

NAVIGATING CHALLENGES IN INSTRUCTIONAL SUPERVISION FOR ENHANCED SECONDARY EDUCATION SYSTEM IN IMO STATE, NIGERIA

Philip Ugonna Ebirim¹ & Ezenwaji, Ifeyinwa O.²

¹Department of Educational Foundations & Management,
Alvan Ikoku Federal University of Education, Owerri

²Department of Educational Foundations, University of Nigeria, Nsukka

Abstract

The study investigated ways of navigating challenges in instructional supervision for enhanced secondary education system in Imo state, Nigeria. The study employed a descriptive survey design guided by two research questions and one null hypothesis. The population comprised 5,697 staff made up of 296 principals and 5,401 teachers in 296 public secondary schools in Imo State, Nigeria. A sample size of 570 staff comprising 148 principals and 422 teachers were drawn through proportionate stratified random sampling technique in the area of the study. A structured questionnaire on “Navigating Challenges in Instructional Supervision for Enhanced Secondary Educational System and Sustainable Development” (QNCISESESSD) was used as the instrument for data collection. The reliability index coefficient of 0.93 was established after face and content validation, and trial testing of the instrument. The data were analyzed using mean scores and standard deviation; t-test statistics was adopted to test the null hypothesis at 0.05 level of significance. The study revealed among others that exhibiting disruptive behaviour in class activities by the students and parents lacking resources to provide students with necessary technology cause challenges in instructional supervision. The study further revealed that encouraging group participation and collaborative learning among students in class activities; providing students with access to necessary technology in schools by their parents are ways of navigating challenges in instructional supervision for enhanced secondary educational system. The study concluded that effective instructional supervision is crucial for enhancing secondary education in Nigeria.

Keywords: Instructional supervision, educational system, secondary schools

Introduction

Education is the foundation for growth and development, enabling individuals and nations to acquire knowledge and become productively viable. No nation can record meaningful growth and development without an enhanced educational system (Ebirim et al., 2023). The quest for qualitative education is a major concern in society, raising questions about how to maintain qualitative instruction at different levels of the educational system to ensure sustainable development. Instructional supervision plays a vital role in shaping the quality of education in any setting. Instructional supervision improves teaching and learning through identifying goals, observing classrooms, providing feedback, offering training and coaching, assessing performance, and ongoing support. These processes enhance teaching quality, promote student learning, and drive school improvement. In Imo State, Nigeria, secondary education faces unique challenges that can impact the effectiveness of instructional supervision. However, enhanced secondary education systems and sustainable development cannot be achieved without instructional supervision. This is why the Federal Republic of Nigeria, in the National Policy on Education (FRN, 2013), specifically prescribes instructional supervision as a process for achieving qualitative education and enhancing the secondary educational system in Nigeria.

In the secondary educational system, instruction facilitates the teaching-learning process, where students acquire relevant knowledge and experiences under the guidance and direction of teachers. Instruction involves the intentional and systematic presentation of information, skills, and values to students, with the goal of promoting learning and ensuring the achievement of specific objectives of the society. Instruction usually takes place in an educational setting to instill positive changes in the behaviour of the students. Izuagba et al. (2008) maintain that instruction is an educational activity designed by the teacher for the learner that takes place in and outside the class to ensure that learning takes place. Offorma (2002) explains learning activity as a process through which behaviour is initiated, modified and changed. The aim of instruction is to ensure that students are exposed to knowledge and behaviour that will enable them become useful throughout life in the society. Through the efforts of the teacher in secondary educational system, students are inspired and directed to learn. Afianmagbon (2008) believed that the role the teacher plays in helping students cannot be overemphasized. During instruction, teachers play a significant role in the lives of students. Teachers ensure that instruction is made lively and meaningful for the students. The students are expected and allowed to interact with both the instructional materials and the teacher. Teachers come in contact with students during instruction. As a result, teachers must understand the students' needs, aspirations and differences for instruction to be effective in the system. For this reason, teachers must be guided and assisted to carry out instruction effectively. In view of the forgoing reasons, instructional supervision in secondary educational system becomes necessary. Supervision relates to guiding and coordinating the work of teachers and all concerned with school work in such a way that students' learning is facilitated (Afianmagbon, 2008). In the same way, Nnabuo et al. (2006) uphold that supervision is directed towards maintaining and improving instructional processes by working with teachers through the educational programme to effect positive change in students. Supervision as an effort is directed to ensure that instructional activities of educational institutions such as secondary schools are effectively carried out through providing guidance and direction to teachers by the supervisors. Supervisors are staff personnel or officials from within or outside the educational system who are saddled with the responsibility of assisting teachers and guiding instructional activities in educational institutions to promote instruction and enhance educational system.

