# INSTRUCTIONAL SUPERVISION AS PERCEIVED BY TEACHERS IN PUBLIC BASIC SCHOOLS IN POKUASE EDUCATION CIRCUIT IN THE GA-NORTH MUNICIPALITY, GHANA

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**Abstract:**

This study investigated the perception of teachers on instructional supervision in public basic schools in the Pokuase Education Circuit in the Ga-North Municipality of the Greater Accra Region of Ghana. The study, which was underpinned by the pragmatist philosophical viewpoint, adopted the convergent mixed method approach. With simple random and convenience sampling techniques, 142 participants and 10 participants were obtained for the quantitative and qualitative phases of this study respectively. All categories of items in the questionnaire had Cronbach's alpha reliability index of 0.7 and above. The trustworthiness of the semi-structured interview guide was ensured by considering credibility transferability, dependability, confirmability, and authenticity. With the aid of Version 20 of Statistical Product for Service Solutions (SPSS), the quantitative data were analysed using descriptive statistics (frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviation). The qualitative data were analysed using thematic approach. It was found out that the respondents perceived the clinical supervision as the most frequently used instructional supervisory practice. Cordial interpersonal relationship was perceived by the teachers as the most benefit of instructional supervision. Supervisor incompetence, supervisor work overload, and inadequate training for supervisors were identified as the top three challenges faced in the practice of instructional supervision. Among the suggestions made to improve instructional supervision in public basic schools in the Pokuase Education Circuit were training of instructional supervisors and sanctioning unprofessional conduct of instructional supervisors. Among the recommendations is that the Ga-North Municipal Education

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Directorate of the Ghana Education Service should organize regular in-service training for the supervisors to equip them in the use of mixed instructional supervisory types in the schools.

**Keywords:** instructional supervision, types, benefits, challenges, measures

## 1. Introduction

Education is considered the pillar of development in the world, and as such, it is recognized as a panacea to socio-economic development of all societies. Indeed, it is argued by Ampofo, Onyango & Ogola, 2019) that the crucial role of education in the development of the individual and the society cannot be compromised. This assertion is corroborated by Asafo-Adjaye (2012) that education, as an investment, results in good private and social returns and progress, making it essential for individual and national development. This implies that every nation depends on education for development. Hence, if more people have access to education in a country, there is the probability that development of that country will be high.

In view of this, countries all over the world are concerned about improving the quality of education. This concern is shared by Kotirde and Yunos (2014) who assert that the core of motivation for educational reforms has become necessary as a result of the heightened interest in quality education, and that achieving quality education is crucial in the strategic plans of developing countries to improve their economies. This is the reason for the various interventions such as capitation grant, school feeding programme, free uniforms and books put in place by the Government of Ghana to achieve the objectives of various international treaties such as the Millennium Development Goals (MDG), Sustainable Development Goals (SDG), Education for All (EFA), and Education 2030 Agenda which reflects the fourth SDG (De Grauwe, 2016).

The significant role of teachers in achieving educational goals and ensuring quality education in schools cannot be overemphasised (Gwaradzimba & Shumba, 2010). Through good planning and instructional delivery, teachers make decisions which to a large extent, affect the well-being and academic achievement of students (Stark, McGhee & Jimerson, 2017). The implication of this is that the Ministry of Education (MoE), Ghana Education Service (GES) at the national, regional, metropolitan, municipal and district levels, headteachers, as well as all stakeholders of education must see to it that teachers perform to their best of abilities to offer quality education to learners. This could be achieved through effective supervision of instruction in schools.

However, in recent times, many stakeholders including educationists, teachers, parents, and opinion leaders have expressed their views about the poor standards of academic performance of Junior High School pupils in Ghana. Most people have the perception that the poor academic performance of these pupils is as a result of ineffective instructional school supervision (Baffour-Awuah, 2011). This view had earlier been emphasised by Mankoe (2007) that the general perception of many stakeholders in

education showed that supervision at school and classroom levels is ineffective, leading to poor teaching and learning outcomes in the Junior High Schools in Ghana. The deduction from this viewpoint is that instructional supervision is a critical antecedent of quality education.

Instructional supervision, which is concerned with learning in the classroom, includes all those activities by educational administrators that may express leadership in the improvement of teaching and learning, such as observation of class instruction, conducting teachers meetings, conducting group and individual conferences and reorganizing curriculum (Olembo, Wanga & Karagu, 1992, p. 84). It is seen as the process of ensuring improvements in the teaching and learning through a network of cooperative activities and democratic relationship of persons concerned with teaching and learning to achieve an effective education system (Oyewole & Ehinola, 2014). According to Archibong (2013) instructional supervision is a collaborative effort involving a set of activities designed with the objective of bringing improvements in teaching and learning in schools. It is also viewed as all efforts assigned to school officials in providing leadership to teachers and other educational workers to improve instruction, stimulate professional growth and development of teachers, select and revise educational objectives, material of instructions, and methods of teaching, and the evaluation of instruction (Ismail, 2015).

The definitions suggest that instructional supervision is characterised by all those activities which are undertaken in a collegial and collaborative manner to implement and achieve the goals and objectives of education by overseeing, equipping, and empowering teachers to maintain and improve their effectiveness in the classroom, and enhance learning in schools. Thus, it plays a crucial role in improving instruction in schools and to achieve school and educational goals which are of great concern and interest all stakeholders of education. This buttresses the argument by DeWitt (1977, p. 589) that *"instructional supervision can only succeed as it becomes a part of, rather than apart from, the visible community which it must also serve"*.

