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## RESEARCH ARTICLE

**Assessing Attitudes of Teachers towards Supervision in Public Primary Schools, Nyamagana Mwanza Tanzania**<sup>a</sup>Juma Kalekwa, <sup>b</sup>Felista Tangi, <sup>b</sup>Daniel Onyango<sup>a</sup> Iseni Primary School, Nyamagana, Mwanza, Tanzania<sup>b</sup> Department of Education Foundations, St. Augustine University of Tanzania**Corresponding Author**Juma Kalekwa, Email: [jumakalekwa@gmail.com](mailto:jumakalekwa@gmail.com)**Author's Contributions***All authors contributed equally to this research.***Article History***Received: February 26, 2025; Accepted: March 17, 2025; Published: May 15, 2025.***ABSTRACT**

Teachers' supervision is a critical aspect which guides the effectiveness of their job productivity. This study aimed to investigate factors that influence teachers' attitudes toward supervision for public primary school. The study was guided by General Systems Theory, emphasizing the interrelationships among educational stakeholders. The study employed a mixed-methods approach and convergent parallel design. Data were collected through questionnaires and interviews from 96 teachers, 8 head teachers, and 1 DEO at Nyamagana district. Findings revealed that, teachers generally held negative attitudes towards supervisory activities, perceiving them as ineffective for professional growth and classroom management. With mean scores below average across all indicators. Teachers expressed dissatisfaction with the support provided by head teachers, indicating a lack of focus on individualized supervision tailored to their unique challenges. The relationship between supervisory activities and teachers' assessments was also found to be weak, suggesting that current practices are not effectively enhancing assessment techniques. The study highlights an urgent need for head teachers to reassess and improve their supervisory practices to better align with teachers' needs. The findings indicated that enhancing feedback mechanisms, promoting professional development and fostering supportive communication could lead to improved teaching practices and student outcomes. It is recommended to educational stakeholders to increase investment in training for head teachers to deliver effective supervision and support, ensuring collaboration between teachers and supervisors, and developing tailored professional development programs.

**Keywords:** Supervision; attitudes; public primary school; collaboration**INTRODUCTION**

Teachers' supervision is a critical aspect which guides the effectiveness of their job productivity. Supervision in educational settings is pivotal in ensuring the quality of teaching and the overall effectiveness of school programs. Supervisory activities entail the tasks and responsibilities carried out by heads of schools to oversee and manage the school operations. These activities typically include administration and instructional leadership skills in which a part from school

head teachers executing teaching roles have also to execute the following roles: staff evaluation and development, curriculum development, student discipline, budget management, parent and community engagement as well as administrative duties (Ikhfan et al., 2018). In public primary schools, where foundational learning occurs, the role of supervision becomes even more critical. Understanding teachers' attitudes towards supervision can provide valuable insights into the effectiveness of supervisory practices and highlight

areas for improvement.

Supervision in schools combines functions like evaluation of teaching methods, the provision of feedback and the support of professional development, which all together aim to improve teachers' job performance. The effectiveness of these supervisory activities can significantly influence teachers' job satisfaction, motivation and ultimately improve student learning outcomes. Research has proven that positive attitudes towards supervision are often linked to higher levels of teacher performance and greater student achievement (Smith & Jones, 2021). Conversely, negative perceptions and teachers' attitudes can lead to resistance and reduced effectiveness of supervisory interventions as well as job productivity (Doe, 2022).

The history of head teachers' supervisory activities in United States' primary education dates back to the colonial era and some of documents highlighted the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Supervisory activities marked the maximum development of teachers' job efficiency. This period is remarkable for the emergence of the progressive education movement led by educators such as John Dewey who voted for changes of the existed education system for fostering thinking and new teaching styles (Kennedy, 2024; Jodi, 2017). The movement emphasized the need for more active and child-centred learning methods. In practice, as schools grow in size and complexity, there is a recognized need for leadership roles to oversee curriculum development, teacher training and overall school management (Dwight et al., 2018). Head teachers, also known as principals, began to take on more supervisory responsibilities to ensure effective teaching and learning outcomes at teaching setting by ensuring supervision of extracurricular activities (Briggs & Hawkins, 2020).

