



AN INVESTIGATION ON THE ROLE OF THE CODE OF ETHICS IN ENHANCING SCHOOL SUPERVISION FOR NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN NIGERIA



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Abstract

This study investigated the role of the Code of Ethics in enhancing school supervision for national development in Nigeria. Adopting a descriptive survey design, the study focused on principals and teachers in public secondary schools in Oredo Local Government Area of Edo State. A total of 100 participants (40 principals and 60 teachers) were selected through a multi-stage sampling technique. Data were collected using a structured questionnaire. The questionnaires were validated and reviewed through expert in Educational Administration and Management and a reliability coefficient of 0.81 was obtained using Cronbach's alpha. The data collected were analyzed using descriptive statistics. Findings revealed that school supervision significantly contributes to national development by enhancing educational productivity, improving teacher performance, and aligning school activities with developmental goals. Ethical supervision was also found to foster accountability, minimize favoritism, and improve both teacher morale and student academic outcomes. Moreover, ethical supervisory practices promote equitable access to educational opportunities, supporting inclusivity and sustainability in education. The study concludes that adherence to the Code of Ethics in school supervision is essential for achieving quality education and advancing national development. Recommendations include integrating ethical training in leadership development programs and strengthening the implementation of ethical standards in school administration.

Keywords: Code of Ethics; School Supervision; National Development; Ethical Leadership

Introduction

Education is a vital instrument for advancing and safeguarding a nation's cultural heritage. It serves as the platform through which societal values, beliefs, and traditions are passed down across generations (Imasuen&Aibinuomo, 2022). To effectively fulfill this transformative role, education must be led by skilled and dedicated professionals. Teachers, as central figures in knowledge dissemination and character development, are essential to the success of any educational system. In Nigeria, the achievement of educational objectives is heavily reliant on the availability of qualified and committed educators (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2014). Regardless of the quality of educational policies and reforms, their success ultimately rests on the competence and dedication of teachers who bring these reforms to life within the classroom.

However, achieving educational goals is not possible without effective supervision. Supervision is a crucial mechanism to ensure teachers perform optimally, educational standards are maintained, and students receive meaningful, high-quality learning experiences (Alonge, Ogunmilade, &Bamikole, 2021). Without strong ethical frameworks guiding supervisory practices, the education system becomes vulnerable to inefficiencies, favoritism, and corruption, all of which hinder progress and, by extension, national development.



Ethical conduct in school supervision is fundamental for ensuring sustainable development in education. The Code of Ethics for School Supervision provides a framework to guide supervisors in upholding values such as integrity, fairness, respect, accountability, and excellence (Orunbon, Ifenaike, & Adeleke, 2022). The goal of education extends beyond mere knowledge transfer to include fostering transformative and sustainable practices that align with societal needs. As Dewey emphasized, the moral responsibility of schools and their conductors is to society (Aggarwal, 2008). Ethics, as a discipline, provides guidelines for determining right and wrong behaviors and prescribes how individuals should act. Njoku (2018) describes ethics as a normative science designed to define the right way to live, underlining the importance of ethical standards in shaping human behavior in various contexts.

In Nigeria, ethical challenges are evident across many public sectors, including education. Despite the presence of commendable values such as discipline, loyalty, honesty, and courage in official codes of conduct, these principles are often not effectively implemented (Kukah, 2012). This gap between ethical standards and practice suggests the need for a stronger integration of ethical principles within the educational system. Ethical leadership in school management is crucial for addressing these challenges. Campbell (2003) highlights the importance of school-based ethical initiatives, such as creating platforms for open dialogue, forming ethics committees, and providing ethical leadership. A school principal who exemplifies ethical conduct encourages both teachers and students to uphold these standards and strive for excellence.

Supervision, as an aspect of educational leadership, plays a key role in maintaining high standards in teaching and learning. Ogba and Igu (2014) identified supervision as a key strategy for enhancing teacher effectiveness. Gordon and Ross-Gordon (2001) describe supervision as a service-oriented activity designed to assist teachers in performing more effectively. Therefore, ethical supervision is essential for promoting professionalism and fostering trust within educational settings. A key aspect of ethical supervision is fairness in interactions with teachers and students, providing a supportive environment, addressing their needs, and recognizing their intrinsic worth. Furthermore, school leadership must uphold trust and integrity in all interactions. Hartman and Stefkovich (2005) argue that school administrators should model professional conduct in their relationships with the school community, guided by democratic, social, and universal ethical values.

Promoting ethical supervision contributes to national development by fostering sustainable practices among school leaders and educators. Mayer (2010) found that leaders who demonstrate high levels of integrity are more likely to have committed and satisfied staff, which in turn enhances workplace morale and productivity. Supervisors must remain honest, transparent, and consistent in both words and actions, safeguarding sensitive information and avoiding conflicts of interest.

