

Analysis of the Supervisory Support to Teachers in Primary and Secondary Schools of Sidama Zone, Ethiopia

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ABSTRACT: The purpose of the study was to analyze the competency of supervisors and their roles in primary and secondary schools of Sidama zone. The study particularly tried to attempt in identifying supports given by supervisors to teachers on pedagogical activities in primary and secondary schools of Sidama Zone. The design of the study was descriptive survey. Both qualitative and quantitative data collection methods were used to collect data from respondents. The research samples consisted of 381 primary and secondary school principals, deputy principals and teachers. Data was collected using questionnaires, semi-structured interviews and document analysis. The data was analyzed using both descriptive and inferential statistics including mean, standard deviation, chi-square and independent t-test. The finding of the study revealed that majority of supervisors is incompetent and weak in supporting teachers to promote students' achievement. The findings of this study is also indicated that, the primary and secondary school supervisors in Sidama zone didn't work with teachers to promote classroom instruction and vital pedagogical activities which needs collaborative activities of teachers and supervisors. Another important issue raised by majority of respondents was that, many school supervisors have lack of pedagogical knowledge and skills concerning instructional supervision, and activities to be taken by supervisors with regard to the instructional supervision process. Finally, based up on the findings it was concluded that, improving the pedagogical competencies of supervisors has immense contribution to improve teachers' performance as a result the quality of instruction and academic achievement of students in primary and secondary schools will be improved.

Key Words: Analysis, Supervisory support, Pedagogical activities

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I. INTRODUCTION

In the process of improving teacher instructional competencies, many educators have come to realize that the quality of instruction depends not only on teachers' teaching skills and the utilization of modern technologies but also on supervisory support provided to teachers to indirectly bring about better student performance. In relation to this concept, UNESCO (2007) confirms that the overall education system should be supported by educational supervision in order to improve the teaching-learning process in general and learners' achievement in particular.

Thus, the objective of this study is to examine the supervisory support given to teachers in order to promote students' performance in some selected primary and secondary schools of Sidama Zone, Ethiopia. To this end, support given by supervisors to improve classroom instruction is the major focus of this study.

II. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The following are key research questions raised during the course of the study:

1. What were the supports given by supervisors to teachers to promote students' academic achievement in primary and secondary schools of Sidama Zone?
2. To what extent have supervisors supported classroom instruction by using different techniques in the target primary and secondary schools?

III. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The study attempted to answer the following research objectives:

- i. To examine supervisory supports given to teachers by supervisors in the sampled schools.
- ii. To assess techniques employed by supervisors to support classroom instruction

IV. RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

This study employed descriptive survey design to collect, process, analyzes and presents the data. As to Babbie (2008), this design is selected for its strength in giving detailed explanations of existing phenomenon of educational settings. Moreover, Gay, Mills and Airasian (2009) adds that a descriptive survey design enables the researcher to collect adequate data and evidences, answer detail questions, and obtain reliable information about the issue in the study area. Descriptive survey also helps to gather opinion of respondents on the current issues.

V. RESESARCH METHOD

The study employed both quantitative and qualitative research methods. The quantitative data were obtained from teachers and school principals through questionnaire while the qualitative data were gathered from supervisors through semi-structured interview items. Using such multiple methods is advantageous to examine the same phenomenon from multiple perspectives (Cohen et al., 2007). This approach is also important to build upon the strength that exists between quantitative and qualitative methods in order to understand a given phenomenon than is possible using either quantitative or qualitative methods alone (Creswell, 2003).

VI. POPULATION, SAMPLES AND SAMPLING TECHNIQUES

There are 640 teachers, 61 school principals and 8 cluster supervisors in the target primary and secondary schools of Sidama Zone. Out of these, 320 (50%) teachers were randomly selected and used for this study. However, all the 61 school principals and 8 cluster supervisors were selected using availability sampling technique as their number is small and manageable.

VII. INSTRUMENTS

Questionnaire was used to gather data from school principals and teachers while the semi-structured interview items were employed to solicit the qualitative data from the eight cluster supervisors. To ensure the content validity, copy of the questionnaire were given to two experienced researchers at Hawassa University, Ethiopia. Based on the comments obtained from the two reviewers, the instruments were amended and distributed to subjects of the study.

VIII. METHODS OF DATA ANALYSIS

The analysis of data was made using descriptive statistics such as mean and standard deviation as well as the inferential statistics like independent sample t-test. The researcher used the t-test to see opinion difference between teachers and school principals on the issues raised in relation to the support provided by supervisors to teachers to indirectly promote students' performance.

