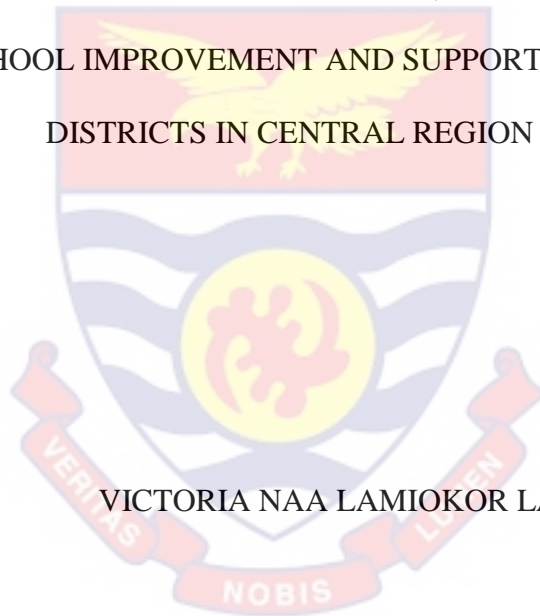UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST

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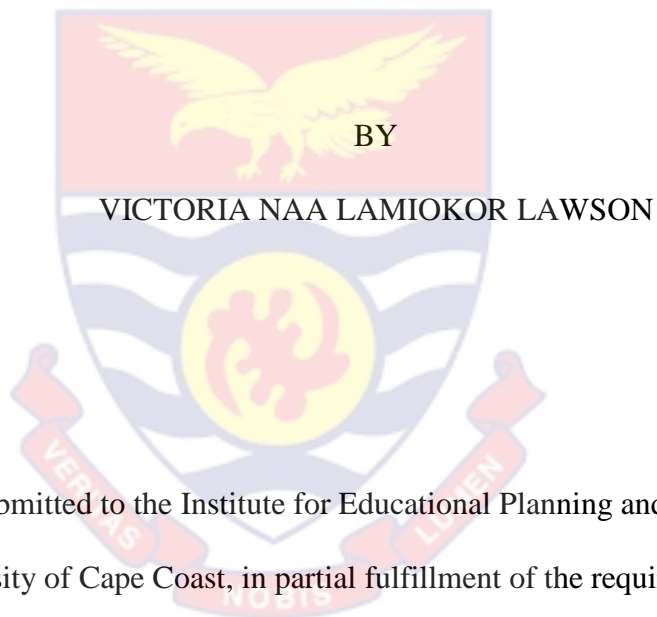
DISTRICTS IN CENTRAL REGION OF GHANA

VICTORIA NAA LAMIOKOR LAWSON

2024

UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST

UNDERSTANDING THE KNOWLEDGE, ATTITUDE AND PRACTICES

OF SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT AND SUPPORT OFFICERS IN THREE

DISTRICTS IN CENTRAL REGION OF GHANA

BY

VICTORIA NAA LAMIOKOR LAWSON

Thesis submitted to the Institute for Educational Planning and Administration,

University of Cape Coast, in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the

award of Master of Philosophy degree in Educational Administration

NOVEMBER 2024

DECLARATION

Candidate's Declaration

I hereby declare that this thesis is the result of my own original research and that no part of it has been presented for another degree in this university or elsewhere.

Candidate's Signature ………………………………Date …………………….

Name: …………………………………………………………………………….

Supervisors' Declaration

I hereby declare that the preparation and presentation of the thesis was supervised in accordance with the guidelines on supervision of thesis laid down by the University of Cape Coast.

Supervisor's Signature ………………………… Date ……………...........

Name: …………………………………………………………………………

ABSTRACT

Quality educational leadership delivery is informed by the knowledge, attitude and practices (KAP) of school improvement and support service provision. However, studies that engage KAP of School Improvement Support Officers (SISOs) in Ghana are either lacking or inadequate. Informed by Fiedler's model and the situational leadership theory the current study leverages an interpretivist paradigm to examine the policy environment, ascertain the knowledge base, and examine the attitude and practices of SISOs towards their work. The study adopted a KAP descriptive study design within which a questionnaire and interview guide were used to collect data from 11 SISOs representing about half of the SISOs from three Districts of the Central Region, namely, Cape Coast Metropolis, Komenda Edina Eguafo Abirim, and Abura Asebu Kwamankese Districts. Descriptive and thematic analyses were performed on the data generated. The study found that SISOs are knowledgeable in their field and follow the guidelines spelled out in the policy manual that guides their practice. Furthermore, whereas some SISOs applied to fill vacancies others were recommended for the role of SISOs. Majority of the SISOs were identified with good attitudes toward their role similar to the practices they held for the role. Based on the findings, it was recommended that the Ghana Education Services (GES) management should facilitate the sustenance of SISO's knowledge by providing continuous in-service training, additional motivation to stay resourced on the job possibly including laptops, stationaries, and logistics to provide effective feedback for professional growth and development.

KEY WORDS

Attitudes

Circuit Supervisors

Knowledge

Practices

School Improvement and Support Officers

DEDICATION

To My Husband

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF FIGURES

LIST OF ACRONYMS

SISOS	School Improvement and Support Officers
CS	Circuit Supervisors
MMDAs	Metropolitan, Municipal, and District Assemblies
MOE	Ministry of Education
GES	Ghana Education Service
KAP	Knowledge Attitude and Practices
SLT	Situational Leadership Theory
SPAM	School Performance Appraisal Meeting
CPD	Continues Professional Development
INSET	In-Service Education and Training
AAK	Abura Asebu Kwamankese
KEEA	Komenda Edina Eguafo Abirim
NaCCA	National Council for Curriculum and Assessment
UNICEF	United Nations International Children Emergency Fund
SMC	School Management Committee
NTC	National Teaching Council
NALAP	National Literacy Acceleration Programme
CCP	Common Core Programme
SABER	System Approach for Better Education Results
KOLCA	Koran International Co-operative Agency
PTA	Parent Teacher Association
BESIP	Basic Education Sector Improvement Programme
PLC	Professional Learning Development
PA	Parent Association

BECE   Basic Education Certificate Examination

USAID   United States Agency for International Development

GALAP   Ghana Accountability for Learning Outcomes Projects

NIB   National Inspectorate Board

NGO   Non-Governmental Organization

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

In relation to the practice of School Improvement and Support Officers (SISO) in three districts of the Central Region, this section provides background information, a statement of the problem, objectives, and research questions, the significance of the study, definitions of key terms, and an explanation of how the study was structured.

Background to the Study

Ghana has gone through major educational reforms after independence. The Metropolitan, Municipals, and District Assemblies (MMDAs) were in charge of the basic and secondary schools' infrastructure, management, and monitoring during all of these years of educational reform. Circuit supervisors served as the primary conduit between districts, schools, and regional offices at the district level. In the new educational reform in 2019, a new curriculum was introduced, and there has been a change in the name of the supervisors from Circuit Supervisors to School Improvement and Support Officers (SISOs). (Ashun, 2022).

Teachers' supervision by School Improvement and Support Officers has been considered as one of the indicators for improving educational leadership and quality education (Shah et al., 2013). To achieve this, much emphasis has been placed on the Knowledge, Attitude and Practices of the School Improvement and Support Officers (SISO's). However, the level of the SISO's knowledge, attitude, and practices in improving and supporting the education system to achieve quality education is not well grounded in the

1

Ghanaian literature, especially in the Central region of Ghana which is mostly considered as the hub of formal education in the country.

Hence, inspection, overseeing, and supervision arise in response to the need inherent in the functioning of an organization. In a hierarchical organization, no one can claim to work without proper supervision (Singh, Arpi, Norohna, Kiehle, Dash, Kanwal & Singh, 2015). For the proper functioning of an organization, there must be proper coordination and linking among different parts and organs of the organization.

The two Latin words that make up the word "supervision" are its roots. Super and videre both mean "to see over" or "to oversee". It refers to the act of overseeing, directing, or managing activities or individuals to ensure that tasks are performed correctly and effectively. The definition of supervision is a two-way, dynamic, and social activity used to achieve organizational goals. It aims to uphold the necessary level of performance by continuously encouraging and aiding the employee to perform at their very best. According to one definition, supervision is a collaborative effort between a leader and one or more subordinates to complete a certain task. Barret (1986) defined supervision as a type of instruction that includes counseling, assistance, inspiration, direction, and liberation. According to Terry and Franklin (2019), supervision is the act of directing and leading the efforts of the workforce and other resources towards achieving predetermined work outputs.

Similar to this, according to Williamson (1980), supervision is a process whereby a designated staff member assists workers in learning by their needs to make the best use of their knowledge and skills and to improve their abilities so that they can do their jobs more effectively and increase

satisfaction for both themselves and the agency. According to Millett (2013), supervision is a spirit that animates the relationship between organizational levels, including maximal accomplishment, or, when it fails, results in administrative paralysis. Realizing the first and preventing the second are the main concerns of effective management.

With the introduction of a school inspector in 1856, the evolution of supervision in Africa began with the education of colonial government officials who served in that capacity between 1850 and 1900 (MacWilliam & Kwamena-Poh, 1975). The 1882 Educational Ordinance provided a framework for controlling supervision and authorized the creation of inspection standards for schools by a central body. According to Gwaradzimba and Shumba (2010), the importance of facilitators in determining the quality of the education kids receive in schools has a significant impact on the achievement of educational goals and the provision of excellent basic education. Therefore, by monitoring what facilitators perform with students, supervisors must help them participate in creating lesson plans.

Around the turn of the 20th century, overseers often referred to as inspectors began visiting schools on the Gold Coast to oversee the teaching process in Ghana. They closely observed teachers during their inspection trips to understand more about the caliber of instruction and learning in the classrooms. Additionally, payment by results was imposed using their inspection reports. According to the outcomes of the inspector's examination in reading, writing, and mathematics as well as optional subjects like history, geography, and needlework, a school was deemed effective.

Role-playing and the use of fear as motivators continued to exist even after the payment-by-results system was discontinued (McWilliams & Kwamena-Poh, 1975). However, funding given to schools based on the overall effectiveness of instruction allowed teachers to exercise more professional independence. According to Bame (1991), an inspection was also marked by fear among teachers and students as well as teachers' hate for the inspectors because they sought out problems with the former. Bame (1991) adds that inspectors unfairly criticized instructors' work and frequently failed to provide them with suggestions and practical examples that could have helped them improve their instruction.

Due to the limited number of schools during the colonial era, Antwi (1992) notes that inspectors of schools were able to visit them frequently and provide reports on how well teachers and children were performing. According to Antwi (1992), instructors were on guard due to the fear of an inspector's arrival. According to a 1960/62 MoE Report, the system of school inspection was reorganized after independence in 1957 into what, starting in 1961, became the Inspectorate section of the MoE and is now a section of the GES. The GES Inspectorate Division is still in charge of monitoring and assessing standards at pre-university institutions.

According to the nation's decentralization policy for leadership and decision-making, the administration of pre-university education has been decentralized, and the system of school inspection is entrusted to the district level. Circuit supervisors are the individuals in charge of managing the schools. A supervisor is frequently assigned to 20 schools in urban areas, 15 in semi-urban areas, and 10 in rural areas, according to Antwi (1992).

According to the MoE Report, the function of school managers has significantly expanded over time to include those of evaluators, expert mentors, and assistants. As an "evaluator," the supervisor's job is to evaluate how well students and teachers perform to determine how well the school's facilities meet the required requirements. To help teachers improve their professional performance and raise the bar for student and teacher achievement, they are expected to take administrative measures to address any deficiencies in schools through recommendations, display lessons, and refresher training. This will promote quality education.

According to studies, instructors have an odd attitude towards their supervisors, which has a negative impact on their performance (Owusu-Addo, 2019). The majority of supervisors, according to Owusu-Addo (2019), take a conventional approach to leadership, which explains why teachers have negative attitudes toward monitoring.

In use in schools are two different types of supervision tactics (internal and external), according to Dewodo, Agbetorwoka, and Wotordzor (2019). In addition, Kpatakpa (2008) discovered in a survey that teachers preferred internal monitoring to external supervision as the one being prioritized in their district. Supporting this, Barichisu (2007) discovered that although both internal and external supervision received more attention, school-based monitoring received more attention in the Municipality. Additionally, according to teachers, internal rather than external supervision promotes teaching and learning (Kpatakpa, 2008). Dewodo, Agbetorwoka, and Wotordzor (2019) advised adopting both internal and external supervisory tactics since they are both essential for efficient supervision.

5

According to Danquah and Acheampong (2018), most instructors and supervisors in elementary schools have favorable opinions on instructional supervision. This stands in stark contrast to the widespread belief held by certain supervisors and supervisees, who see instruction-related supervision negatively. A supportive environment is a tactic employed by supervisors, openness, cooperation, and teacher involvement have an impact on the efficiency of supervision and monitoring, which results in an improvement in the delivery of teaching (Partey, 2022). According to Partey's (2022) research, supervisors who "partner" teachers during class delivery are thought to increase teaching and learning more than those who "police" teachers.

Alila, Uusiautti, and Määttä (2016) claim that through empowering instructors in their jobs, monitoring promotes inclusive teaching. According to Danquah and Acheampong (2018), when supervisors support teachers' active participation in supervision, it frequently leads to a positive connection between supervisors and supervisees, which promotes the successful implementation of the curriculum. Similar to Mensah, Esia-Donkoh, and Quansah (2009) hypothesized that teachers view friendly interpersonal relationships between supervisors as the most advantageous aspect of instructional supervision.

The function of SISOs in enhancing educational leadership in the areas of knowledge, attitude, and practices, which in turn favourable affect teachers' overall performance and academic production, has not received enough attention over the years (Dewodo, Agbetorwoka & Wotordzor, 2019). Despite the lack of attention, its effect on academic achievement calls for more research.

6

Statement of the Problem

According to Donkor and Asante (2016), it has long been known that academic supervision affects students' performance. Donkor and Asante (2016) report that where SISO carries out instructional leadership activities, instructors' output and students' academic achievement are more likely to improve. According to Sarfo and Cudjoe (2016), basic school supervisors' supervision quality and efforts to support teachers are frequently subpar when they lack clinical supervisory skills. According to Baffour-Awuah (2011), modern components of instructional supervision need to be used considerably more frequently. Administrators should pay more attention to offering programmes and activities that allow teachers to develop their professional abilities, as Madriaga (2014) noted teacher professional development scored last on the scale of instructional supervision.

Concerning school oversight, there have been some debates. First of all, according to Sharma, Yusoff, Kannan, and Baba (2011), supervisors utilize oversight to repress teachers. Second, even when being monitored, instructors with the same credentials as the school supervisors do not feel at ease (Sarfo & Cudjoe, 2016). The question of whether private schools perform better academically than public schools is another topic of debate. Ozdemir and Yirci (2015) assert that supervision is crucial for raising educational standards, sustaining educational growth, identifying and fixing potential flaws, preventing a school from falling behind in systemic educational advancements, and encouraging collaboration in the classroom.

It has been determined that the supervisory agents should have the necessary expertise, be able to express themselves clearly, be able to devote

7

enough time to supervision and uphold equality principles. According to Glanz, Shulman, and Sullivan (2007), the centralization of educational reform has a detrimental impact on instructional oversight. They claimed that due to their various non-instructional responsibilities, principals rarely had the time to undertake continuing, thorough supervision. This type of oversight was routinely given to coaches, but they were not given the organizational authority or supervisory training to make the required changes to ensure high-quality education. John (2011) concluded that head teachers and teachers lacked managerial and professional direction due to sporadic inspection from District/Zonal inspectors.

Research demonstrating variations in students' academic achievement between public and private basic schools (Atuahene, Yusheng, Bentum-Micah & Owusu-Ansah, 2019), has given the impression that public schools are less well-supervised than private schools. The Ghana Education Service's support systems, according to Baffour-Awuah (2011), may have a negative effect on how instructional supervision is carried out in schools. Because it appears there is little study evidence, it has become vital to investigate the knowledge, attitude, and practices of basic school supervisors. It is crucial that research be conducted to evaluate how well SISOs are doing their instructional supervision in the light of the switch to SISO. Studies on the work of SISOs are not nearly as numerous as those on circuit supervisors. Therefore, a KAP survey on school improvement and support officers in Cape Coast, Abura Asebu-Kwamankese, and Komenda Edina-Eguafo-Abrem is needed to fill a critical research vacuum.

Research Objectives

The purpose of the study was to learn more about the knowledge, attitudes, and practices of SISOs in two Districts and one metropolis in Ghana's Central Region. As a result, the following particular objectives were proposed to direct the study's trajectory:

1. To appraise the policy environment of the work of SISOs in three districts in the Central Region.

2. To examine the knowledge base of SISOs in three districts of the Central Region.

3. Explore the attitude of SISOs towards their work in three districts in the Central Region.

4. Explore the practices of SISOs

5. Examine how the management of the Directorate of Education influences the operations of SISOs

Research Questions

Consistent with the specific research objectives outlined, the following research questions were formulated and answered by the end of the study:

1. What is the policy environment of the work of SISOs in Ghana?

2. What is the knowledge base of SISOs in three districts of the Central Region?

3. What is the attitude of SISOs towards their work?

4. What do SISOs practice on the field?

5. How does the management of the Directorate of Education influence the operations of SISOs?

9

Significance of the Study

Policymakers and implementers like the Ghana Education Service may benefit from the study and to better understand the duties and routines of school development and support officers in Ghana's public basic schools. The study may also influence the educational authorities to identify and train supervisors with the requisite skills needed for school-based supervision in basic schools. The study may provide practical knowledge to school improvement and support officers on the duties and responsibilities associated with their work. Finally, the study may add to the body of knowledge about monitoring and supervision of schools in less developed countries, such as Ghana.

Delimitations

Geographically, the study was situated in three districts under the Ministry of Education in the Central Region of Ghana namely Cape Coast, Abura Asebu-Kwamankese and Komenda Edina-Eguafo-Abrem. The variables used for the study is Knowledge, Attitude and Practice.

Limitations

The study's principal drawbacks are, among other restrictions on available resources, the timetable of school and improvement support officers to deliver crucial information. The research was only conducted in the districts under the control of the three Districts in the Central Region due to personal financial constraints. Although additional Ghana Education Service agencies should have been included, the study focused primarily on School Improvement and Support Officers and District Directors of Education. The information gathered for the research reflected the issues of the selected

10

SISOs, not those of all SISOs in the Central Region. Due to some concerns, several respondents were hesitant to share key crucial details. Again, because the researcher utilized interviews, certain difficulties arose such as personal life experiences on their work, nonetheless, the researcher informed the respondents that they would maintain their anonymity and confidentiality throughout the study.

Definition of Terms

Some of the words within the study are given operational definitions as they are used in the context and scope of the research as follows:

Basic school:

In Ghana, there are two years of kindergarten, six years of primary school, and three years of junior high school combined into the basic school, which is **(are)** often run by a single principal. Within a certain school, there is a smooth transition from elementary to junior high.

Challenges: Obstacles that test one's abilities and can lead to personal or collective improvement when addressed effectively.

Circuit supervisor: An official tasked with monitoring instruction and learning in a school district.

Education circuit: A geographical district containing ten to twenty basic schools assigned to an officer for supervision.

External supervisors: Circuit supervisors who visit schools to encourage excellent teaching and learning are stationed at the district level, and inspectors are located at the regional and central levels.

Practice of SISO: what the SISO do in the schools they are assigned to.

11

School improvement and support officers: The new name given to the Circuit supervisor under the new educational reform.

Works of SISO: duties and responsibilities of SISO.

Organization of the Study

The study is divided into five (5) chapters. The study's introduction was given in the first chapter. It provided information about the study's context, problem statement, purpose, research questions, significance of the study, delimitation, limitation, and organization for the remainder of the study. The second Chapter, which was made up of an overview, a body, and a summary, concentrated on the review of linked literature. Chapter Three was concerned with the research methodology of the study. It encompassed the design, population, sample and sampling procedure, administration of the instruments as well as data collection and its analysis. The fourth Chapter was concerned with the presentation and discussion of research findings. Finally, the fifth Chapter presented the summary of findings, conclusion, and recommendations of the study to inform policies and improve practices.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

To raise awareness, this chapter reviews pertinent materials on the knowledge, attitude, and practices of school improvement and support officers in their work. The section is structured as follows. The first section catered for theoretical review related to the study. The second focused on conceptual review whilst the third looked at the empirical review pertinent to the study. In addition, a conceptual framework was developed to conceptualize the realities of the study based on the concepts reviewed. The final section of this chapter provided a summary concerning how the empirical, theoretical, and conceptual reviews have provided the needed direction for the study to be successfully carried out.

Theoretical Review

A theoretical framework offers a 'map' of the research process that guides the researcher in investigating the nature and scope of the study in relation to the research questions, objectives, and the purposes of the study. The theoretical framework for this study anchors on behavioral theory, contingency theory, the fiedler model and the situational leadership theory.

Behavioral theory

Behavior is made up of the responses and gestures an organism makes and uses in a particular circumstance. The word "behavior" is typically used to describe acts that are visible to others. The primary focus of behaviorists' learning strategy is how behavior is learned. According to the behaviorist perspective, learning can occur when a link is made between a stimulus and a

behavior, and any behavior can be modified through reward. (Kasonde, Haambokoma, & Tomaida, 2013).

