The effect of heads of schools' supervisory practices on learning achievement in public secondary schools in Ubungo municipality, Tanzania

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ABSTRACT

To create a proactive and effective educational system for individual, community, and national progress, it is presumable that educational stakeholders must oversee educational practices to obtain consistently good results. Supervisory assessment of teaching staff helps educators obtain the support they need to succeed as well as to evaluate, weigh, and examine the benefits of various educational methodologies and tactics to achieve high-quality student performance in schools. This study analysed the effect of heads of schools' supervisory practices on students' learning achievement in public secondary schools in Ubungo municipality using 240 participants, including heads of schools, students, and teachers. The study employed a mixed approach with convergent parallel as the design. Various methodologies were employed to gather data, including questionnaires, documentary reviews, observations and semistructured interviews. The results revealed that the supervisory practices of school heads play a greater role in the quality of teaching and overall learning achievement of students in secondary schools. The academic achievement of students is impacted by supervisory practises such classroom visits, teacher mentoring, assessing teachers pedagogical abilities, assisting teachers in creating lesson plans, and other creative teaching methods. However, unfriendly working conditions, including a lack of facilities, funding, and dedicated teachers, make it difficult for school heads to carry out their supervisory duties. As a result, for supervisory practises to have a significant impact on the teaching and learning process, the government must constantly provide adequate school infrastructure, hire enough qualified teachers, create appropriate teaching and learning resources, and set up an efficient monitoring system to improve the teaching and learning process in secondary schools.

▪▪ INTRODUCTION

Any society must prioritize providing high-quality education since it is a key component of any social growth. By enhancing the quality of teaching and learning, schools can provide students with high-quality education (Briggs, 2012). Due to its usefulness as a crucial tool for assessing and enhancing educational quality, several countries are now changing educational supervision (Murage et al., 2017). It has become crucial because instructional supervision improves student performance by enhancing classroom activities (Mulatu, 2016). There is little doubt that educational supervision improves students' academic achievement, the caliber of teaching, and the ability of supervisors to manage the instructors' instructional workload (Wanzare, 2011). To achieve the purposes of supervision, educational supervisors must educate, support, and motivate instructors (UNESCO, 2007). According to the World Bank (2010), supervisory regimes are the continual areas of change that nations employ to enhance their educational performance and lessen issues with

higher education. Additionally, supervision refers to any initiatives taken by appointed school administrators to give leadership to both teachers and nonteaching staff (Akinwumi, 2002).

According to Mulatu (2016) and Ampofo et al. (2019), educational supervision guarantees that sufficient educational standards are reached in schools and supports teachers' professional growth to suit students' learning requirements. Additionally, Burke and Krey (2005) argue that supervision is largely considered behaviorally focused, process-oriented educational leadership that supports organizational activities, organizes interactions, ensures the upkeep and improvement of educational programs, and assesses the programs' success.

The job of the teachers is directed and guided by the heads of schools. This implies that school heads have a responsibility to work with teachers to improve how they carry out their duties (Kotirde and Yunos, 2015). They play a significant role in the wise management of human and material resources necessary for the efficient operation of schools. In the exercise of their supervisory mandate, heads of schools carry out the following tasks, according to Kotirde and Yunos (2015): a) mentoring inexperienced teachers to promote a supportive entry into the profession; b) raising teachers to minimum standards of successful teaching through daily coaching and in-service training; c) continuous development of case skills for individual teachers; and d) working with various groups of teachers to enhance the learning of students.

According to Itegi et al. (2020), school heads' supervisory practices are procedures employed by principals to guide teachers in effective teaching and learning processes. These practices include peer teaching among teachers, classroom observation by principals, checking teachers' professional documents and mentoring among teachers. Cudjoe and Sarfo (2016) provide that heads of schools' supervisory practices intend to support teachers because heads of schools inspect teaching and learning activities for improvement among teachers and access quality education.

The Ministry of Education, Science and Technology in Tanzania is responsible for supervision of education. This is done with assistance from the Ministry of President's office, regional administration and local government. Under these ministries, the heads of schools are responsible for supervision of curriculum implementation as immediate supervisors (Ngole and Mkulu, 2021). According to MoEST (2001), the heads of schools had a role in monitoring the implementation of the curriculum and supervising the teaching and learning process with proper assessment.

To meet the diverse needs of teachers, school heads tend to employ different supervisory activities. In one way or another, this may encourage the chance of public satisfaction with the supervisor process (URT, 2013). When the heads of schools attend in-service training, they acquire the skills and techniques that improve their supervisor practices. As stated by Wiles and Bondi (2000), to be effective, the leader who is responsible for supervising instruction must have both the knowledge and skills necessary to monitor and change the teacher's behavior. To acquire these skills, students must attend various seminars and on-the-job training.

Alkrdem (2011) revealed that due to the availability of school heads throughout the year, there is a need to delegate power to different departments that can provide support in supervision. The process of supervising schools in some parts of Tanzania has become a major challenge, as noted in a study conducted by Mbezi (2016). In his study, Mbezi pointed out various challenges that hinder the heads of schools from performing their roles in the effective supervision of schools. The serious challenges include limited knowledge and skills, limited teaching and learning resources, lack of training through seminars and on-the-job training, and the negative perception that teachers have of supervision. Even if each school is required by law to have the head of school, it is necessary for the head of schools to perform their duties effectively.

This study assessed the effect of heads of schools' supervisory practices on teaching and learning processes in public secondary schools in the Ubungo Municipality. Specifically, the study examined the extent to which heads of schools carry out supervisory practices to enhance learning achievement, the effect of supervisory practices on students' learning, the influence of supervisory

practices on students' academic performance, the challenges facing heads of schools' supervisory practices in enhancing learning achievement, and the strategies that can be employed by heads of schools to overcome the challenges faced in their supervisory role.

Literature review
Heads of Schools Supervisory Practices and students learning achievement.