The establishment of the National Inspectorate Authority (NIA), formerly National Inspectorate Board (NIB) to complement the efforts of other supervisory bodies in Ghana stresses the need for effective teacher supervision and support as a strategy to ensure quality of teaching and learning. The teacher's role in promoting and improving students' performance is crucial and as such they must be guided and encouraged to be innovative in their instructional processes. To achieve the maximum level of improvement, teachers must be well educated and become part of the learning community (Tesfaw & Hofman, 2014). This implies that constraints that hinder teachers' ability to adopt and acquire competencies and current ideas to facilitate growth on the job and increase their professional competencies in teaching must be eliminated. This study therefore sought to find out the perception of teachers in public basic schools in the Pokuase Education Circuit of the Ga-North Municipality, Ghana.

Various types of instructional supervision have been identified. Irrespective of the type of supervision, it is expected of the supervisor to offer direct assistance to assist

teachers in various ways and involve teachers in all activities to improve instruction. This is why Burton, Carper and Wilburn (2011, p. 27) refer to instructional supervision as "*all efforts taken by the headteacher to support teachers and provide resources, including professional development to facilitate teacher improvement*". The Circuit Supervisors' Handbook outlines two types of instructional supervision namely traditional supervision and clinical supervision (Ghana Education Service, 2002). Traditional supervision is described as the one in which the supervisor observes a classroom teaching and counsels teachers so that he/she can help them improve upon their teaching skills. It also involves meeting the teachers soon after observing classroom teaching and giving them suggestions for improving their teaching. Clinical supervision, is a five-step process that aims at helping the teacher to identify and clarify problems, receives data from the supervisor, and develops solutions with the aid of the supervisor. The supervisor's aim is not to find fault with the teacher, but to help him to know the problems teachers have in their teaching and helps them to find solutions to them. The five steps of clinical supervision are pre-observation conference, observation, analysis and strategy, post observation conference, and post-conference analysis.

Pre-observation conference is a meeting between a teacher and a supervisor who intends to sit in a teacher's class and observe him/her teach. The supervisor meets the teacher he/she intends to observe before the teacher starts the actual teaching (Ghana Education Service, 2002). The observation stage involves the supervisor entering the classroom unobtrusively, and avoiding eye contact with the children and teacher. He seats as quickly as possible near the door, not at the back of the class, to record in writing all that goes on during the lesson. The analysis and strategy stage involves the supervisor first reviewing his notes with respect to the targets agreed upon, and looking for specific incidents in his notes that relate to the targets. During the post-observation conference, the teacher gets feedback on those aspects of teaching that are of concern to him/her. The supervisor begins with positive comments and then offers suggestions for improvements. Post-conference analysis therefore, is the final step in clinical supervision. It represents self-evaluation for the supervisor, who reviews the conference just completed and evaluates its strengths and weaknesses (Ghana Education Service, 2002). Thobega and Miller (2008) found that teachers perceived both their supervisors to have engaged in contextual and clinical supervision practices whereas some were perceived to have used a collaborative style.

Internal supervision which takes place in the school, is done mainly by the headteacher. In basic schools, the headteacher, among others, sees to it that he or she works with teachers, builds units, ensures continuous programme of curriculum improvement, ascertains the need for instructional staff, and directs and supervises the work of teachers (Kpatakpa, 2008). This signifies that the headteacher's role in instructional supervision is crucial. As a key supervisor in the school, the headteacher, through internal supervision, ensures that teaching and learning is effectively enhanced, organises school-based in-service training programmes for teachers, and appraise the work of teachers. External supervision on the other hand, involves routine supervision

where the external supervisor discusses issues about the implementation of school and educational goals with teachers and the headteacher. External supervision could be brief visits, follow-up visits, and intensive supervision. The use of any of these aspects of external supervision is determined by the purpose of the visit by the supervisor. Hence, basic schools in Ghana will be effective in achieving their goals when external supervisors such as Circuit Supervisors and School Management Committee (SMC) assist the headteacher in the supervision of activities of the school.

Developmental supervision has three phases (Glickman, Gordon, & Ross-Gordon, 2009). In phase one, the supervisor tries to find out the levels of the teacher's developmental expertise, commitments, and approach that creates the best supervisory match. In phase two, the supervisor uses a selected interpersonal approach to help the teacher in instructional problem solving. In phase three, the supervisor changes his or her interpersonal behaviour and adopts less supervisor control in favour of more teacher control. Directive control supervision is applied when the supervisor wants to transmit his expectations to teachers. The supervisor presents, clarifies, listens, solves problems, directs, standardizes and reinforces. This form of supervision is useful in limited circumstances, and it is used when teachers possess little expertise, involvement or interest so far as an instructional problem is concerned and also when time is short.

Another form of supervision, directive informational supervision, is used to direct teachers to consider and choose from clearly delineated alternative actions. The supervisor is the major source of information, goal articulation and suggested practices. However, the supervisor is careful to solicit teacher input as he or she revises and refines the choices. Ultimately, the teacher is asked to make a judgment as to which practices or combinations are feasible and realistic (Glickman, Gordon, & Ross-Gordon, 2009). They however, added that directive informational behaviours should be employed under certain circumstances including when the teacher is functioning at fairly low developmental levels, and when the teacher does not possess the knowledge about an issue that the supervisor clearly possesses.

Tsui (2005) posits that collaborative supervision is likely to reduce, if not eliminate the tension and anxiety associated with the supervision of teachers. He argued that tension and anxiety generated in the supervisory process undermines the potential of teacher supervision as a mutually beneficial and enriching experience. Glickman, Gordon, and Ross-Gordon (2009) argued along similar lines with the view that collaborative supervision is premised on participation by equals in making instructional decisions, and its outcome is a mutual plan of action. According to them, collaborative behaviours consist of clarifying, listening, reflecting, presenting, problem-solving, negotiating and standardizing. They opined that collaboration is appropriate when teachers and supervisors have similar levels of expertise, involvement and concern with a problem. The key consideration of a supervisor is the fact that collaboration is both an attitude and a repertoire of behaviours. They conclude that unless teachers have the attitude that they are equal, collaborative behaviours can be used to undermine true equality.

