

# Headteachers' Supervision Practices In Teaching /Learning and Pupils' Academic Performance in Public Primary Schools In Kenya

Pauline Ngui<sup>1</sup>, Dr. Janet Mulwa<sup>2</sup> & Rose Mwanza<sup>3</sup>

South Eastern Kenya University,  
School of Education

<sup>1</sup> Master of Education Candidate-South Eastern Kenya University

<sup>2</sup> -Lecturer South Eastern Kenya University.

<sup>3</sup> - Lecturer South Eastern Kenya University

Corresponding Link (Not author) Gideon Kasivu-gidkasivu@gmail.com

## ABSTRACT

*This study sought to investigate the influence of primary school head teachers' supervision practice of checking of professional records on academic performance in public primary Kenya. The study objectives sought to establish the influence of head teachers' practice of checking of lesson plans and the records of work covered on students' academic performance in public primary schools in kangundo sub county, Kenya. The study used psychological theory of supervision. The study employed descriptive survey research design. The target population comprised of 32 schools which consists of all the 32 headteachers and all the 338 primary school teachers in Kangundo Sub County. Census was used to select 29 schools. A sample of 102 teachers was derived using simple random sampling techniques. Data collection was done by use of questionnaires. Validity of the tools was done by piloting of data collection tools in schools which did not participate in the main study. Descriptive statistics were used to analyze quantitative data which was presented by use of frequency distribution tables. The study findings revealed from the headteachers 33.3% and majority of the teachers 59.2% that the headteachers never checked the lesson plans. About 44.4% of the headteachers and 53.1% teachers indicated that the headteachers never checked the records of work covered. The study concluded that lack of head teachers' practice of checking of professional documents affected academic performance. Based on the study findings, the study recommended that headteachers should increase the frequency and diligence of checking of professional documents.*

**Key Words:** Head teacher, Instructional supervision, Performance, Professional documents, Supervision

Date of Submission: 20-08-2023

Date of acceptance: 04-09-2023

## I. Introduction

Supervision is an interaction between at least two persons for the improvement of an activity. Supervision is also a combination or integration of processes, procedures and conditions that are consciously designed to advance the work effectiveness of individuals and groups. The term supervision is derived from the word 'super-video' which means to oversee (Adepoju, 2008). According to Ogumsanji (2003) the ultimate aim of supervision is improving instructions for providing better education. Supervision is a way of stimulating, improving, refreshing, encouraging and overseeing certain groups with a hope of seeking their cooperation. Such practices are aimed at assisting supervisors in becoming successful in performing their supervisory tasks.

Instructional supervisory role of the head teacher is key to the improvement of quality education in any school and leads to enabling students perform well in their academics. Highlight of the instructional supervision has been made by many stake holders who are increasingly holding the principals accountable for the results of their students (Zepda, 2007). Poor performance is being registered in schools and yet head teachers are expected to make a difference in student's academic performance through instructional supervision (Tyagi, 2010). Other activities include conducting and coordinating staff in-service, advising and assisting teachers involved in instructional programs and receiving community feedback about school programs. These instructional activities are mainly carried out to support motivate and stimulate the teachers to assist them improve their classroom instruction. When head teachers support the teachers in this way the students' academic achievement is improved. These processes of instructional activities help the teachers to identify teaching and learning problems and seek for various alternatives to solve them (Too, et al, 2012).

Bouchamma, and Basque (2019) carried out a study on Supervision Practices of School Principals: Reflection in Action in China. The findings showed that the participants underlined the importance of explaining the importance of checking professional documents to their teachers. This study however did not focus on specific professional documents which is the gap that the current study intended to explore. This is consistent with Ozcan (2020) who did a study on Teachers' Evaluation on School Principals' Supervision in Nevşehir province of Turkey. The study revealed that school principals' conducted supervision by checking professional records of the teachers among other supervisory practices. The study by Ozcan differs from the current study in that it was on Teachers' Evaluation on School Principals' Supervision while the current study focused on specific supervision practices hence the current study fills in the gap.

