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**Influence Of Principal's Instructional Supervisory Practices On Students' Academic Achievement In Public Secondary Schools In Samburu Central Sub-County, Samburu County, Kenya**

By

Selina Lucas Rentilei, Momanyi Marcella and Paschal Wambiya  
The Catholic University of Eastern Africa

**Abstract**

The purpose of the study was to determine how the Principals' instructional supervisory practices influence students' academic achievement in public secondary schools in Samburu Central, Samburu County. Specifically the study determined the extent to which principals performed their instructional supervisory roles of curriculum implementation, monitoring, provision of instructional resources and feedbacks and how it enhanced students' academic achievement. The study was anchored in the Psychological Theory of supervision explored by Pantrurrot (2006). A mixed approach notably convergent parallel mixed approach guided the study whereby in quantitative cross-sectional survey design and in qualitative phenomenology designs were used. The study targeted all secondary school principals, teachers' students and County directors of Samburu County. Stratified random Sampling and purposive sampling techniques were used to select a sample size of 15 principals, 66 teachers, 65 students and the County Director of Education to participate in the study. Data was collected by use of questionnaires, interview guides and document analysis guide that were validated with the help of experts in research and educational administrators. Descriptive statistics notably frequencies and percentages analyzed quantitative data obtained from questionnaires with the help of Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) software version 20. The results presented in frequency distribution tables. The qualitative data obtained from open-ended questions, interview guides and document analysis guide was analyzed thematically based on research questions and presented in form of narratives and direct quotes. Key findings showed that some of the principals inducted new teachers, checked schemes of work, visited classrooms for lesson observation and gave feedback, monitored students' progress to a greater extent while others did not. The study concluded that in schools where principals performed their supervisory roles effectively enhanced students' academic achievement than principal who did sparingly. The study recommended that the Ministry of Education strengthen follow up mechanisms on roles and practices of principals, thorough teacher preparations prior to lessons, good rapport as well as development good communication skills as some of the ways of improving the principal's supervisory skills.

**Key words:** Academic achievement, Instructional, public secondary school, Samburu county, supervisory practices

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**Background to the Study**

Instructional supervision is key to enhancing better teaching and learning in educational institutions In America, Glickman et al., (2017) asserts the principals are the chief instructional Supervisors. Their roles are basically carried within the schools for the purpose of improving class room instruction. The supervisors assist individual teachers in determining more appropriate instructional objectives for the learners in a specific classroom so as to improve students' academic performance. Instructional supervision is an aspect of checking the quality output in secondary school hence it is designed to evaluate educational inputs and outputs. The act of teaching and learning is supervised to determine whether it is achieving the desired objectives. During this supervision, the principal examines a subject teacher in relation to teaching methods applied, instructional materials available for use and the teacher himself/herself in terms of qualification and training.

In Finland, Alila et al., (2016) observes that concepts of supervision and practical implementation and special methods of supervision are instructional supervision that promotes inclusive learning. These include knowledge of similar strategies; thorough supervision preparation, sensitivity to the needs of teachers, use of different methods of teaching to bring about good outcomes in terms of academic achievement of the learners. Glanz & Heinman (2018) assert that, the role of the school principal is that, he/she is an academic supervisor and managerial supervisor. As an academic supervisor, he/she serves to enhance the ability of teachers' professionalism. Meanwhile, the effort of principals to achieve school effectiveness is a function of a managerial supervisor. An effective principal motivates, encourages, praises and gives appraisal to teachers to facilitate student learning. Sule et al., (2015) emphasize that, supervisory activities can be considered as strategies employed by any institution to realize teachers' professional competence. The school principals engage in a number of supervisory activities which include but not limited to the following; classroom visits, checking of teachers' professional records, planning, organizing and coordination of supervisory activities. A supervisor should understand, know and implement the techniques in the implementation of instructional supervision. This is because supervision has a role and is a very important concept in learning problems.

In the context of assisting teachers and improve learning and so that the implementation operates effectively, the supervisor should have the technical skills in the implementation of supervision. These skills include the ability to apply the techniques of supervision properly. Thus, supervisors should master the right techniques in the implementation of the supervision order to be able to formulate the purposes of supervision. As advocated by Wall & Hurie (2017) there are many techniques used by principals as supervisors in the implementation of

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supervision. These aim to assist teachers in teaching and learning, both cooperatively and individually or face to face, either directly or indirectly, or even individual supervision. The supervision techniques employed by the supervisor either personally or individually aim at improving the quality of teaching in schools, when there is a problem faced by teachers which are either personal, specific or confidential. These techniques include classroom visits, classroom observations, individual meetings, visits between classes and self-judgments.

Principals’ supervisory roles and practices are well documented in literature. For instance in Nigeria, Kotirde & Yunos (2016) explain that the role of principals in secondary schools is to direct and guide the teachers’ work. It therefore means that principals are accountable for helping teachers to offer their services to students by joint effort; that is from the principal and the teachers to bring about improved academic achievement of the students. Principals help in mentoring the inexperienced teachers to promote supportive entry into the teaching profession. Secondly, principals raise teachers to minimum standards of effective teaching through daily clinical supervision, daily coaching and in-service training to all teachers for improved teaching methodologies leading to improved academic achievement of the students.

Principal’s supervisory role encompasses curriculum implementation. Glickman et al., (2017) assert that, curriculum is the core of a school’s existence as an institution. It comprises of what is to be taught although it is not a creation of individual teachers but a design of national goals of education aimed at improving instruction. It encompasses all in-school experiences such as the classroom, the students’ activities, and the use of learning resource centers, the assemblies as well as the school learning experiences that are directed by the school among many other factors.

In Kenya, KCSE in Samburu Central Sub-County performance has been below the mean or average of 6. The researcher used the results of 2017 to 2020 to explore if instructional supervision practices by the Principals could be the cause of this trend in dismal performance. The study therefore sought to establish why Samburu Central Sub County has not been performing well the past four years preceding the study. The question therefore was: Are the Principals supervisory practices the cause of the poor performance in Samburu Central Sub-County? The number of students attaining quality grades in KCSE has been equally low as shown in Table 1.

