

## **Challenges of Instructional Supervision on Professional Development of Teachers in Public Secondary Schools in Nairobi and Kajiado Counties, Kenya**

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**Abstract:** The purpose of this study was to identify challenges that principals encounter in undertaking instructional supervisory role in public secondary schools. This study adopted Developmental Supervision Theory by Glickman, Gordon & Ross-Gordon. 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: There were insufficient funds for training teachers and inadequate number of teachers in both Nairobi and Kajiado Counties. Based on the findings, the researcher recommends that Teachers Service Commission (TSC), the teacher employer should ensure that there are adequate number of teachers employed in public secondary schools according to the recruitment policy and the recommended number of teachers vis a vis the students. The Ministry of Education (MoE) and Teachers Service Commission (TSC) should distribute more funds to public secondary schools for training

**Keywords:** Challenges, Principals' Instructional Supervision, Teachers, Professional Development.

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### **I. INTRODUCTION**

Instructional supervision is a service provided by supervisors to help teachers discharge their professional skills in order to improve teaching and learning (Pawlas and Oliva, 2008). However, there are several challenges that affect the effective provision of instructional supervision in the areas of teaching practice, training, support and educational resources, among others. One of the key objectives of instructional supervision is to improve the quality of learner's education by improving the teacher's effectiveness in instruction. Lilian (2007) notes that this improvement depends upon teachers' attitudes towards supervision, and that unless teachers perceive supervision as a process of promoting their professional growth and student learning, the supervisory exercise is bound to fail.

According to Daniel and Namale (2016), inadequate time spent on supervision by supervisors is one of the key challenges due to multiple roles that the supervisors have to perform as part of their administrative duties. Dali, Daud and Fauzee (2017) concurring with Daniel and Namale explain that there are a number of roles which the principal has to undertake in a school, some of which do not add value. According to Dali et al. (2017), some of these roles should either be delegated or done away with. Daniel and Namale also observe teachers' negative attitude as one of the main inhibitors to instructional supervision which they refer to as teacher resistance to evaluation. Dali et al. (2017) argued that the attitude of teachers towards instructional supervisors most likely depends on the approach and type of instructional supervision offered at a given stage. They give an example of fault-finding and evaluative approach both of which they maintain are most likely to result in teachers viewing supervision negatively and as a result creating lack of trust in supervision undertaken by the supervisor. The negative attitude and dissatisfaction of teachers toward instructional supervision also depends on the supervisor-teacher relationship as well as methods and approaches of supervision used in order

to assist teachers' needs. Lack of good supervisor-teacher relationship causes a great challenge to effective instructional supervision (Yelkpiyeri and Namale, 2016).

De Grauwe and Carron (2011), highlights complaints about supervisor's work including irregular and bad planning of visits, inadequate time spent in the classroom on supervision, and inappropriate advice offered by supervisors, are among the key issues in instructional supervision characterized by negative attitude by teachers' on the exercise. The authors also note and warned that teachers strongly dislike the classic fault finding approach by the supervisors, and that teachers expect to be treated as professionals and the specific realities of the school environment be taken into account when supervisors provide advice during their supervisory visits. In a study conducted by Dessalegn (2001) cited in Adimasu (2014) on 458 randomly selected secondary school teachers in Ethiopia, frequency analysis was used which revealed that over 70% of the teachers reported that they were strongly dissatisfied with instructional supervision offered to them, 36% to 60% also reported that the supervision done by instructional supervisors was below average. The teachers lamented that instructional supervisors do not offer opportunity for frequent interactions and rapport with teachers. The study therefore, recommended that in addition to frequent interaction and positive rapport; teachers also need positive motivation and recognition from the supervisors.

According to Wanzare (2013) and Tshabalala (2013), poor, inadequate and sometimes lack of communication between teachers and instructional supervisors, is also a major inhibitor to instructional supervision. They further note that, when instructional supervisors and teachers perceive supervision differently there is bound to be friction and conflict emanating from the exercise. In contrast, when an instructional supervisor and a teacher make decisions objectively on the approach on instructional supervision together as colleagues, there is more likely to be mutual agreement. This phase of supervision is seen as the most challenging and one that other problems arise from (Glickman et al., 2017). Archibong (2012) echoes Wanzare (2011) on poor communication and explains that lack of adequate communication between instructional supervisors and teachers contribute significantly to failure in instructional supervision. He further highlights that, with poor communication between instructional supervisors and teachers, some teachers see supervision as a tool used to control and intimidate them. According to Ozdemir and Yirci (2015) in a study of Turkish private schools, there was no significant relationship between lack of communication between instructors and teachers as far as classroom teaching was concerned, what was necessary was how communication was conducted. On the same study, some teachers felt that supervision was an intrusion into their private instructional practices. They claimed that the principal's intrusive monitoring and physical presence changed the setting in the classrooms and that this resulted in false impressions resulting in an element of stress and overreaction, on the part of the teachers and the students during classroom observations.

