

## Desirable Transformation of Secondary School Education to Greater Heights through Effective Academic Supervision by the Vice-Principals

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**ABSTRACT:** *Secondary school education is an important level of education in any country because it is a bridge between the foundation and the future build-up of generation of youths and larger students to ensure successful and worthwhile academic achievement of our students. It is an established fact that continuous and constant academic supervision is necessary in our schools if the quality, standard and academic grades of higher status are to be achieved. There are three levels of internal academic supervision in secondary schools which are the upper level(principals/vice-principals), middle level(head of departments) and the lower levels(subject heads).From all indications, internal academic supervision is the sure best for improving the present quality and also maintaining higher standards because of its ease of access, cordial relationship to teachers for monitoring, correction and entrenchment of ideas and innovations. Therefore,this paper is to highlight how the vice-principals would achieve effective academic supervision, content of academic supervision and developmental strategies of vice-principals as a central agent of transforming secondary school education system for greater outcomes.*

*Keywords: Desirable transformation, secondary schools, effectiveness of academic supervision and vice-principals.*

### INTRODUCTION

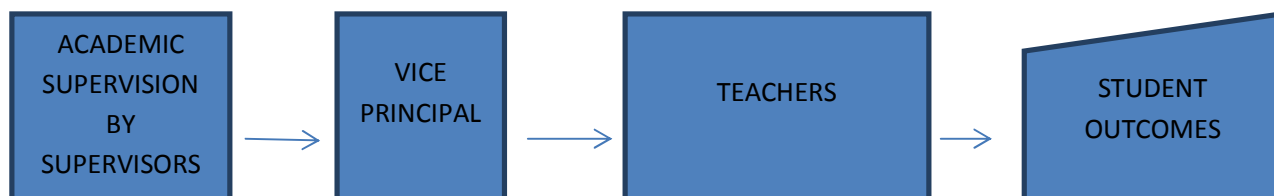
Transformation literally means a change in form, nature and character of a thing. Why transformation of secondary schools? The answer is obvious while looking at the area of academic achievement of students and public evaluation. The visible reason is the poor academic results obtained by secondary school students at end of final /public examinations and poor progressive performance in higher institutions of learning; this justifies a pragmatic design to move away from former, usual method of carrying out academic supervision in secondary schools. From, the above definition, transformation of secondary schools is focused on improving the nature of instructions in the classroom to achieve stronger performance. This nature of academic supervision entails a process of overseeing what the teachers teach, the medium of teaching, how the teaching is done and giving solutions to challenges. This process encompasses spending quite number of hours/periods on teachers' content of instruction, usage of teaching materials and demonstrates the expected practices that will improve academic achievement of students in examinations. This is because the most significant criteria or factor directly influencing the quality of the education a child receives is the quality of his teacher.

Supervision is central to the survival and improvement of an organization such as the secondary school system, hence it is not out of place to call it educational supervision. Therefore, educational supervision is a large umbrella of supervision in educational settings of which this paper will focus on academic supervision. It is of a fact that we have two types of educational supervision in secondary schools which are administrative and academic. The principals and vice-principals have tailored their daily activities in schools to administrative supervision, leaving the academic supervision barely open to external supervisors whose efforts have no continuity and constancy, thereby academic achievements of students under the direct responsibility of teachers had continue to be declining. This has provided escape route for external supervisors to declare that they have played their own part, what is now left is for the teachers to do their own part. And to be practical, there is a wide gap between external supervisors and teachers, which the vice principals can academically and professionally filled as connectors and implementers between supervisors and teachers of which my paper want to fill the missing gap.

It will be explanatory to give my readers an insight into academic supervision in terms of nature, process and outcomes. According to Baughman (1979) academic supervision is a concept and process to improve instruction given to pupils. In like manner, Lovell&Wiles (1983) defined academic supervision as a formally designated behaviours system that interacts with the teacher behaviours system in order to improve the probability that the goals of teaching will be achieved. This statement suggests the use of co-operative behaviours between teachers and supervisors as mandatory for positive relationship of improving the quality of teaching and learning. While Cawood&Gibbon (1990) opined academic supervision in terms of leadership aims at renewal of objectives, professional growth and educational improvements also, Gorton (1983) defined academic supervision as those activities engaged by individual, groups whose main purpose is the improvement of person, group or programme. I will end this introductory review with Beach&Reinhartz (2000) while emphasizing that supervisors should be mentors and friends in relationships to support teachers and provide support in a relaxed atmosphere for providing learning environment in the classroom.

Therefore, the various elements or constructs in the definitions above such as interactions,/relationship ,co-operative behaviours ,leaderships,mentors,support to teachers and improvement which the vice-principals can and will fill adequately and efficiently in this paper. Moreover, the content of this paper will focus on the following areas of academic supervision on methodology, usage of teaching materials, and teaching skills. The effectiveness of academic supervision implies that a desired effect will be observed to take place as a desirable change in the teachers' teaching process supervised by the vice-principals in secondary schools.

