

## Supervision of Instruction in Teacher Training Institutions in Cameroon: Strengths and Weaknesses

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### ABSTRACT

*The purpose of this research was to find out Supervision of Instructions in Teacher Training Institutions in Cameroon: Strengths and weaknesses. The survey research design was used in which quantitative and qualitative data were used as the basis on which to build and explain data. Data were collected with the use of questionnaire and interview guides and the sample was selected using the purposive sampling technique. The sample consisted of 12 Regional Inspectors for teacher education and 324 teacher trainers. The data were analysed using the descriptive and inferential statistics and the following results or findings were obtained. The Regional Pedagogic Inspectors and Teacher Trainers views (more than three-quarter (78.53%) showed that there is supervision of instruction in teacher training colleges bringing out its strengths and weaknesses. Based on the objective and findings, some recommendations were made to Regional Pedagogic Inspectors and Teacher Trainers as well as educational authorities which called for formal training, and in-service training. The study therefore concluded that supervision of instruction is essential to facilitate a smooth teaching learning transaction in Teacher Training Colleges in Cameroon.*

### INTRODUCTION

Education is very important for the development of societies. Teacher training has its vision to realize the quality of education at the secondary and basic levels in Cameroon. To do this, teacher training institutions are provided with professional and developmental courses promoting best practices and distributing high quality classroom resources to in-service as well as pre-service teachers (AIMS, Cameroon, 2019). The secondary and tertiary levels of education in charge of perfecting medium and high level managerial skills, has as a mission to inculcate in young Cameroonians general ethical values to enable them to know, understand and appreciate the Cameroonian cultural diversity, to develop in them the sense of taking initiative and an enterprising spirit as well as the promotion of excellence in every aspect of knowledge. The learners at these levels are provided through vocational and technical trainings, the practical know-how for efficient and effective integration into the production system (SWAPe, 2006-2015).

It is stated that the key component in educational improvement worldwide is teacher education (Tambo,1995). Combs and associates (1974) cited by Tambo, (1995) are of the opinion that

important changes in education will occur as teachers change. The competence of the teacher is an essential element in the running of the school and in the accomplishment of the necessary reforms (Goble and Porter, 1977) cited by Tambo (1995). In the same light the Pan-African conference on education held in Yaoundé, in 1984, declared that “No educational system can rise above the quality of its teachers”. The teacher’s key role has also been expressed by Zumwalt, (1986) cited by Tambo (1995) as follows “There can be no excellence in education without first rate teachers. One can change the curricula, buy more materials, renovate the physical environment, extend the school day, but without good teachers, desired effects will not be produced no matter the change”.

In Cameroon from 1990, much more attention has been directed towards secondary education. Indicators of these include the 1995 National Education Forum, Law No 98/004 of 14<sup>th</sup> April 1998, Law No 2004/022 of 22 July 2004 To lay down the rules governing the organization and functioning of private education in Cameroon with Section 3:3 which focuses on quality and pedagogy and the Technical committee meeting in Yaoundé in February 2005, involving all the ministries of education (Basic, Secondary and Higher education) with technical assistance from the ministries of Economy and finance, Planning and regional development, Labour and professional training and United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). The goal of the 2005 conference was to reflect on a Sector Wide Approach to education (SWAPe, 2006). The report of the National Forum as well as that of the SWAPe, stressed the need to strengthen teacher quality as one of the strategies aimed at improving the quality of educational services in the Basic Education level. Law No 98/004 of 14<sup>th</sup> April 1998, in its chapter III, section 2.1 refers to teachers as “guarantors” of quality education (Republic of Cameroon, 1998). This can be done through teacher preparation/qualifications and teaching practices. Thus, supervision of instruction becomes a need for the desired outcomes to be attained by all the stakeholders.

High quality teachers make a difference in the learning gains of students. It is worth noting that what teachers do or fail to do has the potential to shape the quality of education

Effective supervision is also needed for teachers to be able to guarantee the quality of education. Pedagogic inspectors are appointed and put in place at the National and Regional levels to assist teachers improve on their qualities and competences. It is generally observed that the educational landscape is greatly evolving with some challenges like increase in population of the young, economic and technological changes in the society, as such; the teaching learning transaction is a call for concern to the education stakeholders. The teaching-learning transaction is a human transaction involving the teacher, learner and learning group in a set of dynamic interrelationships Leland,(1958) cited by Andrews, et al.,(2006) .It concerns students approaches to learning and teacher’ approaches to teaching. These approaches determine the degree of excellence in education (Andrews, et al., 2006)

The teaching-learning transaction is a concern to education stakeholders because it is significant in improving teaching and learning. Feedback from teacher, student, parents, is essential to improve quality. Stakeholders are people who have interest in the success of the school or a school system. They are the parties that are either directly or indirectly affected by the success of an education system .This is because local schools educate future employees, business owners and community leaders. A solid education program builds a stronger community by preparing students to be successful community members Business Mirror, (2018).Thus, a healthy relationship between teachers and stakeholders is important, as this will enable everybody to harmoniously work together resulting to positive impact on students.

The government has appointed Pedagogic Inspectors (PIs) at the National and Regional levels as well as within schools to assist teachers improve on their practices. The roles of these inspectors are spelt out in Decree No 2005/139 of 25<sup>th</sup> April that organizes the ministry of education (Republic of Cameroon, 2005). Some of these roles include Producing his/her plan of action at the beginning of each school year; Exploiting reports from departmental meetings and technical remarks from pedagogic animators (Head of Department) on the coverage of school syllabus or the results of

students from the different levels; Go for control and carrying out plan of actions of pedagogic advisers and evaluate their activities in the field; and furnishes the pedagogic adviser with model of forms to be filled for statistics relative to percentage coverage of school programme, syllabuses taught, practices, successes and appreciative remarks. Both National and Regional Pedagogic Inspectors all go to the schools during pedagogic seminars, pedagogic days or other forms of studies organized in the division.

