



## TEACHERS' PERCEPTION OF SCHOOL SUPERVISION AND ETHICAL STANDARDS: IMPLICATIONS FOR SUSTAINABLE NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT



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### **Abstract**

*Supervision, the heart of leadership, life blood that nourishes teams, fosters collaboration and drives results. Ethical standards, the blueprint for excellence outlining the principles and practices that distinguish exceptional individuals and organizations from the rest. Population comprised 205 teachers, an online survey tool was used to gather data from 100 student teachers' in training to assess teachers' perceptions of school supervision within pre-observation and post-observation conferences. Four research questions guided the inquiry, instrument used was adapted from a previous supervision and evaluation study and was revised by the researcher. Pre-observation conference items ( $r = .96$ ) and the post-observation conference items ( $r = .97$ ) were used for data gathering. Data collected were analyzed using mean and standard deviation and regression analysis at the .05 significant level. The findings of the study revealed that student teachers' in training perceptions about the pre-observation conference is ( $\bar{x} = 3.38, SD = 0.75$ ); student teachers' in training perceptions about the post-observation conference is ( $\bar{x} = 3.38, SD = 0.76$ ); 64% percent pre-conference supervisory effectiveness was accounted for by discussing how student teachers' in training were engaged in their learning during instruction; 66% percent post-conference supervisory effectiveness was accounted for by building student teachers' in training capacity to self-reflect about teaching. Conclusively, supervision and ethical standards are issues affected by different things that can lead to sustainable national development. The study recommends continuous professional development, integration of technologies into teacher education curricula, provision of adequate teaching resources, and strengthening policy implementation.*

**Keywords:** Teachers perception, school supervision, ethical standard, sustainable national development  
**Word count:** 241

### **Introduction**

School supervision, in this context and for the purpose of this paper is a means to improve education by developing the skills sets of teachers through supervisory practice and resource allocation, hopefully translating to increased student achievement supervision, in this context and for the purpose of this paper, is a means to improve education by developing the skill sets of teachers through supervisory practice and resource (Owusu-Addo, Gideon, & Anthony, 2022).

Sustainable National Development refers to a country's ability to develop and grow in a way that meets the needs of its present population without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. It requires a multi-faceted approach that involves various stakeholders and strategies such as economic, social, and environmental dimensions of development that ensure a country's long-term prosperity. Economically, to give a stable and growing economy that provides opportunities for all citizens, socially to embrace a fair and just society that promote social inclusion,



equality, and human rights and environmentally in looking at the conservation and sustainable use of natural resources to ensure a healthy and thriving environment.

A teacher, an educationalist is an individual who supports students to attain knowledge, competences or values and ensures that students achieve their desired aim. A teacher is therefore needed to facilitate effective learning in the educational sector and to achieve the educational goals of any school, teachers are required to make learning revolutionary so as to improve student enthusiasm to learning. A high energy to learn will encourage student learning success with marked high learning results (Onodugo, Akubue, & Eneh, 2020). Effective learning in a classroom has vital importance in student retention as the teachers are required to be adaptive to the changing classroom and student needs through constantly and actively engaging them with the use of activity based learning so that they can enjoy their course work and to be able to fulfil the established goals. Students are driven to learn when a teacher understands his or her pupils to an extent (Brew, Nketiah, & Koranteng, 2021). It has been observed in recent times that learning at the secondary school level seems to be more tedious and cumbersome thus making student to work on extra time and probably become stressed since they have to combine both school and home activities such as hawking together (Arpilleda, Oracion, Arpilleda, et al., 2023).

Teacher's support changes student achievement in significant ways as it serves as a secure base from which students could explore the school environment and engage in learning activities. Whenever teachers are prepared to establish caring relationships with students, learn about students' individual needs and strengths, and provide support and encouragement, students are likely to have strong motivation that would make them engage in learning activities to achieve academic success (Ahmedi, Kurshumlija, & Ismajli, 2023). Looking at it closely, students spend close to six hours with teachers each day on an average of one thousand six hundred and fifty days in a year. It seems not at all amazing that academics have a boundless quantity of impact on their students as this will implicitly stimulate the educational surroundings, which in turn, impact on learner's inspiration and achievements (Nasmilah, 2023). Academic learning is directly related to enthusiasm as learning and enthusiasm seem to be associated with student's perceptions and the relevance of their level of involvement in the learning process. Students may be motivated to complete a task but the encouraging factors behind these students differ depending on the situation and skill (Abaniel, 2021).