Behaviorists approach learning as a mechanical process and emphasize objectivity particularly. People are neither automatically nice nor bad, say behaviorists. A person's personality is made up of their experiences and environment. They claim that the human brain resembles a "black box." Neither can we nor do we need to know what is happening inside this "black box." (Guidotti et al., (2018). What goes into this black box (input) and what comes out (output) are more crucial than what happens in the black box itself. Outputs are measurable, observable, and objective. It is possible to change, arrange, and control inputs and outputs. Not a person's perceptions, but rather how they are reflected, is what matters. Pavlov, J. B., Watson, E. L., Thorndike, E. R., Guthrie, and Skinner are the fathers of the behaviorist method, (Sechenov et al., (2022).

The implications of the behaviorist theory to this study are enormous. Supervisors are required to learn new and modern ways of supervising schools. This is a new behavior that will require motivation and reinforcement to bring about a change in the orientation of supervisors. Most supervisors are still used to the traditional method of supervision.

Contingency Theories

Scholars appear to concur that influence is a necessary component of leadership to accomplish objectives, (Anderson, & Sun, 2017). Because of this, an organization's success or failure in attaining the objectives for which it was founded is typically correlated with the style of leadership that prevails inside the organization. There is a tone of writing on leadership, much of it

14

conflicting and perplexing, and there are many different ways to express it. According to Turner and Baker, (2018), contingency theories for leadership are common among various methods and serve as a mediating middle ground in understanding leadership by highlighting the shortcomings of the attributes and behavior approaches and incorporating earlier research findings.

The situational leadership theory (SLT) and least favorite coworker are the subjects of the most well-liked and important studies on the topic. While studying leadership, other authors of the era brought up the issue of the situation as an element that needed to be taken into account. These scholars emphasized the value of contextual circumstances, how they affect particular personalities, and how effective leaders behave.

The Fiedler Model

The success of a leader depends on how well his or her leadership style fits the circumstance. The leader must ascertain the type of environment and leadership style in which they are most successful. According to Fiedler's contingency model, (Fiedler, 1967). there is no single best leadership style. When a leader's style of leadership complements the circumstance, it is effective. The first thorough contingency model for leadership is the Fiedler Model. According to the model, effective group performance and leadership depend on how well the leader's style and the extent to which the circumstance is under his or her control mesh.

According to Fiedler, a person's leadership style is predetermined. This indicates that if a circumstance calls for a task-oriented leader but the incumbent is relationship-oriented, either the circumstance must be changed or the leader must be replaced.

15

Fiedler has distinguished three situational or contingency dimensions: 1. The degree of members' respect, trust, and confidence in their leader is referred to as the leader-member relationship. 2. The degree to which job assignments are structured or unstructured is referred to as task structure. 3. Position power is the amount of control a leader has over factors of power like hiring, firing, discipline, promotions, and pay raises. Fiedler concluded that both favorable and unfavorable circumstances would benefit from a task-oriented leadership approach.

The task-oriented leader will be successful in favorable circumstances when Leader-Member interactions are solid, the task is structured, and position power is strong. A task-oriented style of leadership will be beneficial in unfavorable circumstances, such as when member-leader relations are bad, the task is unstructured, and position power is weak. The human relations-focused leader will perform best when the circumstance is moderate (moderately favorable or unfavorable).

Situational Leadership Theory

According to the Situational Leadership Theory, which was created by Dr. Paul Hersey and Kenneth Blanchard, (1997), effective leadership depends on choosing the appropriate leadership style based on the followers' level of preparation. Followers are able and willing to complete a particular activity. The thesis is based on the idea that leaders may make up for followers' lack of aptitude and drive. The theory suggests four leadership philosophies as well as four follower development levels.

1. Telling (S1): Giving explicit instructions. What should I do?

2. Selling (S2): Striking a balance between people- and task-oriented behavior.

16

3. Participating (S3): A participative and supportive method. Permit group members to participate more actively in formulating ideas and making choices.

4. Delegating (S4): Total control. Individuals tend to make most of the decisions and take most of the responsibility.

Maturity Level of the Followers of Hersey and Blanchard, (1997).

1. M1 (unable and unwilling): Members do not have the necessary knowledge, abilities, or motivation.

2. M2 (unable but willing): Members are passionate and willing but unable.

3. M3 (able but unwilling): Members who are capable of carrying out the assignment but are averse to taking ownership.

4. M4 (able and willing): Members have the necessary skills and are eager to finish the job.

Conceptual Review

A conceptual framework is a theoretical structure or model that outlines the relationships between variables, concepts and theories in a research study. It provides a visual representation of the research problem, objectives and hypotheses and guidelines to the research design, data collection and analysis (Miles & Huberman, 1994; Creswell, 2014).

This section looked at the various concept that underpinned the study. The various concepts were policy environment, concept of supervision, and knowledge of supervisors.

Policy Environment

According to O'Faircheallaigh, (2010), policies are decisions that a government, organization, or other public or private entities make regarding

17

how human activity affects the environment, particularly those steps intended to stop or lessen unfavorably impacts. A government, party, business, or individual may adopt or propose policies as standard courses of action or guiding principles to help decision-making.

The natural world can be summed up as the effects of all the living and non-living things that have an impact on human life. According to Schaafsma, (2021), the term "environment" refers to physical ecosystems that take into account the social and economic dimensions, which include resource management and biodiversity as well as the social dimension of quality of life and health.

Environment and policy are two key concepts that make up the policy environment. Problems resulting from human effect on the environment to organisational decision-making are frequently the subject of policy environments. Although it is dynamic and constantly changes in response to shifts in the political and economic landscape as well as shifts in the accessibility and cost of technologies, the policy environment is a requirement for any organization or government to the laws, regulations, and other policy mechanisms concerning environmental issues.

Concept of supervision

According to Apenteng (2012), supervision cannot be disregarded because it is a key instrument for improving employee performance when given the proper resources, tools, and supervisors. Over time, the idea of instructional monitoring has evolved (Olorode & Adeyemo, 2012). In the 19th and 20th centuries, supervision and school inspection were thought to be interchangeable terms. In the educational system, teachers were required to

18

follow bosses' instructions and directions without inquiry. However, due to the Human Relations Movement's influence on everyday life, modern managers perform their tasks with more humanity.

The use of scientific management ideas in the educational system at the time made supervision synonymous with teacher subordination and school inspection (Olorode & Adeyemo, 2012). A new development in management theory produced a more socially acceptable and compassionate understanding of supervision as a collaborative endeavor between teachers and supervisors. The goal of supervision might be varied. The most crucial thing is that supervisors must have a specific goal in mind before beginning this crucial task in the classroom. The instructors being supervised and their supervisors should be seen as partners in development and colleagues in the profession.

Knowledge of Supervisors

The use of scientific management ideas in the educational system at the time made supervision synonymous with teacher subordination and school inspection (Olorode & Adeyemo, 2012). A new development in management theory produced a more socially acceptable and compassionate understanding of supervision as a collaborative endeavor between teachers and supervisors. The goal of supervision might be varied. The most crucial thing is that supervisors must have a specific goal in mind before beginning this crucial task in the classroom. The instructors being supervised and their supervisors should be seen as partners in development and colleagues in the profession.

Similar to this, teachers believed supervisors only had partial technical and conceptual skills, according to a Gitonga (2019) study. They are unable to adequately improve teachers' pedagogy and instructional material utilization

19

competencies, spend the majority of the time spent on instructional supervision checking teachers' professional records, and have not led the way in maximizing the use of their instructional supervision recommendations and reports to improve the delivery of high-quality education.

Additionally, according to some studies, supervisors may not be sufficiently knowledgeable about their employees' jobs (Arthur, 2022). In a study, Arthur (2022) discovered that the supervisors of instructors had a moderate degree of competence when supervising them. He also mentioned that supervisors could not evaluate teachers' lesson plans. According to Arthur (2022), insufficient supervisory expertise was identified as the root cause of subpar oversight of educators in the district.

According to Apenteng (2012), some supervisors are capable of providing teachers with counseling following supervision. Communication skills like speaking and listening are some of the appropriate talents that circuit supervisors employ. The majority of basic school supervisors, according to findings from quantitative data (Sarfo & Cudjoe, 2016), are familiar with clinical supervision and employ it in basic school supervision. However, it became clear from the interview that they are unable to apply this knowledge sufficiently and efficiently, which is necessary when monitoring teachers.

Studies on subject supervision reveal that some crucial subjects may not be under the supervisors' proper control because of a lack of understanding on their part. Headteachers and circuit supervisors provide professional assistance to teachers in the field of teaching and learning materials, according to Molenaar (2009). However, the assistance provided to science teachers in

20

terms of topic knowledge and the organization of practical work fell short of meeting their demands. According to Molenaar (2009), circuit supervisors lacked the appropriate training to successfully supervise scientific instruction or support teachers in improving their instruction. Despite having expertise in the subject matter of education, Dzikum (2014) found that supervisors lacked the "technical" and "interpersonal abilities necessary for effective monitoring in schools.

According to studies, supervisors are knowledgeable about the task they supervise. According to a study by Ochieng (2013), supervisors are capable of performing assessments. Additionally, it was discovered that supervisory reports are consistently used, and the reports aid teachers in developing professionally. They also concurred that the comments supervisors make on teachers' observation sheets are motivating and assist teachers in identifying instructional issues.

Attitude of Supervisors

According to Idogho and Agholor (2013), in some schools Inspectors and Supervisors create a relaxed and empowering setting for the educators and the students. Daud, Dali, Khalid, and Fauzee (2018) discovered a substantial positive association between the teacher's approach towards supervision and the supervisor's confidence. The effectiveness of teachers was heavily dependent on their supervisors and their having a good working relationship (Apenteng, 2012).

Idogho and Agholor (2013) contend that for school supervision and inspection to be successful, all parties involved must alter their perspectives on how to manage educational institutions. According to Idogho and Agholor

21

(2013), the supervisors' and inspectors' unprofessional demeanors have made it difficult to effectively monitor and supervise schools. This has an impact on the teaching-learning process in schools, which has a knock-on effect on the quality of education.

According to Partey (2019), an autocratic supervisory strategy has a detrimental impact on the quality of basic education whereas a democratic supervisory strategy has a big positive impact on it. To increase the quality of supervision and monitoring, collaboration and engagement of teachers in the role of supervisors are important. Teachers find this appealing since they participate in the supervision process. According to Party (2019), supervisors who "partner" teachers during lesson delivery are thought to improve teaching and learning more than those who "police" teachers.

According to Arthur (2022), some teachers believe that their bosses are out to get them and are exposing their flaws. The goal of supervision should not be to criticize the teacher's work but rather to gather information (Dewodo, Agbetorwoka, & Wotordzor, 2019). Sarfo and Cudjoe (2016) claim that some supervisors behave like bosses and criticize the actions of the teachers. Because of this, some supervisors find it difficult to be amicable with the teachers they visit for instructional supervision (Gitonga, 2019). Job satisfaction must be prioritized if supervision is to have any impact on performance. Supervisors need to put employee job happiness first if they want to see performance improvements (Apenteng, 2012). According to Gitonga (2019), managers trusted the school principal and heads of the department of teachers as well as respected instructors.

Apenteng (2012) asserts that managers foster a supportive environment for employees. They support them, share expectations, and listen to inspire. Supervisors appreciate their subordinates and have effective communication abilities. The findings of Sarfo and Cudjoe (2016) supported a similar claim that some supervisors do have friendly working relationships with teachers.

The need to include instructors in the decision-making process, maintaining positive interpersonal relationships, building mutual trust, upholding discipline, and ensuring respect among teachers were among the aspects that had a detrimental impact on supervision (Badu, 2010). One of the difficulties circuit supervisors have, according to Osei, Mensah, and Agbofa (2020), is the unwillingness of instructors and head teachers to cooperate. The relationships between circuit supervisors and teachers suffer as a result of all these attitudes. If instructional objectives are to be achieved, circuit supervisors and teachers should get along.

Education leaders can assist teachers' mental well-being by implementing the suggestions made by Glickman and Burns (2021) in their supervisory strategies. These tactics include being modest, providing affirmations and practice, utilizing data to guide inquiry, concentrating on strengths, providing specific recommendations, thinking aloud, reviving teachers' intellectual engagement, utilizing community resources, and cultivating teacher leaders.

Practices of Supervisors

It was clear from Apenteng's (2012) study that supervisors didn't have a particularly heavy workload. This might have explained the flexibility of the supervision provided by the supervisors. Regular visits to schools are one of

23

the school supervisors' main responsibilities. Gitonga (2019) examined the instructional supervision techniques used by supervisors in schools. According to the survey, the majority of school principal instructors did not get letters from their supervisors informing them of their plans to visit them for instructional monitoring in advance. Similar to how Dewodo, Agbetorwoka, and Wotordzor's (2019) study found that some circuit supervisors failed to notify teachers in advance of their visits to schools, it is advised that teachers be properly informed by external supervisors in this era of clinical supervision.

In many schools, there hasn't been much supervision. In his study, Ochieng (2013) discovered that supervision had only occurred once or twice over the previous two years, even though respondents thought this was sufficient. Arthur (2022) also discovered that the frequency with which district supervisors observed instructors was ineffective. In his study, Apenteng (2012) noted that circuit supervisors visited their schools regularly. Teachers, though, weren't happy with the supervision work.

According to a study by Badu (2010) on the situation of supervision today, follow-up visits, quick visits, and intensive visits were carried out well. A study by John (2011) found that there has been irregular inspection from District/Zonal inspectors. Therefore Osei, Mensah, and Agbofa (2020) ascertain that lop-sided visits to schools are one of the key encounters impeding instructional supervision.

Another major duty of supervisors is to check school records. According to Ochieng (2013), teachers frequently create professional documentation and records such as lesson plans, instructional schemes, lesson notes, records of the work they have covered, and records of their students'

24

development. Based on this, Molenaar (2009) attests that lesson note preparation and lesson presentation were the key areas the monitors considered in terms of monitoring. In contrast, Idogho and Agholor's (2013) research revealed that school documents such as lecture notes, work schedules, diaries, and attendance registers are not checked by inspectors and supervisors.

As reported by several studies the main work of supervisors is instructional supervision. According to Apenteng (2012), The Regional Inspectors, District Directors, and Inspectors of Schools, according to administrators and teachers, do not provide adequate high-quality oversight. This essentially means that the external supervisors' style of supervision did not have a significant enough impact on teaching and learning in the classrooms. Gitonga (2019) asserts that through instructional supervision, supervisors can improve the delivery of high-quality education.

Ochieng (2013) assessed how prepared supervisors were for the task of supervising primary school instructors from the perspective of the teachers. It was determined that supervisors followed carefully specified rules for supervision and were organized. Some managers assist teachers by reviewing class plans and providing sufficient teaching and learning resources (Kanburi, 2018).

According to Ochieng (2013), supervision should be properly carried out to aid teachers in improving their teaching methods; hence, supervision should be carried out by trained persons. A well-written timetable for conducting supervision should be provided by the supervisor, who should also be imaginative and well-organized (Ochieng, 2013). To guide and advise instructors on how to help students perform better, hence improving the

quality of education, supervisors should make sure that all teachers are present during the supervisory visits (Ochieng, 2013).

Ochieng (2013) found that supervision reports are always implemented, that they aid in teachers' professional development, and that supervisors' comments on teachers' observation sheets are motivating and aid in teachers' ability to identify instructional issues. In contrast, Idogho and Agholor (2013) discovered in their study that when supervisors visit schools for inspection or monitoring, they do not always accurately describe what they observe. The school heads deliver envelopes to the inspectorate team, and in certain schools, the Parents Teachers Association (PTA) does the same, according to Idogho and Agholor (2013). This is done to prevent the closure of the school in their community.

Supervisors plan in-service training to improve teacher growth. John (2011) found in-service training to be insufficient and unrelated to matters involving supervisory skills, however, Arthur (2022) research showed that some supervisors do support teachers by setting up in-service training for teachers. Arthur (2022) noted that the following factors contributed to the district's subpar teacher supervision: After the supervision report, there was no action or follow-up.

Empirical Review on Knowledge, Attitude, and Practices of School Improvement and Support Officers (SISOs)

The empirical literature on the knowledge, attitude, and practices of School Improvement and Support Officers (SISOs) is discussed in this section of the thesis. Understanding previous research that has been conducted using the theories used in this study is the goal.

Dick-Sagoel, Adu, and Ennim (2022) examined the duties, challenges, and potential solutions of the School Improvement and Support Officer (SISO), who oversees the curriculum in Ghana. A cross-section survey design was employed in the investigation. The tools utilized to collect the required data were a questionnaire and semi-structured interviews. The questionnaire was designed for SISO, headteachers, and teachers to learn more about their existing roles as supervisors and the duties of the SISO in schools. They were asked to rate the items on a Likert scale of 1 to 5. Questions about the problems with supervision in the Peru East district and suggestions for improvement were only directed at the nine SISOs selected for the semi-structured interview.

The data from the semi-structured interview was analyzed using inductive analytical techniques, whereas the data from the questionnaire was analyzed using descriptive statistics like frequency and percentage. The major findings of the studies revealed that the majority (5) of the SISOs performed duties like supervising and implementing new educational policies in schools, serving as subject matter experts for curriculum activities, and assisting teachers in developing work and lesson plan schemes. Barriers to efficient monitoring included the absence of transportation to rural schools and conveniently located offices for teachers.

In the Sissala East District of Ghana, Salifu (2018) investigated the impact of teacher monitoring on pupils' academic achievement. The study's objective was to assess the primary duties of supervisors within the Ghana Education Service (GES), the effectiveness with which these duties are carried out, as well as the influence of teachers' primary duties on students' academic

27

achievement. It used both a qualitative and quantitative approach. The data was gathered and analyzed using responses from 150 respondents in total. This included forty (40) instructors, forty (40) parents, fifty (50) kids in the Sissala East District, twenty (20) GES officials, and forty (40) pupils. To choose respondents, stratified and random sampling methods were used. A semi-structured questionnaire and an interviewing guide were used to collect the data.

The study also demonstrated that teachers' primary duties significantly affect the academic success of their students. It is advised that the bodies in charge of monitoring teachers obtain the required assistance, education, and training to ensure that instructors achieve their primary duties and commitments. For failing to perform their duties, stronger consequences must be implemented, such as a salary embargo for teachers.

Circuit Supervision in Ghana's Gomoa East District: Key Issues to Consider was the subject of a study done by Osei, Mensah, and Agbofa (2020). The purpose of the study was to examine the difficulties faced by circuit supervisors in Ghana's Gomoa East district. The sequential explanatory design was used in the study's mixed methodology approach. Fifty individuals were employed to collect data via questionnaires and interviews. Circuit supervisors, head teachers, and teachers were all present. Purposive sampling methods were utilized to choose 50 participants for the study.

Within the Gomoa municipality, this included five circuit supervisors, twenty head teachers, and twenty-five teachers. The study's findings revealed that lack of educational resources and logistics, irregular in-service training, unfriendly attitudes of teachers and head teachers, poor compensation,

incentives, and allowance, and irregular visits to schools are the problems that circuit supervisors must overcome. Ample funding, the provision of materials, professional training for educational field officers on the job, regular supervision, better compensation, incentives, and allowance for educational field workers, regular supervision, and effective collaboration between teachers and circuit supervisors were all suggested as strategies to improve supervision.

In the public basic schools in the Anomabo Education Circuit, Esia-Donkoh and Baffoe (2018) looked into the instructional supervision techniques used by headteachers and the motivation of instructors. In public basic schools in the Anomabo Education Circuit of the Mfantsiman Municipality in the Central Region of Ghana, the study looked at the supervisory practises of headteachers and how these supervisory practises connect to teacher motivation. The cross-sectional survey design was quantitatively approached. The study included 69 respondents, consisting of 15 headteachers and 54 instructors, using purposive and stratified random sample approaches. Two sets of questionnaires (one each for headteachers and teachers) were utilized to collect data.

The reliability of the instruments was established using the test-retest method, and the correlation coefficients for the questionnaires given to teachers and headteachers, respectively, were 8.45 and 8.72. Mean, standard deviation, and Pearson Product Moment Correlation were used to analyse the data. The results suggested that headteachers in the Anomabo Education Circuit often implemented all the instructional supervisory strategies mentioned in the study and they performed above average. However, among

the headteachers, the orientation of new teachers was the most common supervisory practice, while giving teachers in-service training was the least common.

The study found that even though the teachers were sufficiently motivated, the students' performance had not been encouraging, even though teachers in public basic schools in the Circuit were generally highly motivated and there was a statistically significant positive but weak relationship between headteachers' supervisory practices and teacher motivation.

Thompson (2018) conducted a study on the attitudes towards and perspectives on school improvement planning among stakeholders and administrators. The school improvement planning process is examined from the attitudes and views of stakeholders in this study, including school administrators. With 91 respondents and a sample of 15 schools, convenience sampling was used. According to the study's findings, the perspectives of the respondents were determined by four main factors: involvement, accountability, plan implementation, and efficacy. Additionally, these variables explained 68.83% of the variation in the data. The degree of stakeholder involvement appears to be the most important element influencing how the school improvement planning process is perceived, as it accounted for 47.82% of the variation.

The association between supervisors' duties and the delivery of education in Ghanaian Basic Schools was explored by Danquah and Acheampong (2018). The primary goal of the study was to examine the connection between the supervisor's position and the quality of basic education in Ghana. For the study, a qualitative research paradigm was used. To examine

30

the roles and responsibilities of supervisors and their implications for high-quality education, research tools included participant observation and in-depth interviews. Purposive sampling was used to select the study's participants and study's schools, choosing five public primary schools in Assin South Municipality, 50 teachers, and 10 head teachers and their assistants. In total, 60 participants responded to the questionnaire about the study's objectives.