Interest in Basic education is also shown by African Union and international education initiatives such as Education For All (EFA). This is seen in the African Union's Second Decade of Education for Africa (2006-2025). Draft plan of Action (African Union, 2006) and the World Education Forum (Dakar, 2000) which surfaced as a result of the failure to realize the goals of Education For All (EFA, 1990) and talks about colonial legacy system of education which must be reviewed to make education better for all. These structures like the African Union's Second Decade of Education for Africa (2006-2025) are out to ensure that all teachers (both in general, technical and teacher training) are properly qualified and possess the relevant knowledge, skills and attitudes to teach effectively. It is as a result of these initiatives that the preparation of Basic education teachers, requires attention from many fronts. These among others include supervision. Supervising the preparation or training of teachers is partly the responsibility of appointed personnel, pedagogic inspectors and persons internal to teacher training colleges such as head of departments, director of studies, principals. The questions therefore are: how is the current practice in these training colleges? Do these inspectors face some difficulties as they discharge their duties? Can these stakeholders provide recommendations to better improve the quality of training? It is these questions that prompted this study which seeks to investigate the realities, challenges and way forward of supervision of instruction in teacher training institutions.

This study thus looks at the reality in supervising instruction in teacher training schools. Reality depicts the state of things as they actually exist, as opposed to the idealistic or natural idea of them (Merriam-Webster, 2011) as well as focuses on the challenges and way forward which refers to the actions that should be adopted and implemented.

This Chapter presents the background of the study, statement of the problem, research questions, objectives and significance of the study. The scope is further identified and related terms defined.

## **BACKGROUND**

Wayne and Forsyth (1986) stated that, supervision has its roots in the industrial literature of bureaucracy. At this stage, close supervision was considered as a classic response to production and control problems; it was also regarded as management's attempt to control and manipulate subordinates. Supervision or a supervisor is also described as one who has the primary responsibility for facilitating the work of the staff as well as the responsible for implementing the purpose and function of the agency (Frances, 1958) cited by Kettle (2015).

Kettle (2015) sees supervision as an accountable, two-way process, which supports, motivates and enables the development of good practice for individual social care workers. This therefore results in the improvement in the quality of service provided by the organization.'

Scotland (2016) describes it as being a process which aims to support, assure and develop the knowledge, skills and values of the person being supervised (supervisee), team or project group. It also provides accountability for both the supervisor and supervisee in exploring practice and performance. Furthermore, supervision enhances and provides evidence for annual performance review or appraisal; it sits alongside an organisation's performance management process with particular focus on developing people in a way that is centred on achieving better outcomes for people who use services and their careers.

Hawkins and Shohet (2012) looks at Supervision as a joint endeavour whereby a practitioner with the help of a supervisor attends to their clients themselves as part of their client practitioner relationships and the wider systemic context, and in doing so, they improve on the quality of their work,

transforms their client relationships, continuously develops themselves as well as their practice and the wider profession.

In applying supervision to education at this stage where the concept was still rooted in industrial literature, made teachers to view supervisors as simply another layer in the bureaucratic structure designed to control and watch their actions. Supervision according to Webster (2013) is the action or process of watching and directing what someone does or how something is done; action or process of supervising someone or something.

Nwagwu (2004) opines that, supervision is an important requirement in education that concerns itself with the tactics of efficient and effective management of human and material resources. Aguokabuo (2002) sees it as a way to advice, guide, refresh, encourage, stimulate, improve and oversee teachers in the hope of seeking their cooperation in order that they may be successful in the task of teaching and classroom management. In the same light, Figueroa (2004) defines supervision as a process of guiding, directing and stimulating growth with the overall view of improving teaching and learning process better for the learner.

Glickman (1998) defines supervision in terms of tasks to be performed. These tasks are staff development, direct assistance, curriculum development, group development and action research.. It is assistance for the improvement of instruction. This is the action that enables teachers to improve instructions for students. Supervision requires knowledge, interpersonal skills, and technical skills which are applied through the supervising tasks. Walker (2016) and Clark (2015) on the other hand see supervision as a task of improving instruction through regular monitoring and in-service education of teachers. These definitions therefore, according to Eya and Leonard (2012) indicate that supervision is all about promoting leadership and teacher growth in education practices.

Ukpore (2004) sees instructional supervision as the coordination of different tasks or assigned functions like classroom teaching or heading a department by autonomous and delegated authority and ensuring that personal consideration are excluded from business as much as possible and that there is fairness in the treatment of clients all with the view to facilitating the attainment of goals for which the school is set up. Hence, the school instructional supervisor is an educator auditor whose major responsibilities include making the school productive through a system of operational guidance on the major critical areas of the education process and to arrest the incidence of hostage in the school process.

Ogaba and Igu (2014) see supervision as one of the approaches to effectiveness of both teachers and the schools in the teaching and learning transaction. Supervision of instruction is related to effectiveness in that it guides teachers to be able to combine relevant input for enhancement of the teaching-learning process. Also, instructional supervision improves instruction for the benefit of students since it helps the students to learn as effectively and efficiently as possible (Glickman, 1990). This calls for supervision of instructional procedure in secondary school (teacher training in particular). According to Modebela (2008) supervision is a process of assessing, directing, stimulating and motivating teachers to enhance the teaching learning process in educational institution. Ogbo (2015) defined it as the maximum development of the teacher into the most professionally efficient and effective person he/she is capable of becoming. This definition recognizes that a teacher has potential that needed help guidance, and directing.

Jackson (2001) sees educational supervision as a process in which the administrator assists the classroom teacher to improve his/her teaching instruction to enhance student learning. School administrators and other practitioners especially pedagogic inspectors are reminded that supervision is more than just routine classroom visits and evaluation of the teaching and learning process. It goes beyond these two aspects such as; goal setting, follow up visits, mentoring and coaching, continuous feedback on progress, and above all additional support provided to implement changes and professional development opportunities.

