Supervisory approaches in education

In this chapter a review of related literature on instructional supervision and its relationship with professional development is provided. The chapter is divided in to four parts as to enable the reader to follow a logical sequence that includes: history of school supervision, overview of supervision approaches, teachers' perception of supervisory processes, and the relationship between supervision and professional development.

2. 1 History of School Supervision

In many developed countries, such as United Kingdom (UK) and United States, much more attention has been given to inspection than school supervision (Lee, Dig & Song, 2008). The Inspectorate of Education had originated from France under Napoleon's Regime at the end of the 18th century, and other European counties followed the idea in the 19th century (Grauwe, 2007). For example, in UK, the first two inspectors of schools were appointed in 1883 (Shaw, Newton, Aitkin & Darnell, 2003) and in the Netherlands it was started in 1801 (Dutch Education Inspectorate, 2008). The terms " inspector" and " inspection" are still being used in various developed and developing countries , including United Kingdom (UK), United States, European countries and some African countries such as Lesotho, Senegal, Tanzania and Nigeria (Grauwe, 2007).

Traditionally, inspection and supervision were used as important tools to ensure efficiency and accountability in the education system. Later adherents of the terminologies of inspection and supervision are used by different countries in different ways. As outlined by Tyagi (2010), inspection is a top-down approach focused on the assessment and evaluation of school improvement based in stated standards, where as supervision focus on

providing guidance, support and continuous assessment to teachers for their professional development and improvement in their teaching- learning process. Nevertheless, since the demand of teachers for guidance and support rendered from supervisors has increased from time to time, some countries changed the terminology and preferring the term “ supervisor” over that of “ inspector”. According to Grawue (2007), some countries have recently developed more specific terminologies: Malawi, uses “ education methods advisor”, and Uganda “ teacher development advisor”.

The concepts of “ supervision” and “ inspection” have been changed frequently in Ethiopian education system and the reason was not clearly pedagogical (Haileselassie, 2001). In 19 42, educational inspection was practiced for the first time, then it was changed to supervision in the late 1960s , again to inspection in mid 1970s and for the fourth time it shifted to supervision in 1994 (Haileselassie, 2001). Haileselassie stated that:

Apart from perhaps political decisions, one could not come up with any sound educational and pedagogical rationale to justify the continuous shift made in the name. With the name changes made we do not notice any significant changes in either the content or purpose and functions. (Haileselassie, 2001, p. 11-12)

From 1994 onwards, supervision has been practiced in Ethiopia decentralized educational management. According to the Education and Training Policy (1994), educational supervision is recognized at the center (Ministry of Education), Regional, Zonal, District (Woreda) and School levels.

Instructional supervision at school level is practiced by principals, deputy principals, department head, and senior teachers.

However, since the Woreda is the lowest administrative level and had a direct contact with schools, more practical support and guidance are expected from the assigned supervisors at this level. As it is clearly mentioned by the Educational Management, Schools' Organization, Finance, and Community Participation Guideline (MoE, 2002), supervisors have the following key responsibilities:

Ensuring whether teacher -student relationship is healthy and democratic, teachers are properly executing their tasks, education is based on the needs of students, the relation between schools and community, mobilizing community, ensure the existence of help and respect sprit between teachers and students, provide professional support, follow up and training for teachers. (p. 30-32)

2. 2 Overview of Supervisory Approaches

According to Blasé and Blasé (1998), although many supervisory approaches are collaborative in nature, for long time, supervisory of instruction has been viewed exclusively as an inspection issue. Sergiovanni (1992) described supervision as a " ritual they [supervisors and teachers] participate according to well established scripts without much consequence" (p. 203). This author continued that " today, supervision as inspection can be regarded as an artifact of the past, a function that is no longer tenable or prevalent in contemporary education" (p. 204). He explained that though functioned for a considerable span of time, this type of supervision caused

negative stereotypes among teachers, where they viewed as subordinates whose professional performance was controlled. Supporting this idea, Anderson and Snyder (1993) stated, “ because of this, teachers are unaccustomed to the sort of mutual dialogue for which terms like mentoring, peer coaching collegial assistance are coming in to use” (p. 1).