**Table 1: Samburu County KCSE Performance from the Year 2017 to 2020**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Samburu North</b>	<b>Samburu Central</b>	<b>Samburu East</b>
<b>2017</b>	<b>3.291</b>	<b>3.742</b>	<b>2.477</b>
<b>2018</b>	<b>3.013</b>	<b>4.424</b>	<b>3.176</b>
<b>2019</b>	<b>2.892</b>	<b>3.522</b>	<b>3.107</b>
<b>2020</b>	<b>3.111</b>	<b>3.491</b>	<b>2.862</b>

**Source: Samburu Central County Education Office, 2022.**

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Data in table 1 shows that student's performance in KCSE in Samburu Central Sub County has not been good. The mean score for all the last 4 years has been below average for the last four years. This raises a concern on the need to establish how Principals instructional supervision practices influence students KCSE performance in public secondary school in Samburu Central Sub County. Statement of the Problem

### **Statement of the Problem**

Instructional supervision of principals is key in the success of the school. It requires a principal to work closely with teachers at periodic or regular intervals to ensure that the objectives of the school are achieved. This means that instructional supervision enhances teacher's professional knowledge and promotes effective teaching activities. The principal, therefore works closely with teachers to improve students' academic achievement. However, this is not the case in Samburu County which has been performing poorly despite the principal's supervisory activities. There has been a public concern from various stakeholders on the dismal students' academic performance in national Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education (KCSE). The trend over the last four years indicate below average performance. If it continues like this, there will be low progression rate, increased school dropouts as well as increased antisocial activities. Studies have been done on principals supervisory roles. For instance, Chepkuto, Sang & Chumba (2018) examined influence of instructional supervision on curriculum implementation in selected North Rift County, public secondary schools in Kenya. Kimeu (2018) study focused on the role of head teacher's instructional supervision on students' academic achievement in primary schools in Kitui County, Kenya. From the reviewed literature, there is limited study that has been done in Samburu on the principals instructional supervisory roles and practices and their influence on students' academic achievement and this necessitated the need for the current study.

### **Review of Related Literature**

Available literature shows that a number of studies have been conducted on instructional supervisory roles of the school principals. For instance, Sudjana & Nana (2016) examined the roles and responsibilities of supervisors which reviewed more than 100 research reports, texts and articles. They established that teachers prefer direct assistance to improve the learning opportunities of students. This implies that the role of the supervisors is to support and develop the staff to be able to handle instructions in the classroom. Professors who formed part of the sample felt that, supervisors should be also be people oriented and consultants to teachers. Although principal are faced with many administrative duties; they have to put instructional supervision at the center of their work for better results. The reviewed study addressed the roles of the principals but did not connect with the student's academic achievement which the current study incorporated.

A research was conducted on strategies principals used for monitoring teaching and students' learning by Mbuso (2015) in South Africa. The study revealed that the principals in public secondary schools monitor students' academic progress in their schools through weekly review of teachers' files, verification of student and teacher lesson attendance, scrutiny of assessment tests before their application on students. Other strategies of monitoring revealed by the studies included; class visits to measure teaching and students' learning progress and

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checking students' exercise books on a weekly basis to determine the level of teaching and students' academic progress. The current study sought to find out whether the principals in public secondary schools in Samburu county use the above monitoring activities for students' academic achievement

Another study by Paul et al., (2016) investigated the effect of principals' supervision of teachers' professional records on their pedagogical practices in public secondary schools in Uganda. The findings revealed that the supervision of professional records had a statistically significant effect on teachers' pedagogical practices. In addition, Melissa (2016) studied on the influence of head teachers' instructional supervision practice on teachers' job performance in Kenya. The study finding revealed that, principals' supervision of teachers' professional records significantly affects teachers' job performance. All the reviewed findings imply that the principals' supervisory activities of reviewing teachers' portfolio is very important for the achievement of secondary education. However, the two studies have not addressed on students' academic achievement of which the current study had put into consideration.

Mwangi et al., (2015) conducted a study to examine ways principals undertake on instructional supervision in public secondary schools in Kajiado North Sub-County, Kenya. The study wanted to determine the extent to which other teachers embrace and appreciate instructional supervision before taking up leadership positions in secondary schools. The other objective of the study was to establish if head teachers are trained particularly for the role of instructional supervision. Descriptive cross-sectional survey was employed and 180 teachers and 15 head teachers both male and female teachers participated. The study found out that principals are effective in carrying out instructional supervision. The adoptions of new strategies of instructional supervision were found to be effective and would help improve the practices of the principals. The principals were found to carry out instructional activities such as staffing,

consultation with teachers, motivation of teachers and orientation of school program. The findings informed the current study to determine the extent to which principals in secondary schools Samburu county supervisory practices and their influence on academic performance

### **Curriculum Implementation**

Curriculum implementation is another supervisory role of the school principal. Mohammed (2015) investigated the roles of educational inspectors in curriculum implementation in public secondary schools of Bauchi state in Nigeria. Findings of the study revealed that, checking of lesson plans, schemes of work, students' attendance and academic progress were least performed by designated school supervisors. The study concluded that the situation had led to poor curriculum implementation in public secondary schools. However, Mohammeds' study did not explore principals' supervisory role of checking teachers' records in ensuring curriculum was effectively implemented. The current study aimed at examining the extent to which principals supervise teachers' records like lesson plans, records of work, schemes of work and lesson notes to enhance teachers' competency leading to students' academic achievement.

Akinfolarin et al., (2017) conducted a study on academic supervision as a correlate of students' academic performance in secondary schools in Ekiti state, Nigeria. Their study findings were that supervision of teachers' professional records positively correlate with students'

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academic performance and teachers' practices. The current study sought to find out whether principals' supervision practices correlate with students' academic achievement in public secondary schools in Samburu county. Pupils' exercise books and lesson notes reflect the work load covered in class by teachers. It is the head teacher's role to regularly scrutinize on the pupil's exercise book/lesson notes to ensure that the school syllabus is covered appropriately and assignments are marked.