Heads of schools are mandated with the responsibility and duty to bring together and coordinate all the resources within the school for the achievement of desired educational goals (Mbezi, 2016). According to Ngala (1997), heads of schools need to supervise teachers by ensuring that lessons are planned early; lessons are structured with an interesting beginning; revision of previous knowledge and teachers' use of voice variation and summary of major points at the end; teachers use encouragement teaching aids properly; teachers have good relationships with their students; and teachers follow up the curriculum strictly.

Although the duties and responsibilities of the head of school are enormous, all are geared towards the attainment of the preset broad aims and specific objectives of the educational system. The school as an organization cannot escape its responsibility to the community in which it is set. Supervision aids heads of schools in coordinating, improving and maintaining high teaching and learning standards in schools (Mbezi, 2016).

Wanjiru (2015) argued that instruction supervision using robust supervision strategies such as checking students' notebooks, classroom observation, checking teachers' lesson plans, lesson notes and inspection of teachers' record keeping has a significant correlation with teachers' performance and pupils' academic achievement. Moreover, instruction supervision practice should be closer, regular and continuous. This is urgently needed, especially at this time, when many changes have been introduced into the school curriculum rather than snappy, unscheduled and partial supervision (Sule, 2015). Direct supervisory practices include immediate interactions with teachers and other personnel to address classroom, teaching, and student performance and curricular concerns (Alkrdem, 2011).

He notes that direct supervisory practices can be grouped into two broad categories relative to supervision: curriculum supervision and instructional supervision.

According to Oliva and Pawlas (2001), curriculum supervision includes (a) all in-school experiences, including classroom, learning experiences, student activities, use of the learning resource center, assemblies, use of the cafeteria, and social functions, and (b) out-of-school learning experiences directed by the school, including homework, field trips, and the use of community resources. Sergiovanni and Starratt (2002) describe instructional supervision as opportunities provided to teachers in developing their capacities to contribute to student academic success. Used in this sense, supervision of instruction, by design, is a developmental process through which instructional leaders can reinforce teaching practices that improve student learning (Okumbe, 1999; Oliva, 1997).

School-based supervision necessitates the use of various supervisory options to cater to the needs of individual teachers. Today's schools need to give teachers options in supervisory styles that are different for beginners and experienced teachers. Using various styles of supervision is intended to provide options not only to teachers but also to supervisors and schools.

Kutsyuruba (2003) reported that the use of various supervisory styles was preferred by teachers in schools. Teachers always choose between different approaches in the supervision of curriculum implementation. It is also proposed that each school should develop its own styles of supervision that are responsive to its needs and resources (Glatthorn, 1984).

Clinical supervision is a face-to-face meeting with teachers intended to improve teaching and increase professional growth. Clinical supervision is a specific cycle or pattern of working with teachers (Sergiovanni and Starratt, 1993). It is a sequential, cyclic and systematic supervisory process that involves face-to-face interaction between teachers and supervisors who might be experts and is intended to improve teachers' classroom instruction (Kutsyuruba, 2003). The purpose of clinical supervision is to provide support to teachers and gradually to increase teachers' abilities to be self-

supervising. The specific intention is to develop thinking and practice in relation to particular process or curriculum content areas. Clinical supervision, if well implemented, can help improve the capacity of teachers to teach and assess students in a better way. The structure of clinical supervision includes a preobservation conference, classroom observation, analysis, supervision conference, and postconference analysis.

Coaching is a highly sophisticated form of school-based professional reflective practice in supervision. This kind of supervision can be observed as a series of conversations intended to help teachers increase their personal and professional learning and improve pupils' learning and performance. Coaching is a form of professional learning that integrates the most effective learning about teacher work. Coaching means that teachers talk and act with the intention of continuously improving teaching practice among teachers. A coach is a critical listener and observer who poses questions, makes observations and provides suggestions that assist teachers in reflecting, growing and producing different decisions concerning best practices in teaching (Boyd, 2008).

Challenges facing HOS in implementing supervisory practices

School supervision aims to improve the quality of students' education by improving the teacher's effectiveness. As Fraser (cited in Tesema and Abeshu, 2014) notes, the improvement of the teacher learning process is dependent upon teacher attitudes towards supervision. Unless teachers perceive supervision as a process of promoting professional growth, students learning the supervisory exercise will not have the desired effect. Various activities push teachers to perceive supervision in a negative aspect. In line with this, Pawlas and Oliva (2008) noted that bitter complaints about supervisors' work further include irregular and bad planning of visits, insufficient time spent in classrooms and irrelevant advice. This does not mean that teachers do not recognize the positive effects of supervisory work but rather that, in their opinion, the problem with supervisors is mainly attitudinal.

According to Ngole and Mkulu (2021), one of the challenges faced by the heads of schools is incompetence in supervising the teaching and learning process. In most schools, the head teachers are appointed in positions without considering their knowledge and skills in leading. The appointment is based on the number of years in different positions as a teacher. In addition, when they are in position, there are no seminars or job trainings to upgrade their skills before leading the schools. They also add that the teaching and learning process is greatly affected because most school heads are not competent enough to supervise the implementation of the curriculum.

Jared (2011) revealed that most head teachers lack instructional skills and awareness of their job description. Some of them are senior and lack support from experienced teachers. Supervisors need continuous and sufficient training to carry out their responsibilities effectively. Training programs for supervisors are aimed at providing necessary skills to make them better equipped to do their job. As summarized in Tesema and Abeshu (2014), a lack of training for supervisors, a weak relationship between teachers and supervisors and a lack of support for supervisors from higher offices affect supervisory practice in schools. Kurebwa et al. (2015) added that in schools, even some deputy heads lack confidence in leading the school when the head of school is out of duty. In some cases, when the head teacher is absent, the situation at school becomes worse to the extent that every teacher is free to do anything.