The word school comes from the Greek word 'schole' which means leisure, place to develop learners for outstanding moral living, undebatable creative thoughts on how to solve problems and sound productivity in a democratic society. It is a place to learn and develop self-knowledge, to develop life skills and social skills, to optimize life chances and equality of life and to enable future employment and economic wellbeing, an organization that provides instructions or an educational institution designed to provide learning spaces and learning environment for teaching to students under the direction of teachers as each person finds an identity, meaning and purpose in life through connections to the community natural works and humanitarian values such as compassion and peace (Canbulat, Direkci, Şimşek, et al., 2020)

Supervision is a vital ingredient in schools as it improves teaching and learning by evaluating, recording the consistency of strengths and weaknesses of teachers' performance and their ability to discharge the time consuming task of instructional delivery in order to enhance quality in teaching and to make supervisees do their work effectively (Memduhoglu, 2012). A supervisor plays the roles of an educator, sponsor, coach, counselor and director. Teacher as an educator is someone that would teach to improve teaching and learning of new employees by making the teaching to be simple, measurable, attainable, realizable and time-bound as he maintains high morale among the teachers. Supervision is a vital aspect of educational management, a resilient pillar that involves guiding and coordinating educational activities to ensure quality and improvement, monitoring staff performance, identifying strengths and weaknesses and implementation of strategies to enhance teaching and learning and to make sure that maximum achievement of the objectives and goals of education are met. For the effective discharge of daily activities in the school, an average staff lack initiative and ingenuity and for this a supervisor is expected to provide routine leadership constantly, raising the consciousness of staff through advice and professional help to ensure that every staff most efficiently and effectively pursue



her daily task with ease. Informal observations occur when student teachers do not have prior knowledge they will be observed, while formal observations occur when student teachers have prior knowledge they will be observed and typically follow the clinical supervision model (Zatynski, 2012; Hill & Grossman, 2013; Uwe, & Godwin 2019; Awe, Tilije, et al., 2022).

Clinical supervision is associated to the seminal work of (Edwards, Burnard, Hannigan, et al., 2006) and (Kilminster & Jolly, 2000) which includes a pre-observation conference between teachers and student in training in which both discuss the upcoming lesson, an extended observation in which teachers observe student in training instructing, and a post-observation conference in which teachers and students in training discuss the observation, plan for future observations, and differentiate support to target instructional improvement based on professional needs (Range, Scherz, Holt, et al., 2011). Within the clinical supervision model, the pre-observation conference ensures both teachers and students in training have a common understanding of what will occur during the extended observation, either students in training or teachers directed. It is important for teachers to attempt to develop trust between students in training during the pre-observation as teachers are charged with providing non-evaluative feedback at the conclusion of the lesson, usually within the post observation conference (Bouchamma 2005; Nolan & Hoover, 2008). Students in training are more apt to take teachers' feedback seriously if they trust teachers' skills in assessing strengths and weaknesses (Jacob & Lefgren, 2006).

Although not inclusive, variables teachers and students in training might discuss during the pre-observation conference include student assessment, student engagement, classroom management, and classroom climate issues (Range, Young, & Hvidston, 2013). Conversely, the purpose of the post-observation conference is to review and reflect upon data collected during the extended observation and plan future professional development opportunities (Zepeda, 2013). Because providing feedback to students in training about their classroom performance is a primary purpose of the post-observation conference (Zepeda, 2013; Frontier & Livingston, 2011), feedback dispensed by teachers should focus on qualitative and quantitative data collected during the scripted observation (Olivia & Pawlas, 2004). Teachers also might acknowledge students in training for their on-going continuous improvement efforts and attempt to cause students to reflect about their practice (Marzano et al., 2011). The purpose of carefully planning feedback provided to student teachers in training is that, as reflective practitioners, student teachers in training should feel open to discuss their own strengths and weaknesses (Zepeda, 2013). Finally, a purpose of the post-observation conference, which sets the course for future student teachers in training growth, is identifying possible professional development opportunities both short and long term goals, as well as setting the instructional focus of the next extended observation (Spillane, Healey & Parise, 2009). The importance of school supervision lies in the need to enhance quality assurance in education in pursuant to the Sustainable Development Goal 4. Which projects an all-encompassing inclusive and equitable quality education for the promotion of lifelong learning opportunities for all.