According to successful school research, supervision can enhance teacher belief in a course beyond

oneself. Teachers can see themselves not just as individuals separated by classroom walls but as body or group of people complementing and strengthening each other (Glickman, 1998). It is also seen as that phase of school administration which focuses primarily upon the achievement of appropriate instructional expectations of educational systems (Eye, Netzer and Krey (1971) cited by Segun (1988). The researcher sees supervision as the process of assisting, directing, and guiding the teacher to carry out their task of teaching effectively with confidence.

Supervision of instruction is a process of assisting the teacher to improve himself or herself and his or her instructional abilities so as to enhance effective teaching and learning, (Fisher, 2008; Glickman, 1998). An effective teacher is that teacher who can bring about improvement in all that he or she does in the system and also Bilesanmi (2006) suggests that supervision of instruction is necessary because not all the teachers are dynamic and knowledgeable. Supervision is therefore necessary so as to enable these categories of teachers to get improved in terms of teaching and learning activities.

Omoregie (2002) saw it as an internal process (micro inspection). He opines that micro inspection concerns, itself with regular resource utilization and process in a school and the maintenance of lines of action that promote effective learning. Thus, Ezedi (2002) says that instructional supervision strategies in the school organizational framework should analytically examine the following variables closely on a regular basis. This is the focus of instructional supervision; teacher service; regularity/punctuality; weekly lesson preparation, coverage of work; pupils'/students' learning effort; regularity/punctuality of classes; completion of assignments; achievement and conduct scores; curriculum benefits; adequacy of textbooks, and their uses; relevance of continuous assessment and guidance counseling in the school system; school facilities; adequate sanitation and maintenance of accommodation facilities( classrooms, laboratory, library, halls, offices, etc.) equipment and supplies.

Ross (1980) opines that educational supervision is the services to teacher which aims to produce and improve effective teaching and learning process. The supervision activities improve teaching by increasing the professional competence of teachers as they perform their duties. Instructional supervision improves and enhances teacher's professionalism. This enable them solve other problems. Thus, a need for guidance from the administrator (supervisor) to the teacher and other school personnel for the purpose of improving the quality of teaching and learning. In the words of John, Lovell and Kimball (1983), it is considered as formal system behaviour in a way to maintain, modify and improve the plan and the actualization of student learning opportunities.

According to Komoski (1997), "Educational supervision is a leadership instructional act with the ultimate aim of improving classroom instruction. It helps to enhance teaching and learning process and also seen as the process which ensures that the formal curriculum is implemented in the classroom. It is of vital importance that the supervisory process equips teachers with encouraging feedback which will lead to increased teacher motivation. Above all the process also helps school administrators (supervisors) to evaluate teacher competency in terms of teacher knowledge, skills and attitudes.

Business and cooperation's supervise and evaluate employee performance for a variety of reasons including retention, promotion and accountability for completing job related tasks (Ekundayo, Oyerinde and Kolaweke, 2013). Olatoye (2006) holds that education is not different as it requires supervision of classroom instruction to evaluate teacher's effectiveness. Also, education aim at bringing about a relatively change in behavior of the learner as a result of learning. Teachers are the back bone of the entire education system according to (Olorunfemi, 2008). Their effectiveness is perhaps the most important factor encouraging quality education (Sector Wide Approach, 2006).

According to Kpatakpa (2008), there is widespread feeling that academic standards are fast falling and blame is shifted to the teacher, who is seen not to be providing effective teaching and learning. Supervision is an effective method that could help achieve good results as far as teaching and learning are concerned. This means that it is very important for teaching and learning procedures to be constantly monitored and reviewed to ensure total achievement of the objectives. It is for this

reason that supervision of instruction in secondary school, teacher training in particular is very important and necessary.

Teachers need to be skilled and up to date in the teaching process and this can only be achieved when teachers are supervised regularly and effectively in order to enhance good relationships between supervisors and teachers. Based on the assertions, we may be able to analyze that, the need for proper and effective rigorous supervision in our modern secondary school (teacher training) is to create a good atmosphere for a dynamic, proper and normal interactions among intellectuals (Zepeda, 2007).

### **Realities of instructional supervision**

Reality is the state of things as they actually exist, as opposed to an idealistic or natural idea of them. A thing that is actually experienced or seen

It can also be seen as the sum or aggregate of all that is real or existent as opposed to that which is merely imaginary. It is also used to refer to the ontological status of things, including their existence. (Wikipedia, n.d)

It is believed that the primary function of supervision is to help teachers refine classroom practices through direct observation and conferral (i.e. exchange ideas on particular subject). But for many people, personal experience supports the findings of Sullivan's (1982) cited by Blank,(1987) research that supervision depicted in the literature bears little resemblance to the supervision actually taking place in school. This could be due to the fact that those implicated in the process of supervising might not have had formal training or it may be the existence of general laxity on the part of the different stakeholders involved.

According to Sturges (1982),cited by Blank,(1987) there exists a gap between reality and expectations in implementation of instructional supervision and inconsistencies are found between normative and descriptive views about supervision. He further sums up that a supervisor who conducted instructional supervision did not aim to assist teachers but to emphasize the administrative responsibilities of teachers. This renders teachers unable to acquire assistance and support from the supervisors to improve their instructional practices. The supervisor's task to improve teachers' instructional practice and teachers' administrative responsibilities should be combined to achieve wider outcomes. It is the role of the supervisor to help and guide the teachers to accomplish their wider outcomes. It is the role of the supervisor to help and guide teachers to accomplish their task in order to make sure that learning works effectively/ very well. Whether this is done and effectively too, remains a big question to be seen by the end of this study.

