

## Head Teacher's Instructional Supervision in Public Primary Schools of Nyaruguru District, Rwanda: Challenges and Mitigations

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### ABSTRACT

*The study aimed to investigate the challenges of head teachers' instructional supervision in public primary schools in Nyaruguru District, Rwanda, and propose mitigation strategies. The specific objectives included identifying key challenges faced by head teachers, examining current instructional supervision practices, and exploring effective strategies to address these challenges. The research was significant for various stakeholders. It provided insights into the challenges of instructional supervision, informing academic inquiry specific to primary education. Education stakeholders could use the study to enhance teaching quality and student performance in Nyaruguru District's primary schools. The Path-Goal Theory, postulated by Robert House in 1971, guided this study. The study utilized a descriptive research design with a mixed approach, incorporating both quantitative and qualitative methods. The target population included 102 head teachers and 1769 teachers from public primary schools in Nyaruguru District. Stratified sampling was used to ensure representation from all schools, with simple random sampling to select schools and teachers. The sample size for teachers was 326, determined by the Yamane formula, and 10 primary schools and 10 head teachers were selected. Data collection instruments included a Likert-scale questionnaire and semi-structured interviews. Validity and reliability of the instruments were ensured through content validity and Cronbach's alpha. Data analysis involved descriptive statistics for quantitative data, including mean and standard deviation, and thematic analysis, content analysis, and narrative analysis for qualitative data. SPSS Version 26.0 was used for quantitative analysis. Significant challenges identified included inadequate training, reported by 83.1% of respondents, insufficient time for supervision due to heavy workloads (79.1%), and limited resources and support from educational authorities. Head teachers were committed to regular classroom observations and feedback mechanisms, with 76.4% providing timely feedback and 80.3% regularly observing classroom teaching. Increased resource allocation, reduced workload, and additional instructional supervision training were among the recommended effective strategies. The need for more up-to-date training, fewer administrative responsibilities, and individualized supervisory strategies to accommodate a variety of teaching styles was further emphasized in interviews with head teachers. The study came to the conclusion that head teachers were actively engaged in improving instructional quality despite facing significant obstacles. With more robust and consistent support systems, these practices' effectiveness could be enhanced. It is recommended that the government invest in comprehensive training programs for head teachers and allocate increased funding to provide essential resources, such as teaching materials, technological tools, electricity, and infrastructure improvements. Policies should be implemented to reduce the administrative workload of head teachers by hiring additional staff, allowing them more time for instructional supervision. Head teachers should pursue professional growth, foster collaboration, and conduct regular classroom observations with meaningful feedback. Future research could investigate the correlation between instructional supervision and student performance, conduct comparative studies across regions, and explore the use of technological tools in supervision practices.*

**Keywords:** Head Teachers, Instructional Supervision, Public Primary Schools, Supervision

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### I. INTRODUCTION

The progress of any society is significantly influenced by the quality of its education system, which is fundamentally achieved through the presence of competent and professional teachers (Mbawala & Hermanto, 2023). Quality education serves as the cornerstone for societal development, fostering economic growth, social cohesion, and cultural enrichment. To achieve this, it is imperative that teachers are not only well-trained but also continuously supported and developed through effective instructional supervision.

Instructional supervision in schools is essential to stimulate, guide, and support teachers, ensuring they deliver high-quality instruction. This process involves regular observation, feedback, and professional development, aiming to enhance teachers' instructional strategies and classroom management skills (Maisyaroh et al., 2021). Effective

instructional supervision ensures that teachers are equipped with the latest pedagogical techniques and are able to adapt to the diverse learning needs of their students.

School leaders play a pivotal role in this process. They are responsible for creating and maintaining environments that foster the acquisition of 21st-century skills among students. These skills include collaboration, critical thinking, digital literacy, and problem-solving, which are essential for success in the modern world. By providing strong instructional leadership, school leaders can ensure that teachers have the resources, support, and encouragement they need to excel in their roles (Basilio, 2021).

Effective instructional supervision improves teaching practices and student learning outcomes by fostering environments for discussing and implementing instructional improvements (Berhanu, 2024). It should provide constructive ideas, create a democratic atmosphere, and set clear objectives (Maisyaroh et al., 2021). High-performing schools are characterized by effective supervision, which promotes efficient teaching methods and enhances student learning (Wienaah et al., 2021). Supervision assists inexperienced teachers in improving their practices, thereby positively impacting students' learning (Glanz et al., 2007).