Another type of instructional supervision is collegial supervision. Sergiovanni and Starratt (2007) in their study showed that in collegial supervision, teachers agree to work together for their own professional development. Collegial supervision is a process through which teachers review, reflect, and supervise each other for their professional development and improvement in their instructional practices (Carroll, 2007; Mudavanhu, 2015) based on collaboration, mutual respect, shared work values, co-operation, and discussion (Tshuma & Bhebhe, 2016, p. 3). Glatthorn (2001) also defines this approach as a moderately formalized process by which two or more teachers agree to work together for their professional growth, usually by observing each other's classroom, giving each other feedback about the observation and discussing shared professional concerns. According to Owusu-Mensah (2014) collegial supervision makes teachers to become less stressful and anxious because they work under a supportive environment which is collaborative, constructive, and reflective in gaining knowledge, skills, and experiences.

Through collegial supervision, teachers are likely to develop and practice good skills in evaluation and reflection, and this eventually helps them to better understand and appreciate their own instructional skills (Tshuma & Bhebhe, 2016). In effect, by observing and analysing the teaching of others, teachers have the chance of learning from the strengths and weaknesses of their colleagues in order to enhance their reflective practice for improvement in their instructional skills and practices. Sergiovanni and Starratt (2007) intimate that collegial supervision can take many different forms. In some schools, teachers may organize themselves into teams of two or three. They argue that it might be a good idea in some cases for at least one member of the team to be selected by the head of school or supervisor, but there are no rigid rules for composing collegial supervision teams. Once formed, the team may choose to work together in a number of ways ranging from clinical supervision to less intensive and more informal processes.

Sergiovanni and Starratt (2007) further alluded that team members may, for example, simply agree to observe each other's classes and provide help according to the desires of the teacher being observed. The teachers might then confer, giving one another informal feedback and discussing issues of teaching that they consider important. They indicated that the team members are supposed to meet beforehand to decide the rules and issues for the observation and for any subsequent conversations or conferences. Traditionally supervision has come to mean some form of classroom observation. Collegial supervision extends well beyond classroom observation. It provides a setting in which teachers can informally discuss problems they face, share ideas, help one another in preparing lessons, exchange tips and provides other support to one another (Brink, Bäck-Pettersson & Sernert, 2012).

Furthermore, Brink, Bäck-Pettersson and Sernert (2012) explain that in self-directed supervision, teachers take the responsibility of developing themselves professionally by working alone. Teachers may, for instance come out with a yearly plan that includes targets or goals derived from an assessment of their own needs. The teacher discusses the plan with his supervisors like head teacher and circuit supervisors. The

supervisor allows the teacher the freedom to go about his or her work, but they should ensure that the plan and selected improvements targets are both realistic and attainable. At the end of the year, the supervisor meets the teacher to discuss the teacher's progress so far as the achievement of the professional development target set is concerned. Teachers would be expected to provide some sort of documentation, perhaps in the form of a portfolio that includes artefacts such as time, logs, reflective practice diaries, schedules, photo essays, tapes, samples of students' work and other artefacts that illustrate progress towards goals. This yearly conference would then lead to the setting of new targets for further self-directed supervisory cycles.

Instructional supervision can also be informal, and this comprises the casual encounters that occur between supervisors and teachers and is characterized by frequent informal visits to teachers' classrooms, conversations with teachers about their work and other informal activities (Sergiovanni & Starratt, 2007). Successful informal supervision requires certain expectations to be accepted by teachers, otherwise, it will likely be viewed as a system of informal surveillance. Headteachers and other supervisors need to be viewed as principal teachers who have a responsibility to be a part of all the teaching that takes place in the school. They need to be viewed as instructional partners to every teacher in every classroom for every teaching and learning situation. When informal supervision is in place, school heads and supervisors become common fixtures in classrooms, coming and going as part of the natural flow of the school's daily work. However, this kind of relationship is not likely to flourish unless it is reciprocal. If teachers are to invite supervisors into their classrooms as equal partners in teaching and learning, teachers must in turn be invited into the process of supervision as equal partners.

The success of any school system primarily depends on effective instructional supervision (Okorji, 2010; Okorji & Ogbo, 2013) which has been found to improve teachers' professional performance and consequently enhances pupils' achievement (Esia-Donkoh & Ofosu-Dwamena, 2014). Okendu (2012) indicates that instructional supervision improves teaching and learning since it encourages proper guidance and planning, as well as strategising to enhance professional knowledge, skills and experiences of teachers to enable them become innovative in their classroom practice for academic achievement. Baffour-Awuah (2011) also postulate that instructional supervision helps to improve classroom practices to ensure learners' success. As one of the essential ways of promoting effective teaching in schools, instructional supervision helps teachers to enhance their qualitative and quantitative instructional delivery (Ndebele, 2013; Eya & Chukwu, 2012). With the introduction of the new reforms in education in Ghana in the 2019/2020 academic year, effective instructional supervision is more crucial and needed than ever before. To achieve the goals of the new education reform, measures must be put in place by all stakeholders, especially schools and teachers, to ensure continuous evaluation of their activities, especially, in the instructional processes.