**Figure1: A CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK OF NATURE AND PROCESS OF ACADEMIC SUPERVISION IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS.**



### OBJECTIVES OF THE PAPER

1. To improve the quality of secondary school education through academic supervision.
2. To measure effectiveness of academic supervision
3. To find out the frequency of vice principals' visitation to classrooms for academic supervision.
4. To find out if there is a good relationship between vice principals and teachers in secondary schools.
5. To ascertain if vice-principals have portfolio documents for professional growth of teachers.

### STATEMENT OF PROBLEMS

The principals and vice-principals duties in secondary schools is to monitor the activities in schools, no wonder ,both are designated as head of administrative and academic activities. The amount of time and resources utilization is more concentrated in administrative and devotes less attention to academics. Agreed that the principals will be surrounded with administrative and social matters justified their less concentration on academics but vice principals who sits endlessly in the office without any designated duties as some principals exclude their vice from administrative duties see the need for the vice principals to concede academic supervision to their vices while counter-supervise or demand for daily or weekly report of academic activities in the schools. Academic supervision is less monitored or not done at all in secondary schools because the external supervisors such as the education inspectors, zonal secretaries are not impacting positively over long period of time because their periods of visitations is low or extremely scanty.

Related to this, the methodology used by external academic supervision is threatening because it is more on condemnation than developmental. Ajibade (1996, 2002) stated that external supervisors find catalogue of faults to prove that they are very superior in their duties and offices.

In addition, the quality of supervision may be doubtful because most external supervisors are highly deficient in most subject mastery and professional competence, thus there is no guarantee for increased performance of teachers. This is in support of Ogunlabi (2008).

The relationship or interactions between external supervisors and teachers is negative as the nature of relationship is a master and apprenticeship which evokes a hierarchy of power that favours the master as authority which is not supported in today's literature on academic supervision.

The recent underlying reason for pragmatic transformation under discourse is that large percentages of teaching workforce in most states in Nigeria and Africa are not professionally certified unlike in the developed countries where no one can teach in secondary schools except you are academically and professionally certified, as such there is another opportunity to learn required teaching methodology while on the job.

Most importantly, there is a missing gap in the implementation of policies, practices and instructional innovations between external supervisors and teachers as such vice principals would serve as liaison officer to ensure effectiveness of best practices in the secondary school system.

## **RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

This paper would attempt to provide answers to the following;

1. How is academic supervision carried out in secondary schools?
2. How effective is the academic supervision in secondary schools?
3. What is the correlation between academic supervision by vice principals and teachers?
4. How should we improve academic supervision by vice principals in secondary schools?

## **SIGNIFICANCE**

1. To attain efficiency of instructions in the secondary school.
2. To encourage constant and continuous academic supervision at the classroom level.
3. To put in place developmental measures to correct academic deficiencies.
4. To establish co-operative attitudes in teachers toward academic supervision.

5. To ensure effective and reliable academic evaluation in secondary schools.

### **THEORETICAL CONSTRUCT: SCHOOL EFFECTIVENESS THEORY**

Creemert and Kyriakides (2008) developed a model of educational effectiveness. This involves dynamic relations between the multiple factors associated with teacher effectiveness. These are classroom factors describing teachers' instructional role that are associated with student outcome, such factors are questioning skills, teaching methodology, time management, subject mastery, learning environment and classroom assessment.

The teaching experiences of the writer had shown that directions at the classroom have more significant relationship with educational outcomes than those at the school level. This is supported by Teddlie&Reynolds (2000), when they emphasized quality of instruction, interpersonal relationships influencing the performance of student in academics. The implication of this to instructional supervision from the external source is that they operate and relate at school level, making their effectiveness to be short –lived. But, the fact that vice principals or the internal supervisors is closer to teachers with certain degree of classroom relationship, the effectiveness of instructional supervision will be markedly reflected and easily learnt.

Therefore, vice principals would be a better and reliable agent of effectiveness of instructional supervision on teachers' level of instruction towards improving students' academic achievement.

### **CONTENT**

The scope of the content of this paper will cover methodology, teaching materials, teaching skills and school records which the vice principals will monitor properly to ensure desirable transformation in academic education in secondary schools.

### **TEACHING METHODOLOGY**

Teachers' methodology are the various methods of teaching which can assist students for ease of learning mastering skill, acquisition of knowledge to achieve a desirable level of educational objectives. According to Harris (2003), methodology is conceived as instructional process of teaching and learning, enhancing and establishing closer ties with skills and knowledge within curriculum outlines. The various teaching methods desirable in secondary schools include questioning method, problem solving, dramatizing, discussion and observation etc. A lot of attention should be placed on teachers' methodology in the classroom instruction by the vice-principals whose consistency and effectiveness will produce better student academic grades. Although, teachers' methodology and classroom instruction ought to have been taught and learnt in schools by those who attended professional educational colleges and universities but non-use and consistency would hinder level of learning by students and academic performance

as it is more dangerous of the academically obtained teachers to teach without professional knowledge.