In the secondary educational system, the staff personnel or official from within the schools who are saddled with the responsibility of assisting teachers and guiding instructional activities in secondary schools to promote instruction and enhance secondary educational system are referred as the internal supervisors. They include; the principals, vice principals, dean of studies, heads of departments and any staff personnel delegated by the principal within the school. The external supervisors are the staff personnel or official from outside the schools who are saddled with the responsibility of assisting teachers and guiding instructional activities in secondary schools to promote instruction and enhance secondary educational system. Majorly, they are officials from the Secondary Educational Management Board of the Ministry of Education. Both the internal and external supervisors carry out instructional supervision for enhanced secondary educational system. The instructional supervisors according to Ebirim (2012) ensure that instructional activities of educational institutions are properly carried out through guidance, direction and professional assistance to teachers to achieve better outcomes in the process of teaching and learning in the educational system. Instructional supervision is designed to improve teaching and learning in the educational system. Ogbonna and Afianmagbon

(2010) affirmed that instructional supervision involves instructional improvement through offering professional leadership and technical service to teachers for the purpose of facilitating and improving the learning activities. Instructional supervision refers to those activities which are mainly concerned with improving the conditions surrounding teaching and learning by teachers and students. The main purpose of instructional supervision is to improve teaching and learning by teachers and students for enhanced educational system. Through instructional supervision, teachers' ignorance is chased away while their potentials are promoted. Mgbodile (2004) remarked that instructional supervision permits teachers to upgrade their knowledge and grow professionally. Instructional supervision assists teachers in discovering complex situations associated with teaching tasks and selecting suitable measures for tackling these complex situations. Alternatively, instructional supervision enables students' activities in the classroom to be supervised to ensure compliance with the scheme of work in the school syllable for enhanced educational system.

However, in Imo state educational system, instructional supervision for enhanced secondary educational system is confronted with many challenges. Uketui (2008) recognized the organization of the supervisory programmes, the procedure used by the personnel, the quality of teachers and the characteristics of the community. Chiaha (2004) noted that supervisors who use hard instruction on teachers encourage low staff morale and does not promote effective instruction. Supervisors are expected to guide the teachers in identifying objectives and encourage the students in selecting learning. Unfortunately, National Institute for Educational Planning and Administration (NIEPA, 2010) grieved that appointment of some supervisors by the government is politically motivated as such most supervisors appointed by the government are not groomed in supervision. Regrettably, the supervisors hardly make out time to embark on professional training to enhance their instructional supervisory skills and practices. Nwangwu (2008) wept that appointment of supervisors has been politicized to the extent that merits and seniority are no longer considered as being important. Nwangwu further retained that appointment of supervisors should base on necessary experience and supervisors become regularly trained. Then again, most parents fail to provide their children with necessary technology, basic instructional materials and show no concern about what goes on in schools (Oboegbulam, 2004; Ogbonnaya, 2009). Such negligence leads student to absenteeism from classes, truancy and poor attitude to studies as well as encourages disruptive behaviour among students in class activities. Oku et al. (2010) expressed that poor approach to supervision, negative attitude of teachers to instruction affect instructional supervision in schools. These situations according to Maduwesi (2003) are not to the best interest of educational system. Ede (2000) remarked that encouraging teachers to accept current best practices in instructional methods and supervision strategies through adoption of effective communication styles could enhance instructional supervision. Instructional supervision plays a very significant part in enhancing educational system in Nigeria. Therefore, identifying ways of navigating the challenges in instructional supervision in secondary schools will help in enhancing secondary educational system and sustainable development in Nigeria. Against this background, the study seeks to investigate ways of navigating challenges in instructional supervision for enhanced secondary educational system and sustainable development in Nigeria.

