INSTRUCTIONAL SUPERVISION PRACTICES OF SECONDARY SCHOOL HEADS IN MAGUINDANAO 1 DIVISION

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Abstract: The primary objective of the study was to explore the instructional supervision practices of secondary school heads in Maguindanao 1 Division. This qualitative research employed phenomenological approach aimed to explore the instructional supervision practices of secondary school heads in Maguindanao 1 Division. Fifteen secondary school heads as Key Informants were selected. The study revealed the different instructional supervision practices of secondary school heads in the Maguindanao 1 Division and the challenges encountered by the secondary school heads. As to the instructional supervision practices of secondary school heads they have identified two major practices such as close instructional supervision and walkthrough supervision.

Regarding the challenges encountered, there were several challenges encountered in the conduct of instructional supervision of the school principal such as lack of itemized teachers to teach in different field of specialization, lack of resources such as learning materials and facilities and school is situated in a conflict prone area.

In conclusion, instructional supervision practices were conducted and observed by the secondary school heads. A number of challenges were also faced by supervisors during their supervisory duties, and most of these challenges had hindered the success of supervision as well as affected the entire school and classroom instructional performance. To counteract the adverse effect of these, the secondary school heads have rendered interventions to these challenges. It is noticeable that supervision promotes teacher's professional growth and development as well as benefits the teachers with technical skills.

Finally, Instructional Supervision is one of the main functions of the school administrator particularly on the aspect of supervision in instruction to ensure quality instruction and teaching that leads to the promotion of learners' holistic development.

1. INTRODUCTION

In the education process the role of teachers cannot be underestimated (Glatthorn cited in Kutsyuruba, 2003). In addition improving teaching is a complex process in which many elements should interact. Teachers are in the center of this improvement process. Hence teachers acceptance and interaction with the supervisory practice, therefore, the techniques, methods, models, or processes used by supervisors at schools, provide the catalyst for any supervisory success. The way teachers gain professional support from instructional supervisors and the way teachers view the instructional supervision is a vital importance in the outcomes of the supervision process. Instructional supervision is an interactive process that depends on the source of supervision of the principal and the teachers. Therefore, assessing the practices and challenges of instructional supervision is important in implementing successful supervision (Abdulkareem, 2001). Supervision is "an intervention that is provided by a senior member of a profession to a junior member or members of that same profession". This relationship is evaluative, extends over time, and has the simultaneous purposes of enhancing the professional functioning of the junior member(s); monitoring the quality of professional services offered to the clients she; he, or they see(s), and serving as a gatekeeper of those who are to enter the particular profession, (Bernard and Goodyear, 1998).The definition of supervision is different with different literatures and different professional aspects. Particularly, (Surya Govinda and Tapan, 1999:8) defined educational supervision as; "all those services whose main function is to control and evaluate, and/or advice and support teachers**.

Nowadays, improving the quality of education has given priority throughout the world. To monitor the quality, the national authorities highly depend on the school supervision, (De Grauwe, 2001a:13). Quality has different meanings

depending on the kind of organization and the customers served (Certo, 2006:7). Particularly, education quality, according to (Dittmar, Mendelson and Ward, 2002:30) is; "the provision of good education by well- prepared teachers". However, all teachers are not qualified enough and as a result they need support from supervisors (Giordano, 2008:11).

To improve teachers instructional performance, the instructional supervisors should also work with teachers in fixable and collaborative style. Thus, in order to bring effective education through the improved teaching-leaning process; instructional supervisors should be democratic and cooperative and should get serious attention in the school.

Researches by (Beach and Reinhartz, 2000) emphasized that the importance of the collaborative effort of all participants involved in the supervisory process. This would help in improving the way this practice are introduced and avoid any potential conflict. Working in supervision reform without having this kind of information is a great deficiency that might misguide the efforts for improvement.

Accordingly, this study aimed to assess the practices and challenges of instructional supervision in secondary schools in the Division of Maguindanao I regarding the actual instructional supervisory practices implemented by principals at schools. Thus, personal and professional development is the outcome of the effective instructional supervision.

Research Questions

The study described the practices in the instructional supervision of secondary schools in Maguindanao 1. Specifically it sought answers to the following questions.