Strategies to address challenges facing heads of schools' supervisory practices

There are different strategies that are being suggested by different educational stakeholders, particularly educational researchers who are supposed to be forward to address the challenges facing heads of schools' supervisory practices to enhance students' academic achievement. According to Balta et al. (2015), in education organizations, teachers are similar to engines in the process of teaching and learning. School administrators depend greatly on the quality and efficiency of teachers for better results, but when the skills and knowledge of teachers are not updated, implementation of the curriculum will be difficult. The administrators had to make sure that they arranged a success plan for

teachers' development through seminars and on-the-job trainings. In Tanzania, teachers are allowed to pursue further education while they are still in their employment position. If this opportunity was utilized, then the teachers would be very updated and copy with changes in teaching and learning (Ngole and Mkulu 2021).

According to Michael (2017), head teachers, as internal supervisors, had to check on lesson plans. Head teachers had to make sure that what was written on lesson plans related to the curriculum and syllabus of a particular subject. Additionally, the head of the school has a role in monitoring the teaching process through classroom observation. This can be done by comparing what is prepared by teachers on lesson plans and what they teach. In checking lesson plans and teaching processes, head teachers must provide feedback to teachers on their progress and make suggestions for improvement. For effective preparation and presentation of lessons in the classroom, maximum cooperation among students, teachers, and school administrators is necessary.

In Tanzania, cursory studies show that most schools are challenged by a shortage of funds in running schools. For example, the head of school can plan to conduct seminars or job training, but when there is a deficit of funds, implementation would be impossible. There is a need for the government to increase funding in schools to meet various demands in schools. Schools need funds to purchase learning and teaching materials and support important programs such as on-the-job training to update teachers' skills.

METHODOLOGY

This study employed a mixed research approach that incorporates both a qualitative research approach and a quantitative research approach in a single study. The design used is a convergent parallel design that involves the collection of both qualitative and quantitative data at the same time. Okendo et al. (2020) indicate that convergent parallel design involves the collection of both quantitative and qualitative data simultaneously for the purpose of understanding the research problem. This study incorporated 5 heads of schools (14%) and 31 public secondary school teachers selected randomly in

consideration of gender balance. The study also allowed the participation of 204 students in which the selection considered the total number of form four students in each school. Purposive sampling was used to select 5 heads of schools. This is the best method because the human resource officer is selected by considering his or her social status as a head of school. For the selection of teachers and students, simple random/stratified sampling was used.

In data collection, a questionnaire for teachers was administered by the researcher herself. The questionnaire comprised only close-ended questions in Likert scales. The interview guide was formulated from issues identified in the literature, guiding theory and the current situations in schools, such as the performance of students, teachers' awareness of heads of school supervisory practices, challenges and even what is to be done. An interview guide was prepared to conduct face-to-face interviews with individual heads of schools to solicit information that complemented the data collected through questionnaires and focus group discussions. Qualitative data were analysed through thematic and content analysis, while quantitative data were analysed through descriptive statistics.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results of this study are presented according to the research objectives that guided the study: the extent to which heads of schools carry out supervisory practices to enhance learning achievement, the effect of supervisory practices on students' learning, the influence of supervisory practices on students' academic performance, the challenges facing heads of schools' supervisory practices in enhancing learning achievement, and the strategies that can be employed by heads of schools to overcome the challenges faced in their supervisory role.

Extent to which heads of schools carry out their supervisory practices

The results from Table 1 indicated that there was no teacher 0 (0%) who strongly disagreed or disagreed with the statement that teachers' ideas and suggestions are heard and valued. Four (15%) teachers

were neutral, and 22 (85%) teachers agreed and strongly agreed with the statement. This means that in Ubungo Municipality, the ideas and suggestions of teachers are valued by the heads of schools. In line with the same findings, 20 (77%) teachers disagreed, 4 (15%) were neutral, and only 2 (8%) disagreed with the statement that heads of schools offer rewards and motivation for best practices. This implies that in Ubungo Municipality, the heads of schools are not offering any rewards for teachers who best practiced their activities. According to Itegi, Karimi, and Mutiso (2020), it is essential for school administrators to provide guidance to teachers on good teaching and learning processes through their supervisory practices. Instructors should receive guidance on peer teaching, classroom monitoring by administrators, inspection of instructors' professional documentation, and mentorship among teachers. According to Cudjoe and Sarfo (2016), the supervisory practices of school leaders aim to provide assistance to teachers. This is because school leaders engage in the inspection of teaching and learning activities to enhance teacher performance and ensure the provision of high-quality education. The fulfilment of educational objectives in secondary schools nationwide necessitates the collaboration of school administrators and teachers, with the former providing guidance and support to the latter.

Table 1 shows that the majority of teachers, 23 (88%), agree and strongly agree with the statement that there is delegation of power among teachers. There were no teachers (0%) who disagreed, leaving only 3 (12%) who disagreed with the statement. Through observation, it further revealed that in Ubungo Municipality, the head teachers are practicing the best in the delegation of power. In school A, for example, the head teacher provided letters of appointment with a list of roles of each appointed teacher in different departments. Through observation and document review, the researcher observed different appointment letters, such as a letter for academic master, discipline master, class teacher, second master, and head of department and class coordinators. This means that in the Ubungo Municipality, the head teachers are good enough in the delegation of power.

Another issue raised was on the income and expenditure of funds. Only 3 (12%) teachers agreed, the other 3 (12%) were neutral, and the majority of teachers (20, 76%) disagreed with the statement that teachers are informed on income and expenditure of funds. In school B, for example, it was observed that there was no funding information on board either income or expenditure. It can be generalized that in the Ubungo Municipality, the heads of schools are not transparent enough in the issue of school funding. If this is a case, then it is wanting.

The issues of school supervision have been placed upon the heads of schools. The oversight of education in Tanzania falls under the purview of the Ministry of Education, Science, and Technology. This task is accomplished with the assistance of the Ministry of the President's office, regional administration, and local government. According to Ngole and Mkulu (2021), the heads of schools, operating under the purview of these ministries, bear the responsibility of overseeing the execution of the curriculum as immediate supervisors. According to the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MoEST) in 2001, the head of schools was responsible for overseeing the implementation of the curriculum and supervising the teaching and learning process, including appropriate evaluation.