Statement of the Problem

Secondary schools face several challenges which pose scores of threats to enhanced secondary educational system in Nigeria. There are cases of poor and ineffective communication approaches to supervision by the supervisors, negative attitude of parents and students towards education, negative attitude of teachers towards instructional supervision and practices, increased inexperienced teachers and lack of professionally trained supervisors due to government appointments together with the characteristics of school community, inadequate digital resources and massive technological advancement. There are also increased inadequate necessary technology, overcrowded classrooms, and inadequate number of teachers in proportion to students' population ratio in schools as well as poor access to digital resources. The current secondary schools in Imo state are not exceptional in the consequences of the challenges of instructional supervision in Nigeria. Confirming the ways of navigating challenges in instructional supervision in secondary schools would go a long way in enhancing secondary education system in Nigeria. Hence, this study seeks to identify effective ways of navigating challenges in instructional supervision for enhanced secondary educational system in Imo state, Nigeria.

Purpose of the study

The main purpose of this study is to investigate ways of navigating challenges in instructional supervision for enhanced secondary educational system in Imo state, Nigeria. Specifically, the objectives are to:

1. find out the factors that cause challenges in instructional supervision for enhanced secondary educational system in Imo state, Nigeria;
2. determine the ways of navigating challenges in instructional supervision for enhanced secondary educational system in Imo state, Nigeria.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study

1. What are the factors that cause challenges in instructional supervision for enhanced secondary educational system in Imo state, Nigeria?
2. What are the ways of navigating challenges in instructional supervision for enhanced secondary educational system in Imo state, Nigeria?

Hypothesis

H₀₁: There is no significant difference in the mean responses of principals and teachers on the ways of navigating challenges in instructional supervision for enhanced secondary educational system in Imo state, Nigeria.

Methods

The study adopted a descriptive survey design by seeking the opinions of principals and teachers on navigating challenges in instructional supervision for enhanced secondary educational system and sustainable development in Imo state, Nigeria. The study was carried out in public secondary schools in Imo state. The population comprised 5,697 staff made up of 296 principals and 5,401 teachers in 296 public secondary schools in Imo State, Nigeria. A sample of 570 staff comprising 148 principals and 422 teachers were drawn through proportionate stratified random sampling technique in the area of the study. A structured questionnaire on "Navigating Challenges in Instructional Supervision for Enhanced Secondary Educational System and Sustainable Development" (QNCISESSD) with 12 items built on two clusters, structured on a four point scale of

Strongly Agree (SA); Agree (A); Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (SD) was developed by the researchers as an instrument for data collection for this study. The instrument (QNCISESSD) was face validated by three experts in the field of Educational Foundations; Educational Management; Measurement and Evaluation units whose suggestions and corrections were incorporated into the final draft of the instrument. The internal consistency of the instrument was established using Cronbach Alpha Method. The researchers administered the questionnaire on 4 principals and 16 teachers in 4 public secondary schools in Anambra state. The questionnaire were retrieved and analyzed after filling by the staff on which an overall reliability co-efficient of 0.93 was obtained and thus considered appropriate for the study. With the help of six (6) research assistants, data for the study was delivered and collected personally by the researchers. All the 570 copies administered were timely completed, returned and used for the study. Mean and Standard deviation scores were used in answering the two research questions while t-test statistics was used to test the null hypothesis at a 0.05 level of significance. A mean of 2.50 and above was adopted as the decision rule for the items.

Results

Research Question One: What are the factors that cause challenges in instructional supervision for enhanced secondary educational system in Imo state, Nigeria?

Table 1: Descriptive statistics on the factors that cause challenges in instructional supervision for enhanced secondary educational system

S/ N	Item Statement	Principals n=148	Teacher s n=422	Overall Remark		
		(\bar{X}) SD	(\bar{X}) SD	(\bar{X})	SD	DL
1.	Supervisors lacking necessary training to carry out effective supervision practices.	3.41 0.67	3.42 0.61	3.42	0.64	A
2.	Teachers lacking proper motivation due to communication gap with supervisors.	3.48 0.55	3.52 0.50	3.50	0.53	SA
3.	Teachers resisting current best practices in instructional supervision strategies.	3.51 0.52	3.39 0.62	3.45	0.57	A
4.	Students exhibiting disruptive behaviour in class activities.	3.35 0.62	3.46 0.54	3.41	0.58	A
5.	Parents lacking resources to provide their children with necessary technology.	3.36 0.64	3.50 0.51	3.43	0.58	A
6.	Parents Teachers Association (PTA) neglecting what happens in schools.	3.35 0.68	3.34 0.66	3.35	0.67	A
Cluster Mean		3.41 0.61	3.44 0.57	3.43	0.59	A

