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## Mechanisms Used By School Principals to Achieve Effective Instructional Supervision in Delta State Public Secondary Schools, Nigeria

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### ABSTRACT

*This study examined mechanisms used by principals to achieve effective instructional supervision in Delta State public secondary schools. It was guided by two research questions and two hypotheses. The study is a descriptive survey adopting the ex-post-facto design. The population of the study was 452 public secondary school principals in Delta State as at 2018/2019 academic year. Stratified sampling technique was used to sample 226 public secondary school principals in Delta State. A self-developed instrument titled "Instructional Supervision Mechanism Questionnaire (ISMQ)" was used to gather information from the respondents. The responses were converted into mean scores and standard deviation for the purpose of answering the research questions while t-test was used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. Result shows that principals in Delta State public secondary school use instructional supervision mechanism such as; checking of teachers' lesson note/plan, ensure that teachers follow the scheme of work, classroom visitation, teachers use useful instructional materials, provide feedback to teachers soon after classroom visitation and recommend ways teachers can enhance their instruction. Also administrative experiences of principals influence their use of instructional supervision mechanism in Delta State public secondary schools. It is consequently recommended among others that principals in Delta State secondary schools should continue to apply mechanisms such as checking of teachers' lesson note/plan and ensure that teachers use useful instructional materials, provide feedback to teachers soon after classroom visitation and recommend ways teachers can enhance their instruction.*

**Keywords:** *Education, instructional Supervision, Delta State Public Secondary Schools, teachers, students*

### INTRODUCTION

Instructional supervision is an essential part of teaching and learning process; it is a duty of school administrator to ensure the improvement

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of instruction in any school. Emetarom (2007) sees instructional supervision as a process of bringing about improvement in instruction by working with people who are working with students. It is a service rendered to teachers which is directed towards controlling the quality of teaching/learning. Instructional supervision tries to control what is taught, who is taught and the impact of what is taught on the learners (students). Instructional supervisory mechanism is a mixture of some processes, measures and circumstances that are deliberately designed with the sole aim of enhancing the work effectiveness of teachers and other personnel involved in the schooling process and school personnel remain one of the most significant resources in the schools (Eneastor and Azubike, 2009). Instructional supervision has experienced some fluctuations unlike in the preceding, when supervisors concerned themselves with improvement of the teacher and his work. The activities of instructional supervision then were mainly authoritative and descriptive. It was recent that instructional supervision began to be seen as a co-operative activity towards enhancing quality assurance in schools.

Oboegbulem (2013) states that in education, quality assurance is the proficient review of resources inputs, management, evaluation, monitoring, and transformation process (teaching and learning) to produce quality outputs (students) which entails the standard and prospects of the society. Instructional supervision requires the leader to oversee, assess, evaluate and direct employees to ensure an organization meets its goals (Olembo, 1992). World Bank (2010) contends that systems of instructional supervisions and support to schools are frequent areas of reform employed by world nations to improve their education outcomes and mitigate education challenges associated with global education policies.

In 1990s a number of countries attempted to reform instructional supervision due to its effectiveness as a significant tool in monitoring and refining quality education. The worth of instructional supervision in education depends on improving teaching and learning situations and subsequently students' academic achievements (Oboegbulem, 2013).



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Instructional supervision typically involves a supervisor observing and appraising classroom lessons, recording teachers' performance and sharing recommendations for teachers to improve (Gregory, 2010). Awuah (2010) points out that in Ghana school leaders practise instructional supervision to improve teaching and learning through providing passionate teachers with constant support and leadership for the welfares of students. According to Bore (2012), instructional supervision is an act of encouraging human relations and teacher motivation. It is not to judge the competencies of teachers nor to control them but rather to work cooperatively with them (Bore, 2012). Okumbe (1998) observes that without evaluation, supervision depends upon subjective personal opinion and biases. The supervisor must therefore ensure that adequate, valid and criteria based data and records are readily available, despite its implication in improving instructions and students' accomplishment. Buregeya (2011) observes that there is an ongoing decline of instructional supervision of schools throughout the globe.

A supervisor who links interpersonal with technical skills will be successful in improving instruction. The author suggests that an effective supervisor should be able to build self-acceptance, moral, trust and rapport between the principal and teachers. Objectivity, devoid of personal biases, should be the hallmark if supervision is to be effective. Effective instructional supervision involves adherence to bureaucratic processes to control and guide teachers. Common determinants of instructional supervision should include; teachers and students working rigidly according to school timetable, following school regulations, neat and decent environment, and proper student management and disciplined students. Buregeya (2011) exposes deterioration of instructional supervision disappointment to achieve their aims to lack of close supervision. Kigotho (2011) concludes that Kenyan Education System is unaccountable, lacks effective supervision and quality control that have resulted to decline in instructional supervision. The World Bank links high teacher absenteeism in Kenya to unaccountable school systems and devoid of effective supervision (Kigotho, 2011).