### **TEACHING MATERIALS**

Instructional resources or teaching materials are aids that convey essential knowledge and skill of subject in school curriculum through combination of media. Examples of teaching materials are books, workbooks, computer software, maps, wall charts, flip charts and academic libraries. In a research carried out by Popoola (1990) investigated the effect of instructional materials on the academic achievement of students in some secondary schools. He compared the West African Examinations Council results for five years and compared achievement of students in schools with inadequate teaching resources and found a significant difference in the achievement of the two sets of students.

The vice principals have a significant role to monitor teaching materials' usage and records from the schools purchase or produce teaching aids and shared among teachers for use in the classrooms. Every school should keep an inventory of available teaching aids by quantity and conditions for use. The teaching aids inventory should be able to show frequency usage of each resource on a weekly basis. It must be emphasized that teaching and learning materials are determinant of quality of education, thus it is essential for quality teaching materials to be made available to teachers and students in adequate quantity to support teaching and learning processes.

### **TEACHING SKILLS**

Having learnt various methods of teaching, use of teaching materials, the technique of transmitting knowledge and skills to learners is important because teaching skill is like a vehicle or womb to place of use, hence effectiveness of academic supervision by the vice principals will be incomplete without monitoring how the teachers teach mastery of subjects. Teaching is a carrier that provides challenges, excitement, personal reward and a chance to encourage and support others to achieve their goals.

The nature of effective teaching skills is that the teacher should renew and innovate, and enlighten the minds of students so that linkage can be established between past, present and build positive hope by preparing them to build meaningful knowledge for correct application. An effective teacher realize that students learn in a diverse ways hence, a skilled teacher should adjust lessons to reach all students, responding to multiples of learning in classroom in addition to usage of remediation and enhancement, responding to students need and getting students actively engaged in the lesson will increase rate of retention and reproduction. Therefore, effective teaching skills are essential to successful school outcomes resulting from instructional supervision by vice principals.

Researches and experiences had revealed that teachers' actions in their classroom especially teaching skills have twice impact on students' achievement as do school policies regarding curriculum, assessment, staff collegiality and community involvement (Marzano, 2003).

## **SCHOOL RECORDS**

Important school records necessary to be kept up-to-date by teachers which needs to be supervised by the vice principal includes teachers' lesson notes, teachers' record of work, attendance register, markbooks, scheme and record of work, syllabus, school timetable/teacher's timetable and students' cumulative folder. The reasons for keeping stated school records are for efficient administration, diagnostic/examination, remediation, transfer and reporting dossiers for students, parents and employers (Government, Proprietor, supervisors, concerned citizens, principals and vice principals) on their instructional duties as teachers.

The principals and vice principals should counter-check these records where they are delegated to the most senior members of staff/head of staff because they are instructional supervisors in the secondary schools. In doing this, Schon (2000) affirmed that principals should do this with motivation and reward while identifying best teachers to encourage other teachers to emulate the good values and enhance teachers' effectiveness in teaching students for greater heights of performance.

## **CHALLENGES**

1. Overburden of vice principals with some administrative duties of conducting examination, carrying out special duties as it is mandatory for vice principals to carry out instructions from the principals as his role is that of assistants.
2. There may not be absolute authority given to vice principals to back-up the academic responsibility in order to deal with erring teachers and ensure realization of goals and objectives of teaching.
3. There may be possibility of clash of interest of power between principals to absolutely hand over academic tasks to vice principals with power and authority as some teachers might play themselves in-between the two power personality of administering the school effectively.
4. The vice principals overzealousness might surface in ascribing absolute power and decisions regarding academic supervision.

## **CONCLUSIONS**

Teachers' effectiveness in classroom instruction in comparison with their methodological competencies, teaching skills, teaching materials and school records combined with classroom



organization have impacts on learners' academic achievement. This is in agreement with Campbell,2004.The cross examined focus of teachers' level of instruction arising from academic supervision under the direction and control of vice principals will ensure effectiveness resulting in improved academic achievement of students in the secondary schools through transformation from usual external supervision which is ephemeral in form and nature.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS**

1.vice principals should co-opt the most senior members of staff/head of staff as workload shared is half-solved to avoid stress and excess burdens ,this will be a breeding ground for excellence and continuation of good value. More so that most senior members of staff will soon be assigned vice principal-ship position/duty –post.

2. Vice-principals should be given one or two periods per week in a lower class to serve as good role models so that instructions will be matched with action/activity.

3.Training should be given to vice principals on the nature, process, roles and limitations of academic responsibility in relation to principals(superior boss) and external supervisors from ministry of education, teaching service commission( regulating and supervising agencies).This can be a good avenue to deploy experienced supervisors on adhoc(short) and permanent position and use vice principals as resource-persons as those who performs such job are less ranked and equipped with fewer experiences on instructional level of teachers.

4.Vice principals can occasionally be part of supervision or inspection as observer to further learn the rudiments of measuring scales and check-list for application in their various schools to ensure effective connection between external supervisors and teachers for effectiveness in academic activities for productiveness towards students in secondary schools/secondary education.

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