In a study conducted by Alimi of Akinfolarin (2017), on the impact of instructional supervision on students' academic performance in senior secondary schools in Ondo State, Nigeria. Their study found out that there is significant impact on checking pupils' notes on academic performance in English language. The findings agreed with Hallinger & Heck (2008), findings that there is a significant impact in checking of students notes on academic performance in English language in United States elementary schools. Physical observation of lesson presentation is the only way a head teacher can gain an insight into the quality of teaching and learning in the school (Calaghan, 2017). Instructional supervisor can only be able to access the potential for excellent through watching the teacher present a lesson which he/she has prepared. Gachioya (2018), observed that through this visit the supervisor can have an insight into quality benchmarks and performance. Supervision of instruction through classroom visits according to Fischer (2014) include walk-throughs, informal classrooms observations. A walk-through is an observation interlude lasting a minute or two which provides a quick look at teacher performance and environmental factors in the classroom. This is a more appropriate method since it is impromptu unlike the formal and informal which are planned and scheduled for by the supervisor and the teacher.

Fischer adds that a good conference should last 30 to 40 minutes. Longer sessions become an ordeal for both the supervisor and the teacher. The supervisor should incorporate teachers' suggestions as this builds the teacher's confidence hence enhancing the learning process. He or she should recognize and provide alternative approaches and application of a variety of skill as this will strengthen the teacher's pedagogical skills. The supervisor should provide an immediate feedback after observation which should be objective and concluded with a well thought out summary to enable the teacher to remember the key issues discussed (Okumbe, 2007).

Chepkuto, Sang & Chumba (2018) examined influence of instructional supervision on curriculum implementation in selected North Rift County, public secondary schools in Kenya. The results showed that as an internal quality assurance and standard practice, principals occasionally checked on teachers' schemes of work, offered suggestions on syllabus coverage, assisted teacher in teaching strategies and demonstrations. The current studies sought to find out whether instructional supervisory practices of principals of public secondary schools in Samburu County have an influence on curriculum implementation leading to students' academic achievement.

### **Classroom Visitation**

Hussein (2015) studied the instructional supervisory approaches practiced in preparatory schools of Arsi zone, Ethiopia. The findings of this study showed that classroom visitation was not regularly conducted. Supervisors did not provide direct assistance to teachers during

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lessons. The results revealed further that supervisors did not often inform teachers before visiting their classes for lesson observation.

Abebe (2015) study, examined classroom observation procedures at government secondary schools of Kamashi. The findings revealed that although supervisors carried out classroom visits, they would not arrange such visits with the teachers concerned. Principals 'supervisory activities of classroom visitation were under-researched generally in developing countries like Nigeria and in particular Bauchi state (Mohammed 2015). The present study examined the extent to which principals execute classroom visits in public secondary schools of Samburu County.

Malunda et al., (2016) study on the effect of supervision on teachers' practices revealed supervision of teachers' instructions was not adequately conducted in public secondary schools in Uganda. The study concluded that inadequate effective supervision of teaching and learning had led to poor students' academic performance in public secondary schools. Supporting this conclusion, in a paper on supervisors' practices and teachers' effectiveness, (Sule et al 2015) posits that the competence level of teachers increases with classroom observation. The present study assessed the extent principals perform classroom visits and how much pedagogical practices of teachers are affected by them in public secondary schools in Samburu county. Accordingly, Hussein (2015) studied the instructional supervisory approaches practiced in preparatory schools of Arsi zone, Ethiopia.

The findings of this study showed that the classroom visitation was not regularly conducted. Supervisors did not provide direct assistance to teachers during lessons. The results revealed further that supervisors did not often inform teachers before visiting their classes for lesson observation. (Zepeda 2018) stressed that supervisors' classroom observations could only positively influence teacher job performance when a good relationship exists between teachers and supervisors. Principals influence the teaching and learning through the teachers. Whatever support and help the teachers receive from the principals is expected to help facilitate effective classroom instruction. The principals do not directly influence the student's academic performance. The principals therefore carry out various instructional supervisory activities directed to teachers for the benefit of the students. Some of the activities that the Principals practice are; observation of classroom instruction, conducting of teachers' groups and individual conference. Principals' supervisory activities of classroom visitation were under researched generally in developing countries like Nigeria and in particular Bauchi state, (Mohammed 2015). The present study examined the extent to which principals execute classroom visits in public secondary schools of Samburu County.

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### **Classroom Observation**

The instructional supervision is a well-planned and progressive one that starts outside the classroom before the actual classroom teaching and ends outside the classroom after the observation of an actual classroom teaching. Abong (2008) classified the instructional supervision process during teaching practice into three main phases: the pre-observation conference, the observation and the post-observation conference. In the pre-observation conference is the period that the instructional supervisor strives to develop a rapport between himself and the teacher.

The pre-observation conference involves planning the classroom observation strategy by the teacher and supervisor. During this conference teacher and supervisor together plan and discuss the kind and amount of information to be gathered during the observation period and the methods to be used to gather this information (Sergiovanni & Starratt 2014). For the successfulness of classroom observation, the supervisors should have full knowledge on the activities to be carried out. In line with this, Fisher (cited in Gurnam & Chan 2016) suggested that to enhance the professional effectiveness of the teaching staff, administrators/supervisors must be skilled in the following area; (a) what to evaluate, (b) how to observe and analyze classroom observation and information and (c) how to translate the results of observations and the summary of data into meaningful conference feedback that guides and encourages teachers to improve instruction. She also points out that “supervision of instruction must be built on the observer’s thorough understanding and in-depth knowledge of instructional theory, not on a checklist of what should be in a lesson.”

During pre-observation meeting, the supervisor and teacher discuss on the lesson plan by stressing on the lesson objectives, relevance and appropriateness of content, time allocation, the availability of teaching aids, and the evaluation (ADEA, 1998). These determinations are made before the actual observation, so that both supervisor and teacher are clear about what will transpire (Glickman et al., 2012). The observation phase begins when the teacher and instructional supervisor enter the classroom. During this phase, the supervisor as a professional practitioner observes the teacher based on areas agreed up on and collects as much information as possible about the teaching and learning situation (Morrison, 2016). The supervisor also records the teacher’s performance on the format of the lesson plan, the appropriateness of the lesson objectives, and the ability of teacher to provide an appropriate feedback mechanism, reinforcement, and classroom discipline. During classroom observation the supervisor is not only focuses on the recording teachers’ performance, but also records what the students are doing. While the class observation is going on, the supervisor must follow the lesson in detail from the beginning to the end (Gurnam & Chan, 2017).

