

## **The Influence of The Support Supervisory Roles of Head of Department on Teachers' Effectiveness in Secondary Schools in Nigeria.**

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**Abstract:** This study investigated the relationship between the support supervisory roles of Heads of Department and teachers' effectiveness in secondary schools in Nigeria. Specifically, the study sought to find out the relationship between HODs instructional supervision, communication and moderation of assessment of learners and teachers effectiveness. A correlational research design was used where a total sample of 200 respondents were employed. The data which was majorly quantitative in nature was collected from the respondents using a self-designed questionnaire, the validation of the instrument was properly done with a reliability coefficient of 0.902. The data was analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics. A significant relationship existed between HODs instructional supervision and teachers' effectiveness ( $r=0.775$ ,  $N=200$ ,  $P\text{-value}<0.05$ ). A significant relationship was also revealed between HODs communication and teachers' effectiveness ( $r=0.737$ ,  $N=200$ ,  $P\text{-value}<0.05$ ). The relationship between HODs moderation of assessment of learners and teachers effectiveness was also found to be significant ( $r=0.636$ ,  $N=200$ ,  $P\text{-value}<0.05$ ). Thus HODs instructional supervision, communication and moderation of learners' assessment boost teachers' effectiveness. It was recommended that Heads of departments and Area Education Officers must take part in participatory supervision through classroom observation to ensure effective monitoring of the classroom teaching and to enhance teachers' effectiveness, principals should facilitate monthly departmental meetings to enable HODs communicate pertinent issues to their junior staff and that school managers should empower HODs to coordinate the settings, marking and grading examinations under their departments.

**Keywords:** Support, Supervisory, Roles, Teacher, Effectiveness.

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Date of Submission: 23-10-2017

Date of acceptance: 30-11-2017

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### **I. INTRODUCTION**

The Principal's role in the world is increasingly becoming complex as the nature of society, political expectations and schools have changed over time (Valentine and Prates, 2011). Considering the varied and complex nature of school management, support supervision to the staff cannot be the sole responsibility of one person. In fact it is unrealistic to expect any school Head to know everything about leading complex organizations like secondary schools (Hook, 2006; Siplunel, 2006). The large size of many secondary schools and a variety of programs they offer are simply too overwhelming the time available to the Principals even if they have the necessary skills. Thus the role of HODs in the provision of support supervision and general school leadership is inevitable,

Valentine and prater (2011) postulated that a transformational form of leadership encourages secondary school Principals to seek competent teachers who can become HODs. Although this seems encouraging, sharing decisions and developing support supervision roles in others creates ambiguity, about authority and accountability (Schmidt, 2000). Nonetheless, within the most effective secondary schools, support supervision arguably extends beyond the Principal and his/ her administrative team, Gupton (2003) recommends that teachers and principals' work as partners to provide support supervision to the school. The

Principal needs HODS to assist him/her with responsibility of support supervision (House and Terence, 2006) observed that Principals spend very little time at their stations, leaving most of the supervisory roles in the hands of their deputies and other subordinate staff He said, lack of effective supervision had contributed to poor performance by teachers which had ultimately translated into poor performance by students in national examinations. It is therefore evident that, Principals do not offer adequate support and general

supervision to teachers. Instructional supervision is one of the key roles of Principals (Area Education Office, 2011). However, since Principals spend much of their time on administrative supervision, HODs could play a supplementary role in enforcing good instructional practices.

Hannagan (2002) defines communication as a way of passing information about the effectiveness of a particular work behavior and it is said to perform several functions. For example it is directive by clarifying specific behaviors that ought to be performed, it is motivational as it stimulates greater effort and it is error correcting as it provides information about the extent of error being made. However, the importance of communication in learning institutions especially secondary schools in Nigeria has been under-rated as evidenced by the existence of serious communication gaps in secondary schools (The report of Ministry of Education, 2013). The A. E O report was released following a series of complaints parents by students in a number of secondary schools across the states. Information flow is paramount for the effective running of education institutions such as secondary schools. It is the responsibility of the Principal to communicate relevant information to staff (Teaching Service Commission, 2011). However, the tight schedule of the Principal may not allow him/her to communicate every minor detail to his/her staff. Thus HODs may bridge the communication gap between the Principals and teachers.