Baffour-Awuah (2011) and Wanzare (2013) posit that most of instructional supervisors are persons who are promoted from other positions, for instance, former teachers who are supposed to have excelled in their teaching. This underlies an assumption that since they were good teachers, then they are going to be good supervisors. Hence, there is no need for them to undergo training. Instructional supervision therefore, can only be seen to be effective when there is continuous training for both principals as instructional supervisors and teachers. Knowledge and experience also play an important role in instructional supervision and characterizes most increasing issues and several challenges that emanate from discharging instructional supervisory services, including the possession of some working experiences that enable the supervisor to provide the necessary assistance, guidance, and support services to teachers for quality classroom instructions (Holland, 2005; Glickman et al., 2015). Holland is particularly more categorical that instructional supervisors must show evidence that they have the necessary knowledge and experience to make important decisions about instructions. In addition, he argued that the instructional supervisor must also show evidence in the form of degrees and diplomas, so as to inspire teachers' trust.

Baffour-Awuah (2011) opines that, it is a common belief that academic qualifications and long term working experience provide people with knowledge to be able to perform satisfactorily in an establishment. Schools have not set minimum qualifications as a benchmark to be attained by instructional supervisors, but only minimum teaching qualifications that differ from country to country in Africa. Baffour-Awuah stresses that, instructional supervisors should "have higher qualifications than teachers or at worst, at par with them so that they will be able to provide them with the necessary guidance and support" (p.55).

In a study in four African countries (Tanzania, Botswana, Zimbabwe and Namibia), De Grauwe (2001) established that both qualifications and years of experience played key roles in the selection of instructional supervisors. He further revealed that in Spain, it is from three to seven years of teaching experience. In Italy, nine years of teaching experience while Lyons and Pritchard (2000) revealed 20 years of teaching experience in Venezuela. Baffour-Awuah (2011) presents the case of Ghana as generally considering longer years of teaching experience as a requirement to be an instructional supervisor, but this depends on which teacher in the school has the highest qualification and longer years of teaching experience. He however laments that, there are situations where new graduate teachers work under the supervision of an experienced head teacher, but who

possess low academic qualifications than the teachers they supervise. The main concern is the lower qualifications of the instructional supervisor which may result in status quo in both instructional strategies and supervisory practices.

In Kenya, principals of public secondary schools are appointed with an assumption that the pre-service training and experience they gain while discharging their duties is enough to enable them perform their tasks effectively (Wanzare, 2013). Samoei (2014) points out that TSC appoints principals based on the number of years they have taught. However, a lot of newly appointed principals; and also those who have been in the field long enough, face challenges due to lack of training to prepare them for their new roles as principals. According to Nzabonimpa (2009), instructional supervisors lack time for effective instructional supervision, partly due to overload of work caused by many other responsibilities that instructional supervisors are expected to perform. Adu1, et al. (2014) argued that, "it is the administration that has failed to specify the scope of responsibilities and results instructional supervision is expected to bring about in the school" (p. 276). In support of the authors, Enaigbe (2009) confirms that the instructional supervisors are responsible for carrying out school based instructional supervision in addition to routine administrative tasks. Enaigbe further argues that, supervisors are overwhelmed by routine administrative burden that they hardly find time to visit classrooms and observe how the teachers perform in classrooms.

Wanzare (2013) adds his voice and comments that the instructional supervisor's excessive workload has direct bearing on the negative effects in the practice of supervision. He further posits that, when a choice is made between administrative and pedagogical duties, the latter suffers. De Grauwe (2016) suggests that in order to solve the problem, the government should employ several staff to cater for administrative duties so that the workload of principals in schools becomes less heavy and responsibilities become much clearer. According to Wanzare (2011), majority of principals lack proper management skills to enable them plan, organize, coordinate and delegate their duties well. This would enable them balance between their administrative duties and their other roles, especially in instructional supervision. De Grauwe and Carron (2011) conclude that instructional supervision can never be effective without adequate instructional materials. According to the scholars, these materials are undoubtedly helpful to the instructional supervisors themselves and to the teachers, and ultimately schools themselves. Samoei (2014) concurs with De Grauwe and Carron (2011) and state that instructional materials often turn the supervisory visit into a more objective exercise. She argued that the absence of a specific budget for instructional supervision materials is a critical problem that negatively affects the quality of supervision.