To address the varied requirements of educators, school administrators often implement a range of supervision practices. This may potentially enhance the likelihood of public satisfaction with the supervisor procedure (URT, 2013). When school administrators participate in in-service training, they obtain the necessary skills and approaches to enhance their supervisory practices. According to Wiles and Bondi (2000), to effectively oversee instruction, the leader must possess the requisite knowledge and abilities to monitor and modify teacher behaviour. To gain these abilities, it is necessary to participate in a variety of seminars and engage in on-the-job training.

The researcher also intended to know if the teachers are involved in decision making in the Ubungo Municipality. The findings from Table 4 revealed that the majority of teachers, 25 (96%), agreed, and only 1 (4%) was neutral, which left no teacher who disagreed with the statement that the

teachers are involved in decision making. The researcher further reviewed the documents and determined the involvement of teachers in decision making. All 4 (100%) head teachers were involved in decision making through staff meetings and department meetings. In school A, for example, there are 4 regular staff meetings per year whereby two are conducted before opening the school for each term and two before closing the school. In addition, there are three staff meetings while teaching is on progress. Additionally, if there is any emergence, the head teacher calls for staff meetings to address the issue. The study further revealed that all minutes of the meetings are stored in files and kept in the head of the school's office.

According to Alkrdem (2011), the consistent presence of school administrators throughout the academic year necessitates the delegation of authority to other departments that can offer assistance in monitoring. According to research undertaken by Mbozi (2016), the supervision of schools in certain regions of Tanzania has emerged as a significant concern. In his study, Mbezi identified many problems that impede the ability of school administrators to effectively fulfil their tasks in school supervision. One of the significant issues faced in the educational context encompasses several factors, namely, a dearth of knowledge and skills, a scarcity of teaching and learning resources, a lack of training opportunities such as seminars and on-the-job training, and a prevailing unfavourable image among instructors towards supervision. Although it is mandated by legislation for every educational institution to choose a head of school, it is crucial for these individuals to fulfil their responsibilities with utmost efficacy.

For a summary of the first 5 statements, it can be established that in Ubungo Municipality, the head teachers preferred to practice a democratic leadership style rather than an autocratic style. Apart from either a democratic or autocratic leadership style, the researcher was also interested in understanding if there was any element of laissez faire in secondary schools in Ubungo Municipality. The 4 statements were presented to teachers, and the results are presented in Table 2. The findings from

Table 2 show that the majority of teachers (24, 92%) disagree with the statement that states that all decisions are made by teachers, 2 (8%) were neutral, and no teacher agreed with the statement. Twenty-five (96%) disagreed with the statement that the head of school is responsible for overall actions and decisions, only 3 (12%) were neutral, and there was no teacher who agreed with the statement. When teachers were asked if they had access to many resources and tools, only 3 (12%) teachers were neutral, and the remaining 23 (88%) disagreed with the statement. From Table 1, all 26 (100%) agreed with the statement that there is little guidance from the head of school. In summary, the heads of secondary schools in Ubungo Municipality do not practice any element of laissez faire.

School-based supervision requires the implementation of diverse supervisory strategies to address the unique needs of different instructors. In contemporary educational settings, it is imperative for schools to provide instructors with a range of supervisory styles that cater to the diverse needs of both novice and seasoned educators. The use of diverse supervisory approaches aims to offer a range of choices not only to educators but also to supervisors and educational institutions.

According to research conducted by Kutsyuruba (2003), teachers at educational institutions expressed a preference for employing diverse supervision techniques. Educators are consistently faced with the task of selecting among several methodologies while overseeing the execution of a programme. Additionally, Glatthorn (1984) suggests that it would be beneficial for each educational institution to establish its own unique approaches to supervision that are tailored to its own requirements and available resources. This implies that the matter of supervision may involve replicating practices observed elsewhere but also necessitates careful consideration of the unique context and cultural dynamics inside a certain educational institution.

The researcher was further interested in determining the influence of different supervisory activities on students' learning and academic achievement.

Table 1. Head of schools' supervisory practices in relation to democratic leadership style

S/N	Strong disagree		Disagree		Neutral		Agree		Strong agree		Total	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
1	0	0%	0	0%	4	15%	18	69%	4	15%	26	100%
2	4	15%	16	62%	4	15%	2	8%	0	0%	26	100%
3	0	0%	0	0%	3	12%	17	65%	6	23%	26	100%
4	6	23%	14	54%	3	12%	3	12%	0	0%	26	100%
5	0	0%	0	0%	1	4%	13	50%	12	46%	26	100%

Source: Researcher 2021

Table 2. Head of schools' supervisory practices in relation to laissez leadership style

S/N	Strong disagree		Disagree		Neutral		Agree		Strong agree		Total	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
1	18	69	6	23	2	8	0	0	0	0	26	100
2	16	62	9	35	1	4	0	0	0	0	26	100
3	17	65	6	23	3	12	0	0	0	0	26	100
4	21	81	5	19	0	0	0	0	0	0	26	100

Influence of supervisory practices on students' learning

To explore the influence of head teachers' supervisory activities on students' academic performance, the study sought to observe the basic elements that reflect the broad goal of the school. Table 4 presents the availability and implementation of the school vision, action plan, school motto and school almanac. The findings of these basic elements are presented in Table 4.3. From Table 4.3, the findings from all 31 secondary school teachers were questioned, and they reported that they had stated the school vision of their respective schools. Through observation, it was revealed that the school vision of each school was clear, printed, displayed on school notes board and other places, such as in the office of school heads. However, most school heads failed in the implementation, as they had many responsibilities that they wished to accomplish, and the major challenge was a shortage of funds. This study found that the funds received by schools were not enough to enable them to fulfil the school vision.

Thus, the findings concur with Uwezo (2010), who reported that since 2002, the amount of capitation grants from government to schools has declined by more than 35%. The capitation grant supplies to schools are limited to meeting school demands, such as the purchase of books and other teaching and learning materials.

