

## **Perceived influence of instructional supervision on students' academic performance in secondary schools in Makurdi Education Zone of Benue State, Nigeria**

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### **Abstract**

**Background:** Instructional supervision is an aspect of school administration that should not be taken for granted in schools. This is because when teachers are supervised in their teaching responsibilities, they tend to perform better than when left unsupervised. The supervisors consider teachers' level of knowledge, competence and experience which help to attest to their level of performance in their responsibilities in the school system.

**Objectives:** The aim of this study was to examine the influence of instructional supervision on students' academic performance in secondary schools in Makurdi Education Zone of Benue State, Nigeria. Two research questions guided the study and two hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance.

**Methodology:** Descriptive survey design was adopted for the study. The population of the study comprised 1768 teachers in the 89 public secondary schools in Makurdi Education Zone of Benue State. A sample of 265 teachers from 13 public secondary schools was used for the study. A 10-items structured questionnaire titled, "Instructional Supervision Questionnaire" (ISQ) was used for data collection. The instrument was validated by two experts; one from Educational Management, and another from Measurement and Evaluation, Benue State University, Makurdi. The reliability of the instrument was ascertained through a trial test which yielded a Cronbach Alpha co-efficient of 0.92. This was considered high enough to be used for field study. Mean and standard deviation were used to answer the research questions and Chi-square ( $\chi^2$ ) test of goodness of-fit was used to test the null hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance.

**Results:** The findings indicated that classroom visitation and classroom observation has significant influence on students' academic performance in secondary schools in Makurdi Education Zone of Benue State, Nigeria.

**Conclusion:** Instructional supervision is very important in enhancing students' academic performance. This is because, through instructional supervision, teachers are compelled to wake up in their slumber and also make students sit up in their studies. This tends to enhance their academic performance in both internal and external examinations.

**Unique Contribution:** The study has provided valuable facts and ideas about the importance of instructional supervision which enhances various aspects of students' academic performance in schools.

### **Key recommendations**

Based on these findings, it was recommended among others that, school administrators should ensure regular classroom visitation and observation in their respective schools so as to

encourage students to improve in their study habit geared towards enhancing their better academic performance.

**Keywords:** instructional supervision, students' academic performance, classroom visitation, classroom observation.

## **Introduction**

Students' academic performance has been an everyday discussion among education stakeholders such as teachers, parents, students among others. Improving instructional processes may in tend to improve students' academic performance as it is a product of teachers' instruction. This is thus a hallmark of instructional supervision.

Supervision of instruction may be defined as the process of bringing about improvement in the teaching-learning process through a network of cooperative activities and democratic relationship of persons concerned with teaching and learning (Mohammed, Yusuf & Sanni, 2014). Instructional process and supervision constitute the leverage point for instructional improvement, teacher's competence and efficiency of the educational system. It is all the conscious efforts of designated officials to co-ordinate and directs the activities in an educational system with a view to improving teaching and learning.

Supervision of instruction is the process of enhancing professional growth and development of teachers, the curriculum of the school and improving the techniques of teaching in classrooms through democratic interactions between the teacher and the supervisor (Okendu, 2012). In his opinion, Ukeje (2007) states that supervision of instruction helps to improve learning. According to Ukeje, instruction refers to the interaction between persons, materials, ideas, performances and objects of the contrived curriculum environment. It is the interaction of school activities between the teacher and the learner as part of the school environment. Through such interactions, the supervisor gets to know the instructional problems faced by the teachers. Once a problem has been eminently identified by the teacher and then discussed by the supervisor, a solution will be recommended by the supervisor.

Instructional supervision is describe as the a situation whereby the supervisor guides and assists the teachers to meet the set targets (Olorunfemi 2008; Okobia, 2015). This definition describes instructional supervision from the point of establishing the relationship with education stakeholders for the primary purpose of achieving set objectives. Similarly, Gordon and Ross-Gordon (2011) see supervision as a service activity that exists to help teachers do their job efficiently and effectively.

