the null hypothesis 1 was rejected. This means that a significant 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’ classroom supervision. The difference could also be attributed to principals’ supervisory dispositions. The urban principals could be busier with other administrative functions, having less attention to visit

the classroom. The rural principals on their side might be confronted with rural challenges at the detriment of supervising classroom instruction. This finding is consistent with the finding of Whitakers (1997) Hanghey and Mac Elon (1998) and Wller (2007), Egwu (2009) Osakinle, Onijigan & Falana (2010), these scholars empirical studies who maintained that instructional supervision was a fundamental component of instructional leadership of the school principal and viewed principal's role as imperative to improve instruction. If schools are to achieve set educational objectives, the principals should not allow other daily activities to interfere with the classroom supervisory functions in view of the facts that the operations of school enterprise lies with classroom environment all other activities are supportive as the school principals are considered first and foremost internal school supervisors.

In table 2, the result showed that the **t**-calculated of four (4) out of six (6) on supervisory functions of principals with 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 definitely 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, the situation is likely going to affect their final assessments result. The data analysed showed that two (2) out of six (6) items on monitoring students assessment had **t**-calculated less than **t**-critical value. The null hypothesis was accepted. This implies that principals irrespective of school location do monitor students' achievements with respect to display of high expectations and lending of leadership support to students. The finding is in accord with Fulan, (1996), Fulan and Hargreaves (1996) and Brooker (2007) who affirmed that the effective school principal with higher expectation is more focused on students' achievements. The finding of this study also revealed that principals cannot alone supervise and maintain accurate record keeping, address poor attitude and behaviour of teachers without immediate assistants the vice principals since students are the centre of educational process, more importantly, all attitude towards their academic achievements should be fully monitored. Principals should as much as possible make use of their vice principal's (academic and administration) and dean of studies to effectively assist monitoring students achievement.

Result of the study on table 3 showed that the **t**-calculated in all the items with respect to principal's supervisory functions in the provision and maintenance of instructional materials with regard to school location were greater than **t**-critical values. The null hypothesis was rejected. Reasons that could be adduced to this finding may include uneven distribution of school amenities between urban and rural schools, special attention not given by government to provide adequate fund and modern instructional materials ICT inclusive. Aduw and Ede, (2006) noted in their studies that teaching and learning required appropriate enabling environment, basic infrastructure and teaching/learning materials 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.

In table 4, the result showed that 8 out of 10 principals' performance in establishing and supporting staff development, the **t**-calculated were grater than the table value of 1.96, the null hypothesis was rejected. The finding implies that there is a significant difference in the mean ratings of teachers on principals' performance in establishing and supporting staff development, with respect to school location, the remaining two functions were accepted with **t**-calculated value less than **t**-critical of 1.96. The significant differences could be related to laxity of the school administrator and therefore the extent of global achievement tends to be less. The school heads should strive to reverse this type of ugly situation because teachers are regarded as fulcrum on which the curriculum revolves and no school can function effective without teachers. School principal should strive to encourage teachers' development potentiality for better discharge of their classroom responsibilities.

The opinions of Onyinloye (2010) and Bua, Dike, Nwajiaku & Okpala (2015) are interdem with the results of this study when they stated that professional development of staff by the school principals will not only improve their knowledge but they will appreciate the use of appropriate teaching method to improve teaching effectiveness.

7. EDUCATIONAL IMPLICATIONS

The findings of this study suggest that where the school principal fails to carryout effective supervision of classroom instruction because of some administrative problems, effective teaching and

learning and curriculum implementation will be affected. In view of this, school principals irrespective of school location should endeavour to carry out effective supervision of instruction, monitor and support staff development through seminars and conferences, which will in turn foster improvement in teaching/learning and curriculum implementation. This might improve students' academic achievement and quality assurance in education in Nigeria.

8. CONCLUSION

Using the perception of teachers, the study detected a significant difference between urban and rural secondary school principals in classroom supervision of instruction, monitoring of students' assessment and achievement as well as the provision and maintenance of instructional materials. Poor funding and uneven distribution of available instructional materials constituted problems in school administration. There is a significant difference in most of the supervisory functions of school principals based on staff development with particular reference to school location. The urban is more favoured in terms of staff development because of urbanization advantage.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Arising from the findings of the study, the discussion made and conclusions drawn, the following recommendations are made:

1. The school principal in improving in-service needs should endeavour to give internal supervision of instruction its right place in the school. Constant and effective supervision will not only improve curriculum implementation but will reduce laxity on the part of the teachers and students' involvement in examination malpractice.
2. School principals should be encouraged to combine administrative functions with classroom instructional duties in order to foster effective teaching and learning process using appropriate strategies of supervision of delegation duties.
3. The Ministry of Education in conjunction with the State Secondary Education (SEB) Board should constantly organize workshop, conferences and seminars where instructional supervisory roles and staff development will be discussed and its importance emphasized. The workshop and seminars should be made compulsory for principals, teachers and vice principals to highlight the importance of each to the education system.
4. Government at both Federal and State levels should provide more funds to schools to enable principals provide and maintain available instructional materials for effective teaching and learning.

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