In the United States, effective instructional supervision plays a crucial role in enhancing student learning by supporting teachers in their professional pedagogical roles (Baker, 2010). Effective school leaders prioritize instructional activities and provide timely feedback to teachers, thereby fostering an environment conducive to educational improvement (Foundation, 2013).

Globally, instructional supervision is widely acknowledged for its pivotal role in improving teaching practices and the overall quality of learning. Countries such as Finland, Nigeria, South Africa, Ghana, Ethiopia, and Kenya have recognized the importance of robust instructional supervision frameworks. Despite its benefits, challenges such as limited resources, insufficient training opportunities, and ineffective supervision practices pose significant obstacles to its effectiveness (Alila et al., 2016; Dangara, 2015; United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization [UNESCO], 2015; Cansoy et al., 2024).

In Rwanda, instructional supervision plays a critical role in ensuring the successful implementation of instructional improvement initiatives mandated by the Rwanda Education Board. Conducting research on instructional supervision in public primary schools in Nyaruguru District is essential for gaining insights into current practices and challenges. This research can provide valuable information to enhance the quality of supervision, thereby improving teaching practices and ultimately enhancing student learning outcomes.

### 1.1 Statement of the Problem

Teachers are essential for effective teaching and learning, especially if they fulfill their duties professionally. Professional teachers spend time planning and must be precise to avoid instructional waste (Kaplan et al., 2015). They use active teaching methods and manage classrooms effectively. School leaders support teachers through training to improve teaching practices, promote professional development and improve student outcomes. However, there are challenges in teaching training. Worldwide, the purpose of educational supervision is to implement educational policy, evaluate the work of teachers and ensure quality. Despite efforts, many African education systems lack coherence between education policy and broader education components (Bidin, 2017a). UNESCO (2015) notes that teachers lack additional training and orientation. In Rwanda, research shows that teachers and principals lack training in effective teaching (Imaniriho, 2011). The Rwanda Board of Education ([REB], 2021) found leadership the lowest among professional standards for school principals, indicating its ineffective implementation. Effective instructional supervision must be ongoing and include regular classroom observations, constructive feedback, in-service training, appropriate resources, and adjustment of educational policies (McGhee & Stark, 2021). The current situation, characterized by inadequate training, ineffective management and limited resources, negatively affects the quality of teaching and student outcomes. Improving teaching instruction requires addressing gaps in training, resources, and management. Implementing structured learning processes, aligning practices with practices, and supporting teachers and principals can improve the quality of teaching and student outcomes. The study conducted in Nyaruguru district aims to identify challenges in the supervision of principals and suggest improvement strategies to help make education more effective.

### 1.2 Research Objectives

- i. Identify the key challenges faced by head teachers in providing instructional supervision in public primary schools in Nyaruguru District.
- ii. To find out the current instructional supervision practices implemented by head teachers in public primary schools of Nyaruguru District.
- iii. To explore effective strategies and interventions to address and alleviate the challenges faced by head teachers in providing instructional supervision within the primary schools of Nyaruguru District.

### 1.3 Research Questions

- i. What are the primary challenges experienced by head teachers when providing instructional supervision in public primary schools in Nyaruguru District?
- ii. What instructional supervision practices are currently being utilized by head teachers in public primary schools of Nyaruguru District?
- iii. What are the most effective strategies and interventions to tackle and mitigate the challenges faced by head teachers in delivering instructional supervision within the primary schools of Nyaruguru District?

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2.1 Theoretical Literature

Instructional supervision is a kind of supervision conducted by school leaders, or any other appointed as a supervisor in a school, with the purpose of giving direction and support to teachers to increase instructional practices (Malunda et al., 2016). Instructional supervision happens in two ways: classroom observation and portfolio supervision. It can be carried out formally when head teachers attend class to conduct lesson observation or informally when the head teacher conducts a short visit to the classroom during instruction (Dangara, 2015). The purpose of this visit is not to find faults in teachers' practices but to collect data regarding how the curriculum is delivered to students (Mosley, 2018). Supervision of the portfolio refers to the review of teachers' pedagogical documents like the scheme of work, lesson plans, summary notebooks, and records of results from students' works (Zepeda, 2012). Held (2020) views instructional supervision as the actions that enable teachers to improve instructional quality and meet both personal and organizational needs. Ozdemir (2015) described instructional supervision as opportunities provided to teachers to develop their capacities towards contributing to students' academic success.