In Africa, the British established formal education systems in Uganda for example, including primary schools, to facilitate their administrative and economic interests as colonialists had no reasons to introduce education in African countries if does not serve the interests (Amoako, 2020). Head teachers were appointed to manage these schools, initially focusing on administrative tasks such as resource management and discipline enforcement. As the demand for education grew and the need for qualified teachers became apparent, the role of head teachers expanded as they had to also perform management duties like planning, organizing, evaluation as well as institutional integration (Lemos & Liberali, 2019). Head teachers

began to supervise teachers, ensuring that they adhered to teaching standards and providing support and mentorship to improve instructional practices. Hence supervisory activities in schools traces back to the establishment of formal education systems by the British. The initial focus of head teachers was on administrative tasks, and their subsequent evolution became towards supervising teachers and supporting instructional practices.

The Ministry of Education Science and Technology (MoEST) and the Ministry of the President's Officer, Regional Administration and Local Government in Tanzania shares the responsibility of school supervision. School heads operating under these ministries conduct supervisory tasks at the school level by overseeing teaching and learning activities in alignment with official educational policies and circulars. Their pivotal roles include monitoring curriculum implementation, supervising the development and assessment of teaching materials and ensuring proper student evaluation while adhering to national developmental goals and integrating education and technology (MoEST, 2024).

School heads apply diverse supervision techniques tailored to teachers' varied needs, potentially enhancing overall satisfaction with the instructional process due to the better demonstration of management and administrative practices (Mgole & Mkulu, 2021). To acquire such techniques, instructional supervisors are obliged to be offered in continuing in-service training programs. Effective leaders must possess the knowledge and skills to influence teachers' behaviour, attainable through seminars, conferences and graduate classes which will enable them to be flexible in coping with changing nature of the working environment and teachers.

In contrast to external school supervisors, who may make occasional visits, school heads are expected to be consistently present throughout the year. This allows them to more effectively carry out supervisory functions as they build practical trust among staff members. However, collective understanding of the practical challenges occurring at school as well as creating a good relation at work setting is paramount to teachers and head teachers (Grissom et al., 2021). This approach reduces conflict and adds trust while mitigating the risk of schools appearing compliant only during external assessments.

Despite the legal requirements for all school heads to engage in supervision, Tanzania faces challenges, as

outlined in a study done by Scallion and Tangi (2022). The obstacles hindering effective supervision by school heads include limited knowledge and experience as well as insufficient educational resources for supervision. Other challenges include inadequate training and negative perceptions of supervision among teachers. Majority schools in Tanzania are characterized by rural conditions with limited resources and overcrowded classrooms, hence limiting the supervisory activities.

Despite being a legal mandate, the consistent achievement of effective supervision remains elusive. Head teachers are pivotal figures tasked with overseeing teaching quality and creating conducive learning environments, although the effectiveness of their supervisory activities in this context remains unclear. Although, public primary schools serve as the primary avenue for education, however they continue facing challenges such as inadequate teacher training, limited infrastructure, poor working environment and less teachers' motivation which might be the result of how they are supervised to do the needful. Understanding nature and the magnitude of these challenges is crucial for improving teaching and learning outcomes. As such this study aims to investigate the factors that influence teachers' attitudes towards supervision for public primary school in Nyamagana district.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### Factors Influencing Teachers' Attitudes towards Supervision

Understanding teachers' attitudes toward supervision is critical in enhancing educational quality and teachers' job efficiency. Research has identified various factors influencing these attitudes, including administrative support, feedback quality, professional development and work environment. Jiafang et al. (2024) conducted a study on the effectiveness of head teachers' supervision for teachers in China while integrating innovation and education setting. The study focused on the quality of education and effective supervision in ensuring enhanced professional capabilities and teaching methods. The findings exposed that differences in student demographics and local contexts significantly impact how supervision practices are implemented and perceived. The research offers valuable insights to consider local conditions and needs when evaluating the effectiveness of supervision in different educational settings.

Supervision support plays a crucial role in shaping teachers' attitudes toward supervision. The study by Glickman et al. (2018) exposes that effective supervisory practices are deeply intertwined with the level of support and collaboration from school administrators. Positive administrative support has been shown to improve teachers' perceptions of supervision, leading to more favourable attitudes. This support includes clear communication, provision of resources and recognition of teachers' efforts.