It should be clear, however, that traditional supervisory approaches should not be removed completely because supervisory authority and control are essential for professional development. Mitchell and Sackney (2000) explained this as “ much of past practice is educationally sound and should not be discarded” (p. 37). Having said this, it is important to differentiate instructional supervision from evaluation. Authors described the former as a formative approach and the later as a summative approach (Poole, 1994; Zepeda, 2007). Poole (1994) stated that “ instructional supervision is a formative process that emphasizes collegial examination of teaching and learning” (p. 305). In this regard, participants in the supervision process plan and implement a range of professional growth opportunities designed to meet teacher’s professional growth and educational goals and objectives at different levels. Teacher evaluation, on the other hand, is “ a summative process that focus on assessing the competence of teachers, which involves a formal, written appraisal or judgment of an individual’s professional competence at specific time” (Poole, 1994, p. 305). The supervisory (formative) and evaluative (summative) processes should go hand in hand (Sergiovanni & Starratt, 2007). While supervision is essential for teachers’ professional growth, evaluation is essential to determine this growth and teacher effectiveness (Kutsyuruba, 2003; Wareing, 1990).

The widely used approaches to evaluation are administrative monitoring, report writing, checklists, and self-assessment. On the other hand, approaches to supervision are categorized as clinical supervision, peer coaching, cognitive coaching, mentoring, self-reflection, professional growth plans, and portfolios (Alfonso & Firth, 1990; Clarke, 1995; Poole, 1994; Reninan, 2002; Sergiovanni & Starratt, 2007; Zepeda, 2007). Implementing different supervisory approaches is essential not only to give choices to teachers; it is also important to provide choices to the administrators and schools (Kutsyuruba, 2003). Each component of supervisory approaches are discussed as follows.

Clinical Supervision

According to Sergiovanni and Starratt (2007), clinical supervision is a “ face-to- face contract with teachers with the intent of improving instruction and increasing professional growth” (p. 23). It is a sequential, cyclic and systematic supervisory process which involves face-to-face interaction between teachers and supervisors designed to improve the teacher’s classroom instructions (Kutsyuruba, 2003). The purpose of clinical supervision according to Snow-Gerono (2008) is “ to provide support to teachers (to assist) and gradually to increase teachers’ abilities to be self-supervising” (p. 1511). Clinical supervision is a “ specific cycle or pattern of working with teachers” (Sergiovanni & Starratt, 1993, p. 222). It is a partnership in inquiry where by the person assuming the role of supervisor functions more as an individual with experience and insight than as an expert who determines what is right and wrong (Harris, 1985). Goldhammer, Anderson and Karjewski (1980) described the structure of clinical supervision

that includes pre-observation conference, class room observation, analysis and strategy, supervision conference, and post-conference analysis. Clinical supervision is officially applicable with: inexperienced beginning teachers, teachers are experiencing difficulties, and experienced teachers who are in need of improving their instructional performance.

Sergiovanni and Starratt (2007) stated that clinical supervision is typically formative than summative in its evaluative approach in order to enable beginning teaches " collaborate to research their practices and improve their teaching and learning" (p. 233). As a result of this, the writers further described that the focus of clinical supervision is not on quality control, rather on the professional improvement of the teacher that guarantees quality of teaching and students' performance (Sergiovanni &Starratt, 2007).

Collaborative Supervision

Collaboration and collegially are very important in today's modern schools. According to Burke and Fessler (1983), teachers are the central focuses of collaborative approach to supervision. Collaborative approaches to supervision are mainly designed to help beginning teachers and those who are new to a school or teaching environment with the appropriate support from more experienced colleagues. Thus, these colleagues have an ethical and professional responsibility of providing the required type of support upon request (Kutsyuruba, 2003). In this regard, a teacher who needs collegial and collaborative support should realize that " needs do not exist for professional growth, that feedback from colleagues and other sources should be solicited in order to move toward improvement" (Burke & Fessler, 1983, p. 109). The major components of collaborative approaches to supervision which are

especially needed for beginner or novice teachers are: peer coaching, cognitive coaching and mentoring (Showers & Joyce, 1996; Sergiovanni & Starratt, 2007; Sullivan & Glanz, 2003; Kutsyuruba, 2003).

