

The cover features a central white band with blue text. Above and below this band are blue horizontal stripes. The bottom half of the cover is dominated by a large, abstract, wavy pattern in shades of yellow, orange, and red, resembling a sunset or a textured surface. A thin vertical yellow and green stripe runs along the left edge.

INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF RESEARCH IN EDUCATION

Volume 3. Number 6 2011

PAN-AFRICAN BOOK COMPANY

ATTITUDE OF VOCATIONAL EDUCATION TEACHERS IN AKWA IBOM STATE SECONDARY SCHOOLS TOWARDS INSTRUCTIONAL SUPERVISION IN AKWA IBOM STATE: A CONCERN FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN THE THIRD WORLD COUNTRIES

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to investigate the attitude of vocational education teachers in Akwa Ibom State Secondary Schools towards instructional supervision. The population involved in this study consisted of 1,200 vocational education teachers in two Educational Zones (Uyo and Ikot Ekpene). The sample that actually participated in this investigation consisted of 320 vocational education teachers obtained by random and cluster sampling techniques. A 16-item questionnaire developed by the researchers was used to obtain the needed information from the sample. The data obtained from the sample were treated with descriptive and inferential statistics (independent t-test) for results. Sixty five percent (65%) of the teachers expressed negative attitude while thirty five percent (35%) expressed positive attitudes towards instructional supervision. Seventy percent (70%) and thirty (30%) of the males and females expressed positive and negative attitudes respectively towards instructional supervision. Factors associated with the vocational education teachers' attitude towards instructional supervision include gender, qualifications, and work experience. Male (X_m) and female (X_f) vocational education teachers differed significantly in their attitude towards instructional supervision in Akwa Ibom State Secondary Schools. Female teachers held a higher positive attitude than the male counterparts towards instructional supervision. Trained (X_1) and untrained (X_2) teachers differed significantly in their attitude towards instructional supervision. The trained vocational education teachers held higher positive attitudes than the untrained ones towards instructional supervision. Teachers under 15 years and those with 16 and above years of experience differed significantly in their attitude towards instructional supervision. Teachers with over 16 years of work experience held a more negative attitude than those having less than 15 years of work experience. Gender, training and work experience are some of the strong factors that influence teachers' attitude towards educational process. It was concluded that, teacher training programmes should lay greater emphasis on affective skills or socio-psychological skills development in supervisors and inspectors of education.

INTRODUCTION

Education is primarily aimed at imparting knowledge to the youth. This is usually carried out in the school. Therefore, if educational institutions must achieve the aims of education, supervision of instruction becomes inevitable. It is then mandatory that the school be properly organized to ensure effective supervision for high quality of learning-be it academic or vocational.

For a long time supervision of schools has been regarded as an important aspect of educational process. However, the quality of teaching and learning has been adversely affected by inadequate supervision of instruction in schools (Ukeje, Akabegu and Ndu, 1992 and Edem, 1998). The types of attitudes teachers have towards instructional supervision appear to be borne out of their experiences with supervisors and how instructional supervision activities have been organized and executed. There is a general notion that supervisors are threats to the teachers as well as a given school system. They always want to catch the teachers doing what is considered wrong by the supervisors. Actions such as these create an unfavourable impression of supervision in the minds of the teachers. The consequence of this attitude is the teachers' failure to cooperate with the supervisors (Usoro and Usoro, 2010).

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STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Vocational education teachers in secondary schools in Akwa Ibom State and elsewhere in Nigeria are subject to certain experiences which appear to colour their attitude towards the educational process. Among the experiences of the teachers in the school situation is that of supervision which is an aspect of the pedagogic process employed to achieve quality learning by the youth. The question to raise at this juncture is: what is the attitude of vocational education teachers in secondary schools towards instructional supervision in Akwa Ibom State? There is no ready answer to the foregoing question, because no research evidence is available on the issue. The available answers (if any) to the question are mere opinions because they lack empirical support. Even if there was an answer to the question, it would still be necessary to replicate the investigation on the premises that new knowledges emerge with time and circumstances. However, it is the limited or lack of research evidence to indicate the attitude of vocational education teachers in Akwa Ibom State Secondary Schools towards instructional supervision that constituted the focal point of the problem for this investigation.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was threefold namely:

1. To ascertain the attitude of vocational subject teachers towards instructional supervision in secondary schools in Akwa Ibom State.
2. To ascertain the causes of vocational teachers' attitude towards instructional supervision in Akwa Ibom State secondary schools.
3. To ascertain the influence of sex, professional qualifications and years of working experiences on teachers' attitude towards instructional supervision in Akwa Ibom State secondary schools.