1.   What are the practices in the instructional supervision of the principals in the secondary schools?

2.   What are the challenges as experienced in the instructional supervision of the school heads?

Theoretical Consideration

This study is anchored to the Path Goal theory developed by Robert House. It has its roots in expectancy theory. This theory states that a leader's behavior is dependent on the satisfaction, motivation and performance of his or her subordinates. It further claims that the leader engages in behaviors that compliment subordinates abilities and compensate for deficiencies. This theory can be classified both as a contingency and as a transactional leadership theory. It was developed to describe the way the leaders encourage and support their followers in achieving the goals they have set. According to this theory leaders should be clear on what they expect from the subordinates.

This study is significant not only for the researcher but also for the secondary school heads, teachers and the division office. The result of this study may be helpful for Maguindanao 1 division to identify the challenges that secondary schools faced in implementing instructional supervision and remedial measures against these challenges.

2.   RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The study used qualitative-case study research design. It explored base on the instructional supervision practices of secondary school heads. The essence of case study is to explore and investigate contemporary real-life phenomenon through detailed contextual analysis of a limited number of events or conditions, and their relationships. Yin (1984:23) defines the case study research method "as an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context; when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident; and in which multiple sources of evidence are used."

The case study method permits the collection of detailed descriptive data, which are usually qualitative in nature. It may provide information on the unique features of particular individuals. They are selected to provide the researcher with an opportunity to study the phenomenon of interest. The research questions identify phenomenon and the cases are selected in order to explore how the phenomenon exists within a particular case. In this design, individuals who are experiencing the phenomenon under investigation are all suitable cases for analysis.

The study was conducted in Maguindanao I Division of Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao. Most particularly in the municipality of Datu Paglas, General Salipada K. Pendatun, Pandag, Paglat, Buluan, Mangudadatu, Rajahbuayan, Mamasapano, Shariff Aguak, Datu Unsay, Guindulungan and Talitay where the different national high schools are located.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter presents the results and analysis of data. The data are presented in narrative and tabular forms. Coding is also used to ensure the ethical considerations of the conduct of research study.

I. Instructional Supervision Practices

There were several instructional supervision practices mentioned by the school principals. The instructional practices conducted by school principals are enumerated such as close supervision on teacher's attendance, implementation of monthly plan, classroom supervision, LAC session, In-service training, monitoring by walking, and provision of Curriculum Guide. It is mentioned that school principals usually conduct a strong close supervision on teachers' attendance. Most of them strictly monitored teachers' implementation of monthly plans as part of the principal's supervision. Along with these practices is the regular classroom supervision where the principals did classroom observations. In-service training was also mentioned as part of the mechanism done by the principal to enrich practices in instructional supervision. The in-service training is usually conducted at the beginning of the school year as part of the preparations for the teachers. Another strategy cited is MOWA, which means monitoring by walking. Here, the principals did management by simply walking around the corridors to ensure teachers are doing their job well.

Lastly, another mechanism used is the provision of curriculum guides for teachers. One principal said:

"*Yung walking style, listening to the teachers and the students. Walking style if the teachers has or have problems in his or her teaching style tini take note po natin yan. The administration assess the teachers through meeting. By not mentioning the name of the teachers to avoid na baka masaktan, magiging problema sa paaralan. Instructional supervision helps a lot because there are teachers sometimes turo ng turo minsan nawawala sa instructional materials so because of that minsan nagigising sila".*

Many times informal visits, general supervision and informal supervision are used interchangeably. Partially, general supervision embodies those supervisory practices carried out by heads of schools outside the classroom (Okumbe, 2007). General supervision denotes a number of supervisory activities a head teacher may do outside the classroom purposely checking on teacher's performance outside the classroom. One prototype of such supervisory activities is informal visits (Beaver, 2002).

And teacher's outside-the-classroom performance may include preparing lesson plans, schemes of work, teaching aids and materials if provided, supervising students while working in school garden, or during co-curricular activities to mention but few. A slight difference between general supervision and informal supervision is that informal supervision is comprised of the casual encounters that occur between supervisor and teacher, and it is characterized by frequent informal visits to teacher's classrooms, conversations with teachers about their work, and informal activities.

Unfortunately, there is a handful of literature in relation to research study on either correlation between outside-the-classroom supervision and teacher's performance or student's performance. Most researchers and scholars focus mainly on what teachers do in the classroom. Even some primary and secondary school heads do not consider it as essential to check on their teacher's performance outside the classroom; say like during co-curricular activities and trip study.