Kaufman and Schwartz (2004) describe five models of instructional supervision: directive, alternative, collaborative, non-directive, and creative. The directive model demonstrates the best teaching approach and evaluates its implementation, although this can hinder creativity (Kaufman & Schwartz, 2004). The alternative model suggests various alternatives to improve teaching practices without favoritism (Wilson, 2018). The non-directive model lets the teacher express and solve their classroom problems, with the supervisor providing guidance (Kaufman & Schwartz, 2004). The creative model involves both the teacher and supervisor creatively searching for solutions to classroom problems (Kaufman & Schwartz, 2004).

As Garson emphasized, instructional supervision practices include a pre-observation conference, classroom observation, and post-observation conference, according to Garson (2013). According to Rehman and Al-Bargi (2014), the pre-observation conference facilitates a collaborative relationship by allowing the supervisor and teacher to establish observation objectives and approaches. The purpose of classroom observation is to document the lesson and evaluate teaching methods, giving teachers a chance to consider their own practices (Garson, 2013). According to Douglas et al. (2020), the post-observation conference provides an opportunity for reflection and constructive feedback by sharing the observation results, interpreting them, and making plans for instructional enhancement. A number of obstacles prevent efficient instructional supervision. Supervisory practices are impacted by inadequate training and support for supervisors (Olima et al., 2020; Kaplan et al., 2015).

Inadequate communication between teachers and supervisors and an excessive workload for supervisors are additional significant obstacles (Dangara, 2015; Al Abbasi & David, 2021). The process is further complicated by inadequate instructional resources and misconceptions regarding the purpose of supervision (Darling-Hammond, 2010; Fisher, 2011; Mannan, 2017). Additionally, these difficulties are exacerbated by a lack of teacher involvement in the supervision process and a lack of the necessary skills for head teachers (Mannan, 2017; Pajak, 1990). Recent research suggests that teachers should be made aware of the significance of supervision and that positive communication styles should be encouraged in order to lessen these obstacles (Oluremi, 2013). The effectiveness of supervision can be improved by including teachers' thoughts and reflections in the supervision process (Munna & Kalam, 2021; Ahmed et al., 2021). According to Alexander et al. (2015), clinical supervision models that involve teachers in the planning and reflection phases are recommended. According to Simpeze et al. (2023), it is also possible to foster a supportive learning environment by viewing supervisors as friends and mentors.

### 2.2 Theoretical Framework

#### 2.2.1 Path-Goal Theory

The Path-Goal Theory, postulated by Robert House in 1971, is a leadership theory that emphasizes the leader's role in helping their followers achieve goals by clarifying paths to success and removing obstacles. This theory suggests that leaders should assess the needs of their followers, set clear paths to goals, and provide support and guidance along the way. In the context of the current study on head teacher's instructional supervision in public primary schools of

Nyaruguru District, this theory can be linked by highlighting how head teachers, as instructional leaders, can adopt different leadership styles based on the needs of their teachers to enhance instructional supervision. By understanding the various challenges faced in the district and applying the principles of the Path-Goal Theory, head teachers can effectively supervise teachers, provide necessary support, clarify goals, and navigate obstacles to ensure quality education and effective teaching practices in public primary schools.

## 2.3 Empirical Review

### 2.3.1 Key Challenges Faced by Head Teachers in Providing Instructional Supervision in Public Primary Schools

In his study titled "Effective instructional leadership: The role of instructional supervision in improving teaching practices," Mannan (2017) identified obstacles such as limited supervision time due to administrative burdens. Head teachers struggled with these conflicts, which had a significant impact on their supervisory roles ( $p < 0.05$ ), despite receiving constructive feedback and regular classroom observations. According to Oluremi (2013), a lack of resources, inadequate training and professional development, and inadequate support from education authorities are major barriers to effective instructional supervision in Nigeria. This qualitative study used thematic analysis to identify these obstacles as significant factors that impact supervision quality.