Research questions

More specifically, this study was designed to provide answers to the following research questions.

1. What are the attitudes of vocational education teachers towards instructional supervision in Akwa Ibom State secondary schools?
2. What are the causes of vocational education teachers' attitude towards instructional supervision in Akwa Ibom State secondary schools?
3. To what extent do gender, training and work experience influence the mean scores of vocational teachers' attitudes towards instructional supervision in Akwa Ibom State secondary schools?

Population and sample

The population of the study consisted of 1200 vocational education teachers and principals of 58 secondary schools offering vocational education subjects in Akwa Ibom State. Thirty two (32) secondary schools were randomly sampled to participate in the investigation. Three hundred and twenty vocational education teachers including principles from the 32 schools constituted the sample (320) that participated in this study.

Instrumentation

A 16-item questionnaire developed by the researchers was validated by vocational education experts in the University of Uyo, Akwa Ibom State. The validated version of the questionnaire was then subjected to split-half reliability test to determine its internal consistency using Pearson and Spearman Brown's prophesy statistic.

Method of Data Collection and Data Analysis

Sequel to the establishment of validity and reliability ($r = 0.87$) of the instrument adequate copies were produced and administered to the sample via research assistants in the schools under investigation. The data obtained were treated with descriptive statistics (mean and percentage computations) while the three null hypotheses formulated on the basis of research question three were tested with independent t-test at $p = 0.05$ for results.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

According to Ekpendu (1986, p.15) the origin of administrative inspection belongs to the colonial era. Ukeje, Akabogu and Ndu (1992) provided the following as some of the activities of the early supervisor: install individual drinking cups in several schools, secured nautical inspection of the pupils, encourage use

of teaching aids in all the schools and persuaded the board of education to supply better equipment and materials. It is instructive to note that the foregoing activities of early supervisors have been replaced by the modern concept of supervisor's activities/functions.

Usoro and Usoro (2010) observed that as schools grew large with more teachers and pupils it became necessary to appoint principals who performed certain management functions but not involved in instructional activities of the schools. Teachers were the main instructional agents. The principals' management functions included the supervision of teachers. The supervisory activities became rather too complex as the school grew larger in population of learners so there arose the need to appoint superintendence category of personnel to handle the job of supervision (Aju and Bar, 1928). The genesis of control and supervision of education in Nigeria dates back to 1882 which witnessed the passage of education ordinance into a legal status (Nduka, 1982). This ordinance eventually metamorphosed into school law operating in the Nigerian educational system today. During the foregoing era, the supervisory concepts and behaviours in Nigeria were characterized by inspection for control and supervision was performed by laymen. But soon after the amalgamation of Northern and Southern Departments of Education and the appointment of Hussey as Director General in 1929, provision was made for the appointment of government

Commenting on the attitude of traditional supervisor in Nigeria at that time, Nwaogu (1980) wrote:

The traditional supervisor was autocratic, dogmatic and arrogant and was often observed as a police sent out to catch the teachers doing what the supervisor considered wrong and to penalize the teacher for it. He would visit the school unannounced the world stood still when he entered to inspect a school.

In the light of Nwaogu's comments, it is clear that the early supervisor was always out to find fault instead of assisting teachers with his inputs to improve their task of teaching.

The Rationale for Instructional Supervision

The need for instructional supervision in Nigerian schools, especially with the introduction of the 6-3-3-4 educational system cannot be overemphasized. The desire for quality education was strongly pressed by Fafunwa (1995), who viewed the Nigerian society as making explicit demands upon the public schools to provide quality education. The ultimate goal of supervision is the outcome of quality learning by the youth. That is without supervision of instruction following laid down procedure, the quality of learning is likely to fall short of the public's expectation. It is the focus of the education enterprise on quality learning that implicitly announces the rationale or reason for adopting instructional supervision in the school system. Perhaps at this point, it may be necessary to dwell briefly on the modern concept of supervision or inspection and its demands on the supervisory personnel. The modern concept of supervision as given by Federal Republic of Nigeria (2004), Edem (1998), Mbipom (2000), Akpan (1995) are to:

- a. Assess and report on the efficiency of an institution.
- b. Offer all possible assistance to teachers in maintaining educational progress.
- c. Supervise, assess and report on the arrangements for the training of teachers.
- d. Possess thorough knowledge of educational developments through study, research and travel.
- e. Advance educational progress by the compilation of pamphlets and handbooks on general or particular aspects of education.
- f. Assist teachers in the selection and use of books and materials in the planning and organization of their lessons; in the organization of extracurricular activities and by informing them about recent research and new teaching methods.