The practice of instructional supervision falls short of expectation. Teacher supervisors are expected to be knowledgeable in curriculum, Instruction, and planning; have strong interpersonal and communication skills and portray positive attitudes toward new recruits (Blank,1987).Ideal supervisors are equally knowledgeable and experienced. These supervisors set clear and explicit goals with supervisees, as well as give direct and systematic feedback and are non-critical and supportive (Carifo, and Hess,1987).The reality on the ground as depicted by researchers hold that the supervisors who conducted instructional supervision did not aim at assisting teachers but to emphasize the administrative responsibilities of supervisees(sturges,1982).The support and assistance that help supervisees to achieve outcomes is not given by supervisors due to lack of knowledge in the area. The multiplicity of tasks such as filling of forms, liaisoning with the public, material resource allocation etc renders supervisors with little or no time for observing teachers Howell,(1981) cited by Glickman, (1998).Supervision is seen as an administrative task rather than as a form of teaching (Pajak,1986) cited by Glickman,(1998). Supervisory sessions are snappy and not frequent due to the small number of supervisory personnel.

Several reasons thus account for the fact that there exist a gap between the realities and expectations. These include; poor conditions of service for teachers and supervisors, lower status of the teacher, myopic conceptions about supervision of instruction, poor leadership mostly based on bureaucratic orientations, ignoring political, human resource and symbolic orientations. All these express the

realities which affects supervision of instruction.

According to the end of 2017/ 2018 academic year report from Teacher Training Colleges in the South West Region, the following challenges or problems were identified in the domain of supervision of instruction.

The Board of studies is expected to meet regularly to appraise the activities of the institutions for the year. But unfortunately, this Board does not meet in some of the institutions due to distance and the difficulties associated to the school location which greatly hampers the activities of the Board.

Most institutions lack permanent structures to host modern libraries, food and nutrition labs, ICT facilities, etc. As a consequence, the teaching and learning process is thus affected negatively.

Lack of information and communication technology centers which makes it difficult to blend theory and practice. This also affects distant learning.

The college campuses are exposed to vandals who constantly destroy and steal school property. There is also trespassing even within school hours causing distractions thus hampering teaching and learning.

Considering the pressure of other responsibilities, such as relating to the public, completing required forms, allocating material resources, and relaying messages, those responsible with educational supervision are often left with little time for observing teachers (Howell, 1981) cited by Glickman et al.,(1998). When this scarce time is allocated out over the many teachers to be supervised, the observations frequently resemble Polaroid snapshot. This is the reality in most of our educational settings.

Lee (1984) cited by Glickman,et al.,(1998) believed that the majority of supervisors (National, Regional, institutional/principals) and other personnel charged with supervisory duties have not had the opportunity to explore the topic and perceive clinical supervision simply as a sequence of pre-observation conference, observation and post-observation conference. This is believed to be as a result of inadequate preparation.

### **Tasks of instructional Supervision**

These are tasks that can bring about improved instruction (Glickman, et al, 1998). Tasks of supervision are the various ways supervisors and teachers use to enhance teaching and learning. A number of scholars and researchers conceptualize instructional supervision as task. Scholars like William and Harris cited by Million (2010) have identified three main tasks of supervision which include; instructional improvement, professional development and curriculum development. On the other hand, Zepeda (2010) scrutinizes instructional supervision as a three-stage process; supervision of teaching practice, professional development and evaluation. Other researchers like Beach and Reinhartz, (2000), Glickman, (1998), Sergiovanni and Starratt, (1998) hold that one of the major components of supervision is the improvement of instruction, they further emphasize that for instruction to improve, staff development, self-evaluation and fostering curriculum development must be included in the supervisory process.

Glickman (1985) identified five tasks of supervision that have direct impact on instructional improvement. They are; direct assistance, group development, professional development, and curriculum development and action research. These tasks are discussed in the paragraphs below:

### **Economic arguments for instructional supervision:**

Supporters of this view argue that the primary responsibility of schools is to prepare the nation's workforce. A well educated workforce is seen as vital to economic productivity and expansion. This view of the role of the school is accepted generally and has been central to national educational legislation and policy for decades. Instructional supervision is seen as a way to help schools produce a more capable workplace. It is believed by proponents of this view that, jobs in the 21<sup>st</sup> century exist in increasingly complicated environments and require competent workers who are beyond basic skills

level.

Law No. 98/004 of 14 April, 1998 orientation law on education in Cameroon in its part 11, article 11, section 16 states that: the state will ensure the constant adaptation of the educational system to national economic and socio-cultural realities. Instructional supervision enables the teachers to improve their skills, knowledge and dispositions. This therefore enables teacher trainers to improve on their level of productivity. Through supervision, professional development is enhanced. It should be noted that professional development yields a number of economic importance.

The human capital theory by Smith,( 1976) cited by Gattiker,(1995) states that investment in human capital would lead to greater economic outputs. This theory recognizes that investment in education, training and experience can bring significant wage and job benefits to individuals. Professional development which partly is an outcome of instructional supervision can be viewed as an investment in human capital and the decision to participate in training activities and acquire skills is viewed as a rational choice on the part of individuals. Human capital theory has at its core a very simple argument: investment in either formal or informal training or education increases an individual's performance, productivity and earnings (Gattiker, 1995). This perspective on human capital takes as its starting point the view that human competencies are one of the resources available to organizations. The origin of this notion can be attributed to the work of Prahalad and Hamel (1990), which analyzed the competitiveness of organizations (schools) and attributed it to the possession of core competencies. They postulated that an organization can possess unique clusters of factors that allow it to be competitive, and human capital is one of these. This resource-based view represents a current paradigm (clear example) on firm competitiveness and conceptualizes the organization as a collection of competencies that focuses attention to issues of learning, professional development, knowledge accumulation and experience. Hamel and Prahalad (1994) describe core competencies as “a bundle of skills and technologies rather than a single skill or technology”. This line of thinking clearly indicates that an outcome of instructional supervision- professional development has value in enhancing core competencies, some of which are grounded in human capabilities. These skills need to be developed over time in order to confer on schools a set of capabilities that other schools will find it difficult to imitate. However, they also need to be rented to the organization in order for them to be of value in strategic terms.