Instructional supervisors face many challenges as they carry out their instructional roles in the schools. The challenges range from material resources, professionalism, management of staff and inter-relationship. Terra and Berhanu (2019) found out that instructional supervisors did not give regular and adequate support to teachers in professional and curriculum development, did not give training to teachers either in pedagogical issues or in importance of instructional supervision, and spent their time performing administrative tasks instead of more support time in academic tasks. Their study also revealed that instructional supervisors encountered various challenges that hindered effective implementation in of instructional supervision. These challenges include problem in selecting and assigning right officers as instructional supervisors, lack of instructional supervision manuals, inadequate finances, facilities and materials. Others are resistance of teachers to supervision as a result of lack of awareness for teachers in importance of instructional supervision, excessive workloads of headteachers and circuit supervisors, and lack of right training for supervisors. Similar challenges faced in the implementation of instructional supervision in schools have been identified by researchers such as Choy, Chong, Wong and Wong (2011), Hammond (2017), Oduro (2008), Sergiovanni and Starratt (2007), Tassa (2017), and Tesfaw and Hofman (2014).

There is a general agreement that ineffective supervision on the part of both teachers and students is a prime cause of the poor students' performance (Oliva & Pawlas, 2008). Even though Aguba (2009) discovered several contributory factors such as indiscipline of students, improper parental care, ineffectiveness of teachers and inadequate teaching and learning materials as influencing student performance, it has been noted that ineffective instructional supervision by the instructional supervisors at the school level is a major contributor to the poor performance of students in schools. Thus, most parents and other stakeholders attribute the poor performance of students in Ghana's basic schools to ineffectiveness of instructional supervision. It is therefore argued that teachers are not adequately supervised for the expected learning outcomes of students. This, could be the reason for the assertion that public perceptions seem to show that academic performance, especially in the public basic schools is not encouraging when one considers the fact that those schools have enough access to professional teachers, learning materials and financial resources from the government, donor agencies, and non- governmental organizations (Baffour-Awuah, 2011).

Poor academic performance of students in public basic schools in the Pokuase Education Circuit has been observed for some time in spite of the fact that the schools in the Circuit are provided with adequate and well-trained teachers and headteachers. Despite the availability of trained teachers together with the efforts of stakeholders of education in the Circuit to ensure quality in students' academic performance, much has not been achieved. Statistics of the Basic Education Certificate Examination (BECE) results in the Circuit reported by the Statistics Unit of Ghana Education Service Directorate in the Municipality indicates that since 2016, the pass rates for English Language, Mathematics, and Integrated Science for 2016 and 2017 were not encouraging. For instance, in 2016, the pass rates for English Language, Mathematics, and Integrated

Science were 54.5%, 48.9%, and 46.2% respectively. Similarly, in 2017, the pass rates for English Language, Mathematics, and Integrated Science were 56.4%, 46.5%, and 49.4% respectively.

With these statistics, it was worthwhile and expedient to investigate the perception of teachers on instructional supervision in public basic schools in the Circuit since ineffective instructional supervision is considered by Oduro (2008) as one of the key reasons for poor academic performance among learners in the public basic schools in Ghana. Again, literature on instructional supervision in public basic schools in the Pokuase Education Circuit seem to be non-existent. It was therefore prudent to conduct this study to offer empirical evidence on the practice of instructional supervision in public basic schools in the Pokuase Education Circuit in the Ga-North Municipality of the Greater Accra Region of Ghana. With the aim of exploring the perception of teachers on instructional supervision in public basic school in the Circuit, the following research questions were formulated to guide this study:

1. What is the perception of teachers on the type of instructional supervision mostly used in public basic schools in the Pokuase Education Circuit?
2. What are the benefits of instructional supervision to teachers in public basic schools in Pokuase Education Circuit?
3. What challenges are faced during instructional supervision in public basic schools in the Pokuase Education Circuit?
4. What measures could be adopted to improve instructional supervision in public basic school in the Pokuase Education Circuit?

The findings of this study, among others, will help the Ga-North Municipal Directorate of the Ghana Education Service (GES) to implement policies and strategies to improve instructional supervision in public basic schools in the Pokuase Education Circuit. The findings will also help the Directorate of GES in the Municipality to determine future training programmes and skills needed for internal (headteachers) and external (circuit supervisors) instructional supervisors in public basic schools in the Pokuase Education Circuit to equip them with skills, knowledge, and attitudes to supervise appropriately using contemporary supervisory skills. Again, through the findings of this study, teachers in the Pokuase Education Circuit will be made aware of the roles of headteachers and circuit supervisors and the need for them (teachers) to cooperate during instructional supervision processes. It is also our expectation that the findings of the study will contribute to knowledge and literature about instructional supervision for educational systems in the Ga-North Municipality, and also serve as a starting point for other researchers who will like to undertake a study of this nature.

## 2. Methodology

This study was underpinned by the pragmatists' philosophical viewpoint/paradigm and as such, adopted the convergent mixed method design by merging both quantitative and qualitative approaches where quantitative and qualitative data were collected almost at

the same time, and the information integrated in the interpretation of the overall results with the view of explaining contradictions (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). The adoption of this design was to provide a comprehensive analysis of the data and bring together the differing strengths and weaknesses of qualitative and quantitative data collection procedures and analysis so as to have a comprehensive understanding of the issues under study (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2018). The target population for this study was all teachers in public basic schools in the Pokuase Education Circuit, while the accessible population involved all teachers in public basic schools in the Education Circuit who had spent at least two years in their respective schools. Two years inclusion criteria was deemed relevant for our study because we believed that teachers need to spend a considerable time in their school to be familiar with the instructional supervisory practices of their headteachers in order to provide vivid description of these practices. At the time of the study, teachers who fit the criteria were three hundred (300).

Through random sampling technique, 142 teachers were obtained for the quantitative phase of the study while convenience sampling technique was utilised to obtain ten (10) teachers for the qualitative phase of the study. Questionnaire and semi-structured interview guide were used to collect data for this study. Apart from the demographic data of the respondents, the other variables of the study which were based on the research questions were measured on a 4-point Likert scale such that 4=Strongly Agree, 3= Agree, 2=Disagree, and 1=Strongly Agree. The semi-structured interview guide involved predetermined questions to probe for in-depth information form the respondents in a face-to-face and a verbal interaction manner (Leavy, 2017). A pilot-test of the instruments was carried out in the Amamoley Education Circuit, also in the Ga-North Municipality. Headteachers and teachers in two public basic schools were involved in the pilot-test.