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Usman (2015) observes that regular instructional supervision using robust instructional supervision strategies such as scrutinising students' notebooks, teachers' lesson plan/notes, visiting classroom; teachers record keeping have substantial correlation with teachers' performance and academic achievement of students in secondary schools. Kieleko, Kanori and Mugambi (2017) discover that the areas covered by the principals in instructional supervision were: lesson plans, schemes of work, pupils' lesson notes, records of work covered and class attendance.

Instructional supervision was reflected substantial and personally helped teachers in their profession in respect to syllabus coverage, professional development, and improvement of the instructional process. Nyandiko (2008) and Kirui, (2012) establish that head teachers' experiences have a positive influence on implementation of curriculum change and instructional supervision practices. Wawira (2012) observes that head-teachers' job and teaching experiences influence teachers' perception towards head-teachers' instructional supervision practices. Rashid (2016) establishes that the highly experienced head teachers were more effective in instructional supervision as they possess rich knowledge, skills and attitude necessary for adequate performance of their supervision roles. Wawira (2012) finds that administrative experience does not significantly influence instructional supervision practices in public primary schools. Rotich (2014) establishes that instructional supervision practices were influenced by head-teachers' administrative experience, class sizes, head-teachers' in-service training staffing levels.

The school principals have recognized the prominence of instructional supervision in refining teaching and learning. Thus intensely, efforts have been made to enhance the quality assurance in education through institutional supervision at the secondary level of education. Some teachers have attributed their performance and job dedication to instructional supervision of principal, while other teachers express their concern to instructional supervision to principals' inability to conduct supervision of instruction. What are the mechanisms used by principals to achieve effective instructional supervision? Could it be that principals who have spent longer years understand the need for instructional



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supervision? To answer the above questions, the researcher decided to examine mechanism used by principals to achieve effective instructional supervision in Delta State public secondary schools. The aims of this study are to:

1. Investigate the mechanisms used by principals to achieve effective instructional supervision in Delta State public secondary schools.
2. Examine how principals' administrative experiences influence the use of instructional supervision mechanism.

The following hypotheses were formulated to give the study a direction.

1. There is no significant difference between male and female principals on their assessment of mechanisms used to achieve effective instructional supervision.
2. There is no significant difference between experienced and inexperienced principals on the use of instructional supervision mechanism.

## **METHOD**

The study is a descriptive survey adopting the ex-post-facto design. The population of the study was 452 public secondary school principals in Delta State as at 2018/2019 academic year. Stratified sampling technique was used to sample 226 public secondary school principals in Delta State. A self-developed instrument titled "Instructional Supervision Mechanism Questionnaire (ISMQ)" was used to gather information from the respondents. The instrument was validated through face and content validity; thereafter it was subjected to split half reliability test using 20 principals who were excluded from the main study. The scores were correlated using the Pearson Product Moment Correlation Statistics and a co-efficient of 0.75, was obtained. The responses were converted into mean scores and standard deviation for the purpose of answering the research questions while t-test was used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance.

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## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1 shows mean scores and standard deviation analysis on mechanisms used by principals to achieve effective instructional supervision. Result of the study reveals that respondents agree on all the items with mean scores above 2.50 benchmark, except for item 5,6 and 10 which is below 2.50 benchmark. Average mean score of 2.71 with SD of 0.92 shows that there are mechanisms used by principals to achieve effective instructional supervision in Delta State public secondary schools. These mechanisms include; checking of teachers' lesson note/plan, ensure that teachers follow the scheme of work, classroom visitation, teachers use useful instructional materials, provide feedback to teachers after classroom visitation and suggest ways teachers can improve their instruction.

Table 2 shows mean scores and standard deviation analysis on principals' administrative experiences influence the use of instructional supervision mechanism. The results reveal that respondents agree on all the items with mean scores above 2.50 benchmark. Average mean score of 2.75 with SD of 0.77 shows that principals' administrative experiences influence the use of instructional supervision mechanism in Delta State public secondary schools.

Table 3 shows t-test summary of difference between male and female principals on their assessment of mechanisms used to achieve effective instructional supervision. Result of the study shows that t-calculated value of 0.97 was less than t-critical value of +1.96 with 224 degree of freedom at 0.05 level of significance. Hence, the hypothesis that there is no significant difference between male and female principals on their assessment of mechanisms used to achieve effective instructional supervision is rejected. It therefore means that significant difference does not exist between male and female principals on their assessment of mechanisms used to achieve effective instructional supervision.

Table 4 shows t-test summary of difference between experienced and inexperienced principals on the use of instructional supervision mechanism. Result of the study shows that t-calculated value of 3.61 was less than t-critical value of +1.96 with 224 degree of freedom at 0.05 level



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of significance. Therefore, the null hypothesis that there is no significant difference between experienced and inexperienced principals on the use of instructional supervision mechanism is rejected. This entails that significant difference exists between experienced and inexperienced principals on the use of instructional supervision mechanism.