Mukamurera and Kayisire (2016) looked into how well instructional supervision worked in public primary schools in Rwanda. Their mixed-methods study revealed that head teachers had a lot of administrative work to do and didn't have enough training in instructional supervision, which made them less effective ( $p < 0.05$ ). In Rwandan secondary schools, Niyibizi and Nzabalarwa et al. (2018) looked at how instructional supervision affected teachers' job performance. They identified a lack of resources and inadequate supervisory skills among principals as major obstacles. The significant impact of these obstacles on teachers' job performance was confirmed by regression analysis. In public primary schools in Rwanda, Livingstone and Andala (2022) looked at how instructional supervision affected students' academic performance. Effective instructional supervision was hindered ( $p < 0.05$ ) by factors such as inadequate support from the education system and a lack of professional development opportunities for head teachers.

### 2.3.2 Current Instructional Supervision Practices Implemented by Head Teachers in Public Primary Schools

According to Garson (2013) the instructional supervision comprises of a pre-observation conference, classroom observation, and post observation conference. These steps were emphasized also by (MacBeath, 2009).

**Pre-observation conference:** At this dimension the supervisor and the teacher collaborate and set the goal and the method of observation to be used. It creates a ground for both the instructor and the supervisor in establishing relationship based on shared expectation and esteem. The instructor and the supervisor gain the chance to interact freely as individuals who shared professional task. (Rehman & Al-Bargi, 2014).

**Classroom observation:** The main target of classroom observation is to get realities about the objectivity of the lesson in order supervisor and the teachers adjust the lesson as good as possible (*The Rwandan Journal of Education, Vol.7, N, 2024*). The aim of classroom observation for the teacher is to teach the lesson with good methodology and the supervisor make documentation about the lesson as precisely as possible. Researchers stressed that classroom observation is very important which enabled to recognize realities of the classroom and attain high standards of adequate teaching methodologies. Carter et al., (2024) highlights different classroom aspects that can be explored during lesson observation. For example, it provides an occasion for administrator to evaluate teaching methodology, abilities of classroom arrangement and other different features of instruction that are not easy to find by using other evaluation procedures. It is the best way of helping teachers to reflect on pedagogical practices by discovering their strengths and weaknesses. According to (MacBeath, 2009), the instructional supervisor must avoid sitting where he /she can interrupt classroom movement. The instructional supervisor should write down events observed in the classroom when instruction is taking place. It is also good to note how teachers deal with disruptive behaviors and record how they reinforce desired behaviors occurred.

**Post- observation conference:** Post- observation conference takes place in order to share the observation results and analysis, interpret the meaning of results, and provide a plan for instructional enhancement (MacBeath, 2009). Supervisor meets the teacher armed with well completed form used during observation. The teacher is allowed to talk about and reflect on what was captured in classroom. It provides ground for the supervisor to have deep understanding of the lesson and ask questions in order to have clarification of what have been observed. It also gives teachers opportunities to ask for suggestions and clarification about the lesson taught. During this stage teacher gets time for reflection, review, constructive feedback, and reinforcement. It deals with the reality of the teacher when he /she were in the classroom. According to (Douglas W. et al., 2020) post- observation conference creates an opportunity where teacher and supervisor sit and discuss the classroom observation cases, with intention of discovering areas for enhancement, and developing working strategies for future improvement. Various studies revealed that instructors are likely to adjust their instructional practices discussing with supervisor.

### 2.3.3 Effective Strategies and Interventions to Address and Alleviate the Challenges Faced by Head Teachers in Providing Instructional Supervision within Primary Schools

According to Mannan (2017), reducing administrative burdens and giving head teachers more time and resources for supervision could help them overcome obstacles. In order to overcome difficulties with supervision, Oluremi (2013) suggested enhancing head teacher training and professional development, optimizing resource allocation, and increasing support from education authorities. According to Wanzare (2012), effective instructional supervision necessitates ongoing head teacher professional development and training. The study emphasized the need for improved resource allocation and additional support from education authorities. In order to increase the effectiveness of supervision in Rwandan schools, Mukamurera and Kayisire (2016) suggested reducing administrative burdens and providing head teachers with specialized instructional supervision training. In order to improve teachers' job performance and instructional supervision in Rwanda, Niyibizi and Nzabalarwa (2018) recommended enhancing supervisory skills and providing head teachers with sufficient resources. In order to improve the efficiency of instructional supervision in Rwandan primary schools, Livingstone and Andala (2022) argued that head teachers should have access to more opportunities for professional development and that the education system should provide them with more support.