Observations revealed that all 4 visited schools had school motto. The school motto was printed on the school T-shirt worn by students twice per week. Additionally, the school motto was printed and displayed on note boards. One school motto observed was "Education for liberation", which encouraged students to study hard so that they could be liberated by education. However, through observation, it was revealed that the school motto does not match what was practiced in a particular school. It was further revealed that some students with academic cases about their discipline issues like not attending classes regularly.

All 4 secondary schools had a school almanac. The school almanac showed all activities conducted from January to December. Observation and document review revealed that the school almanac was followed and implemented. Only 1 (25%) out of 4 schools visited had an action plan. When asked why they did not have school action plans, the three head teachers responded that they were still preparing for them. However, the one observed was also not clear, as the months of implementation of different activities within the action plan were not shown. In Tanzania, the primary obligation and task assigned to school administrators/heads of schools is to

effectively unite and organize all available resources inside the educational institution to accomplish predetermined educational objectives (Mbezi, 2016). According to Ngala (1997), it is imperative for school heads of schools to effectively oversee teachers by ensuring the following: early planning of lessons, incorporation of engaging introductions and effective structuring of lessons, inclusion of revision of prior knowledge, utilization of voice variation and summarization of key points at the conclusion of lessons, proper utilization of teaching aids for encouragement, establishment of positive teacher-student relationships, and strict adherence to the curriculum.

The head of school is tasked with significant obligations and responsibilities, all of which are focused on achieving the predetermined overarching goals and particular objectives of the educational system. The educational institution, as a collective entity, is inherently obligated to fulfil its role and duties within the surrounding community. According to Mbezi (2016), supervision has a crucial role in facilitating the coordination, enhancement, and preservation of high standards of teaching and learning inside educational institutions, particularly among school administrators.

According to Wanjiru (2015), there is a strong correlation between the use of effective supervision strategies, such as reviewing students' notebooks, observing classroom activities, evaluating teachers' lesson plans and notes, and inspecting their record-keeping practices, and both teachers' performance and students' academic achievement. Furthermore, it is imperative that instructional supervision practices be conducted in a tighter, regular, and continual manner. The necessity for this is particularly pronounced in the current context, as several modifications have been implemented within the educational curriculum, necessitating a departure from hasty, unsystematic, and incomplete oversight (Sule, 2015).

Apart from the head of schools, the other teachers were asked to rate their head of schools if they practiced different activities to enhance teaching and learning processes, and their responses are presented in Table 4.

Table 3. School vision, action plan, almanac and motto

S/N	Yes-Available		Available and well implemented		Available but poorly implemented		No-Not available	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
School Vision	26	100	0	0	0	0	0	0
School Action Plan	7	30	0	0	0	0	19	70
School Motto	6	23	16	62	4	15	0	0
School Almanac	0	0	26	100	0	0	0	0

Source: Researcher 2021

Table 4. Activities practiced by the heads of schools

S/N	Always		Very often		Often		Rarely		Never		Total	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
1	0	0	0	0	0	0	24	92	2	8	26	100
2	0	0	0	0	0	0	25	96	1	4	26	100
3	0	0	0	0	2	8	24	92	0	0	26	100
4	12	46	10	38	4	15	0	0	0	0	26	100
5	14	54	11	42	1	4	0	0	0	0	26	100
6	0	0	0	0	11	42	13	50	2	8	26	100
7	9	35	13	50	4	15	0	0	0	0	26	100
8	0	0	0	0	3	12	17	65	6	23	26	100
9	0	0	0	0	2	8	19	73	5	19	26	100
10	7	27	16	62	2	8	1	4	0	0	26	100
11	0	0	8	31	8	31	10	38	0	0	26	100

The findings from Table 4 revealed that the majority of teachers (24, 92%) said that head teachers rarely practiced classroom visitation as the lesson progressed, and only 2 (8%) said never. Twenty-five (96%) teachers said that head teachers are role models in teaching sessions, and only 1 (4%) teacher said never. In the provision of school-based in-service training, 2 (8%) said head teachers are often practiced, while 24 (92%) said it is rarely practiced. Twelve (46%) teachers said that head teachers always monitor class attendance by teachers, while 10 (38%) said very often and 4 (15%) said often. The majority of teachers in the Ubungo Municipality (14, 54%) said that head teachers are always ensuring timely preparation of schemes of work, 11 (42%) very often and 1 (4%) often practiced by the head of schools. Eleven (42%) teachers said often, 13 (50%) said rarely and 2 (8%) said never to check students' homework assignments and exercise books.

From the same table, 9 (35%) of the teachers said always, 13 (50%) said very often and 4 (15%) said often with organizing for the provision of support curricular materials. Often, the practice of organizing programs that cater to individual differences was said by 3 (12%) teachers, rarely said by 17 (65%) teachers and never said by 6 (23%) teachers. The majority of teachers, 19 (73%), said that the head teachers rarely held an after classroom observation meeting with the teacher, while 5 (19%) said never. Always checking the preparation and use of lesson plans was said by 7 (27%) teachers, while it was very often said by 16 (62%) teachers, 2 (8%) said often and only 1 (4%) said never. Eight (31%) teachers said that checking the records of log books and whether they rhyme with the schemes of work was very often practiced by head teachers. Another 8 (31%) said often, and 10 (38%) said rarely practiced. It can be generalized that monitoring class attendance by teachers, ensuring timely preparation of schemes of work and organizing for the provision of support curricular materials were the only activities always practiced by head teachers in Ubungo Municipality. However, important activities such as classroom visitation as the lesson progresses, being a role model in teaching sessions and the provision of school-based in-service training were ignored by most head teachers in the Ubungo Municipality.

Influence of supervisory practices on students' academic performance

To measure whether learning took place, the study intended to review the academic performance of students in the national examination results of form four 2020.

