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RESEARCH ARTICLE

Contribution of Heads of Schools' Classroom Visitation Practices on Teachers' Job Performance in Public Secondary Schools in Mbogwe, Geita – Tanzania

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ABSTRACT

The instructional supervision of heads of schools links and strengthens instruction. The study aimed to assess the contribution of heads of schools' classroom visitation practices on teachers' job performance in public secondary schools in Mbogwe district council, Geita - Tanzania. The study was guided by Reflective Practice Theory established by Donald Schön (1983). The researcher employed a mixed-methods approach using a convergent parallel design. The target population of the research was 383 and a sample size of 104 participants, encompassing 92 teachers, 6 heads of schools, 4 ward educational officers, 1 district education officer, and 1 district quality assurance. The collected data was cleaned, processed, and analyzed using SPSS 24. Quantitative data was analyzed using percentages and displayed in frequency tables. Qualitative data was labelled, appropriately coded, and transcribed under specified themes. The findings of the study revealed that the head of schools regularly carried out classroom visitation and ensured teachers' job performance. The research recommended that the Ministry of Education, along with the relevant educational agencies, should provide in-service training for heads of schools on their roles as instructional leaders to enable them to proficiently discharge their functions; arrangements of classroom visitation should depict the procedure, requirements, and objectives of the exercise; head of schools should develop and adopt sound development and motivational programs that would encourage and enhance teachers' commitment to job performance.

Keywords: Instructional supervision; Head of school; Classroom visitation; Teachers' job performance.

INTRODUCTION

Classroom visits by school heads are essential for improving educational quality. Operative classroom visitation practices are recognized as the foundation for outstanding and permanent learning. Adequate monitoring is necessary for effective and positive teaching and learning in schools (USayee and Adomako, 2021).

Classroom visits allow school heads to gain more

conversant with both educators and learners, as well as learn about the various strategies that teachers employ when carrying out their instructional tasks. Some of the key benefits of employing classroom observations empower instructors to perform the following: First, allow the head of school to examine instructional procedures in naturalistic environments; second, give out more comprehensive and accurate verification than other data sources of information;

thirdly, encourage change and evidence that it occurred; and fourthly, present a consistent, well-substantiated body of knowledge about effective teaching. As a result, successful classroom visitation assists teachers in improving their performance as teachers, developing the necessary skills and confidence in classroom practices, and ensuring continued professional development and outstanding teaching (Lyonga, 2018).

A comparative study was conducted on head teachers' classroom observation techniques in both private and public schools in Lahore. Amin et al. (2022) observed a considerable variation in heads' instructional supervision between public and private schools. Some of the variations highlighted by Amin et al. include: private-sector heads regularly visit their teachers' classes, whereas public-sector heads do so only periodically; heads perform instructional supervision regularly, whereas public-sector heads do so only regularly; and private-sector heads regularly track teachers' appropriate use of instructional aids, whereas public-sector heads do so only occasionally. This indicates that private school administrators exercise instructional monitoring substantially more effectively than their rivals.

A study conducted by Theodomir and Claire (2022) on the impact of head teachers' instructional supervision practices on teachers' classroom performance in Rwanda discovered a significantly high degree of beneficial relationship between head of school instructional supervision and teachers' job performance. This means that reviewing teaching methods, conducting classroom visits, ensuring the availability and utilization of educational documents, and providing pedagogical coaching can all help

teachers improve their classroom performance. Thus, school heads are accountable for providing effective instructional supervision, primarily classroom visits, to further enhance the performance of both teachers and the school as a whole.

Tanzania, comparable to other developing nations, implemented instructional supervision during the colonial period, when it was known as school inspection, and continued to practice it after independence in 1961 (Kambuga and Dadi, 2015). Since then, there have been ongoing initiatives to improve educational activities through instructional supervision. Some initiatives included enacting National Education Act No. 25 of 1978 Section 25 (Cap. 353) and its 2014 amendments, which included, among other things, designating a district quality assurance officer. As a result, the district quality assurance division (DQAD) continues to visit schools to assess the level of instruction, teacher competency, and educational quality (URT, 2018). Based on this approach, instructional monitoring has evolved into a strategy for assuring teacher job performance as a means of ensuring that the nation has an excellent education system.