IX. LITERATURE REVIEW

The Concept of Supervision

There is no single unifying definition of the term supervision. However, the ff are among the definitions given by authors at different times:

Pierce and Rowell (2005) define supervision as a developmental process designed to support and enhance the individual's motivation, autonomy, awareness, and skills necessary to effectively accomplish the job at hand. It is one of the administrative tools which individuals as well as groups of people employ in the day-to-day administration of their work or organisations (Nyarko, 2009).

Similarly Supervision has been defined as the process of monitoring and control of an organization's level of goal materialization (Daresh and Marsha, 1995). Bernard and Goodyear (2008:1) also said "supervision is an intervention that is provided by a senior member of a profession to a junior member or members of that same profession. It is one of the administrative tools which individuals as well as groups of people employ in the day-to-day administration of their work or organizations.

From the context of education, supervision is defined as a dynamic process leading to studying and improving all factors that affect the education situation (Daresh, 2001). Likewise, Kilminster, Jolly and Van der Vleuten (2007) explain educational supervision as the provision of guidance and feedback on matters of personal, professional and educational development in the context of trainee's experience.

Generally, supervision is a component of educational management that is directed at promoting the competence of teachers in order to bring about better student achievement indirectly.

Purposes of Educational Supervision

Chike-Okoli (2006) suggested that teachers should be guided to improve teaching methods and techniques, utilize newly discovered principles of group dynamics, provide for individual differences, locate and utilize community resources and evaluate their teaching competence. These need to be among the major purposes of educational supervision.

Further, supervision's purpose needs to increase the opportunity and capacity of schools to contribute more effectively to students' academic success (Sergiovanni & Starratt, 2007). Likewise, Zepeda (2003) states that supervision's purpose is to promote growth, development, interaction, fault-free problem solving, and a commitment to build capacity in teachers.

There are also various purposes need to be accomplished in the non teaching areas. These are directed at guiding the supervisors in ensuring the supply of teaching materials to the school, ensuring that the quality of instruction is maintained in the school, providing an opportunity to assess the moral of the school and providing feedback to education planners on the need for curriculum improvements (Adui, Akinloye and Olaoyei, 2014).

Approaches to Supervision

Researchers have identified different approaches that supervisors who use clinical, and other supervision models which evolved from clinical supervision, apply to supervision. Glickman and Tamashiro (1980, in Awuah 2011) note that during post- observation conference, supervisors may employ directive (control or informational), collaborative, and non-directive approaches to address issues which crop up to plan actions for instructional improvement. They contend that even though a supervisor may employ a combination of these approaches, he/she may be more inclined to one of them. The following are among the common supervisory roles that supervisor may employ (Ibid, 40-44).

Directive approach: Supervisors who use a directive approach believe that teaching consists of technical skills with known standards and competencies for all teachers to be effective in their instructional practices (Glickman et.al., 2004). According to this approach, the roles of the supervisor are to direct, model, and assess competencies. directive supervisor sets standards for improvement based on the preliminary baseline information from classroom observation, shows teachers how to attain standards, and judges the most effective way to improve instruction.

Collaborative approach. Supervisors who employ this approach believe that teaching is primarily problem-solving, in which two or more people pose a problem, experiment and implement those teaching strategies that are deemed relevant. Here, the leader and teacher mutually agree on the structures, processes, and criteria for subsequent instructional improvement. The assumption underlying this approach is that both supervisors and teachers perceive each other as valuable partners in the supervisory process. There is, therefore, a sense of trust and respect between the two parties. The supervisee in this approach is likely to not feel threatened in pursuit of his/her instructional practices, and will probably welcome the observation processes.

Non-directive approach. This approach is based on the premise that teachers are capable of analysing and solving their own instructional problems. The supervisor in this approach is only a facilitator who provides direction or little formal structures to the plan.

X. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The purpose of school supervision is providing support to teachers on pedagogical activities with the goal of improving the teaching and learning process to maximize the achievement of students. To improve teachers' instructional performance, supervisors should be collaborative and work with teachers, especially on pedagogical activities. Thus, in order to realize the students' achievement through the improved teaching-learning process; supervisors should be work with teachers in all activities of teaching and learning. Basically, supervisors have to play a great role in promoting instruction, curriculum and staff development. However, this study focused on supports given by supervisors to teachers on pedagogical activities with the goal of improving the teaching and learning process to maximize the achievement of students in primary and secondary schools of Sidama Zone.