Generally, the academic performance of students in secondary schools in the municipality of Ubungo is poor in all 4 visited schools. This is because the students who scored division four and zero make up a total of more than 50%. These students are not selected to join the next level and are left behind to find other alternatives out of school. According to research conducted by Samoei (2014) in the Nandi region of Kenya, principals who are responsible for overseeing schools did not engage in the practice of observing instructors during classroom instruction. There was a complete absence of further preparation of lesson plans by instructors at the secondary school level. This inquiry has prompted a relevant query on the extent to which principals have effectively implemented supervisory practices. This is because the absence of effective supervisory practices by principals inevitably results in diminished academic performance among students, as substantiated by Wanzare's (2012) research. The implementation of instructional supervisory procedures and practices, as highlighted by Wanzare, serves to enhance the overall quality of teaching and learning. Consequently, teachers are empowered to identify and address any issues pertaining to teaching and learning. Hence, it is apparent that to achieve successful teaching and learning outcomes, administrators should actively engage in the supervision of teachers and provide support to facilitate effective instructional practices, hence boosting students' academic achievement.

Table 5. Students' academic achievement on the national examination in 2020

S/N	DIVISION		PERFORMA		NCE SUMMA		RY		DIV 0		TOTAL	
	DIV I		DIV II		DIV III		DIV IV					
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
School A	1	0	17	8	27	12	129	58	49	22	223	100
School B	3	1	28	6	40	8	271	55	155	31	497	100
School C	4	1	14	6	31	13	144	64	37	16	230	100
School D	4	1	7	2	30	8	220	61	100	28	361	100

Source: Researcher 2021

Classroom visits and observation of teaching

It was found in this study that school-based supervisors always visited classrooms when teachers were teaching. Classroom visits could be regarded as the center of any assistance and support the supervisors would provide to the teachers. The findings also indicated that when supervisors visited classrooms, they observed teacher lessons and recorded teachers' performance and pupils' activities with the aim of collecting and discussing data on challenges that the teacher faced in teaching and learning. The school had a clear timetable specifically for classroom visits and observation and to provide the needed assistance. They checked-up class journals, schemes of work, lesson plans and lesson notes and other information related to teaching, and the supervisors who visited classrooms regularly and purposefully enabled teachers to teach effectively and make good use of instructional time. For effective supervision, teachers need frequent supervision.

According to Michael (2017), head teachers assumed the role of internal supervisors and were responsible for overseeing the evaluation of lesson plans. Head teachers are responsible for ensuring that the content provided in lesson plans aligns with the curriculum and syllabus of the specific topic. In addition, it is the responsibility of the head of the school to oversee the teaching process by conducting classroom observations. This can be accomplished by a comparative analysis of the content stated in instructors' lesson plans and the actual instructional delivery in the classroom. In the process of reviewing lesson plans and evaluating the teaching process, it is the responsibility of head teachers to offer feedback to teachers on their success and provide suggestions for improvement. To ensure the successful preparation and delivery of teachings within the classroom setting, it is imperative to foster a high level of collaboration among students, instructors, and school officials.

Demonstrating how teachers could use innovative approaches in teaching

The head teacher of school E was punctual and ideal in demonstrating teaching inside the classroom. In the observation of the general school timetable, the head teacher was assigned by academics to teach the English language. During the day of study, it was observed that the teachers of school E referred to their head of school as their role model in the teaching process. One of the teachers said the following:

Our head is always in front line before us and always showing us the way to go. He entered the class on time and prepared well for the lesson. He missed only a few lessons due to other administrative duties, but he is always available for students inside and outside the classroom.

School-based supervision requires the implementation of diverse supervisory strategies to address the unique needs of different instructors. In contemporary educational settings, it is imperative for schools to provide instructors with a range of supervisory styles that cater to the diverse needs of both novice and seasoned educators. The use of diverse supervisory approaches aims to offer a range of choices not only to educators but also to supervisors and educational institutions. According to research conducted by Kutsyuruba (2003), teachers at educational institutions expressed a preference for employing diverse supervision techniques. Educators are consistently faced with the task of selecting among several methodologies while overseeing the execution of a programme. Additionally, Glatthorn (1984) suggests that it would be beneficial for each educational institution to establish its own unique approaches to supervision that are tailored to its own requirements and available resources. This implies that the matter of supervision may involve replicating practices observed elsewhere but also necessitates careful consideration of the unique context and cultural dynamics inside a certain educational institution.

Establishment of an internal supervision team

The head teacher of school E formulates the internal team that deals with supervisory activities. The team comprises four members, one academic master's and three other teachers. The team works hand in hand with the head of school. Through observation during the day of the visit, the following internal supervision is practiced: clinical supervision, coaching mentoring team teaching and self-directed supervision. The findings indicated that school supervisors discussed issues related to teaching and learning with the teachers and observed weaknesses.

They also supported the teachers of the identified weaknesses by showing them how to improve.

It is better to note that teachers are helped to solve the challenges of teaching and learning found in specific classroom settings. This can be done by school-based supervisors who are closer to them. However, school supervisors themselves need to have a good command of knowledge of subject matter and methodological skills to enable them to see and advise on teachers' weaknesses.

The findings of this study also indicated that the internal supervision team insisted on departmental meetings. Using teachers and department meetings for supervision were dominant in school E. Teachers stated that these meetings were used for discussion of challenges, identification of difficult topics and proposing solutions to some teaching and learning challenges. That is, departmental meetings enable teachers to have an opportunity to plan for the next sessions and reflect on their progress in teaching and learning. Additionally, it was clear that departmental meetings are helpful in rectifying problems before classroom teaching begins.

Challenges faced by the heads of schools in supervision practices

Under this objective, the synthesis of the findings revealed that parents do not give maximum cooperation to the school administration. In all 4 (100%) secondary schools, there was little cooperation among parents and school administration. When asked about this challenge, a head teacher of school 'A' said,

The parents are paid almost nothing for this level of education. You know they call it free education. Therefore, most of them do not care about the progress of their children. That is why if a parent meeting is called, only a few parents attend less than half of all parents. Sometimes we are trying to use local government authorities such as street chairpersons to call parents in meetings, but the response is still very low. However, when there is a discipline case and students are almost suspended from studying, the parents respond and come to school for discussion. However, this is always too late, and its effect is very minimal (Head teacher-interview July 2021).