According to Rogers (2004), during class observation it is better for the supervisor to sit at the back of the class to follow the lesson attentively without making any gesture or showing signs of displeasure, approval or disapproval and takes notes if necessary, on an appropriate form which will be analyzed later. He does not interrupt the teacher during the class. The post-observation conference is an opportunity and setting for teacher and supervisor to exchange information about what was intended in a given lesson/unit and what actually happened (Sergiovanni & Starratt, 2012). This conference helps the teacher and the supervisor to measure

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strengths and weaknesses and further identify any gaps when measured an ideal particularly the needs of the learners and the teachers (Morrison, 2008).

The post-observation conference helps the teacher to improve the classroom instruction. The feedback during the post observation conference should focus on modifiable teaching behaviours. In doing this, teachers should not be asked to do things which they cannot do anything about (Abong 2008).

In general, developing the skill of observing serves a dual purpose; it helps teachers gain a better understanding of their own teaching, while at the same time refines their ability to observe, analyze and interpret, an ability that can also be used to improve their own teaching. An observation task is a focused activity to work on while observing a lesson in progress. It focuses on one or a small number of aspects of teaching or learning and requires the observer to collect data or information from the actual lesson (Ruth 2016).

Zepeda (2015), studied teachers' views on Principals supervision in junior high schools' districts in Nassau County, New York. The study findings indicated that in consensus, the responding teachers portrayed that the classroom observer should be honest, objective, maintain confidentiality and utilize the process for the express purpose of promoting instructional improvement. The findings emphasized the need for establishing a collegial relationship between supervisor and teacher in order to make principal supervisory activities trustworthy and confidence. The current study sought to find out whether teachers in Samburu County utilize instructional processes to ensure that there is improved academic achievement of the students.

In America, a study was carried out on classroom observation and it appeared that, classroom observation works best if set in a cycle of preparation, observation and feedback, hence the need for the supervisor and supervisee to work hand in hand before and even after the observation process. In doing all these, teachers must feel that the supervisor is there to serve them and to help them become more effective (Glickman et al 2017).

Wall & Hurie (2017) conducted a study on post-observation conferences whose participants were bilingual pre-service teachers in Texas, United States of America. The study sought to examine the nature of interactions during the post-observation conferences as such critical reflective spaces were considered helpful. The study notes that the post-observation conferences were providing supportive and dialogic spaces where facilitators and the bilingual pre-service teachers could rehearse and do classroom interactions in a manner that is dynamic and complex.

Such spaces as a resulted contributed to the pre-service teachers' abilities to author themselves as successful educators. Contrary to this study that focused on pre-service teachers, the present study focused on secondary school Principals' effectiveness on instructional supervision leading to students' academic achievement. Given that the study by Wall & Hurie (2017) was conducted far away, it was necessary to examine as well the classroom interactions in the context of observation conferences particularly among the principals in Samburu Central Sub-County public secondary schools.

In Nigeria, (Ekpo & Eze 2015) assert that, observation techniques are implemented to follow the course of the visit to the classroom when the lesson is conducted by the supervisor. The purpose of the observation techniques is that in the learning process, effective data was

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obtained regarding aspects of the situation observed, watched and studied in the practices of learning and finding properties that stand out and excel in each educator. It also assists in finding the needs of educators in teaching, obtaining materials and supervision programs and providing information to strengthen and foster the integrity of the school.

In practice, there are some aspects that are observed, including; activities and efforts undertaken by teachers and students in the learning process, learning how to use media, mental reactions of the learners, state of media used, social and physical environment of the school both inside and outside the school as well as supporting factors. The supervisors typically use a checklist as an observation tool for collecting data in collecting the necessary information more objectively about the situation in the classroom and to repair the weaknesses and faults the teacher faced. There are three types of individual meetings; the classroom conference, office conference and casual conference.

Wairimu (2016) assessed the perception of teacher on assessment of pupils' books on performance in Primary Schools in Nakuru North District, Kenya. The study revealed that problems encountered during classroom visits are normally discussed in conferences as a result way forward are normally crafted. Moreover, the study revealed that head teachers assess teachers' professional records as well as evaluation of teachers' work load. The study focused on teachers' perception on classroom observation, while that present study focused on influence of classroom observation on students' academic achievement.

In Kenya, Kinoti (2019) notes that to improve teaching effectiveness, physical observation of lesson presentation is the only way a head teacher can gain an insight into the quality of teaching and learning in the school. The instructional supervision can only be able to assess the teachers' potential for excellence through watching the teacher present a lesson which he or she has prepared. This enables the head teacher to identify gaps and plan for appropriate ways to fill them; for instance, by in service trainings and providing adequate teaching and learning resources.

When teachers feel that classroom observation is to make them grow professionally, they feel motivated to work even more. The current research sought to find out whether classroom observation is done by the supervisors in public secondary schools in Samburu County. According to Kimotho (2016), the principal should visit the classroom frequently to encourage teachers. One way to help teachers improve instruction is through clinical supervision (Glickman, 2014), in his model of clinical supervision presented a cyclical sequence of events which should ideally be implemented at least twice a year.

In a study by Arsaythamby, Mary & Rozalina (2013) on the influences of clinical supervision on the teaching performance of secondary school teachers of Malaysia found that clinical supervision helped instructional supervisors identify teachers' classroom shortcomings and consequently, help address them ultimately teachers' ability to facilitate teaching and learning for more effective and enhanced students' understanding. From the foregoing explanation, it's noted that clinical supervision emphasizes on data collection based on "what you see (observation), hear (discussion), and read (documentation)". A basic prerequisite for the process to proceed successfully is for the teachers to have a positive mind-frame towards being observed by the supervisor when the actual teaching is taking place. In fact, Ogunu (2014) compares the application of clinical supervision to the teaching

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practice undertaken by all the teacher trainees. Like the teaching practice, a positive supervisory relationship grounded by trust, respect, rapport, and empathy. This study examined how effectively clinical supervision has been conducted in schools as a means of obtaining data to help teachers become better teachers. Maybe, also it’s the high time such data are used as a reference during promotions of teachers.

