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Original Article

Determining Whether Gender of External Instructional Supervisors Influence Public Secondary School Teachers' Performance in Ndhwa Sub-county, Homabay County

Achar Judith Lavina^{1*} & Dr. George Ogochi, PhD²

¹ Mount Kenya University, P. O. Box 4441-40200, Kisii, Kenya.

* Author for Correspondence ORCID ID: <https://orcid.org/0009-0000-1163-7215>; Email: lavinachar@gmail.com

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Professional Development, Instructional Supervisor, Instructional Supervisor, Teacher, Supervision & Teacher Performance.

In the recent past, external instructional supervision of teachers has been known to have an impact on the student's performance and more especially on the KCSE performance. The purpose of this study is to investigate the influence of external instructional supervision on public secondary school teachers' performance in the Ndhwa sub-county. The researcher believes that the process of supervision is a collaboration among the stakeholders in Education. The researcher used simple random sampling to select 15 public secondary schools, 15 secondary school principals and 103 teachers; purposive sampling was used to automatically select instructional supervisors (one QASO and one TSC sub-county director) from the Ndhwa sub-county. Questionnaires were used as a data collection instrument for teachers, principals, and supervisors (QASO) and an interview guide for the TSC sub-county director. The data collected was subjected to the statistical package for social sciences to generate descriptive statistics. Thematic analysis was also carried out on the qualitative data. The study established that teachers' performance is improved if the supervisor is usually warm and friendly to teachers, always assists the teacher where they go wrong, and often tries to be fair, firm, open and transparent in their dealings with teachers. The study established that supervisors always possess the necessary problem-solving skills, skills to observe teachers, skills for designing instruments for evaluation and whether supervisors help schools promote peace among staff and students. The study established that supervisors visiting school could easily improve cooperation with teachers by giving guidance and advice; teachers regarded them as professional colleagues and not as subordinates or inferiors.

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INTRODUCTION

Supervision is commonly used in Education as a tool for educational effectiveness. Wilcox (2000) defines supervision as the procedure for measuring the quality and /or performance of institution services, programmes, and projects by the supervisors, who are not directly included and who are specially appointed to fulfil these responsibilities. In Tanzania, the purpose of instructional supervision is to ensure that the school complies with the provision of the Education Act and to ascertain whether the school is being properly and efficiently managed (Education Act No. 10 of 1995, sections 31-32). In Britain, instructional supervision is aimed at collecting a range of evidence, matching them against a statutory set of criteria, arriving at judgements and making the judgment known to the public.

In Kenya, the directorate derives its mandate from the Education Act, Cap 211, of the Laws of Kenya, stating that "the Minister shall appoint instructional supervisors with authority to enter and supervise any school, or any place suspected that a school is being conducted at any time, with or without notice, and to report to the authority with respect to the school or any aspect thereof". The importance of external instructional supervision has been emphasised by Zepeda (2006) and Oliva and Pawlas (2001). According to Adetula (2010), inspection is an assessment of the state of the education system to ascertain its purported standard. It thus indicates that inspection is a means of monitoring a school's activities to make sure that they are carried out according to standards in such a way that can ensure the attainment of the stated school

objectives and Education in general. Proper supervision and objective judgement by experienced supervisors enhance the development of teachers and ensure their improved instructional role. Okumbe (1990) says that supervision and inspection trace their genesis from the judgmental and autocratic practice with the canine aim of punishing the teachers in a truism that cannot be doubted. It, however has been a long walk sideways the woods of Education for this an indispensable tenet in the academic domain.

The issue of the influence of external instructional supervision on teachers is universal, but Ndhiwa is only used as a case study. The case in Ndhiwa Sub-county has been probably because of the historical, geographical, and economic establishment of the sub-county. Historically, the teachers of Ndhiwa Sub-county have been having negative attitudes towards external supervisors. In addition, the supervisors who have been visiting schools at times fail to put in place their professional skills supervision (K.C.S.E. Result analysis, 20th September, 2017, p.1). Economically, most schools in this sub-county lack resources that can be used in establishing supervisory facilities that can aid external supervisors. Geographically, the terrain of the sub-county under investigation makes it difficult to access external supervisors (Ndhiwa Sub-county F.S.E. performance, 2018, p.11). These factors conceivably cause secondary schools in this sub-county to perform poorly due to a lack of supervisory strategies. Teachers therefore are not able to practice their profession as per the standard stipulated in education policies and curriculum obligations. Students finally fail to perform in

KCSE because of the poor methodology that their teachers employ in instructing them. Teachers who are not inducted fail to be inducted (Obungu, 2016, p. 3).