Ngole and Mkulu (2021) assert that a significant obstacle encountered by school administrators is a lack of proficiency in overseeing instructional and educational processes. In many educational institutions, the appointment of head teachers often occurs without due consideration of their expertise and proficiency in leadership. The appointment is contingent upon the candidate's tenure in various teaching roles over a span of years. Once they assume their positions, there is a lack of seminars or on-the-job training opportunities for educators to enhance their abilities prior to assuming leadership roles in schools. Additionally, it is asserted that the effectiveness of the teaching and learning process is significantly impacted by the lack of competence among many school administrators in overseeing curriculum implementation. Zabonimpa (2011) performed research in Uganda, namely, in Entebbe, which found that a significant number of head teachers exhibit a deficiency in teaching abilities and a lack of understanding of their work responsibilities. A portion of the students in question are classified as senior and face a dearth of guidance from seasoned educators.

Additionally, Masao (2017) posits that head teachers have significant challenges in fulfilling their tasks to the degree that they may become overwhelmed with their responsibilities. The majority of head teachers also engage in classroom instruction, but they often perceive additional administrative responsibilities as burdensome. The substantial workload poses challenges in effectively overseeing the teaching and learning process, perhaps leading to subpar academic achievement among pupils.

Inadequate Fund from Government

This was among the serious challenges to all 4 (100%) head teachers, as they complained that the funding from the government was low compared to school demand. The head teacher of school D has the following:

The government sends money to schools each month. However, if you compare the amount sent by government and the amount we spend each month, there is always a deficit. This is a very serious challenge because we run our school in debt.

Sometimes we fail to meet important services such as photocopying of examination and payments of teachers for extra duties. This is hard condition for me to deliver at my best level even though I always tried to minimize expenditure to meet the basic demands. (Head teacher semistructured interview July 2021).

Ngole and Mkulu (2021) assert that a prevalent issue in Tanzania's educational system is the insufficiency of funds required to effectively operate schools. For instance, the school administrator may want to organize a seminar or provide work training. However, in the event of a financial shortfall, the execution of such plans would become unfeasible. There exists a necessity for the government to augment funding in educational institutions to adequately address the diverse array of demands inside these establishments. Schools require funding to acquire learning and teaching materials, as well as to support essential programmes such as on-the-job training aimed at enhancing instructors' skills.

Inappropriate use of ICT in teaching and learning processes

For all 4 (100%) head teachers, this was another serious challenge. They add that ICT is almost not applied at all in the teaching process. The head teacher of school B said,

We have electricity and few computers. Additionally, we have one printer that is multitask, meaning that it can print, photocopy and scan documents. However, we don't have projector so it is difficult for teachers to apply power point presentation during teaching and learning process, not only that but also our teachers are not well prepared to apply ICT in the process of teaching (Sem istructured interview July, 2021.

In addition, the head teachers of secondary schools in Ubungo municipality were further asked if there were any other challenges in supervising teaching and learning processes. The two major challenges were repeated by all 4 head teachers, and they are discussed below.

It is imperative that supervisors receive ongoing and adequate training to properly fulfil their duties. Training programmes for supervisors are designed with the objective of imparting essential skills to enhance their proficiency in performing their duties.

According to Tesema's (2014) summary, the deficiency in supervisor training, the inadequate rapport between instructors and supervisors, and the absence of support for supervisors from higher authorities have a detrimental impact on the supervisory practices inside educational institutions.

Shortage of classrooms

In all 4 secondary schools in the municipality of Ubungo, the number of classrooms is very low compared to the number of students. In school A, for example, the total number of students was 1860, and the number of classrooms was only 25, with approximately 74 students for each classroom. The head teacher of school A said,

In our school, we have a deficit of almost 20 classes, so one class will have only 40 students. This is a serious challenge because it is very difficult to control more than 70 students in one classroom… (Head of school interview July 2021)

Shortage number of science teachers

The number of science subjects is very low in all 4 secondary schools visited. The head of school C says the following:

In our school, the science teachers have an overload in teaching. One teacher per day is teaching almost 7 to 8 sessions. These science teachers are always teaching from morning to evening because they are very few. Most of them are not getting a time to prepare their lesson they are just teaching with experience. To solve this challenge, I tried to convince DED as an employer, and his office is paying for two temporary science teachers, but that is still not enough. (Head teacher interview-July 2021).

The primary objective of school supervision is to enhance the educational quality for children through the enhancement of teacher effectiveness. According to Fraser (as stated in Tesema, 2014), the enhancement of the teacher learning process is contingent upon the attitudes of teachers towards monitoring. The desired effect of the supervisory exercise may not be achieved unless teachers regard monitoring as a means of fostering professional growth and enhancing student learning.

There are several factors that contribute to instructors perceiving supervision in a bad light. According to Pawlas and Oliva (2008), criticisms

regarding supervisors' jobs encompass several issues, such as inadequate planning of visits, insufficient time spent in classes, and provision of unnecessary advice. This does not imply that educators fail to acknowledge the beneficial impacts of supervisory responsibilities. Rather, they contend that the issue with supervisors mostly stems from a matter of attitude.

Strategies towards challenges faced by head teachers in supervisory practices

This study aimed to investigate the strategies employed by heads of school in handling different challenges faced in leading public secondary schools in Ubungo Municipality. The findings were obtained through semistructured interviews and documentary reviews in the field. All of the respondents provided multiple related responses.

