

Principals' Supervisory Strategies and School Discipline in Public Secondary Schools in South-South Geopolitical Zone, Nigeria

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Abstract: *The study focuses on principals' supervisory strategies and school discipline in public secondary schools in South-South Geopolitical Zone, Nigeria. Principals' supervisory strategies play a crucial role in maintaining school discipline. Effective school discipline is critical for fostering a safe, orderly and conducive learning environment. Four research questions were raised while four null hypotheses were formulated. The study was a qualitative and quantitative survey employing the ex-post-facto design. The target population of the study was 33,968 principals and teachers in the public secondary schools in the South-South Geopolitical Zone, Nigeria which was made up of Akwa- Ibom, Bayelsa, Cross-River, Delta, Edo and River States. The sample for the study consisted of one thousand, one hundred and eighty-five (1185) principals and teachers in three (3) states of South Geopolitical Zone. The instrument that was employed for collection of data was a questionnaire titled "Principals' Supervisory Strategies and School Discipline Questionnaire" (PSSSDQ). The validated and its reliability equally determined via a pilot study using test re-test reliability technique with a coefficient index of 0.76 was used. Mean scores, standard deviation and coefficient of determination using 2.50 as benchmark to provide answers to the research questions. Pearson Product Moment Statistics was used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. From the findings it was concluded that in public secondary schools in South-South Geopolitical Zone, Nigeria, principals employ classroom visitation, clinical supervision, monitoring strategies in ensuring school discipline.*

Keywords: supervisory strategies, discipline, school, Nigeria

INTRODUCTION

Education is aimed at imparting knowledge and skills, and inculcating human values which help in personal and professional growth. It is the education which constitutes an essential pre-requisite

for achieving national goal of inclusive development and equitable justice to the society at large. Giving quality education is the priority of each and every nation in the world because the quality of education forms the basis of socio-economic and personal growth, an indicator of national progress (Handayani, Sayekti, Redjeki, Rimayati, Marliyah and Agustiningrum, 2021). Of late, there have been high expectations from schools in terms of discipline to improve the quality of education. This demand has augmented the need for clinical supervision to improve activities in the schools setting. Emphasizing the role of clinical supervision on discipline, Lockheed and Verspoor (2021) observed that the quality of education partly depends on how well teachers and students are trained, directed, coordinated and supervised since they are one of the key inputs to educational delivery.

However, a major aspect of the principals' instructional leadership responsibility is the supervision of instruction. In an exploration, Adam and Ogunsanya (2020) found that for principals to be deemed competent in instructional supervision, they should be able to effectively perform their supervisory job with different strategies to ensure discipline, successful learning and attainment of objectives. Principals' utilisation of supervisory strategy such as classroom visitation, clinical supervision, monitoring and use of closed circuit television supervisory strategies could make teachers, students and the non-teaching staff to become familiar with those indices of indiscipline in the schools. This will enable them to suggest solutions to problems of discipline that is influencing teaching, learning and discipline processes negatively. The supervisory responsibility of the principal is critical for schools to make success (Amirova, 2021).

According to Palmer (2023) the intents of supervision is to promote face-to-face interaction, building of relationship between the teacher and supervisor, promotion of capacity building of individuals who are fundamental for the coordination and planning of the school goals and objectives. Teseme (2014) expressed that supervision leads to the improvement of students' learning through improvement in instructional practice, promotion of changes that results in a better developmental life-styles for teachers and students in the learning environment. It, thus, becomes a strategy which helps to implement and improve teaching learning process for the advantages of the teachers and students respectively. Discipline creates a good image of a school and allows students to learn productively in a conducive environment. Discipline helps students to succeed in their learning and in later life. Teachers on the other hand can teach effectively only when the classroom environment is calm and devoid of students' disruptive behaviour (Handayani et al, 2021).

