



ETHICAL STANDARDS AS CORRELATES OF EFFECTIVE SUPERVISION FOR SUSTAINABLE NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS OF OWERRI ZONE I, IMO STATE.



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Abstract

The study investigated ethical standards as correlates of effective supervision for sustainable national development in secondary schools in Owerri Zone 1 of Imo State. Three null hypothesis tested at 0.05 level of significance guided the study. The population of the study comprised of all the teachers in Owerri Zone 1 totaling 2,328. A sample size of 200 teachers was drawn using the purposive and cluster sampling techniques. The instrument for data collection was a researcher developed questionnaire titled “Ethical Standards of Supervision Effectiveness (ESSSE). The instrument was validated by two specialists from the faculty of education Imo State University. Data obtained were analyzed using Pearson product moment correlation. The results showed that a significant relationship exist between ethical standards and supervision effectiveness. Based on the findings it was recommended that unethical conducts of supervisors should be avoided to gain the trust, confidence and respect of teachers during supervision.

Keywords: Ethical Standards, Supervision, Sustainable Development.

Introduction

Ethical school supervision characterized by honesty, fairness and integrity is crucial for sustainable national development by promoting quality education and fostering ethical leadership. Education is a vital instrument for change and for achieving national goals and aspiration. System of education in any country are structured and restructured to meet up with current societal demands. Policies are made in line with national goals and for any policy to work, supervision is imperative for adequate implementation. Supervision is the art of improving the teacher’s skills and management with the aim of improving the teaching and learning process (Alike & Adoga, 2017). Supervision is also a way of overseeing the activities of teachers, advising, guiding to ensure the application of appropriate teaching skills and instructional materials that will enhance learning and at the same time achieve educational objectives (Ohamobi & Onyekazi, 2021). It connotes helping the teachers in classroom organization, and management, pedagogical development, curriculum development, selecting appropriate instructional materials, communication skills that will help in realization of school aims and objectives. Supervision when adequately undertaken, will improve standard, quality education, better academic performance of students and dedication of teachers. For Okafor, Egbe, Ngene & Eji (2024) supervision is an essential mechanism for improving educational quality, fostering accountability among administrators and educators and ensuring the welfare of students. This involves working with teachers and educators in a collegial, collaborative relationship to revitalize our educational system, so as to meet up with the challenges globally and for sustainable national development.

National development is a national growth in all endeavors, political cultural, economic, social and otherwise. Sustainable development is development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of the future generations to meet their own needs. It is a framework for progress that balances economic growth, social well –being and environmental protection. Sustainable national development is the capability of a particular nation or country to achieve comprehensive improvement or refinement in all ramifications and its existence (economic, political, cultural, religious etc) and set, maintain and continue at that level for a long time. Oyewole & Osalusi, (2016) they posit that supervision is vital in the actualization of sustainable education standards. They maintained that for education effectively develop human capital, it becomes highly imperative to embark on regular and effective supervision. It is quite unfortunate as observed by Oyewole et al (2016) that teachers are being ‘Snoopervised’ in the process of ensuring quality education in schools as this type of supervision was characterized with bossiness, threat and lack of human relations. Ayodele and Oyewole (2014) noted that the modern day approach of supervision is more clinical in nature as teachers need to be helped to improve on their job performance through corrections and personal guidance where necessary. The idea of modern day supervision places much emphasis on the behaviours of the supervisors in the process of interacting with the teachers. It is a clear departure from the punitive measure that are embedded in the old traditional supervision while the modern approach focuses on corrective/rehabilitative measures in a cordial relationship that will totally erase symptoms of suspicion for any kind of witch – hunting on the part of the teachers. This is rather a diagnostic approach that involves the teachers’ abilities, preparation and creating enabling environment that will keep the teachers to improve on the quality of instruction. This modern approach will ensure quality control through mutual interactive behaviours between the supervisor and the supervisee in sustaining the standard of education in our schools hence ethical standards of supervision must be upheld for a sustainable national development.

Ethics is a branch of philosophy which deals with the morality of human actions or the norms of proper course of action for man (Kanu 2018). It studies right and wrong actions in human behaviours. It is a method by which we categorize our values and pursue them. Ethics is very nature of man because it is our means of deciding a course of action without which our actions would be meaningless and aimless (John – Nelson, Ihunwo & Ohanyiri, 2015). To the extent that we pursue rational ethical standards, we will be able to correctly organize our goals and actions to accomplish our most pressing values. We act normally in order to realize full human well – being in the order of a created nature, that is, ethics establishes grounds for good relationship with others and God.