Ethical Standard refers to the moral principles and values that guide the behaviour and decision making processes of individuals and organizations. In the context of school supervision, ethical standards ensure that educational institutions operate with integrity, transparency and accountability

#### Research Questions

What are student teachers' in training perceptions about the pre- observation conference items?

What are student teachers' in training perceptions about the post-observation conference items?

What are the best predictors of teachers' supervisory effectiveness based on how student teachers in training viewed the importance of pre-conference elements?

What are the best predictors of teachers' supervisory effectiveness based on how student teachers in training viewed the importance of post-conference elements?

#### Method

Five secondary schools were selected due to their high performing student achievement, as determined by the author, based on Integrated Science assessment scores, which were in the top 10% of the state. To understand how the schools were successfully insuring high student achievement four



research questions (as indicated above) guided the inquiry. The instrument used in data collection was adapted from a previous supervision and evaluation study (Clark, 1998), and was revised by the researcher. Ten items that were Likert scaled (Strongly Agree(SA)= 4, Agree(A)=3, Disagree(D)=2, Strongly Disagree(SD)=1) were used for analyses in the current study. Four items on the survey asked student teachers’ in training about teachers’ skills in conducting pre-observation conferences and included items about student assessment, student engagement, lesson objectives, and remediation instruction. Six items on the survey included items about student teachers’ skills in conducting post observation conferences and included items about identification of performance strengths, meaningful feedback, collective data analysis, agreed upon focus, student teachers’ in training reflection, and collective identification of improvement. The reliability of the instruments was determined using Cronbach’s Alpha method of reliability for internal consistency. Reliability coefficient (r) value on all items, pre-observation conference items and post-observation conference items 0.98, 0.96 and 0.97 were obtained respectively indicating that the instruments were highly reliable. To establish content validity, the survey was reviewed by three administrators with supervisory experience.

For data collection, an online survey was administered to student teachers’ in training in the five secondary schools assessing their perceptions about teachers’ supervision within pre- observation and post-observation conferences. The survey was sent to the teachers in each of the five secondary schools who were then asked to forward the survey to their student teachers’ in training. In summary, the instrument was e-mailed to 205 student teachers’ in training and 100 student teachers’ in training responded to the survey, a response rate of 49%. The data collected were analyzed using the descriptive statistics, simple percentage, frequency distribution and regression.

**Results**

Research Question 1: What are student teachers’ in training perceptions about the pre- observation conference items?

Table 1: Student Teachers’ In-Training Perceptions about the Pre-observation Conference Items

| Pre-Conference Items   | $\bar{x}$ | SD   |
|--|-----------|------|
| 1. Teacher and I discuss how to assess students’ knowledge                           | 3.47      | 0.71 |
| 2. Teacher and I discuss how to actively engage students in learning                 | 3.43      | 0.72 |
| 3. Teacher and I discuss the objectives of the lesson                                | 3.39      | 0.76 |
| 4. Teacher and I discuss plans for remediation of students who struggle with content | 3.22      | 0.82 |
| Total  | 13.51     | 3.01 |
| Teachers’ Perception of School Supervision (Pre-conference observation)              | 3.38      | 0.75 |

KEY: Strongly Agree (SA) =4, Agree (A) = 3, Disagree (D) = 2, Strongly Disagree (SD) = 1, St. D = Standard Deviation,  $\bar{x}$ = Mean; F-value is significant at P<.05

\*\*\* Decision Rule for Weighted Mean: Mean value of 0.000- 2.499=Low; 2.500-3.499= Moderate; 3.500-above=High

| Post-Conference Items   | $\bar{x}$ | SD   |
|---|-----------|------|
| 5. Teacher and I identify performance strengths                     | 3.46      | 0.74 |
| 6. Teacher provides meaningful feedback after observing my teaching | 3.41      | 0.72 |
| 7. Teacher and I analyze the data collected during the observation  | 3.37      | 0.79 |
| 8. Teacher and I discuss the things we agreed to focus upon         | 3.35      | 0.78 |
| 9. Teacher builds my capacity to reflect about my teaching          | 3.35      | 0.80 |
| 10. Teacher and I identify areas in which I can improve             | 3.33      | 0.73 |
| Total   | 20.27     | 4.56 |
| Teachers’ Perception of School (Post-conference observation)        | 3.38      | 0.76 |