Improving communication with teachers and parents

All four head teachers revealed that frequently talking to teachers and parents was the best strategy to handle challenges they faced in leading public secondary schools. The head teacher from school 'A' insisted that to handle the challenges, community support was needed, and the best strategy was to talk and communicate to teachers and parents frequently. In some cases, challenges emerged due to a lack of information and knowledge on a given task. Thus, the head of school had the role of talking and communicating to teachers and parents on tasks and/or issues that bring doubts and problems in schools. All 4 visited schools' head teachers insisted that communicating and advising teachers through different meetings, such as tea break meetings, could help to handle some of the challenges faced by the heads of schools. By any means, challenges have to be approached and addressed accordingly, and among four head teachers had the following to say.

I just tried on my level best to talk with teachers. Every Monday morning, I had a meeting with my teachers, and we try to sort out different challenges. Additionally, we regularly conducted parent meetings and tried to address some of the challenges. The challenges are so many, but when I meet with my fellow teachers, we share the ideas and we try to

handle them. For my side, I can say that talking with teachers and parents is the best way of handling challenges. (Interview with head of school-July 2021)

Establishment of morning and evening studying programs

It was observed that in all four secondary schools, the head teachers established the studying program for morning and evening. This program was specific for form two and form four. During the morning, the session began at 6:30 am to 7:45 am before the beginning of normal classes. During the evening, they started at 2:30 pm to 5:00 pm. The teachers used this extra time to cover the syllabus as well as to help students who were slow learners. There was no payment in this program, and the teachers volunteered to help the students. The head of school C says the following:

This program helps us to complete the topic early so that teachers can concentrate on solving the questions and preparing for the examination. We have done it for three years now, and it shows some improvement, especially completion of the topic before time. This enables our students to get enough time for preparation before examination. First, we stated with only form four, and the next year we also included form two. (Head of school interview July 2021). This strategy seems to work and assist teachers in accomplishing topics on time as well as preparing students in advance for final examinations.

The research conducted by Ngole and Mkulu (2021) showed that to enhance the teaching and learning process, it is imperative for head teachers to enhance their leadership practices to achieve optimal efficacy. A competent leader possesses the capacity to discern the obstacles encountered by both students and instructors, with the aim of seeking viable solutions. To enhance their effectiveness, it is imperative for school leaders to engage in regular collaboration with both teachers and students, enabling instructors to do their tasks more proficiently.

According to Mwesiga and Okendo (2018), it is imperative for authorities to engage in the monitoring of school heads' performance in overseeing the implementation of the curriculum. The efficacy of school leadership has significant

importance and necessitates consistent observation and evaluation. The effectiveness of the school's leader is crucial in ensuring that all actions carried out inside the institution contribute to the provision of high-quality education.

Establishment of an internal supervision team

The secondary schools of Ubungo Municipality were challenged by the negative attitude of teachers toward instructional supervision as well as the opposition to new programs aimed at improving academic performance. One of the strategies employed by the heads of schools was the establishment of an internal supervision team. It was revealed that secondary schools have internal supervision teams with members among teachers of particular schools. This team tried to talk with teachers, and they helped each in different challenges during the teaching process.

In summary, with regard to major findings, the heads of schools preferred to use a democratic leadership style rather than an autocratic and laissez faire style. Although the heads of schools tried to supervise different teaching activities, they all ignored supervising important activities such as classroom observation. Secondary schools faced similar challenges, including a shortage of science teachers, low cooperation with parents and a shortage of classrooms. The heads of schools had different strategies to solve challenges, including frequent meetings with teachers and parents, fund mobilization and the establishment of morning and evening studying programs.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusion

This study intended to investigate the effect of heads of schools' supervisory practices on students' learning achievement in public secondary schools in Ubungo Municipality. A synthesis of the findings illustrates that secondary school students' overall learning achievement and the effectiveness of their teachers are more strongly influenced by the supervision practices of school leaders. The study confirms that successful learning achievement in

secondary schools requires proper monitoring as a precondition. Heads of schools are engaged in a variety of actions in the form of supervision to accomplish this goal. However, unfavourable working circumstances, such as a lack of resources, financing, and committed teachers, make it challenging for heads of schools to perform their supervisory tasks. The main objective of supervision in general will not be achieved if it is threatened by a lack of resources, a shortage of teaching staff, inexperienced teachers, uncommitted teachers, and negative attitudes towards school supervision.

The findings also suggest that secondary school students' ability to learn depends on the presence of a supportive teaching and learning environment. This environment is not created by coincidence; rather, it is affected by the school's capable headmaster, teachers, and parents. The direct supervisor of all teaching and learning activities is the head of the school. Therefore, school heads must increase the efficacy of their supervisory practices to improve teaching and learning processes. An excellent head of school is one who can recognize problems teachers and students have and provide solutions. The teachers would be in a better position to accomplish their jobs if the head of school routinely collaborates with the students and teachers. Educational stakeholders must keep an eye on how well the heads of schools supervise the curriculum's implementation. It is crucial to regularly monitor and assess the efficacy of the school head. All actions carried out in schools will result in the delivery of high-quality education when the head of the school is effective.

Recommendations

The creation of efficient internal monitoring teams as well as classroom supervision must be given more attention by school heads. The team will assist the head of school in overseeing education and enhancing the standard of instruction.

The government should hire and assign qualified teachers in the majority of secondary schools since a capable head of school is worthless if there are not enough teachers in the classroom. This is because there are not enough teachers in the majority of secondary schools. Additionally, the government should ensure that teachers and heads of schools receive professional development in teaching

pedagogy and leadership skills through the MOEST. Meetings with all stakeholders in education should also be organized to discuss the issues that the Ubungo municipality's education sector is experiencing and to exchange concepts that might boost students' academic performance.

Additionally, it is strongly advised that heads of schools work frequently with school committees, community, and political leaders to increase parent awareness of education issues and secure their crucial support to increase student attendance and commitment to academics, leading to improved learning achievement.

▪▪ DECLARATIONS

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Competing interests
The authors declare that they have no competing interests.

Ethical approval
The authors declare that this study followed applicable research ethics. This study obtained approval from relevant authorities, including the Regional Education office and the St. Augustine University of Tanzania, who gave clearance for this study. Furthermore, all participants provided informed consent and agreed to take part in this study.

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