Statement to the Problem

Principals' supervisory strategies play a crucial role in maintaining school discipline. Effective school discipline is critical for fostering a safe, orderly and conducive learning environment. However, maintaining discipline in schools remains a complex challenge, Principals, as instructional and administrative leaders, play a pivotal role in shaping school discipline through their supervisory strategies. These strategies encompass oversight of teacher practice, implementation of discipline policies. Therefore, there is urgent need to identify the best practices

in principals' supervisory strategies that promote fair, consistent and constructive approaches to school discipline, ultimately enhancing student outcomes and school climate.

Research Questions

The following research questions were raised in the study:

1. How do principals' supervisory strategies influence school discipline in public secondary schools in South-South Geopolitical Zone, Nigeria?
2. How does principals' classroom visitation influence school discipline in public secondary schools in South-South Geopolitical Zone, Nigeria?
3. How does principals' clinical supervisory influence school discipline in public secondary schools in South-South Geopolitical Zone, Nigeria?
4. How does principals' monitoring strategy influence school discipline in public secondary schools in South-South Geopolitical Zone, Nigeria?

Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were formulated and tested:

1. There is no significant relationship between principals' supervisory strategies and school discipline in public secondary schools in South-South Geopolitical Zone, Nigeria
2. There is no significant relationship between principals' classroom visitation and school discipline in public secondary schools in South-South Geopolitical Zone, Nigeria
3. There is no significant relationship between principals' clinical supervisory and school discipline in public secondary schools in South-South Geopolitical Zone, Nigeria
4. There is no significant relationship between principals' monitoring strategy and school discipline in public secondary schools in South-South Geopolitical Zone, Nigeria

LITERATURE REVIEW

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework of this study was hinged on reinforcement theory which was propounded by B. F. Skinner in 1969. It evolves from the assumption that teachers will change their behaviour in order to receive definite rewards. According to reinforcement theory of Skinner (1969), people behave in a certain way because of reinforcement or stimulus they received in the past for the same behaviour. If the outcome of a particular behaviour is satisfying, positive reinforcement occurs and the person is expected to behave the same way again. The person is likely to change the behaviour if the reinforcement is negative. Skinner documented three distinct types of reinforcement. They are positive reinforcement, negative reinforcement and punishment. In positive reinforcement, a positive outcome support repetitive behaviour. Negative reinforcement of some behaviour occurs when unpleasant consequences are removed.

Principals' Supervisory Strategies and School Discipline

There are several instructional supervisory techniques. Iloh, Nwaham, Igbinedion and Ogogor (2016) listed the variety of supervision techniques to include: classroom visitation/ observation,

inter/intra school, team teaching practices, workshops, demonstration, clinical supervision and micro-teaching among others. This is also in line with Adeyemi (2020) who outlined supervision techniques as follow: classroom visitation, micro-teaching, research approach, workshop, demonstration technique and tape recording. The supervisory techniques outlined by the above scholars adopted in this study are: classroom visitation/observation, workshop and demonstration.

One of the strategies used in enhancing school discipline among teachers and students' is observation. Adam and Ogunsanya (2020) found that for principals to be deemed competent in instructional supervision, they should be able to effectively perform their supervisory job with different strategies to ensure discipline, successful learning and attainment of objectives. Effective monitoring by principal's helps teachers feel strong and accountable, who rewards them well for good performance, and who sees that things are organised in such a way that teachers feel they know what they should be responsible. Principals should foster among teachers and students a strong sense of team spirit and pride in performing in teaching. If principals create and encourage this spirit, his teachers certainly will perform better. Megan (2021) noted that schools are most likely more agreeable to monitoring teachers' job performance than are most personal goods or service manufacturing organisation, as of the easiness of measuring the 'added value' of education.