In view of the above analysis of supervision in terms of demands upon the supervisor, the rationale for the application of instructional supervision to the educational process is undebatable.

The Role of the Instructional Supervisor

The role of the instructional supervisor as given by Usoro and Usoro (2010) are:

1. Working together with the teacher to observe the growth, development and needs of the individual pupils and therefore cater for such needs.

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2. Helping teachers to develop a more ideal classroom climate and environment suitable for learning process.
3. Giving or providing demonstrations in various aspects of teaching skills to the teachers.

The supervisory role of the principal as seen by many researchers is as follows:

1. Creation for both staff and the pupils a conducive environment where creative learning takes place.
2. Fostering of the team spirit among teachers and the provision of leadership in programme development, evaluation of teachers' performance for the primary purpose of enabling them to develop appropriate skills for the achievement of the school goals.

Embedded in the foregoing role of supervisors and school principals is the concept of quality and goal achievement for the well being of the schools and education at all levels.

Teachers' Attitude towards Instructional Supervision

Attitude is the key concern in working relationships and learning process. Attitude is a relatively enduring system of affective, evaluative reactions based upon and reflecting the evaluative concepts or beliefs which have been learned about the characteristics of a social object or class of social objects (Knezevich, 1994). As an affective reaction, it is covert or implicit response. The evaluative reaction is based upon the conception of the referent terms of facilitation or inhibition of attainment of already existing goals (Shaw and Wright, 1967). According to the same source attitude scales measure only one dimension of the affective reactions: positively – negatively. In the context of this report, attitude is the tendency in individuals to react to objects, events and persons, positively, negatively or indifferently. In this investigation, the focus was the teachers' positive, negative or neutral reactions to instructional supervision by supervisory personnel. Obot (1980, p.16) acknowledged the importance of teachers' attitude and feelings toward supervision must be understood and dealt with if mature and helping relationship is to prevail. The author further asserted that teachers have different feelings about supervision and also react differently towards the activity. He also observed that male teachers often react negatively to instructional supervision than their female counterparts.

Results of the study

The results of the study are summarized and presented sequel to each question or hypothesis testing as follows:

Research question one

What are the attitudes of vocational education teachers towards instructional supervision in Akwa Ibom State secondary schools?

The analysis of data related to research question one indicates that 65% (208) of vocational education teachers held positive attitudes towards instructional supervision while 35% (112) held negative attitudes towards instructional supervisor's style of supervision. Positive attitude was the outcome of democratic supervision.

Research question Two

What are the causes of positive/negative attitudes of vocational education teachers towards instructional supervision in Akwa Ibom State secondary schools?

The analysis of data related to research question two indicates the following as causing teachers' positive attitude towards instructional supervision. The instructional supervisors were always friendly, helpful, and democratic in their approach, not critical but suggestive and understanding as reported by 65% of the respondents. The remaining 35% of the respondents viewed the supervisors as vindictive, fault-finding, and very critical without offering inputs for improvement.

Research question Three

To what extent do gender, training and work experience influence the differences between the mean scores of vocational teachers' attitudes towards instructional supervision in Akwa Ibom State Secondary Schools?

In order to provide answers to research question three, three null hypotheses were derived therefrom and tested with independent t statistic at $p = 0.05$ for results.

Null Hypothesis 1 (H₀₁)

Male and female vocational education teachers do not differ significantly in their attitudes towards instructional supervision in secondary schools in Akwa Ibom State.

The results of the hypothesis testing are summarized in table 1

Table 1: Summary of results of testing Null Hypothesis One

| Variable | N | \bar{X} | df | t _c value | t _t at p = 0.05 | Decision |
|---------------------------|-----|-----------|-----|----------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------|
| Group 1 (X _m) | 170 | 3.58 | 318 | 5.05 | 1.96 | Reject H ₀ |
| Group 2 (X _f) | 150 | 2.12 | | | | |

Analysis of data in table 1 indicates a significant difference in the attitudes of male and female vocational teachers towards instructional supervision in their schools (X_m=3.58; X_f= 2.12, t_c = 5.05; t_t = 1.96 at p = 0.05). The null hypothesis was rejected in favour of the alternative hypothesis. More male vocational teachers (65%) than female ones (35%) showed negative attitude towards instructional supervision.

Null Hypothesis 2 (H₀₂)

There is no significant difference between attitudes of trained vocational education teacher and those of untrained counterparts with respect to instructional supervision in secondary schools in Akwa Ibom State.