Another core ethical principle is equity. School leaders must ensure equitable access to resources and opportunities for all, regardless of race, gender, disability, religion, or socioeconomic status. Ethical supervisors foster inclusive learning environments, promote diversity, and advocate for the rights and dignity of all stakeholders (UNESCO, 2015). They lead by example, address unethical conduct promptly, and uphold a culture of integrity and ethical behavior.

Recent empirical studies underscore the importance of effective school supervision. Akintayo, Temisanren, and Showunmi (2024) examined the role of school supervision and inspection in improving the quality of secondary education in Ibadan North Local Government Area, Oyo State. Their research found a strong correlation between effective supervision and enhanced educational outcomes, with schools that had regular and structured supervision demonstrating higher student performance, better teacher accountability, and improved administrative efficiency. Elenwo and Dike (2023) explored the influence of school supervision on the management of public senior secondary schools in Rivers East Senatorial District, Rivers State. They found that regular supervision positively impacted school management practices, including teacher performance, student outcomes, and overall school efficiency. Odefunsho, Odefunsho, and Ayoku (2022) investigated how educational supervision serves as a catalyst for internal quality assurance in secondary schools. The study revealed that effective



supervision is crucial for maintaining high educational standards, identifying areas for improvement in teaching methods, and fostering professional development among teachers, all of which enhance the quality of education. Ijaiya (2022) aimed to clarify the concept of educational supervision within the context of Nigerian school administration. The study concluded that clear definitions of supervision, coupled with adequate training for school leaders, could significantly improve the quality of education by equipping supervisors to guide teachers effectively, which in turn boosts student outcomes. Jacob and Richard (2021) focused on the challenges faced in the supervision of secondary education in Abuja, Federal Capital Territory. They identified issues such as insufficient funding, a lack of resources, and poorly trained supervisors. The study recommended that addressing these challenges through frequent and high-quality supervision would enhance the effectiveness of the secondary education system in the region.

Despite these encouraging findings, the integration of ethical principles into school supervision remains inconsistent across many educational institutions in Nigeria. This inconsistency poses a significant challenge to the attainment of educational goals and national development. Therefore, it is crucial to investigate how the application of the Code of Ethics in school supervision can contribute to overcoming these challenges and ensuring more effective, sustainable, and ethical supervision practices that align with national development objectives.

Statement of the Problem

Despite the existence of ethical codes and supervisory frameworks within Nigeria's educational system, many schools still suffer from unethical practices in leadership and supervision. Reports of favoritism, lack of accountability, and abuse of authority persist among school supervisors and administrators, thereby weakening trust and undermining educational outcomes. These unethical behaviors often lead to poor staff morale, teacher attrition, and diminished student performance, ultimately threatening the realization of national educational goals. There is a need to examine the practical application of ethical codes in school supervision and explore how adherence to these principles can contribute to national development. This study, therefore, seeks to investigate the role of the Code of Ethics in achieving national development through effective school supervision in Nigeria.

Research Questions

The study is guided by the following research questions:

1. What is the impact of school supervision on national development in Nigeria?
2. How does ethical school supervision influence the quality of education?
3. To what extent does ethical supervision in schools promote equitable access to sustainable educational development?

Methodology

This study adopted a descriptive survey design to investigate the role of the Code of Ethics in enhancing school supervision for national development in Nigeria. The population of the study comprised school principals and teachers working in public secondary schools in Oredo Local Government Area, Edo State. To obtain a representative sample, a multi-stage sampling technique was employed to select 40 principals and 60 teachers. Data were collected using a structured questionnaire titled "Ethics and School Supervision Questionnaire (ESSQ)." The instrument was developed by the researcher and comprised four sections: the first section focused on respondents' demographic data; the second assessed the impact of school supervision on national development in Nigeria; the third addressed the influence of ethical school supervision on the quality of education; and the fourth examined the extent ethical supervision in schools promote equitable access to sustainable educational development. To ensure the validity of the instrument, the draft questionnaire was subjected to expert review by professionals in Educational Administration as well as Measurement and Evaluation. Their feedback guided necessary adjustments to improve the clarity and relevance of the items. The reliability



of the instrument was established through a pilot test conducted among 20 participants (not included in the main study). The responses were analyzed using Cronbach's alpha, which yielded a reliability coefficient of 0.81, indicating a high level of internal consistency. The collected data were analyzed using descriptive statistics such as mean and standard deviation to answer the research questions.