Cronbach's alpha coefficients were computed to check the internal consistency of the items in the questionnaire. The reliability coefficients of the variables were clinical supervision (0.76), external supervision (0.81), traditional supervision (0.78), developmental supervision (0.79), internal supervision (0.80), informal supervision (0.77), collegial supervision (0.76), and self-directed supervision (0.79). Trustworthiness of the semi-structured interview guide was done by considering credibility, transferability, dependability, confirmability, and authenticity (Bryman, 2012). For ethical considerations, research protocols including access, consent, confidentiality, honesty, openness, and responsibility (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Bryman, 2012) were adhered to.

## 3. Analysis and Results

In analysing the demographic variables of the respondents (sex, age, academic qualification, and teaching experience), frequency and percentages were used. For the four research questions, mean and standard deviation were used. In the case of the qualitative data, thematic analysis was done.

## 3.1 Analysis of Demographic Variables

The analysis of the demographic variables showed that out of the 142 respondents, 61(43.0%) were male teachers while 81(57.0%) were female teachers. It was realised that 41(28.9%) of the teachers were aged between 20 and 30 years, 59(41.5%) were within the age range of 31 and 40 years, 31(21.8%) were within the 41 and 50 age range, while the remaining 11(7.7%) were more than 50 years. Concerning academic qualification, the data revealed that 3(2.1%) of the respondents were Certificate "A" Post-Secondary holders, 70(49.3%) were Diploma holders, 62(43.7%) had obtained Bachelor's degree while 7(4.9%) had obtained a Master's degree. With years of teaching experience, it was found out that 46(32.4%) of the respondents had 1-5 years teaching experience, another 46(32.4%) had 6-10 years teaching experience, 20(14.1%) had teaching experience ranging between 11 and 15 years. It was also observed that 17(12.0%) and 13(9.1%) of the respondents had teaching experiences of 16-20 years, and more than 21 years respectively.

## 3.2 Analysis of Research Question 1

The goal of this research question was to determine the types of instructional supervision used in public basic schools in the Pokuase Education Circuit. The results are presented in Table 1. The types of instructional supervision considered in this study included clinical supervision, informal supervision, self-directed supervision, traditional supervision, external supervision, collegial supervision, internal supervision, and developmental supervision.

**Table 1:** Types of Instructional Supervision Used in Pokuase Education Circuit

| Type of Supervision | Mean | Standard Deviation |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Clinical Supervision | 3.95 | 0.36 |
| External Supervision | 3.90 | 0.39 |
| Traditional Supervision | 3.86 | 0.38 |
| Developmental Supervision | 3.81 | 0.42 |
| Internal Supervision | 3.80 | 0.67 |
| Informal Supervision | 3.75 | 0.78 |
| Collegial Supervision | 3.70 | 0.83 |
| Self-directed Supervision | 3.63 | 0.80 |

It is observed from the results that various types of instructional supervision are exhibited in the schools. However, the findings revealed that the respondents perceived the clinical supervision (M=3.95, SD=0.36) as the most frequently used instructional supervision, as compared to external supervision (M=3.90, SD=0.39), traditional supervision (M=3.86, SD=0.38), developmental supervision (M=3.81, SD=0.42), internal supervision (M=3.80, SD=0.67), informal supervision (M=3.75, SD=0.78), collegial supervision (M=3.70, SD=0.83), and self-directed supervision (M=3.63, SD=0.80). Thus, the results established that the clinical supervision was the dominant type of instructional supervision used in public basic schools in the Pokuase Education Circuit while self-directed supervision was the least dominant type of supervision used in the schools. Nevertheless, considering the 4-point Likert scale used in data collection where the mean

score is 2.5 (1+2+3+4/4), it was evident that all the types of instructional supervision outlined in this study were rated above average. In essence, the findings pointed out that multiple instructional supervisory types were employed in the schools.

From the analysis of the interview data on the type of instructional supervision used in public basic schools in the Pokuase Education Circuit, one respondent had this to say:

*"My head teacher is in charge of supervision in the school, so he carries out supervision of teaching and learning in the school. He enters our classrooms anytime he wishes, and he observes our lessons. He then offers suggestions to us on how to improve on our performance."* (Respondent #2).

The response is evident that both internal supervision and traditional supervision were used in the schools in the Pokuase Education Circuit. The headteacher carries out the internal supervision, and the traditional supervision was observed when the head teacher conducted instructional supervision without prior notice of the teachers. It is also inferred from the response that the headteacher appears to have solutions to the teachers' instructional needs which is typical of traditional supervision. Another respondent commented that:

*"The Circuit Supervisor carries out supervision in our school with support from the headteacher. The circuit supervisor sometimes informs us of the visit, and what he expects from us during the supervision. He then organizes a meeting with us after the supervision where we discuss observations made."* (Respondent #6)

The comment suggests that there were external supervision and characteristics of clinical supervision in the schools. By external supervision, the Circuit Supervisor conducts instructional supervision. The Circuit Supervisor holds pre-observation conference with the teachers, and discusses with them the aim for the supervision. The responses further showed that the Circuit Supervisor organises post-observation conference sessions with teachers to discuss the outcome of the supervision. Responding to the type of supervision used in the schools, a respondent remarked:

*"The supervisors tailor their supervision to the peculiar needs of each teacher. The supervisors assess the needs of the teachers and implement their supervision to address the challenges of individual teachers. For example, newly trained teachers may require more attention during the supervisory process than experienced teachers. In this way, individual attention is given to each teacher depending on their needs."* (Respondent #8)

From these remarks, it is obvious that the supervisors adopted the developmental type of supervision where the supervisors evaluate the needs of the supervisees, and channel their supervisory practices to address these needs. Based on the comment, it was

deduced that the developmental type of supervision was used in the schools. It is also observed from the qualitative data that supervisors used varied supervisory types in the schools in the Pokuase Education Circuit. These include external, internal, developmental, clinical, and traditional types of supervision.