Based on this assumption were asked to respondents to rate and indicate the supports given by supervisors to teachers on pedagogical activities to improve the students' achievement. Hence to rate and evaluate supervisory support, the respondents' opinions were obtained using five points' frequency Likert type items summarized in to three rating scales such as agree, undecided and disagree. Meanwhile, the statistical tools used to measure responses of respondents were mean, standard deviation, t-test and p-value. The mean values in the following tables were interpreted as follows. If the mean value in the table is between 1 - 2.99 indicates that respondents' disagreement on role of supervisors in their school; if the mean value in the table is 3.00 indicates that respondents are unable to decides on role of supervisors in their school; finally, if the mean value in the table is between 3.01 – 5.00 indicates that respondents' agreement on role of supervisors in their school. Moreover, the data obtained through interview were analyzed using the iterative process as outlined by Creswell (2014) and the data was reviewed by researcher again and again to ensure its consistency and properly understood for interpretation. Finally, researcher used the member checking methods which were identified by

Creswell (2014) to check the accuracy of the information transcribed to words. In this regards, we are forwarded different supports to be given by supervisors to teachers in the form questions, and tried to analyze the opinion of respondents in the following table 1 and 2.

Table 1: Supports Given by Supervisors to teachers to Promote Students’ Achievement

	My school supervisor:	Respondent	Mean (\bar{x})	Standard Deviation	Overall			
					\bar{x}	SD	p-value	t-value
1	sets clear goals with teachers for the student’s academic	Teachers	2.63	.80	2.65	.81	.19	-1.19
		Principals	2.77	.88				
2	focuses on more pedagogic activities than administrative	Teachers	2.60	.76	2.61	.79	.02	-.79
		Principals	2.68	.94				
3	work with teachers to maintains an orderly	Teachers	2.64	.83	2.68	.84	.97	-2.36
		Principals	2.91	.88				
4	guide teacher to use different instruction	Teachers	2.67	.81	2.71	.82	.87	-2.22
		Principals	2.93	.89				
5	support teachers to continuously monitor	Teachers	2.63	.79	2.63	.80	.33	-.19
		Principals	2.65	.85				
6	provides feedback to students about their performances.	Teachers	2.61	.78	2.65	.81	.03	-2.22
		Principals	2.86	.93				
7	able to encourage and reinforce good performance of teacher	Teachers	2.58	.84	2.60	.84	.51	-1.01
		Principals	2.70	.88				

Source: Survey questionnaire (N=381, Significance difference at $\alpha = 0.05$ with degree of freedom 380).

As indicated in table 1 item 1, respondents were asked whether or not the school supervisors are sets clear goals with teachers for the student’s academic achievement. Accordingly, the mean value of teachers and principals were (M =2.63, SD=.804) and (M =2.77, SD=.883) respectively. This indicates that both teachers and principals confirmed that the school supervisors did not work with teachers in setting goals with teachers to improve the academic achievement of students in primary and secondary schools they are assigned to work. Moreover, the result of the t-test & P-values were (t= -1.19 & P=.199) respectively. Since (P >0.05) indicates that there is no significant difference among the responses of the two groups. Therefore, it is possible to conclude that the primary and secondary school supervisors in Sidama zone in setting goals with teachers to improve the students’ academic achievement is unsatisfactory.

In table 1 item 2, the respondents were asked to rate whether or not their school supervisors focus more on pedagogic activities than administrative activities. Accordingly, the mean value of teachers and principals were (M =2.60, SD=.765) and (M =2.68, SD=.940) respectively. This indicates that both teachers and principals recognized that their school supervisors focused more on the administrative activities than pedagogic tasks. Moreover, the result of the t-test & P-values respectively were (t= -.796 & P=.021). Since (P >0.05) indicates that there is no significant difference among the responses of the two groups. Furthermore, the overall mean of the response of both teachers and principals is (M=2.61, SD=.795). Therefore, it is possible to conclude that primary and secondary school supervisors in Sidama zone focused more on the administrative activities than pedagogic activities.

In above table 1 item 3, respondents were asked rate their school supervisors’ work with teachers to maintain an orderly classroom. Accordingly, the mean value of teachers and principals were found to be (M =2.64, SD=.833) and (M =2.91, SD=.881) respectively. This indicates that both group of respondents confirmed that their school supervisors were not work with teachers to maintain an orderly classroom. Moreover, the result of the t-test & P-values respectively were (t= -2.36 & P=.977). Since (P >0.05) indicates that there is no significant difference among the responses of the two groups. Therefore, it is possible to conclude that the competency of the primary and secondary school supervisors’ work with teachers to maintain an orderly classroom is low.