Moderation of student assessment is a process aimed at ensuring that marks and grades are as valid, reliable and fair as possible for all students and all markers (ALTC, 2012C), Moderation of assessment checks that marking is consistent such that an assessment item would be awarded the same mark by any marker.

Moderation of assessment is more than checking the marks; it is the checking of assessments from the development of each item to ensure that the whole assessment process is fair, valid and reliable enabling equivalence and comparability (ALTC, 2012a). According to NAPE report (2013), some teachers in secondary schools in Uganda do not know how to set standard examinations and this has impacted negatively on the performance of students in National examinations. Learners' assessment is part of the teaching — learning process and hence must be moderated by the Principal. However, HODs may be more objective in the moderation of assessment of learners since they (HODs) are assumed to be the most senior and competent teachers in their departments. According to Harvey (2012), school managers should know how teachers are assessing and grading students.

According to the Ministry of Education and Sports (2008), opined that to effectively teach and evaluate students list of roles and responsibilities assigned to the Heads of department suggests that their leadership is significant in influencing instructional leadership and hence teacher's effectiveness. Therefore the supervisory roles of heads of departments are critical to teachers' wellbeing, quality of teaching, effectiveness and students' achievements. Thus to produce substantive information to policy makers, it is imperative to document, illuminate and understand the influence of supervisory roles of HODs on teacher's effectiveness in secondary schools. Policy makers could use the information to contribute to the enhancement of the education process and improvement of the Nigerian Education system as a whole.

The irregularity and low frequency of visitations to schools by AEOs officials because of transportation challenges and understaffing in their department leaves the challenges of support supervision unresolved. Furthermore, the quality of supervision offered by external inspectors may sometimes be doubted since some of them may be highly deficient in the subject mastery and professional competence. Hence the establishment of the Directorate of Education Standards may not guarantee teachers' effectiveness unless it is locally reinforced by Principals and middle managers such as HODs.

Principals may not be able to provide adequate support supervision to teachers although it is one of their roles according to the Education Service Commission (2011). This is because they do administrative supervision and secondly they may not be technical in certain subjects. Thus there is a missing gap in the implementation of policies, practices and instructional innovations between supervisors and teachers.. As such HODs who happen to be the most technical and senior teachers in their departments would play a complimentary role to ensure effectiveness of best practices in secondary schools in Nigeria.

### **Statement of the Problem**

The current research on the leadership and support supervision roles of Heads of department in secondary schools shows that support supervision provided by heads of department is important for enhancing the curriculum and improving teaching quality and learning (Brown and Rutherford, 1998; Dinham, 2005, 2007). However, other researchers indicate that Heads of department often lack adequate professional development to execute their roles effectively (Adey, 2000). Furthermore, research showed ambiguity in the duties and responsibilities of heads of department (Gold, 1998). For example, Lepeda and Kruskamp (2007) observed a difference between how heads of departments perceived their actual responsibilities and what they wished their responsibilities were.

According to the Ministry of Education (2008), one of the roles of the Principal is provision of support supervision to the teachers. However, the Principal is quite often busy with administrative supervision. As a result, there seems to be lack of internal support supervision in secondary schools in Nigeria as indicated in the

report of the AEO (2014). As such HODs may play a complimentary role in offering support supervision to teachers in their departments.

However it appears as if no much research has been carried out to establish the relationship between the support supervisory roles of HODs and teachers' effectiveness. Hence the need for this study.

**Research hypotheses.** The study sought to verify the following hypotheses;

(i). There is no statistically significant relationship between HODs instructional supervision and teachers' effectiveness.

(ii). There is no statistically significant relationship between HODs communication and teachers' effectiveness.

(iii). There is no statistically significant relationship between HODs moderation of assessment of learners and teachers' effectiveness.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of the study was to find out the relationship between support supervisory roles of the Heads of department and teachers' effectiveness in secondary schools in Nigeria.