The results showed that supervisors are tasked with improving teachers' professional qualifications through practical counseling and sharing of crucial information about teaching and learning, boosting teachers' confidence levels, and providing regular progressive reports on educational activities of schools under their supervision to the headquarters in order to keep them informed about school needs and success. What's more, the study's findings showed that the role of supervisors is favorably correlated with and essential to providing high-quality education in terms of instructors' professional growth and students' academic accomplishment.

According to Esia-Donkoh and Ofosu-Dwamena (2014), instructors generally believed that educational supervision had a beneficial effect on their professional growth in terms of developing experience, curriculum, teaching methods and resources, classroom management, child characteristics, and assessment. Additional research found that instructors' ability to perform efficient pupil internal assessments and evaluations in schools was improved by supervisors' instructional supervision of teachers (Gitonga, 2019). Additionally, Ampofo, Onyango, and Kenyatta (2019) discovered that the performance of the teacher position is significantly impacted by the supervisor's lesson design, supervision, and lesson delivery.

31

Gitonga (2019) investigated the effects of supervisors' instructional supervisory practises on instructors' instructional skills. The results of this study showed that, while the majority of school principal teachers did not think that instructional supervision sessions with teachers in schools were very helpful in enhancing teachers' pedagogical skills, the majority of heads of department of teachers felt the same way. The competence of instructors to use instructional materials while teaching was not significantly improved by supervisors' instructional supervision sessions of teachers in schools (Gitonga, 2019). This may be attributable to supervisors paying insufficient attention to how teachers used instructional materials while instructing.

In the Ga South Municipal Education Directorate, research was conducted to investigate the impact of supervision on employee performance by Apenteng (2012). The study examined the different kinds of supervision, its characteristics, difficulties, and effects. The respondents comprised directors, external supervisors, circuit supervisors, and other staff members (administrators, budget officers, and training officers). Findings from the study contend that enough employees and infrastructure are essential for achieving high staff performance, inadequate supervision may result in subpar performance.

Weak supervision has been demonstrated to affect negatively on academic performance. According to Kanburi (2018), there are certain repercussions on students' academic performance as a result of weak supervision in schools since this results in inadequate monitoring of how teaching and learning are carried out at the institution, which in turn has an impact on student's performance. Similarly, Osei, Mensah, and Agbofa (2020)

noted that the Director General of Education acknowledged that insufficient school supervision is to blame for the current low performance of students. Additionally, Gitonga (2019) reported that the impact of instructional supervision on the development of teachers' instructional competencies was insignificant to be linked to the school's academic performance, indicating that teachers hardly benefited from supervisor visits in terms of improved instructional skills that would help to improve their school's academic performance.

Challenges of School Supervision

Challenges of school supervision are funds, staff, and workload, lack of transport, inadequate logistics, teacher's attitudes and directorates. These challenges do hinder the effectiveness of school supervision and make it difficult for supervisors to provide high-quality support to teachers and students.

Funds

Olorode and Adeyemo (2012) opined that the scarcity of resources has made management somewhat unsuccessful in the school system. Kanburi (2018) found out that the reason for poor teacher supervision in the district was the absence of allowances. According to Dickson (2011), pre-funding of activities that are not reimbursed on time was discovered to undermine the district's ability to effectively supervise teaching and learning. According to Osei, Mensah, and Agbofa (2020), the main obstacles to supervision were poor pay, ineffective incentives, inadequate allowances, and few visits by supervisors to the school. According to Apenteng (2012), variables that adversely affect supervision and its subsequent impact on the educational

33

setting include logistics, a lack of funding, and nonpayment of trip expenses. Apenteng (2012) also made clear that one of the issues supervisors, particularly external ones, experienced was a lack of funding.

Staff

These are the areas to which sufficient attention must be given for successful supervision of education in the state, according to Olorode and Adeyemo (2012). They argue that the lack of manpower has made monitoring in the school system very ineffective.

John (2011) found out that the sampled schools were understaffed. There was a severe lack of qualified workers. According to Kanburi (2018), the following are the causes of the district's subpar teacher supervision. These include a lack of professional training, which has been proven to obstruct the district's ability to effectively supervise teaching and learning. Apenteng (2012) added that among other things, oversight was impacted by a lack of manpower. According to Osei, Mensah, and Agbofa (2020), inconsistent in-service training was the primary determinant of staff members' ability to oversee educational facilities and instructional activities.

Workload

Circuit supervisors oversee too many schools for them to be able to perform any useful work, according to Molenaar (2009). Elbom (2008) suggested that excessive workload given to instructional supervisors did not help matters. Osei, Mensah, and Agbofa (2020) thought that the enormous capability of administrators was among the impediments encountered by circuit supervisors.

34

Lack of transport

John (2011) also found out that the Quality Assurance and Supervisory Officers (QASOs) supervision work was hindered mainly by a lack of transport. In the view of Kanburi (2018), the following factors were identified as contributing to the district's subpar teacher supervision: a weak motorable road network, and a dearth of cars or motorcycles. According to Dickson (2011), the district's circuit supervisors are now more mobile because they all have motorcycles that allow them to get around. The effective supervision of teaching and learning in the area is hampered, according to Dickson (2011), despite the increased mobility, by a lack of maintenance, an inconsistent and inadequate supply of fuel for the motorbikes, and nonpayment of the maintenance fee. John (2011) also found out that the QASOs' supervisory work was limited mainly by reasons such as insufficient road network. The problem, according to Apenteng (2012), is that some remote schools are inaccessible for supervisory work.

Inadequate logistics

Kanburi (2018) assessed the reasons for poor teacher supervision in the district to include inadequate logistics and the lack of will power. Osei, Mensah and Agbofa (2020), demonstrated that the issues that confront circuit supervisors are the absence of educational resources and logistics and the shortage of textbooks and furnishings. On the other hand, Apenteng (2012) and Molenaar (2009) believed that a major obstacle to efficient monitoring and supervision was the circuit supervisors' inability to visit the schools due to a lack of logistical support. Well, Elbom, (2008), pointed out that the insufficient availability of educational resources is problematic.

35

Teacher's attitudes

John (2011) found out that the QASOs supervision work was hindered mainly by teachers seeing supervision as interference in their work. John (2011) also found out that the QASOs supervision work was hindered mainly by factors such as teachers preparing only when they are aware that supervision is to take place. Osei, Mensah and Agbofa (2020) also found out the uncooperative attitudes of teachers and head teachers towards supervision were problematic.

Apenteng (2012) observed that time management and indiscipline in schools are challenges to the work of supervisors and make supervisory activities less effective. ELBOM, (2008) found out that the major factor that affects the proper implementation of instructional supervision is the uncooperative attitude of staff members.

Directorate

According to Arthur (2022), the Directorate's lack of commitment to improving the oversight of teachers in the region is the cause. Again, Dickson (2011) saw the inability of the District Director of Education to take quick action on supervision reports to be the main factor affecting effective supervision.

Supervision by head teachers

Ampofo, Onyango, and Kenyatta (2019) evaluated how well teachers performed in their roles under the direct supervision of school heads in public senior high schools. Teachers, class prefects, department heads, school heads, and one regional director for the Inspectorate Division of the Ghana Education Service were among the respondents. According to the survey, school

36

administrators gave teachers' class planning and delivery very little time to oversee. The study found a substantial correlation between teacher role performance and the course planning and delivery monitoring provided by school leaders. The study suggests the Ghana Education Service reduce the teaching load of Heads of Department by the school head to allow them to play more significant roles in the instructional supervision process and allocate a greater percentage of the advancement requirement of the school heads to proof of direct supervision of teachers.

In secondary schools in the Kubang Pasu district of Kedah, Daud, Dali, Khalid, and Fauzee (2018) noted the supervisory achievement among the elements of instructional and educational supervision and demonstrated that there was no significant relationship between the elements of confidence in the classroom teaching and learning, supervisor, supervisor support towards teaching, and student participation. Ampofo, Onyango, and Kenyatta (2019) evaluated the impact of direct supervision from school heads on the roles and productivity of teachers in public senior high schools. Teachers, class prefects, department heads, school heads, and a regional director for the Inspectorate Division of the Ghana Education Service were among the responders. According to the report, school administrators allotted relatively little time for monitoring teachers' work and lesson planning. John (2011) also discovered that Head Teachers, who were the direct school supervisors, only performed a very limited amount of evaluation and supervision duties.

Nyarko (2009) explored the perceptions of teachers, principals, and circuit supervisors on the supervisory capacity of principals at the grassroots level. The objective was to know whether and how school leaders are trained,

how competent teachers and area supervisors perceive school leaders to be, school leaders are aware of their level of capacity and the support school leaders receive from their area. The main findings indicate that school principals are more competent in administrative tasks than in instructional supervision tasks.

Lonyian and Kuranchie (2018) the career needs of principals in school management were explored. School principals and circuit overseers participated in the drill. The research finding shows that school principals are not aware of the management skills they need to run schools effectively. Therefore, school principals and supervisors unanimously called for pre-service and in-service training programmes, for prospective and current principals, respectively, to equip them with the Skills needed for management functions. Participants believed that continuing professional development programmes could update and enhance the knowledge and skills of school leaders to enhance their professional growth and development.

Lack of opportunity for ongoing professional development is another issue that the circuit supervisors were concerned about, according to Lonyian and Kuranchie (2018). They expressed their displeasure that head teachers are not given the chance to regularly participate in programmes through in-service training, seminars, symposia, and short courses in order to stay up to date on new developments in the educational industry generally and school leadership in particular. Head teachers frequently lack the knowledge and abilities necessary to respond forcefully to new changes as a result of this predicament.

Type of Supervision

The types of supervisions used in this study were clinical supervision, modern type of supervision, internal supervision and supervisory training.

Clinical supervision

Apenteng (2012) observed that more traditional supervision is carried out in schools than clinical supervision; therefore, students' academic performance is poor despite the fact that schools have implemented monitoring as research shows.

Sarfo and Cudjoe (2016) suggested that some of the reasons given by supervisors were the inability to utilize clinical supervision effectively, the size of the supervision circle, other administrative tasks, and the tedious nature of clinical monitoring process. District supervisors who complained about the size of their districts said that the number of teachers in a district was so high that they could not use clinical supervision as a model and had no means of support assist with their travel. For this reason, they cannot support teachers effectively and regularly when needed.

In 2019, Alshehri (2019) looked at Saudi Arabia's existing development monitoring procedures. This study's goal was to investigate the application of the collaborative approach in supervision as one of the most popular forms of supervision. Data were gathered for this explanatory sequential mixed approach through surveys, followed by semi-structured interviews. Teachers from Makah elementary schools were included in the sample. According to the findings, supervisors occasionally used collaborative techniques to enhance supervision.

39

Abaidoo (2016) recommended that the Ghana Ministry of Education and Education Service ensure that school principals and circuit supervisors engage teachers in appropriate clinical supervision and go beyond checking lesson plans. This will help improve teachers' professional development and ensure favorable and sustainable attitudes toward educational supervision.

In the current period of clinical supervision, Dewodo, Agbetorwoka, and Wotordzor (2019) noted that some circuit coordinators neglected to provide advance notification of their interactions to schools. They suggested that instructors be properly notified by external inspectors before they visit their schools. More importantly, supervision should place more of an emphasis on fact-finding than it should on criticizing the teacher's work.

Kanburi (2018) emphasized that the main project interventions used were clinical supervision and informal supervision strategies. Post-intervention results showed that the majority of visiting supervisors actually developed observation contracts with their teachers. To increase teachers' confidence in their assignments, supervisors held meetings with teachers to help them analyze challenges in their teaching work. Some of the recommendations made include that the Ghana Education Service should organize a workshop for all supervisors where they will be trained on clinical supervision strategies and informal supervision skills to equip them with modern knowledge about surveillance. Teachers' work supervisors must carry out a sufficient number of tests in schools. The Ghana Education Service must ensure adequate logistics.

The modern type of supervision

The modern type of supervision are characterized by a more collaborative, supportive and developmental approach.

The traditional way of supervision

According to Apenteng (2012), certain minds were gradually shifting away from conventional supervision, in which the supervisor gave the teacher recommendations, and towards a more contemporary style of supervision that tends to create a self-directed teacher.

Eya, Esobhawan, and Modebelu (2016) looked into the application of the counseling model of supervision in fostering a teacher-positive attitude toward the efficiency of classroom instruction. The findings showed that, compared to the conventional model of supervision, the counseling supervisory model had a greater beneficial influence on teachers' attitudes toward instructional supervision.

Internal supervisors

Apenteng (2012) reported that while the majority of internal supervisors preferred and supported greater emphasis on internal supervisors, external supervisors (from regional offices) preferred to promote both systems within the General Department of Education. Partey (2022) suggests that there also needs to be more emphasis on internal monitoring, peer review, and the collegiality of teachers and that school leaders need to be equipped to carry out this task (innovative monitoring).

Supervisory training

Arthur (2022) emphasizes that it is necessary to put in place measures to promote the use of modern and innovative methods in the training and

41

development of educational managers to improve their supervision activities in different schools. Arthur (2022) found at the pre-intervention stage that: teacher supervision is important in the education system because it provides appropriate control over teachers' work in school. Teacher supervision at school is ineffective because teachers are only supervised twice at most in one term. Arthur (2022) stated that this project research investigated modern and innovative training and development methods of educational administrators to improve their supervision activities in secondary schools in the Kumbungu district.

Sarfo and Cudjoe (2016) recommend that basic school supervisors be trained in the use of clinical supervision while removing some of their administrative and classroom responsibilities for effective use of clinical supervision to help improve teacher performance. Dickson (2011) found that the inspection department of the county Office of Education did not have a plan to train supervisors, meaning that supervisors lacked supervisory skills. Osei, Mensah, and Agbofa (2020) on strategies to improve supervision activities stated that there is a need to improve supervision activities through on-the-job professional training for field education officers,

Osei, Mensah, and Agbofa (2020) further revealed that on-the-job professional training is one of the strategies to improve the supervision of area supervisors.

Dickson (2011) recommended that the head of the inspection unit establish an interim supervisory training program to orient supervisors and circuit directors before assuming assignment. Osei, Mensah, and Agbofa (2020) further revealed that on-the-job skills training is one of the strategies to improve the

42

supervision of circuit supervisors and suggested that there should be enough supervisory skills training workshops for supervisors and other educational workers in the fields at Gomoa. East District.

John (2011) believes that in-service training is inadequate and irrelevant to issues related to supervisory skills. Kanburi (2018) found that the supervisory knowledge level of teacher supervisors was moderate; because they lack the skills to evaluate the content of what teachers teach. Some findings also showed that supervisors' level of understanding was at a good level with several people giving suggestions on how to approach topics and they were clearly presented and of a high level.

According to Lonyian and Kuranchie (2018), head teachers and circuit supervisors typically request pre-headship and in-service training programmes for current and prospective head teachers, respectively, to prepare them for their responsibilities as head teachers. The participants held the opinion that head teachers' knowledge and abilities might be updated and upgraded through Continues Professional Development (CPD) programmes to further their career development.

Lonyian and Kuranchie (2018) complain about district training officers lacking resources and skills to organize in-service training (INSET). They feel that sometimes they do not have enough skills to implement certain INSET programmes but do not want to seek outside help. Osei, Mensah, and Agbofa (2020) recommended that regular, effective, and efficient in-service training should be provided to all constituency monitors in Ghana. (According to Osei, Mensah, & Agbofa (2020) regular, effective, and efficient in-service training should be provided to all the constituency monitors in Ghana)

Lessons learned from the empirical review

The study draws important lessons from an empirical examination of the knowledge, attitudes, and practices of school support and improvement officers (SISOs). In the above studies, the independent variables included knowledge, attitudes, and practices. Some variables were measured on a five-point scale (Dick-Sagoel, Adu, and Ennim (2022), while others were measured on a ratio scale.

Most studies (Salifu, 2018; Osei, Mensah & Agbofa, 2020; Dick-Sagoel, Adu & Ennim, 2022) have used a mixed methods approach to analyze knowledge, attitudes, and practices of school improvement and support officers (SISOs). For example, Dick-Sagoel, Adu, and Ennim (2022) and Salifu (2018) used descriptive statistics, Esia-Donkoh and Baffoe (2018) and Dick- Sagoel, Adu, and Ennim (2022) used regression analysis, correlation analysis, and t-test for paired samples. However, Danquah, and Acheampong (2018) used case studies and qualitative methods to analyze the knowledge, attitudes, and practices of school support and improvement officers (SISO).

The sample techniques used were in line with both quantitative and qualitative approaches. When primary data are needed for analysis, empirical evaluation points to the use of simple random sampling, cluster sampling, stratified sampling, and purposive sampling. Primarily quantitative and qualitative methods were used to analyze the primary data (Esia-Donkoh, 2018; Dick-Sagoe, Adu, & Ennim (2022); Thompson (2018), while qualitative narrative and content analysis were applied (Baidoo, Danquah, & Acheampong (2018); Dick-Sagoel, Adu, & Ennim (2022).

44

Conceptual Framework
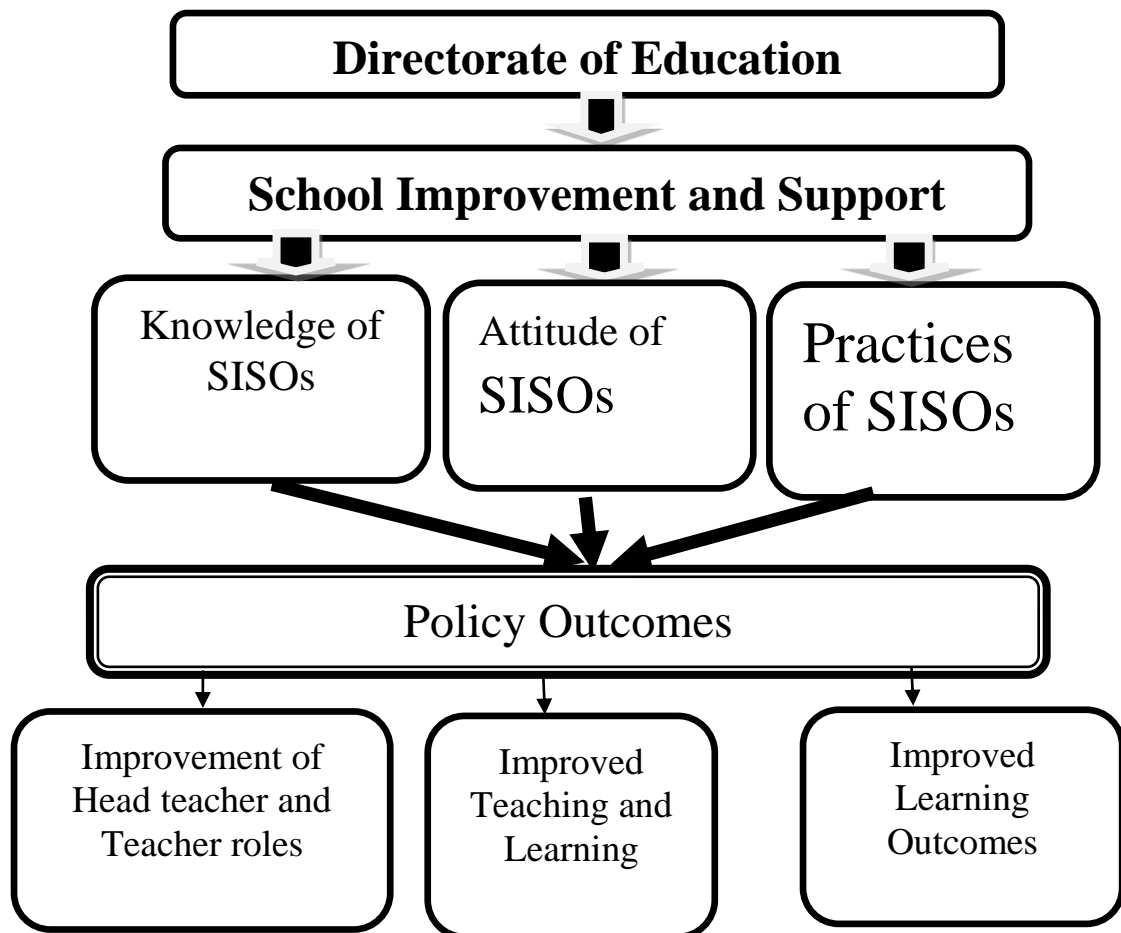
Figure 1: Conceptual Framework analyzing the Knowledge, Attitude, and Practices of SISO.
Source: Author's Construct (2023)

The conceptual framework for the study was the author's construct (2023) framework for analyzing the Knowledge, Attitude, and Practices of School Improvement and Support Officers (SISOs).

The conceptual framework explains the ideas in the present study. The framework emphasizes knowledge, attitudes, and practices of school improvement and support officers. The education director works with the School Improvement and Support Officers whose knowledge, attitude, and practices affect head teachers, teachers, and pupils and must eventually lead to improved work outcomes. It must be pointed out that the activities of the School Improvement and Support Officers, when geared towards the head

45

teacher, are passed on to the teachers to be impacted positively on the pupils resulting in effective teaching and learning.

