

**CONTRIBUTION OF INSTRUCTIONAL SUPERVISION
PRACTICES BY THE SCHOOL AUTHORITIES IN
IMPROVING LEARNERS' ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE IN
PRIVATE SECONDARY SCHOOLS
BURERA DISTRICT RWANDA**

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Abstract

This study aimed at assessing the contribution of instructional supervision practices on students' academic performance in private secondary schools. The study was guided by three objectives which are: to assess the instructional supervision practices by school authorities' private secondary schools, in Burera District; to analyse the learners' academic performance in private secondary schools, in Burera District; to assess the contribution of instructional supervision, by school authorities, in improving learners' academic performance in Burera District. The questionnaire was the main instrument of data collection and it was distributed to school managers, deputy school managers in charge of studies and to teachers from private schools located in Burera District. The study used descriptive design as a research design. Quantitative method was used, and the data were analysed using Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) and then the findings were presented using tables. The first objective was to assess instructional supervision practices in private schools of Burera District during the period of 2017-2019. The results from the study revealed that instructional supervision practices by school authorities are various and effective in teaching and learning activities in private schools. The second objective of the study aimed at analysing students' academic performance in private schools. The findings have shown that respondents had different views but the majority declared that it was good in the last three years. The third objective of this research was to assess contribution of instructional supervision practices on students' academic performance in private schools in Burera District during the period of 2017-2019. The findings showed that instructional supervision practices done by school authorities contribute greatly on students' academic performance. Ministry of Education through its institutions such as Rwanda TVET Board (RTB) and Rwanda Education Board (REB) together with Education Directorates at district level should continue to emphasize on practicing instructional supervisions by school authorities and provide school authorities with capacity building (training) on instructional supervision practices. Schools should continue to practice instructional supervisions to improve students' academic performance. Teachers should continue to improve their teaching and learning methodologies for students' academic performance improvement.

Keywords: *Academic Performance; Instruction; Instructional Supervision Practices; Private Secondary School; Supervision and School authority*

According to Machingambi (2014) education has been edged upon as being the best tool for national reforms in the socio-economic and political arena in any country. Glickman (2010) Globally, the governments of various countries on a

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continuous basis are aimed at funding schools to ensure that they have instructional materials and teaching personnel besides providing an environment that is conducive to both the learners and the teachers.

Peretomode (2004) effectively providing education requires an educational system that is reliable. In the context of educational system, reliability is solely enhanced through practices of supervision conducted by the head teachers or other school administrators. Peretomode (2004) added that supervision is categorized into two: personnel and instructional supervision. Archibong (2010) defines instructional supervision as a set of activities which are carried out with the purpose of making the teaching and learning purpose better for the learner. On the other hand, Archibong (2010) defines personnel supervision as the set of activities which are carried out by the supervisor with the basic aim of sensitizing, mobilizing and motivating staff in the school towards performing their duties optimally in terms of the achievement of the stated aims and objectives of the education system.

Different countries around the world have different mechanisms of addressing the issues of instructional supervision

In Rwanda, according to MINEDUC (2013), the head teachers do the instructional supervision at the school level. Teachers play an important role in the implementation and the attainment of the desired educational results. This requires an effective instructional supervision of teachers in order to produce vibrant outputs that will contribute effectively towards national development. Such outcomes will result in high level of academic achievements that entails the inculcation of the right type of knowledge, skills, values and attitudes to the learners enabling them serve efficiently and effectively their society.

Tyagi (2010) has emphasized that instructional supervision is one of responsibilities of school authorities and these create a platform for both teachers and school heads to use their collective expertise in self-appraisal of teachers, to identify gaps in teacher technical and pedagogical skills, knowledge and competencies in order to provide the vital support needed for teachers' professional performance with purpose of achieving high learners' performance. So, the purpose of instructional supervision is to assist, direct, stimulate and motivate teachers to enhance or improve effective teaching and learning process towards academic performance of students in educational institution.

Although, private schools' authorities conduct different instructional supervision practices to make sure the teaching and learning process with expecting the improvement of learners' academic performance, this practice remains poor in private secondary schools in Burera District. According to the Rwanda Education Board (REB), national examination results of senior six, (2018) the private schools in Burera District come in the last positions among other private schools in Rwanda. This situation has also been emphasised by MINEDUC (2018) Education statistical year book (2018). This means that Burera District private schools are not performing adequately and one of the leading causes is associated with poor instruction supervision practices.

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The problem is that teachers are regularly supervised and comments are given by their school authorities to improve their teaching and students' academic performance. Unfortunately, the academic performance of students in private secondary schools of Burera District remains low to mean that educational goals are not effectively achieved in those secondary schools. Consequently, the researcher is pushed by this situation and is interested in carrying out this study to assess the contribution of instructional supervision practices by school authorities in improving learners' academic performance in private secondary schools in Burera District.

Different theories were reviewed. First of all, The underlying theoretical foundation in this study will be grounded by psychological theory of supervision explored in education by Planturroot (2006). According to this theory, organization stands as a body where it has other parts of the body that work together and it has a head that delegate duties to other parts of the organization, this head serve as an overseer who supervises the function of each part of the organization, this theory is in line with my study in which the principal stands as the instructional supervisor who delegate and supervises the performance of teachers in the organization.