The ministry of education introduced instructional supervision in schools and recommended school principals to perform the role of instructional supervision to strengthen the work performed by Quality Assurance Standards Officers (MoE Circular No. 2009 QSA/2/1A/VIL.11/86). However, findings from various studies by scholars, research by the ministry of education and study locations covered in the background to the study, have cited inadequate and poor instructional supervisory practices and insufficient funds for training teachers in public secondary schools (Ousman and Mukuna, 2013; Wanzare, 2013). Literature available has also revealed that the challenges faced by principals in instructional supervision are characterized by various factors and seem not to have been addressed.

This study therefore intended to fill the gaps with an aim hopefully to identify challenges that principals encounter in undertaking instructional supervisory role in public secondary schools and to provide solutions through interrogating principals, HoDs and teachers and examining what interventions the policy makers can put in place to curb the challenges in order to improve instructional supervision. The main objective of this study is to identify challenges that principals encounter in undertaking instructional supervisory role in public secondary schools. The following question was formulated to address the stated objective:

What challenges do principals face in their instructional supervisory role in public secondary schools?

## **II. RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY**

Descriptive survey design which embraces both quantitative and qualitative approaches was used by the researcher to carry out the study. This is because according to Orodho (2012), descriptive survey designs are used for exploratory studies in order to give room for sampling people's attitudes, views, habits and social issues. According to Borg and Gall (2007), descriptive survey involves collecting information from head teachers, teachers, students and stakeholders who are associated with education procedures (Borg and Gall, 2007). The sample comprised of 38 principals, 151 heads of departments and 289 teachers in Nairobi and Kajjado 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. Cronbach's alpha was used to measure reliability or internal consistency of the instruments. According to Sekaran and Bougie (2016), Cronbach's alpha provides a unique,

quantitative estimate of the internal consistency of a scale. The following formula was used to test the reliability of the instruments:

$$\alpha = \frac{N \cdot \bar{c}}{\bar{v} + (N-1) \cdot \bar{c}}$$

Where:  $N$  = the number of items  
 $\bar{c}$  = average covariance between item-pairs  
 $\bar{v}$  = average variance (Bonnet and Wright, 2014)

The reliability of the instrument was found to be 0.854, which is above the threshold of 0.7. A correlation coefficient (r) of approximately 0.75 is considered good and high enough for the reliability of the instruments (Bonnet and Wright, 2014). Qualitative data was analyzed thematically, while Quantitative data was analyzed using descriptive statistics and presented in frequencies and percentages.

### III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

#### *3.1 Principals' opinion was sought on challenges hindering their performance in instructional supervision.*

The objective sought to identify challenges faced by the principals while undertaking instructional supervisory role in public secondary schools in Kenya. To achieve the objective, respondents were required to give their opinion on several challenges which hindered the principals' effective performance in instructional supervision. A three-point scale was designed to enable the respondents express their opinions: **3-Agree (A)**, **2-Neutral (N)** and **1-Disagree (DA)**.

Principals' opinion was sought on challenges hindering their performance in instructional supervision. Table 1 is a presentation of the results.

**Table 1: Principals' opinion on Challenges they face in Instructional supervision**

<b>Challenges</b>	<b>Agree</b>		<b>Neutral</b>		<b>Disagree</b>	
	<b>3</b>		<b>2</b>		<b>1</b>	
	<b>n</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>n</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>n</b>	<b>%</b>
Heavy workload for principals	24	70.6	7	20.6	3	8.8
Inadequate teaching/learning materials	13	38.2	10	29.4	11	32.4
Lack of appropriate office facilities and equipment	12	35.3	8	23.5	14	41.2
Lack of enough time	19	55.9	11	32.4	4	11.8
Teacher/Supervisor relationship	17	50.0	12	35.3	5	14.7
Understaffing	23	67.6	6	17.6	5	14.7
Insufficient funds for training	25	73.5	6	17.6	3	8.8
Crowded and under furnished classrooms.	14	41.2	8	23.5	12	35.3
Deplorable working conditions	4	11.8	13	38.2	17	50.0
Overworked teachers	19	55.9	7	20.6	8	23.5
Teachers' lack of commitment and cooperation	15	44.1	9	26.5	10	29.4
Loaded curriculum	23	67.6	9	26.5	2	5.9
Attrition of teachers	8	23.5	14	41.2	12	35.3

Table 1 reveals that 25 (73.5%) of the principals agreed that they faced challenges in instructional supervision due to insufficient funds for training on how to conduct instructional supervision, 24 (70.6%) principals agreed that heavy workload was also a hindrance to their effective performance. Table 1 further reveals that 23 (67.6%) principals agreed that understaffing and overloaded curriculum were challenges they experienced in performing their instructional supervision duty, 19 (55.9%) principals agreed that they faced challenges due to lack of enough time and dealing with over worked teachers.