Results show that principals in Delta State public secondary schools use instructional supervision mechanisms such as; checking of teachers' lesson note/plan, ensure that teachers follow the scheme of work, classroom visitation, teachers use useful instructional materials, provide feedback to teachers after visiting classroom and recommend ways teachers can enhance their instruction. Also administrative experiences of principals influence their use of instructional supervision mechanism in Delta State public secondary schools. These findings agree with Usman (2015) who observes that regular instructional supervision using robust instructional supervision strategies such as scrutinising students' notebooks, teachers' lesson plan/notes, visiting classroom, inspect teachers record keeping have substantial correlation with teachers' performance and academic accomplishment of students in secondary schools.

Kieleko, Kanori and Mugambi (2017) opine that the areas covered by the principals in instructional supervision were: schemes of work, lesson plans, record of work covered, pupils' lesson notes and class attendance. Instructional supervision was reflected substantial and personally helped teachers in their professional in respect to syllabus coverage, professional development, and improvement of the instructional process. However, Kirui (2012) establishes a positive influence of head teachers' experiences on implementation of instructional supervision practices and curriculum change. Wawira (2012) observes that head-teachers' job and teaching experiences influence teachers' perception towards head-teachers' instructional supervision practices. Rashid (2016) establishes that the highly experienced head teachers were more effective in instructional supervision as they possess rich knowledge, skills and attitude necessary for adequate performance of their supervision roles. Wawira (2012) finds



that administrative experience does not significantly influence instructional supervision practices in public primary schools. Rotich (2014) establishes that instructional supervision practices were influenced by head-teachers' administrative experience, class sizes, head-teachers' in-service training staffing levels.

**Table 1:** Mean scores analysis on mechanisms used by principals to achieve effective instructional supervision

S/N	Mechanisms used by principals to achieve effective instructional supervision	Mean	SD	Remark
1.	Checking of teachers' lesson note	2.75	1.01	+
2.	Checking of teachers' lesson plan	2.79	.92	+
3.	Ensure that teachers follow the scheme of work	2.60	1.03	+
4.	Classroom visitation	3.31	.80	+
5.	Checking of students note	2.47	.87	-
6.	Asking students questions to ascertain teachers performance	2.30	.94	-
7.	Ensure that teachers use useful instructional materials	2.46	.95	+
8.	Provide feedback to teachers after classroom visitation	2.92	.88	+
9.	Suggest ways teachers can improve their instruction	3.13	.83	+
10.	Organise micro-teaching for teachers	2.41	.96	-
	Average Mean Score	2.71	.92	+

**Keys: Agree (+), Disagree (-) Mean Benchmark = 2.50**

**Table 2:** Mean scores analysis on principals' administrative experiences influence the use of instructional supervision mechanism

S/N	Influence of principals' administrative experiences on use of instructional supervision mechanism	Mean	SD	Remark
1.	Experienced principals understand the need to supervise teachers	2.61	.51	+
2.	Experienced principals visited with different mechanisms for instructional supervision	2.84	.82	+
3.	Experienced principals spice up teachers through supervision of instruction	2.59	.71	+
4.	Experienced principals motivate teachers when they supervise them	2.77	.88	+
5.	Principals administrative experience influence their instructional supervision	2.92	.92	-
	Average Mean Score	2.75	.77	+

**Keys: Agree (+), Disagree (-) Mean Benchmark = 2.50**



**Table 3:** t-test on difference between male and female principals on their assessment of mechanisms used to achieve effective instructional supervision

Variables	N	Mean	Df	Level of Sign.	t-Cal	t-Crit.	Decision
Male Principals	96	2.74	224	0.05	0.97	+1.96	Not Significant
Female Principals	129	2.97					

**Table 4:** t-test on difference between experienced and inexperienced principals on the use of instructional supervision mechanism

Variables	N	Mean	Df	Level of Sign.	t-Cal	t-Crit.	Decision
Experienced Principals	102	3.88	224	0.05	3.61	+1.96	Significant
Less Experienced Principals	124	2.32					

## CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

It can therefore be concluded that principals in Delta State secondary school employ mechanisms such as checking of teachers' lesson note/plan, ensure that teachers follow the scheme of work, classroom visitation among others and their use of these mechanisms is influenced by their administrative experiences. It is consequently recommended that principals in Delta State secondary schools should continue to mechanisms such as checking of teachers' lesson note/plan, ensure that teachers use useful instructional materials, provide feedback to teachers soon after classroom visitation and recommend ways teachers can enhance their instruction. Also less experienced principals should consult experienced principals from time to time on instructional supervision mechanism they employ.

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