In educational institutions, Planturroot (2006) explains that supervisors seek to improve schools, classroom instruction, and the growth of the organizational body by using one or more of the three philosophies namely: (i) essentialism (ii) experimentalism and (iii) existentialism. These three philosophies determine the manner in which the supervisor will direct the body of the organization. This study is going to build on the three philosophies because the strengths of each are useful for the principals' instructional supervisory roles. These philosophies also complement each other in their limitation, bringing in a positive blend for instructional supervision in school.

Secondly, the Essentialists argue that schools should transmit the traditional moral values and intellectual knowledge that students need to become model citizens. They maintain that classrooms should be controlled by the teacher who ideally serves as an intellectual and moral role model for the students. The teachers or administrators decide what is most important for the students to learn and place little emphasis on students' interests. Essentialist teachers focus heavily on achievement test scores as a means of evaluating progress.

According to Fitzgerald (2011) the head teachers are bestowed with the duty of supervising the teachers in their respective schools and controlling that they carry out their responsibilities effectively. There are numerous and endless supervisory practices that school authorities can perform in the effort to improve teaching-learning and consequently impact on students' academic performance. According to Dipaola & Hoy, (2013), instructional leadership should be directed to several areas including scheduling of teaching and learning activities, adherence to curriculum requirements and ability of teaching staff, supplying of teaching and learning materials and equipment among others.

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Sule et al. (2015) noted that it is incumbent upon the headteachers to develop as well as maintain the competence of their juniors. The competence, according to Sule et al. (2015), is developed and maintained through instructional supervisory practices such as moderating marking schemes, moderating examination question papers, micro-teaching, workshops, conferencing, demonstration, classroom observation, checking teachers' regularity in class, teachers' punctuality, pupils' notes, schemes of work, lesson notes among others. The findings of the study conducted by Sule et al. (2015) revealed that in order to conduct these tasks, the school principals ought to have adequate supervisory capacity and as well encourage their teachers to utilize their talents where necessary so as to improve instructional procedures at the end.

Research Questions

How effective are the instructional supervision practices by school authorities in private secondary schools, in Burera District; How is the learners' academic performance in private secondary schools, in Burera District?; What is the contribution of instructional supervision, by school authorities, in improving learners' academic performance in Burera District?

Research design

According to Creswell (2014), Research design is a set of advance decisions that make up the master plan specifying the methods and procedures for collecting and analysing the needed information. This research, a descriptive research design was used to explain the variables, research methodology based on investigation. The study also employed quantitative method and use the results to best understand the research problem. 77 respondents (4 school managers, 4 deputy school managers and 69 teachers) from 4 private secondary schools located in Burera District were contacted for questionnaires with the purpose of responding to the set research questions.

Target population

According to Oso & Onen (2011) target population is the total number of subjects, objects or events with common attributes or features that are of interest to a researcher. The population for this research was made up of a set of 77 respondents who are 4 school managers, 4 deputy school managers in charge of studies (deputy school managers), and 69 teachers from four private secondary schools located in Burera District.

Findings

Assessment of instructional supervision practices by school authorities in private schools

The researcher sought to know how effective instructional supervision practices in private schools are. The respondents have assessed instructional supervision practices in private schools and their views are presented below:

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Mean, SD, minimum and maximum on assessment of instructional supervision practices by school authorities in private schools

Statement	N	Mean	SD	Min	Max
Pre-observation meeting of school authorities with teachers help in making teachers and students ready not only for class visits but also for teaching and learning process	77	4.16	.70	3.0	5.0
Class visits done by school authorities enhances the preparation of lesson and makes its delivery effective	77	4.3	.60	3.00	5.00
Checking teachers' pedagogical documents help teacher to focus on teaching process and leads to the effective instructional delivery	77	4.3	.60	3.00	5.00
Checking students' documents such as notebooks prepare students to always have notes complete and well taken and study them regularly	77	4.23	.70	3.00	5.00
Checking students' attendance improve students' active participation	77	4.05	.88	2.00	5.00
Peer teaching among visited teachers supervised by school authorities help teachers to improve teaching experience	77	3.9	.92	2.00	5.00
Post-observation meeting of school authorities with visited teachers' mentors teachers and facilitates improvement of the quality of teachers' instruction.	77	4.1	.96	2.00	5.00
Overall		4.31	0.77		

Strongly Disagree= [1-2]=**Very Low Mean**; Disagree= [2-3]=**Low mean**; Neutral=[3-4]=**moderated mean**; Agree= [4-5]=**High mean**; Strongly Agree = [5-]=**Very High mean**

Source: Primary data, 2021

The findings in the table above showed how instructional supervision practices are effective in teaching and learning activities. The mean rating of respondents' views of seven questions were 4.16, 4.3, 4.3, 4.23, 4.05, 3.9 and 4.1 corresponded to standard deviation of 0.70, 0.60, 0.60, 0.70, 0.88, 0.92 and 0.96. These findings indicated that respondents in this research had high agreement on the effectiveness of instructional supervision practices as the overall mean rating was 4.31 and standards deviation was 0.77 meaning that the choice was concentrated on agree and strongly agree rates.