It is noted that in the developed countries, supervision of educational institutions is better organized and well-coordinated than in developing countries (Afolabi & Loto, 2008). In the United States of America (USA) for example, the main aim of supervision practice in schools is to improve classroom instruction. This could be achieved through observation of classroom teaching, analysis of observed data and face-to-face interaction between observer and the teacher. There is state-wide control, county, city or township supervision in the United States because the government system is mainly federal. In Turkey, Inspection and supervision is organized by the Ministry of National Education through the Turkish National Education Inspectorate. District Education Directorates monitors, directs, guides and evaluates educational programs and institutions apart from the universities (Tyak, 2003).

According to Wangui (2007) effective head teachers are perceived as those who are involved in proper tuition and revision. Supervision of teachers and students work, proper testing policy, syllabus coverage, teacher induction and team building enhances effective curriculum implementation. However, providing resources for instruction, communicating the school vision effectively and maintaining high visible presence in all parts of the school's activities are instructional practices of head teachers that boost effective curriculum implementation.

Checking of record of work covered can influence academic performance of learners either positively or negatively. Professional documents are an important component in teaching and learning process (Kiamba, 2011). Teachers are required to make and retain records that include schemes of work, lesson plan, and records of work, mark book, progress record book and attendant register (Fischer, 2011). Preparation of professional documents enhances teaching and learning process which ultimately impacts on performance. It is the role of the head of the school to make sure that teachers prepare such records and use them in the teaching and learning process.

According to Nzambi (2012) checking of syllabus coverage and provision of necessary resources for learning had an influence of students' academic performance. However, Ampofo et. Al, (2019) found that school heads allocated very little time for checking professional documents such as lesson planning and delivery of teachers. The study established that school heads' checking lesson planning supervision ( $p= 0.043 < .05$ ) and lesson delivery supervision ( $p= .035 < .05$ ) had a significant influence on academic performance. The study recommended that the Ghana Education Service should dedicate a greater portion of the promotion requirement of the school heads to evidence of direct supervision of teachers and a reduction in the teaching load of Heads of Department by the school head to enable them play more instrumental roles in the instructional supervision process.

A study by Musungu and Nasongo (2008) revealed that eight percent of the principals in high performing schools checked lesson plans, scheme of work, class registers and school attendance. This means that if internal supervision is done or not done frequently, this may contribute towards effective or ineffective implementation of curriculum hence good or poor learners' academic performance. Opicha (2016) established that most of the head teacher checked professional records for example the lessons plan and schemes of work on monthly basis. On the frequency to which the schemes of work and lesson plans were updated, majority of the teachers indicated they were done very often while a third posited they were checked rarely. This study was carried out to investigate the influence of primary school head teachers' practice of checking of professional records on academic performance in public primary schools in order to fill a knowledge gap.

The role of the head teacher in instructional supervision is crucial in influencing teachers to carry out their instructional tasks in line with the objectives as stipulated in the curriculum. Complaints from education stakeholders, politicians, parents and the general public in respect to the quality of teaching and learning in public primary schools has made the head teachers' role in supervision be looked into more keenly. For any system to function effectively and achieve its objective, keen supervision is a vital role to success. Primary schools in Kangundo Sub County, Machakos County have been performing poorly in KCPE. In all the zones in Kangundo Sub County, performance has been below average. Hence the poor performance of pupils in KCPE is invariably placed on teachers in general and head teachers in particular. It was particularly important to carry out the study to find out if the cause of poor performance is as a result of loopholes in instructional supervision. The study objectives sought to establish the influence of head teachers' practices of checking of lesson plans on students'

academic performance and to determine the influence of headteachers practice of checking the records of work covered on students' academic performance in public primary schools in kangundo sub county, Kenya.