II. Strengths and Weaknesses Encountered in Instructional Supervision

The strengths and weaknesses encountered in the instructional supervision were presented in tabular forms. Thematic analysis were utilized in the study.

The participants' responses show the strengths and weaknesses encountered by the school principals in the supervision of instruction. The data were analyzed and categorized by themes. The data were categorized into two (a) contributing factor and (b) barriers encountered by the school heads in the instructional supervision. School Principals play a vital role in the implementation, monitoring, assessing and evaluating the proper supervision of instruction.

Theme 1- Contributing Factor

Based on the interview of participants, several experiences were encountered as to the strengths and weaknesses observed in the conduct of instructional supervision. The following strengths were cited by the school principals in the supervision of instruction such as, strengthen performance of the school, improvement for teachers, promotion of student's learning,

improvement of student's competence, shows instructional leadership, ensure quality education, evaluate teacher's performance, update teachers and ensure teachers are properly guided.

Theme 2- Barriers Encountered in the Instructional Supervision

On the other hand, there were also issues that contributed to the weaknesses enumerated by the participants such as less assurance of the implementation of the new curriculum, lack or non-availability of instructional materials, less teaching strategies, insufficient learning materials, student- teacher relationship, big class size, young supervisor, non-computer literate teachers, tardiness of teachers, lack of teachers or few itemized teachers in our school, absenteeism of teachers, lack of teachers' teaching strategies, teachers were assigned not on their field of specialization, delayed deliveries of textbooks, lack classrooms, school is situated in a conflict prone area, limited resources, lack of innovative teaching strategies.

Supervision encourages a wide variety of instructional techniques and diversity in teaching methods which take into account the unique talents and capabilities of each teacher. Administrators/head teachers support the improvement of instruction by conducting teacher's observation as well as by giving suggestions, coaching, or demonstrating teaching skills or providing alternative teaching methods to enhance teachers and students performance. They also provide resources such as videotapes of a particular skill, staff development activities to individuals or small groups of teachers, and appropriate instructional materials that enhance the delivery of instruction inside and outside the classroom.

III. Challenges as Experience in the Instructional Supervision

Instructional Supervision is one of the main functions of the school administrator particular on the supervision of instruction to ensure quality of instruction that leads the promotion of pupil's holistic development. There were several challenges encountered in the conduct of instructional supervision of the school principal.

Principal 3 said "*40 percent sa aking mga guro ay volunteer teacher at di pwede nating mapressure para gumawa sa mga bagay na related sa instruction. Ano din, minsan matagal ang pagdating ng mga instructional materials, so ang ginamit naming ay yong old textbooks. Ang problema talaga namin ang kakulangan ng suplay ng learning materials.* (Forty (40) percent of my teachers were volunteer teachers, so I cannot pressure them to do things related to instruction. Another thing is the late arrivals of instructional materials so still we used the old textbooks. In other words, we have problems on insufficient supplies of learning materials.)"

Another principal was also interviewed personally on the challenges encountered and expressed saying "*karamihan sa aking mga teacher nagtuturo ng hindi nila field dahil sa kakulangan ng itemized teachers . (*Most of my teachers are teaching subjects not on their field of specialization).*"

Principal 8 also cited "*Ok marami ahh alam mo naman na ang aming* school is war zone area. *So… ang dami naming na encounter* with that. *Oh meron* man-made calamity *pag man-made calamities na sinasabi ang* instructional supervision is *naaapektuhan. So dapat… so paano kami? Paano naming naencourage ahh paano naming na*cocope-up *yun.* So as school head, I always look at the positive side of situation. So *nakita niyo meron* man-made calamity*, barilan, baha…*So inspite of that *bumabangon kami in ahh nagbebeautify kami ng area kasi naniniwala ako* "A good environment can attract students"and then *pag na attract ang estudyante natututo ng maayos ang mag-aral.* (As school head, there were a lot of challenges encountered in the instructional supervision practices since our school is located in the conflict-area where man-made and natural calamities were experienced that really affect the instructional supervision. There is armed conflict and heavy flooding on the locale. Despite these incidents, we still continue to beautify our school to stand the challenge. I considered a good environment somehow attracts students/ pupils to learn well.)