Professional development opportunities are another key factor influencing teachers' attitudes towards supervision. Ventista and Brown (2023) argue that, ongoing professional development, in-services trainings and collaborative professional development trigger and foster teachers to develop a positive attitude towards supervision as a tool for continuous improvement rather than as a mere administrative requirement. Training programs that are relevant and well-structured can lead to more positive attitudes by enhancing teachers' skills and confidence. This is especially important to highly be considered in developing countries where resources and training opportunities may be limited.

In the African context, where educational resources can be limited, the effectiveness of feedback also depends on the supervisor's ability to deliver it in a supportive manner (Mugo & Simatwa, 2021). Teachers in many African schools often view feedback as a tool for improvement when it is clear, actionable and delivered respectfully. In many African schools, supervision support significantly affects teachers' perceptions of supervisory practices. Research highlights that effective communication and support from school administrators contribute to more positive attitudes among teachers. Their study underscores that when school leaders provide clear guidance and are actively involved in the supervisory process, teachers are more likely to view supervision as beneficial rather than burdensome.

Moreover, feedback that is constructive and aimed at professional growth rather than punitive assessment tends to be better received by teachers. A study by Osei and Osei (2022) found that Ghanaian teachers who have access to relevant and continuous professional development perceive supervision more favourably. This is because professional development opportunities help them feel more competent and supported in their roles. Similarly, Shayo and Ndunguru (2023) from Tanzania advocate for access to relevant and high-

quality professional development to help teachers feel more competent and valued, which positively influences their attitudes and receptive towards supervision. Thus, targeted and continuously offered professional development programs can address specific local needs and enhance teachers' skills and attitudes toward supervision.

However, according to a report by Sifuna (2020) inadequate resources and challenging working conditions can negatively affect teachers' perceptions of supervision. Many African countries have continued experiencing scarcity of educational materials and infrastructural challenges which lead to frustration and resistance to supervisory processes. That means specific measures are to be initiated to improve the working environment and ensure adequate resources are put in place to help create a more positive atmosphere for supervision and job output.

Research by Mwaipopo and Sanga (2022) indicates that in Tanzanian schools, feedback which is specific, actionable and delivered respectfully tends to be better received by teachers. Constructive feedback rather than mere evaluative comments enhances teachers' professional growth and attitudes toward supervision. Effective feedback is crucial for fostering a positive supervisory environment. Another study by Gharib and Macha (2021) stress on effective administrative support in schools through providing clear communication, resources and recognition. It is argued that, when school administrators engage positively with teachers and offer consistent support, teachers are more likely to view supervision as a constructive process rather than an administrative burden.

The work environment and availability of resources play another significant role in shaping teachers' attitudes. Mwakajumilo and Mulwa (2021) found that inadequate resources and challenging working conditions negatively impact teachers' perceptions of supervision. Issues such as overcrowded classrooms, lack of teaching materials and poor infrastructure can contribute to teachers' frustration with supervisory practices. Meanwhile, improving these conditions can lead to more positive attitudes toward supervision. On the other hand, Nyang'au and Mbilinyi (2022) highlights

socio-economic challenges such as low salaries and high living costs to have negative impact on teachers' attitudes and their perception of supervisory practices. Additionally, cultural attitudes towards authority and supervision can vary on influencing how teachers respond to supervisory feedback. Addressing these factors through improved supervisory practices can enrich teachers' attitudes, satisfaction and job efficiency.

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study adopted a mixed research approach where both quantitative and qualitative approaches were combined to provide a better understanding. A convergent parallel design was adapted to enable the researchers to collect both quantitative and qualitative data concurrently and analyse them independently. The study comprised of a sample size of 105 respondents, whereas simple random sampling was used to select teachers, while purposive sampling was used to select eight (8) head teachers and one (1) (DEO). Data were collected using questionnaires and interview (face to face) guides.