### II. Research Methodology

This was hinged on descriptive research design. The total target population in this study comprises of 32 schools which consists of all the 32 headteachers and all the 338 primary school teachers in Kangundo Sub County (Sub County Director of Education, 2023). Census was used to select 29 teachers. A sample of 102 teachers was selected by use of simple random sampling. This study used questionnaires, to collect data. Descriptive statistics such as frequencies, percentages were used to summarize the data. The results that were obtained were used to make a research report.

### III. Research Findings

This study sought to establish the extent to which headteachers carried out their supervisory roles in teaching and teaching regarding their practice of checking of professional documents. The information on checking of professional documents was sought from both the teachers and the headteachers. They were asked how often the checked schemes of work before commencement of teaching, lesson plans, records of work covered, pupils progress records and class registers. Regarding checking of schemes of work before commencement of teaching, the respondents were asked how of often they checked. The results from the headteachers and the teachers were as presented in Table 1.

**Table 1 Headteachers' and teachers responses on frequency of checking schemes of work before commencement of teaching by the headteachers**

The headteacher checks the schemes of work before commencement of teaching	Teachers			
	Headteachers		Teachers	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
Always	5	18.5	14	14.3
Sometimes	15	55.6	45	45.9
Never	7	25.9	39	39.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>98</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Results reported in Table 1 shows that 18.5% of the headteachers and 14.3 % of the teachers respectively indicated that they always checked schemes of work before commencement of teaching while 55.6% of the headteachers and 45.9% of the teachers respectively indicated that they checked schemes of work sometimes and 25.9% of the headteachers and 39.8% of the teachers respectively said that headteachers never checked schemes of work before commencement of teaching. The data shows that schemes of work were not checked before commencement of teaching. When they were asked to indicate how often they checked lesson plans, the respondents reported as presented in table 2.

**Table 2 Headteachers' and teachers responses on frequency of checking of lesson plans.**

Checking lesson plans	Headteachers		Teachers	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
Always	8	29.6	15	15.3
Sometimes	10	37.0	25	25.5
Never	9	33.3	58	59.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>98</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Results presented in Table 2 show that 29.6% headteachers indicated that they always checked the lesson plans while 37% of the headteachers indicated that they sometimes checked the lesson plans while 33.3% of the headteachers indicated that they never checked lesson plans. Among the teachers, 15.3% reported that they always checked the lesson plans, 25.5% of the teachers indicated that they checked sometimes while 59.2% indicated that the headteachers never checked the lesson plans. From the responses of the both categories of respondents it is clear that lessons were rarely checked. On the issue of checking the records of work covered, the respondents indicated as presented in Table 3.

**Table 3: Headteachers' and teachers responses on frequency of checking records of work covered**

Checking records of work covered	Headteachers		Teachers	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
Always	0	00	8	8.2
Sometimes	15	55.6	38	38.8
Never	12	44.4	52	53.1

<b>Total</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>98</b>	<b>100.0</b>
--------------	-----------	--------------	-----------	--------------

Results presented in table 3 regarding headteachers' show that 55.6% of the headteachers indicated they checked the records of work covered only sometimes while 14.4% of the headteachers indicated that they never checked the records of work covered. The data shows that the headteachers checked the records of work covered just some times or they never did so.

Among teachers' responses on frequency of checking records of work covered only 8.2% teachers said that the head teachers always checked the records of work cover while 53.1% teachers indicated that they never checked. Majority of the teachers 53.1% indicated that the headteachers checked records of work sometimes. From the data all the respondents agreed that record of work covered were not checked. Results on the frequency at which headteachers checked pupils progress records is presented in table 4.