An article in the Standard Newspaper of Wednesday 27th, October 2010 on education argue that the “Medicine for the failing quality of education in public schools is tying pupil’s performance to teacher’s promotion”. The gist of this article was that teachers would be proactive when they are instructionally supervised so as to obtain valuable feedback which they would utilize to perform better in facilitating learning and ultimately be promoted. The sequence included teacher pre-conferencing to determine the method and duration of the observation. The pre-conferencing is followed by classroom observation which involves making use of physical indication, visual indication and interpersonal or directive analysis. The last stage in clinical supervision which is post-conferencing is aimed at discussing results on remedial action and a critique by both the supervision and the supervisee. Clinical supervision is the rationale and practice designed to improve the teachers’ classroom performance.

The principal data of clinical supervision obtained from the events which take place in the classroom are analyzed. The relationship between the teacher and the supervisor form the basis of the programme, procedure and strategies designed to improve the students learning by improving the instructional behavior (Wanga & Kiragu 2017). Natade (2013) attributes poor pupil performance in public schools to ‘armchair’ Head teachers who do not know what goes on classroom. Ineffective instructional leadership leads to delinquent behavior among some pupils and their subsequent failure in the national examinations. Gritney (2014), adds that head teachers need to observe their teachers formally on regular basis, make notes in the classroom and work with a clear commitment. The principal should discuss classroom observation with a teacher promptly in-order to provide for in-school professional development. There is need to monitor standards being achieved by their pupil, develop and implement strategies for systematic monitoring. This is to evaluate standard to achieve curriculum strength and weakness and improve on the quality of teaching and learning.

#### **4. Design and Methodology**

The mixed approach particularly Convergent Parallel Mixed Method design which combines both qualitative and quantitative designs guided the study. The two analyzed independently and the results were interpreted together. Quantitative approach in research provides ‘numerical data’, while qualitative approach in research provides participants’ perspectives of the topic under study (Creswell, 2009). In quantitative approach, Cross sectional survey design was used whereby there research involved a large group of people at one point in time. The design was considered appropriate for the current study for it enabled to gather data from various categories of participants that comprised of principals, teachers and students on how instructional supervisory practices of the principals influence students’ academic achievement in public secondary schools in Samburu County. In qualitative approach, naturalistic phenomenological

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design was used for the participants to narrative their lived experiences. This gave the participants opportunity to express their views more deeply and exhaustively through interviews and open-ended items in the questionnaires.

Phenomenology is the study of the world as it appears to individuals when they lay aside the prevailing understandings of those phenomena and revisit their immediate experience of the phenomena (Gall & Borg 2007). Phenomenology provided the researchers with in-depth information concerning the effectiveness of principals' participation in instructional supervision in public secondary schools. Stratified random sampling technique was used to select a sample size of 15 schools, 66 teachers and 65 students. The schools were categorized into boarding and day schools. For students and teachers, the strata was based on gender that catered for representativeness of opinions thus avoided gender biasness. Principals of the selected schools were automatically included in the study. Extreme Case Purposeful technique was used to select county Director of quality assurance and standards officers to participate in the study. They were considered rich in information about supervisory roles of a principals and how they influence students' academic achievement.

### **Findings on Principals Instructional Supervisory Practices in Samburu Central Sub-county**

The first research question sought views from teachers and students on what instructional supervisory roles principals play in secondary schools in Samburu County. Study participants were given a questionnaires of 10 Likert scale items containing the principals' instructional supervisory practices. The participants were asked to tick appropriately using the Likert scale as Strongly Agree (SA),=5 Agree(A)=4, Undecided(U)=3 , Disagree(D)=2, Strongly Disagree(SD),=1. Table 1.1 illustrates the teachers and students responses.

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**Table 2: Teachers and Students Responses on Principals Supervisory Roles and students were summarized in the Table 1**

	%		SA	A	U	D	SD
1	Principals induct new teachers						
2	Instructional supervisors ensure curriculum is full implemented in the classroom	T	24	35	19	18	4
		S	23	36	21	17	3
3	Instructional supervisors participate in school timetabling	T	53	26	6	13	2
		S	58	27	8	5	2
4	Instructional supervisors encourage evaluation on mats	T	42	37	9	2	7
		S	46	33	11	7	3
5	Instructional supervisors facilitate of instructional materials and encourage good use	T	66	30	1	2	1
		S	61	29	3	4	3
6	Checking schemes of work	T	48	32	11	7	2
		S	49	38	8	2	3
7	Checking teachers records	T	27	26	9	28	10
		S	29	27	12	9	23
8	Visiting classroom to observe lessons	T	18	22	12	28	20
		S	16	21	18	25	20
9	Provide feedback after classroom observation	T	19	22	16	28	15
		S	29	26	17	16	12
10	Awarding teachers who have registered exemplary performance in students examinations	T	10	13	29	30	18
		S	11	14	23	27	25

\*Key: T=Teachers S=Students. Teachers, n=61 Students, n=60

**Source: Field Data 2021**

Data on table 1 shows that a majority of 59% of both teachers and students agreed that the principals do regular induction of new staff members whereas 22 % and 20% disagreed with the

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same statement respectfully. A minority of about 19% of teachers and 21% of students were not very sure whether the principals regularly induct new members of staff and instead delegate that duty to the deputy principals. This could be due to the tight schedules they have on other administrative matters. The findings from interviews with principals confirmed the teachers and students views on inducting new staff. All principals interviewed confirmed that they always induct new staff members on the vision, mission and core values of the school. They are also given orientation on the culture and physical set up of the school as well as the teaching and testing policies. These inductions enable teachers to settle down quickly and commit themselves to their teaching duties. The results concur with those of Jeputei (2014) who found out that principals carry out instructional roles such as inductions of staff and orientation of school program.