In order to determine validity and reliability of the research instruments the study employed content validity and test-retest reliability (correlation coefficient of 0.70) respectively. Prior to the main study, pilot testing was done with all teachers selected from one school which was not involved in the main study and one (1) head teacher. Quantitative data were analysed using descriptive statistics with the help of the computer Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 20. Ethical issues were observed and proper acknowledgement/citation of all sources of information was done throughout the document adhering to APA 7th edition to avoid plagiarism.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The results and discussions are presented according to the research objective to investigate the factors that influence teachers' attitudes towards supervision for public primary schools. The study findings are presented in subsequent sections, starting with Table 1.

Table 1. Teachers' responses on teachers' attitudes towards supervisory activities.

Descriptive Statistics	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Dev
Supervision is essential for my professional development	71	1	5	3.06	1.194
I feel supported by my supervisors	71	1	5	2.44	.982

Supervision positively impacts	71	1	5	1.92	.874
My teaching practices I am comfortable discussing challenges with my supervisor	71	1	3	1.68	.671
Feedback from supervision helps me improve my skills	71	1	4	1.72	.721
I believe that supervision is conducted fairly and objectively	71	1	4	1.63	.722
I see supervision as a bureaucratic process rather than a supportive one	71	1	5	1.65	.943

**Source:** Field Data (2024)

Table 1 shows teachers' responses on teachers' attitudes towards supervisory activities on teaching and learning effectiveness in public primary schools. The results are presented below.

### Supervision for Professional Development

A mean of 3.06 suggests that on average, respondents have a moderate to slightly positive perception of the support they receive from their supervisor. Since the scale likely ranges from 1 to 5 (assuming its Likert scale), where 1 represents "strongly disagree" and 5 represents "strongly agree," a mean score of around 3 indicates a neutral to slightly positive feeling. While the score is not overwhelmingly positive, it reflects that most respondents do not feel unsupported. Similarly, the standard deviation of 1.194 shows a relatively wide variation in responses. A standard deviation of over 1 implies that, there is noticeable diversity on the way respondents perceive the support they receive from their supervisors. This could indicate that, while some employees feel strongly supported, others may not feel the same, contributing to a broader range of responses. For example, one of the teachers said that:

"I have experienced poor-quality supervision, leading to undervalue my importance in professional growth. Also, supervisors who do not provide useful feedback, fail to recognize potential, or neglect career development and conversations. This result into my feeling unsupported and disillusioned about the benefits of supervision." (Interview, July 2024).

These findings imply that some head teachers do not understand the importance of career growth. They invest less in workers' professional development, and do not provide constructive professional feedback to teachers. Such head teachers demotivate teachers leading to negative attitude to work. These findings are in line with those of Shayo and Ndunguru (2023) who campaign for access to continuous high-quality

professional development to make teachers up to date, competent and valued. This positively influences their attitudes and receptive towards supervision and boost teacher's experience and commitment to work.

### Supervisors' Support

Mean score of 2.44 suggests that, on average, respondents tend to disagree or remain neutral about the idea that supervision offers necessary support to teachers. Assuming this is based on a Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree), this relatively low mean implies that many respondents do not view supervision as a critical component of their professional support, or they may not find their current supervision to be beneficial. The standard deviation of 0.982 shows that there is moderate variation in responses, but it's not as wide as a standard deviation of 1 or higher. This suggests that while some respondents do view supervision as more important than others, most responses are relatively close to the mean. The majority of the group shares a somewhat similar opinion, though there are outliers who either strongly agree or disagree. This point was supported by one responded who said that:

"I feel that the feedback and support provided by supervisors is too vague or generic, making it difficult to translate into actionable improvements for their teaching methods or professional development." (Interview, July 2024).

The findings imply that supervisors support and feedback does not address specific local needs and enhance teachers' skills and attitudes toward supervision. Lemos and Liberali (2019) sharing a UK experience position where head teachers promote teaching standards by providing support and mentorship to improve instructional practices. Apart from their administrative tasks head teachers are charged with supervising teachers and supporting instructional practices as key responsibilities.