Ethics in education refers to the implementation of moral principles within the educational context guiding behaviour, teaching approaches and policy making. Ethical standards are guidelines, principles and values that guide educators conducts and behaviours to maintain fairness, integrity and professionalism. It can influence supervisors’ interactions with students, teachers, parents and colleagues and the wider educational community. Ethical standards in supervision therefore ensures that an effective supervision should provide leadership with extra knowledge and supervision skills; promote co – operative educational efforts in a friendly atmosphere; provide co – ordination, direction and guidance to teachers activities; improve instruction in the teaching learning process; help in the achievement of appropriate educational aims and objectives; stimulate continuous growth of teachers and development of pupils and stimulate and develop creative qualities in teachers (Jamal, 2023). Supervisors must be role models, adhering to a code of conduct and ensuring that all school staff and students are treated with respect and dignity. This includes fair assessment of students, transparent communication and a commitment to providing a conducive learning environment. Ethical standards in school supervision are crucial for fostering a positive learning environment and promoting sustainable national developments. These standards ensure that supervision is fair, equitable focused on the achievement of educational goals. In school supervision, ethical conduct is crucial for maintaining a fair, respectful and productive environment. Supervision must uphold principles of fairness, transparency, confidentiality and professional integrity when evaluating teachers, providing feedback and making decisions. Ethical codes guide supervisors in ensuring equitable treatment, avoiding bias and prioritizing the well being of students and staff.

Zulfu (2011) maintains that ethical responsibilities of supervision is to help the supervisee ethically reflect on their practice from both internal and external perspectives and to consider the way in which their practice matches up against both their internal values and the external ethical values and framework of the nested systems. A strong ethical framework gives both supervisors and supervisee the security to explore, learn and make mistakes without fear of retribution. Studies have shown that good ethical standard is an integral part of a profession (Matthew and Obiasili 2022). Ethical standards in supervision such as respect for others, respect for sanctity of human life, honesty, respect for rule of law and order, morality, hard work, sharing self-discipline, non-violence, and mutual cooperation should be upheld for effective supervision in schools. Okafor et al (2022) highlights the key principles of ethical standards of supervision as fairness and equity, transparency and communication, professional integrity, respect and confidentiality, accountability and advocacy for students. Supervisors have a responsibility to advocate for the well – being and educational needs of students. This includes ensuring that teachers are equipped with the skills and resources they need to support student learning and development. The importance of ethical standards in supervision cannot be overstated. It is fundamental in creating a positive learning environment, developing morally responsible individual, maintaining the integrity of the educational system. The works of Ohamobi & Onyekazi (2021), Zulfu (2016), Juliawali & Maizura (2023), Arark & Satri (2022) and Janal (2023) have shown a relationship between observing ethical standards in school supervision for sustainable national development. They assert that the key ethical standards in school supervision vital for sustaining national development include ensuring student safety and well-being, upholding professional standards, fostering a collaborative and supportive environment, promoting fairness and equity and prioritizing lifelong learning and development. Good human relationship is indispensable for good supervision, which according to context of this study has to do with ethical conducts and supervision effectiveness. Therefore, the supervisor which could be either the principal (internal supervisor) or supervisors from the school board (external supervisor) could only be effective if there are cordial relations with the teachers. Thus, the supervisor must learn the best way to use his fellow human being. He must learn that friendliness begets friendliness and conversely hostility begets hostility. Furthermore, the school supervisor must realize that every human being in the school has got his needs, interest and peculiar backgrounds and will certainly act and interact in accordance with this attributes. So the supervisor observing ethical standards in terms of courtesy, mutual confidence, respect, open mindedness and sincerity can work wonders in promoting effective school supervision.

It is against the background that the researchers want to investigate ethical standards as correlates of effective supervision for sustainable national development in secondary schools in Imo State.

Statement of problem

School supervision serves as a strategic tool for shaping behavior and fostering improvement within schools. Through effective supervision teachers are encouraged to reflect on their instructional practices, receive constructive feedback and access tailored professional development opportunities.

There has been an outcry by teachers that supervision is synonymous to witch hunting. Supervisors see themselves as lords, bullies, nag and fall short of ethical standards in the discharge of their duties. Their negative attitude has shown devastating effect on the attainment of educational objectives. Teaching and learning are affected; teachers run away from supervisors and are afraid of being supervised. The researchers therefore want to ascertain if ethical standards has any influence in teachers behavior in the discharge of their duties. The study seeks to investigate ethical standards as correlates of effective supervision for sustainable national development in secondary schools in Imo State.

Purpose of the study

The main purpose of the study was to investigate how ethical standards affect effective supervision for sustainable national development in secondary schools in Owerri Zone I of Imo State. Specifically, the purpose of the study was to find out:

If ethical standards enhance supervision effectiveness for sustainable national development.

If strategies employed in maintaining ethical standards of supervisors affect supervision effectiveness.

If supervisors unethical conduct affects supervision effectiveness.

Research Hypothesis

H₀₁: Ethical standards have no significant relationship with supervision effectiveness.