However, 17 (50.0%) of the principals disagreed that their performance was hindered by deplorable working conditions in their schools. Furthermore, 14 (41.2%), 12 (35.3%) and 11 (32.4%) of the principals also

disagreed that they faced challenges due to lack of appropriate office facilities and equipment, crowded and under furnished classrooms, attrition of teachers and inadequate teaching/learning materials.

**3.2 Heads of Departments' opinion was also sought on the challenges faced by the principals in instructional supervision. The results are indicated in Table 2.**

**Table 2: HoDs opinion on Challenges facing principals in Instructional Supervision**

Challenges	Agree		Neutral		Disagree	
	3		2		1	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
Heavy workload for principals	42	31.3	40	29.9	52	38.8
Inadequate teaching/learning materials	39	29.1	38	28.4	57	42.5
Lack of appropriate office facilities and equipment	40	29.9	27	20.1	67	50.0
Lack of enough time	45	33.6	41	30.6	48	35.8
Teacher/Supervisor relationship	29	21.6	88	65.7	17	12.7
Understaffing	60	44.8	33	24.6	41	30.6
Lack of funds for training	63	47.0	39	29.1	32	23.9
Crowded and under furnished classrooms.	50	37.3	24	17.9	60	44.8
Deplorable working conditions	37	27.6	31	23.1	66	49.3
Overworked teachers	88	65.7	26	19.4	20	14.9
Lack of commitment and cooperation among teachers	44	32.8	40	29.9	50	37.3
Overloaded curriculum	96	71.6	25	18.7	13	9.7
Attrition of teachers	26	19.4	66	49.3	42	31.3

Table 2 shows that 96 (71.6%) and 88 (65.7%) of the HoDs agreed that principals faced challenges in instructional supervision due to overloaded curriculum and dealing with overworked members of teaching staff. Furthermore, 63 (47.0%) and 60 (44.8%) also agreed that principals faced challenges due to lack of funds for training and understaffing. However, 67 (50%) and 66 (49.3%) of the HoDs disagreed that principals experienced challenges because of lack of appropriate office facilities and deplorable working conditions. Likewise, 60 (44.8%) and 57 (42.5%) of the HoDs also disagreed that principals faced challenges due to crowded and under furnished classrooms and inadequate teaching/learning materials.

**3.3 Teachers' opinion was also sought on challenges faced by the principals in instructional supervision. The results are presented in 3.**

**Table 3: Teachers' opinion on Challenges facing principals in Instructional Supervision**

Challenges	Agree		Neutral		Disagree	
	3		2		1	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
Heavy workload for principals	74	30.2	63	25.7	108	44.1
Inadequate teaching/learning materials	79	32.2	57	23.3	109	44.5
Lack of appropriate office facilities and equipment	86	35.1	61	24.9	98	40.0
Lack of enough time	62	25.3	115	46.9	68	27.8
Teacher/Supervisor relationship	93	38.0	94	38.4	58	23.7
Understaffing	113	46.1	71	29.0	61	24.9

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Insufficient funds for training	106	43.3	48	19.6	91	37.1
Crowded and under furnished classrooms.	90	36.7	47	19.2	108	44.1
Deplorable working conditions	131	53.5	44	18.0	70	28.6
Overworked teachers	116	47.3	64	26.1	65	26.5
Teachers' lack of commitment and cooperation	136	55.5	59	24.1	50	20.4
Loaded curriculum	97	39.6	93	38.0	55	22.4
Attrition of teachers	85	34.7	92	37.6	68	27.8

According to Table 3, 136 (55.5%) and 131 (53.5%) of the teachers agreed that the principals faced challenges due to lack of commitment and cooperation from teachers and deplorable working conditions, 116 (47.3%) and 113 (46.1%) of teachers also agreed that principals faced challenges due to overworked teachers and understaffing. Whereas 115 (46.9%) of the teachers remained neutral when asked about lack of enough time as a challenge to principals' instructional supervision, 109 (44.5), 108 (44.1%) and 98 (40.0%) of the teachers disagreed that principals experienced challenges due to inadequate teaching/learning materials, heavy workload, crowded and under furnished classrooms and lack of appropriate office facilities and equipment.