Chapter Summary

From the above theoretical framework, empirical review, and conceptual review, it becomes clear that the Knowledge, Attitude, and Practice (KAP) of School Improvement and Support Officers have a direct bearing on the effectiveness of supervision in educational institutions. It was also found out that there are challenges affecting the effective supervision of school activities which in any way can be addressed to promote best practices in our educational establishments.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODS

Introduction

Chapter three discusses the procedures used to conduct the research, including the research design, population, sample and sampling procedures, research instruments, validity, data collection procedures, and data analysis process.

Research Approach

Research methods, according to Almeida (2018), are the procedures and tactics employed by researchers to gather and examine data for a research project. Qualitative and quantitative approaches are the two main paradigms used in research; the combination of the two is known as mixed methods. A strategy used in quantitative research is the collection and analysis of data. It is built on a deductive methodology that prioritizes theoretical validation and is influenced by experimental and positivist philosophies (Hennink & Bailey, 2020). According to McLaren (2012), the positivist paradigm is inextricably related to quantitative methods. They take into account both the frequency of events and the numerical analysis of the data. Quantitative research methods make use of pertinent statistical data to respond to queries involving quantitative numbers (Silverman, 2010). In addition, Babbie (2010) notes that certain quantitative research tends to concentrate on numbers from data collection to analysis. This is accomplished using a range of quantitative methodologies and approaches, which is in line with their extensive application as a research strategy across numerous academic fields

47

According to Mohajan (2020), the goal of quantitative research is to create and use mathematical theories, models, and hypotheses that relate to phenomena. The process of measuring, according to Rahi (2017), is essential to quantitative research because it establishes the link between empirical observation and the mathematical expression of quantitative connections.

Qualitative research is a type that aims to collect and analyze non-numerical data to understand the social realities of individuals, including their attitudes, beliefs, and motivations (Apuke, 2017). According to Jwan and Ong'ondo (2011), qualitative research relies on naturalistic inquiry to evaluate the relative importance of different explanations, especially when conducted at a deeper and flexible level become more active over a specified period of time. This type of research often includes in-depth interviews, focus groups, or observations to gather detailed data and context. Qualitative research is often used to explore complex phenomena or to better understand people's experiences and perspectives on a particular topic. This is especially useful when researchers want to understand the meanings that people attach to their experiences or when they want to explore the underlying reasons for their behavior. (Fog, 2009). The researcher explored the perspectives of key informants for this study to determine their knowledge, attitudes, and practices.

Mixed methods techniques seek to combine and close the gap between qualitative and quantitative research designs in order to offer a more useful solution to the issue at hand. Quantitative and qualitative research techniques are combined and integrated into one study in mixed methods research. Williams (2007) asserts that mixed methods research entails gathering and

48

combining qualitative and quantitative data in order to better comprehend a phenomenon and respond to research questions. The fundamental idea behind adopting mixed methods research is to maximize each form of data's advantages while minimizing its disadvantages (Symonds & Gorard, 2008).

Research Design

The overall strategy for gathering information to address the research questions could be considered a research design (Cresswell, 2013). This relates to the precise data analysis methods the researcher plans to employ. Exploratory, explanatory, and descriptive research strategies are just a few that can be used. According to Leedy (1993), the decision is influenced by four issues the data required, where the data is located, and how the data were gathered and interpreted. The KAP model served as the primary element for validity in the study, which used a descriptive research methodology. The researcher chose this strategy and design to comprehend the ideas, viewpoints, or experiences of the participants. The KAP model is thought to be the most appropriate for carrying out the study because it was qualitative and data from the respondents was gathered using interview guides.

Study Area

One of Ghana's 260 Municipal, Municipal and District Assemblies (MMDAs), Abura Asebu Kwamankese District is one of the 22 MMDAs in the Central Region, with Abura Dunkwa serving as the administrative center. It was created in 1988 by Legislative Instrument L.I.1381 and split from the previous Mfantsiman Municipal Council. 380 km2 is the total area of the district. Its coordinates are 5°05'N, 5°25'N, and 1°5W, 1°20W, respectively. South Assin District on the north, Mfantsiman Municipality on the east, the 5

49

km long Gulf of Guinea on the southeast, Cape Coast Metropolitan on the south, and Twifo-Heman-Lower Denkyira District on the west are its borders. According to the 2010 population and housing census, there are 117,185 people living in the district, with 55,275 men and 61,910 women (Ghana Statistical Service, 2014)

One of the 22 municipal offices of Ghana Education Service is Komenda/Edina/Eguafo/Abirem. Komenda/Edina/Eguafo/Abirem District, which was formed from the Cape Coast Municipal Council in 1988 as an ordinary district assembly, existed until it was elevated to municipal assembly status on February 29, 2008, at which point it became Komenda/Edina/ Eguafo/Abirem Municipal. Elmina serves as the municipality's capital city, and it is situated in the southwest corner of Central Region.

The Cape Coast Metropolis covers an area of roughly 122 square kilometres, with its farthest point located at Brabedze, which is located around 17 kilometres from Cape Coast, the Metropolis's centre. It serves as the region's capital. Cape Coast is separated into Cape Coast South and Cape Coast North on a political level.

Almost every community has access to fundamental educational resources, with the majority of schools being centred in the southern section of the Metropolis. Fishing and farming are two of the districts' primary economic pursuits.

Population

According to Schwandt (2007), a population is a group of people or things that have at least one attribute in common. The population for the study consisted of SISOs in three districts in the Central Region, which form part of

the 22 MMDAs in the Central Region. Numerous SISOs are located in the three districts of Cape Coast, Abura Asebu-Kwamankese, and Komenda Edina-Eguafo-Abrim, and were selected because they are the ones available to the researcher since the researcher cannot reach all the districts within the region due to cost and time for the study.

There are 155 SISOs in the 22 districts in the Central Region. There is a total number of six SISOs in the Cape Coast district, seven in the Komenda-Edina-Eguafo-Abrem district, and eight in the Abura Asebu-Kwamankese district.   The group that constitutes the SISOs includes senior education officers who have risen through the ranks of the GES positions. They are experienced officers in the educational sector who were formerly head teachers and teachers in the classroom but applied to become SISOs.

Sampling Procedure

Due to limited time and resources, the researcher chose purposive sampling as a practical, cost-effective way to select three specific districts out of the twenty-two educational districts in the Central Region. The districts selected were Abura-Asebu-Kwamankese (AAK), Cape Coast, and Komenda-Edina-Eguafo-Abirem (KEEA). After selecting the districts, the researcher employed the snowball sampling technique to identify eleven participants out of 21 SISOs in the three districts, stopping when new information began to repeat, and signaling data saturation. This sampling method included three participants from Cape Coast, four from AAK, and four from KEEA. The qualitative approach was used to gather a range of perspectives and insights from School Improvement Support Officers (SISOs) on the Knowledge, Attitudes, and Practices (KAP) related to their roles. The researcher chose the

51

snowballing technique because SISOs are field workers and it's difficult to get them in their respective district offices.

Data Collection Procedure

To facilitate the gathering of pertinent data for the research at the various education offices in the Central Region, a letter of introduction from the University of Cape Coast Institutional Review Board and the Institute for Educational Planning and Administration was obtained. An approval letter obtained from Ghana Education Service offices was used to obtain permission from the SISOs to administer the research. The administering and collection of data was done within two months. The fieldwork lasted for two weeks. From June 1 to the fourteenth of June, the researcher arranged and met the SISOs who were selected to be part of the study and scheduled dates for the interview. The interview was done in the morning and lasted for about 30-45 minutes.

Data Collection Instrument

To gather qualitative information, the researcher employed a structured and semi-structured interview guide. Based on the study's primary goals, the researcher created the interview guide. The interview guide included both open-ended and closed-ended questions, with the open-ended allowing for a deeper investigation of the subject. The policy environment, knowledge, attitude, practices, and the management of GES's influence on the SISOs were all covered by the questions. The objects were grouped following the key components of the conceptual framework and the research issue. To record the experiences of the SISOs, the researcher used a voice recorder app for the interviews.

52

Data Processing and Analysis

The researcher conducted the data collection by giving the interview guide to the chosen respondents, assisted by his assistants (also chosen from the university community). The field assistants helped the researcher by capturing the interviewees' comments and typing up the data. The researcher prepared a full day of training on effective questioning methods and how to record responses for the assistants. To assess the policy environment for the work of school improvement and support officers (SISOs) in Ghana and to study their knowledge base in three districts of the Central Region, content analysis was used to analyze objectives one and two. while objective five, which looked at how the Directorate of Education's leadership affected SISO operations, was analyzed using content analysis.

Ethical Consideration

In recognition of the role of ethics in research works, some ethical standards were observed. The safety and confidentiality of the respondents were guaranteed, and they received full explanations of the study's objectives. The Institutional Review Board at the University of Cape Coast granted permission for the study to be conducted and the right to gather data. Following use, raw data were immediately stored in a secure location to prevent unauthorized access by outside parties. With the use of a computer and a password to prevent unauthorized access, data were electronically saved.

From the above, it is clear the researcher informed the respondents thoroughly about the purpose of the research so as to decide if they wished to be a part of it or not. The respondents gave their agreement before the voice recording interview.

Chapter Summary

This chapter focused on the methodology of the main study. The research approach used was qualitative research method and the design adopted was the purposive sampling and snowball sampling technique. KAP model was used for the study which entailed knowledge, attitude, and practices as key valuables. The study focused on three educational districts in the Central Region and used eleven out of twenty-two SISOs as its target population.

54

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Introduction

Following the study questions and literature review, this chapter discussed the results findings, and comments of the fieldwork on understanding the knowledge, attitude, and practice of SISOs in three Districts of Ghana's Central Region. After reviewing the information gathered from 11 respondents, there were two Females and nine Males from the three Districts selected for the study. All respondents duly made time for the interview and cooperated in validating the transcribed interviews.

Results and Findings

Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

This section examines the demographic characteristics of the School Improvement and Support Officers. The variables include Sex, District of SISOs, circuit of SISOs, the respondents' position, level of academic qualification, professional qualification, rank in service, and number of years served as a SISO.

In this study, the respondents included were nine males and two females making eleven were present from two districts and one metropolis in the central region. The districts and the metropolises of the respondents were investigated. This was very important to give a fair idea about the respondents' locations. From the findings, approximately four of the respondents were from Cape Coast Metropolis, three were from Abura Asebu Kwamankese District, while three of the SISOs were from Komenda Edina

55

Eguafo Abirem District. The findings show that the majority of the respondents were from the Cape Coast Metropolis.

The circuits of the respondents were also investigated. From the findings, it appears that, except Cape Coast circuit and Abura Dunkwa circuit which had two SISOs each, the rest of the circuits had only one respondent. The circuit of the respondents includes the following Aboom, Bakane, Efutu, Agona, Cape Coast, Abura Dunkwa, Moree, Komenda, and Elmina.

The level of education of respondents was also sought. Out of 11 respondents, five had a bachelor's degree, and six of the School Improvement and Support Officers (SISOs) had obtained master's degrees. The findings show that the professional qualification of the respondents in the two Districts and one metropolis consists of a Bachelor's Degree and a Master of Philosophy in Education (MPhil), it seems the majority of the SISO officers have attained a Master's degree. The minimum number of years that SISOs have served was one year, while the maximum number of years worked was 13 years.

1. What is the policy environment of the work of SISOs in three districts in the Central Region?

This research question sought to appraise the policy environment of the work of SISOs in Ghana. Given that, the researcher explored the structural issues inherent in the policy space of the SISO's work and sought the District Director's point of view through their observation of the policy environments for the work of the SISO in four key areas. In that regard, the researcher examined the appointment procedure of SISOs, the policy manual that guides their work, the names of the manuals and the organizations that published those manuals, if they were given orientation and training in carrying out the

56

policy-mandated roles that are assigned to them and the accessibility of resources materials by their employers.

In the respondents' view, they were the direct mediators between the schools, the district, and the regional offices as circuit supervisors until the new educational reform which changed their name from circuit supervisors to school improvement and support officers. This came up in the new educational reform in 2019 when a new curriculum was introduced and there has been a change in the name of the supervisors from Circuit Supervisors to School Improvement and Support Officers (SISOs) by Ashun, (2022). The SISO is required to be a curriculum leader under the new nomenclature. He exercises administrative control over curriculum transactions by fostering an environment that fosters the development of a common vision, shared objectives, and circuit-wide leadership. As the principal instructional leader for the educational district, the SISO accepts his responsibilities to ensure managerial performance, prioritizing learner progress, and effective instructional practices as the district's top priorities (Waters & Marzano, 2007).

Appointment

The study participants indicated that they follow the guidelines provided by Ghana Education Service (GES) codes and conduct in operationalizing their work. It was additionally found that positions of SISOs are filled based on, among other things, the qualifications of officers. For instance, some SISOs revealed that they became SISOs through a reshuffling in which the SISO position became vacant, applied, had an interview, and were successfully selected. Another respondent said, he became a SISO

through an advertisement for a vacancy from the district directorate which he qualified for, so he applied and got the mandate. According to some of the school improvement and support officers:

> "*I joined the GES in 1996, initially I was in the classroom. I had wanted to be in the office so I attained the rank, the opportunity came, I applied and I was chosen. So far as you are a professional teacher and attained the rank of principal superintendent you qualify" (Respondent1)*
>
> *"I was in the classroom initially but later, I applied for the position to be a SISO, went for an interview and was chosen". (Respondent 2)*
>
> *"They gave me a nod to be a SISO. I attended an interview and I passed that was in 2013. I was then chosen to become a SISO- through appointment by Ghana Education Service". (Respondent 3)*

Policy Manual

Some respondents interviewed claimed that as a SISO, they have manual called Circuit Supervisors handbook and the handbook was published by Ghana Education Service which also spells out the roles and duties of teachers. The manual was circuit supervisor's manual and later changed to SISOs handbook according to another respondent. The work of SISOs is to give support to head teachers, teachers, and students. Some respondent noted that the SISOs handbook or guide has not changed so much and the manual was published by National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NaCCA). One respondent interviewed, claimed that the Handbook for circuit supervisors was published by UNICEF and he has the soft copy that he occasionally reads through to guide his movement. Some also elucidated that they have the code

58

of conduct of GES to guide them which spells out what the teacher must do. For instance, one SISO in Abura Asebu Kwamankese recounted that:

> "*We have a work prescription that we use. Additionally, we also have school management committee (SMC) manual that assists us which is published by UNICEF some aspects are helpful and we have the head teacher's manual. The updated one was done in 2020. (Handbook for Circuit Supervisors)". (Respondent 4)*

According to the Circuit Supervisors' Handbook from 2002, a circuit supervisor's duties include the following: encouraging efficient instruction and learning in elementary schools, explaining educational policies to teachers and assisting them in comprehending the goals of educational policies. Additionally, the manual encourages efficient school administration, coordinates in-service training for teachers' professional growth, and fosters positive relationships between the school and the community. When questioned, School Improvement and Support Officers (SISOs) stated that they track student and staff progress and performance, create work schedules for the District Director of Education to approve, and submit reports on specific schools with copies to the affected schools.

In support of this, the SISOs clarified that they compile statistics on the circuit's schools, are in charge of carrying out additional special tasks when requested by the education directorate, the schools, or the community, suggest head teachers and teachers for promotion, present awards to outstanding head teachers, and evaluate the performance of head teachers:

> "*The work of SISOs is specifically about dealing with head teachers, teachers, students as well as parents. Materials such as the C.S guide*

> *are given immediately after you're appointed as a SISO. Anytime a*
>
> *policy comes, you are given training about the policy initiated.*
>
> *Whatever you have to know about SISOs' work is embedded in*
>
> *the handbook and their work is on-the-job training. During workshops,*
>
> *a softcopy of policy guidelines would be provided to every SISO*
>
> *official. We also have an SMC manual that assists us which is*
>
> *published by UNICEF some aspects are helpful." (Respondent 5)*
>
> *"I usually used Google, Edu care, and Encyclopedia as online*
>
> *Resources because they gave information I needed. In my district, I*
>
> *Know about seven (7) SISOs who used the internet. In our office, we*
>
> *have a WIFI for internet connection". (Respondent 6)*

According to one SISO from Cape Coast*:*

> *"The resource materials are not accessible, most times, books,*
>
> *textbooks, and financial assistance are a no-go area. We have to visit*
>
> *several schools but the resources are not accessible making our work*
>
> *difficult". (Respondent 7)*

One respondent claimed that they don't access online resources for their work.
However, they sometimes use books, phones, and other materials for the work.
Through work, we sometimes download information from the internet. For
instance:

> *"Net for schools is one of the websites sometimes we usually access*
>
> *information. At times we use the ODK." (Respondent 8)*

Some respondents noted that internet resources such as goggles and other
databases are researched to enable SISO to perform their duties effectively.
Lonyian and Kuranchie (2018) expressed dissatisfaction with the District

60

Training Officers' lack of resources and expertise in organizing INSETs for SISOs and their reluctance to seek outside help.

One respondent indicated that:

> "*I access online resources depending on the situation at hand. (The handbook can be accessed online)*".

Several SISOs interviewed noted that the materials are sometimes very difficult to access:

> "*There are online resources that we get information about the work And certain events, sometimes we get resources through the GES website*" (Respondent 3)

Resource Materials

Osei, Mensah, and Agbofa (2020), the issues that confront circuit supervisors are the absence of educational resources and logistics and the shortage of textbooks and furnishings. SISOs need more resources to aid their movement from school to school since expectations from their employers to perform creditably are very high. Apart from that, there are other things that a SISO should use as a policy document but it's not forthcoming. According to the respondents interviewed, there are challenges and as a SISO, you need materials to be able to support the schools and there is none. He continued to confirm that "in their areas for example, they may not have problems with teachers but there are other areas that teachers lack and as such would not be able to operate.

According to one SISO official*:*

> "*I don't need so many materials to work with except organizing Training which I will say I need funding. I usually used online*

> *resources to perform my duties. I don't need many resources".*
>
> *(Respondent 1)*

Some reiterated that the resources are not accessible, for instance, when you need fuel, an A4 sheet, and other logistics you couldn't obtain them. According to one respondent:

> "*Resources are not really available, but occasionally, funds are*
> *released for stationaries and items that will help us do the work. We*
> *don't have any website which guides our work neither do any SISO*
> *visit any website". (Respondent 10)*

The major aspect of SISO's job is fieldwork, and as such you can't stay in the office all the time. In that respect, going to the field has many problems with means of transport but now the government was able to provide motorbikes in 2020 but fueling is the major trouble according to one respondent. He confirmed that the last time the SISOs received fuel was December 2021, and they have been buying their fuel for the job from their monthly salary. They noted that the schools in the district are scattered and the roads are not motorable posing a very big challenge to them. In addition, SISOs lack logistics including office consumables, computers, and printers to compile their reports when it's needed.

Orientation and training

By monitoring, inspecting, supporting, and assessing the operations of schools that are leaders in professional development for head teachers and teachers through programmed ideas, training seminars, and workshops, School Improvement and Support Officers ensure quality requirements are met. The United Nations International Children Fund (UNICEF) **(United Nations**

62

International Children's Emergency Fund) has been holding seminars to improve the abilities of SISOs, according to some of the respondents who were interviewed. According to several respondents, the National Teaching Council (NTC) has been hosting seminars and workshops for officers. For instance, a SISO official narrated that:

> *"I have had training as a SISO to upgrade myself. One was organized at Offinso in the year 2018-2019. When we were directing manuals for SMCs and head teachers and other education stakeholders to have common guardians and principles for education. There are other trainings and interventions such as NALAP, SABER., etc,. (Respondent 11)*

Another SISO official indicated that:

> *"I have not undergone any training as a SISOs. There was no training on the migration from circuit supervisor to School Improvement and Support Officer (SISO)" (Respondent 6)*

Some respondents confirmed that they have been receiving training from management to upgrade their skills. For instance, research dissemination workshops were organized by Institute of Education (UCC). Through the workshops, SISOs were key in the training concerning what actually transpired in the classrooms.

According to one respondent:

> *"There was one training at the beginning of the term called Common Core Programme (CCP) for the JHS 1 to JHS 3." (Respondent 1)*

This result was in line with Kanburi's (2018) conclusions, according to which steps must be taken to encourage the use of cutting-edge techniques for the

development of educational authorities to improve their supervision of the various schools. Dickson (2011) discovered that the District Education Office's Inspectorate Division had not established any plans for supervisor training, indicating that the supervisors lacked supervisory abilities. On-the-job professional training is one of the ways to better supervision for circuit supervisors, according to Osei, Mensah, and Agbofa (2020). However, some respondents interviewed claimed that management doesn't give training for SISO*s*. They explained that there were other trainings they attended for the introduction of the new curriculums by System Approach for Better Education Results (SABER).

According to Lonyian and Kuranchie (2018), the SISOs' worries about possibilities for ongoing professional growth were sufficient. They expressed dissatisfaction about the lack of opportunities given to supervisors and head teachers to participate in programmes continually through in-service training, seminars, symposia, and short courses to stay current with new trends in the educational industry in general and school leadership in particular.

Some respondents narrated that they have some training and workshops organized by Korea International for clinical supervision where they go to schools to offer alternatives/support. Some trainings include how to manage with disabilities, and difficult behaviors in the classroom, with teachers and head teachers organized by School Improvement and Basic Education Agency (SIBA) and UNICEF. Limited resources to undertake training for teachers in BS 7, 8, and 9. These results contradict earlier studies of John (2011) that in-service training was inadequate and not relevant to issues touching on supervisory skills. This is seen in the Sekyere East District

64

(Dickson, 2011) where the knowledge of technical leadership skills, interpersonal skills, and conceptual skills in the art of supervision, monitoring, and evaluation were found to be lacking in supervisors. As a result, they are unable to conduct math tests, reading tests, demonstration lessons, or regular monitoring of teaching and learning.