There are several dimensions or techniques through which instructional supervision can be carried to ensure an improved teaching-learning which in turn influences pupils' academic performance. Peretomode (2004:196) in his view identified activities that the skillful instructional supervisor can utilize to bring about desirable effect in teacher behaviour for achieving teaching effectiveness as well as enhancing students' academic performance. They include: Classroom visitation, observation, note checking, post conferencing, moderation of examination questions among others. Thus, for the purpose of this study, the focus is on classroom visitation and observation.

Classroom visitation involves a teacher visiting and observing another teacher in a teaching action in another class within the same school (inter-class visitation) or in another school (inter-school visitation) (Peretomode, 2004). In his opinion, Peretomode (2004) describes classroom visitation as a procedure by which the educational leader could be of great assistance in aiding the teachers to improve their instructional methods, strategies or techniques and the learning processes of the students. The main aim of the principal's visitation according to this definition is for the improvement of teaching-learning process. This method enhances proficiency especially if the beginning or inexperienced teacher

watches experienced teacher in action. In another perspective, Usman (2015) found that regular instructional supervision using robust supervision strategies like checking of students' notebooks, classroom visitation/inspection by school administrators, checking teachers' lesson plan/notes and inspection of teachers record keeping have significant correlation with teachers' performance and academic achievement of students in secondary schools.

Classroom observation is another seemingly aspect of instructional supervision which influences students academic performance as speculated in the study area by relevant education stakeholders. Classroom observation is a common method for assessing teaching process among teachers. For a teacher to be observed, an observation can provide a very useful feedback that might not be revealed by other assessment methods (Center for Instructional Development and Research, 2008). In another perspective, Harris (2015) and Neagley and Evans (2010) see classroom observation as been essential to enhancing effective instructional improvement programme as well as students' positive academic performance. Good (2008) states that classroom observation helps beginning teachers with enough skills and knowledge to improve their teaching continuously through analysis and reflection, seeing the various interpersonal interactions between the teacher and those based on feedback from individual classroom or school.

Students' academic performance on the other hand according to Ayo (2008) in Maimela and Monyatsi, 2016) is the outcome of students' assessments through comprehensive, systematic, cumulative, diagnostic, formative and summative evaluation of what they have gone through in a school setting. In his opinion, Ogunsaju (2014) defines students' academic performance as the desirable relevant changes or outcomes associated with students' performance after a period of teaching and learning activities as related to educational aims and objectives which provide information to teachers, parents, students, and school administrators and the level at which educational aims and objectives have been achieved.

One of the seemingly causes of poor academic performance can be ineffective and inefficient instructional supervision. Effectiveness and efficiency of instructional supervision is necessary at all levels of education, especially at the secondary level. This is because many career divisions are taken at this level of education. In his submission, Akinola (2010) notes that, secondary schools students' academic performance in external examinations conducted by the West Africa Examination Council (WAEC) and National Examination Council (NECO), have been very low, of which it is to the dissatisfaction of the general public. It was appalling that out of 1351557 candidates who sat for May/June 2010 West African Senior School Certificate Examination,(WAEC), only 337071 candidates representing 24.94 percent obtained credits in English Language, Mathematics and three other subjects.

It is therefore envisage from the above that the importance of instructional supervision on students' academic cannot be over-emphasized as it seems to constitute a vehicle for the delivery of qualitative education in Nigerian secondary schools. This study therefore sought to examine impact of instructional supervision on students' academic performance in Makurdi Education Zone of Benue State, Nigeria with particular focus on classroom visitation and observation.