The results of the hypothesis testing are summarized in table 2

Table 2: Summary of Results of Testing the Null Hypothesis 2

| Variable | N | \bar{X} | df | t _c value | t _t at p = 0.05 | Decision |
|---------------------------|-----|-----------|-----|----------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------|
| Group 1 (X ₁) | 220 | 3.98 | 318 | 4.23 | 1.96 | Reject H ₀ |
| Group 2 (X ₂) | 100 | 0.98 | | | | |

Data analysis in table 2 indicates a significant difference between the mean scores of trained and untrained vocational teachers' attitudes towards instructional supervision (X₁ = 3.98; X₂ = 0.98). Since t_c value (t = 4.28) exceeded the tabled value, (t_c = 1.96), the null hypothesis was rejected in favour of the alternative hypothesis.

Null Hypothesis 3 (H₀₃)

Vocational education teachers with less than 15 years of work experience and counterparts with more than 16 years experience do not differ significantly in their mean attitude scores towards instructional supervision in Akwa Ibom State secondary schools.

The results of testing the Null Hypothesis 3 are summarized in table 3.

Table 3: Summary of results of testing the Null Hypothesis 3

| Variable | N | \bar{X} | df | t _c value | t _t at p = 0.05 | Decision |
|--|-----|-----------|-----|----------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------|
| Group 1 (0-15 years) X ₁ | 100 | 3.72 | 318 | 2.31 | 1.96 | Reject H ₀ |
| Group 2 (16 and above years) X ₂ | 220 | 0.727 | | | | |

Data analysis in table 3 shows a t value of 2.31 as against tabled value t_t = 0.05. Since the computed t-value (2.31) exceeded the critical t-value (1.96), the null hypothesis was rejected in favour of the alternative hypothesis. The significance of difference between the two groups of subjects means that what is observed about the sample is also true of the population from which the sample was drawn.

The findings of this research are stated and discussed as follows:

Sixty-five percent and thirty-five percent of the teachers held positive and negative attitudes respectively towards instructional supervision in Akwa Ibom State Secondary schools. This finding is in line with the real life situation involving likes and dislikes, positive and negative reactions towards people, objects and events.

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It is only natural that some teachers hold positive attitudes and others exhibit negative reactions towards instructional supervision in education. No respondent was observed to express neutral attitudes towards instructional supervision in Akwa Ibom State secondary vocational institutions. However, this finding has supported the report by Shaw and Wright (1967).

The causes of teachers' positive attitudes towards instructional supervision included friendliness, helpfulness, democratic approach, suggestive but non-critical approach and understanding of the supervisors. On the other hand, 35% of the teachers reported supervisors as being vindictive, fault-finding and critical without offering useful inputs for improvement etc. The teachers' negative attitudes towards instructional supervision were based on the foregoing characteristics of supervisors. The findings have supported the efforts of Shaw and Wright, (1967), Aghenca (1984) and Knezevich (1994).

More female (70%) than male (30%) vocational teachers showed positive and negative attitudes respectively toward instructional supervision in Akwa Ibom State secondary schools. The reason for this difference between the attitudes of the two groups towards instructional supervision is outside the scope of this investigation. However, this finding has supported the efforts of Akpan (1995). Trained vocational teachers were observed to express positive attitude towards instructional supervision while untrained teachers held a negative attitude towards instructional supervision in secondary schools in Akwa Ibom State. Teachers with 15 years of working experience were observed to react more positively than teachers with 16 or more years of working experience towards instructional supervision. While this finding has no parallel in review of literature, an argument may be advanced to explain attitudinal differences between the two groups. Teachers with less working experience are not knowledgeable enough to detect the short comings of the supervisors in the discharge of their supervisory functions. This report is in line with the observation of Knezevich (1994).

CONCLUSIONS

On the bases of the research results and discussion of findings, the following conclusions may be drawn:

1. Gender, training and years of working experience are strong variables that influence the teachers' attitudes towards educational process.
2. Instructional supervision at all levels of educational practices is subject to positive and negative reactions by stakeholders.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Government should employ qualified vocational education teachers and supervisors for purpose of improving upon quality education.
2. The teacher training programme should be enriched with human relations topics to enable supervisors to develop better attitudes in executing their supervisory tasks.
3. Every vocational education teacher should be groomed in affective skills or human relations skills for a more effective functioning in supervisory career.
4. Government at regular intervals should mount seminars, workshops and conferences on supervisory functions in secondary schools in Akwa Ibom State. Such seminars, workshops and conferences should emphasize the role of gender, training and years of experience in the attitude of vocational teachers towards instructional supervision.
5. The principals of secondary schools should undergo periodic in-service training in administration and supervision in line with modern educational practices in the advanced democrats.

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