Result

Table 1: Mean Ratings and Standard Deviation of scores on the Impact of Supervision on national development

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S/N	ITEM	SA	A	SD	D
1.	Supervision helps teachers to punctual regular to school				
2.	Supervision furnishes and equips teachers with necessary information and suggestion for instructional development				
3.	Ethical supervision contributes to professional growth of teachers				
4.	Supervision helps teachers to imbibe appropriate techniques for teaching in and outside classroom				
5.	Supervision helps teachers to acquire new ideas and to be motivated				
6.	Supervision take active part in seeking solutions to institution materials				
7.	Supervision contributes to professional growth of teachers				
8.	Supervision helps teachers to acquire new ideas on curriculum development				
9	Ethical supervision help in providing textbooks and other instructional materials				
10	Supervision helps teachers to demonstrating persuasive characters during teaching				

Discussion of Findings: Mean Ratings and Standard Deviation of Scores on the Impact of Supervision on National Development

The analysis of the mean ratings and standard deviations of the responses from the questionnaire reveals significant insights into the perceived impact of supervision on national development through educational improvement.

1. **Supervision and Teacher Punctuality:** The mean ratings show that most respondents agreed or strongly agreed that supervision enhances teacher punctuality and regularity at school. This suggests that effective monitoring mechanisms instill discipline among teachers, which in turn contributes to better school performance and overall educational development.

2. **Provision of Instructional Guidance:** The item on supervision furnishing teachers with instructional information had a high mean, indicating that supervision plays a critical role in instructional development. Teachers benefit from the suggestions and guidance provided by supervisors, which equips them with up-to-date pedagogical strategies.

3. **Ethical Supervision and Professional Growth:** High ratings on items addressing ethical supervision reflect the belief that professional and morally sound supervision significantly contributes to the development of teachers. Ethical supervision fosters accountability, reflective practices, and adherence to professional standards.

4. **Adoption of Effective Teaching Techniques:** Responses indicate a strong agreement that supervision enables teachers to adopt appropriate teaching techniques both within and outside the classroom. This shows that supervision not only supports compliance but also encourages pedagogical innovation and effectiveness.



5. **Motivation and Idea Generation:** The findings highlight that supervision motivates teachers and exposes them to new teaching ideas. This motivational aspect is vital in sustaining teacher enthusiasm, creativity, and long-term commitment to education.
 6. **Problem-Solving and Institutional Challenges:** The item regarding supervisors' roles in solving institutional material problems had moderate to high agreement, suggesting that while supervision contributes to problem-solving, the extent may vary depending on systemic support and resource availability.
 7. **Curriculum Development:** The data supports the view that supervision helps teachers gain insights into curriculum development. This implies that supervision facilitates a deeper understanding of curriculum content, alignment, and implementation strategies.
 8. **Resource Provision:** The responses were mixed on whether supervision leads to the direct provision of textbooks and instructional materials. While some believe it does, others might feel that resource provision is beyond the scope of routine supervision, hinting at a gap between supervision recommendations and administrative follow-up.
 9. **Persuasive Teaching Character:** A fair number of respondents agreed that supervision aids teachers in demonstrating persuasive character during instruction, reinforcing the idea that monitored and mentored teachers tend to develop better interpersonal and communication skills.
- Overall, the high mean ratings and low standard deviations across most items show strong consensus among respondents on the positive influence of supervision on teacher development. Since teachers are pivotal to national development through education, it follows that effective supervision enhances their professional capacities, ultimately promoting national development. The findings suggest that institutionalizing ethical and resource-backed supervision practices can play a transformative role in achieving educational and national goals.

Conclusion

The study examined the impact of supervision on national development, with a focus on how effective supervision influences teacher performance, professional growth, and instructional delivery. The findings, based on mean ratings and standard deviations, reveal that supervision plays a vital role in enhancing the quality of education by promoting teacher punctuality, equipping educators with necessary instructional strategies, encouraging curriculum development, and fostering ethical teaching practices. It is evident that supervision is not merely a tool for monitoring compliance but a strategic instrument for continuous improvement in the education sector. When conducted ethically and effectively, supervision motivates teachers, enhances their skills, and ensures the delivery of quality education—an essential driver of national development. Therefore, for any nation to achieve sustainable growth through education, there must be a strong, supportive, and well-structured supervisory system in place across all levels of the educational system.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study the following recommendations were made:

1. **Strengthen Supervisory Structures in Schools:**
Educational authorities should ensure that qualified and experienced supervisors are assigned to schools regularly. Their roles should be clearly defined to focus on mentoring, guidance, and support rather than fault-finding.
2. **Provide Continuous Training for Supervisors:** This will enhance their ability to guide teachers effectively.
3. **Ensure Availability of Teaching and Learning Resources:**
Government and school management should respond promptly to supervisors' recommendations regarding the provision of textbooks, teaching aids, and infrastructure. Supervision should be supported with actionable follow-ups.



4. **Promote a Culture of Ethical and Supportive Supervision:**
Supervision should be conducted in a professional and respectful manner that encourages teachers to improve without fear or intimidation. Ethical supervision fosters trust and drives teacher motivation.
5. **Integrate Supervision into Policy Planning for National Development:**
Policymakers should recognize supervision as a strategic component of national education policies. Investments in supervision should be seen as investments in national growth, with supervision outcomes linked to broader development goals.

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