On whether the instructional supervisors ensured the curriculum is fully implemented in the classroom, a majority of 79% of the teachers and 85% of the students agreed. The study revealed that the principals do curriculum implementation: in particular, they supervise curriculum timetabling to ensure that all the subjects are timetabled, and a correct number of lessons is observed as required by the education policy. The findings agree with the study of Jeputei (2014) that principals played instructional, supervisory roles by supervising the implementation of the curriculum which involved supporting teachers in their instructional practices. Contrary, 15% of teachers and 7% of students disagreed that principals do ensure that curriculum is fully implemented in the classroom. This could be due to underlying factors such as delegation of duties to the senior teachers and the Heads of Departments by the Principals. Only a minority of 6% of teachers and 8% of students were undecided. This shows that some teachers are not aware of who fully is responsible to ensure that curriculum is fully implemented in schools. This is because, majority of instructional activities in most schools are carried out by the deputy principals, Senior teachers and the Heads of Departments. Despite that Principals are responsible for acting as instructional leaders of the school by promoting best practices in teaching and learning so that students achieve academic success (Ngale 2018). Even though principals are involved in many tasks that tend to distract from this goal of instructional supervision, effective principals focus on instruction because they know that this will impact students academical achievement the most (Ozdemir et al., 2015). Many researchers have shown the importance of high-quality instruction as a necessary component of student improvement and achievement.

On a statement whether instructional leaders participate in school timetabling a majority of 79% of teachers and 79% of students agreed that principals supervise curriculum timetabling. This ensured that there are no clashes in lessons where one teacher is expected to be in two different classes in one period. Other teachers 9% and 11% of students were undecided. On the other hand, 9% teachers and 10% of students disagreed that principals participate in school time tabling. This therefore means that in those schools, the work of school timetabling was either delegated to the Dean of Studies or by the Heads of the Departments. This was confirmed by a principal in one school during interviews when he said:

The organization of the time-table is often delegated by the principals to their deputies and other subject teachers to ensure all the required subjects are taught and the expected lessons per week are reflected in the timetable. Protection of instructional time encourages syllabus

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coverage. The students are therefore exposed to all topics which favor them in answering of exam questions which boost their academic achievement. On the other hand failure of principals' involvement in school timetabling and setting of students' academic targets also have negative impacts on students' academic achievements. This is due to the fact that the teachers and students will feel that the principals have neglected them as far as instructional supervision is concerned and teachers will deliver their lessons anyhow thus leading to poor academic achievements of the students in KCSE in Samburu Central Sub-County.

The study also revealed that, most of the teachers 86% and 90% of students agreed that the principals encourage and facilitate school self-evaluation and instructional matters. This implies that the principals monitor students' academic progress. From interviews, most of the principals concurred with teachers and students when they reported that they monitor students' academic progress by organizing for academic clinics to improve students' academic achievement. They also check the spreadsheet to monitor each student performs and discuss them with the relevant teachers. The researcher was informed that at the release of the Kenya Certificate of Secondary Examinations (KCSE) results, principals discuss with the teachers the analyzed results, then use the analysis as a tool for future academic improvement.

The finding also revealed that principals supervise the frequent testing of students through the heads of departments. The findings agree with a study of Conran (2020) that emphasized that during interviews with principals, it emerged that monitoring of students' academic progress is very important because it improves students' academic performance. Failing to do so leads to poor academic achievement. This was confirmed by 3% of teachers and 7% of students who disagreed that principals carried out evaluation on instructional matters. The study found that in most schools the principals leave the work of monitoring students' academic progress to the Dean of Studies and the class teachers. This could have been a big factor which contributed to student low academic achievement in the public secondary schools in Samburu County. Only a few of 1% of teachers and 3% students were undecided.

Data obtained from interview with CQASO, revealed that 65% of the principals monitor students' academic progress twice per term through the help of the Dean of Studies and the classroom teachers. Another 35% of the principals in Samburu Central Sub-county do not monitor students' academic progress. This could be a factor leading to students' low academic achievement in the final KCSE. The Data in the table also reveal that majority of 89% of teachers and 90% of students confirmed that principals facilitate availability of instructional materials. Only 7% of teachers and 5% of students were undecided while 4% and 5% disagreed with the same statement respectfully. It was evident that teachers were motivated by the supervisory styles.

From the findings, it is evident that a higher percentage of principals provide instructional materials that aid teaching and learning process. These like pupils' exercise books, writing materials and reference materials like atlases, wall maps, and dictionaries while a small percentage of the principals do not provide all the necessary instructional materials. Without these resources learners cannot gain much in their studies. This could, therefore, lead to poor academic achievement of the students. In light of Zepeda et al., (2016) in The American National Policy Board for Educational Administration (2015) supervisors have to relentlessly create positive working conditions, construct appropriate school policies and systems and engage in

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deep and meaningful engagements outside the classes that in return motivates and drives powerful impact of what happens inside and outside classes.

Teachers ought to be motivated by the way their principals handle them in the school environment; that is, provision of instructional materials, collegial supervision and involvement in instructional supervision all along. In return, they will inculcate a pleasurable learning culture in their learners leading to high academic achievement. Most teacher participants agreed that principals provide instructional learning materials like students' course books, teachers' guidebooks, reference books and equipping of the libraries in schools where they are available. That the provision of these instructional materials and their effective use improved students' academic achievement. The County Quality Assurance and Standards officer (CQASO) echoed in an interview that:

The government makes an effort to provide course books to the students in a ratio of 1:1. The principals distribute these books to the students through the help of teachers. However, most of the principals do not make follow ups on the lost books thus leading to few textbooks books available for use. This affects students' academic achievement in Samburu County (Personal Communication, July 15, 2022).