In above table 1 item 4, both groups of respondents were asked to rate whether their school supervisors guide teacher to use different instruction media in a classroom or not. Accordingly, the mean value of both groups were (M =2.67, SD=.811) and (M =2.93, SD=.891) respectively. This indicates that both groups of respondents approved that the school supervisors didn't work and guide teacher to use different instruction media in a classroom. Moreover, the result of the t-test & P-values respectively is (t= -2.22 & P=.879). Since (P >0.05) indicates that there is no significant difference among the responses of the two groups. Furthermore, the overall mean of the response of both teachers and principals of the item 4 is (M=2.71, SD=.828). Therefore, it is possible to conclude that the skills of the primary and secondary school supervisors' working in Sidama zone in guiding teacher to use different instruction media in a classroom is below the standard.

In table 4.7, item 5 above, the respondents were asked whether or not their school supervisors support teachers to continuously monitor their student performance. Accordingly the mean value of both teachers and principals groups were (M =2.63, SD=.796) and (M =2.65, SD=.854) respectively. Moreover, the result of the t-test & P-values respectively were (t= -.190 & P=.331). Since (P >0.05) indicates that there is no significant difference among the responses of the two groups. This indicates that both teachers and principals groups confirmed that their school supervisors were not support teachers to continuously monitor their student performance. Hence, it is possible to say that the role of school supervisors' in supporting teachers to continuously monitor their student performance is low.

In above table 1 item 6, respondents were asked to indicate their school supervisors are provides feedback to students about their performances. Accordingly, the mean value of teachers and principals were (M =2.61, SD=.787) and (M =2.86, SD=.939) respectively. Moreover, the result of the t-test & P-values respectively were (t= -2.22 & P=.030). Since (P >0.05) indicates that there is no significant difference among the responses of the two groups. This indicates that both group of respondents' confirmed that majority of supervisors working in primary and secondary school of Sidama zone were not provides feedback to students about their performances. Therefore, it is possible to conclude that the role of school supervisors' in providing feedback to students about their performances is low.

As depicted in above table 1 item 7, respondents were asked rate their school supervisors able to encourage and reinforce good performance of teacher and student. Accordingly, the mean value of both group of respondents were (M =2.58, SD=.841) and (M =2.70, SD=.882) respectively. Similarly, the result of the t-test & P-values respectively were (t= -1.01 & P=.515). Since (P >0.05) indicates that there is no significant difference among the responses of the two groups. This indicates that both teachers and principals confirmed that the school supervisors were not able to encourage and reinforce good performance of teacher and student. Therefore, it is possible to conclude that the skill of primary and secondary school supervisors working in primary and secondary schools of Sidama zone to encourage and reinforce good performance of teacher and student is below the standard.

Table 2. Supports Given by Supervisors to Teachers to Promote Classroom Instruction

	My school supervisor:	Respondent	Mean (\bar{x})	Standard Deviation	Overall			
					\bar{x}	SD	p-value	t-value
1	support and work with teachers to identify causes of students' misbehavior in the	Teachers	2.49	.79	2.50	.80	.297	-1.02
		Principals	2.60	.86				
2	guide teachers to create a conducive learning atmosphere in a class	Teachers	2.50	.80	2.53	.81	.420	-1.28
		Principals	2.65	.87				
3	works with teachers to identify the students skill gaps in the class	Teachers	2.61	.82	2.63	.83	.124	-1.21
		Principals	2.75	.90				
4	encourages students to evaluate themselves on instructional matters	Teachers	2.61	.79	2.65	.82	.184	-2.04
		Principals	2.85	.92				
5	creates a system wide mind set on student for their academic achievement	Teachers	2.65	.80	2.66	.82	.077	-.39
		Principals	2.70	.93				

As depicted in table 2 item 1, both group of respondents were asked to rate their school supervisors support and work with teachers to identify causes of students' misbehavior in the school. Accordingly, the mean value of teachers and principals were (M =2.49, SD=.795) and (M =2.60, SD=.861) respectively. Likewise, the

result of the t-test & P-values respectively were ($t = -1.02$ & $P = .297$). Since ($P > 0.05$) indicates that there is no significant difference among the responses of the two groups. This indicates that both teachers and principals confirmed that the most of the school supervisors working in primary and secondary schools of Sidama zone didn't support and work with teachers to identify causes of students' misbehavior in the school. Hence, it is possible to conclude that the skill of majority of school supervisors' working in primary and secondary schools of Sidama zone in supporting and working with teachers to identify causes of students' misbehavior in the school is low. In the same table item 2, both groups of respondents were asked to rate their school supervisors guide teachers to create conducive learning atmosphere in a class. Accordingly, the mean value of teachers and principals were found to be ($M = 2.50$, $SD = .807$) and ($M = 2.65$, $SD = .873$) respectively.

