ORGANIZATION OF THE INSTRUCTIONAL SUPERVISION PROCESS IN THE SCHOOLS

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INTRODUCTION

Since independence the quantitative expansion of the general education system in Sri Lanka has progressed satisfactorily. However, the quality of education has not been improved in parallel with such quantitative expansions. With this background, ensuring the quality of education has now become an urgent educational priority and is a key challenge of our general education system. On the other hand the instructional supervision process has become a very important aspect to ensure effectiveness & efficiency of teaching- learning process in the school and finally to secure the quality of education. Therefore it is very important to ensure and establish an efficient instructional supervision process in the schools. This research study focused on the organization of the instructional supervision process of schools.

According to Glickman (1992), "without a strong, effective, and adequately staffed program of supervision, an effective school is unlikely to result" Supervision can be defined as "the glue of a successful school" (Glickman, Gordon, & Ross-Gordon, 2007). Sergiovanni and Starratt (2002:6) describe instructional supervision as opportunities provided to teachers for developing their capacities towards contributing to students' academic success. Therefore maintaining an effective instructional supervision process is one of the most important functions of the school. The effectiveness of the instructional supervision process depends on an adequately organized instructional supervision process.

Teaching-Learning process is the most important aspect in our classroom. However, research shows that many teachers in our schools are unprepared to meet the needs of different learners or to manage their classrooms. Many teachers are not aware of how to develop an effective lesson plan, how to write specific, observable and measurable learning objectives and how to create or maintain an effective learning environment for their students. The other issue is that many principals in our schools are unprepared to supervise, monitor or manage the performance of teachers. The effectiveness of teachers and the learning environment they create are directly within the control of the principals. However, many principals who are willing to move to impoverished areas lack the necessary supervisory and management skills. As a result, those principals fail to ensure that their teachers direct students towards success. So the education system in our country should pay greater attention to instructional supervision more than ever before. Therefore the instructional supervision process occupies a unique place in the entire school system. Accordingly, this study focused on the organization of the instructional supervision process in the schools.

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The following specific research questions were formulated in line with the main objective of the research study.

1. What is the nature of the organizational structure of instructional supervision process in the schools? On the basis of principals views.
2. What is the degree of functions and responsibilities of vice principals, sectional heads and subject heads in the instructional supervision process?
3. What are the problems and challenges faced by supervisors involved in the instructional supervision process?

METHODOLOGY

The survey research design and the descriptive research approach were selected for the conducted of this study. The study used qualitative and quantitative techniques for data collection which included questionnaires and interviews. Simple statistical methods were used for data analysis. The population of this study consisted of all (46) the 1AB, 1C, Type ii & Type iii schools in the Dehiattakandiya Educational Zone of Ampara District. Accordingly, 10 schools were selected in order to maintain a meaningful representation of the school population. Thus the total sample included 10 Principals, 18 Vice–principals, 28 sectional heads, 24 subject heads.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1. The organization of instructional supervision process in the schools.

Table 1-Organization of instructional supervision by principals.

	Statement	Always happening	%	Moderately happening	%	Not happening	%	Total	%
01	Assign a supervisory team for instructional supervision process.	04	30	03	30	03	30	10	100
02	Consider education qualifications and seniority to select supervisors.	07	70	0	0	03	30	10	100
03	Consider respective circular (2003/38) to select supervisors.	02	20	04	40	04	40	10	100
04	Use instructional supervision work plan.	07	70	03	30	0	0	10	100
05	Allocation of time for supervision from the school time table.	04	40	03	30	03	30	10	100
06	Maintain supervision reports.	05	50	02	20	03	30	10	100
07	Use instructional supervision reports to improve teacher professional development.	03	30	03	30	03	30	10	100
08	Facilitate to training supervisors.	05	50	03	30	03	30	10	100

According to Table 1, nearly 60% of the principals had developed a systematic mechanism to improve of instructional supervision process of their schools. Specially, it was very important to assign a supervisory team for instructional supervision. Majority (70%) of the principals had considered education qualifications and seniority to select supervisors and used an instructional

supervision work plan. However, nearly 40% of the principals had not given sufficient consideration to developing a proper mechanism to improve instructional supervision process of their schools. In the interview they pointed out that due to lack of staff and experienced senior teachers they were unable to assign a supervisory team for instructional supervision process.

2. Functions and responsibilities of instructional supervision process.(views of vice principals, sectional heads and subject heads)

The majority (60%) of the vice principals mentioned that they always give their support to plan, organize, supervise and maintain the school instructional supervision process and perform their duties. Nearly 50% of the sectional heads and subject heads mentioned that they always give their support to organize school based projects for teacher development, supervise co-curricular activities, maintain and evaluate monthly supervision reports, class room observation, resolving issues of teachers, maintaining sectional data bank, monitoring and evaluation of term notes, time table, lesson notes etc.

3. The problems and challenges faced by supervisors in the school instructional supervision process.

Majority (80%) of the supervisors mentioned that, lack of experienced and competent supervisors, lack of time for supervision due to bulk of administrative and other management duties, negative attitudes concerning supervision of teachers, lack of pedagogical knowledge concerning instructional supervision, deficiencies of formal training of supervisors, & inconvenience for establishing sound supervisory culture in their schools as the main issues and challenges faced by them in the instructional supervision process of the school.

CONCLUSIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS

Educational activities in schools should be supervised to achieve the education objectives. Hence instructional supervision process is a good mechanism to up-grade performance of the teaching-learning process and teachers up to required levels.It can be concluded that the efficiency of the teaching- learning process of the classroom and professional development of teachers would be unsuccessful and expected goals would not be achieved, if the internal supervision process of the classroom is ignored. Majority of principals have developed a proper organizational structure to establish and maintain instructional supervision process of their schools. It can be concluded that, all the vice principals, sectional heads, and subject heads had given their fullest support to plan, organize and maintain the school instructional supervision process and performed their duties and responsibilities well. It can be concluded that, lack of experienced & competent supervisors, negative attitudes towards supervision among teachers, lack of pedagogical knowledge concerning instructional supervision, deficiencies of formal training of supervisors, lack of time for supervision are main obstacles & issues faced by them. Accordingly, some recommendations can be made as follows.

1. Priority should be given to the school instructional supervision process & it should be carried out continuously. Principals should be serious about the instructional supervision and establishing of a sound supervisory system in the school.

2. The school principals should be used to effective and meaningful recruitment procedures for the selection of school supervisors. Specially, the respective circular (2003/38) issued by the ministry of Education to select supervisors must be considered.
3. All the supervisory staff must be constantly refreshed on quality & appropriate supervision training.
4. All the supervisory staff must be maintained and trained to use instructional supervision reports to improve teaching-learning process and teacher professional development.
5. All the supervisory staff must develop optimistic attitudes towards supervision among teachers.
6. Establishment of a sufficient school climate that is conducive to effective instructional supervision process.

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