Peer coaching

Peer coaching, according to Sullivan and Glanz (2000), is defined as " teachers helping teachers reflect on and improve teaching practice and/or implement particular teaching skills needed to implement knowledge gained through faculty or curriculum development" (p. 215). The term coaching is introduced to characterize practice and feedback following staff development sessions. According to Singhal (1996), supervision is more effective if the supervisor follows the team approach. This would mean that the supervisor should have a clear interaction with teachers and group of teachers, provide an open, but supportive atmosphere for efficient communication, and involve them in decision making. The goal of coaching as described by Sergiovanni and Starratt (2007), is to develop communities within which " teachers collaborate to honor a very simple value- when we learn together, we learn more, and when we learn more, we will more effectively serve our students" (p. 251). Thus, peer coaching provides possible opportunities to beginner teachers to refine teaching skills through collaborative relationships, participatory decision making, and immediate feedback (Bowman & McCormick, 2000; Sullivan & Glanz, 2000). In this regard, research findings showed that beginning teachers rated experienced teachers who coached than as highly competent and the process itself as very necessary (Kutsyuruba, 2003).

Cognitive coaching

According to Costa and Garmston (1994), cognitive coaching refers to " a nonjudgmental process built around a planning conference, observation, and a reflecting conference" (p. 2). Cognitive coaching differs from peer coaching in that peer coaching focuses on innovations in curriculum and instructions, where as cognitive coaching is aimed at improving existing practices (Showers & Joyce, 1996). As Beach and Reinhartz (2000) described, cognitive coaching pairs teacher with teacher, teacher with supervisor, or supervisor with supervisor, however, when two educators are in similar roles or positions, the process is referred as peer supervision. The writers further identified three components of cognitive coaching: planning, lesson observation, and reflection.

Costa and Garmston (1994) described three basic purposes of cognitive coaching, namely: (1) developing and maintaining trusting relationship; (2) fostering growth toward both autonomous and independent behavior; and (3) promoting learning. In a cognitive coaching process, teachers learn each other, built mutual trust, and encouraged to reach at a higher level of autonomy- the ability to self-monitor, self-evaluate, and self-analyze (Garmston, Linder & Whitaker, 1993).

Mentoring

Mentoring as defined by Sullivan and Glanz (2000) is " a process that facilitates instructional improvement wherein an experienced educator agrees to provide assistance, support, and recommendations to another staff member" (p. 213). Mentoring is a form of collaborative (peer) supervision focused on helping new teachers or beginning teachers successfully learn

their roles, establish their self images as teachers figure out the school and its culture, and understand how teaching unfolds in real class rooms (Sergiovanni & Starratt, 2007). Sullivan and Glanz (2000) stated the works of mentors as:

The mentor can work with a novice or less experienced teacher collaboratively, nonjudgmentally studying and deliberating on ways instruction in the class room may be improved, or the mentor can share expertise in a specific area with other educators. Mentors are not judges or critics, but facilitators of instructional improvement. All interactions and recommendations between the mentor and staff members are confidential. (p. 213)

Research projects and publications revealed that mentoring has clear connections with supervision and professional development which serve to augment the succession planning and professional development of teachers (Reiman & Thies-Sprinthall, 1998). In addition, Sergiovanni and Starratt (2007) described that the emphasis of mentoring on helping new or beginner teachers is typically useful for mentors as well. By helping a colleague (beginner teacher), mentors able to see their problems more clearly and to learn ways to overcome them. As a result, mentoring is the kind of relationship in which learning benefits everyone involved.

Self-Reflection

As the context of education is ever changing, teachers should have a professional and ethical responsibility to reflect on what is happening in response to changing circumstances. Thus, they can participate in collective

reflection practices such as peer coaching, cognitive coaching, or mentoring, as well as self-assessment reflective practices (Kutsyuruba, 2003). According to Glatthorn (1990), self- directed development is a process by which a teacher systematically plans for his or her own professional growth in teaching. Glatthorn further described that self-directed approaches are mostly ideal for teachers who prefer to work alone or who, because of scheduling or other difficulties, are unable to work cooperatively with other teachers. Sergiovanni and Starratt (2007) considered this option to be efficient in use of time, less costly, and less demanding in its reliance on others. Thus, the writers indicated that in self-directed supervision " teachers work alone by assuming responsibility for their own professional development" (p. 276).

Furthermore, Glatthorn (1990) suggested that self-development is " an option provided for teachers that enable them to set their own professional growth goals, find the resources needed to achieve those goals, and undertake the steps needed to accomplish those outcomes" (p. 200). In addition, this approach is particularly suited to competent and experienced teachers who are able to manage their time well (Sergiovanni & Starratt, 2007).