The resource- based theory perspective rest on the assumptions that differences in human resources configuration between organizations result in a fundamental hate or geneity in their potential to contribute to organizational performance. The long term competitiveness of an organization will in part be determined by whether its human resources are durable, difficult to imitate and substitute and enable the organization to differentiate itself from other competitors (Festing and Erdems 2011). Human resources provide the potential for sustain competitive advantage through the use of professional development to improve competencies that are organization-specific and generate tacit organizational knowledge (Lado and Wilson, 1994).

The resource-based approach emphasizes the need for organizations to implement a specific professional development strategy, one that seeks to achieve competitive advantage by enhancing both the competence and commitment of human resources. It requires that organizations implement an internally consistent set of professional development practices. Research has suggested a set of universal professional development practices that are of value. These include job training, leadership development, technical competency development, strategies to generate tacit organizational knowledge and social networking strategies (McWilliams, Van Fleet and Wright,( 2001); Eissenhardt and Martin,( 2000). The “best practices” approach suggests that particular universal professional development practices are associated with enhanced school performance. It provides ongoing opportunities for educators to continue to improve their knowledge and skills so they can help students achieve.

Education and the economy are two sides of the same coin. Education outputs are used to reinforce the economy. The man power produced by education is also used or needed in the education industry.

This means that education consumes what it produces. For instance, a qualified man-power (teacher)

### **Statement of the Problem**

There are increasing calls for improvements in the quality of education. This constitutes a challenge for teacher training institutions and other stakeholders. A huge responsibility lies in the hands of Teacher Training Institutions charged with the responsibility of training teachers for the basic and secondary education sub-systems, cognizant of the fact that the educational landscape is constantly changing as well as the socio-economic and political atmosphere, these training institutions are directly or indirectly affected. Even though the Ministry of Secondary Education has put in place Pedagogic Inspectors who are expected to visit and supervise instruction in teacher training colleges, little is scientifically known about their effectiveness, problems encountered and the way forward as just a few or no publications are found in the literature. This is very important, especially as there is much talk on the falling standards of education in the country. The fact that pedagogic inspectors are not trained and consequently do not possess appropriate supervisory competence according to the Draft Report of the Sector Wide Approach to Education, (2006), they might not be effectively carrying out their responsibilities (Republic of Cameroon, 2006). Considering the pressure of other responsibilities such as relating to the public, completing required forms, allocating material resources and relaying messages, those responsible for educational supervision are often left with little time for observing teachers (Howell, 1981) cited by Glickman (1998). When this scarce time is allocated out over the many teachers to be supervised, the observation is most often snappy. Thus, the most needed support to teachers is not realized. The much talk of falling standards can also be traced from the source one of which is the quality of the teachers produced from the teacher training institutions as well as those who train them. This implies that supervision of instruction is found wanting. More the supervisors are few while the task is huge. Reality in the field has shown that some don't even or scarcely visit the teacher training institutions. This makes instruction to depend on the teacher trainers who lack or have insufficient supervision from the Regional Pedagogic Inspectors. Thus supervision of instruction becomes problematic as role of supervisors is not fully exercised which thus affects teacher trainer quality and finally the quality of teacher trainees produced.

It is therefore, on this premise that this researcher seeks to investigate the realities of supervision of instruction in Teacher Training Colleges. It is hoped that the findings of this study will inform supervisory practices going forward and can also improve actions aimed at improving the quality of teachers and the effectiveness of teacher training colleges which was affected by the lack of technical and professional skills of the different stakeholders involved in the supervisory process.

### **Objective**

To bring out the strengths and weaknesses of supervision of instruction in Teacher Training Colleges.

### **Research Question**

What are the strengths and weaknesses of instructional supervision in Teacher Training Colleges?

### **METHODOLOGY**

The design selected as appropriate in carrying out this study was the survey research design. The survey research design is a procedure in quantitative research in which investigators administer a survey to a sample or to the entire population of people to describe the attitudes, opinions, behaviours, or characteristics of the population (Kothari,2004).This design thus enables the researcher to use a representative sample, which allowed the researcher to make inferences or generalizations to the population under study. Data is collected through the use of a questionnaire and an interview guide.

This study was carried out in three out of the ten Regions of Cameroon. These are the two English speaking regions of North West and South West, and the Littoral region being one of the eight French speaking regions of the country.

The population in research is all the members or elements, be they human beings, animals, tress, objects, events, etc. of a well-defined group (Nworgu, 1991). The target population will be made up of all the members of a specified group to which the investigation relates. The target population of this study includes all the Regional inspectors of teacher training institutions in the South West, North West and Littoral Regions, administrators and all the teachers of the government teacher training institutions in these Regions. According to official records from these three regions, there are 6 inspectors in charge of teacher training institutions in the North West, 06 in the South West and 6 in the Littoral Region making a total of 18 Regional Inspectors as target population of this study. The North West Region has 263 teachers in 7 Government Teacher Training Colleges, 8 institutions in the South West Region with 357 Teachers and 4 public teacher training colleges in the Littoral Region with 243 Teachers. Thus the target population for this study consists of 18 Regional Inspectors and 863 teacher trainers drawn from 19 Government Teacher Training Colleges in the three Regions.

**Table 1: Distribution of inspectors, training institutions and teachers by Regions.**

S/N	Region	Number of inspectors	Number of institutions	Number of teachers
1.	North West	06	07	263
2.	South West	06	08	357
3.	Littoral	06	04	243
<b>Total</b>	<b>03</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>863</b>

**Source: Beginning of year report 2018/2019 for North West, South West and Littoral Regions. Sample and sampling technique**

The sample of this study was made up of 12 Regional Inspectors for teacher education and 324 teacher trainers selected from 7 Government Teacher Training Colleges in the North West, South West and Littoral Regions of Cameroon. The researcher used the purposive or judgmental sampling technique in selecting the Regional Inspectors and teacher trainers in the training schools. The researcher used the government institutions because most of their teachers are trained. This technique is also to ensure that only elements relevant to the researcher were included. The result is shown below.