**Research Question 2:** What are student teachers’ in training perceptions about the post-observation conference items?

**Table 2:** Student Teachers’ In-Training Perceptions about the Post-observation Conference Items

In regards to the first research question, student teachers’ in training perceived all as important as all had means greater than 2.50. Most teachers agreed that student teachers in training discussed student assessment issues with them ( $\bar{x}$ =3.47; SD=0.71) and agreed least teachers discussed the remediation plans for students who struggled with content ( $\bar{x}$ =3.22; SD=0.82). In regards to the second research question, again teachers agreed with all items as all had means higher than 2.50. Teachers agreed most with collective identification of teachers’ performance strengths ( $\bar{x}$ =3.46; SD=0.74) and agreed least with collective identification of areas in which teachers could improve ( $\bar{x}$ =3.33; SD=0.73).

**Research Question 3:** What are the best predictors of teachers’ supervisory effectiveness based on how student teachers in training viewed the importance of pre-conference elements?

To address research question three, regression analysis was used, the four pre-observation conference items were regressed onto the criterion variable, teachers’ supervision efforts to improve student teachers’ in training instructional practice.

**Table 3:** Regression Analysis Result for Pre-observation Conference Item

| Item  | R <sup>2</sup> | F-value | Significance |
|---|----------------|---------|--------------|
| Teacher and I discuss how to actively engage students in learning | 0.641          | —       | p< .05       |

Sixty-four percent of the variability in teachers’ supervisory effectiveness was accounted for by one item, namely how students will be engaged in learning during the observed lesson. Thus, student engagement was the most important predictor of student teachers’ in training ratings of teachers’ supervisory effectiveness in helping to improve teacher instruction during the pre-observation conference. This variable alone explained 64.1% approx. 64% of the importance of teachers’ ability to help improve instruction, and at a .05 significant level.

**Research Question 4:** What are the best predictors of teachers’ supervisory effectiveness based on how student teachers in training viewed the importance of post-conference elements?

To answer research question four, regression analysis was conducted, all six items were regressed on the criterion variable, teachers’ supervision efforts to improve student teachers’ instructional practice.

**Table 4:** Regression Statistics for Post-observation Conference Item on Teachers’ Supervisory Effectiveness

| Item  | R <sup>2</sup> | F-value | Significance |
|---|----------------|---------|--------------|
| Teacher builds my capacity to reflect about my teaching | 0.655          | —       | p< .05       |

Sixty-six percent of the variability in teachers’ supervisory effectiveness was accounted for by one item, namely the ability of the teacher to build student teachers’ in training capacity to self –reflect about teaching. As a result, helping teachers self-reflect was the most important predictor of student teachers’ in training ratings of teachers’ supervisory effectiveness in helping improve teacher instruction during the post-observation conference. This variable alone explained 65.5% approx. 66% of teachers’ supervisory effectiveness in helping improve teacher instruction, and, as with the pre-conference item, at a highly significant level. The other five of the six total post-observation conference items did not contribute significantly to the work.



## **Discussion**

This quantitative study was conducted to understand student teachers' views about teacher supervision in five secondary schools, including how supervision practices supported high performance and thus might better inform ethical standards and sustainable national development. The results add to the literature concerning student teachers' in training formative supervision and teachers' responsibilities to engage in instructional leadership to build the capacity of student teachers' in training through pre- and post-observation conferences. Overall, the results can be summarized as follows:

Teachers believed that all pre-observation and post-observation conference items were important but agreed most that student teachers' in training discussed student assessment within the pre-observation conference and identified teachers' performance strengths of the extended observation within the post-observation conference.

The results of regression analyses suggested teachers attributed one variable as the most important predictor of student teachers' in training rating teachers' supervisory effectiveness in helping improve teacher instruction, namely discussions about student engagement during the pre-observation conference.