Portfolios

As teachers want to be actively participated in their own development and supervision, they need to take ownership of the evaluation process (Kutsyuruba, 2003). The best way for teachers to actively involve in such practices is the teaching portfolio (Painter, 2001). A teaching portfolio is defined as a process of supervision with teacher compiled collection of

artifacts, reproductions, testimonials, and student work that represents the teachers' professional growth and abilities (Riggs & Sandlin, 2000).

A portfolio, according to Zepeda (2007), is " an individualized, ongoing record of growth that provides the opportunity for teachers to collect artifacts over an extended period of time" (p. 85). Similarly, Sergiovanni and Starratt (2007) stated that the intent of portfolio development is to establish a file or collection of artifacts, records, photo essays, cassettes, and other materials designed to represent some aspect of the class room program and teaching activities. As Sullivan and Glanz (2000) stated portfolio documents not only innovative and effective practices of teachers, but also it is a central road for teachers professional growth " through self-reflection, analysis, and sharing with colleagues through discussion and writing" (p. 215). The writers further described that portfolio can be used to support and enrich mentoring and coaching relationships.

Professional Growth Plans

Professional growth plans are defined as " individual goal-setting activities, long term projects teachers develop and carry out relating to the teaching" (Brandt, 1996, p. 31). This means that teachers reflect on their instructional and professional goals by setting intended outcomes and plans for achieving these goals. In professional growth plans as part of instructional supervisory approach, teachers select the skills they wish to improve, place their plan in writing including the source of knowledge, the type of workshop to be attended, the books and articles to read, and practice activities to be set. In this regard, Fenwick (2001) stated that professional growth plans " could produce transformative effects in teaching practice, greater staff

collaboration, decreased teacher anxiety, and increased focus and commitment to learning" (p. 422).

Summative Evaluation

There is a clear link among instructional supervision, professional development and teacher evaluation (Zepeda, 2007). Teacher evaluation involves two distinct components: formative evaluation and summative evaluation (Sergiovanni & Starratt, 2007). The writers differentiated formative teacher evaluation as an approach intended to increase the effectiveness of ongoing educational programs and teachers' professional growth, where as summative teacher evaluation is designed to judge and rate the quality of one's own teaching and level of professional growth. In this regard, the purposes of instructional supervision are formative- focused on teachers' ongoing professional development, and the intents of evaluation are summative- assessment of professional performance which leads to a final judgment (Zepeda, 2007). However, Sergiovanni and Starratt (2007) stated that both formative and summative teacher evaluations cannot be separated, for each contains aspects of the other. Summative evaluation, therefore, uses various techniques such as, administrative monitoring, report writing, checklists, and self-assessment tools (Kutsyuruba, 2003).

2. 3 Teachers' Perception of Supervisory Processes

From laypersons conducting school inspection in the 18th century, up to the practice of neo-scientific management, instructional supervision in most schools of the world has focused on inspection and control of teachers (Alemayehu, 2008). According to Sullivan and Glanz (2000), " historically the

evaluation function of supervision was rooted in bureaucratic inspectional type supervision" (p. 22). The writers further described that teachers view supervision for the sake of evaluation as often being anything other than up lifting. In a study of supervision and teacher satisfaction, Fraser (1980) stated that " the improvement of the teaching learning process was dependent upon teacher attitudes toward supervision" (p. 224). The writer noted that unless teachers perceive supervision as a process of promoting professional growth and student learning, the supervisory practice will not bring the desired effect.

Kapfunde (1990) stated that teachers usually associate instructional supervision with appraisal, rating, and controlling them. In Ethiopia, many teachers resent or even fear being supervised because of the history of supervision, which has always been biased towards evaluation or inspection (Haileselassie, 1997). Regarding the challenges of teachers, it is stated in various literatures that beginning teachers face more challenges than more experienced teachers. " Teaching has been a career in which the greatest challenge and most difficult responsibilities are faced by those with the least experience" (Glickman, Gordon & Ross-Gordon, 1998, p. 21). At least 30 percent of beginning teachers leave the profession during the first two years (Casey & Mitchell, 1996). For many less experienced teachers, supervision is viewed as a meaningless exercise that has little value than completion of the required evaluation form (Sergiovanni & Starratt, 1998). The writers further described that " no matter how capable are designated supervisors, as long as supervision is viewed as doing something to teachers and for teachers, its

potential to improve schools will not be fully realized” (Sergiovanni & Starratt, 2007, p. 5).