The responses of the CQASO) confirmed that most schools initially the government supplied enough text books for every student. But due to lack of proper accounting procedures some were lost and has led to inadequate/unavailability of school supervision resources. These included inadequate text books, reference books, computers, information communication technology (ICTs), and stationery among others. This has adversely affected the efficient and effective supervision of schools in Samburu County, leading to low academic achievement. With regards whether principals' check schemes of work, most of the teachers 80% of teachers and 87 % of students agreed. This shows that principals work very hard to ensure that teachers cover the syllabus in good time. However, a few teachers (11%) and 8% students were undecided while 9 % and 5% disagreed. This therefore leads to poor academic achievement since students sit for KCSE unprepared due to incomplete syllabus coverage by the teachers. When asked to comment on teachers records of work, the CQASO reported that:

Principals check teachers schemes of work, lesson plans and records of work covered. I agreed that most principals (68%) sometimes made lesson observations and gave teachers feedback. Some of the principals (32%) delegated the work of classroom observation to the deputy principals and the heads of departments, who sometimes fail to observe teachers. Some teachers also do not agree with the supervisor on when to be observed and also fail to request for lesson observation. This builds a negative attitude towards instructional supervision thus leading to low academic achievement of students in public secondary schools in Samburu County (Personal Communication, July 15, 2022).

Analysis of the CQASO's response indicate that although most principals checked the scheme of work and signed, poor communication skills and negative attitudes of teachers towards affected the supervision. The researcher was informed that many supervisors are not always polite with their comments; teachers are adults and that if correction from supervisors is to be taken

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seriously, the participants were of the opinion that supervisors do it politely and with respect for the teacher. When impolite comments are used, the teacher feels embarrassed and not respected thereby devastating the morale of the teacher and general job performance thus leading to low academic achievement of students.

On whether principals check teachers' records of work, majority of the teachers 53% and 56% of students agreed. This is normally done through the deputy principal who confirms to the principal whether teachers write down the records of work. The records of work allow for smooth syllabus coverage which leads to improved academic achievement. If the school principals do not check the records of work, as recorded by 38% of teachers and 32% of students who disagreed with the statement. This could be another factor leading to poor academic achievement the students in public secondary schools in Samburu Central. Only a minority of 9% of teachers and 12% of students were undecided.

With regards to how often they check teachers records of work, from interviews majority of the principals (93.3%) said that they check professional records twice per term while a few (6.7%) check them once per term. Checking the work covered by students is important as advocated by Conran (2020), that learners' exercise books and lesson notes reflect the work load covered in class by teachers. Principals' reports also indicated that there is a significant impact of checking of students notes on students' academic achievement. Checking of students' work has a mediating influence on teachers, instructional community and school organization that lead to high performances. From the study, most of the principals (67%) reported in an interview that they help teachers set academic targets at least on termly basis, 33% of them were of different opinion that they leave teachers to set their performance targets for students. Teachers file the set subject targets and work towards attaining them. The subject targets are analyzed after the end of term exams when results are printed out by the Dean of Studies.

Classroom visitation has been found to be key in instructional supervision. The study findings revealed that the about 40% of the teachers and 37% of students of the agreed that the principals employed classroom visits and observed teachers' lessons as part of their instructional supervision style. The researcher found that in most of the sampled schools, the practice of class visitation was carried out by either the principal or the deputy principal at least once in a term which is a Teachers Service Commission TPAD requirement. The principals mostly observed teachers by walking around, the classroom. That kept teachers on their toes to prepare and teach well. This was confirmed by one of the principals during the interview, when he said "...after assessing a teacher, most of them ask me to assess them in the next lesson..."

The above direct quote may indicate that a good experience of the supervisory interaction between the teacher and the principals. This was experienced by teachers in schools where principals employed collegiality whereby they involved teacher's inputs during the stages of: preparation for conducting instructional supervision; initial meeting; pre-observational, observational and post observational conferences; and final staff meeting in the school. This was reiterated by Sergiovanni & Starratt, (2002) who found that when teachers' belief that principals are collegial, they tend to be positive towards instructional supervision and become open-minded and trusting which contributes to successful instructional supervision sessions. These findings also agree with a study by World Bank (2010) that demonstrated that in

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effective organization management and proper leadership, the leader (principal) could pinpoint individual teacher strengths and weaknesses then come up with strategies for helping them grow and improve.

From interviews, 60% of the principals concurred with teachers and students views when they reported that they do classroom visits to observe teachers teaching frequently, at least twice a week while 40% of the principals said that they do not frequently visit classrooms to observe teachers teaching but they delegate the work to the deputy principals, Dean of Studies and the Heads of Departments. This means that if they fail to observe teachers in their classrooms as they teach, they will slumber in service delivery to the students since there is no supervision cascading to poor academic achievement.

The finding also indicate that about 12% of teachers and 18% of students were undecided with 48% of teachers and 45% of students respectfully disagreed that principals employed classroom visits and observed teachers' lessons as part of their instructional supervision style. Some participants felt that, principals rarely or rather never visited their classrooms to observe teachers lessons. If principals do not regularly visit classrooms or avoid them completely, they will not know what teachers are doing in class. This would, therefore, be a factor that leads to poor academic achievement of the students.

Although principals visited classrooms to observe teachers lessons, it was not helpful since most of them did not give feedback. This was confirmed by 43% of teachers and 28% students who disagreed that the principals give feedback to teachers' after classroom observation. Some of them, 16% of both teachers and 17% students were undecided. This indicates that teachers felt that the kind of feedback given out by the principals were not satisfactory. It also implies that majority of the principals do not take instructional supervision very seriously. This could have therefore led to demotivation of teachers leading to poor academic achievement of the learners. In other schools the study found that lack of collegiality in supervision, could be what is missing for teachers who hold the view that principals are autocratic. Further maybe lack of complete involvement of teachers at all stages of instructional supervision could also explain why few teachers have the perception that principals don't use collegial approach during instructional supervision. The findings contradicts that study done by Mbogo (2017) in Murang'a South where head teachers held pre-observation and post-observation sessions.

The CQASO interviewed indicated that although a good percentage of principals guided teachers to reflect on their lessons they did not prioritize lesson observations. Neglecting classroom observation, one of the critical tools for ensuring teachers accountability was somewhat ineffective consequently leading to a downward trend in academic achievement of students. Other challenges reported by the CQASO included Financial Constraints: the problem of lack and or inadequate funds to facilitate school visitation, as well as provide the necessary help to teachers by purchasing and providing them with appropriate instructional materials remains a big limitation to effective supervision of schools in Samburu County.