## **II. METHODOLOGY**

The researcher employed the correlational research design utilizing quantitative methods. This design was the most appropriate since the study sought to find out the relationship between the supports supervisory roles of HODs and teachers' effectiveness in secondary schools. The target population was all teachers in Nigerian Secondary School. Multistage sampling technique was used to select the samples for the study. Precisely, the researchers used purposive sampling to select states (Ekiti and Cross River). Convenience sampling were used to select schools and participants for the study. Principals of the participating schools were purposively selected because they have knowledge and experience about the roles of HODs. HODs were also purposively selected because they were the major subject of the study. The researcher used self-designed structured questionnaires titled support supervisory roles of HOD on Teachers Effectiveness to gather the information, the instrument was divided into four sections. Section A contained the background information of the respondents such as gender, qualification and working experience. Section B contained seven items on the influence of HODS instructional supervision on teachers' effectiveness. Section C contained seven items on the influence of HODS communication on teachers' effectiveness, Section D contained 8 items on the influence of HODs moderation of assessment of learners on teachers' effectiveness. Section E contained sixteen items on teachers' effectiveness. The instrument was rated on a four point Likert scale which required an individual respondent to respond to a series of statements in the questionnaire by indicating whether he/she strongly agrees, agrees, disagrees or strongly disagrees. To ensure validity of the research instrument, the researcher consulted his supervisor and other expert raters from the Faculty of Education. Reliability of the instrument was ensured through split half method. In this case the instrument was piloted with respondents who were not part of the sample. This was done by dividing test items into: odd items represented by "x" and even items represented by "y" and Cronbach Alpha coefficient was used to determine the reliability of the instrument. Thus the reliability of the instrument was 0.902, indicating that the instrument was reliable and useable.

### **Result of the finding.**

**Research Hypothesis one;** There is no significant relationship between HODs instructional supervision and teachers' effectiveness

**Table 1** Pearson correlation statistic for HODs instructional supervision and teachers' Effectiveness.

<b>HODs Instructional Pearson Correlation</b>		
<b>Supervision</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>.775(**)</b>
Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
N	200	66
Teachers' Effectiveness	Pearson Correlation	.775(**)
		1
Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
N	200	66

\*\* Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

In order to determine the relationship between HODs instructional supervision and teachers' effectiveness in secondary schools in Nigeria, Pearson Product Moment correlation was employed in table 1. The result from the table revealed that (  $t=0.775, N=200, P\text{-value} < 0.05$  ). Therefore there is a strong and positive correlation between HODs instructional supervision and teachers' effectiveness. Thus a statistically significant relationship exists between HODs instructional supervision and teachers' effectiveness. Therefore

research hypothesis one was rejected. Therefore when HODs instructional supervision is increased, teachers' effectiveness also increases.

**Hypothesis Two;** There is no statistically significant relationship between HODScommunication and teachers' effectiveness

**Table 2.** Pearson correlation statistic for HODS communication and teachers'effectiveness.

HODs	Pearson Correlation	1	.737(**)
communication	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
N	200	200	
teachers' Pearson Correlation	1		.737(**)
effectiveness	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	200	200

Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

In order to determine the relationship between HODs communication and teachers' effectiveness in secondary schools in Nigeria, Pearson Moment correlation was employed in table 2 The result from the table revealed ( $r=0.737$ ,  $N=200$ ,  $P\text{-value}<0.05$ ) meaning that there was a strong positive correlation between HODs communication and teachers' effectiveness.Thus there is a statistically significant relationship between HODs communication and teachers' effectiveness. Hence, research hypothesis two was rejected. Therefore HODs communication improves teachers' effectiveness.