## III. METHODOLOGY

The study used the descriptive research design with a mixed approach, and the target population is 1871 with a sample size of 336 respondents from Nyaruguru District. A simple random sampling, stratified and purposive sampling were used for teachers; the questionnaire was used as the instrument and the interview was conducted. The SPSS software was used in analysis and descriptive statistics were used. The reliability testing for the questionnaires was carried out using Cronbach alpha. Values of 0.8 which were above the 0.7 were obtained, indicating good internal consistency.

## IV. FINDINGS & DISCUSSIONS

### 4.1 Response Rate

The response rate is the percentage of individuals or entities that respond to a survey, questionnaire, or study out of the total number initially contacted.

Table one indicate the response rate in this study as follows

**Table 1**

*Response Rate*

Sampled	Responded	Response Rate (%)
336	292	$292/336 * 100 = 86.9$

**Source:** Primary data, 2024

Table 1 shows that out of 336 individuals sampled, 292 responded, resulting in a high response rate of 86.9%. This indicates strong participant engagement and suggests that the survey or study was well-received. A high response rate enhances the reliability and validity of the findings, as it reflects a comprehensive representation of the target population.

### 4.2 Challenges faced by head teachers in providing instructional supervision in public primary schools

Objective one of this study focuses on identifying the challenges faced by head teachers in providing instructional supervision in public primary schools in Nyaruguru District. Understanding these challenges is crucial for developing effective strategies to enhance instructional supervision practices. This objective aims to discover the specific obstacles that hinder head teachers from performing their supervisory roles efficiently.

**Table 1***Challenges Faced by Head Teachers in Providing Instructional Supervision in Public Primary Schools*

Statement	Strongly Agree		Agree		Neutral		Disagree		Strongly Disagree		$\bar{x}$	Std. D
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%		
Lack of adequate training for head teachers in instructional supervision.	111	34	160	49.1	37	11.3	18	5.5	0	0	4.11	0.81
Insufficient time for head teachers to conduct effective supervision.	110	33.7	148	45.4	50	15.3	18	5.5	0	0	4.07	0.84
Limited resources to support instructional supervision activities.	108	33.1	147	45.1	37	11.3	30	9.2	4	1.2	3.99	0.96
High workload of head teachers affecting their supervision duties.	107	32.1	159	48.8	42	12.9	18	5.5	0	0	4.08	0.81
Lack of support from the education authorities for instructional supervision.	108	33.1	153	46.9	43	13.2	22	6.7	0	0	4.06	0.85

**Legend:** 5. Strongly Agree 4.21-5.00-very high, 4. Agree 3.41-4.20 high, 3. Not Sure 2.61-3.40 Moderate, 2. Disagree 1.81-2.60 low 1. Strongly Disagree 1.00-1.80 very low;  $SD \leq 1$ : Homogeneity SD,  $SD > 1$ : Heterogeneity SD

The key findings highlight several challenges faced by head teachers in providing instructional supervision in public primary schools of Nyaruguru District. The lack of adequate training had a mean score of 4.11, indicating strong agreement among respondents. Insufficient time for effective supervision scored a mean of 4.07, while limited resources had a mean of 3.99, both reflecting significant challenges. The high workload of head teachers, with a mean score of 4.08, and lack of support from education authorities, with a mean score of 4.06, were also prominent issues. These high mean scores suggest that head teachers struggle with training, time management, workload, resource limitations, and lack of support. The findings imply a need for professional development, systemic support, structural changes, and investment in resources to enhance instructional supervision. This is consistent with MacBeath et al. (2012), who found that inadequate training and support significantly hinder effective instructional leadership. Rehman and Al-Bargi (2014) also reported that insufficient time and resources, coupled with heavy workloads, negatively impact instructional supervision and the overall quality of education.

### 4.3 Perceptions of Head Teachers on Challenges they Face in Instructional Supervision

"The primary challenges I face in providing instructional supervision include a lack of adequate training in modern supervision techniques," said Interviewee One (Head Teacher). We have not received up-to-date training, and many of us were trained years ago. In addition, there is a lot on your plate; administrative tasks frequently take precedence over supervision, making it hard to effectively observe classrooms. The inconsistent availability of resources like teaching materials is another major issue that makes it difficult to provide thorough and meaningful supervision. Last but not least, authorities in education offer inconsistent support. We may receive instructions without the resources or follow-up assistance required to effectively implement them.