**Instrument for data collection**

The instruments used to collect data for this study were the structured questionnaire and interview guide. The structured or fixed questionnaire was constructed to reflect the research questions and objectives. The instruments were accompanied by a cover letter stating the research topic, explaining the purpose of the study, how to provide the responses and how the result would be used.

**Method of Data Analyses**

The closed ended items or data obtained were analyzed using statistical package for social sciences (SPSS) version 17.0 for windows to obtain descriptive statistics (frequencies, percentages and means).Meanwhile; interview responses were qualitatively analyzed.

**FINDINGS**

The findings here bring out the strengths and weaknesses of instructional supervision in teacher training colleges as presented in the table below

**Table 2: Strength and weaknesses of instructional supervision**

Items	Stretched				Collapsed	
	SA n (%)	A n (%)	D n (%)	SD n (%)	Agreed n (%)	Disagreed n (%)
Instructional Supervisors identify the lack of abilities to manage	164 (18.53)	588 (66.44)	92 (10.40)	41 (4.63)	752 (84.97)	133 (15.03)

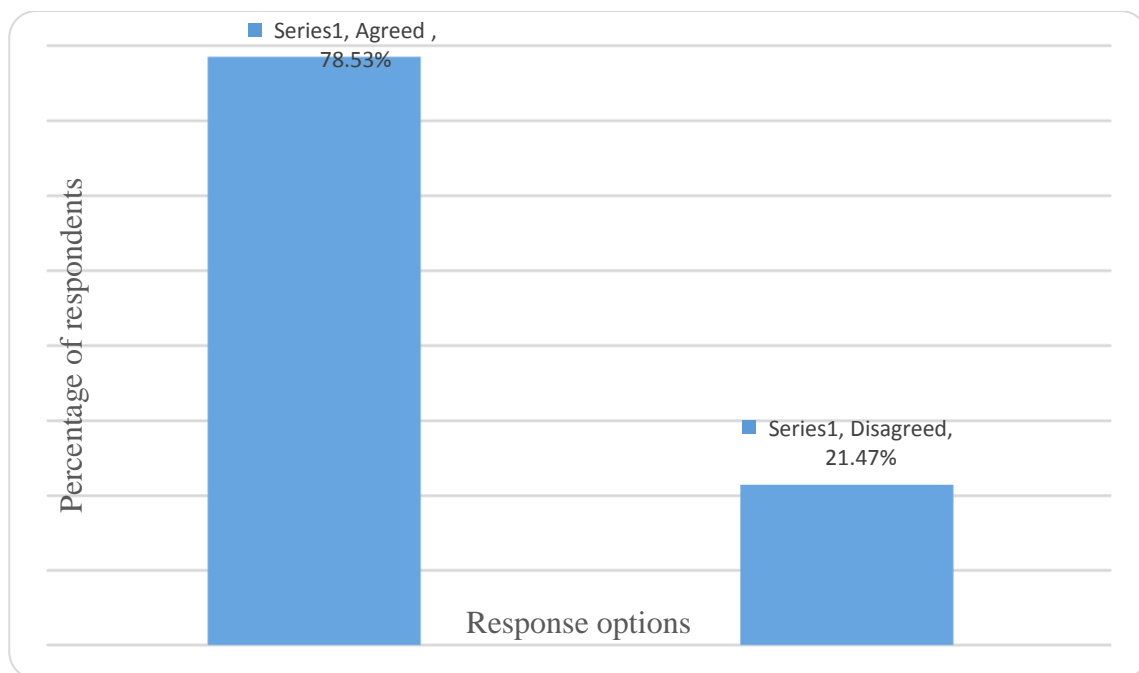
students in the classroom.						
RPIs assist teachers in developing/selecting instructional materials and encourage them to use it appropriately.	168 (19.07)	546 (61.98)	134 (15.21)	33 (3.75)	714 (81.04)	167 (18.96)
Instructional supervisors facilitate experience sharing programs.	176 (18.64)	684 (72.46)	64 (6.78)	20 (2.12)	860 (91.10)	84 (8.90)
Supervision creates a suitable climate where teachers feel free.	340 (34.98)	462 (34.98)	170 (17.49)	0 (0)	802 (82.51)	170 (17.49)
They facilitate professional growth of teachers through short term training, workshops and seminars.	496 (46.27)	528 (49.25)	48 (4.48)	0 (0)	1024 (95.52)	48 (4.48)
RPIs check teachers' schemes of work, lesson plans, lesson notes and record of work to help guide teaching.	624 (55.32)	504 (44.68)	0 (0)	0 (0)	1128 (100)	0 (0)
Existence of positive cordial, social and professional relationship among teachers.	136 (14.06)	753 (77.87)	78 (8.07)	0 (0)	889 (91.93)	78 (8.07)
Supervision of teachers improve the quality of teaching.	648 (57.14)	486 (42.86)	0 (0)	0 (0)	1134 (100)	0 (0)
Teachers do not take the comments of supervisors seriously.	48 (6.73)	306 (42.92)	298 (41.80)	61 (8.56)	354 (49.65)	359 (50.35)
RPIs are regular in schools to supervise instruction.	56 (6.98)	414 (51.62)	320 (39.90)	12 (1.50)	470 (58.60)	332 (41.40)
Teachers prepare only when they are expected to be supervised.	356 (40)	252 (28.31)	262 (29.44)	20 (2.25)	608 (68.31)	282 (31.69)
Instructional supervisors design appropriate intervention to minimize the identified limitations of teachers in the classrooms.	144 (15.25)	672 (71.19)	128 (13.56)	0 (0)	816 (86.44)	128 (13.56)
Instructional supervisors are arranging induction training for beginner teachers.	40 (5.29)	363 (48.02)	320 (42.33)	33 (4.37)	403 (53.31)	353 (46.69)
Instructional supervisors support teachers to do action research.	124 (15.94)	399 (51.29)	214 (27.51)	41 (5.27)	523 (67.22)	255 (32.78)
RPIs do undertake remedial actions their first sessions with a teacher was not successful.	0 (0)	183 (25.81)	526 (74.19)	0 (0)	183 (25.81)	526 (74.19)
<b>Multiple responses set (MRS)</b>	<b>3520 (25.93)</b>	<b>7140 (52.60)</b>	<b>2654 (19.55)</b>	<b>261 (1.92)</b>	<b>10660 (78.53)</b>	<b>2915 (21.47)</b>