Principals' Classroom Visitation and School Discipline

Classroom visitation is a procedure by which the principals' leaders can assist or aids the teachers to improve both their instructional strategies/techniques and the learning processes of the students (Peterson, 2021). The main objective of the principals' visitation is for the improvement of the teaching-learning process as well as enhancing the capacity development of the teachers. Marris (2019) therefore stated that frequent and immediate specific feedback to teachers is a formidable condition for checking gaps in the teaching and learning circumstance. Hence, unarguable, effective communication has a positive impact on the totality of the school climate. In this regards, multiple informal mini-observations with one-on-one feedback conversations (face to face) becomes inevitable. If this practice is usable and feature prominently in our educational supervision model, it will thus conceive as a paradigm shift from traditional modality to knowledge based endeavour. So, the administrators or principals in this circumstance too need to have a particular area of focus for communication.

Classroom visitation and observation strategy is also seen as clinical supervision (Cole, 2023). It is one of the techniques principals can adopt to ensure effective supervision of instruction in schools. Schon (2017) suggested that apprentice surgeons learn their trade through having close surveillance from their mentors or experts in the field. Using this strategy, the principal visits the classroom to observe the teacher teach the students. Classroom visitation should be adequately planned by the principals to enhance discipline that will ensure quality education. Classroom visitation and observation is a clinical cycle involving lesson planning, lesson presentation, teacher/student relationship, students' active participation, teacher personality and teacher knowledge of the subject matter (Edegbe, 2019). Classroom visitation and

observation is a powerful technique through which an instructional leader possessing great wisdom can provide assistance to teachers to improve their professional practice and enhance students' learning (Ekpoh & Eze, 2015).

Principals' Clinical Supervisory and School Discipline

Clinical supervision has been associated with higher levels of job satisfaction, improved retention, reduced turnover and staff effectiveness. Effective clinical supervision may increase teachers' perceptions of the school management support and improve their commitment to the school's vision and goals. Clinical supervision models are vehicles for improvements in instructional practices, and they are considered part of instructional supervision (Zepeda, 2017). This is evidenced in the study by Ebmeier (2013) that linked teacher efficacy to supervision. Ebmeier defined efficacy as an individual's belief about his or her own capabilities to achieve a certain end. The study revealed that supervision activities that teachers considered supportive to their roles included providing feedback, encouragement, emotional support, reinforcement, as well as modelling experiences. The roles of school administrators have expanded to include much more than management and administration. Principals are expected to be instructional experts, to support curriculum, to provide professional development, to use data-driven decision-making, to be visionary, and to be able to unite the teachers into a unified force to advance student achievement (Tucker, 2023).

Clinical supervision was developed by Morris L. Cogan and others at Harvard during the 1950's. It was, in contrast to other supervisory efforts designed as a professional response to a specific problem. Clinical supervision requires that teacher and supervisor attack problems together and it rests on the conviction that instruction can only be improved by direct feedback to a teacher on aspects of his or her teaching that are of concern to that teacher (rather than items on an evaluation form or items that are pet concerns of the supervisor only)" (Zepeda, 2017). The clinical aspect of supervision which is referred to as the clinic of the classroom and in that way, just as a doctor is a direct part of the medical processes in a clinic, the supervisor is a part of the ongoing activity, and as a result the supervisor carries away a more accurate and complete understanding of what occurred. In clinical supervision the teacher and supervisor are involved in a close helping relationship.

Principals' Monitoring Strategy and School Discipline

Supervision is basically the practice of monitoring the performance of teachers noting the merits and demerits and using suitable and friendly strategies to improve the floors while still improving on the merits thus raising the standard of schools and attaining educational objectives. Monitoring implies their measuring performance against expected outcomes and making the required corrections for teachers' job performance. The word discipline can presume various suggestions depending on the situation in which it is utilised (Balogun, 2020).

One of the strategies employed in instructional supervision by principals is school monitoring. School monitoring refers to the procedure of gathering information at intervals about continuing

job or programmes in the schools. In an expert system that addresses monitoring problems, gather data from a process, evaluate that information. Monitoring systems are in a sense, diagnosis systems that run iteratively. Monitoring systems examine data, and issue treatment, recommendations and instructions. Monitoring in instructional supervision involves the network designs. The network designs go beyond even horizontal structures and totally abandon the classical, hierarchical, functional structure of organisation. The bureaucratic model worked fine in the previous era when there was less competition and more stable market conditions, and before the now boundary less conditions of advanced information technology and globalization. School's view close circuit television as an instrument to monitor teachers in enhancing their classroom management and discipline (Balogun, 2020).