### **Statement of the Problem**

There has been a growing expression of concern by education stakeholders on the issue of students' academic performance particularly in secondary schools in Makurdi Education Zone of Benue State. Education stakeholders' worry is on the manner in which students in secondary schools are seemingly performing poorly in internal and external examinations. There are observed cases of irregularities in students such as their inability to

do their assignment very well, participate in class activities, frequently do their class assigned task and participate in extra-curricular activities. Some find it difficult to ask or answer questions in class, speak and even write well. This scenario has triggered a lot of insinuations which is whether school principals are to be blamed. Some seem to attribute poor performance of the students to students' attitude, parent's laxity to their children's education. Could it also be that instructional supervision strategies such as class room visitation and classroom observation have not been adopted by school administrators to enhance students' better academic performance? However, whoever is to be blamed the fact remains that, students' poor academic performance seems to keep souring higher than ever before which demands further investigation on how to surmount this problem. Therefore, this study sought to determine impact of instructional supervision on students' academic performance in secondary schools in Makurdi Education Zone of Benue State, Nigeria.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this study is to investigate the perceived impact of instructional supervision on students' academic performance in secondary schools in Makurdi Education Zone of Benue State, Nigeria. Specifically, the study sought to:

1. examine the perceived impact of classroom visitation on students' academic performance in secondary schools in Makurdi Education Zone of Benue State, Nigeria.
2. determine the perceived impact of classroom observation on students' academic performance in secondary schools.

### **Hypotheses**

The following hypotheses were formulated and tested at 0.05 level of significance.

- Ho<sub>1</sub>. Classroom visitation has no significant impact on students' academic performance in Makurdi Education Zone of Benue State, Nigeria.
- Ho<sub>2</sub>. Classroom observation has no significant impact on students' academic performance in secondary schools.

### **Methodology**

The researchers employed the use of descriptive survey design in this study. According to Nworgu (2015), descriptive survey design is a type of design which aims at collecting data on, and describing in a systematic manner, the characteristics, features or fact about a given population. Descriptive survey design was adopted as appropriate for this study because it enhances the study situation in their natural settings without manipulations of variables (Ada, 2010). The study is confined to Makurdi Education Zone of Benue State, Nigeria which comprises of Guma, Gwer-East, Gwer-West and Makurdi Local government. The population of the study comprised 1768 teachers in the 89 public secondary schools in Makurdi Education Zone of Benue State. A sample of 265 teachers from 13 public secondary schools was used for the study. A 10-items structured questionnaire titled, "Instructional Supervision Questionnaire" (ISQ)" was used for data collection. The instrument was validated by two experts; one from Educational Management, and another from Measurement and Evaluation, Benue State University, Makurdi. The reliability of the instrument was ascertained through a trial test which yielded a Cronbach Alpha co-efficient of 0.92. This was considered high enough to be used for field study. Mean and standard deviation were used to

answer the research questions and Chi-square ( $\chi^2$ ) test of goodness of-fit was used to test the null hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. The decision is that, if the calculated value p is less than the level of significance, the null hypothesis will not be accepted and vice versa.

**Results and Findings**

This section presented and discussed the results of the study.

**Research Question One**

What is the perceived impact of classroom visitation on students’ academic performance in secondary schools in Makurdi Education Zone of Benue State, Nigeria?

**Table 1: Mean Ratings and Standard Deviations of the Respondents on the Perceived Impact of Classroom Visitation on Students’ Academic Performance in Secondary Schools**

Item No	Item Description	SA	A	D	SD	$\bar{X}$	SD	Decision
1	Lazy students are encouraged to study hard to pass their examinations as a result of classroom visitation.	157	86	9	13	3.46	0.78	Agree
2	Teachers are compelled to cover their scheme of work as a result of classroom visitation which tends to enhance students academic performance.	145	93	17	10	3.41	0.77	Agree
3	Classroom visitation makes teachers to be regular in class for teaching which tends to enhance students academic performance. .	166	72	15	12	3.48	0.80	Agree
4	Students do not stay in class for their studies throughout because of classroom visitation.	23	46	99	97	1.98	0.94	Disagree
5	Classroom visitation help to correct students’ mistakes which enhance their better academic performance.	151	90	7	17	3.42	0.83	Agree
<b>Cluster Mean</b>						<b>3.15</b>	<b>0.82</b>	<b>Agree</b>