In the Mbogwe district, where this study was conducted, regardless of the Tanzanian government's initiatives to modernize educational systems, learners from public schools perform poorly in grades. Given the district's disappointing performance in school, the amount of oversight in improving teachers' teaching abilities is uncertain. The NECTA results for 2021, 2022, and 2023 show that a large number of pupils, 2,771, fall into division four and 498 zero, as shown in Table 1 below.

Table 1. *Mbogwe District Summary Results for 2021, 2022 and 2023.*

YEAR	SAT	DIVISION AND PERCENTAGE									
		I	%	II	%	III	%	IV	%	O	%
2021	1531	43	2.8	181	11.8	293	19.13	871	56.89	143	9.34
2022	1723	49	2.84	184	10.67	318	18.45	949	55.07	223	12.94
2023	1743	87	4.9	234	13.4	338	19.39	951	54.56	132	7.57

Source: Mbogwe district secondary school head office 2021; 2022; 2023.

Classroom visitation is intended to improve teachers' job performance by encouraging them to reflect and develop self-awareness about their practice, as well as providing evidence of actual teacher performance, strengths, and areas for improvement, all of which are thought to benefit students' academic achievement.

Surprisingly, despite the government's attempts to require the use of instructional monitoring in schools, the national assessment results, as shown in Table 1, indicate that academic achievement is generally low. Accordingly, the main objective of this study was to look into the influence of heads of schools' classroom visits

via the lens of teacher job performance.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Theoretical Literature Review

The study was guided by Donald Schön's Reflective Practice Theory (1983), which advocates for practitioners to engage in critical self-reflection to improve their practices. Reflecting on action requires considering what you would do differently the next time, as well as taking the time to examine and consider what should be changed in the future (Chukwuere, 2021).

Reflective practice theory stipulates that individuals have experience (engage in real-world experiences that serve as the foundation for reflection), are reflexive (have the capacity for introspection and self-awareness, allowing them to critically examine their experience), and seek improvement (are motivated to improve their knowledge, skills, and performance through reflective processes). Finally, reflection is a constant process of learning and progress, not a static activity (Rucinski, 2020). As a result, it embodies constant self-analysis and self-evaluation; sincerity to working in ways other than those already well-known; identification of quality practice examples; openness to sharing experiences with colleagues; and willingness to change the pre-established plan based on the students' reactions.

Contribution of Heads of Schools' Classroom Visitation on Teachers' Job Performance

This section presents the empirical literature related to this study. The literature review is based on the study's purpose which is to explore the contribution of the head of schools' classroom visitation on teachers' job performance in public secondary schools in Mbogwe, Geita – Tanzania.

According to the literature, classroom visitation helps teachers perform better. This method of supervision actively changes and enhances instructional processes by overseeing, monitoring, and mentoring instructors' professional development. According to Harris et al. (2017), classroom visitation methods by heads of schools focus on the following areas:

- i. Operative classroom supervision
- ii. Supervision of teachers
- iii. Monitoring students' manners.

Operative classroom supervision focuses on keeping the classroom orderly and presentable. Making daily classroom visits allows the school heads to gain a deeper knowledge of the methods of instruction and learning. School heads must employ classroom walk-throughs to oversee classroom instruction (Hvidston et

al., 2016). Thus, classroom visits contribute to instructors' frequent attendance, timeliness, and utilization of the correct resources and approaches. Overall, the approach supports the teacher's ongoing advancement through routine interactions and the sharing of ideas. Sultans (2017) investigated the impact of supervision on teacher performance in Kuwaiti high schools. In response to the research topic of whether or not supervision influences teachers' work performance; all participants believed that principals' instructional supervision had a substantial impact on teacher performance. Consequently, it is important to maintain direct contact with teachers to increase mentoring and their professional growth. It is a sequential, cyclical, and orderly supervisory approach that incorporates close and personal relationships between educators and school administrators to improve teachers' classroom performance.