The findings on table 2 above reveal that majority (84.97%) respondents agreed to the fact that instructional supervisors identify the lack of abilities to manage students in the classroom while few (15.03%) disagreed. Also, majority (81.04%) respondents agreed that RPIs assist teachers in developing/selecting instructional materials and encourage them to use it appropriately while few (18.96%) disagreed. Likewise, majority (91.1%) respondents agreed that Instructional supervisors facilitate experience sharing programs while very few (8.9%) disagreed. Again, majority (82.51%) respondents agreed that supervision creates a suitable climate where teachers feel freewhile (17.49%) disagreed. Equally, majority (95.52%) respondents agreed that supervision facilitate professional growth of teachers through short term training workshops and seminars while very few (04.48%) disagreed.

Similarly, all the respondents agreed that RPIs check teachers' schemes of work, lesson plans, lesson notes and record of work to help guide teaching. More so, majority (91,93%) respondents agreed that there is the existence of positive cordial, social and professional relationship among teachers while very few (8.07%) disagreed. Correspondingly all the respondents agreed that supervision of teachers improve the quality of teaching. In the same way almost half of the respondents (49.65%) respondents agreed that teachers do not take the comments of supervisors seriously while slightly above half (50.35%) respondents disagreed. Furthermore, majority (58.6%) respondents agreed that RPIs are regular in schools to supervise instruction while some (41.4%) disagreed. Moreover, majority (68.31%) respondents agreed that teachers prepare only when they are expected to be supervised while some (31.69%) disagreed.

Besides majority (86.44%) respondents agreed that instructional supervisors design appropriate intervention to minimize the identified limitations of teachers in the classrooms while few (13.56%) respondents disagreed. As well, majority (53.31%) respondents agreed that instructional supervisors are arranging induction training for beginner teachers while some (46.69%) disagreed. In addition, majority (67.22%) respondents agreed that instructional supervisors support teachers to do action research while some (32.78%) disagreed. Additionally, some (25.81%) respondents agreed that RPIs do undertake remedial actions their first sessions with a teacher was not successful while majority (74.19%) respondents disagreed. The findings on the multiple responses set further revealed that majority (78.53%) respondents agreed that there is supervision of instruction in teacher training colleges by RPIs while some (21.47%) respondents disagreed. This is further presented in figure 2 below.

**Figure 1: Summary showing respondents degree of agreement on supervision of instruction in teacher training colleges.**



### Thematic Analysis for Research Question one

#### What are the strengths and weaknesses of instructional supervision?

##### Item A: Inspectors assist teachers in developing and selecting instructional materials and encourage them to use it appropriately:

This point had a majority of the instructional supervisors agreeing that assisting teachers to identify the appropriate instructional materials that will facilitate the teaching and learning process is a difficult task. This they emphasized that different lessons have different materials that are to be used. Furthermore, over three quarter of the supervisors stated that no lesson should be taught without the

use of a teaching aid especially as there are learners who learn faster by observation. This assistance they said is usually done in school when they are to observe a lesson. In the pre conferencing, they assist develop or select the instructional material. They said from a general point so as to assist a vast majority of the teachers, they organize annual seminars for all teachers in which the basic techniques of selecting or developing the instructional materials is made.

*“ I remember going to school more than 5 times to assist a particular teacher. He was just interested only in delivery notes to learners. Our exchanges made him see the need for use of instructional materials and he vowed to make it part and parcel of his lessons ”. (Inspector no. 3, November 2021).*

**Item B: Supervisors create suitable climate where workers feel free:**

Firstly, almost all the supervisors stated that teachers generally saw inspectors as a threat or people who are coming to spy on them and give report to hierarchy. As such, they felt very uncomfortable. They noted 100% that supervision creates a very conducive atmosphere for teachers to work effectively. This they said comes as a result of the fact that the competencies shared in the whole process makes the teacher a master in their delivery and exchanges with students and even with other colleagues.

**Item C: They facilitate professional growth of teachers through short term training workshops and seminars:**

The supervisors were unanimous on this point and indicated that it is an official assignment which they must perform and give reports to hierarchy. They also said that before going to the schools, they first and foremost have seminars organized by the Minister of Secondary education at the beginning of the academic year. It is on this strength that they also organize seminars and workshops at the Regional and school levels to build capacities of teachers.

*“These regular seminars is really a big win for supervision of instruction as laudable ideas and approaches as well as proposals are made from bottom to top in the administration based on local realities ”. (Inspector no. 5, November 2021).*

**Item D: RPIs check teacher’s schemes of work, lesson notes and plans, and record of work to help guide teaching:**

The pedagogic supervisors all agreed that while in school and after observing and working with teachers, they equally check important school, students and teachers documents like schemes of work, lesson notes and record of work books. This enables them to confirm the workload covered so far, whether the learners have notes and also verify if the competency approach was used in the delivery process. Two third of the interviewees noted that they do not however only check the above documents, but gives directives and make corrections where necessary.