Teachers do not perceive supervision as helpful for their teaching and professional growth when its approach is focused on teacher appraisal and efficiency (Acheson & Gall, 1992; Zepeda & Ponticell, 1998). Various literatures identified supervision to be unfamiliar with most teachers because of its evaluative structure (Acheson & Gall, 1992). According to Smyth (1991), the cause for resistance to supervisory practices by most teachers is the hierarchical and explotative form of teacher evaluation introduced by some types of supervision. In line with this, Acheson and Gall (1992) said that the hostility of teachers is not towards supervision but the supervisory styles teachers typically receive. Thus, selecting and applying supervisory models aimed at teachers’ instructional improvement and professional growth is imperative to develop a sense of trust, autonomy, and professional learning culture (Hargreaves & Fullan, 2000).

2. 4 Relationship between Instructional Supervision and Professional Development

The overall purpose of instructional supervision is to help teachers improve, and this improvement could be on what teachers know, the improvement of teaching skills, as well as teacher’s ability to make more informed professional decisions (Sergiovanni & Starratt, 2007). According to Zepeda (2007), there must be a clear connection of instructional supervision to professional development and teacher evaluation. She added that the various models or approaches of instructional supervision such as clinical

supervision, peer coaching, cognitive coaching, mentoring, etc. bridge instructional supervision and professional development.

Instructional supervision, with its focus on collegiality and professional improvement, is an important tool in building an effective teachers' professional development. Instructional supervision is " an organizational function concerned with teacher growth, leading to improvement in teaching performance and greater student learning" (Nolan & Hoover, 2008, p. 6). It is clear that continuous improvement in methods and skills is necessary for every professional, and so the professional development of teachers has become highly important (Anderson & Snyder, 1998; Carter, 2001; Zepeda, 2007).

Professional development is an important part of an ongoing teacher education concerned with improving teachers' instructional methods, their classroom management skills, their ability to adapt to instruction to meet students' needs, and establishing a professional culture which is important in teaching and learning (Wanzare & Da Costa, 2000). Professional development gives emphasis on the development of professional expertise by involving teachers in a problem solving and action research (Sergiovanni &Starratt, 2007). Sullivan (1997) on the other hand, stated that as fields of educational development, instructional supervision and professional development are interlinked and " can and should overlap as needs and local preferences dictate" (p. 159). From the supervisor's view point, professional development emphasizes " providing teachers with the opportunity and resources they need to reflect on their practice and to share their practice with others" (Sergiovanni & Starratt, 2007, p. 216).

Instructional supervision and professional development are linked in several ways. As McQuarrie and Wood (1991) noted one connection to be through the use of data obtained from supervisional practices used in planning and implementing staff development as part of instructional improvement and helping teachers improve their skills. The writers further stated that both instructional supervision and professional development: (1) focus on teacher effectiveness in class room; (2) may be provided by teachers, supervisors, and administrators; (3) are judgment-free practices that improve teachers' instructional activities in a collaborative ways; and (4) promote in their participants a sense of ownership, commitment, and trust toward instructional improvement.

Anything supervisors can perform to help teachers develop and strengthen becomes an investment in promoting professional development (Sergiovanni & Starratt, 2007). And thus, professional development allows teachers to make their own decisions regarding their knowledge and skills improvement and to assume personal accountability (Retting, 1999; Kaagan, 2004).

Professional development needs of beginner teachers differ from those experienced teachers, and special supervisory approaches should be developed to meet these needs (Kutsyuruba, 2003). According to Glatthorn (1990), beginning teachers are characterized by their preferences for certain types of supervisory approaches. Most importantly, they need intensive assistance of clinical supervision. Similarly, they need mentoring, peer coaching, cognitive coaching, and other collegial supervisory approaches. The writer further noted that experienced teachers also have their own special professional development needs and preferences. Most experienced

teachers can benefit from collaborative and self-directed supervisional practices which will foster continuous professional growth and development. In general, instructional supervision is an ongoing process which enables teachers the opportunity to develop professionally and different supervisory options should be provided for different teachers based on their experience and level of difficulty.