### 3.3 Analysis of Research Question 2

The purpose of the second research question was to investigate the perception of the teachers on the benefits derived from instructional supervision in the public basic schools in the Pokuase Education Circuit. Table 2 presents the findings of the analysis.

**Table 2:** Benefits of Instructional Supervision

| Benefits of Supervision | N | Min. | Max. | Mean | Std. Deviation |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Interpersonal Relationship | 142 | 1 | 4 | 3.96 | 0.35 |
| Teacher Performance Appraisal | 142 | 1 | 4 | 3.95 | 0.36 |
| Teacher Professional Development | 142 | 1 | 4 | 3.94 | 0.39 |
| Promoting Effective School Management | 142 | 1 | 4 | 3.93 | 0.38 |
| Promoting School-community Relations | 142 | 1 | 4 | 3.92 | 0.42 |
| Interpreting Educational Policies | 142 | 1 | 4 | 3.88 | 0.44 |
| Promoting Effective Classroom Instruction | 142 | 1 | 4 | 3.87 | 0.46 |
| Effective Classroom Management | 142 | 1 | 4 | 3.75 | 0.78 |

Eight (8) benefits of instructional supervision were identified in the study. These comprised promoting school-community relations, teacher performance appraisal, promoting effective classroom instruction, teacher professional development, effective classroom management, promoting effective school management, interpersonal relationship, and interpreting educational policies. The results in Table 2 reveal that the respondents graded all the benefits of instructional supervision outlined in this study.

Indeed, interpersonal relationship (M=3.96, SD=0.35) was perceived as the highest benefit of instructional supervision, followed by teacher performance appraisal (M=3.95, SD=0.36), teacher professional development (M=3.94, SD=0.39), promoting effective school management (M=3.93, SD=0.38), promoting school-community relations (M=3.92, SD=0.42), interpreting educational policies (M=3.88, SD=0.44), promoting effective classroom instruction (M=3.87, SD=0.46), and supporting effective classroom management (M=3.75, SD=0.78). The findings suggested that the respondents perceived instructional supervision as valuable to the teachers of public basic schools in the Pokuase Education Circuit. It is further observed that all the benefits of instructional supervision outlined in this study were rated higher than the average score of 2.5 based on the 4-point Likert scale used in the data collection.

The interviews were conducted to find out the opinions of the respondents on the benefits of instructional supervision to the schools. This was what a respondent said:

*"In my view, supervision is important in every school. The supervisors assist teachers to update their knowledge and skills in matters relating to teaching and learning. The*

*supervisors share ideas with us, and this helps to enhance our performance on the job.* (Respondent #1)

It is inferred from the comments above that instructional supervision improves the professional development of teachers, and boosts their job performance. Another respondent stated that:

*"Supervision helps me to assess my performance. During supervision, I get to know my areas of strength as well as weaknesses, and the supervisor supports me to address the challenges that I face in doing my work as a teacher. With this, I become effective in my instruction." (Respondent #5)*

These comments pointed out that instructional supervision enhances teacher performance appraisal which results in effective teaching and learning in the classroom. Other respondents alluded to the impact of instructional supervision on school management as captured in the comments below:

*"Supervisors, especially Circuit Supervisors, assist the teacher in ensuring effective school management. The CS [Circuit Supervisor] visits the school, and guides the head teacher in many management issues such as record keeping, organizing school-based in-service training, resolving conflicts, and organizing Parent-Teacher Association meetings. All these help the head teacher to manage the school effectively.* (Respondent #2)

Deductively, these comments indicate that instructional supervision enhances effective school management.

## 3.4 Analysis of Research Question 3

This research question sought to investigate the challenges that confront the conduct of instructional supervision in the schools, and the results are presented in Table 3. It is observed from the results that instructional supervision in the schools was faced with several challenges.

**Table 3:** Challenges Facing Instructional Supervision

| Challenges of Supervision | N | Min. | Max. | Mean | Std. Deviation |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Supervisor Incompetence | 142 | 3 | 4 | 3.99 | 0.12 |
| Supervisor Work Overload | 142 | 3 | 4 | 3.97 | 0.28 |
| Inadequate Training for Supervisors | 142 | 1 | 4 | 3.89 | 0.43 |
| Uncooperative Attitude of Teachers | 142 | 1 | 4 | 3.86 | 0.65 |
| Inadequate Supervisors | 142 | 2 | 4 | 3.83 | 0.57 |
| Inexperienced Supervisors | 142 | 2 | 4 | 3.82 | 0.46 |
| Lack of Resources for Supervision | 142 | 1 | 4 | 3.80 | 0.64 |

The findings revealed that the respondents perceived supervisor incompetence (M=3.99, SD=0.12) as the major challenge to instructional supervision in the schools, followed by supervisor work overload (M=3.97, SD=0.28), inadequate training for supervisors (M=3.89, SD=0.43), uncooperative attitude of teachers (M=3.86, SD=0.65), inadequate supervisors (M=3.83, SD=0.57), inexperienced supervisors (M=3.82, SD=0.46), and inadequate resources for supervision (M=3.80, SD=0.64). Based on these findings, the study concluded that there were challenges that bedevil the effective conduct of instructional supervision in the schools.