H₀₂: Strategies employed in maintaining ethical standards of supervisors does not significantly relate with supervisor effectiveness.

H₀₃: Supervisors unethical conducts have no significant relationship with supervision effectiveness.

Method

The study adopted the correlational design. The population of the study consist of all the teachers in Owerri Zone I totaling 2,828. A sample size of 200 teachers was involved in the study using purposive and cluster sampling technique. The instrument used for collecting data for the study was a questionnaire titled "Ethical standards of supervision effectiveness" questionnaire (ESSSEQ). The questionnaire was divided into two (2) sections A and B. section A sought for demographic data and section B elicited data on ethical standards of supervision and supervision effectiveness. The validity and reliability of the instruments was ascertained through consultation within specialists in educational management and measurement and evaluation departments, all in the faculty of education Imo State. Pearson (r) statistics was used for the data analysis.

Results

Hypothesis one:

Ethical standards have no significant relationship with supervision effectiveness.

Table one: Pearson product moment correlation between ethical standards and supervision effectiveness.

Variables	N= 200			
	Ex	Ex ²	Exy	r – value
	Ey	Ey ²	74253	0.53
Ethical standards(x)	2324	6684		

Significant at 0.5, critical r- value = -138 and df = 198

The analysis in table I reveals that the calculated r – value of 0.53 is greater than the critical r – value of .138 at 0.05 level of significance and 198 degree of freedom. This result led to the rejection of the null hypothesis which shows that significant relationship exists between ethical standards and supervision effectiveness.

Hypothesis two

Strategies employed in maintaining ethical standards of supervisors does not significantly relate with supervision effectiveness. Table 2: Pearson product moment correlation between strategies of maintain ethical standard between strategies of maintaining ethic standards and supervisors and supervisors effectiveness.

Variables	N= 200			
	E x	Ex ²	Exy	r- value
	Ey	Ey ²	85216	0.60
Strategies for making ethical standard (x)	3560	5124		

Supervision at 0.05, critical r-value = 138 and df = 198

The analysis in table 2 reveals that the null hypothesis was rejected to flow that a significant relationship exist between strategies employed in maintaining ethical standards of supervisors and significant and 198 degree of freedom and 138 critical r-value.

Hypothesis three

Supervisors' unethical conduct has no significant relationship with supervision effectiveness.

Table 3: Pearson product moment correlation between unethical and supervision effectiveness.

	N200			
	Ex	Ex2	Exy	r value
	Ey	Ey2	12562	*0.57
Supervision effectiveness (y)	3148	2788		

Significant at 0.05, critical r-value = 138 and f = 198

The analysis in table 3 reveals that the calculated r – value of 0.57 is greater than the critical r – value of 138 at 0.05 level of significant and 198 degree of freedom. This result prompted the rejection of the null hypothesis, meaning that a significant relationship exist between supervisors unethical conduct and supervision effectiveness.

Discussion of findings

The findings of hypothesis one revealed that there is a significant relationship between ethical standards and supervision effectiveness. The implication of this findings is obvious based on the fact that ethical standards foster a positive learning environment by ensuring that supervision is fair, equitable and gaining the trust and confidence of the supervisee. Without appropriate ethical conduct, the supervisor will not achieve the level of effectiveness in the supervision of teachers. This result is in line with the findings of Zulfu (2016) and Mathew and Obiesili (2022) that ethical standards in supervision help to achieve effectiveness during supervision in schools. They assert that it creates a positive learning environment for sustaining national development. Standards of supervisors relate with supervision effectiveness. The findings is in agreement with Arar and Salh (2022) and Jaral (2023) strategies such as professional development, regular reflection and assessment, creating a culture of trust helps supervisors to carry out their supervision effectively. Jaral (2023) maintains that supervisors who employ these strategies gains teachers trust and confidence thereby making them respond positively to them.

The result of the study further records that a significant relationship exists between unethical conduct of supervisors and supervision effectiveness. This finding is in line with Ayodele and Oyewole (2014)Juliawati and Maizura (2023) and Ohamobi and Onyekazi (2021). Supervision according to them involves working with teachers and other educators in a collegial, collaborative relationship. Unethical conducts damage relationships, affecting the trust and respect between supervisors and teachers leading to strained working relationships and a negative school climate. When teachers feel unfairly treated or that their concerns are not being addressed it can lead to decreased job satisfaction, reduced productivity and increased turnover.

Conclusion

The conclusion that can be drawn from this study is that ethical standards affects supervision effectiveness. The strategies employed by supervisors in maintaining ethical standards significantly affect supervision effectiveness. Thus unethical conducts by supervisors affect supervision effectiveness.

Recommendation

Ethical standards should be upheld by supervision during supervision of teachers.

Workshops and seminars should be constantly organized for supervisors.

Strategies and key principles of ethical standards should by observed by supervisors in the course of carrying out their duties.



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