The Koran International Co-operative Agency (COLCA) training and Math/Science training target instructions with those with learning difficulties. Osei, Mensah and Agbofa (2020), on the strategies to improve supervision, mentioned that there was the need to improve field officers in education who are under supervision while receiving professional training on the job. The results of this study support previous research by Lonyian and Kuranchie (2018), who found that circuit supervisors and head teachers frequently request pre-headship and in-service training programmes for aspiring and current head teachers to provide them with the skills necessary for headship responsibilities. In a similar line, these findings support the findings of an earlier study by Osei, Mensah, and Agbofa (2020), which recommended that all circuit supervisors in Ghana should regularly, effectively, and efficiently organize in-service training.

The researcher further went on to find out from the district director's point of view about the policy environment of the work of SISOs in their respective districts. The directors believed the policy environment for the work of SISOs is very adequate for effective supervision though there are a few challenges with the policy documents that affect the duties of SISO. The district directors of Ghana Education Service confirmed that they know of a handbook called Circuit Supervisors Handbook published in 2012 by the GES

65

council which is available for SISOs accessibility. They further narrated that, SISOs regularly use the policy manuals at their disposal. For instance, one indicated that:

> 'They do have policy manuals that they work with and for our district every Monday we meet for discussions and particularly we deal with the manual and code of conduct from time to time. The policy environment for the work of SISOs is very adequate for effective supervision considering the work they are doing and the report they bring, testifies that they are doing the job". (Director 1)

According to one district director:

> "They have policy manuals that they work with, but with time some of the policies should be reviewed. To some extent. The policies are formulated by the government and you are on the ground and there are certain things that you may face which you have to think otherwise, to make an impact, but the policy formulators also think otherwise and you have to comply with theirs which poses a challenge". (Respondent10)

Subsequently, another district director confirmed that:

> "Sometimes these manuals are supposed to be reviewed by looking at The current standard of education has not yet been done so that is a challenge because the Monitoring Act 778 of 2008 has been amended in 2020 and therefore this book is supposed to be reviewed". (Director 2)

The District Directors noted that other challenges are lack of textbooks, feeding the minds of parents with free education which makes parents not to

support the education of their children. They reiterated that every organization has a challenge and GES is not excluded. Challenges including accessing schools sometimes become very difficult. The respondents narrated that some SISOs have motorbikes which with time had its consequences:

> "*It would be imperative if vehicles were given to SISOs or some monies were given to them to add up to buy cars. This will help because some of the schools are difficult to access and most SISOs lost their lives during work schedules, according to one district director*".
>
> "*Road network to some schools and logistics are needed because sometimes some SISOs have to cross rivers to be able to assess schools that are part of their circuits, and weather conditions not favorable for some of the SISOs especially those who use the motorbikes*". (Director 1)

The district directors maintained the narrative by stating that beginning in 2019, the government has transitioned to a standard-based curriculum, however, due to the lack of textbooks, teaching and learning have only been partially completed. This implies that, without the necessary tools available at the moment, the SISO can only provide advice and cannot take any disciplinary action against the teacher.

According to one respondent:

> "*In Ghana, which organization do you see a supervisor not given responsibility allowance but the subordinate is given? That is what is happening in GES, head teachers receive responsibility allowance but the SISOs are not*". (Director 2)

67

He continued that they have suggested to GES that the fuel allowance should be given monthly in addition to salaries, however, they rejected it and said they will pay quarterly which is not forthcoming. So, a pertinent question is asked, how do the SISOs go to the field to supervise and monitor the duties of the schools?

Interpretations and Discussions of Results for Objective One

To appraise the policy environment of the work of SISOs in three districts in the Central Region

Objective one results and findings were interpreted and discussed in details with reference to the literature review as a basis for comparison with the findings. Policy Environment of the Work of SISOS in Ghana as the first objective sought to appraise the policy environment of the work of SISOs in Ghana. In view of that, the researcher sought to explore how the officers become SISOs, if there are any manuals that guides their work, name of the manuals and the organizations that published those manuals, accessibility of resource materials and online resources and if they have undergone any training in their role as a SISO.

The SISO accepts this role as the chief instructional leader for the school district in order to promote managerial performance, prioritising learner progress and effective instructional practises as the district's top priorities (Waters & Marzano, 2007) In Ghana Education Service (GES) codes and conduct, SISOs are appointed through qualifications. For instance, interviews conducted revealed that some respondents became SISOs through reshuffling of which the SISO position became vacant, applied, had an interview, and were successful. Some respondents claimed that they become SISOs through

advertisements for teachers who want to be SISOs, they expressed interest through application and were invited by the Human Resource Officer and the Director.

Some respondents interviewed claimed that as SISOs, they have a manual called Circuit Supervisors Handbook and the handbook was published by Ghana Education Service. Whatever teachers need to do with respect to their work is embedded in the handbook. The manual was the circuit supervisor's manual and was later changed to the SISO handbook. The work of SISOs is to find support for headteachers, teachers, and students. Some respondents noted that the SISOs handbook or guide has not changed so much and the manual was published by National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NaCCA). Some claimed that the Handbook for SISOs was published by UNICEF. The soft copy was so intermitted that they read through it. They also elucidated that they have the code of conduct of GES to guide them which spells out what the teacher must do. The current study's findings are in line with those of Osei, Mensah, and Agbofa (2020), who found that irregular in-service training was the primary factor affecting staff members' abilities to oversee educational environments and instructional activities.

The district directors of Ghana Education Service in the three districts where the researcher collected the data confirmed that they know of a handbook called Circuit Supervisors Handbook published in 2012 by the GES council. They narrated that SISOs regularly use the policy manuals. For instance, they do have policy manuals that they work with from time to time in addition to the code of conduct. He continued that the policy environment for the work of

69

SISOs is very adequate for effective supervision considering the work they are doing and the report they bring, which testifies that they are doing the job.

The SISOs who were interviewed made it clear that the policy environment for their job was more than suitable for efficient supervision. In the light of the tasks they are completing and the reports they submit, it is clear that they are performing their duties. The respondents agreed that the manuals used occasionally need to be revised in the light of the current level of knowledge, but this hasn't happened yet, which presents a problem because the Monitoring Act 778 of 2008 will be amended in 2020, at which point this manual will also need to be evaluated. A SISO should incorporate additional measures as part of the policy statement, although these measures are not readily available. When questioned, School Improvement and Support Officers (SISOs) stated that they track student and staff progress and performance, create work schedules for the District Director of Education to approve, and submit reports on specific schools with copies to the affected schools. Some respondents mentioned that research is done for SISOs' obligations using online tools like Google and other databases.

Lonyian and Kuranchie (2018) expressed dissatisfaction with the District Training Officers' lack of resources and expertise in managing INSETs. They stated that although occasionally lack the skills to carry out particular INSET programmes, they are hesitant to ask for outside help. Some respondents acknowledged that management has been providing them with training to improve their skills. For instance, research dissemination workshops were organized by the Institute of Education (UCC). During the workshop, SISO played a crucial role in training related to what occurred in the classroom.

70

According to one respondent, there was also one training at the beginning of the term (the new curriculum for SISO called Common Core Programme (CCP) for the JHS 1 to JHS 3 were to use such programmes. This finding is in line with those made by Kanburi (2018), who suggested that steps must be taken to encourage the use of cutting-edge techniques for the development of educational authorities to improve their supervision of the various schools. Dickson (2011) discovered that the District Education Office's Inspectorate Division has no formalised plans for training supervisors, which indicates that the supervisors lack supervisory skills. On-the-job professional training is one of the ways to better supervision for circuit supervisors, according to Osei, Mensah, and Agbofa (2020). According to Lonyian and Kuranchie (2018), the SISOs were concerned about the lack of options for continued professional growth. They complained that supervisors and head teachers are not provided an opportunity to attend programmes continuously through in-service training, seminars, symposia, and short courses to be abreast of new trends in the educational enterprise in general and school leadership in particular.

What is the knowledge base of SISOs in three districts in the Central Region?

The second research question examined the knowledge base of SISOs in three districts of the Central Region. The study employed four key areas of SISOs' knowledge about their work which include, the strategies used by SISOs in terms of motivation, how SISOs ensure learning takes place in their circuits to meet quality education, management of conflicts, and policy intervention. The goal of SISOs is to oversee and supervise schools to ensure the success of the Standard Based Curriculum and the Common Core Programme.

71

Motivation

To properly monitor and supervise to ensure high-quality teaching and learning in schools, SISO officials must be endowed with the necessary skills, competencies, and abilities. SISOs primarily employed motivational strategies, both intrinsic and extrinsic. Osei, Mensah, and Agbofa (2020) claim that teachers and head teachers are frequently sent to work as supervisors in the education office. The majority of them lack the expertise, experience, and training necessary to serve as supervisors. Poor supervisor competence in monitoring was a major issue for poor teacher supervision in several districts (Kanburi, 2018). SISO officials elucidated that motivation given to teachers to work diligently can occur through advice given to them to develop love for God's work. As a SISO, God's word and principles are being used and not materials. Encouragement and clinical motivation are two methods SISOs employ to get teachers to work hard.

According to one respondent:

> "*We organized some refresher courses and training for our teachers. Occasionally we motivate teachers by purchasing drinks and other items for diligent teachers''. (Respondent 4)*

One respondent interviewed narrated that:

> *"SISOs rely on intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. Even how to talk to teachers is a form of motivation. We attend the Professional Learning Community (PLC) once every week to find out about the challenges concerning teaching and learning. Talking to them rather than concentrating on money is key and serves as a form of motivation since SISOs cannot give money to teachers as a motivation". (Respondent 8)*

72

> *"SISOs have strategies to put in place to help them carry their work,*
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> *and also motivate teachers. I visits them frequently, I do retrospect, set*
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> *targets for ourselves. We motivate them for their efforts, organize*
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> *workshops and inform them about the need to upgrade themselves*
>
> *through workshops. I frequently send their letters to them. I meet all*
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> *head teachers on how to carry their work. We meet and hear teachers'*
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> *grievances and refresh them to be more productive". (Respondent 8)*

They also make sure that teachers make the most of their class time. They clarified that SISOs are required to know the curriculum, maintain attendance, provide frequent exercise, and teach in accordance with the curriculum. There are additional chances for instructors to attend self-funded workshops. Most of them indicated that we make sure the instructional materials such as textbooks are available and create lesson plans. We provide heads of schools the authority to oversee teachers. We give heads the authority to verify that the teachings presented match those in the textbook. Additionally, we assist worthy teachers. The current study's findings concur with those of Idaho and Agholor (2013), who found that all stakeholders need to alter their perspectives on school administration if supervision and inspection of schools are to be effective. According to Idaho and Agholor (2013), the supervisors' and inspectors' unprofessional demeanors have made it difficult to effectively monitor and supervise schools. This has an impact on how well lessons are taught in classrooms during teaching and learning times, which has the knock-on effect of lowering educational standards.

Quality education

Regular visits to schools are one of the school supervisors' main responsibilities. These findings defy earlier research by Gitonga (2019), who claimed that teachers did not significantly gain from supervisor visits in terms of developing their teaching abilities, which would boost the academic success of their schools. It is sometimes sad that materials needed for effective monitoring and supervision such as textbooks, curriculum, and other materials were not forthcoming. To resolve disputes, advice is typically given to teachers, who also meet with parents and head teachers. By encouraging teachers to act as facilitators rather than as the center of instruction, and by educating them on the rules and regulations governing the educational system, it is possible to guarantee high-quality teaching and learning. One school improvement and support officer indicated that:

> *"For quality learning to be ensured we organize workshops for head teachers. We visit every school to check whether every teacher is in class. Do pre-conference and post-conference. In addition, we check lesson plans, Flip through books, log book/attendance books, Check reporting times, assess instructional hours for a while, and do validation of books. (Respondent 11)*

According to one male respondent in Komenda Edina Eguafo Abirem:

> *"There should be punctuality on the part of the teachers and the head teacher as well. This attitude affects contact and instructional hours. When monitoring, I ask teachers about whether they were able to give enough exercise and assignments. I advised teachers to be diligent in their work since it pays. Teachers can be recommended for positions*

74

based on their diligence". (Respondent 3)

Another account was given by a SISO that*:*

> *"As a SISO, you ensure that teachers make good use of the instructional hours as well as contact hours for instance (7:30 – 3:30 pm). Additionally, I ensure that teachers teach the correct curriculum as well as give more exercises and mark them. Quality teaching and learning are ensured through advising teachers to be facilitators rather than teachers being teacher-centered. We educate teachers about the policy in the educational system for them to be applied". (Respondent 2)*

The conclusions of this study were consistent with those of Badu's (2010) earlier study on the situation of supervision at the time, which found that follow-up visits, quick visits, and intensive visits were all carried out effectively. The results of this study, however, contradict John's (2011) study, which found that District/Zonal inspectors had conducted erroneous inspections.

The SISOs are positioned at the circuit level to regularly visit schools. Among the responsibilities are observing teachers in action to ensure that students are being taught appropriately, providing ongoing professional development for instructors, and submitting reports to their district's municipal or metropolitan education directorate (Appiah, 2009).

The policy officers who were interviewed also mentioned that they demand punctuality and use the contact and training hours. SISOs should keep an eye on how students are participating in class, and school administrators should take time management seriously. Teachers must have time to access additional

75

resources. Additionally, parents should offer support by providing resources like textbooks. Finally, parents should receive feedback from the school. Some SISOs argued that it was against their will that they couldn't make frequent trips to schools in certain rural locations. Due to the poor road network and the terrible weather, these schools are not visited. As a result, they were exposed to a variety of risks and were not covered by any health or insurance coverage.

Conflict resolution

The presence of conflicts is not limited to bounded spaces. Conflict is characterized as an adversarial state of opposition, discord, or incompatibility between two or more parties. It also acknowledges that conflicts develop over time through a series of smaller or larger changes as well as specific actions in which a range of individuals may play crucial roles. One respondent in KEEA recounts how he been tackling conflict. Some SISOs interviewed elucidated that in resolving conflict, they usually used the SMC and PTA to resolve conflict between head teacher and teachers. We are always successful, however when the conflict is beyond the level of SISOs, the issue is sent to GES office. With respect to teacher to teacher, we manage it at head teacher's office. We usually use SMC & PTA executives to resolve conflicts. If it fails, we call them to the office to dialogue. Teacher to student conflicts is resolved through the use of SMC and PTA executives in a win-win situation.

One respondent mentioned that:

> *"I first listen to the head teacher depending on the one who came to report first. Taking into consideration (Win-Win/Lose-Lose situation). I talk to both parties and try using win for the head teacher and later*

76

look at his fault. For instance, a teacher slapped a head teacher and this incident was reported to the superiors. Most of the issue that comes with pupils, and parents come in to resolve the matter. For instance, students to students, I have never come across such cases". (Respondent 2)

Some SISOs interviewed indicated that*:*

"We respond to frictions between teachers and head teachers and sometimes call both parties, listen to them, and give counsel and dialogue with them. However, if the other party disagrees, we inform the director by Writing a situational report". (Respondent 9)

One SISO official interviewed narrated that*:*

"Conflict between teachers to parents is resolved by inviting both parties to express their grievances because it allows me to be aware of what is transpiring in the school. I called those involved and settled the matter. If the conflicts still exist after mediation, we transfer the issue". (Respondent 11)

One reply clarified that:

"By some rules, the mediator must first gain the trust of the disputing parties by becoming familiar with their objectives, anxieties, and concerns. Second, the mediator should allow time for both sides to identify their legitimate and illegitimate aims and wants as individuals. Additionally, mediators should work to reconcile both sides' laudable but seemingly incompatible aspirations by finding mutually agreeable, appealing solutions for a sustainable future that exemplifies creativity, empathy, and nonviolence, creating a new reality". (Respondent 6)

77

> *"Student to student conflict is resolved by the head teacher or by the guidance and counselling coordinators or we psych parents, PTA, head teachers and the parties involved. Concerning teacher-to-teacher, conflict is resolved through listening to both parties and give peace to where the fault is coming from and sometimes, we advise the party to apologize. But with respect to teacher to student, if it's geared towards gender, we refer to girl-child coordinator, but if it is caning or corporal punishment, we settle that. If it's brutality or sorer we resolve it in accordance to the GES guidelines. We sometimes counsel teachers on the need to be careful about such temptations". (Respondent 8)*

Furthermore, the SISO official interviewed stated that if issue was on insubordination, they have a way of doing it. For instance, conflict between teachers to student is resolved by listening to the teacher first, then the students and later invite student's parents, if necessary. He claimed that they do it as a team work. According to the SISO officials, they give students stronger warning. However, head teacher to parent conflict is resolved by bringing it to the notice of GES office to resolve through dialoging with PTA chairman, or meet parents separately.

Policy intervention

In order to ensure the success of both teachers and the district Directorate, the supervisor's overall responsibilities include communicating organisational needs, monitoring teachers' performance, providing guidance and support, identifying developmental needs, and managing the mutually beneficial connection between them. Resources should be made available to teachers and administrators so they can carry out their jobs more successfully

and efficiently. Quality teaching and learning is one of the primary concerns in basic education, according to the Basic Education Sector Improvement Programme (BESIP) (1996), and supervision is a significant contributor to improving quality teaching and learning, for instance, one SISO in Elmina lamented *that:*

> *"We ensure teachers stick to the curriculum. Respect instructional time. From time to time, we inform teachers about policy guidelines. During staff meetings, we are invited. Managements don't often give resources. Also, government gives some small amount of money for transportation in the name of fuel subsidy for our work but inadequate. Every Wednesday, there is PLC. Through punctuality and regularity, lesson observation, curriculum activities organized by SISOs, by attending Professional Learning Community (PLCs) which is organized weekly by teachers who experience challenges in teaching and sometimes engage a resource person who is knowledgeable in the area of concern to come and teach the teachers." (Respondent 1)*

Some respondents interviewed elucidated that they assessed some programmes like inter-school quiz programmes in cluster bases, since it's very large school and some of them are scattered, about 14 schools in the circuit. So, all schools are being put together to partake in debate and inter-school competitions. The respondents claimed that they also do a lot of monitoring in various schools to ascertain the extent of the work done by teachers to ensure quality teaching and learning. Some teachers thought that because SISOs live in places that are distant from schools it would be difficult for them to come there regularly to monitor. For instance, one SISO lamented that:

> *"I visit the schools in my circuit regularly and by termly basis I put them into zones for various competitions because I am the 2nd with the highest number of schools after Aboom with 16 schools". (Respondent 4)*

> *"As a SISO, I interpreted policies with head teachers, teachers and other stakeholders during Professional Learning Community (PLC) meeting, brief head teachers and ensure that they implement policies, organizing training workshops to explain teaching policies introduced by GES". (Respondent 5)*

The researcher enquired if the district directors see SISOs knowledgeable in the roles they perform within their assigned circuits and if there are any area that the SISOs must improve upon in terms of knowledge acquisition. The District Directors narrated that SISOs are knowledgeable in the roles they perform within their assigned circuits because some are veterans, they have done the work for longtime and with support of SISOs manual and head teachers handbook they are on top doing their work. They do lesson observation, Professional Learning Communities (PLC) with the teachers. This is whereby teachers and other stakeholders come together if there is any problem in a school, they solve it and the SISOs are the lead to convey most of these meetings both at the school and cluster levels. The officials noted that they write situational report when the need arises and discuss the way forward. Head of supervisions, director and other officers called activities initiators also go to the field to monitor SISOs without their knowledge, so if the SISOs are not working, these people will identify and handle it. According to the respondents:

80

"*Since they are there to support, they are on top of issues to the curriculum, demands of teachers and head teachers, check timetables in the schools and observe daily activities. Their ideas of work schedules to schools depends on the proximity on their daily routines. They see to it that teaching and learning, observation of lessons, instructional hours and other activities in the schools take place. Sometime they have to interact to parents during PTA meetings and other stakeholders to promote teaching and learning in the schools". (Director 1*)

"*As they conduct PLCs at their circuits, we also conduct PLC at the office. In our district, we discuss some of the issues on the field so if a SISO is having a challenge, we take it as a team, discuss it plus other activators". (Director 3)*

Regarding the policy guidelines, the directors who participated in the interview confirmed that new things continue to emerge daily that call for knowledge, and that in accordance with the policies, guidelines, and regulations that the GES publishes regarding education, one must stay current with knowledge to assist head teachers, teachers, students, parents, and stakeholders in promoting teaching and learning with their designated circuits.

Interpretation and discussion of results of objective two

Research Objective two examines the knowledge base of SISOs in three districts of the Central Region. The study sought the understanding of the strategies used by SISOs in terms of motivation to the teachers in their circuits, how SISOs ensure learning takes place in their circuits to meet quality teaching and learning, management of conflicts, policy intervention and how

81

to bring on board donor support to their circuits. Osei, Mensah, and Agbofa (2020) claim that teachers and head teachers are frequently sent to work as supervisors in the education office. The majority of them lack the expertise, experience, and training necessary to be a supervisor. Poor supervisor competence of monitoring was a major issue for poor teacher supervision in several districts (Kanburi, 2018). School Improvement and Support Officers frequently further their education. To advance their skills and expertise, they look for professional development opportunities, go to conferences, and remain current on the most recent educational research.