Insufficient and qualified supervisory staff (Heads of Departments) in public Secondary schools in Samburu County affects effective school supervision in Samburu County as well as the utilization of supervisory staff who are not professionally trained supervisors. Sometimes there is a misconception that any head of department of a particular subject could carry out

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school supervision but this is not true as many of them have never taken a single course on school supervision and they cannot provide the required professional help expected of a supervisor. From interviews principals also confirmed that they give feedback to teachers. When asked whether, they give feedback to the teachers after observation, 60% of the principals agreed that they do it after lesson observation. The other 40% of principal participants said that feedback is normally given by the other supervisors including the Deputy Principals, the Dean of Studies and the Heads of Departments who are delegated to observe the lessons.

The findings of this study are in agreement with Okendu, (2012) who found that in contemporary Nigeria, instructional supervision through democratic interactions between the teacher and the supervisor was found to be the most dominant approach of enhancing the professional growth and improving the techniques of teachers. However, these findings are contrary to Kamindo (2008) & Moswela (2010) who found that teachers seemed to view principals as being autocratic and that the environment in which instructional supervision took place in schools were rather autocratic with manifestations of silent hostility and intimidation to teachers.

Although some principals never provided feedback, in some schools it was done regularly. This was confirmed by 41% and 55% of teachers who agreed that principals provide feedback after classroom observation. It is important to note that classroom observation which is well designed, effectively utilized, more frequent and consistent, informative, collegial and guide teachers to improve instructional process consequent to improved learner outcomes regularly. The finding is also supported by a study done by Sule et al. (2015) which revealed that: there was a significant positive relationship between instructional supervisory practice of classroom observation and teachers' role effectiveness. Further, there was a significant positive relationship between instructional supervisory practice of checking of teachers' lesson notes and teachers' role effectiveness. And that a closer, regular and continuous instructional supervisory practice rather than snappy, unscheduled and partial supervision is what was urgently needed for effective implementation of any school curriculum.

The principals provision of instructional feedback implies that during instructional supervision, the intentions of instructional supervision are brought out at the stages of pre-observational, post-observational and plenary conferences are to some large extent always captured and communicated accordingly to the success of the instructional supervision process. Instructional feedback from the principals, when passed to the teachers enable them improve the quality of their teaching services in schools leading to high students' academic achievement.

On whether principals award teachers who have registered exemplary in students' examinations, 48% of teachers and 52% of students disagreed with the statement. This could be the reason why public secondary schools in Samburu County perform very poorly in academics. Another 29% of the teachers and 23% students who were undecided. Only a minority of 23% of the teachers and 25% of the students agreed that teachers were motivated. Teacher motivation is a factor for maximized teacher output. The researcher found out that some schools used teacher educational trips, incentives, giving bonuses on good results, complimentary remarks and appreciative actions from their supervisors some of the approaches that motivated teachers to execute instructional duties with commitment.

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Majority of the teachers disagreed that the principals award teachers who had registered exemplary performance in examinations. This could be a factor which demotivate teachers in Samburu Central Sub-county leading to poor performance especially in The Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education. The finding is in line with Dali et al., (2015) who opines that extrinsic motivation is propagated on job contentment, incentives, professional progression and work situational dynamics that affect teacher motivation. The finding additionally attests to Nwambam & Eze (2018) and Glanz (2018) that teacher motivation energizes them to act in desirable academically productive manner. This induces students to demonstrate zeal to learn invariably.

### **Conclusions**

Based on the findings, it can be concluded that principals' instructional supervisory practices influenced students' academic achievement. However, in some schools principals' instructional supervisory practices were not up to the required standards which cascaded to students' poor academic performance. That principals had untapped potentials for carrying out their supervisory roles effectively. On matters related to lesson observation, the researcher concluded that classroom observation was not effectively administered. In some schools it was conducted irregularly and while others did not do it at all. It further concluded that evaluation of teaching, transformational culture and organizing in-service training for teachers was ineffectively attended in Samburu Central Sub-County. Teacher preparedness for lessons was to some extent ineffective. The study also established that principals delegate their instructional supervisory roles to the Deputy Principals, senior teachers and the Heads of Departments. This therefore leads to compromise in instructional supervision leading to poor academic achievement of students in Samburu Central Sub-County.

The study also revealed that, most principals do not participate in school time tabling and monitoring students' progress. These factors impact negatively on students' academic achievement in public secondary schools in Samburu Central Sub-County in Samburu County. The researcher also concluded that teachers contribute to students' low academic achievement in public secondary schools in Samburu Central Sub-County by refusing to be observed during the lessons and having a negative attitude towards supervision. They can therefore not improve on areas they are weak at on instructional supervision thus affecting students' academic performances. All these require enhancement procedures to improve students' academic achievement of students in Samburu Central Sub-County in Samburu County.

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### **Recommendations of the Study**

Several aspects were noticed in the study which should be adopted to improve instructional supervisory roles of the principals to improve academic achievement of the students in public secondary schools in Samburu Central Sub-County in Samburu County. Consequently, from the findings of the study the subsequent recommendations were made;

(i)The Ministry of Education and teacher employer should put up a standardized measure of effective instructional supervision and strengthen follow up mechanisms on the roles and practices utilized by principals on supervision of instruction in schools.

(ii)The Ministry of Education should make follow ups on quality of instructional supervision by expanding government grants to provide instructional resources, assuring the academic welfare of the learners, maintaining learners' continuous assessment records and targets setting. The finding summits to TSC TPAD tool (2016) that requires a frequent appraisal to maintain quality in instructional process at the school level.

iii) The Ministry of Education should establish a standard measure of the adequacy of instructional materials in schools.

iv) That the MOEST establishes a regular National retraining programme for school administrators to bridge the gap between supervisory knowledge and competency for quality academic achievements.

v) That the teachers should embrace preparation for the instructional process before attending lessons.

vi) That the principals should fully embrace effective instructional supervision to enhance students' academic achievement.

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