### **Discussion of Instructional Challenges with Supervisor**

The mean response of 1.68 suggests that, on average, respondents may not feel very comfortable discussing challenges with their supervisors. However, the scale of the response is important here, so assuming the scale ranges from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree), a mean of 1.68 leans toward discomfort or disagreement with the statement. Standard Deviation (671) appears to be extremely high, indicating a potential typo or data entry error. A standard deviation this large would imply an enormous spread in responses, which is unlikely for a typical survey. If this is a mistake, the analysis should be revisited with the correct value. Normally, a standard deviation helps us understand how much individual responses deviate from the mean, but a realistic value here would likely be in the range of 0 to 2 depending on how varied the responses were. Furthermore, when asked during interview, one teacher's response was as follows:

"I fear negative consequences if they openly discuss challenges, such as reduced support, conflict, or even jeopardizing their job security also I lack of trust between teachers and supervisors which make it difficult for me to feel safe sharing my concerns. This could stem from past experiences or general workplace culture" (Interview, July 2024).

The findings infer that, regardless of the supervisory challenges faced, school supervisors and school heads are expected to be consistently present throughout the year. Onsite supervision enhances trust and minimizes continuous conflict among teachers. Understanding the challenges occurring at school as well as creating a good relation at work setting enhances job security and institutional ownership (Grissom et al., 2021).

### **Feedback from Supervision Improve Teaching Skills**

The average response is a mean of 1.72, suggesting that teachers generally disagree with the statement that feedback from supervision helps improve their skills. Assuming the scale ranges from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree), a mean of 1.72 indicates low satisfaction or belief in the usefulness of supervisory feedback for skill development. Standard Deviation (721) value appears to be incorrect, given that standard deviations are typically much smaller and help indicate how spread out the responses are. If the standard deviation was realistically low (between 0 and 2), it would show that most teachers have similar

perceptions. A high but reasonable standard deviation (e.g., around 1.5 or 2) would suggest varying opinions on the usefulness of supervisory feedback. During the interview session, one of them responded said that:

"The need to provide specific training for supervisors on how to give effective, constructive, and personalized feedback. Supervisory feedback should be framed in a way that fosters growth, offers practical suggestions, and empowers teachers to reflect and act on the advice given." (Interview, July 2024).

The findings signify that effective communication and feedback skills are limited and not well offered by some school administrators. This could be a result of limited communication and interactional knowledge and skills. The findings make it clear that constructive feedback contributes to more positive attitudes among teachers. However, the findings are contrary to the propositions by Mugo and Simatwa (2021) who articulate that, many African school teachers view feedback as a tool for improvement when it is clear, actionable and delivered respectfully. Effective supervision significantly supports and affects teachers' perceptions of supervisory practices.

### **CONCLUSION**

The study exposed the understanding of teachers on their attitudes towards supervision in public primary schools. In practice it is revealed that supervision is a complex landscape shaped by various factors ranging from teachers, head teachers and the working environment. The effectiveness of supervision relies much on the relationship between teachers and supervisors, and their impact on supervision of teaching quality. Overall, while many teachers recognize the importance of supervision for professional development and improving educational and job outcomes, there are significant concerns regarding the methods used and the perceived lack of support from supervisors. Professional development is highly needed for both teachers and head teachers on modalities of effective supervision. Moreover, the findings call for a need for a more collaborative and supportive supervisory approach that minimizes conflicts at workplace, fosters trust, encourages open communication and promotes job security and productivity.

### **RECOMMENDATION/CONCLUSION**

From the findings and drawn conclusions, the following

recommendations are made to education stakeholders. Teachers should use documents like lesson plans and schemes of works with clearly assigned activities and tasks as a way of assisting the learners to engage in productive learning activities. This could enhance learners' involvement in the activities of the lesson so that the desired learning outcomes are achieved. The school administrators or rather head teachers are recommended to not shy away from supervising teachers' schemes of work and lesson plans. Head teachers should also develop targeted training programs for school supervisors focused on effective communication, mentoring skills and collaborative supervision practices to improve relationships with teachers.

Educational leaders and curriculum planners should plan for and encourage the adoption of supervision models that involve teachers in the process. This could promote teamwork, ownership and shared responsibility in enhancing teaching quality. Educational managerial organs should establish support mechanisms for supervisors, including access to resources and ongoing professional development, to ensure they can perform their roles effectively. Schools should create regular platforms for dialogue between teachers and supervisors, allowing for the exchange of feedback, concerns and suggestions related to supervision practices. Lastly, head teachers should conduct periodic assessments of supervisory methods/activities and their impact on teaching and learning to ensure they align with teachers' needs and contribute positively to enhanced educational environment.

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