Principal 7 also mentioned "*The challenges that we encountered since I become an administrator of the school sometimes, problema sa teachers. Kung minsan kulang ang teachers na matagal magdating ang request mo. Yan ang problema na malaki. Minsan aabutin ng taon bago bababa ang teachers. Yung appointment nila ba. But actually hindi sa eskwela ang problema, in the regional office. Men are resourceful, nagpapatulong tayo sa local government, kung kakulangan ng teacher ang problema ang ginagawa naming yung napatulong kami sa mga bakante mga teachers na walang trabaho. Minsan may nagvovolunteer tinatanggap namin. Binibigyan ng allowance.* The study indicates that there are a number of challenges faced by supervisors during their supervisory duties, and most of these challenges may hinder the success of supervision as well as affect the entire school and classroom instructional performance.

IV. Best Practices Adapted to Improved Instructional Supervision

Several best practices adapted to improve the instructional supervision were given by the principal respondents such as the adaptation of MOWA (Monitoring by Walking). This practice was employed by the principal to monitor the teachers' activities that facilitates learning. Regular conduct of classroom observations were also adapted. As cited by one of the principals, the strategy helps teachers improve the teaching and learning activities, update and upgrade teachers' performance as well as school's performance.

Gerumi (2002) research findings, on the other hand, revealed that the teachers had an overall very satisfactory performance rating and performed beyond the target, unfortunately, majority of them did not have professional and technical skills other than their instructional skills. To this end, it is good to recollect again that supervision promotes teacher's professional growth and development as well as benefits them with technical skills.

The findings indicate that supervisory practices have a significant effect on secondary school student's academic performance. Most important, it is reasonable to note that this perceived effect of supervision of instruction on student's performance is indirect in that much of student's performance relies on a number of factors such as the role of teacher as both instructor and facilitator (Petty, 2004).

4.   DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

This section contains the insights that I have formulated based on the data gathered on the instructional supervision practices of the secondary school heads in Maguindanao1 Division. This part includes the findings, implications of the study and recommendations.

Summary of findings

Thematic Analysis was used to extract the themes embedded from the response of the informants, thus, it involved the following themes:

1. On the instructional supervision practices of the secondary school heads they have identified that are mostly used in the conduct of supervision. Along this are the regular classroom supervision where the principals did classroom observations, the walking through supervision where it is more informal and the in- service training done before the beginning of the school year.

2. Generally, school heads encountered different strengths and weaknesses in the instructional supervision. It strengthens performance of the teachers and improves the competence of students. On the other hand the weaknesses, such as less teaching strategies, insufficient learning materials and the attitude of teachers towards instructional supervision affects the implementation of the supervision.

3. Meanwhile, several challenges that affects the instructional supervision were also enumerated by the school heads in the conduct of the instructional supervision such as the lack of facilities, lack of itemized teachers and the peace and order situation of the area where the school is located. These challenges may hinder the success of instructional supervision. Hence, the secondary school heads sees it as an opportunity to adapt change and strengthen more the instructional supervision.

4. In the totality, there are common grounds among the different secondary school heads in terms of instructional supervision. And they considered it as the best practices. These are the (1) regular classroom observation where the school heads may announce or not the formal classroom visitation and the (2) walking through observation where the school heads informally observes the teachers by just merely passing through listens and take note of the on-going teaching-learning process.

Implications

In the foregoing findings, this study shows that secondary school heads are conducting instructional supervision in their respective schools regularly such as classroom supervision, LAC session, In-service training, monitoring by walking, and provision of Curriculum Guide.On the other hand they have also experienced difficulties in instructional supervision such as less teaching strategies, insufficient learning materials, big class size, young supervisor, non-computer literate teachers, tardiness of teachers and lack of teachers. This challenges and difficulties most of the times hinders them to achieve the desired goals in the instructional supervision. Hence the secondary school heads still manage and seek solution to the

problems. On the part of the teachers, sometimes they are reluctant of the supervision especially in the classroom observation and the use of teaching strategies. Yet the continuing instructional supervision uplift their performance and competence.

Furthermore, instructional supervision both the contributing factors and barriers were encountered by the secondary school heads. Since their main function is to ensure quality of instruction that leads the promotion of learner's holistic development. Therefore, school principals play a vital role in the implementation, monitoring, assessing and evaluating the proper supervision of instruction.

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