**Table 4. Headteachers' and teachers' responses on frequency of checking pupils progress records**

Checking pupils progress records	Headteachers		Teachers	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
Always	4	14.8	8	8.2
Sometimes	11	40.7	32	32.7
Never	12	44.4	58	59.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>98</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Results presented in table 4 shows that 14.8% of the headteachers indicated that they always checked pupils progress records, 40.7% of the teachers said that they checked sometimes while 44.4% indicated that never checked pupils progress records. Among the teachers 8.2% of indicated that the headteachers always checked pupils progress records, 32.7% of the teachers indicated that the headteachers checked pupils progress records sometimes while majority of the teachers 59.1% indicated that the headteachers never checked pupils progress records.

The results from the head teachers and the teachers show that they were in agreement that pupils' progress records were not checked. Finally, on the headteachers checking of professional documents, the respondents were asked to indicate how often the headteachers checked class registers. Their responses are presented in table 5.

**Table 5 Headteachers' and teachers' responses on frequency of checking class registers**

Checking class registers	Headteachers		Teachers	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
Always	5	18.5	25	25.5
Sometimes	8	29.6	38	38.8
Never	14	51.9	35	35.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>98</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Results on headteachers' and teachers' responses on frequency of checking class registers as presented in table 4.16 shows that only 18.5% of the headteachers reported that they checked class registers with 29.6% stating that they did it sometimes and majority of them 51.9% indicating that they never checked class registers. Results from the teachers indicated that 25.5% of the teachers reported that their headteachers always checked the class registers 38.8% of the teachers indicated that the headteachers checked class registers sometimes while 35.7% of the teachers indicated that the headteachers never checked class registers. The data from both the headteachers and the teachers was in agreement that headteachers did not efficiently check the class registers.

#### **IV. Discussion and interpretation of research findings**

This study sought to determine the extent to which primary school head teachers practice of checking of professional documents/records influence KCPE performance in public primary schools in Kangundo Sub County. Record keeping is an important component in the learning of school (Kiamba, 2011). Findings revealed that majority 55.6% of the headteachers and 45.9% of teachers indicated that they checked just sometimes with seven 25.9% of the headteachers and 39.8% indicated that they never checked schemes of work before commencement of teaching. The findings imply that headteachers did not check professional documents/records. Lack of checking of scheme of work is likely to make teachers not prepare well for teaching and hence affect KCPE performance. Okumbe (1999) adds that instructional practices involve such activities as helping in the formulation and implementation of schemes of work, evaluating and overseeing modification of instructional programs and delivering instructional resources.

It was also revealed that 29.6% headteachers and 15.3% of the teachers respectively reported that they always checked the lesson plans while 37.0% and 25.5% respectively of the teachers indicated that they checked sometimes while 33.3% and majority of the teachers 59.2% respectively indicated that the headteachers never checked the lesson plans. The findings imply that headteachers did not adequately check lesson plans. When the

headteacher does not check teachers' lesson plan it is likely to compromise teaching hence affect KCPE performance.

It was also revealed that majority 55.6% of the headteachers indicated that they checked records of work covered sometimes with 38.8% of teachers indicating that they checked sometimes, twelve 44.4% of the headteachers and 53.1% teachers respectively indicated that the headteachers never checked the records of work covered. These findings show headteachers did not adequately check records of work covered which could affect teaching. This is in line with Firestone and Rienl (2008) who out that checking of students' record of work is a mediating influence on teachers, instructional community and school organization that lead to high performances.

Data also revealed that 40.7% of the headteachers and 32.7% of teachers respectively indicated that the headteachers checked pupils progress records sometimes. Most of the headteachers 44.4% and majority of the teachers 59.1% indicated that the headteachers never checked pupils progress records. It is evident from these findings that headteachers did not always check pupils' progress records which could affect pupils KCPE performance