Interviews were also conducted to determine the challenges that confront the conduct of instructional supervision in the schools. One of the respondents remarked:

*"Supervision in the schools has not been effective because the supervisors do not have the needed materials and logistics to work efficiently. For example, supervisors do not have motorbikes which could enable them to access the schools easily. So, many supervisors are unable to visit the schools regularly for supervision."* (Respondent #10)

This observation showed that supervisors do not have the required resources to carry out effective supervision in the schools. Conversely, the comments implied that the supervisors would be more effective if they had all the resources to do their work. Another respondent noted that:

*"The supervisors' work is too burdensome. One Circuit Supervisor is assigned to about 35 schools, and some even have more than this. The schools they supervise are too many that they find it difficult go to each school frequently. For the head teacher too, she supervises as well as teaches a subject. I think the workload is too huge for the supervisors to be effective.* (Respondent #4)

By implication, the workload frustrates the efforts of the supervisors in implementing effective instructional supervision in the schools. Another respondent added that:

*"I think some of the supervisors are not competent enough to carry out effective supervision in the schools. This is because some of the supervisors do not actually offer the support that teachers need to improve on their [teachers] performance. Most of the supervisors come around, check records, and leave without visiting the classrooms to give instructional support to teachers. In my view, the supervisors are not well equipped to discharge their duties well."* (Respondent #6)

Based on these remarks, it is construed that the supervisors do not possess the knowledge and skills to discharge the task of instructional supervision effectively. From the above information, it is evident that factors such as work overload, lack of resources

for supervision, and incompetence on the part of the supervisors militate against the smooth implementation of instructional supervision in the schools.

### 3.5 Analysis of Research Question 4

Views were gathered from the respondents on measures that could be put in place to improve instructional supervision in the schools, and the results are shown in Table 4. The findings revealed that the respondents suggested motivation of supervisors (M=3.84, SD=0.30) as a way to improve instructional supervision in the schools. This was followed by training of supervisors (M=3.76, SD=0.19), sanctioning unprofessional conduct of supervisors (M=3.70, SD=0.77), selection of experienced supervisors (M=3.52, SD=0.77), provision of resources for supervision (M=3.51, SD=0.98), supporting supervisors for further studies (M=3.46, SD=0.98), rewarding high performing supervisors (M=3.43, SD=1.09), and orienting teachers on the importance of instructional supervision (M=3.35, SD=1.01). The findings pointed out that the respondents had diverse views on what could be done to improve instructional supervision in the schools.

**Table 4:** Measures to Improve Instructional Supervision in Schools

| Measures to Improve Supervision | N | Min. | Max. | Mean | Std. Dev. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Motivating of Supervisors | 142 | 3 | 4 | 3.84 | 0.30 |
| Training of Supervisors | 142 | 4 | 4 | 3.76 | 0.19 |
| Sanctioning Unprofessional Conduct of Supervisors | 142 | 1 | 4 | 3.70 | 0.77 |
| Selecting Experienced Supervisors | 142 | 1 | 4 | 3.52 | 0.77 |
| Providing Resources for Supervision | 142 | 1 | 4 | 3.51 | 0.98 |
| Supporting Supervisors for Further Studies | 142 | 1 | 4 | 3.46 | 0.98 |
| Rewarding High Performing Supervisors | 142 | 1 | 4 | 3.43 | 1.09 |
| Educating Teachers on Import. of Supervision | 142 | 1 | 4 | 3.35 | 1.01 |

During the interviews, the participants offered suggestions on what could be done to improve on the conduct of instructional supervision in the schools. A respondent had this to say:

*"The supervisors should be trained in the practice of instructional supervision through in-service training and refresher courses. These programmes will equip them with the current trends of supervision, so that they can offer the needed support to teachers."* (Respondent #1)

Apart from the training of supervisors as cited above, other respondents suggested that the needed resources should be supplied to the supervisors for effective supervision. This is deduced from the excerpt that:

*"Circuit Supervisors must be supported to carry out effective supervision in the schools. These supports could be in the form of motorbikes, files, and money for fuel so that they can visit the schools regularly. As done for the head teachers, Circuit Supervisors should be given monthly allowance to support them for supervision."* (Respondent #7)

Another participant mentioned rewards for supervisors as a means to motivate them to carry out effective instructional supervision. This is realized from the comment that:

*"I propose that supervisors who show high commitment and performance should be identified and rewarded. I have observed that when teachers and head teachers are rewarded as best teachers and heads, Circuit Supervisors are left out. I think the supervisors offer valuable contributions to teachers and head teachers; therefore, their [supervisors] contributions should be acknowledged."* (Respondent #3)

Deductions from the responses of the participants showed that the challenges that hinder effective instructional supervision in the schools could be resolved. Measures such as provision of resources, reward and motivation of supervisors, and training of the supervisors are required to ensure effective conduct of supervision of teaching and learning in the schools.

## 4. Discussion

This study established that in public basic schools in the Pokuase Education Circuit in the Ga-North Municipality, clinical supervision was mostly used, followed by external supervision, traditional supervision, developmental supervision, internal supervision, informal supervision, collegial supervision, and self-directed supervision. This finding is consistent with previous studies (Sergiovanni & Starratt, 2007; Thobega & Miller, 2008; Glickman, Gordon & Ross-Gordon, 2009) where there was consensus that supervisors used multiple types of instructional supervision based on the needs of the peculiar situation. The qualitative analysis confirmed that instructional supervisory types such as external, internal, developmental, clinical, and traditional supervision were practiced in the schools. The findings imply that the various types of instructional supervision are relevant in addressing a particular instructional issue. For instance, clinical supervision is used to provide support to teachers while the traditional supervision could be used to find out whether teachers are complying with decisions taken during the clinical supervision. Therefore, it is construed that each of the instructional supervision is vital in accomplishing a need in public basic schools in the Pokuase Education Circuit in the Ga-North Municipality.