Successful principals in monitoring of instruction tend to have compliment, wider based pyramids and to emphasize informal coordination. These findings have been explained in terms of the controls each of the modal technologies requires. In monitoring of instruction by principals, it is difficult to predict job performance, which depends on the idiosyncrasies of the teachers. Monitoring of instruction is the responsibility of the principals. The emphasis is at the work level, where most principals and teachers' relationships are established, so typically there are few principals and fewer teachers' specialists (Adeyemi, 2020).

METHODOLOGY

The study was a qualitative and quantitative survey employing the ex-post-facto design. The target population of the study was 33,968 principals and teachers in the public secondary schools in the South-South Geopolitical Zone, Nigeria which was made up of Akwa- Ibom, Bayelsa, Cross-River, Delta, Edo and River States. The sample for the study consisted of one thousand, one hundred and eighty-five (1185) principals and teachers in three (3) states of South Geopolitical Zone. The instrument that was employed for collection of data was a questionnaire titled "Principals' Supervisory Strategies and School Discipline Questionnaire" (PSSSDQ). The validated and its reliability equally determined via a pilot study using test re-test reliability technique with a coefficient index of 0.76 was used. Mean scores, standard deviation and coefficient of determination using 2.50 as benchmark to provide answers to the research questions. Pearson Product Moment Statistics was used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance.

Table 1: Mean rating and Standard Deviation on Principals' Supervisory Strategies and School Discipline

S/N	Principals' supervisory strategies	Mean	SD	Remark
1.	My principal utilizes classroom visitation as supervisory strategy to enhance discipline.	3.41	.75	Agree
2.	My principal keeps records of students and teachers who violate school rules and regulations	3.03	.87	Agree
3.	My principal uses class prefects to take record of teachers class attendance to teach students	3.01	.78	Agree
4.	My principal calls teachers to discusses with them face-to-face about school disciplinary issues	2.68	.61	Agree
5.	The principal utilizes self-appraisal method as supervisory strategy to enhance discipline.	3.08	.74	Agree
6.	My principal utilises guided practice as supervisory strategy to enhance discipline.	2.89	.75	Agree

Data in Table 1 showed mean rating and standard deviation on principals' supervisory strategies influence school discipline in public secondary schools in South-South Geopolitical Zone, Nigeria. Respondents agreed on all items.

Table 2: Mean rating and Standard Deviation on Principals' Classroom Visitation And School Discipline

S/N	Principals' Classroom Visitation and Discipline	Mean	SD	Remark
1.	Note effective instructional strategies and classroom management techniques	3.08	.55	Agree
2.	Observe student behavior, engagement and participation	2.03	.77	Agree
3.	Provide constructive feedback to teachers, highlighting strength and areas for improvement	3.31	.78	Agree
4.	Discuss observations and insight with teachers to promote reflection and growth	2.68	.80	Agree
5.	Schedule follow-up visits to monitor progress and provide ongoing support	3.41	.94	Disagree

Data in Table 2 showed the mean rating and standard deviation on principals' classroom visitation and school discipline in public secondary schools in South-South Geopolitical Zone, Nigeria. Respondents agreed on items 1 – 4 and disagreed with item 5.

Table 3: Mean rating and Standard Deviation on Principals' Clinical Supervisory and School Discipline

S/N	Principals' Clinical Supervisory and School Discipline	Mean	SD	Remark
1.	Provide guidance and support for teachers	2.78	.86	Agree
2.	Encourage teachers to reflect on their practices	2.70	.73	Agree
3.	Use data-driven decision making to inform supervision	2.83	.84	Agree
4.	Foster a collaborative relationship with teachers	2.80	.81	Agree
5.	Schedule regular clinical supervision sessions	2.51	.72	Agree

Data in Table 3 showed the mean rating and standard deviation on principals' clinical supervisory and school discipline in public secondary schools in South-South Geopolitical Zone, Nigeria. Respondents agreed on all items.