Key: (\bar{X}) =Mean; SD = Standard Deviation; DL = Decision Level; SA =Strongly Agree; A= Agree; n = Number of Respondents. Downing

Analysis in table 1 shows the descriptive statistics on the factors that cause challenges in instructional supervision for enhanced secondary educational system and sustainable development in Imo state, Nigeria. The result revealed that both principals and teachers

agreed on all the items listed (1-6) in the table as factors that cause challenges in instructional supervision for enhanced secondary educational system with an overall mean score of 3.43 and overall standard deviation score of 0.59. This is because; the aggregate weighed mean is within the range of 2.50-3.49 set as the criterion for agreed.

Ho₁: There is no significant difference in the mean responses of principals and teachers on the ways of navigating challenges in instructional supervision for enhanced secondary educational system in Imo state, Nigeria.

Table 2: t-test analysis of differences in perceptions on ways of navigating challenges in instructional supervision for enhanced secondary education system

Staff	N	\bar{X}	SD	t-value	Df	Alpha level	Sig	Decision
Principals	148	3.48	0.54	0.42	568	0.05	0.62	NS (Not Rejected)
Teachers	422	3.52	0.52					

Key: N=Number of Respondents; \bar{X} =Mean; SD=Standard Deviation. NS= Not Significant, df= Degree of Freedom = $(n_1 - 1) + (n_2 - 1) = (148-1) + (422-1) = 568$

The result indicated that a t-value of 0.42 with a degree of freedom of 568 at an alpha level of 0.05 and a significant value of 0.62 were obtained. Since the significant value of 0.62 is not less than 0.05 set as the level of significance for testing the hypothesis, it means that the result is statistically not significant. The null hypothesis which stated that there is no significant difference in the mean responses of principals and teachers on the ways of navigating challenges in instructional supervision for enhanced secondary education system in Imo state, Nigeria is not rejected. Hence, this indicates that both principals and teachers share the same view in their responses on the ways of navigating challenges in instructional supervision for enhanced secondary educational system in Imo state, Nigeria.

Research Question Two: What are the ways of navigating challenges in instructional supervision for enhanced secondary educational system in Imo state, Nigeria?

Table 3: Descriptive statistics on the ways of navigating challenges in instructional supervision for enhanced secondary educational system

S/ N	Item Statement	Principal s n=148 (\bar{X}) SD	Teacher s n=422 (\bar{X}) SD	Overall Remark		
		(\bar{X}) SD	(\bar{X}) SD	(\bar{X})	SD	DL
7.	Providing regular professional training for supervisors to enhance their instructional supervisory practices.	3.14 0.66	3.48 0.53	3.40	0.58	A
8.	Adopting effective communication strategies for teachers to make contributions in instructional supervision.	3.48 0.55	3.53 0.49	3.52	0.51	SA
9.	Encouraging teachers to embrace new ideas in instructional methods and supervision strategies.	3.67 0.46	3.40 0.64	3.54	0.55	SA
10	Encouraging group participation and collaborative learning among students in class activities.	3.59 0.49	3.54 0.49	3.55	0.49	SA

11	Providing students with access to necessary technology in schools by their parents.	3.55 0.49	3.70 0.45	3.67	0.46	SA
12	Showing interest in what goes on in schools by the Parents Teachers Association.	3.42 0.57	3.45 0.54	3.44	0.56	A
		3.48	3.52	3.50	0.53	SA
Cluster Mean		0.54	0.52			

Key: (\bar{X}) =Mean; SD = Standard Deviation; DL = Decision Level; SA =Strongly Agree; A= Agree; n = Number of Respondents

Analysis in table 3 shows the descriptive statistics on the ways of navigating challenges in instructional supervision for enhanced secondary educational system and sustainable development in Imo state, Nigeria. The result revealed that both principals and teachers strongly agreed on all the items listed (7-12) in the table as the ways of navigating challenges in instructional supervision for enhanced secondary educational system with an overall mean score of 3.50 and overall standard deviation score of 0.53. This is because; the aggregate weighed mean is within the range of 3.50-4.00 set as the criterion for strongly agree.

