



THE ROLE OF ETHICAL SCHOOL SUPERVISION IN BUILDING A NEW AND A BETTER NIGERIA



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Abstract

The paper explores the significance of ethical supervision in Nigeria's education sector, emphasizing its transformative potential in nation-building. Using relevant theoretical perspectives, the study examines how ethical conduct among school supervisors influences school effectiveness, student achievement, and long-term national development. The conceptual review highlights ethical principles, challenges in current supervision practices, and the nexus between education and sustainable development. The paper argues that fostering a culture of integrity, accountability, and professionalism in school supervision can strengthen educational delivery, reduce corruption, and nurture responsible citizens who are essential to a new and better Nigeria. The paper recommended policy reforms, training, and leadership models that embed ethical values in the supervisory process.

Keywords: Supervision, Ethical Supervision, Challenges and Role of Ethical Supervision .

Introduction

Ethical school supervision is fundamental to educational quality, transparency, and the moral formation of future citizens. Nigeria's quest for sustainable development and national transformation heavily depends on the effectiveness of its educational system. School supervision, as a core administrative function, plays a vital role in maintaining quality education, promoting accountability, and ensuring adherence to national educational goals (Obi & Ebong, 2021). However, without ethical grounding, supervisory practices can become counterproductive, promoting favoritism, corruption, and inefficiency. Ethical school supervision involves the application of moral principles and professional values in overseeing the functioning of educational institutions. These include fairness, justice, transparency, honesty, and respect for the rights and responsibilities of all stakeholders in education (Adeyemi, 2019). When supervisors adhere to ethical standards, they create a supportive and professional climate where teachers can thrive, students can learn effectively, and administrators can manage resources responsibly. In contrast, unethical supervisory behaviors—such as discrimination, nepotism, bribery, or negligence—undermine educational outcomes and erode trust in the school system (Adeleke & Ogunyemi, 2021).

The Nigerian education sector has been plagued by numerous challenges, including underfunding, infrastructural decay, poor teacher morale, and examination malpractice. While various reforms have been introduced to address these issues, ethical lapses in school supervision continue to frustrate progress (Okeke, 2022). The need for ethical leadership in supervision is especially urgent given Nigeria's demographic realities: a large, youthful population that depends on quality education for economic mobility and civic participation. As such, effective and ethical school supervision can serve as a lever for broader social transformation.

Moreover, global frameworks such as the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) have highlighted the need for inclusive, equitable, and quality education (UNESCO, 2021). SDG 4 calls for lifelong learning opportunities and improved education outcomes, which cannot be achieved without competent and ethically guided supervision. In the Nigerian context, aligning school supervision with these global standards requires a strong ethical orientation among educational leaders and stakeholders. In recent years, there has been growing advocacy for integrating ethical education and training into teacher education programs and administrative development courses. This shift is informed

by research that links ethical leadership to improved school performance, enhanced stakeholder confidence, and greater staff motivation (Ofojebe & Ezugwu, 2020). Supervisors who lead with integrity are more likely to foster collaboration, reduce conflict, and guide schools toward achieving both academic excellence and social responsibility.

Theoretical Framework

Several theoretical frameworks support the relevance of ethics in educational supervision:

Transformational Leadership Theory:

This theory emphasizes the role of visionary leaders in inspiring ethical behavior and promoting positive change (Bass & Riggio, 2006). The relevance is this theory is that school supervisors, as transformational leaders, can model integrity, fairness, and professionalism.

Utilitarian Ethical Theory: Suggests actions are ethical if they promote the greatest good for the greatest number. Ethical supervision ensures that students, teachers, and communities benefit from fair and consistent oversight (Mill, 1863).

Kohlberg's Moral Development Theory: Stresses that individuals progress through stages of moral reasoning. Supervisors with higher moral development levels are likely to implement and enforce ethical practices (Kohlberg, 1981).

Conceptual Review

Concept of Supervision

Olorisade (2003) perceived supervision as a process of manipulating all elements and conditions surrounding teaching and learning to produce better learning and the function of providing the leadership with necessary materials to affect improvement in the work that teachers do. Supervision aims at studying, analyzing and discovering ways and means of helping the school to carry out the teaching-learning process effectively and efficiently. Ibekwe (2005).

Ethical School Supervision refers to the practice of overseeing educational activities guided by principles such as: honesty, fairness, accountability, and respect for all stakeholders. In Nigeria, ethical lapses in school administration ranging from bribery and favoritism to negligence, undermine quality and equity in education (Adewale & Ajayi, 2022).

Key Concepts of Ethical School Supervision:

1. **Integrity:** Upholding honesty and moral principles in supervisory duties.
2. **Accountability:** Being answerable for decisions and actions.
3. **Fairness:** Equal treatment of teachers, students, and staff.

Challenges:

1. Inadequate training of supervisors.
2. Political interference in school management.
3. Lack of clear ethical guidelines.
4. Little or no community involvement.
5. Inadequate use of technology.
6. Corrupt supervisors.

Role of Ethical School Supervision in Building a New and a Better Nigeria

1. **Promotes Quality Education:** Ethical supervision ensures that teaching standards, curriculum delivery, and school environments meet national benchmarks (UNESCO, 2021).
2. **Enhances Moral Values Among Students:** Supervisors who model ethical conduct influence teachers and students to uphold similar values.



3. **Helps in Combating Corruption:** Transparent supervision reduces mismanagement of school funds, abuse of authority, and examination malpractice (Okafor, 2020).
4. **Ethical school supervision Improves Teacher Performance:** Ethical supervisors use fair evaluation methods, offer constructive feedback, and support professional development.
5. **Strengthens Public Trust in Education:** Communities gain confidence in the school system when it is run with integrity, fostering greater engagement and investment in education (Nwangwu, 2022).
6. **Ensures support for National Unity and Development:** Ethical supervision cultivates a disciplined and educated youth population ready to contribute to national goals.

Conclusion

Ethical school supervision is not just an administrative responsibility but a critical pathway toward national rebirth. It ensures quality, equity, and moral formation within the educational system. A key pillar for building a better Nigeria. The practice of ethical supervision needs to be systematized, celebrated, and sustained for long-term impact.

Suggestions

1. **Provision of Training and Capacity Building:** Regular ethics training for school supervisors should be institutionalized.
2. **Policy Reforms:** The Ministry of Education should develop and enforce ethical guidelines for supervision.
3. **Community Involvement:** Schools should engage parents and community leaders in ethical oversight.
4. **Integration of Technology:** Digital tools can enhance transparency and track supervisory activities.
5. **Monitoring and Evaluation:** Establish independent bodies to assess ethical compliance in school supervision.

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