Table 4: Mean rating and Standard Deviation on Principals' Monitoring Supervisory Strategy and School Discipline

S/N	Principals' Monitoring Strategy and School Discipline	Mean	SD	Remark
1.	Regularly observing teaching practices.	3.18	.90	Agree
2.	Evaluating lesson plans for effectiveness	3.20	.83	Agree
3.	Monitoring students performance and progress	2.93	.85	Agree
4.	Assessing school culture and climate	2.84	.80	Agree
5.	Monitoring budget and resource utilization	2.71	.78	Agree

Data in Table 4 showed the mean rating and standard deviation on principals' monitoring strategy influence school discipline in public secondary schools in South-South Geopolitical Zone, Nigeria. Respondents agreed on all items.

Table 5: Pearson r on Principals' Supervisory Strategies and School Discipline

		Supervisory Strategies Adopted by Principals	School Discipline
Supervisory Strategies	Pearson Correlation	1	.249**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	879	879
School Discipline	Pearson Correlation	.249**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	879	879

**Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Data in Table 5 shows, Pearson r on supervisory strategies adopted by principals and school discipline revealed that a strong positive relationship between supervisory strategies adopted by principals and school discipline with $r=.249$ and significance $p=.000$. Thus, the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant relationship between supervisory strategies adopted by principals and school discipline in public secondary schools in South-South Geopolitical Zone, Nigeria was rejected and alternative accepted. This implies that there was a significant relationship between common supervisory strategies adopted by principals and school discipline in public secondary schools in South-South Geopolitical Zone, Nigeria.

Table 6: Pearson r on Principals' Classroom Visitation and School Discipline

	Principals' Classroom Visitation	School Discipline
Principals' Classroom Visitation	Pearson Correlation	.157**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	N	879
School Discipline	Pearson Correlation	.157**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	N	879

**Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Data in Table 6 shows, Pearson r on principals' classroom visitation and school discipline revealed that a strong positive relationship between principals classroom visitation and school discipline with $r=.157$ and significance $p=.000$. Thus, the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant relationship between principals' classroom visitation and school discipline in public secondary schools in South-South Geopolitical Zone, Nigeria was rejected and alternative accepted. This implies that there was a significant relationship between principals' classroom visitation and school discipline in public secondary schools in South-South Geopolitical Zone, Nigeria.

Table 7: Pearson r on Principals' Clinical Supervisory and School Discipline

	Principals' Clinical Supervision Strategy	School Discipline
Principals' Clinical Supervision Strategy	Pearson Correlation	.065
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.056
	N	879
School Discipline	Pearson Correlation	.065
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.056
	N	879

Data in Table 7 shows, Pearson r on principals clinical supervisory and school discipline revealed that there is no strong positive relationship between principals clinical supervisory and school discipline with $r=.065$ and significance $p=.056$. Thus, the null hypothesis which states that there was no significant relationship between principals clinical supervisory and school discipline in public secondary schools in South-South Geopolitical Zone, Nigeria was retained.

Table 8: Pearson r on Principals' Monitoring Strategy and School Discipline

		Principals' Monitoring Strategy	School Discipline
Principals' Monitoring Strategy	Pearson Correlation	1	.013
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.698
	N	879	879
School Discipline	Pearson Correlation	.013	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.698	
	N	879	879

Data in Table 8 shows, Pearson r on principals' monitoring strategy and school discipline revealed that there is no strong positive relationship between principals' monitoring supervisory strategy and school discipline with $r=.013$ and significance $p=.698$. Thus, the null hypothesis which states that there was no significant relationship between principals' monitoring supervisory strategy and school discipline in public secondary schools in South-South Geopolitical Zone, Nigeria was retained.

DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

The study revealed the supervisory strategies adopted by principals in public secondary schools in South-South Geopolitical Zone, Nigeria, included; classroom visitation, keeps records of students and teachers who violate school rules and regulations, prefects taking records of teachers class attendance, principals calling teachers to discuss with them face-to-face about school disciplinary issues, self-appraisal method, guided practice, lectures, micro-teaching, induction of new teachers, orientation, occasional movement round the school compound and monitoring devices. This finding concords with the findings of Handayani, Fitria and Fitriani (2021) who found that school heads' regular classroom visits and monitoring facilitated the attainment of high standards in discipline, improved teachers' performance and pupils' academic achievement.

The study also showed that there was a significant relationship between principals' classroom visitation and school discipline in public secondary schools in South-South Geopolitical Zone, Nigeria. The reason for this finding could be that regular classroom visitation would help to

check mate students attendance, truancy and maintain acceptable behaviours during lesson. This is in line with Peterson, (2021) who asserted that classroom visitation is a procedure by which the principals' leaders can assist or aids the teachers to improve both their instructional strategies/techniques and the learning processes of the students. The main objective of the principals' visitation is for the improvement of the teaching-learning process as well as enhancing the capacity development of the teachers.

Finding revealed that there was no significant relationship between principals clinical supervisory and school discipline in public secondary schools in South-South Geopolitical Zone, Nigeria was retained. The reason for this finding could be that regular clinical supervision admonishes students during morning assembly and helped to ensure that students come to school early, reduce truancy, loitering about during lesson period, and lateness to school among students. Clinical supervision would helped to check teachers' class attendance, absenteeism, reduce laxity in writing lesson notes among teachers. Also face-to-face interaction with teachers can help to improve classroom management and reduce indiscipline. Clinical supervision can help to maintain a culture of discipline in school for effective teaching and learning. This is line with Zepeda, (2017) who noted clinical supervision has been associated with higher levels of job satisfaction, improved retention, reduced turnover and staff effectiveness. Effective clinical supervision may increase teachers' perceptions of the school management support and improve their commitment to the school's vision and goals. Clinical supervision models are vehicles for improvements in instructional practices, and they are considered part of instructional supervision.

Finding revealed that there was no significant relationship between principals' monitoring supervisory strategy and school discipline in public secondary schools in South-South Geopolitical Zone, Nigeria was retained. The reason for this finding could be that principals are aware that one of the supervisory strategies used in improving school discipline is the use of monitoring. Thus, monitoring would be used to improve discipline in the schools. In support of this Balogun, (2020) noted that supervision is basically the practice of monitoring the performance of teachers noting the merits and demerits and using suitable and friendly strategies to improve the floors while still improving on the merits thus raising the standard of schools and attaining educational objectives. Monitoring implies their measuring performance against expected outcomes and making the required corrections for teachers' job performance. The word discipline can presume various suggestions depending on the situation in which it is utilised.

CONCLUSION

From the findings it was concluded that in public secondary schools in South-South Geopolitical Zone, Nigeria, principals employ classroom visitation, clinical supervision, monitoring strategies in ensuring school discipline. It was also, concluded that the level of school discipline was high in public secondary schools in South-South Geopolitical Zone, Nigeria. Furthermore, classroom visitation supervisory strategies were significant to school discipline while clinical and monitoring

supervisory strategies were not significant to school discipline in public secondary schools in South-South Geopolitical Zone, Nigeria.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study the following were recommended:

1. Ministry of Education in South-South Geopolitical Zone should encourage school principals to supervise teachers and students in school, this would ensure that there is discipline in the school.
2. Since school discipline was high in South-South Geopolitical Zone, school principals should ensure that they maintain their standard and reduce school indiscipline.
3. Principals in South-South Geopolitical Zone should continue to employ classroom visitation as a supervisory strategy since it was significant to school discipline.

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