"One of the biggest challenges is the sheer size of our school and the number of classes," said Interviewee Two (Head Teacher). With so many administrative responsibilities, it is physically impossible to observe every teacher on a regular basis. As a result, there is a lack of oversight and feedback. Our staff's wide range of teaching methods presents another obstacle. Diversity can be strength, but it also means that supervisory strategies that are the same for everyone don't always work. In order to effectively support various teaching methods, we require more individualized strategies. Last but not least, we can't afford to give our teachers enough opportunities for professional development, which has an effect on how they teach." These findings are consistent with the research by Leithwood et al. (2008), which found that head teachers often struggle with outdated training and high administrative burdens, and by Darling-Hammond (2017), who reported that insufficient resources and lack of tailored professional development hinder effective supervision and teaching improvement.

### 4.4 Current Instructional Supervision Practices Implemented by Head Teachers in Public Primary Schools of Nyaruguru District

The second objective of this study is to determine the current instructional supervision procedures used by principals in Nyaruguru District's public primary schools. In order to evaluate these practices' efficacy and identify areas for improvement, it is essential to comprehend them. This objective aims to provide a comprehensive overview of how head teachers support and enhance the instructional processes in their schools by examining the existing supervisory methods.

**Table 2***Current Instructional Supervision Practices Implemented by Head Teachers*

Statement	Strongly Agree		Agree		Neutral		Disagree		Strongly Disagree		$\bar{x}$	Std. D
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%		
Head teachers regularly observe classroom teaching.	107	32.8	155	47.5	45	13.8	19	5.8	0	0	4.07	0.83
Head teachers provide timely feedback to teachers after observations.	107	32.8	142	43.6	46	14.1	31	9.5	0	0	3.99	0.92
Head teachers conduct regular meetings to discuss instructional issues.	106	32.5	160	49.1	42	12.9	16	5.5	0	0	4.08	0.81
Head teachers encourage professional development among teachers.	107	32.8	155	47.9	43	13.2	19	5.8	0	0	4.16	1.75
Head teachers use data to inform instructional decisions.	106	32.5	149	45.7	46	14.1	25	7.7	0	0	4.03	0.88

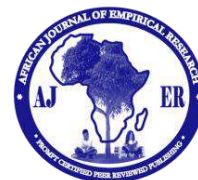
**Legend:** 5. Strongly Agree 4.21-5.00-very high, 4. Agree 3.41-4.20 high, 3. Not Sure 2.61-3.40 Moderate, 2. Disagree 1.81-2.60 low 1. Strongly Disagree 1.00-1.80 very low;  $SD \leq 1$ : Homogeneity SD,  $SD > 1$ : Heterogeneity SD

Table 2 presents the current instructional supervision practices implemented by head teachers in public primary schools of Nyaruguru District, with a focus on means and standard deviations. The statement "Head teachers regularly observe classroom teaching" had a mean score of 4.07 and a standard deviation of 0.83, indicating a high level of agreement among respondents about the regularity of classroom observations. "Head teachers provide timely feedback to teachers after observations" had a mean score of 3.99 and a standard deviation of 0.92, suggesting that while timely feedback is commonly provided, there is slightly more variation in responses. The practice of conducting regular meetings to discuss instructional issues received a mean score of 4.08 and a standard deviation of 0.81, highlighting a high frequency and consistency of such meetings. Encouragement of professional development among teachers scored the highest mean of 4.16 but also showed a significant standard deviation of 1.75, indicating substantial variation in responses. Lastly, the use of data to inform instructional decisions had a mean score of 4.03 and a standard deviation of 0.88, reflecting a generally high agreement on data-driven decision-making. These findings are supported by the research of Hallinger (2011), which emphasizes the importance of regular classroom observations and feedback for effective instructional supervision, and by Robinson et al. (2008), who found that promoting professional development and using data to guide decisions are crucial for improving instructional practices.

#### 4.5 Perceptions of Head Teachers Current Instructional Supervision Practices Implemented in Public Primary Schools of Nyaruguru District

**Interviewee Three (Head Teacher)** "Our current practices for instructional supervision involve regular classroom observations where we focus on various aspects such as teaching methods, student engagement, and lesson delivery. In order to encourage teachers to work together to learn, we also encourage peer observations. I try to observe the classroom at least twice per month, depending on the teacher's schedule and the resources available. To ensure fairness and consistency during observations, I use a structured observation checklist. This makes it easier to evaluate teaching methods objectively and identify areas for improvement. Through face-to-face meetings, I provide teachers with feedback following classroom observations. Based on specific examples I observed during the lesson, I highlight their strengths and areas for improvement. In addition, I document my responses with written feedback to guarantee clarity. We begin with a clear comprehension of our educational objectives in order to align instructional supervision with our school's objectives and standards. By focusing on effective teaching methods that improve student learning outcomes, our supervision procedures are intended to support these objectives. Teachers are also involved in setting professional development objectives that are in line with our school's vision." Workshops, seminars, and in-service training sessions are just some of the professional development opportunities we provide. Technology integration, pedagogical strategies, and curriculum updates are all covered in these activities. We also encourage teachers to take part in outside training programs so that they can bring fresh ideas and methods back to our school.