The current study's findings concur with those of Idaho and Agholor (2013), who found that all stakeholders need to alter their perspectives on school administration if supervision and inspection of schools are to be effective. According to Idogho and Agholor (2013), the supervisors' and inspectors' unprofessional demeanors have made it difficult to effectively monitor and supervise schools. This has an impact on the teaching and learning process in schools, which in turn leads to a decline in educational standards.

What is the attitude of SISOs towards their work?

The third research question investigated the attitude of SISOs towards their work. According to Owusu-Addo (2019), instructors have an odd attitude towards their supervisors, which hurts their performance. To him, most of the supervisors, take a conventional approach to leadership, which explains why teachers have negative attitudes towards monitoring. Drawing on the findings from Owusu-Addo (2019), the researcher examined SISO's attitudes in four key areas: their relationship with teaching and non-teaching staff within their

82

circuit, time management, how they receive advice, and their reactions towards feedback.

Idogho and Agholor (2013) contend that all stakeholders must alter their perspectives on school administration if the supervision and inspection of schools are to be effective. According to Idogho and Agholor (2013), the supervisors' and inspectors' unprofessional demeanors have made it difficult to effectively monitor and supervise schools. This has an impact on how well teachers and students are instructed during class time, which hurts education standards.

Relationship

The researcher investigated how school improvement and support officers (SISOs) build effective working relationships with teachers and school staff. How to work with school leaders to align improvement strategies with the school's vision and goals and the involvement of students and parents in the school improvement process was also explored. The researcher further explored strategies used by SISOs to build trust and positive relationships with students and their families. This response plays a key role in ascertaining the effectiveness of the monitoring and supervision of teachers. In the study, Apenteng (2012) noted that circuit supervisors visited their schools regularly. Some respondents mentioned that:

> *"Getting closer to teachers through relationship building helps SISOs know what is expected, understand their needs, collaborate effectively, and ensure that any issues are resolved." (respondent 2).*

83

Similarly, respondent 3 also said,

> *"Respect is mutual, so avoid coming across as bossy. Engage in open conversations, view them as friends, and treat them well. There's no need for conflict, as some SISOs have done in the past, treat them with respect."*

Working with school leaders to align improvement strategies with the school's vision and goals is vital for creating a cohesive and focused school culture. Establishing a clear vision provides the school with a sense of direction that they can all work towards. New instructors can be introduced to the mission, vision, values, and overall culture of the school by SISOs in the beginning. This promotes a sense of connection and purpose by assisting students in comprehending the mission and goals of the institution.

Some respondents mentioned that,

> *"At the beginning of each academic term, we meet with the heads of schools, holding a headteachers' meeting where we discuss the office's vision, listen to their concerns, and align our goals with theirs. Each school has its vision and goals, and it is guided not only by the headteacher but also by the SMCs, local chiefs, and the entire community. We emphasized the importance of education along with the school's aims and objectives. These meetings involve all stakeholders, and provide valuable insight into school operations."* *(respondents 5 & 6)*

Some respondents elaborated that they normally engage parents through meetings to welcome their concerns and plan for appropriate intervention.

> *"We regularly engage parents through Parent Association (PA)*

84

meetings, where we welcome their input. Although the government

recently restricted teachers' participation in these meetings, the

headteacher, teachers, SISOs, and parents usually attend to discuss

current issues together." (respondent 7)

Similar to respondent 3 who stated that,

"Parent Associations organize meetings and invite SISOs and teachers

as needed, depending on the issue. Occasionally, they also bring

students to attend, especially for discussions related to BECE

registration."

Where respondents 1 and 6 voiced that,

"The school has a prefectorial board, where selected students

represent their peers by conveying their concerns to the headteacher

and staff for resolution. Occasionally, SISOs meet with the prefects to

listen to and address their issues. This approach builds trust, as

students know their concerns will be addressed."

This finding is in line with that of Sarfo and Cudjoe (2016), who found that some supervisors behave like bosses and criticize the work of the teachers. This means that rather than using a fault-finding strategy like directing or telling, supervisors should encourage participation in and mutual sharing of feedback with teachers. Due to this, some supervisors find it difficult to be amicable with instructors when they visit schools to oversee instruction (Gitonga, 2019).

Feedback

The study further examined how respondents are given valuable feedback provided by heads of schools under their supervision. In this period of clinical

85

supervision, Dewodo, Agbetorwoka, and Wotordzor (2019) noted that some circuit supervisors did not give prior notice of their visitations to schools. Dewodo, Agbetorwoka, and Wotordzor (2019), suggested that instructors be informed by external supervisors before they visit schools within their circuits. The researcher explored effective methods for collecting feedback from teachers and students in a school improvement context, common barriers to effectively incorporating feedback into school improvement plans, and how can these barriers be overcome. Ways feedback from different stakeholders (e.g., students, parents, teachers, community members) differ, and how should these differences be addressed in improvement plans by SISOs looking at culture influence and its effectiveness of school improvement initiatives. Some respondents mentioned that;

> *"Feedback is collected in various ways, both verbal and written. At the school level, we regularly hold meetings with teachers and the headteacher to receive their feedback. Sometimes, the headteacher provides updates on discussions, noting any changes or improvements. We also gather feedback through informal conversations in classrooms or the headteacher's office. Quick visit forms are regularly provided to school heads to gather information about staff, and we also use attendance books, class registers, learners' exercise books, termly report cards, and more. Occasionally, we engage directly with staff to obtain any additional data needed." (Respondents 4 & 6)*

Some respondents mentioned common barriers to effectively incorporating feedback into school improvement plans, and how can these barriers be overcome. According to respondents 3 and 5,

86

"It's often challenging to obtain timely information from schools due to delays from the headteacher. One common barrier is the difficulty in obtaining necessary information from parents. We may need parents to attend meetings or provide timely information, but they may not respond. These challenges are frequently reported from the field, where timely information is crucial, yet often unavailable."

Similarly, the statements made by respondents 2 and 7 states that,

"Information varies, as teachers may provide different insights compared to parents. It is always advantageous to bring both the student and the parent together to avoid conflicting information. There are several stakeholders with differing perspectives, so we focus on those who can provide immediate assistance and work on those issues. Not every suggestion is implemented, we discuss and evaluate each one before deciding on its approval."

Another respondent mentioned that,

"Feedback is essential because it benefits teachers, students, headteachers, SISOs, and parents. It helps identify gaps, problems, and challenges that need to be addressed. For teachers and students, feedback provides insights into academic performance, highlighting strengths and weaknesses. Additionally, it serves to motivate learners, especially those who excel. For parents, feedback informs them about their children's performance in school, enabling them to implement any necessary remedies." (Respondent 7)

87

Contrary to another respondent, feedback differs from culture to culture. He mentioned that,

> *"Every environment has its own culture and practices. As a SISO, it's essential to understand that culture is about people living in a shared space, so you must study it closely. You should encourage activities rooted in their culture that can benefit the school, as these elements are integral to their identity. Instead of trying to change them, you provide guidance to help integrate these cultural aspects into the school." (Respondent 8)*

This finding is consistent with that of Nkonkonya, Dick-Sagoe, Adu, and Ennim (2022), who concluded that instructors' behavior and outcomes are influenced by feedback. Feedback is touted as a powerful mechanism for effective supervision and monitoring. According to Nkonkonya, Dick-Sagoe, Adu, and Ennim (2022), immediate feedback is one of the most powerful ways to help teachers improve their instructional practice. Teachers have the highest impact on learning outcomes. They need the support of administrators and coaches to improve their instructional practices. Classroom observations are one of the most effective ways to provide direct and immediate feedback to teachers.

Advice

The researcher also examined how SISOs accept useful advice on how to improve their work. SISOs oversee, examine, and assess how well schools are running to uphold quality standards through programmed ideas, training seminars, and workshops, and take the lead in professional development for head teachers and teachers. The researcher explored situations where SISOs

88

had to implement advice from a stakeholder or colleague that initially conflicted with their views and how they handled it. Creating an environment where colleagues and stakeholders feel comfortable giving honest advice and seeking advice to improve skills and knowledge and how to strategies to ensure that advice from mentors or peers are applied to their work. Some respondents explained that;

> *"Corporal punishment is an example of a conflict we encounter, as the government has prohibited caning in schools. However, some parents insist on its use, stating that their children should be punished regardless of government guidelines. This creates a challenging situation, as these parents are often unwilling to consider our explanations. We advise them against punishing their children at school but suggest that they may do so at home." (Respondents 1 & 2)*

Some respondent mentioned that SISOs normally don't get training from their employers, they function based on their experiences in the field.

> *"There's no formal training for the role of a SISO; we learn through experience on the job. Sometimes, you may need advice from a mentor or a colleague with extensive experience to guide you on what to do." (Respondent 8)*
>
> *"In our office, we have colleagues, our chief supervisor, and other officers. As a SISO, it's important to remain humble; after all, wisdom is like a baobab tree—strong and expansive. By assessing ourselves, we gain a clearer understanding of our work and can recognize when to seek input. Regardless of rank, we value each other's opinions and frequently seek advice to improve and collaborate effectively. While*

89

> *some of their advice works well in certain situations, it isn't always*
>
> *effective since each circuit has its unique challenges." (Respondent 6)*

Similarly, respondent 10 voiced that,

> *"In our work, we encounter new situations daily, so it's essential to*
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> *accept that we don't know everything. Whenever I face challenges, I*
>
> *can't resolve on my own, I seek advice from others, but if I can handle*
>
> *them, I do. Most issues in the schools fall within my capacity to*
>
> *address, but for those beyond my reach, I bring them to the office.*
>
> *Working with policy means being cautious to avoid any missteps."*

Accepting helpful advice is therefore essential for high-quality supervision and monitoring, providing feedback on how their work is going. Some respondents clarified that school improvement and support staff frequently have a sincere love of learning and a strong desire to help improve schools. They are driven to have a positive effect and think highly of the value of a good education. These policy officers frequently exhibit a proactive and problem-solving mindset. They are dedicated to pinpointing ineffective practices in schools and coming up with workable solutions. They are not scared to face obstacles head-on and strive for improvement.

The researcher also examined how SISOs accept useful advice to improve their work. SISOs oversee, examine, and assess how well schools are running to uphold quality standards through programmes ideas, training seminars, and workshops, taking the lead in professional development for head teachers and teachers. Therefore, acceptance of useful advice is very imperative in quality supervision and monitoring through providing feedback concerning the progress of their work. Officers responsible for school

improvement and assistance must be flexible because the field of education is always changing. They are willing to experiment with different methods, keep up with the most recent developments in educational research and trends, and change their tactics as necessary.

The researcher looked at how respondents (SISOs) felt about their work and the suggestions they made for raising educational standards. Giving guidance is essential in ensuring that educational standards increase, as does receiving feedback. The goal of many school support and improvement officers is to advance educational equity. Regardless of their backgrounds or circumstances, they actively seek to guarantee that all kids have equitable access to high-quality education.

Time management

Time management plays a critical role in enhancing the overall performance of schools, working closely with educators, administrators, and stakeholders to improve student outcomes (Komalasari, Arafat & Mulyadi (2020). Time management for a SISO is crucial to ensure effective fulfillment of their responsibilities, which often include strategic planning, monitoring, evaluation, and providing direct support to schools. The researcher examined how SISOs approach goal setting and deadlines and adjust their time management strategy due to unexpected changes or challenges. The opinions of SISOs were requested regarding what tools or techniques they use to manage time and keep track of tasks. However, time management is a skill that involves assessing the use of time, planning, and monitoring activities. Some respondents interviewed indicated that;

91

> *"There are times when deadlines are set, leaving no choice but to prioritize tasks and focus on the most pressing ones. We usually create an itinerary for our regular duties, but some situations require immediate attention, so effective management is key, even though it's impossible to do everything at once. In these cases, we prioritize the most crucial or urgent tasks. Our office operates in a way that requires working according to schedules, as we often have numerous responsibilities to manage simultaneously." (Respondents 4 & 7)*

But according to respondents 2 and 9,

> *"In project management, we follow action plans, and as a SISO, it's crucial to set a term itinerary to achieve our objectives. At the end of each term, we review to check if all aspects of the action plan have been accomplished, though occasional changes may prevent full completion."*

Alternatively, the voices of respondents 4 and 11 also similarly mentioned that,

> *"I have an itinerary that I generally follow, though it's not always possible to stick to it entirely. Emergencies sometimes arise that require quick adjustments or alternative routes to achieve certain objectives, even if they deviate from the original plan. We follow both our personal and office itineraries closely, working within set timelines and as a team. This structured approach allows us to track progress, so, we know what to accomplish by the end of the term, and enables us to document all activities in our reports. The itinerary is our primary tool, guiding us and helping us determine when to make timely visits as*

92

needed."

Teachers believed that supervisors only had incomplete technical and conceptual skills, according to a Gitonga (2019) study. They are unable to adequately improve teachers' pedagogy and instructional material utilization competencies, spend the majority of the time on instructional supervision checking teachers' professional records, and have not led the way in maximizing the use of their instructional supervision recommendations and reports to improve the delivery of high-quality education. The outcomes of this study are consistent with Gitonga's (2019) earlier research on the instructional supervision techniques used by supervisors in schools.

District directors' impressions about the attitude of male, female, new, and experienced SISOs were sought, and if there is anything concerning the attitude of SISOs generally and how those attitudes can be worked on by the researcher.

The respondents interviewed narrated that almost all of them are elderly people and have learned that today supervision is all about clinical friendship. They elucidated that SISOs are supposed to support the teachers termed as clinical supervision since SISOs are not there to intimidate teachers or to harass them, but to help them achieve their objectives. According to the respondents with the new curriculum, some of the teachers may face challenges during implementation so it is the duty of the SISOs to help since they have also been trained at that job to improve teaching and learning.

The respondent's view about the differences that exist between male and female SISOs work was solicited. According to one respondent:

93

"In general, I can't differentiate between the work female SISOs do and the work male SISOs do. To the best of my knowledge, they are working as expected of them. If there is any shortcoming then it must be an individual issue but not general". (Director 1)

The respondents confirmed that SISOs work effectively and as such their work moves them to hinterlands and hard-to-go areas, despite that they go and assist teachers and pupils in hinterlands.

Another respondent interviewed indicated that:

"Unfortunately, it was just last year we had a female because of the terrine of our schools' females cannot go, but she does well". (Director 2)

Another district director interviewed confirmed that:

"Female SISOs are also doing well comparatively. However, don't send them to hard go areas, not that they can't do the work just that they can't use the motorbikes. Due to that,

they put them to close schools for effective monitoring". (Director 3)

Another district director interviewed noted:

"Female SISOs' attitude towards the teachers is good based on personal investigations about their duties within the circuits assigned to them. They also give them under-job training and training and through teamwork and monitoring the new ones are catching up". (Director 1)

94

According to them, SISOs are now being ushered to the work, and as such they don't know much about the work since it's a learning cycle and process. Management have instructed them that anytime they encounter any problem they should come to them and guide them side by side to gain experience.

The respondents confirmed that SISOs are friendly and they always collaborate to work, there is teamwork among them. However, according to the respondents, some of them are difficult to be corrected. They think they know the job so they are not subjected to corrections. They take issues calmly since there are different characters in schools. They investigate thoroughly and sometimes go further to PTA to delve into the issues and solve them without the interference of the office. They reiterated that SISOs are focused on the work to get good academic performance.

The District Directors interviewed confirmed in terms of work, SISOs are the backbone of the office and if teaching and learning will go no or succeed in their respective districts, they are very key and the eye of the office. They are effectively working to achieve high standards. There might be some areas that we expect SISOs to perform and they may not be able to perform well but my SISOs are on top of their work where they have to write their report every week and every month.

There is always a head teacher meeting where reports will be given about the SISOs or head teachers will call the office if they are having issues. They indicated that sometimes, they have a monitoring sheet at the blind side of SISOs which head teachers and teachers use to monitor and report any issues on the SISOs if the need arises. They stressed that they have adopted school's monitoring which is unique to our schools and very effective which is

95

making our monitoring and supervision very superb and is yielding results through the way the BECE results shots up.

According to them there are individual differences so they monitor the heads in the various schools if there are any issues but not many. The district directors affirmed that SISOs do a lot of sacrificial works from their own pockets since allowances are delayed.

Interpretation and discussions of results of objective three

Objective three explores the attitude of SISOs toward their work in three districts in the Central Region. Idogho and Agholor (2013) contend that all stakeholders must alter their perspectives on how to manage schools if they are to effectively supervise and inspect them. According to Idogho and Agholor (2013), the supervisors' and inspectors' unprofessional demeanors have made it difficult to effectively monitor and supervise schools.

Majority of the respondents strongly agreed that they get along with teachers and heads of schools under their supervision. The respondents developed positive attitude towards their work through checking on the teacher's record of work on their school visits in the three districts of Central Region. In the study of Apenteng (2012) noted that circuit supervisors visits schools on a regular basis. This finding is in line with that of Sarfo and Cudjoe (2016), who found that some supervisors behave like bosses and criticize the work of the teachers. This means that the supervisors should encourage teachers to participate in feedback-sharing approaches rather than using a fault-finding strategy like directing or telling. The outcome is also consistent with Badu's (2010) assessment of the state of supervision at the time, which found that follow-up visits, quick visits, and intensive visits were being carried

96

out effectively. The results of the present study, however, run counter to Idogho and Agholor's (2013) claim that school records such lecture notes, work schedules, diaries, and attendance registers are not reviewed by most inspectors and supervisors.

In this period of clinical supervision, Dewodo, Agbetorwoka, and Wotordzor (2019) suggested that instructors be properly informed by external supervisors before they visit their schools. They observed that some circuit supervisors did not give prior notice of their visitations to schools. SISOs concur that the principals of the schools they oversee offer them with useful feedback. Respondents strongly agree that they are given valuable feedback provided by heads of schools under their supervisions. This finding is consistent with that of Nkonkonya, Dick-Sagoe, Adu, and Ennim (2022), who found that instructors' behavior and performance are influenced by feedback.

The respondents interviewed narrated that almost all SISOs are experienced people and have learned that today's supervision is all about clinical friendship. They elucidated that SISOs are supposed to support the teacher termed as clinical supervision since SISOs are not there to intimidate teachers or to harass them, but to help them achieve their objectives. The respondents confirmed that SISOs work effectively and as such their work moves them to hinterlands and hard-to-go areas, despite that they go and assist teachers and pupils in hinterlands. SISOs ensure quality standards by supervising, inspecting, and evaluating the operation of schools. Leads in professional development for head teachers and teachers through programme proposals, training seminars and workshops. Therefore, acceptance of useful advice is very imperative in quality supervision and monitoring and as well as

97

provide feedback concerning the progress of their work. Teachers believed that supervisors only had incomplete technical and conceptual skills, according to a Gitonga (2019) study. They are unable to adequately improve teachers' pedagogy and instructional material utilization competencies, spend the majority of the time on instructional supervision by checking teachers' professional records, and have not led the way in maximizing the use of their instructional supervision recommendations and reports to improve the delivery of high-quality education.

Giving guidance is a crucial part of getting feedback to ensure that educational standards are improving. According to the results, respondents firmly agreed that they provide helpful recommendations on how to raise educational standards. Trainings, workshops, and seminars have been shown to considerably improve job performance and perhaps more crucially, the skill sets of teachers and head teachers. SISOs strongly agreed to have training sessions organized for teachers and head teachers, while the majority agreed to have such training sessions organized for teachers and heads. According to Osei, Mensah, and Agbofa (2020), inconsistent in-service training was the primary determinant of staff members' abilities to oversee educational facilities and instructional activities. SISOs mentioned that they are given opportunities to be facilitators in the training sessions organized by management and also respondents. John (2011) concluded that orientation and in-service training were insufficient and irrelevant when it came to matters involving supervisory competence. The results of this study are in line with those of Kanburi's (2018) research, which suggests that some supervisors do

98

assist teachers through setting up orientation and in-service training for new teachers.

What are the practices of SISIs?

The fourth objective examined the practices of school improvement and support officers (SISOs) in their work. School Improvement and Support Officers (SISOs) are essential in helping schools improve their overall performance and offer the necessary assistance to guarantee high-quality instruction. Depending on the particular setting, geography, and educational system, SISOs may employ different practices in their job. The researcher focused on four key areas to examine how SISOs implement their roles and responsibilities, supervision itineraries, school visits, and collaborations.

The methods used by SISOs directly affect how well supervision in educational institutions works by way of observation and tracking. The effectiveness of teachers has increased to 90% with good supervision and monitoring (Lorensius, Anggal, & Lugan, (2022). According to Lorensius, Anggal, and Lugan, (2022), attendance, supervision, and lesson observation of teachers have improved as a result of SISO practices and their methods have helped teachers and principals continue to do their jobs well. SISOs often start by evaluating the school's situation, including student achievement, instructional strategies, administration, and infrastructure. Data is analyzed to find areas that need improvement. SISOs work with school leadership to create thorough improvement plans based on their assessment. These plans provide detailed objectives, plans of action, and deadlines for increasing many parts of the school's operations.