The results from the analysis of the second research question revealed that creation of interpersonal relationship was perceived as the greatest benefit of instructional supervision, followed by teacher performance appraisal, teacher professional development, promoting effective school management, promoting school-community relations, interpreting educational policies, promoting effective classroom instruction, and supporting effective classroom management. The finding pointed out that instructional supervision is valuable to the public basic schools in the Pokuase Education Circuit. Inferring from the qualitative analysis, there was a general agreement among the

respondents that instructional supervision contributes significantly to school improvement. This is in agreement with findings of earlier studies (Glickman, Gordon & Ross-Gordon, 2007; Sergiovanni & Starratt, 2007; Sullivan & Glanz, 2013) which established that instructional supervision is crucial to the delivery of quality education in schools. Hence, it is reiterated that instructional supervision is a crucial and essential indicator of quality education. This suggests that measures must be put in place to achieve effective implementation of instructional supervision in public basic schools in the Pokuase Education Circuit.

The study discovered that challenges such as supervisor incompetence, supervisor work overload, inadequate training for supervisors, and uncooperative attitude of teachers during supervision, inadequate supervisors, inexperienced supervisors, and inadequate resources for supervision were the major bottlenecks of instructional supervision in public basic schools in the Circuit. Several studies like those conducted by Hammond (2017), Tassa (2017), Oduro (2008), Sergiovanni and Starratt (2007), Choy, Chong, Wong and Wong (2011), and Tesfaw and Hofman (2014) discovered similar challenges of instructional supervision in their study settings. It is therefore presumed that the practice of instructional supervision is not effectively carried out in public basic schools in the Pokuase Education Circuit as a result of these challenges. By inference, supervisors would be well equipped to discharge their supervisory roles if these challenges are resolved.

The findings of the study showed that measures such as motivation of supervisors, training of supervisors, sanctioning unprofessional conduct of supervisors, selection of experienced supervisors, provision of resources for supervision, supporting supervisors for further studies in supervision, rewarding high performing supervisors, and orienting teachers on the importance of instructional supervision were identified. The findings are consistent with that of other studies carried out by Ivancevich (1998) and Baffour-Awuah (2011) where they highlighted these measures as a means to enhance instructional supervision in schools.

## 5. Conclusions

Based on the findings of the study, it is concluded that there are varied types of instructional supervision that are practiced by supervisors to enhance teachers' instructional practices in public basic schools in the Pokuase Education Circuit in the Ga-North Municipality. Indeed, each type of instructional supervision has a role to pay in improving teaching and learning in schools. The study therefore underscored the relevance of the various types of instructional supervision in the school. In essence, no supervisory type is irrelevant in promoting quality education in the schools. Hence, instructional supervisors are required to determine the aim of their supervision, and choose a supervisory type that is most likely to yield the needed results. The point is made that one-size-fits-all approach to supervision should be avoided since each type of supervision fulfills a purpose.

The significant role of instructional supervision in improving teaching and learning cannot be downplayed. The empirical evidence obtained from this study buttresses the notion that instructional supervision is a critical antecedent of quality education in all schools because it provides teachers with the essential competences to sharpen their instructional skills so that they are abreast with the contemporary trends of teaching and learning. This helps teachers to become effective in performing their instructional tasks. Accordingly, instructional supervision provides avenues for continuous teacher professional development where teachers learn on the job. Hence, teachers in public basic schools in the Pokuase Education Circuit in the Ga-North Municipality need to seize the opportunity and apply themselves fully to the practice of instructional supervision.

It is established that the conduct of instructional supervision in the schools is fraught with numerous challenges. Interesting to this study was that the challenges originate from various stakeholders in education with the major ones including circuit supervisors, headteachers, and teachers, School Management Committees, the Ministry of Education and the Ghana Education Service. This position signals a clarion call on these major stakeholders to contribute their quota to ensure effective supervision in the schools. Indeed, the suggestions from the participants indicate that each of the stakeholders is required to offer their support so that instructional supervision in the schools, especially in the Pokuase Education Circuit in the Ga-North Municipality would achieve the intended aims.

## 6. Recommendations

The Ga-North Municipal Education Directorate of GES should organize regular in-service training programmes for the supervisors to equip them in the use of mixed instructional supervisory types in the schools. This training will provide supervisors with the knowledge and skills to choose supervisory types based on the situation and purpose for supervision so as to offer targeted support to teachers. The Ga-North Municipal Education Directorate should organize symposia, seminars, and workshops for both supervisors and teachers in the Municipality to orient them on the benefits of instructional supervision in the schools. This will make teachers and supervisors in the various public basic schools in all Education Circuits in the Municipality, especially Pokuase Education Circuit, to become committed to the practice of supervision.

Instructional supervisors should give regular and adequate attention and support to teachers in the Pokuase Education Circuit on professional and curriculum development, and also focus on academic tasks. In line with this, the Ga-North Municipal Education Directorate should relieve supervisors of performing other duties apart from supervision in order to reduce their workload to make them more effective. This could be achieved by reducing the number of schools allocated to Circuit Supervisors, and detaching headteachers from teaching with the aim of providing them with ample time for instructional supervision. This can be feasible when the Ga-North Municipal

Education Directorate is able to recruit enough teachers to teach subjects and classes that would otherwise had been handled by the headteachers.

Supervisors who distinguish themselves in high performance should be motivated by the Ga-North Municipal Education Directorate to inspire them to offer quality instructional supervisory services to the schools. The Education Directorate of the Municipality should also establish award and scholarship schemes to reward supervisors for effective and efficient performance and dedication to the course of instructional supervision in public basic schools. The Ga-North Municipal Education Directorate should support instructional supervision by providing adequate resources needed for supervision in public basic schools. These logistics may include motorbikes, logistics, and funds to ensure easy access to the schools and effective organisation of instructional supervision to enhance teaching and learning.

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