

Instructional Supervisory Roles of the School Heads in a District

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Abstract: *The instructional supervisory roles of school heads are significant and indispensable factors that lead to the improvement of instruction among teachers and the learning outcomes of students. This research aimed to study the instructional supervisory roles of secondary school heads in the district of Sta. Cruz, Province of Zambales. The descriptive method was used in this study. Nine (9) school heads and sixty - four (64) teachers served as respondents wherein survey questionnaires were used as instruments. Frequencies were used to summarize the information obtained, presented in distribution tables of frequency and percentages. Weighted mean was used in describing the supervisory roles of school heads in terms of their administrative function, supervisory activities, and the effectiveness of carrying out their supervisory roles. The findings established that the school heads carried out their instructional supervisory roles always and very effectively. Based on the result of the T - test, there is a significant difference between the assessments of the school heads and teachers on the instructional supervisory roles of the school heads. Because of this result, a proposed plan of action was made to improve the instructional supervisory role of school heads and likewise recommended that further and in - depth studies on instructional supervision be conducted.*

Keywords: instructional supervision, supervisory role, administrative function, descriptive methods, effectiveness, Sta. Cruz

1. Introduction

The rapid advancement of technology poses a significant challenge to humanity to keep up with the fast societal development rhythmically, especially in the third world and developing countries like the Philippines. Despite innovations that have been done to improve instruction, the students in the Philippines still performed poorly, especially in the major learning areas. We are far behind the other Asian countries in terms of performance in education. This is where the role of the school head is essentially needed.

In this light, the researcher would like to see the supervisory roles of the school heads and how the teachers perceive them. This endeavor is thought to contribute to improving the performance of the supervision role of school heads, enhancing instruction among teachers, and improving students' learning outcomes.

Researchers have suggested factors contributing to the establishment of quality education in schools. Digolo (2003) observes that the maintenance of factors such as curriculum, instructional materials, equipment, school management, teacher training, and resources are some of the indicators of quality education. To support the teacher and learning process, Doharly (1993) explains that the school head should ensure quality curricular supervision and provision of adequate physical resources.

One of the most crucial roles of school heads is to be an instructional leader, which covers seventy percent (70 %) of his time in performing his duties and responsibilities. Part of it is instructional supervision. The school heads of schools are expected to give instructional supervision a special place in the discharge of their duties. It requires a focus on the implementation of the required curriculum through instruction (Samoei 2014).

Instructional supervision is very important because it does not only help improve instruction but enables every learner to reach academic success. Its main purpose is to improve

the quality of teaching through improved skills of teachers, which in turn improve students' performance.

Based on research, there are certain skills that a school head must possess to carry out his or her supervisory roles. Kitavi (2005) notes that in education, the term supervision is used to describe those activities which are primarily directed towards the improvement of conditions surrounding the growth of both pupils and teachers; therefore, the role of the supervisor is to improve, stimulate, coordinate and make teachers self - directed and cooperative toward personal and institutional goal achievement.

Another crucial skill needed by the school heads in their supervisory function is the evaluation skill. Northouse (2010) explains that evaluation skill in education involves the ability to define goals and establish standards by which to judge the amount of change already taken place; making a judgment about the worth and value of change. The school head should establish a standard of appraisal to review teachers' performance in the light of their tasks as well as the context in which teachers are working. Without school heads' skill of evaluation, most teachers will be forced to rely on guesswork rather than on systematic evidence of the teaching - learning situation. The school heads should assist each teacher in forming a self - rating check which has a set of criteria by which they can judge their work. The teachers should evaluate themselves to know the progress they are making and which procedures decrease or increase their effectiveness (Sergiovanni and Starrat, 2006). Northouse (2010) explains that evaluation skill in education involves the ability to define goals and establish standards by which to judge the amount of change already taken place; making a judgment about the worth and value of change.

Communication skill is another important aspect of supervision. Communication, according to Mbiti (2007), "is a way of letting people (Staff, Parents, Learners, Community, and educational offices) know what is taking place and when such an activity is taking place. It is the lifeblood of an institution such that without communication,

it is impossible to run any of the activities in an organization" (p.32). The principal's role is to establish a sound information network that keeps teachers and other educational stakeholders informed about the progress and challenges the school is experiencing.

The school heads should be able to communicate their ideas and intentions about organized, professional development programs to teachers who are the beneficiaries of such programs. The ability of the head to communicate effectively is one of the powerful strategies to ensure the participation of the teachers in supervisory activities.