The study explores how instructional supervisors understand their roles based on their gender with the aim of providing essential information as curriculum supervision. The research also helps instructional supervisors on how best to prepare and support teachers to be able to handle curriculum implementation in their respective schools.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The main mission of the instructional supervision department is to establish, maintain and improve educational standards in Kenya, and the vision is to provide quality assurance feedback to all educational institutions in Kenya (Republic of Kenya, 2003). According to Wasonga (2004), the purpose of instructional supervision in Education is to have an overview of the quality of Education in Kenya based on agreed “all-round performance “indicators on the performance of an educational institution. Frequent visits to schools by the supervisors should aim at bringing an improvement in curriculum instructions and to the entire school management. According to Sullivan and Glanz (2000), supervision is all about improving practices, methods, and processes of working with teachers to enhance their ability to improve classroom practices.

The supervision of teachers’ and students’ work by proper policy, syllabus coverage, proper testing instructions, orientation for new employees, and teamwork building enhance performance (Musungu and Nasongo, 2008). Acheson (1997) states that supervision is the ability to perceive desirable objectives in school and act with the process of bringing about improvement of instructions by working with learners. According to the Republic of Kenya (2003), it is an official of the MoEST who identifies and provides feedback on strengths and weaknesses in educational institutions so that these institutions can improve the quality of

Education provided and the achievement of their students. Kamindo (2008) reveals that supervision is what personnel in a school have to do with adults and duties for the purpose of maintaining or changing the school operation, directly influencing the teaching process employed to promote students learning, which is directed towards maintaining and improving teaching and learning processes of the school.

Many studies show that to enhance the quality of Education in Kenya, regular visits and assessments in schools are an important activity. Kamindo (2008) says that instructional supervision refers to the activities concerned with maintaining and increasing effectiveness in teaching performance. This is because supervision examines both the strengths and weaknesses of such schools and then makes recommendations for improving education standards in schools. According to Ogunsaju (2006), the ultimate purpose of the supervision of schools is the improvement of pupils learning, but its immediate focus is on the teacher and the whole of the educational setting. It therefore, seeks to improve the total educational environment so as to enhance pupil learning. According to UNESCO (2004), quality education can influence parents’ choice to invest in their children’s Education. UNESCO (2004) reveals that a particular education system, whether of high or low quality, can be judged in terms of the extent to which its objectives are being met. The improvement of the quality of Education should focus on setting standards for the variables and ensuring that the set standards are adhered to (Republic of Kenya, 2003).

It is indicated that the prime role of instructional supervisors is to give professional support and not just mere criticism to teachers regardless of their gender. The literature also suggested that if school instructional supervision is to lead to school improvements, there should be proper evaluation of teachers in order to assess their strengths and weaknesses. The studies did not outline how to solve the differences caused by the gender role of instructional supervisors in order to improve teachers’ academic performance.

THEORETICAL REVIEW

The theoretical framework of the study was based on Fullan's curriculum implementation model. Fullan curriculum implementation model identifies six premises that are necessary for effective curriculum implementation. These premises are vision building, initiative taking and empowering, staff development/resources provision, restructuring, monitoring, problem solving and planning. In successful modifications, these premises provide a strategy for both the tasks and approach that facilitate improvement (Fullan, 1991). Observation is significant for effective implementation because it provides the limitation and the suitability of new ideas during the implementation process (Fullan 1991). Through observation, instructional supervisors can find out whether activities are being implemented as planned regardless of the gender of the instructional supervisor and whether they are producing desired results. All school activities should also be monitored through careful observations and assessment. Also, observation can assist the instructional supervisors in

restructuring the teachers' activities that are affected by gender roles.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The researcher will use descriptive research design, which is a method of collecting data by interviewing or administering a questionnaire to a sample of individuals. Orodho (2009). The study utilised descriptive research design, which is a method of collecting data by interviewing or administering a questionnaire to a sample of individuals. The target population consisted of teachers and principals from 50 public secondary schools in the Ndhiwa sub-county, the TSC subcounty director and instructional supervisors. This is essential since they are the key players in instructional supervision in secondary schools in the Ndhiwa sub-county. Mugenda and Mugenda (2003) state that in order to get a reasonable sample size, take 10 % of the accessible population if the population is too large and 30 % if it is small. Based on this guideline, the researcher picked 30% of the target population, which gave a sample size as shown in *Table 1*.

Table 1: Study sample size

Target population	Target population	Sample size	Sample size
TSC sub-county director	1	1	100%
Instructional supervisors (QASO)	1	1	100%
Principals	50	15	30%
Teachers	376	103	27%
TOTAL	428	120	

Source: SCDE, Ndhiwa Sub-County

The researcher used two instruments for this study: a questionnaire and an interview schedule. The questionnaire was filled out by teachers, principals, and the instructional supervisor, while the interview schedule was used by the TSC agent. The questionnaire allowed the researcher to measure for or against a particular viewpoint. In addition, it enabled the collection of a large amount of information within a short time and space.