**Decision Rule: 1.00-1.49=SD, 1.50-2.49=D, 2.50-3.49=A, 3.50-4.00=SA**

Data on Table 1 showed that the mean ratings for items 1-5 are 3.46, 3.41, 3.48, 1.98 and 3.42 respectively with their corresponding standard deviations of 0.78, 0.77, 0.80, 0.94 and 0.83. The standard deviations are small which shows that there is homogeneity in respondents’ responses for the items raised. Based on the decision rule, it means that respondents agreed with item 1, 2, 3 and 5 in the cluster which mean scores were above the cut-off point of 2.50. Meanwhile, item 4 was disagreed because it had mean score less than 2.50 cut-off mark. The cluster mean of 3.15 was also found to be above the cut-off point of 2.50. This implies that classroom visitation impact on students’ academic performance in secondary schools in Makurdi Education Zone of Benue State, Nigeria.

**Research Question Two:**

What is the perceived impact of classroom observation on students’ academic performance in Makurdi Education Zone?

**Table 2: Mean Ratings and Standard Deviations of the Respondents on the Perceived Impact of Classroom Observation on Students' Academic Performance Secondary Schools**

Item No	Item Description	SA	A	D	SA	$\bar{X}$	SD	Decision
6.	Regular classroom observation enables students' to improve on their class given task which invariably results to their better academic performance.	173	71	11	10	3.54	0.75	Agree
7.	Classroom observations help to control classroom noise making among some students which enhances better atmosphere for learning.	184	68	9	4	3.63	0.63	Agree
8.	Students' pay better attention to teaching as a result of classroom observation.	165	79	12	9	3.51	0.74	Agree
9.	Classroom observation enhances students' cooperative learning which tends to enhance their better academic performance.	150	93	14	8	3.45	0.73	Agree
10.	Teachers are confused on the use of the right technique in teaching the students as a result of classroom observation.	15	22	142	86	1.87	0.79	Disagree
<b>Cluster Mean</b>						<b>3.20</b>	<b>0.73</b>	<b>Agree</b>

Table 2 indicated that the mean ratings for items 6–10 are 3.54, 3.63, 3.51, 3.45 and 1.87 with their corresponding standard deviations of 0.75, 0.63, 0.74, 0.73 and 0.79. The standard deviations are small which shows that there is homogeneity in respondents' responses for the items raised. Based on the decision rule, it means that respondents agreed with item 6, 7, 8 and 9 in the cluster which mean scores were above the cut-off point of 2.50. Meanwhile, item 10 was disagreed because it had mean score less than 2.50 cut-off mark. The cluster mean of 3.20 was also found to be above the cut-off point of 2.50. This implies that classroom observation impact on students' academic performance in secondary schools.

### Hypotheses Testing

#### Hypotheses One:

Classroom visitation has no significant impact on students' academic performance in secondary schools in Makurdi Education Zone of Benue State, Nigeria.

**Table 3: Chi-square test of the Impact on Students' Academic Performance in Secondary Schools in Makurdi Education Zone**

Opinions	Observed N	Expected N	Residual	Level of Sig.	df	$\chi^2$ -cal	P-value	Decision
SD	13	66.3	-53.3	0.05	3	217.94	0.00	Sig.
D	11	66.3	-55.3					<b>Rejected</b>

A	84	66.3	17.8	<b>Ho<sub>1</sub></b>
SA	157	66.3	90.8	
<b>Total</b>	265			

a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected frequencies less than 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is 92.8.