McNamara (2010) asserts that supervisory roles of heads will demand that he/she assigns responsibilities to heads of departments and other junior teachers with a clear description of duties and with specified expected results. Unwillingness to delegate, rather than the inability or lack of skills, is the main reason for not delegating, especially among new or inexperienced managers and supervisors. Bennaars, Otiende, and Boisvert (1994) warn that the school head who monopolizes all duties in the school is bound to find it difficult to manage everything effectively.

As mentioned above, researchers share the belief that supervision is effective if the supervisor possesses and exhibits qualities and characteristics related to knowledge and interpersonal and technical skills. The importance of acquiring these skills cannot be left to chance. This informs the need to improve the school heads' supervisory skills to help enhance teachers' development. Equally, the acquisition of skills like motivational skills, disciplinary skills, and computer skills will help facilitate effective supervision of teachers in particular and adequate management of the school in general.

The conceptual framework of this study is based on the concept that the school heads' supervisory role is a very crucial role that they have to perform. As presented and clearly stated in the National Competency - based Standards for School Heads, an effective school head is one who can implement continuous school improvement, can produce better learning outcomes among its pupils/students, and can help change the institutional culture, among others. The school head, as the chief executive of schools, has multifarious tasks to accomplish for the successful administration of the school system. Several authors describe the functions and roles of the school head. Amadeker (2005) describes the functions and roles of the school principal as 'headteacher, principal, leader of the school, school father adviser, chief administrative executive, public relation officer, curriculum director, innovator, policymaker, organizer, communicator, school authority educator, perfectionist, and philosopher.

In the same vein, Ezeocha (2000) sees the functions of the principal as supervision of instructions, curriculum development, aid evaluation, school - community relations, and management of school finance, staff, and student personnel administration. Bernard and Goodyear (2000) post that the principal is a standard setter, one who leads in the development of aspirations and expectations on the part of both teachers and pupils to do good work. He assists the

teachers with their problems of improving methods, materials, and evaluation and thus provides a good measure of quality control. Principals can help teachers improve their testing techniques and develop their ability to analyze and interpret data.

This study sought to examine the instructional, supervisory roles of school heads in terms of their: administrative function, instructional, supervisory activities, and instructional, supervisory roles. It shall also investigate the significant difference between the instructional, supervisory roles of school heads as perceived by the teachers and the school heads. This endeavor is thought to contribute to the improvement of the performance of the supervisory role of school heads and enhance instruction among teachers.

2. Background of the Study

A school head is the significant figure in any institution who manages school systems and the likes. He has the greatest weight of responsibility especially in terms of both leadership and management, the one who brings out the best in the teacher and whose passion and industry are beyond compare and are worthy of emulation.

Instructional supervision, on the other hand, is regarded as the work of ensuring the implementation of the educational mission of a school by overseeing, equipping, and empowering teachers to provide meaningful learning experiences for students and it has notable aims namely: (1) to provide objective feedback to teachers; (2) to diagnose and solve teaching problems; (3) to help teachers develop their strategies and skills; (4) to evaluate teachers for promotions or appointments; and (5) to help teachers maintain a positive attitude. Instructional supervision is the process of assisting teachers in the form of guidance, direction, stimulation, or other development activities to develop and improve the teaching and learning process and situation for a better one (Archibong, 2012).

According to Kalai (2007), secondary school head teachers are key to the successful management of their schools. Kalai observes that principals of secondary schools in Kenya are appointed from serving teachers, most of whom had no prior training or skills in educational administration or supervisory management. An apparent lack of supervisory training adversely affects the effective management of schools. Because of this, Lunenburg (2010) asserts that to provide effective supervisory service, supervisors must acquire three basic skills, namely, conceptual skills, technical skills, and human relation skills. Another is a conceptual skill. According to Lunenburg (2010), it is the ability to acquire, analyze, and interpret information received from various sources and to make complex decisions that help in logically achieving the school's goals.

Betts (2000) talked about a technical skill which is the "capability to apply knowledge, experience, techniques, and methods to perform specific tasks with the aid of appropriate machines and equipment" (p.12). Technical skill is concerned with understanding and being able to perform specific tasks and processes, practices, and techniques required for specific jobs in an institution effectively (Locke, 2010). It is about understanding the skills needed to advance

the organization. However, the school heads may not be required to have all the technical answers to problems; they need to know their supervisory role in the school. School heads need to understand the behavior needed to perform the job and master the skills involved in performing their role, especially in the supervision of teachers.