Although principals agreed that they faced challenges due to lack of funds for training, heavy workload, understaffing, overloaded curriculum, lack of enough time and dealing with over worked teachers, HoDs' and teachers' opinions were only similar to that of principals' on overloaded curriculum and inadequate teaching staff being the only challenges that hinder principals' effective performance. Whereas principals disagreed that they experienced challenges due to deplorable working conditions in their schools, lack of appropriate office facilities and equipment, crowded and under furnished classrooms, attrition of teachers and inadequate teaching/learning materials, HoDs' and teachers' opinions were in line with the principals' in only two areas: crowded and under furnished classrooms, and inadequate teaching/learning materials.

From the findings of this study, all the respondents agreed that overloaded curriculum and understaffing were challenges that principals' experienced. Overloaded curriculum could be attributed to understaffing in most public secondary schools. This finding was supported by one of the principals who had this to say:

...I have very few staff members, with so many students to be taught. If I request for more teachers, I get no response from the TSC, so we are forced to employ teachers from around who also need to be paid therefore my teachers are overworked, so sometimes I find it hard to put more pressure on them, because they have a lot of work to do...

Another area of concern according to Yelkpereri and Namale (2016) was lack of commitment and cooperation among teachers. The scholars in their finding argued that teachers had a negative attitude towards supervision depending on the approach and type of instructional supervision offered at any stage, such as inspectorial faultfinding and evaluative approach. In support, (Zepeda, 2018) refers to lack of commitment and cooperation as teachers' negative attitude towards supervision as an inhibitor to instructional supervision.

This study contradicts the scholars' arguments because it found that lack of commitment and cooperation among teachers was not a hindrance on principals' performance in instructional supervision. When asked about teachers' attitude towards instructional supervision, one of the principals commented and gave a solution to this:

Some teachers do not take it positively especially when they are being supervised on their performance. Generally, this has not hindered my performance. I have continued with my supervision. Intimidation and resistance can be dealt with by talking to and sensitizing teachers.

From the principal's comment, it is clear that some teachers are not comfortable with the idea of being supervised. However, this does not hinder principals from performing their role in instructional supervision. While teachers cited deplorable working condition as one of the challenges preventing principals' effective instructional supervision, principals and HoDs did not consider this as an issue or challenge. Furthermore, teachers contradicted themselves when they disagreed that crowded and under furnished classrooms which is an

indication of deplorable working condition, was not a hindrance to principals' effective instructional supervision.

The findings on lack of appropriate office facilities and inadequate teaching materials that did not hinder principals' performance in instructional supervision disagreed with findings by De Grauwe and Carron (2011) where they concluded that there could be no effective instructional supervision without adequate instructional materials. The same findings were further supported by Merga (2007) who argued that, the absence of a specific budget for instructional supervision materials and office facilities are critical problems that negatively affect the quality of instructional supervision.

In the literature reviewed, most scholars cited inadequate time spent on supervision by instructional supervisors as one of the key challenges due to multiple roles that the supervisors have to perform as part of their administrative duties (Nzabonimpa 2009; Adul, Akinloye and Olabisi 2014). Majority of principals echoed the scholars' view on heavy workload. However, the HoDs and teachers refuted this view. According to them, heavy workload did not hinder the principals' performance in instructional supervision because they effectively delegated this duty to HoDs. Principals need to plan and organize themselves to perform instructional supervision which is very crucial as part of their duties. This is confirmed by Enaigbe (2009) who assert that instructional supervisors are responsible for carrying out school based instructional supervision in addition to routine administrative tasks. This was contrary to this study which found that lack of time was not an issue or challenge to principals' performance in instructional supervision. Wanzare (2013) and Tshabalala (2013) cite poor, inadequate and sometimes lack of communication between teachers and instructional supervisors as a major inhibitor to instructional supervision. Wanzare (2013) also points out that newly appointed principals and also those who have been in the field long enough face challenges due to lack of training to prepare them for their new roles as principals. On the contrary, according to the responses by all the respondents, findings in this study did not capture the authors' claims as hindrances to principals' performance, except insufficient funds meant for in-service training.

#### **IV. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

This study concludes that there were insufficient funds for training teachers and inadequate number of teachers in both Nairobi and Kajiado Counties. Principals faced challenges in instructional supervision due to crowded and under furnished classrooms and inadequate teaching/learning materials in Kajiado County. This study therefore recommends that Teachers Service Commission (TSC), the teacher employer having a higher capitation, should ensure that there are adequate number of teachers employed in public secondary schools according to the recruitment policy and the recommended number of teachers vis a vis the students. The Ministry of Education (MoE) and Teachers Service Commission (TSC) should distribute more funds to public secondary schools for training teachers.

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