**Item E: Supervision of teachers improves the quality of teaching:**

All the inspectors agreed that all the teachers in Government Teacher Training Schools have been trained. But after graduation and posting to schools, some of the teachers do not care about quality and just focused on delivery of lessons. Supervising instruction in the schools has made teaching much more qualitative as it awakens the consciousness of the teachers and also brings new pedagogic approaches to them.

*“Supervision is not meant to see weaknesses of teachers so as to punish them. We have had teachers who were very weak in lesson preparation, class management and delivery of lessons. But after regular visitations and assistance, they emerged as the best in their schools. Thus the quality of their teaching greatly improved thanks to the collaboration between teachers and instructional supervisors in the supervisory process ”. (Inspector no. 1, November 2021).*

**Item F: RPIs are regular in schools to supervise instruction:**

All the inspectors noted that one major weakness in the process of supervision of instruction is their inability to regularly visit teachers. This they lamented is due to the fact that they are few in numbers while there are many teachers which makes coaching limited to a few, Besides, they are not regular because of the financial means to carryout effective supervision. The issue is further compounded by the Anglophone crisis plagued with insecurity. All these make supervision of instruction irregular they noted.

*“Even before the crisis even came, we have always been limited to urban schools. We have hardly visited a school twice in an academic year. In all, we are not regular and as such some teachers go for years without meeting a pedagogic inspector for supervision”.*(Inspector no. 2, November 2021).

#### **Item G: Teachers prepare only when they are expected to be supervised:**

The feedback from the supervisors attest to the fact that the teachers prepare very well when they are expecting a supervisory team or an inspector. This they said is evident from the fact that the sample lessons presented are different from the other lessons as can be seen from how they have been filling records of work books and lesson notes prior to inspection. This is a weakness to supervision of instruction in the schools since effective teaching learning transaction is supposed to be all round at any lesson presentation.

This research established that the majority of respondents being Regional Pedagogic Inspectors and Teacher Trainers agreed that the process of supervision of instruction has its strengths and weaknesses in teacher training colleges. However, their views were generally in favour of the strength of supervision which should serve as a tool to improve their functions as supervisors as well as improve the quality of education offered in Teacher Training Colleges in Cameroon. They thus, agreed that supervision of instructions enhances the preparedness of the teachers in their institutions. This implies that instructional supervision is very important in the teaching learning process and that if Regional Pedagogic Inspectors carry out their task of supervision effectively, then a larger majority of teachers in teacher training colleges would benefit from the positive aspects of supervision thus enhancing the quality of teaching in these schools

Kutsyuruba (2003), posits that teachers desired more frequent use of supervision that meets their individual professional needs. Also, the respondents in Kutsyuruba study are seen requesting and stating that supervision ensures better planning, active involvement in decision making, promotes trust and collaboration, provides support, advice, and help and closely connected to professional development. These are strengths linked to supervision of instructions. These are realities in the supervisory process which are strengths to the process in the domain of teaching as a whole and specifically in Teacher Training Colleges which is the focus of this study.

Another application is that of Mwaniki and Hellen (2018) x-rayed a reality of supervision in a study. They opined that the primary function of external instructional supervision of teachers is to establish the status of instruction among teachers and consequently improve it. From the findings, it showed that instructional supervisory practices in schools had improved teachers’ instructional competences in assessment and evaluation of pupils. Also, there was a slight improvement in the teachers’ pedagogic skills, and their ability in preparation and utilization of teaching aids.

Thus, Regional Pedagogic Inspectors should undertake regular training programs or supervision of instruction in Teacher Training Colleges so as to exercise their functions as specialists as well as increase the strengths of supervision over the weaknesses. According to the Achievement Theory by McClelland (1961), every individual has three types of motivational needs irrespective of their demography, culture or wealth. These motivation types are driven from real-life experiences and the views of their ethos (set of beliefs, ideas etc). These beliefs are; The need for Achievement, Need for Power and Need for Affiliation. These have a relationship with this study especially on the realities or strengths and weaknesses of supervision of instructions. Both Teacher Trainers and Inspectors are bound with the need to achieved desired goals. The urge to achieve and for the common good of the

learner, makes a reality that supervision is a necessary activity ongoing in Teacher Training Colleges. The more the achievements they make, the higher their performance because of higher levels of motivation.

With respect to the Need for Affiliation, the author McClelland, sees it as the urge of a person to have interpersonal relationships and social relationships with others or a particular set of people. They seek to work in groups by creating friendly and lasting relationships and has the urge to be liked by others than competing with them and usually avoids high-risk situations and uncertainty. This is a reality between teachers and supervisors. They must and have been complementing each other individually and in groups during the supervisory process.

Both tend to adhere to the norms of the culture in that work place. These individuals work effectively in roles based on social interactions. The supervisor who encourages supervisees and delegates power or responsibilities will facilitate the achievement of the goals which relates to the strengths of supervision. Collaboration enhances socialization and exchange of ideas, this will enable supervisor to learn from the supervisee and vice versa. Where this is not applicable, the weaknesses of the process are detected or identified.

### **Recommendations**

The recommendations in this study are based on the objective of this study and the findings. Worthy of note is the fact that Teacher Trainers and Regional Pedagogic Inspectors are key actors and play very vital roles in the educational community and specifically in the teaching learning process. In this light, the following recommendations have been made:

That Regional Pedagogic Inspectors should be trained on this special discipline of supervision and not just rely on their training and experience as teachers. This could be in seminars, conferences or even through distance learning. This will give a good blend when added with their experiences as teachers.

It is also recommended that the supervisors should be provided with adequate material and financial aid to enable them carry out their task with ease as well as visit many schools and teachers. This can be provided by the school authorities as well as the Ministry of Secondary Education which appointed them. This will also help to curb to the barest minimum the challenges that they encounter in the supervisory process

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