Table 3 revealed that  $\chi^2 = 217.94$ , at  $df = 3$  and  $p = 0.00$ . Since p-value of  $0.00 < .05$  at 3 degree of freedom, the null hypothesis which states that classroom visitation has no significant impact on students' academic performance in secondary schools in Makurdi Education Zone of Benue State, Nigeria is therefore, rejected. This implies that classroom visitation has significant impact on students' academic performance in secondary schools in Makurdi Education Zone of Benue State, Nigeria.

**Hypotheses 4:**

Classroom observation has no significant impact on students' academic performance in Makurdi Education Zone.

**Table 4: Chi-Square test of the Impact of Classroom Observation on Students' Academic Performance in Secondary Schools in Makurdi Education Zone**

Opinions	Observed N	Expected N	Residual	Level of Sig.	df	$\chi^2$ -cal	P-value	Decision
SD	9	66.3	-57.3	0.05	3	266.25	0.00	<b>Sig. Rejected Ho<sub>2</sub></b>
D	12	66.3	-54.3					
A	71	66.3	4.8					
SA	173	66.3	106.8					
<b>Total</b>	265							

a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected frequencies less than 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is 92.8.

Table 4 revealed that  $\chi^2 = 266.25$ , at  $df = 3$  and  $p = 0.00$ . Since p-value of  $0.00 < .05$  at 3 degree of freedom, the null hypothesis which states that classroom observation has no significant impact on students' academic performance in secondary schools in Makurdi Education Zone, Benue State, Nigeria is therefore, rejected. This implies that classroom observation has significant impact on students' academic performance in secondary schools in Makurdi Education Zone.

**Discussion of Findings**

The first finding of the study indicated that classroom visitation has significant impact on students' academic performance in secondary schools in Makurdi Education Zone of Benue State, Nigeria. The result agrees with the findings of Peretomode (2007) who posits that classroom visitation is a procedure by which the educational leader could be of great assistance in aiding the teachers to improve their instructional methods, strategies or techniques and the learning processes of the student. The main objective of the principal's visitation according to the definition is for the improvement of the teaching-learning process. This method enhances proficiency especially if the beginning or inexperienced teacher watches experienced teacher in action. The finding also relates with Usman (2015) who found that regular instructional supervision using robust supervision strategies like checking of students' notebooks, classroom visitation/inspection by school administrators, checking teachers' lesson plan/notes and inspection of teachers record keeping have significant correlation with teachers' performance and academic achievement of students in secondary schools. The finding also support that of Adewale (2014), who found a significant effects and

correlation/ relationship of, class visitation, teachers' attendance and regularity, checking of record of work and lesson notes toward student academic work.

The second finding of this study revealed that classroom observation has significant impact on students' academic performance in Makurdi Education Zone. This finding corroborate with the findings of Harris (2015) and Neagley and Evans (2010) who regard classroom observation as essential to an effective instructional improvement programme which enhances students' better academic performance. The finding also corresponds to Okendu (2012) who found that that regular instructional supervision in the school system has significant impact on students' academic performance. The author also found that instructional supervision has significant positive relationship with instructional processes, instructional problems and that it also has a significant relationship with instructional supervision and academic program planning of secondary schools in Delga local government area, Rivers State, Nigeria.

### **Conclusion**

Based on the results of the study, it was concluded that classroom visitation and classroom observation has significant influence on students' academic performance in secondary schools in Makurdi Education Zone of Benue State, Nigeria. This implies that instructional supervision is very important in enhancing students' academic performance. This is because, through instructional supervision, teachers are compelled to wake up in their slumber and also make students sit up in their studies. This tends to positively enhance students' academic performance in internal and external examinations in the school.

### **Recommendations**

Based on the findings of this study, it was recommended as follows;

1. School administrators should ensure regular classroom visitation in their respective schools so as to encourage students to improve in their study habit geared towards enhancing their better academic performance.
2. Appropriate school authorities should ensure that a committee is set up in school that will from time to time go on regular observation of classroom happenings so as to strengthen the minds of teachers and students in the course of teaching and learning.

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