Supervisor's itineraries

The researcher investigated how SISOs prioritize schools and areas of focus in their supervisory itinerary and how they adjust their itinerary due to unforeseen circumstances. The researcher further explored how SISOs balance the needs of multiple schools while providing adequate support to each one and how they stay current with best practices and trends in education to inform the supervisory approach. School improvement and support officers said they frequently prepare their supervision schedules every week. This result is consistent with Ochieng's (2013) assertion that effective supervision is necessary to assist teachers in developing their instructional strategies. The results support the claim by Ochieng (2013) that supervisors should be creative, well-organized, and have a well-written timetable for supervision. Some supervisors stated that;

> *"Issues vary from school to school, with some being more urgent than others. Schools needing additional support receive higher priority, while those with fewer needs are visited less frequently. Each issue is addressed based on on-site assessments, making it essential for SISOs to be present to provide focused support." (Respondent 6)*
>
> *"As a SISO, visiting each public school at least three times per term is mandatory. To ensure that all schools, including private ones, receive attention, we create an itinerary guaranteeing at least one visit per term for each school. Factors like school performance influence the itinerary, often gauged by BECE results. Underperforming schools require more frequent visits, as a consistent presence encourages teachers to stay engaged and motivated." (Respondent 3)*

100

Some respondents also cited that sometimes they have to adjust their itineraries due to unforeseen circumstances and balance the needs of multiple schools while ensuring adequate support to each one. According to respondents 4 and 9, emergency calls from schools often disrupt and change planned schedules. They stated that,

> *"Yes, quite frequently. For example, I once received an urgent call to a school where a teacher had fallen seriously ill and needed immediate medical assistance, and the staff there were unsure how to handle it. This required an immediate response, leaving me with no choice but to act quickly. Although we have scheduled meetings at the office every On Tuesday, I sometimes have to miss them to address urgent issues at school. Additionally, unexpected programs often conflict with my itinerary, so I frequently have to adjust my plans. Maintaining a smooth schedule is not always possible."*

Additional insights were provided by other respondents regarding the management of schools within their circuits. According to them,

> *"Each school requires two visits per term, so the total number of visits is calculated by multiplying the number of schools in the circuit by two. To manage this, it's essential to visit each school at least once per term and add additional visits as needed. Sometimes, high demand from schools means I'll ask fellow SISOs or another officer to represent me, or we may address certain issues together. We rely on each other's support to deliver our services effectively, as help from a colleague is often necessary." (Respondents 3 & 5)*

Staying updated on best practices and trends in education is essential for informing effective supervisory approaches. Some SISOs noted that workshops are regularly organized to enhance their knowledge, while others seek out new online resources and materials to further their professional development. Some respondents mentioned that,

> "Workshops are periodically organized for SISOs to address current issues. The metro often hosts regular workshops, as well as occasional national workshops, where SISOs can stay informed about the latest developments and share this information with schools. For example, with the introduction of the new curriculum, it became necessary to visit schools to ensure that teachers were not still using the old curriculum to prepare their lesson plans.'' (Respondent 9)

> "I stay informed about current educational issues by listening to and reading the news online, watching television, and reviewing newspapers. I also utilize the SISOs manual and meet with colleagues at the office to share updates on relevant topics." (Respondent 10)

Some SISOs interviewed elucidated that the Ghana Education Service (GES) management doesn't monitor SISOs. They only monitor the preparations of itineraries to check them but they don't see the monitoring. In addition to their direct involvement, SISOs seek to increase the ability of school administration, teachers, and staff to support and continue improvement efforts. Since the educational environment is continuously changing, SISOs must be adaptable in how they modify their techniques to meet shifting demands. This might entail remaining current with best practices, technology, and educational trends.

School visits

A good working school environment must produce good results from School Improvement and Support Officers' knowledge, attitudes, and practices because they ultimately impact head teachers, teachers, and students. Regular SISO visits to schools and reviews teachers' performance have been shown to improve learning results significantly. How SISOs prepare for a school visit to ensure meaningful feedback and support, identify key areas of focus before a school visit, handle difficult situations or conflicts during a school visit, and how SISOs initiate school improvement policies was explored by the researcher. Some respondents indicated that;

> *"We conduct school visits regularly, with a minimum of two visits required. Occasionally, we inform the school ahead of time about our visits, but often we receive calls from headteachers inviting us to stop by. During these visits, we assess aspects such as attendance, punctuality, and the attendance book. If there are no issues to address, we conclude our visit. Only a small number of us carry out lesson monitoring during these visits. (Respondent 11)*

Similar to respondent 11, respondent 9 stated that,

> *"Whether I inform headteachers and staff about my visit depends on its purpose. If I need specific information or assistance, I notify them in advance. However, I usually don't give any prior notice for brief visits. My communication is based on the type of information I need and how I plan to structure my visit. Schools also invite us to events like anniversaries and Parent Association meetings."*

103

School Improvement and Support Officers play a crucial role in uplifting educational standards across schools. When they visit, they assess the school's current environment, identify areas for growth, and offer tailored guidance to address specific challenges or goals. This support might involve coaching teachers, providing resources, or helping implement effective teaching strategies to improve student engagement and achievement. By actively collaborating with school staff, these officers aim to create a more positive and effective learning atmosphere, ultimately contributing to better educational outcomes for students. Identifying key areas of focus before a school visit, some respondents stated that,

> *"To effectively address attendance, it's vital to arrive at the school early to observe teachers' arrival times. Additionally, reviewing the attendance log, where teachers note their names and arrival times, is an essential component of school visits." (Respondent 6)*

> *"At one point, teachers were not preparing their lesson notes, despite repeated requests from the head teacher. They insisted on teaching from experience alone. I had to clarify the educational policy, emphasizing that writing lesson notes is a core responsibility for teachers. After understanding this, they agreed and complied." (Respondent 8)*

Other respondents noted that they actively support and enhance school initiatives.

> *"I haven't personally encountered any major issues, though minor concerns do arise. Head teachers generally inform us of any matters before we plan a school visit. To boost student performance, the Pedu*

104

Abura circuit launched a quiz competition for JHS students, which continued for two to three years. Teachers created the questions, moderated by an overseer, and involved students from forms two and three. With sponsor support, each student received around twenty exercise books and a math set, leading to improved academic performance and attendance." (Respondent 5)

"One head teacher was organizing a 25th anniversary celebration, and although I thought it might be overwhelming for her as she had just been promoted, it turned out successfully with support from some teachers and my input. This was the school's first anniversary celebration, and through collaboration with me and other stakeholders, we made it happen." (Respondent 7)

The findings show that the school improvement and support officers like checking on the teacher's record of work on their school visits. The results of this study are consistent with those of Kanburi's (2018) earlier investigations, where the supervisors who visited schools developed an observation agreement contract with their teachers. Teachers, administrators, and staff at schools receive helpful criticism from SISOs. This feedback promotes a culture of ongoing improvement by assisting individuals in understanding their strengths and areas for development.

Concerning the supervision visits ahead of time, the views of the respondents who were investigated indicated that they sometimes inform schools about their supervision visits ahead of time. The results of the current study refute the conclusion made by Dewodo, Agbetorwoka, and Wotordzor (2019), who suggested that in this era of clinical supervision, teachers should

105

be properly informed by external supervisors before they visit their schools. Teachers reportedly remained alert due to the worry of an inspector's visit, according to Antwi (1992). Gitonga (2019) reported that the majority of principal instructors at schools did not receive letters from supervisors informing them of their plans to visit them for instructional monitoring in advance. Similarly, Gitonga (2019) found that teachers did not significantly gain from supervisor visits in terms of developing their teaching techniques, which would enhance the academic performance of their schools.

Collaboration

The researcher further investigated how SISOs collaborate with other education professionals and stakeholders to support school improvement efforts, and what role professional development plays in their approach to school improvement. Important qualities of a successful School Improvement and Support Officer, and how they embody these qualities with tools or techniques used to assess the effectiveness of a school's instructional practices during their visits to schools was examined by the researcher. According Partey's prior research (2019) stated that internal supervision, peer evaluation, and teacher collaboration should receive greater attention. Headteachers should also be better qualified to carry out this mission. Some SISOs interviewed mentioned that;

> *"As far as I know, the University of Cape Coast (UCC) is currently*
> *collaborating with some of our schools. They have organized their*
> *departments, particularly in basic education, to visit our schools*
> *periodically, bringing learning materials for our students."*
> *(Respondent 9)*

106

"We collaborate with stakeholders every day because without collaboration you can't do anything on your own so when any of my schools need support we reach out to the churches since most of my schools are mission schools. Through me, one of my schools is in collaboration with one NGO that wants to do a lot of things for the school. Sometimes we even move to the community leaders for support depending on what we need". (Respondent 8)

According to some SISOs interviewed, professional development plays an important role when it comes to the approach to school improvement.

"Very important. Professional development is key because anything that you don't know, through professional development we upgrade ourselves for the necessary information that we need to work in the schools. As much as we go for the workshops, the in-service training, and others, whatever information we are being given, you just need to bring it on board and implement it in our schools and they are working". (Respondent 10)

"We say education is ongoing so we can't sit here today and say we know everything because what we know today tomorrow it will pass, so like I said the books are there we read and listen to the news so knowing what is happening. Currently, as a metro, we are coming out with a scheme of learning and I should know about else I can't contribute on the field when I am out there". (Respondent 11)

107

The most important qualities for a successful school improvement and support officers are embodied with some collaboration qualities. Some respondents stated that,

> *"The SISOs work specifically is a human relationship job. You need to understand what the job itself entails and practically how to do it on the field. You need to understand the teachers and how they teach, mark, and give exercise but as a SISO the approach that you use helps. You have to encourage and direct them to how to get information and resources to aid their work". (Respondent 1)*

> *"As a SISO you have to be current to know what is happening through listening to the news, and reading manuals and you can even upgrade yourself, if there is a course that SISOs can read you apply. GES does more programmes for us to learn more about the work and its policy implementation. Professional courses are ongoing so you just have to make yourself available for an upgrade. You put whatever you too into practice. Recently I have learned how to fill the updated form to submit certain things in both hard and soft copy". (Respondent 4)*

Tools and techniques used to assess the effectiveness of school instructional practices during school visit are necessary for educational supervision. Other respondents mentioned that,

> *"We need to get a monitor tool to assist areas that we look at. The monitory tool contains a lot and monitors so many things like punctuality, teaching and learning resources, how teachers teach, time, questioning, child centered, etc.". (Respondent 6)*

"There are forms that we fill and it's ranked for the variables to show the performance of that school. The BECE results are also another tool we use to measure the performance of a school. Other tools include attendance, exercise, registers, etc." (Respondent 3)

Roles and responsibilities

Supervisors have primary responsibilities to address significant challenges in a school setting and be able to stay current with the latest research and best practices in education and school improvement. To ensure that new teachers are successfully integrated into the educational environment and in line with its improvement goals, School Improvement and Support Officers (SISOs) must understand the primary roles and responsibilities and provide orientations for new teaching staff. Some respondents indicated that,

"The SISO is a father to the circuit and you should let the teachers see you as one and be able to come to you when they need help. They should be able to get closer to you, talk to you, and ask for directions to be able to do the work. You keep checking on what the teachers are doing in the school and give advice. Another thing is that you the SISO, are more or less a lesion officer between the school and the education office by representing both sides and reporting correct information. You are there also to explain government policies and check their implementation and provide intervention where necessary". (Respondent 8)

"As a SISO, you are there to help improve the school so whatever improvement the school needs you have to help. We are also to support the schools not financially but academically and the work the teachers

109

are doing. Providing support in terms of advice, direction, education, etc. I think the name of the SISO alone tells the primary responsibilities and what is expected of you as a SISO". (Respondent 5)

"I encourage the headteachers in some of the schools in my circuit to write letters to the organization to seek support for dustbins in their school to reduce littering around the compound will be minimized and it was successful". (Respondent 7)

The school's continuing strategic priorities and improvement actions should be summarized via SISOs. This aids new teachers in comprehending the precise areas of concentration and their contribution to the advancement of the school. SISOs can help new instructors get in touch with seasoned mentors or school-wide support systems. These mentors can offer advice, respond to inquiries, and share perspectives based on their own experiences. SISOs can expose fresh educators to these resources while demonstrating how they are integrated into teaching and learning activities if the school uses particular digital tools or platforms.

Regular checks of teachers' work records during each visit are also investigated by the School Support and Improvement Officer (SISO). A study by Badu (2010) on the current state of surveillance found that follow-up visits, short-term visits, and intensive visits all went well. Another important task of a supervisor is to check academic records. Teachers often prepare professional documents/records such as work plans, lesson plans, lesson notes, records of work taught, and records of student progress (Ochieng, 2013). From the study, the majority of the school improvement and support officers (SISOs) sometimes check on the teacher's record of work on every visit, while the

110

SISOs often and very often check on the teacher's record of work on every visit.

These findings do not match those observed in an earlier study by John (2011) that, there were surprise inspections by district/regional inspectors. Osei, Mensah, and Agbofa (2020) found that unscheduled school visits are one of the major barriers to educational supervision. The findings of this study are not consistent with the results of Idogho and Agholor (2013) study that inspectors and supervisors do not check school records such as course notes, work plans, diaries, and attendance records. Some supervisors support teachers by checking lessons to provide adequate teaching and learning materials (Kanburi, 2018). The opinions of the interviewees were sought on the supervision, punctuality, and regularity of principals and teachers. Partey (2008) points out that openness, collaboration, and teacher involvement as a strategy adopted by supervisors would influence supervision effectiveness, leading to improved provision of educational level.

Molenaar (2009) demonstrates that the areas that instructors are mainly concerned with when monitoring are the preparation of lectures and lecture presentations. According to the results, one respondent sometimes monitors the punctuality and regularity of principals and teachers, teachers and teachers. Kanburi (2018) found that poor supervision in schools has certain effects on student learning outcomes. Weak supervision means poor supervision of how teaching and learning are carried out at school, thereby affecting students' academic performance. Apenteng (2012) and Molenaar (2009) consider the lack of logistical support for district supervisors to be able to visit schools as a major disadvantage for effective monitoring and supervision. The findings of

this study are consistent with the findings of Idogho and Agholor (2013) that unprofessional attitudes of school supervisors and inspectors hindered effective school control and supervision. This affects the quality of teaching in schools during the learning process, leading to a decline in educational attainment.

The practices of SISOs were imperative for the district directors to ascertain how effective the SISOs are which areas they see them having challenges and how best the practices of SISOs can be improved**.** The district principals interviewed explained that through monitoring and tracking, the majority of teachers are now at least 90% effective. This directive prompted USAID-funded SISOs to monitor learners in their early years of schooling to encourage teaching and learning that helps children improve their school performance. One interviewed district director emphasized that his SISOs are very effective. In this regard, they plan their itinerary and indicate which schools they will visit during the week, but this represents a change because they are all human. Their practices help them do their work effectively. They make quick visits to schools, check attendance, monitor teaching and learning, monitor teaching, request work updates, support teachers when needed and help parents.

When asked to rate the SISOs' efficacy, the district directors stated that, on a scale of one to ten, they would receive an eight. She reaffirmed the fact that their visit to schools and support for the schools are overburdened. They also carry out further interventions with our consent. For instance, in the areas of not receiving textbooks and other logistics to effectively supervise teaching and learning inside the allocated schools. Additionally, we support the

112

submission of reports, which always takes longer than expected, but we attempt to give them extra time.

We frequently send resource people to assist the schools in order to enable SISOs to update their skills in the areas where they may not have in-depth expertise.

> *"Organize workshops or seminars that bring together district directors and school improvement and support officers. This collaborative setting can foster discussions on best practices and create an opportunity for both parties to understand each other's perspectives. Through interactive sessions, you can identify areas where improvements can be made. Additionally, we provide adequate tools for monitoring and supporting transport and other expenses to be able to go to the field." (Director 1)*

The views of the district directors were solicited on how the practices of SISOs can be improved. According to one respondent*:*

> *"If they receive refresher courses, in-service training, workshops particularly relation to their job, at best give them some time to work on their report writing". (Director 2)*

The researcher conducted an observation of the district directors on the work of SISO. The observation was focused on who provides policy manuals to aid the work of the SISO, if the SISOs are given training by GES, whether SISOs visit private schools, and if there are any challenges with the visit of private schools. The researcher continued to find out if the office of GES supports SISOs with handbooks on their roles and if the handbooks are adequate and can be accessed online. The researcher concluded the observation by finding

<div align="center">113</div>

out how best can the management of GES support the work of SISOs in their circuits. Develop online platforms or forums where district directors can continuously exchange ideas and collaborate on improving school practices. This can facilitate ongoing discussions and idea sharing.

According to one District Director:

> *"Since SISOs are mediators between policy formulators and the schools, the employers are responsible for providing manuals that should aid the work. They elucidated what they used to do but they have stopped. If they happened to call for training the SISOs have to pay. Most NGOs give free training but with GES you have to pay". (Director 3)*

An interview with one district director noted that the Ghana Education Service (GES) sometimes conveys all SISOs to Offinso during vacations for training, but it's not so nowadays. Training like the introduction of the Standard-Based Curriculum (SBC) was done for both SISOs, head teachers, and teachers for primary schools and the Common Core Programme (CCP) for the Junior High School (CCP).

The district directors interviewed indicated that SISOs are been given training by GES. They elucidated that specific trainings are given but if there is a new SISO, an orientation is given and the person learns on the job. However, other programmes also call SISOs for training. Most trainings are interventions, especially USAID training, the SISOs were trained. KOLCA and other specific programmes invite SISOs for training. Normally, corporate bodies like USAID, KOLCA, GALOP, etc., sometimes in collaboration with GES, offer sponsorship for training.

114

SISO visit to private schools was inquired by the researcher. According to one respondent interviewed…….

''they used to do but were stopped by National Inspectorate Boar

(NIB). They wanted to take over the supervision but upon their

assessment and evaluation they saw it wasn't easy, so about two years

ago, they asked the SISOs to take up the supervision and monitoring

of private schools again which the SISOs refused but we are

talking to them". (Director 1)

Another district director confirmed that, earlier they stopped because it was taken from them by NIB and now, they have turned around and want SISOs to supervise the private schools again. However, some district directors opined that it was part of their work but it was cancelled.

The district directors were asked about any challenges with SISO visits to private schools. The respondents confirmed that there were a lot of challenges when they were under them. Challenges range from no log books for SISOs to comment, proprietors been hostile to SISOs, not following rule and regulations by GES, unqualified teaching staff among others.

The district directors interviewed noted that their outfit supports the SISOs with the handbook on their roles. According to the view of one district director**………** *"We do support SISOs in terms of movement in their motorbikes which have to be fueled and that's the problem. The support of the GES not often, once in a while of a year".*

Some district directors interviewed elucidated that by providing some logistics for them to be able to do their work. According to one respondent………. *"When we have means, we support because their work is*

115

more mobile so commuting from one school to the other is a problem especially when the means are not there which makes movements limited. We support them by providing some logistics since they have been providing with motor bikes but only 2 or 3 out of the 6 uses the bike. The females cannot ride on the bikes".

The district directors interviewed also noted that the handbooks are adequate and if they are not enough, we make photocopies for each and every one by the director. Especially, when they are promoted from the position of SISO, we don't take the manuals back because they might need them for the purpose of promoting teaching and learning.

According to one district director…….…

"The handbooks or manuals for SISOs are adequate but on softcopy bases, we don't have hardcopies. Some district directors have asked SISOs to download and bind it for everyone to have a copy which they all comply".

According to respondents, most manuals are being given by donor partners, while some also be accessed online. But they mostly use their descriptions when tracing pending issues and they don't reflect in the handbooks, or when they come to the office, we discuss.

Also, some district directors indicated that whenever there are new policies from their employers, they take them through and equipped them with the necessary knowledge to be able to operate.

District Directors opinion on how best can the management of GES support the work of SISOs was solicited. According to them they give SISOs responsibility allowance. Logistics in terms of computers, printers, A4 sheets,

116

laptops, etc. They affirmed that the motor bikes were killing SISOs so they should rather provide proper means of transport to them.

The directors suggested to management to provide small offices in the various circuits assigned to individual SISOs to prevent the destruction of instructional hours. In addition, the district directors suggested adequate and regular provision of fuel since all of them are using their private cars. According to one District Director……… *"Provision of A4 sheets. Laptops, printers, and other logistics are needed badly. The headquarters do support with motorbikes, handbooks, fuel"*.

Interpretation and discussions of results of objective four

The majority of SISOs strongly agreed with the supervisor's approach to improving school performance. The results observed in this study mirror the results of previous studies by Gitonga (2019) on educational supervision practices conducted by supervisors in schools. School support and improvement officers (SISOs) play a vital role in improving the quality of education and overall school performance. Their primary responsibility is to work closely with school administrators, teachers, students and the community to identify areas for improvement as well as provide guidance and support to implement effective strategies fruit. Below is an explanation of practices that SISOs can use to improve school operations. SISOs typically begin by analyzing school performance data, including academic achievement, attendance, behavioral incidents, and more. This enables them to pinpoint particular areas that require attention and development. They assess the institutional processes and systems' positives and negatives. This result supports Apenteng's (2012) observation that SISO works with school

117

administrators, teachers, and staff to establish improvement strategies. These strategies are compatible with the objectives and mission of the school and are designed to solve specific problems. Collaborative planning, according to Osei-Owusu (2020), guarantees that all stakeholders are committed to the improvement process. Results demonstrate that SISO offers employees and teachers chances for professional growth. They pinpoint the subject areas that require training, whether it is in curriculum development, technological integration, or classroom management. Teaching and learning can both be made to be of a higher caliber by developing the faculties of the educators.

SISOs keep a close eye on the improvement plans' development. They look through lesson plans, visit classrooms, and have conversations with teachers and students. Through constant evaluation, they are able to promptly provide feedback and alter the tactics being used.

The results also show that SISOs aid schools in resource management. They could help locate funding sources, advise spending cuts, and make sure that resources like people, technology, and teaching aids are allocated to the areas where they are most needed.