Analyzing students' academic performance in private schools

The main teaching and learning outcome are students' academic performance. According to the Burera secondary school results (2019) of the last three years, private secondary performance in national was at a good percentage and this performance was due to different factors including instructional supervision practices conducted by school authorities. The national examinations result of last three years indicated private schools progressed gradually in performance as the average of performance was 56.7% in 2017; the performance was 62.1% in 2018 and the performance of private schools in Burera became 78.8% in 2019. With this progress in students' performance, the researcher sought to know how students' academic performance was in three last years in private schools and asked respondents to analyze it. The tables below summarized the views of respondents:

Mean, SD, minimum and maximum on students’ academic performance in the last 3 years.

Statement	N	Mean	SD	Min	Max
The students’ academic performance in class works has been good in the last 3 years	77	4.02	.86	2.00	5.00
The students’ academic performance in quizzes has been good in the last 3 years	77	4.11	.82	2.00	5.00
The students’ academic performance in school examinations has been good in the last 3 years	77	3.9	1.07	1.00	5.00
All students have been promoted to the next class and there were no repeaters in the last 3 years,	77	4.04	1.09	1.00	5.00
In the last 3 years more than a half of the students of this school have had over 80% in annual school results	77	3.86	1.28	1.00	5.00
In the last 3 years more than 1/2 of the candidates of the national examinations have been in division one and two each year	77	2.83	1.04	1.00	5.00
In the last 3 years the school has been classified among the top ten best academically performing schools in the district	77	2.90	1.06	1.00	5.00
Overall		3.73	0.78		

Strongly Disagree= [1-2]=**Very Low Mean**; Disagree= [2-3]=**Low mean**; Neutral=[3-4]=**moderated mean**; Agree= [4-5]=**High mean**; Strongly Agree = [5-]=**Very High mean**

Source: Primary data, 2021

Basing on the findings in the table above respondents expressed different views on students’ academic performance. This has been observed through the mean rating from 1st to 7th questions that were 4.02, 4.11, 3.9, 4.04, 3.86, 2.83 and 2.90 corresponding to standards deviation of 0.86, 0.82, 1.07, 1.09, 1.28, 1.04 and 1.06 which showed that majority of respondents agreed that students’ academic performance is good in private schools. The high rate of agreement was also observed through the overall mean of agreement (3.73) and standard deviation (0.78).

Assessing the contribution of instructional supervision practices, by school authorities, in improving learners’ academic performance in private schools.

Instructional supervision practices play a great role in improving students’ academic performance. The findings in the table below indicated the findings on contribution of instructional supervision practices, by school authorities, in improving learners’ academic performance in private schools.

Mean, SD, minimum and maximum of contribution of instructional supervision practices, by school authorities, in improving learners’ academic performance in private schools

Statement	N	Mean	SD	Min	Max
School authorities’ instructional supervision practices improve teacher’s instruction and support him/her grow professionally.	77	4.00	1.06	2.00	5.00
School authorities’ instructional supervision practices play a significant role in building teacher’s pedagogical competence	77	4.14	1.08	1.00	5.00
School authorities’ instructional supervision practices help scheme of work, lesson plans, lesson content and activities/exercises to be well organized and adopted to students’ level	76	4.20	.90	2.00	5.00
School authorities’ instructional supervision practices create a good relationship between students and teachers.	77	4.13	.73	3.00	5.00

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School authorities' instructional supervision practices make students punctual, regular, interested and lesson focussed	77	4.25	.86	2.00	5.00
School authorities' instructional supervision practices enhance active class participation.	77	4.18	.85	2.00	5.00
School authorities' instructional supervision practices play a significant role in improving students' academic performance	77	4.00	.95	1.00	5.00
Overall		4.12	0.88		

Strongly Disagree= [1-2]=**Very Low Mean**; Disagree= [2-3]=**Low mean**; Neutral= [3-4]=**moderated mean**; Agree= [4-5]=**High mean**; Strongly Agree = [5-]=**Very High mean**

Source: Primary data, 2021

The findings in the table above presented mean rating and standards deviation explaining how instructional supervision practices contribute to students' academic performance. This has been indicated by the means of all seven questions that were 4.00, 4.14, 4.20, 4.13, 4.25, 4.18, and 4.00 corresponding to the standards deviation of 1.06, 1.08, 0.90, 0.73, 0.86, 0.85 and 0.95, all presenting that majority of respondents agreed that instructional supervision practices contribute immensely to students' academic performance. The overall mean rating of 4.12 and standard deviation of 0.88 indicated a higher level of agreement.

Conclusion

The purpose of this chapter was to present, analyse and interpret the data collected. The findings of the study highlighted the assessment of instructional supervision practices in private schools; analysis of students' academic performance in the last 3 years and the contribution of instructional supervision practices done by school authorities on students' academic performance and confirmed that they have played a great role in improving students' academic performance. The research findings showed that most of the respondents agreed that instructional supervision practices improve significantly students' academic performance.

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