The fundamental purpose of teacher supervision is to help teachers develop their teaching skills and abilities. According to Baker and Bloom (2017), classroom visits should be constructive instead of judgmental in any way since they provide an opportunity for instructors to further develop their knowledge, ability to interact, and evaluation of their practices. There are numerous methods for providing instructional supervision, which lends credence to this argument. Nevertheless, clinical supervision has become standard practice in several locations of the world (Glickman, Gordon, & Ross-Gordon 2017). As a result, supervision is intended to increase a teacher's grasp of the subject matter, adaptability to changing conditions, and decision-making skills to address difficulties that emerge during instruction and learning. Theodomir and Claire's (2022) study on the impact of head teachers' instructional supervision practices on teachers' classroom performance in Rwanda discovered a significant high degree of beneficial relationship between head of schools' instructional supervision and teachers' job performance. This implies that the principal must be capable of managing the performance of his school's teachers. School principals contribute to enhancing overall teacher performance as part of their performance management responsibilities to achieve more favourable outcomes. Ubogu (2020) supports a slightly different idea, namely that monitoring is a collaborative endeavour between teachers and administrators. This implies that the head of the school's supervision has a considerable and favourable effect on teachers' work performance.

Monitoring students' manners is employed to establish classroom etiquette, which assists in helping students grasp the classroom learning situation and encourage the formation of a conducive classroom environment (Chung et al, 2022). Classroom behaviour analysis seeks to investigate the mechanisms that underpin teachers' teaching practices and students' academic development in the classroom. This would assist teachers and students in constructively reflecting on their classroom performance, promoting the enhancement of classroom teaching quality. Similarly, Zadock (2023), who did a study on instructional supervision practices in Tanzanian public pre-primary classes, says that school heads must use classroom walk-throughs to oversee classroom instruction. This means that supervision is a multifaceted approach that focuses on instruction and seeks to create a conducive teaching environment to increase instructors' professional expertise. As a result, it helps to identify teachers' strengths and weaknesses, as well as follow-up procedures aimed at strengthening the highlighted areas of weakness.

METHODOLOGY

The purpose of the paper was to examine the contribution of heads of schools' classroom visitations on the teachers' job performance in public secondary schools in Mbogwe district, Geita Region-Tanzania. To attain this goal, a mixed methodology and convergent parallel design were used. The mixed approach was important to this research because it allowed for the collection of data from various sources using triangulated data collection instruments, which were subsequently analyzed and integrated to establish a more complete comprehension of the main issue that prompted the study. This study's sample size was 104 respondents, including one District Educational Officer (DEO), one District Quality Assurer Officer (DQAO), four Ward Education Officers (WEOs), six Heads of Schools (HS), and 92 teachers. The respondents were chosen using stratified, simple random, and purposive sampling methods. Data were gathered using closed and open-ended questionnaires, as well as organized interviews. To ensure questionnaire validity and reliability, the Cronbach alpha correlation coefficient was used. The coefficient for the variables was 0.81, indicating that the surveys were valid and trustworthy. To ensure the reliability of qualitative data, data from multiple sources was triangulated and analyzed. Quantitative data were examined descriptively using a

Software Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 24, whereas qualitative data were assessed thematically.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This research examines the contribution of heads of schools' classroom visitation methods on teacher job performance in public secondary schools in Mbogwe, Geita, Tanzania. The results are reported based on the responses of the participants. The teachers responded to the questionnaires based on their ideas, while the opinions of the school principals, ward education officers, district education officers, and district quality assurance officers were obtained through an interview. The next section offers the study's findings and commentary.

Contribution of Heads of Schools' Classroom Visitation on Teachers' Job Performance

The study attempted to determine how heads of schools' classroom visits contribute to teachers' job performance. In practice, educators must observe the interaction between teacher and learner in the classroom since it can indicate the learning opportunities that students receive as well as teachers' areas of weakness that need to be addressed. Table 2.1 shows the quantitative results collected from the questionnaire data.

According to the findings in Table 4.1, a greater number of teachers understand the head of school's responsibility to supervise teachers' instructional activities. For example, 62 (67.39%) of teachers held the opinion that the head of school should visit classrooms examine teachers' lesson presentations, and provide appropriate comments. 58 (63.04%) of teachers are convinced that class visits by the head of school assist them in enhancing their performance. 52 (56.52%) of teachers contend that classroom monitoring increases commitment. 62 (67.39%) of teachers stated that when the principal walks around the school, they are motivated to work hard. 78 (84.78%) of teachers agreed that the head of school monitors teachers' attendance and punctuality at school. 72 (78.26%) of teachers agreed that they identified recommendations made by the school's principal for work enhancement. This means that supervisory behaviour and support are crucial to instructors' work success. Thus, school heads have responsibility for directing the execution of the authorized curriculum in line with the Ministry of Education, Science, and Technology (National

Education Act No. 25 of 1978, Section 25 Cap. 353 with its 2014 amendments. Zadock (2023) confirms the study's claim that supervision strives to enhance development, interpersonal interaction, error-free

problem solving, as well as commitment to building teacher's ability to adapt their teaching methods and use new teaching methods. All of these contribute to effective instructional and educational practices.