About 29.6% of the headteachers and 38.8% of the teachers indicated that the headteachers checked class registers sometimes while 51/9% of the headteachers and 35.7% of the teachers indicated that the headteachers never checked class registers. From the findings, it can be implied that headteachers did not check class registers. If class registers are not checked, it is possible not to know which children are not coming to school which could encourage truancy which affects KCPE performance. This is in line with Musungu and Nasongo (2008) who found out that eight percent of the principals in high performing schools checked lesson plans, scheme of work, class registers and school attendance. Gaziel (2007) found out that secondary school principals invest some of their energy and time in their instructional roles. This agrees with Kerubo (2010) who conducted a study on the frequency of head teacher's instructional supervision on Kenya Certificate of Primary Education performance in public primary schools in Dagorretti District and revealed that head teachers' approval of schemes of work and lesson plans and record of work covered could influence KCPE performance. The findings also agree with Daresh (1992) who found that supervision in the areas of checking the records had a positive impact in academic performance of pupils

## **V. Conclusions and recommendations**

The study concluded that headteachers did not check of professional documents/records. Lack of checking of scheme of work, lesson plans, and records of work covered, pupils' progress records, and class registers is likely to make teachers not prepare well for teaching and hence affect KCPE performance. The study also concluded that headteachers only did classroom visits only some times. Based on the first objective, the study recommends that headteachers should increase the frequency and diligence of checking of professional documents. This includes checking schemes of work, lesson plans, records of work covered. This would facilitate teachers' job and hence positively influence pupils' performance.

## **References**

- [1]. Adepoju, B.P. (2008). Supervision of instructions in public primary schools in Ghana: Teachers and head teachers' perspectives. Doctoral thesis, Murdoch University. Retrieved from <http://research.repository.murdoch.edu.au/id/eprint/8483>.
- [2]. Afolabi, F.O & Loto, A. B. (2008). The head master and quality control in primary education through effective intra school supervision, Nigeria: Journal of teachers' perception (Jotep) Vol 2 (24)
- [3]. Daresh, J. L. (1992). Essentials of Management. 4th Edition. New Delhi: University of Kentucky.
- [4]. Eshiwani, G. S. (1983). Factors influencing Performance Among Primary Pupils in Western Kenya: A Policy Study. BER, Kenyatta University College.
- [5]. Eshiwani, G.S. (1993). Education in Kenya since Independence. Nairobi: Government printer.
- [6]. Gaziel, B. (2007). Exploring the transformational nature of instructional leadership. The Alberta Journal of Educational Research, XLII (4).
- [7]. Kerubo, M. J. (2010). Role of head teachers' instructional supervision on Kenya certificate of primary education performance in public primary schools. Unpublished masters' thesis, Kenyatta University, Kenya.
- [8]. Kiamba, J. C. (2011). Obstacles to effective instructional supervision in public primary schools in Mbooni Division, Mbooni West District, Kenya. Unpublished MEd project, University of Nairobi, Nairobi, Kenya.
- [9]. Nzambi, N. P. (2012). Role headteachers play in instructional supervision in order to improve on students' academic achievement in Kitui District secondary schools as it is perceived by their teachers. Unpublished M.Ed research project. Kenyatta University.
- [10]. Ogumsanji, J. (2003). Introducing Principals to the role of instructional leadership. Master's thesis. Retrieved from [www.sackschool.boards.ca/~95-14.htm](http://www.sackschool.boards.ca/~95-14.htm)
- [11]. Too, C. Kimutai, C. K & Kosgei, Z. (2012). The Impact of Head Teachers' Supervision of Teachers on Students' Academic Performance. Journal of Emerging Trends in Educational Research and Policy Studies (JETERAPS), 3(3), 299-306.
- [12]. Tyak, P. P. (2003). The Struggles of teacher research in and context of education reform: Implications for Instruction Supervision Journal of Curriculum and supervision, Accessed on April 2013.
- [13]. Wangui, E. K. (2007). An Investigation of How Leadership Styles Affect Performance in public Secondary Schools in Mathioya Division, Muranga District. Unpublished M.Ed. Project, University of Nairobi pg.45, 46, 39, 40.
- [14]. Zepda, B. (2007). Appraisal of head teacher's administrative practices under the universal Basic Education Programme in Imo State: Nigerian Journal of Educational Management 6 249-258.