Discussion

The findings revealed that supervisors lacking necessary training to carry out effective supervision practices, teachers lacking proper motivation due to communication gap with supervisors, teachers resisting current best practices in instructional supervision strategies, students exhibiting disruptive behaviour in class activities and parents lacking resources to provide their children with necessary technology as well as Parents Teachers Association (PTA) neglecting what happens in schools cause challenges in instructional supervision for enhanced secondary educational system and sustainable development. The implication is that supervisors who lack professional training may not gain proper experience over the teachers to provide effective supervision. The supervisors may not be competent enough to give expertise and reliable advice to teachers and students. This assertion is in line with the submission of NIEPA (2010) that most officials appointed as supervisors are not groomed in the art of supervision and have no advantage over their teachers in terms of experience. The consequence is that instructional supervision is not effectively carried out. Once more, teachers lacking proper motivation due to communication gap with supervisors will discourage the teachers from cooperating and putting in their best in instructional processes and supervision strategies. Chiaha (2004) noted that when teachers' opinions are not reckoned with in decision making due to communication breakdowns, such approach encourages low staff morale in instructional activities in schools. Supervisors' inability to establish effective communication style in instructional supervision may result to misunderstanding that will make teachers to resist current best practices in instructional supervision strategies. Likewise, students exhibiting disruptive behaviour in class activities and their parents lacking resources to provide their children with necessary digital resources in addition to Parents Teachers Association (PTA) neglecting what happens in schools affect effective supervision in schools. Ogbonnaya (2009) and Oboegbulam (2004) supported that parent's negligence to provide their children with basic instructional materials and lack of interest in what goes on in the schools will initiate poor attitude to studies and have negative implications for instructional supervision. The finding also showed that the null hypothesis was not

rejected. This implies that the difference between the mean scores of principals and teachers on the ways of navigating challenges in instructional supervision for enhanced secondary educational system and sustainable development in Imo state, Nigeria is statistically not significant. This is an indication that both principals and teachers shared the same view on the ways of navigating challenges in instructional supervision for enhanced secondary educational system and sustainable development.

The findings revealed that providing students with access to necessary technology in schools by their parents; encouraging group participation and collaborative learning among students in class activities; encouraging teachers to embrace new ideas in instructional methods and supervision strategies plus adopting effective communication strategies for teachers to make contributions in supervision practices together with showing interest in what goes on in schools by the Parents Teachers Association and providing regular professional training for supervisors to enhance their instructional supervisory practices are the ways of navigating challenges in instructional supervision for enhanced secondary educational system and sustainable development. This finding was in cycle with the postulations of Ede (2000) who remarked that encouraging teachers to be innovative in the use of strategies through systematic planning will make the teachers not to resist new ideas in instructional supervision. In addition, Nwangwu (2008) supported that appointment of supervisors should base on qualification, experiences and commitment to duty. All these measures according to Modebelu (2007) will promote instructional supervision and processes in educational system and sustainable development.

Conclusion

Based on the findings, the study concluded that effective instructional supervision is crucial for enhancing secondary education in Imo state, Nigeria. However, challenges such as inadequate supervisor training, poor teacher motivation, and resistance to best practices, student disruptions, and limited parental resources hinder progress. By providing regular training for supervisors, fostering effective communication between supervisors and teachers, encouraging innovative instructional methods, promoting collaborative learning, ensuring access to technology, and engaging Parents Teachers Associations, stakeholders can navigate these challenges and significantly improve secondary education in Imo State thereby contributing to sustainable development.

Recommendations

Based on the finding of the study, the following recommendations were made:

1. Supervisors should prioritize regular professional training to enhance their instructional supervisory practices and adopt effective communication strategies to motivate and involve teachers in supervision processes. Teachers, in turn, should be open to embracing new ideas in instructional methods and supervision strategies.
2. Students should be encouraged to participate in group activities and collaborative learning, minimizing disruptive behaviors. Meanwhile, parents should provide their children with necessary technology and resources, while also taking an active interest in their children's education through the Parents Teachers Association (PTA).

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