The next skill that a school must have is the human relation skill which is the ability to motivate, inspire, guide, and bring people together and develop them into an effective workforce as well as improve the well-being of individuals and working groups to make the best contribution to the success of the school (Lunenburg, 2010). According to Okumbe (2007), "it is the ability to understand the teachers and to interact effectively with them" (p.183). This involves being concerned about teachers and their problems, giving full consideration to their ideas and suggestions, and creating the type of staff meeting in which each teacher has an opportunity to make his/her opinion known by encouraging socializing activities that build a cordial environment.

The notable results of this study will be used as bases for future related researches that are focused on the Instructional Supervisory Roles of School Heads not just in the District level, but more consequentially; in both Regional and National levels.

3. Research Methodology

The study utilized the descriptive survey research method. A Cross-sectional survey was used. The purpose of the survey is to describe existing conditions, identify the standards against which existing conditions can be compared, and investigate the relationships that may exist between events (Creswell, 2003). Cohen, Manion & Morriison (2000) explains that survey research involves collecting data to answer questions concerning the phenomenon under study and mostly uses questionnaire. The respondents of this study were the nine (9) secondary schools in the district of Sta. Cruz. This was composed of nine principals and 30% of the total number of teachers from the public secondary schools. Random sampling using the Fishbowl technique was used to select the teachers per school. Data were collected using Survey Questionnaire on School Heads' Supervisory Role. The research instruments were adapted from the Thesis of Sr. Catherine Jeptarus Samoie entitled Instructional Supervisory Role of Principals and Its Influence on Students' Academic Achievement in Public Secondary Schools in Nandi North District Nandi County, Kenya. Modifications made so that it would suit the educational setting of the Philippines and the research itself. It also underwent face validity and pilot tested for its usability.

4. Results and Discussion

The profile of the respondents shows that 9.67 is the average number of years as school heads, and 100% of the school heads of Sta. Cruz district has attended training on School Leadership, Instructional Leadership, Curriculum and Development, and School Management. School heads' supervisory roles can be summarized from the salient findings of this study. The administrative functions of the

school heads are always performed. The instructional and supervisory activities are always done by the school heads. The instructional, and supervisory roles of the school heads are done very effectively.

There is a significant difference between the assessments of the school heads and teachers on the instructional supervisory roles of the school heads. There are various ways on improving the instructional supervisory role of school heads. These are attending specialized training on strategies of conducting instructional supervision so that school heads will acquire more skills in the performance of their supervisory roles, establishing good working relationship among school personnel so that teachers will feel at ease during observations, integration of portfolios to have a well-defined, clear and detailed instruction over the entire course and strengthening co-observation which is particularly helpful where the member of qualified teachers could therefore champion the course of improving the effectiveness of their colleagues.

5. Conclusions and Recommendations

Based on the findings revealed in the study, the following conclusions were drawn. The majority have served as school heads from 6 years and above while the rest of them have served for 5 years and below. Findings also show that all of the school heads have attended the training on School Leadership, Instructional Leadership, Curriculum and Development, and School Management. School heads always perform their administrative and supervisory role. The instructional supervisory activities are carried out always by the school heads and they are very effective in performing their supervisory roles. There is a significant difference between the assessments of the school heads and teachers on the instructional supervisory roles of the school heads. A plan of action is proposed which include the following activities: school heads should attend the training which caters to the different strategies of conducting instructional supervision, conduct team building activities, Integrate the use of portfolios by teachers (Portfolios can include learning activities, assessments, lesson plans, examples of student work, and other forms of evidence to improve instructional effectiveness.) They can also be used to validate good practice. Another is the strengthening of co-observation and conduct of School Learning Action Cells (SLAC).

In light of the conclusions drawn, the following recommendations are offered. Regardless of the number of years of being school heads, they should perform their duties and responsibilities efficiently and effectively and constantly keeping themselves abreast with the current trends in supervision by continuously attending training to cope with the changes and demands of the education system.

It is recommended that innovations in supervision be done to come up with a creative way of improving instruction among teachers. Since it was found out in the study that there is a significant difference between the assessment of school heads and teachers, it is recommended that topics on instructional supervision be included during School Learning Action Cells (SLACS) to create a more concrete

understanding and awareness of the relevance and need for school heads to perform this role. To further improve the performance of the school heads' instructional supervisory role, an action plan is proposed for implementation. A study of a similar nature must be conducted among Public Secondary Schools to strengthen further the findings of the present study.

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