**Research Hypothesis Three;** there is no statistically significant relationship between HODs moderation of assessment of learners and teachers' effectiveness

**Table 3.** Pearson correlation statistic for HODS moderation of assessment of learners and teachers' effectiveness.

HODs		PearsonCorrelation
		1
communication	Sig. (2-tailed)	.636(**)
	.000	
N	200	
200		
teachers'	Pearson Correlation	
	.636(**)	1
effectiveness	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	.000	
N	200	
200		

\*\* Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

In order to determine the relationship between HODs moderation of assessment of learners and teachers' effectiveness in secondary schools in Nigeria, Pearson ProductMoment correlation was employed in table 3. The result from the table revealed that ( $r=.636$ ,  $N=200$ ,  $P\text{-value}<.05$ ). Thus there is a strong positive correlation between HODs moderation of assessment of learners and teachers' effectiveness. Therefore a statistically significant relationship existed between HODs moderation of assessment of learners and teachers' effectiveness. Therefore, research hypothesis three was rejected. Hence HODSmoderation of assessment of learners improves teachers' effectiveness.

### III. DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS.

The finding of the study revealed that there is a strong and positive correlation between HODs instructional supervision and teachers' effectiveness, this is in agreement with the findings of some scholars such as Nampa (2002), whose research study indicated that there was a significant relationship between monitoring practices and teachers' performance in secondary schools. Nambasa (2002) study findings indicated that lack of instructional supervision and inadequate inspection brings about poor quality teaching and learning in secondary schools, by implication Heads of department have got to supervise teachers in their departments so as to boost quality teaching and learning in secondary schools.In same vein HODs instructional supervision is paramount in enhancing teachers' effectiveness. Thus, HODs must regularly guide their junior staff on professional aspects such as making schemes of work, lesson preparation and activity based teaching which are all geared towards improving the teachers' pedagogical skills.

The research finding also revealed that there is a statistically significant relationship between HODs communication and teachers' effectiveness which is in agreement with Hannagan (2002) who indicated that communication is motivational since it stimulates greater effort by employees. Blasé (2004) says that Heads of department as instructional leaders should encourage communication among teachers in an attempt to prevent isolation and enhance professional growth. The research finding is further supported by Hady (2000) who expressed that for performance to be effective, it is important for employers to communicate on what is to be done and how it is to be done. Thus HODs communication is very important in enhancing teachers' effectiveness in secondary schools in Nigeria. The HODs must therefore communicate to their teachers as regularly as possible in to improve on the teachers' pedagogical skills. It further found out that HODS communication significantly correlates with teachers' effectiveness. HODs communication is also very important in boosting teachers' effectiveness since they (teachers) are kept informed about what is expected of them. Communication enables teachers to share opinion with HODs and hence promotes good working relationship. Finally, it was discovered that HODs moderation of assessment of learners improves teachers' effectiveness. This finding is in agreement with Harvey (2012) who stated that school managers should know how teachers are assessing and grading students. The research finding also agrees with Yoloye (2000) who also pointed out that continuous assessment as a method of evaluating the educational process and achievement of students in educational institutions needed to be moderated and supervised. HODs moderation of assessment of learners improves teachers' effectiveness since the junior staff gets an opportunity to interact with senior and more experienced teachers and this reduces chances of setting substandard examinations.

#### IV. CONCLUSIONS

In this aspect, the researcher presents the conclusions generated from the findings as follows, from the views of the respondents, it can be concluded that HODs instructional supervision aspects such as allocation of teachers, organization of demonstration lessons, lesson observation, drawing teaching syllabus and annual work plan greatly improve teachers' effectiveness. It was also concluded that HODs communication enhances teachers' effectiveness and that HODs moderation of assessment of learners improves teachers' effectiveness. **Recommendations.** Based on the findings, the researcher made the following recommendations: Heads of department should take part in participatory supervision through classroom observation to ensure effective monitoring of the classroom teaching to enhance teachers' professional competencies, School managers should facilitate monthly departmental meetings to enable HODs communicate pertinent issues to their junior staff. Principals should empower HODs to coordinate the setting, administration, marking and grading of examinations under their departments.

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Ogunlade Joseph Olurotimi The Influence of The Support Supervisory Roles of Head of Department on Teachers’ Effectiveness in Secondary Schools in Nigeria.” IOSR Journal Of Humanities And Social Science (IOSR-JHSS), vol. 22, no. 11, 2017, pp. 69-74.