Table 2. Teachers' View on Heads of Schools' Classroom Visitation on Teachers' Job Performance.

NO.	Statement	SD		D		U		A		SA	
		F	P	F	P	F	P	F	P	F	P
1.	The head of school visits the classrooms to observe teachers' lesson presentation	6	6.52	16	17.39	8	8.69	44	47.82	18	19.56
2.	Class visits by the head of school help me improve my teaching (job performance)	13	14.13	17	18.47	4	4.34	38	41.30	20	21.73
3.	Classroom visitation hastens my commitment to ensure coverage of the syllabus	11	11.95	20	21.73	9	9.78	35	38.04	17	18.47
4.	When the head of school walks around the school, I get inspired to work hard	14		12		4		44		18	
5.	The head of school observes teachers' attendance and punctuality in school.	6	6.52	8	8.69	0	0	40	43.47	38	41.30
6.	I identify recommendations given by the head of the school for the improvement of my job.	5	5.43	12	13.04	3	3.26	52	56.52	20	21.73

Source: Field data (2024).

Conversely, 22 (23.91%), 30 (32.60%), 31 (33.69%), 26 (28.26%), 14 (18.47%), and 17 (18.47%) all disagreed. This suggests that school heads' classroom visits have little to do with job performance and instead have an emotionally (psychological) damaging effect (isolation, temperamental upheavals, less collegiality) on the whole teaching procedure. This goes against Yusrina and Bima's (2020) study findings, which confirm the preceding findings by stating that making observations of teacher practice may offer an understanding of whether learning occurs in the classroom. Thus, classroom observation is done to increase teachers' awareness of themselves and make them more reflective.

In addition to the questionnaire results, the researchers interviewed school heads, Ward Education Officers (WEOs), District Secondary Education Officers (DSEOs), and District Quality Assurance Officers (DQAOs) to gain administrative perspectives on classroom visitation practices and their influence on teacher job performance. Heads of schools, for example, expressed their practical onsite or field experiences with classroom visitation procedures during interviews as one of the interviewees stated that:

To be honest, instructional supervision has really benefited teachers. During classroom

visits as head of school, I observed how teachers might use various teaching strategies. For example, it is exciting to see how teaching staff engage and connect with the students, as well as their ability to deliver material to them. (Interviewee H1: 20/6/2024: 12.25)

The expression preceding implies that through classroom visits, supervisors may encourage advancement and gather additional useful knowledge such as management of the classroom, the interaction between teachers and students, as well as modification of learners' behavior, while simultaneously providing unquestionable proof and obtaining actual events from naturalistic classroom environments. The study's findings are consistent with Caratiquit and Pablo's (2021) suggestion that all teachers whether master teachers or beginning teachers, might dialogue while expanding their knowledge together during a post-conference. The teacher's standing is likely to advance significantly as a result of these operations, particularly when detected flaws are addressed. When asked the same research question about the influence of heads of schools' classroom visits on teachers' job performance, one interviewee responded as follows:

Whenever I visit teachers in classrooms as a ward education officer, one of the things I like

most is how competent they are to use many different kinds of teaching strategies. This demonstrates our efforts to assist our teachers by conducting unique training geared exclusively toward classroom instruction. (Interviewee W4: 23/6/ 2024): 12.50)

The aforementioned expression means that instructional monitoring has significantly improved teachers' ability to incorporate teaching approaches. It was determined that providing extra training on the usage of different approaches to teaching and conducting classroom visits strengthened teachers' ability to employ several instructional methods. Similarly, the findings are consistent with Mwaniki and Guantai's (2018) study, which found that instructional monitoring helps teachers enhance their instructional skills, including pedagogical skills. In other words, classroom visits, training, timely feedback, and recommendations from instructional supervisors help teachers recognize their areas of shortcomings and make self-improvements. Teachers who accept training, feedback, and ideas favourably and act on them on a timely basis are likely to develop significantly. The previously mentioned result correlates to the data obtained during an interview with DEO, who stated the following:

Heads of schools undertake lesson observations while teachers are teaching in class, but this is inadequate. On the whole, every school has an "internal school quality team" that works with the principal to oversee all teachers' teaching and learning. Teaching and learning have improved as a result of classroom visits, with most instructors now able to construct schemes of work and lesson plans. (Education Officer1: 27/6/ 2024): 9.50)

This means that Internal School Quality Assurance, HoS, WEO, and SQA play a range of instructional supervision roles in order to ensure effective teaching. As a result, WEO and SQA are responsible for giving guidance in the execution of the authorized curriculum in accordance with the Ministry of Education, Science, and Technology. Mpungu (2018) supports the findings that supervision improves not only teachers' performance but also the entire process of instruction and learning, resulting in improvements in the quality of education delivered in public secondary schools. Thus, school quality assurers must be provided with suitable supervisory requirements and, if possible, allowances for amortization on their additional duty.

Furthermore, when asked, the DQAO stated that SQAOs do not commonly visit schools due to a lack of funding resources for visiting all schools on time. As a result, the DQAO emphasized the importance of excellent coordination of school and classroom visits, stating that:

The school heads are responsible for tracking both students and teachers in order to ensure that instructional time is adhered to, as follow-up school visits are uncommon in some schools, not because DQAOs are lazy, but because we are few and lack adequate facilities to complete our work as needed due to limited budget. As a result, there is an urgent need for school heads to guarantee proper classroom visits and report back to our office. (DQAO1: 25/6/2024: 2.45)

The above-mentioned statement implies that schools do not gain optimally through DQAO follow-up visits, even though internal activities such as head-of-school classroom visits are critical to ensuring effective teaching and learning and enhancing teacher job performance. This reveals the truth that infrequent follow-up school visits can have a negative impact on teachers' teaching practices and student learning attainments. In agreement with this point of view, Nurfadilla and Surhato (2020) argue that quality assurance officers' recommendations and guidelines assist in helping teachers be more successful in the teaching and learning process by encouraging creativity and promoting capacity building. Thus, the findings are consistent with those of principals and teachers, indicating that school quality assurance practices have an advantageous influence on teachers' job performance.

CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

According to the findings, the school heads made regular classroom visits to independently confirm that instructional and educational activities were executed effectively. Additionally, the study's findings revealed that school heads who routinely conduct class observations and hold post-observation conferences with instructors have a considerable impact on teachers' job performance and, as a result, the academic achievement of learners. Finally, the findings demonstrated that the school administrator appropriately advised teachers on how to establish institutional standards to serve as a means of controlling students' behaviour to develop an inviting

educational setting that enhanced both learning and instruction. As a result, the study concluded that classroom visits by heads of schools have a beneficial and statistically significant influence on pedagogical practices and teacher job performance in public secondary schools in Mbogwe District.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Ministry of Science, Technology, and Education should prioritize monitoring and develop suitable policies. This policy should include the establishment of an independent quality assurance body that operates autonomously of the Ministry at all levels. For example, in basic education, the "QA Division" is part of the Ministry and lacks autonomy; there should be periodic courses, seminars, and symposia for educators and heads of schools to keep them up to date on the most current developments in human management and overall instructional supervision. Classroom visits significantly impact teacher job performance, requiring school heads to collaborate with teachers to schedule visits and lesson observations, addressing inconsistencies in the supervision of instructions. School heads should guarantee that every classroom visit has to be followed by quick feedback from the teacher. The post-observation conference is going to enable the head of the school to inform the teachers of areas where his instructions could be improved. This engagement should be collegial rather than evaluative. Any effective learning process depends on the teachers. Therefore, the government may additionally offer more opportunities for workshops, training, and promotion to encourage teachers to be as passionate about their work as possible. Lastly, with the help of school boards and parent associations, school administrators should create and implement effective professional development and motivating initiatives that will strengthen and inspire teachers' dedication to their work.

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