SISOs advise schools to make decisions based on evidence rather than speculation. They encourage schools to regularly collect and evaluate data in order to evaluate the efficacy of their development initiatives. As a result, a culture of fact-based decision-making is promoted. SISOs facilitate communication between parents, guardians, and the school. To incorporate the neighborhood in the school's reform efforts, they plan gatherings, workshops, and other activities. Engaging the community and parents fosters a positive environment that improves student achievement. According to Olivares-

118

Rodrguez, SISOs work to promote a climate of ongoing improvement within the school. They promote open communication, introspection, and a readiness to change in response to shifting educational environments and student needs. The function of School Improvement and Support Officers in promoting school activities is complex. Data analysis, collaborative planning, professional development, monitoring, resource allocation, data-driven decision-making, community participation, crisis support, networking, and cultivating an improvement culture are all part of their practises. SISOs assist schools in developing and giving pupils better educational opportunities through these procedures.

Role of Management of the Directorate of Education on the Operations of SISOs

Research objective five examines how the management of the Directorate of Education influences the operations of SISOs. The researcher engaged the SISOs in three key areas to know whether the management of Ghana Education Service gives them the needed support to do their work. These areas include material resources, financial assistance, and training. Within a given jurisdiction, the Directorate of Education is crucial in managing and supervising many facets of education. Depending on the jurisdiction's educational system and unique aims, the Directorate of Education's role regarding School Improvement and Support Officers (SISOs) can change. According to Kodjo (2021), the Directorate of Education is in charge of creating educational policies and strategies to raise the standard of instruction in schools. Setting standards and expectations for SISO duties and responsibilities is part of this. The policies could serve as a roadmap for the

119

SISO program's goals, priorities, and scope as well as a structure for their activities.

Resource Materials

The SISO programme is one of many educational programmes in that the Directorate of Education frequently controls the money and staffing (Wolfenden, 2023). They make ensuring SISOs have the resources they need to efficiently carry out their duties, which may include financing for equipment, materials, and training. The majority of SISOs have stated that the motorbikes they use are quite weak, which makes it challenging to drive on rough roads and visit schools on a regular basis. Additionally, they claimed that maintaining such inferior motorbikes has become an expensive burden.

According to one SISO

"Not really, management of Ghana Education Service do not give us the needed support. Ghana Education Service doesn't have enough resources. Sometimes government subventions are not available and so we do it in our way. Once in a while, we get some support"

Training

Management doesn't give training for our work according to one SISO interviewed. However, the respondents interviewed opined that there are other trainings that they attend for the new curriculum by SABER learning, but for SISOs, there is no training. We monitor teachers to stick to the new curriculum and so they trained as to be abreast with it".

According to one respondent from Komenda….

"The training comes when necessary. Nowadays is real unless the programme will affect SISO. That is when you will be motivated to

120

> *attend or if it's an initiative by an NGO. Role play is different training*
>
> *as a SISO".*

Management of Ghana Education Service (GES) normally gives manuals which sometimes you don't even get a copy of. Some respondents interviewed narrated that the manuals are sometimes difficult to obtain and as such only when you are asked, that is when you will be given softcopy or sometimes hardcopy.

Financial Assistance

Management supports us intermittently. For instance, in terms of finance, we obtain it once a year. GES facilitate our visits by providing funds, but it does not come often. We also need finances. They indicated that prices of fuel are high and so most of them have parked their vehicles. The schools are scattered and as such we need to move to all areas.

According to some respondents…

> "Management of GES facilitates our visits to the schools *by giving us small tokens,* manuals, and training".
>
> *"Management sometimes facilitates our visits to schools by giving us coupons to go to the fuel stations. In the beginning, they give us one thousand Ghana cedis (GH¢1000.00) for our monitoring but some SISOs get as low as a hundred Ghana cedis (GHc100.00)".*

Somehow, management gives support to SISOs such as fuel, and maintenance allowance. According to one SISO, Ghana Education Service themselves don't have the resources. GES usually lacks funds to monitor the work of SISOs. They are challenged financially. Management of Ghana Education Service (GES) normally gives manuals which sometimes you don't even get a copy.

121

Some respondents interviewed narrated that the manuals are sometimes difficult to obtain and as such only when you asked, that is when you will be given softcopy or sometimes hardcopy.

According to them, management supports us intermittently. For instance, in terms of finance, they obtain it once a year. The respondents indicate that GES facilitates their visits by providing funds, but it does not come often. In order to make sure that SISOs are effectively supporting schools, the Directorate of Education may implement quality assurance methods, claim Lu, Liu, and Jiang (2017). To keep the level of support offered by SISOs at a high level, this may entail routine evaluations, audits, and assessments. Between the SISOs and higher echelons of government or other stakeholders, the Directorate of Education frequently serves as a conduit. They explain the SISO program's effects, fight for the resources or adjustments that are required, and make sure the programme stays in line with overarching educational strategies.

They indicated that prices of fuel are high and so most of them have parked their vehicles. The schools are scattered and as such we need to move to all areas. Some respondents narrated that management facilitated their movement very small by giving them small tokens. They facilitate by giving us manuals. They seldom also give us training. Management sometimes facilitates our visits to schools. They give us coupons to go to the fuel stations. In the beginning, they give us one thousand Ghana cedis (GH¢1000.00) for our monitoring but some SISOs get as low as a hundred Ghana cedis (GHc100.00).

Somehow management gives support to SISOs such as fuel, and maintenance allowance. According to one SISO, Ghana Education Service themselves don't have the resources. GES usually lacks funds to monitor the

122

work of SISOs. They are challenged financially. The SISO program's effectiveness is normally tracked and assessed by the Directorate of Education. For SISOs, this may entail establishing key performance indicators (KPIs), and benchmarks, and evaluating the organizations' success in pursuing educational objectives. Regular assessments assist in determining whether the programme is successful and has a good influence on schools. Management of GES monitors the work of SISOs by checking of the log book. They also check the itinerary especially if there is T&T to give to SISOs. SISOs role are very important in shaping education.

Some of the respondents to the survey clarified that GES management may support the work of SISOs by offering ongoing in-service training, motivating resources like fuel and stationery, and appropriate resources like laptops, and logistics. They ought to offer instruction and fuel. The current has been significantly influenced by training. The management should provide SISOs with a token to use to purchase motorcycle fuel. When problems are reported to management, they ought to act promptly.

The respondents agreed that monitoring and supervision needed financial support provision of computing, materials, and logistics. For effective teaching and learning, the necessary texts and curricula should be made available. Corporate organizations should advise the government to release the materials required for efficient teaching and learning promptly. In conclusion, the Directorate of Education plays a variety of roles in the work of the School Improvement and Support Officers, including developing policies, allocating resources, monitoring, and evaluating them, as well as working together, analyzing data, ensuring quality, and communicating. This

123

guarantees that SISOs effectively improve education in schools under their control.

Interpretation and discussion of findings of objective five

Most SISOs have reported that the motorbikes used by them are very weak, making it difficult to travel on bad roads and visit schools regularly. They also argued that the maintenance of such weak motorbikes has become a drain on their salaries.

Some SISOs interviewed elucidated that the Ghana Education Service (GES) management doesn't monitor SISOs. They only monitor preparations of itineraries to check but don't see the monitoring. Management doesn't give training for our work according to one SISO Interviewed. However, the respondents interviewed opined that there are other trainings that they attend for the new curriculum by SABER learning, but for SISOs, there is no training. Respondents indicated that GES facilitates their visits by providing funds, but it does not come often. They indicated that prices of fuel are high and so most of them have parked their vehicles. The schools are scattered and as such we need to move to all areas. Management of GES facilitate our visits to the schools.

Management of GES monitors the work of SISOs by checking the log book. They also check the itinerary especially if there is T&T to give to SISOs. SISOs role are very important in shaping education. According to Bukachi et al. (2018), SISOs frequently require strong leadership and managerial abilities to work with many stakeholders, promote change, and put improvement plans into practice. Courses and workshops on leadership development, dispute resolution, decision-making, and strategic planning can

124

be offered through the management of education services. For SISOs to effectively lead and manage projects for school improvement, they must possess these abilities.

Some of the interviewees clarified that GES management may support SISOs' roles by offering ongoing professional development, in-service training, inspiration, provision of fuel, provision of sufficient resources, provision of laptops, provision of stationery, logistics, etc. Some responders clarified that management ought to offer instruction and fuel. This claim is in agreement with Danquah and Acheampong's (2018) assertion that training has been a significant factor in the present. The management should offer tokens to be used to purchase motorbike fuel. When problems are reported to management, they ought to act promptly. To help SISOs understand how to collect, evaluate, and use data to drive evidence-based practices that improve teaching and learning outcomes, the management of education services can offer training in data analysis methodologies.

Chapter Summary

Chapter four addressed the findings and discussions of the field data from the school improvement and support officers in three districts in the Central Region. The findings and discussions were based on the objectives of the study with objective one addressing the policy environment of the work of SISOs, objective two about the knowledge base of SISOs, objective three on SISOs attitudes, objective four on the practices of SISOs and objective five, the role of the directorate of education in support of the work of SISOs.

125

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

This chapter presents the summary of the work, the key findings obtained from the analysis of the study, the conclusions and recommendations as well as suggestions for further studies.

The study was structured to obtain information on the knowledge, attitude, and practice of SISOs in three Districts of the Central Region. Consequently, the following specific objectives were been put forward to guide the course of the study:

1. To appraise the policy environment of the work of SISOs in Ghana

2. To examine the knowledge base of SISOs in three districts of the Central Region.

3. Explore the attitude of SISOs towards their work in three districts in the Central Region.

4. Explore the practices of SISOs

5. Examine how the management of the Directorate of Education influences the operations of SISOs

Summary

Informed by the quality educational leadership through knowledge, attitude, and practices of school improvement and support officers (SISOs), numerous researchers have investigated the efficacy, attitudes, and practices of educational officers toward quality educational achievement. Most studies on educational leadership use the Fiedler model and situational leadership theory as their theoretical foundation. Using an interpretive paradigm, the study

sought to investigate the policy environment of the work of SISOs in three districts in Ghana, ascertain the knowledge base of SISOs in three districts of the Central Region, and examine the attitude and practices of SISOs towards their work. The study used a KAP descriptive study design. Out of the twenty-two educational districts in the central region, three were chosen at random using the convenience sampling technique, and 11 school improvement and support officers (SISOs) were selected from those three districts using the purposive sampling technique. The transcribed data were examined using thematic and content analysis. On the collected data, descriptive and thematic analyses were carried out.

Key Findings

The key findings from the study based on the objectives of the study are

1. The policy environment for the work of SISOs was very adequate for effective supervision.

2. It shows that the majority of SISOs have adequate knowledge and experience about their work.

3. It is clear that the majority of the SISOs have a good attitude towards their work.

4. The majority of SISOs adhere to and put into practice the rules outlined in the policy manual for circuit supervisors.

5. It is clear that SISOs don't normally get support from the management of the District Directorate of Education

Conclusions

Based on the key findings, the following conclusions were drawn by the researcher for the study

1. Ongoing training and development are essential for SISOs to ensure they are well-equipped to address evolving issues in the educational systems to promote quality teaching and learning.

2. The need for continuous monitoring and evaluation of the implemented policies is crucial to regularly assess the effectiveness of the supervisor's practices and make necessary adjustments as needed.

3. Fostering positive relationships is crucial for SISOs to effectively carry out their roles.

4. Adhering to the policy manual will help SISOs maintain high standards of performance

5. SISOs should communicate clearly about their role and needs.

Recommendations

The researcher recommended the following based on the key findings and conclusions of the study objectives

1. Ghana Education Service should ensure that policies related to supervision are regularly reviewed and updated to align with current best practices.

2. Ghana Education Service should regularly assess SISOs' knowledge through evaluations or assessments to identify gaps and provide targeted support or resources for improvement.

3. School Improvement and Support Officers should be encouraged to build positive relationships with school staff, students, and colleague SISOs.

4. Ghana Education Service should create a system of accountability where adherence to the policy manual is monitored and evaluated.

5. School Improvement and Support Officers should take proactive steps to address the support needed from the management of the district directorate of education through effective communication.

Suggestions for Further Research

The study examined SISOs in three Districts in the Central Region to learn more about their knowledge, attitudes, and practices. A non-probability sampling technique will be needed at a later date in place of the convenience and purposive sampling technique because it may introduce some bias into the study. The KAP model uses only offered a snapshot of SISO knowledge, attitude, and practices at a specific period. The outcomes may vary if a different time range or supplementary data are used. The current study's context might not be applicable to different populations across the nation.

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130

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133

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APPENDICES

Appendix A

UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST

INSTITUTE FOR EDUCATIONAL PLANNING AND

ADMINISTRATION

INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR SISOs

Introduction

We kindly invite you to respond to this interview questions. This is an interview guide to obtain information concerning the Knowledge, Attitude and Practices of SISOs. This exercise is in partial fulfilment for the award of a Master of Philosophy Degree in Educational Administration. It is purely an academic exercise and as such responses given would be treated with utmost anonymity.

SECTION A: DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

1. Sex of Respondents

3. District …………………………...

4. Circuit …………………………….

5. The number of years Respondent has served as a SISO ……………..

6. Highest Level of Academic qualification

7. Highest professional qualification

8. Rank in Service:

SECTION B: POLICY ENVIRONMENT OF THE WORK OF SISOs

9. How did you become a SISO? (Probe; employed based on your certificate, license, referral, etc.)

10a. Do you have any manual to guide your work as a SISO?

10b. What is the name of the policy manual(s) or guide(s)?

10c. Which organization published it?

11. How accessible are resource materials that you need to enable you perform your role as a SISO?

12. Do you access online resources to aid you on your role?

13. How do you access resources online to aid you on the job? (Probe: which websites, what can you say about the websites, do you know other SISOs who use this website)

16. Do you know any SISO who also relies on this website?

17. Have you undergone any training on your role as a School Improvement and Support Officers in your District? (Probe, Name of training, workshop, seminar, conference?)

18. If yes, provide additional information on the training you received on how to carry out your role:

SECTION B: LEVEL OF KNOWLEDGE OF SCHOOL

IMPROVEMENT AND SUPPORT OFFICERS ABOUT THEIR ROLES

Please respond to the following statement on the knowledge of the SISOs in undertaking their roles

19. As a SISO, what four (4) strategies do you have on board to motivate the teachers in your circuit?

20. How do you ensure that learning takes place within the schools in your circuit to meet quality learning?

24. How do you manage conflicts between

    a. Head teacher and teacher?

    b. Teacher to teacher?

141

c. Teacher to student?

d. Student to student?

e. Head teacher to parent?

f. Teacher to parent?

25. SISOs are to make sure head teachers establish a school system that meets quality teaching and learning. How do you go about your duties when it comes to quality teaching and learning in your circuit?

26. As a SISO, what is your role in supporting the teachers in your circuit with regards to policy interventions?

27. How do you tailor activities to bring donor support to the schools in your circuit?

SECTION C: ATTITUDE OF SISOs TOWARDS THEIR WORK

Please respond to the following statement on the attitude of the SISOs in undertaking their roles

1. How do you build effective working relationships with teachers and school staff?

2. How do you work with school leaders to align improvement strategies with the school's vision and goals?

3. How do you involve students and parents in the school improvement process?

4. What strategies do you use to build trust and positive relationships with students and their families?

5. Describe a time when you had multiple projects or tasks with tight deadlines. How did you prioritize and manage your time?

142

6. How do you approach setting goals and deadlines for yourself and others? Can you provide an example of how you managed a project with specific deadlines?

7. Can you give an example of a situation where you had to adjust your time management strategy due to unexpected changes or challenges?

8. What tools or techniques do you use to manage your time and keep track of tasks? How do these methods help you stay organized and productive?

9. Tell me about a situation where you had to implement advice from a stakeholder or colleague that initially conflicted with your views. How did you handle it?

10. How do you create an environment where colleagues and stakeholders feel comfortable giving you honest feedback and advice?

11. How do you seek advice and feedback to improve your skills and knowledge as a School Improvement and Support Officer?

12. What strategies do you use to ensure that advice from mentors or peers is continually applied to your work?

13. What are the most effective methods for collecting feedback from teachers and students in a school improvement context?

14. What are the common barriers to effectively incorporating feedback into school improvement plans, and how can these barriers be overcome?

15. In what ways does feedback from different stakeholders (e.g., students, parents, teachers, community members) differ, and how should these differences be addressed in improvement plans?

143

16. How does the feedback culture within a school influence the overall effectiveness of school improvement initiatives?

SECTION D: THE PRACTICES OF SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT AND SUPPORT OFFICERS IN THE DISTRICTS

Please respond to the following statement on the practices of the SISOs in undertaking their roles

1. How do you prioritize schools and areas of focus in your supervisory itinerary?

2. Can you describe when you adjusted your itinerary due to unforeseen circumstances? How did you handle it?

3. How do you balance the needs of multiple schools while ensuring you provide adequate support to each one?

4. How do you stay current with best practices and trends in education to inform your supervisory approach?

5. How do you prepare for a school visit to ensure you're able to provide meaningful feedback and support?

6. Can you describe your process for identifying key areas of focus before a school visit?

7. Describe a time when you had to handle a difficult situation or conflict during a school visit. How did you resolve it?

8. Can you provide an example of a school improvement initiative you've successfully supported following a visit? What was the outcome?

9. How do you collaborate with other education professionals and stakeholders to support school improvement efforts?

144

10. What role does professional development play in your approach to school improvement, and how do you incorporate it into your visits?

11. What do you believe are the most important qualities for a successful School Improvement and Support Officer, and how do you embody these qualities?

12. What tools or techniques do you use to assess the effectiveness of a school's instructional practices during your visits?

13. Can you describe your understanding of the primary responsibilities of a School Improvement and Support Officer?

14. Can you provide an example of a successful school improvement initiative you have been involved in? What was your role, and what were the outcomes?

15. Describe a time when you had to address a significant challenge in a school setting. How did you approach it, and what was the result?

16. How do you stay current with the latest research and best practices in education and school improvement?

SECTION E: HOW MANAGEMENT OF GES SUPPORT THE WORK OF SISO

53. Does the management of Ghana Education Service give you the needed support to do your work as a SISO?

54. Are there any issues with how the Management of GES monitors your roles?

55. If yes what are some of these issues?

56. Does the management of GES provide you with the needed training for your work as a SISO?

57. Do management of GES make manuals available for your work?

58. In Which areas do you get the support?

59. Does management of GES facilitate your visits to the schools in your circuit?

60. In what ways do they facilitated your visits?

61. How best do you think GES management can facilitate your role as a SISO?

Thank you.

146

APPENDIX B

UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST

INSTITUTE FOR EDUCATIONAL PLANNING AND

ADMINISTRATION

INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR DISTRICT DIRECTORS OF EDUCATION

Introduction

This is an interview guide to obtain information concerning the Knowledge, Attitude and Practices of SISOs. This exercise is in partial fulfilment for the award of a Master of Philosophy Degree in Educational Administration. It is purely an academic exercise and as such responses given would be treated with utmost confidentiality.

SECTION A: DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

1. District ……………………………

2. The number of years Respondent has served as a director

3. Highest Level of Academic qualification

4. Highest professional qualification

5. Rank in Service:

SECTION B: POLICY ENVIRONMENT OF THE WORK OF SISOs

6. Do you know of any manual that guides the work of SISOs?

7. If yes, what is the name of the policy manual(s) or guide(s)?

8. Do the SISOs regularly use the policy manual/guide to your knowledge?

9. Do you believe the policy environment for the work of SISO is very adequate for effective supervision?

10. Are there any challenges with the policy documents that affect the duties of SISOs?

147

11. If yes, what are some of the challenges?

SECTION B: IMPRESSION ON KNOWLEDGE BASE OF SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT AND SUPPORT OFFICERS ABOUT THEIR JOB IN THE DISTRICTS

12. Do you find SISOs knowledgeable in the roles they perform within their assigned circuits?

13. Please give further explanation for your response

14. Is there any area that the SISOs must improve upon in terms of knowledge acquisition?

15. Please mention these areas.

SECTION C: ATTITUDE OF SISO TOWARDS THEIR WORK

16. What is your impression about the attitude of male SISOs?

17. What is your impression about the attitude of female SISOs?

18. What is the attitude of new SISOs?

19. What is the attitude of experienced SISOs?

20. Is there anything concerning the attitude of SISOs generally?

21. How can these attitudes be worked on?

SECTION D: THE PRACTICES OF SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT AND SUPPORT OFFICERS IN THE DISTRICTS

22. Do you find the practices of the SISOs effective?

23. In which areas are the practices effective?

24. Which areas do you see them having challenges?

25. How best can the practices of SISOs be improved?

OBSERVATION OF THE DISTRICT DIRECTORS ON THE WORK OF SISO

26. Who provide policy manual to aid the work of the SISOs?

27. Are the SISOs giving training by GES?

28. If yes, how regular is the training?

29. Who sponsors the training programme?

30. If no, why?

31. Do the SISOs visit private schools?

32. Are there any challenge with the visit of private schools?

33. If yes, what are some of the challenges?

34. Do your outfit support the SISOs to do their work?

35. In which area are this support?

36. Do you provide SISOs with hand book on their roles?

37. If yes, is the handbook adequate for the SISOs?

38. Can these handbooks be accessed online?

39. How best can the management of GES support the work of SISOs?

Thank you.