The results of regression analyses suggested student teachers' in training attributed one item as the most important predictor of teachers' supervisory effectiveness in helping to improve teacher instruction, which included discussions surrounding capacity building to cause student teachers' in training to self-reflect during the post-observation conference.

Student teachers' in training agreed that all pre-observation conference items were important and teachers engaged in conversations about each, but the most important predictor of student teachers' in training ratings of teachers' supervisory effectiveness was the ability to engage in conversations about student engagement issues within the pre-observation conference. This finding reinforces an understanding of how student engagement guides instruction (Quinn, 2002). A reflection of the data-driven focus of student achievement in the age of accountability and sustainability, as many walkthrough models, such as the Instructional Practices Inventory (IPI), are based on large data collections that are formative in nature to help teachers focus on improving student engagement in order to translate to greater student achievement (Valentine, Durning, Shanahan, et al., 2021).

In respects to post-observation conference items, student teachers' in training agreed with all items, however the most important predictor of student teachers' in training ratings of teachers' supervisory effectiveness was the ability to build capacity to self-reflect on instruction during the post-observation conference. This finding makes straight with other studies that report the importance of building trust relationships between student teachers' in training, teachers and administrators, as well as a school culture that values ongoing learning through a shared leadership approach to address school improvement efforts (Marks & Nance, 2007; Monk, 2008). Moreover, Zepeda (2013) has written about the importance of principals and teachers building students' capacity to reflect on their own instruction during the post-observation conference, and teachers' ability to acknowledge student teachers' in training for their efforts to continually improve their instruction through self-reflection is a central component of instructional improvement (Marzano et al., 2011; Ovando, 2005). When considering ethical standards for sustainability of national development, specifically those that target instructional improvement, teachers must be able to guide student teachers' in training through a self-reflection process rather than simply seeking to identify areas of deficiency (Memduhoglu, 2012). Additionally, teachers who see themselves as instructional leaders can help others identify areas for future growth, infuse trust between student teachers' in training and teachers into the school culture, and promote a shared leadership approach that provides power to teachers to improve their own instruction, rather than solely exercising power over them in an evaluator role (Mette, 2014).

## **Conclusion**

Effective school supervision is crucial for achieving sustainable national development through the provision of quality education by improving academic performance; enhancement of curriculum delivery, and development of skills and competencies, secondly, through human capital development



looking at the development of teachers, leadership and students; thirdly through social and economic development by reducing inequality, promoting economic growth and fostering social cohesion and, finally through governance and accountability by bringing improvement in governance, enhancement of accountability, transparency and integrity. Ethical standards in school supervision contributes to sustainable national development by promoting a culture of accountability, respect for human rights, transparency and fairness in the management of educational resources.

### **Implications for sustainability national development**

Sustainable national development can benefit stakeholders by improving quality of life, making ways for economic growth and stability, environmental protection and bringing about social cohesion and stability. Challenges to sustainable national development are many but here are some: poverty and inequality, climate change, conflict and instability, and corruption and poor governance, by understanding the principles, dimensions, benefits, and challenges of sustainable national development, countries can work towards creating a more equitable, prosperous and environmentally sustainable future for all: economically, diversify the economy, invest in infrastructure, promote entrepreneurship and, foster international trade; socially, invest in education, promote social inclusion and foster community development; environmental sustainability, conserve natural resources, promote renewable energy and address climate change, In the area of governance and institutional sustainability: strengthen institutions, promote good governance, support the rule of law and finally invest in human capital development, promote gender equality and foster a culture of peace.

In Nigeria, there continues to be a disconnect between research, practice, and funding of schools to produce high quality instructional environments where all stakeholders can see an educated student contributing meaningfully to a healthy society, a strong economy, and a more socially just world. In order to ensure a learning environment that addresses issues of social justice and equitable education for all students (Ishimaru, 2013), school leadership must support the development and training of teachers to meet the individual needs of schools (Rorrer, Skrla, & Scheurich, 2008). Thus, through an instructional supervision lens, sustainability national development should have an increased focus on engaging students in their learning, as well as the need for teachers to serve as an instructional facilitator to help build self-reflection capacity among student teachers' in training in order to strive for continual improvement of instruction.

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