"Our approach to instructional supervision includes regular classroom walkthroughs and formal observations," **said interviewee number four (head teacher)**. To get a complete picture of how teaching is done, we use a mix of scheduled observations and random visits. Every two weeks, I observe the classroom. I focus on specific instructional strategies and levels of student engagement during these sessions. I also encourage teachers to conduct self-reflection and establish goals for personal development based on feedback. I typically schedule feedback sessions with teachers following classroom observations. I give constructive feedback to you orally and then write notes that summarize the



key points. The provided feedback is guaranteed to be clear and consistent with this strategy. Our school's objectives can only be met through collaborative planning with teachers. Our educational standards are supported by our discussions of curriculum alignment, assessment strategies, and professional development opportunities. Throughout the school year, regular communication and feedback loops aid in maintaining alignment. Peer mentoring programs, subject-specific workshops, and opportunities for teachers to attend conferences are examples of professional development activities. We also encourage teachers to pursue advanced certifications in their subject areas and encourage collaborative learning through lesson study groups." These practices align with the findings of Hattie (2009), who highlighted that regular feedback and professional development are crucial for enhancing teaching effectiveness, and by Ingvarson et al. (2005), who emphasized the importance of continuous observation and reflective practices in improving teaching quality and student outcomes.

#### 4.6 Effective Strategies and Interventions to Address and Alleviate the Challenges Faced by Head Teachers in Providing Instructional Supervision

Objective three of this study focuses on identifying effective strategies and interventions to address and alleviate the challenges faced by head teachers in providing instructional supervision within the primary schools of Nyaruguru District. This objective aims to explore actionable measures that can enhance the capacity of head teachers to overcome obstacles such as inadequate training, limited resources, high workloads, and insufficient support from educational authorities. By investigating these strategies, the study seeks to contribute to improving the overall quality of instructional supervision practices in the district's public primary schools.

**Table 3**

*Effective Strategies and Interventions to Address the Challenges Faced by Head Teachers in Providing Instructional Supervision*

Statement	Strongly Agree		Agree		Neutral		Disagree		Strongly Disagree		$\bar{x}$	Std. D
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%		
Providing additional training for head teachers on instructional supervision.	71	21.8	170	52.1	47	14.4	30	9.2	8	2.5	3.81	0.95
Reducing the workload of head teachers to focus more on supervision.	99	30.4	127	39	61	18.7	29	8.9	10	3.1	3.84	1.05
Allocating more resources for instructional supervision activities.	158	48.5	101	31	32	9.8	24	7.4	11	3.4	4.13	1.07
Increasing support from education authorities for supervision efforts.	164	50.3	99	30.4	32	9.8	10	3.1	21	6.4	4.15	1.13
Implementing a mentorship program for head teachers on supervision.	102	31.3	154	47.2	52	16	8	2.5	10	3.1	4.01	0.92

**Legend:** 5. Strongly Agree 4.21-5.00-very high, 4. Agree 3.41-4.20 high, 3. Not Sure 2.61-3.40 Moderate, 2. Disagree 1.81-2.60 low 1. Strongly Disagree 1.00-1.80 very low;  $SD \leq 1$ : Homogeneity SD,  $SD > 1$ : Heterogeneity SD