Moreover, the result of the t-test & P-values respectively were ($t = -1.28$ & $P = .420$). Since ($P > 0.05$) indicates that there is no significant difference among the responses of the two groups. This indicates that both groups of respondents confirmed that majority of the primary and secondary school supervisors working in Sidama zone were not guide teachers to create conducive learning atmosphere in a class.

In table 2 item 3, respondents were asked to indicate their school supervisors working with teachers to identify the students' skill gaps in the class. Accordingly, the mean value of teachers and principals were found to be ($M = 2.61$, $SD = .822$) and ($M = 2.75$, $SD = .906$) respectively. Moreover, the result of the t-test & P-values respectively were ($t = -1.21$ & $P = .124$). Since ($P > 0.05$) indicates that there is no significant difference among the responses of the two groups. This value of the statistics indicates that both teachers and principals confirmed the school supervisors were not worked with teachers to identify the students' skill gaps in the class. Hence, it is possible to conclude that the role of school supervisors' in working with teachers to identify the students' skill gaps in the schools understudied is low.

In the same table item 4, the respondents were asked to rate their school supervisors encourage students to evaluate themselves on instructional matters. Accordingly, the mean value of both group of respondents were ($M = 2.61$, $SD = .794$) and ($M = 2.85$, $SD = .928$) respectively. Similarly, the result of the t-test & P-values respectively were ($t = -2.04$ & $P = .184$). Since ($P > 0.05$) indicates that there is no significant difference among the responses of the two groups. This indicates that both teachers and principals confirmed that majority of primary and secondary school supervisors working in Sidama zone were not encouraging students to evaluate themselves on instructional matters. Therefore, it is possible to say that, the effort of school supervisors' in encouraging students to evaluate themselves on instructional matters is low.

As depicted in above table 2 item 5, respondents were asked to rate their school supervisors create a system wide mind set on student for their academic achievement. Accordingly, the mean value of both group of respondents were ($M = 2.65$, $SD = .803$) and ($M = 2.70$, $SD = .937$) respectively. Moreover, the result of the t-test & P-values respectively were ($t = -.395$ & $P = .077$). Since ($P > 0.05$) indicates that there is no significant difference among the responses of the two groups. This indicates that both teachers and principals confirm that the school supervisors were not creates a system wide mind set on student for their academic achievement. Therefore, it is possible to conclude that the effort of school supervisors' in creating a system wide mind set on student for their academic achievement is low.

XI. CONCLUSION

The effectiveness of the teaching and learning process depends on many factors. Among the factors supports given by supervisors to teachers on pedagogical activities to ensure an optimum result of teaching-learning in the classroom is very important. However, this study revealed that majority of supervisors are incompetent in supporting teachers to promote students' achievement on such pedagogic activities like setting goals with teachers for the students' academic achievement, working with teachers to maintains an orderly classroom, guiding teachers to use different instruction media in a classroom, supporting teachers to continuously monitor their student performance, encouraging and reinforcing better performance of teachers and students. Majority of the supervisors focused more on pedagogic activities than administrative activities. The findings of this study also indicated that, the primary and secondary school supervisors in Sidama zone did not work with teachers to promote classroom instruction on some the pedagogical activities like identify causes of students' misbehavior in the school, guide teachers to create a conducive learning atmosphere in a class, work with teachers to identify the students skill gaps in the class and create a system wide mind set on student for their academic achievement.

As interview conducted with some school principals, senior teachers, department heads and supervisors indicated that, majority of primary and secondary school supervisors were too busy and they are occupied with administrative and political workloads rather than pedagogical support to teachers and school principals. Another important issue raised by majority of respondents was that, many school supervisors lack pedagogical knowledge and skills concerning instructional supervision, and activities to be taken by supervisors with regard to the instructional supervision process. Finally, based up on the findings it was concluded that, improving the

pedagogical competencies of supervisors has immense contribution to improve teachers' performances in order to improve the quality of instruction and academic achievement of students in primary and secondary schools.

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