Data was then entered and coded into the computer for analysis using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). This helped summarise and interpret the data without seeking

to test the facts. According to Muji (2004), SPSS has the capability to offer extensive data handling and numerous statistical analysis routines that can analyse small to very large data. Data collected was analysed using descriptive statistics, especially the measures of central tendency. Analysed results were presented using frequency distribution tables, bar graphs and percentages. Gay (1992) says that a descriptive survey is commonly represented by the use of graphs and frequency tables.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

Return Rate

Questionnaires were administered to 120 respondents who took part in the study. From the

questionnaires distributed, the number that was returned was as per *Table 2* for each of the categories of respondents.

Table 2: Return Rate

Category	Sample	Return rate	M	F
Principals	15	14	9	5
Teachers	105	94	52	42
Total	120	108	61	47

The return rate of the respondents was 108(90%), which included 14 principals and 94 teachers. This return rate was considered adequate for the study since it points to the low rate of nonresponse, hence reducing the potential for biased estimates.

External Instructional Supervisors Influence on Teachers’ Performance

The first objective of the study was to determine if the gender of external instructional supervisors influences public secondary school teachers’ performance. The findings are indicated in *Table 3*.

Table 3: Gender of external instructional supervisors and teachers’ performance

Statement	f	M	F	%	Mean	Std.Dev.
I believe that the difference between male and female instructional supervisors indeed exists.	108	57	51	90	4.221	2.154
The gender of an instructional supervisor influences how they collaborate with teachers during supervision.	102	54	48	85	4.202	1.093
The type of approach by the instructional supervisor is greatly dictated by their gender.	102	54	48	85	4.202	1.093
I feel more empowered when supervised by a female supervisor.	108	57	51	90	4.221	2.154
Female supervisors lead through inspiration and transformation.	108	57	51	90	4.221	2.154

Source: Research data March 2021

From the results in *Table 3*, it is observable that the standard deviations relative to the mean values are small, and as supported by Field (2009), the calculated means highly represent the observed data.

supervisor determines the choices adopted during instruction supervision; female supervisors adopt a more democratic style than their female counterparts during supervision, and the type of decision made during instructional supervision is largely influenced by the gender of an instructional supervisor.

The results show that the respondents agree (mean 4.221) that the difference between male and female instructional supervisors indeed exists. They also agree that teachers’ performance is improved if the supervisor is usually warm and friendly to teachers, always assists the teacher where they go wrong, and often tries to be fair, firm, open and transparent in their dealings with teachers. The gender of an instructional

The respondents were asked whether they feel more empowered when supervised by a female supervisor. One of them had the following view:

Female instructional supervisors are encouraged to use friendly approaches during supervision so that teachers can carry out their duties effectively.

Table 4: Correlation between gender role and academic performance

	Correlation	Teacher performance
gender role and academic performance	Pearson Correlation	.358**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	N	339

***. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).*

In *Table 4*, the objective of the study was to determine if the gender of external instructional supervisors influences public secondary school teachers' performance. The analysis of the results revealed that the gender of external instructional supervisors positively and significantly influences the teacher performance at $r = .358^{**}$, $p < .001$, a significant level contributing 12.8% variability to the performance of students in secondary school when other factors are held constant.

The study established that teachers' performance is improved if the supervisor is usually warm and friendly to teachers, always assists the teacher where they go wrong, and often tries to be fair, firm, open and transparent in their dealings with teachers.

These findings are in agreement with many scholars' findings. For example, the study findings agree with Wasonga's (2004) view that the availability of supervisors' gender and their attitude enhances the effectiveness of schools, hence ensuring good teacher performance.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The study found that the gender of an instructional supervisor determines the choices adopted during instruction supervision; female supervisors adopt a more democratic style than their female counterparts during supervision, and the type of decision made during instructional supervision is largely influenced by the gender of an instructional supervisor.

Quality education provision in secondary schools in Kenya, with specific reference to Ndhiwa sub-county, Homa-Bay County, is an integral part of the government commitment whose indicators include good grades representing good academic performance. The external instructional

supervisors, who are representatives of the cabinet secretary in charge of Education, are tasked with ensuring the provision of quality education by, among others, providing teaching and learning resources, bridging the teaching staff shortages where the TSC has not given adequate, and putting motivational structures in place through the provision of incentives to both teachers and students. This study sought to examine whether these practices by the BOM have any influence on student's academic performance in the Ndhiwa sub-county, Homa-Bay County.

A number of aspects of the study revealed fundamental issues that require the involvement of a number of players, including the government through the Ministry of Education, so as to make quality education provisions at the secondary school level sustainable, thereby necessitating the government through the external instructional supervisors should ensure that they provide adequate teaching and learning support to schools to guarantee good teacher performance.

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