Table 3 provides insights into effective strategies and interventions to address challenges faced by head teachers in providing instructional supervision within Nyaruguru District's primary schools, focusing on means and standard deviations. The statement "Providing additional training for head teachers on instructional supervision" had a mean score of 3.81 and a standard deviation of 0.95, indicating moderate agreement among respondents regarding the need for more training. "Reducing the workload of head teachers to focus more on supervision" scored a mean of 3.84 with a standard deviation of 1.05, suggesting variability in responses but generally supportive of workload reduction. Allocating more resources for instructional supervision activities received a mean score of 4.13 and a standard deviation of 1.07, showing strong agreement on the importance of resource allocation. Similarly, "Increasing support from education authorities for supervision efforts" had a mean score of 4.15 and a standard deviation of 1.13, indicating high consensus among respondents. Implementing a mentorship program for head teachers on supervision scored a mean of 4.01 with a standard deviation of 0.92, demonstrating significant agreement on the potential benefits of mentorship. These findings align with research by Darling-Hammond et al. (2017), who emphasized the critical role of targeted training, resource allocation, and mentorship in improving instructional supervision, and by Leithwood et al. (2008), who found that increased support from authorities and reduced administrative burdens significantly enhance supervision effectiveness.



#### 4.7 Perceptions of Head Teachers on Effective Strategies and Interventions to Address and Alleviate the Challenges Faced by Head Teachers in Providing Instructional Supervision

"One effective strategy we've employed is establishing regular professional learning communities among teachers," stated Interviewee One (**Head Teacher**). These sessions improve school-wide instructional practices by fostering peer support and collaboration. Our capacity to provide better instructional supervision would be significantly enhanced if we had access to cutting-edge technology and teaching resources. Digital learning platforms and interactive whiteboards, for instance, could make classroom observations more dynamic and efficient. By providing specialized training workshops on instructional leadership and supervision, education authorities could better support us. In order to guarantee quality and consistency across schools, it would also be beneficial to have clear guidelines and frameworks for supervision practices. It could be very effective to start a mentorship program in which experienced head teachers mentor new or struggling colleagues. Professional development and ongoing support would be provided through this program, which would be tailored to the particular difficulties of instructional supervision. Head teachers would benefit from structured training programs that focus on leadership in educational settings. Effective communication, conflict resolution, and diverse learning environment-specific instructional strategies might be covered in these programs." "Implementing a peer coaching system has been instrumental in overcoming challenges related to instructional supervision," stated Interviewee Two, **the Head Teacher**. Peer coaches foster a culture of continuous improvement among teaching staff by providing individualized support and feedback. We could significantly improve our supervision practices by allocating additional financial resources for instructional supervision activities like professional development workshops and classroom resources. Head teachers could be supported by education authorities by creating regional networks or forums where best instructional supervision practices are shared. Innovation and knowledge sharing would benefit from this collaborative approach. Implementing a structured induction program for new head teachers may assist in reducing instructional supervision difficulties. During the transition period, this program would provide comprehensive training and mentorship. Mentorship programs in which seasoned principals mentor aspirant leaders are something I highly recommend. In order to guarantee a pipeline of effective educational leaders, these programs would concentrate on leadership abilities specific to instructional supervision. Similarly, Evertson and Weinstein (2006) found that access to resources and structured training programs improves the effectiveness of instructional supervision and overall teacher performance.

### V. CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

#### 5.1 Conclusions

The study concludes that head teachers in Nyaruguru District face significant challenges in their supervisory roles, including inadequate training, insufficient time, heavy workloads, limited resources, and a lack of support from education authorities. Despite these obstacles, head teachers remain committed to improving instructional quality by actively engaging in various supervisory practices such as classroom observations, timely feedback, instructional meetings, professional development support, and data-driven instructional decisions. However, inconsistencies in professional development highlight the need for more consistent and robust support systems. The qualitative data from head teacher interviews corroborate the quantitative findings, providing a deeper understanding of the complexities of instructional supervision. The study recommends targeted interventions, including additional training, workload reduction, resource allocation, and increased support from educational authorities, to enhance head teachers' capacity for effective instructional supervision and improve the overall quality of education in public primary schools.

#### 5.2 Recommendations

The following recommendations were made and sent to the Rwandan government, school administration, parents, and teachers on the basis of the study's findings: The government should invest in comprehensive training programs for head teachers and allocate increased funding to provide essential resources, such as teaching materials, technological tools, electricity, and infrastructure improvements. Policies should be implemented to reduce the administrative workload of head teachers by hiring additional staff, allowing them more time for instructional supervision. Head teachers should pursue professional growth, foster collaboration, and conduct regular classroom observations with meaningful feedback. Teachers should engage in professional development, collaborate with colleagues, seek feedback, reflect on practices, and utilize available resources to enhance teaching and learning. NGOs and the private sector should partner with schools to provide additional resources, training, and support programs to improve instructional supervision and educational quality.

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