RESEARCH ARTICLE   OPEN ACCESS

Impact of Head Teachers' Supervision Practices on Teachers' Job Performance in Private Secondary Schools: A Case Study of Ibanda District, South Western Uganda

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Abstract

This study examined the influence of headteachers' supervision practices on teachers' job performance in private secondary schools in Ibanda District, Southwestern Uganda. The investigation was guided by the objective of identifying common supervision practices applied by headteachers. The study was anchored on Douglas McGregor's Theory X and Theory Y, which provided a theoretical basis for understanding teacher motivation and performance under different supervisory approaches. A descriptive survey design was adopted, employing both quantitative and qualitative approaches to capture a comprehensive picture. Data were collected through structured questionnaires administered to teachers and semi-structured interviews with headteachers and directors of studies. Teachers provided information on the types and frequency of supervision practices, while headteachers and directors of studies offered deeper insights into implementation strategies, challenges, and perceptions of supervision.

Findings indicated that headteachers' supervision practices significantly influence teachers' job performance. Schools with structured, consistent, and supportive supervision frameworks reported higher levels of teacher effectiveness and improved student outcomes. Common supervision practices included classroom observations, lesson plan reviews, mentorship, provision of feedback, and in-service training. These practices not only enhanced teachers' professional growth but also strengthened accountability.

The study concluded that effective supervision by headteachers is central to improving teacher performance and sustaining quality education in private secondary schools. It is recommended that headteachers adopt and maintain structured supervision practices, including regular classroom observations, timely feedback, mentorship, and professional development initiatives, to continuously enhance teacher effectiveness and foster better student learning outcomes.

Keywords: Head Teachers' Supervision Practices, Teachers' Job Performance, Private Secondary Schools, Ibanda District, South Western

Background to the Study

Globally, education systems recognize teacher supervision as central to improving instructional quality and learning outcomes. International bodies such as UNESCO (2020) emphasize that effective supervision, through feedback, mentoring, and classroom monitoring, enhances teacher competence, reduces absenteeism, and raises learner achievement. In many contexts, supervision is shifting from inspection-based approaches to developmental models of instructional leadership, where collaboration and continuous professional growth are prioritized (Bush & Glover, 2016).

Regionally, across Sub-Saharan Africa, supervision remains a challenge due to underfunded education systems, limited training for headteachers, and high pupil–teacher ratios (World Bank, 2010). Research from Kenya, Tanzania, and Ethiopia shows that while classroom observations and feedback sessions are common, follow-up is often inconsistent, and supervision is hampered by resource gaps and weak leadership training (Ochieng, 2021; Mwangi & Wambua, 2022; Kassahun, 2023). These studies highlight both the potential and the limitations of supervisory practices in contexts similar to Uganda's.

In Uganda, headteachers are mandated to oversee curriculum delivery, manage staff, and supervise teachers to ensure instructional quality (MoES, 2019). Supervision practices often include lesson plan reviews, classroom observations, and performance appraisals. However, research indicates that in practice, supervision in Ugandan schools is frequently irregular, with headteachers emphasizing administrative duties over instructional support (Nsubuga, 2008). This situation has contributed to persistent challenges such as teacher absenteeism, inadequate preparation, and low learner outcomes (Okurut, 2012; Bold et al., 2017).

This study was guided by McGregor's Theory X and Theory Y (1957). Theory X suggests strict monitoring and control are necessary to ensure productivity, while Theory Y emphasizes supportive supervision that empowers teachers to exercise self-direction (Lawter, Kopelman, & Prottas, 2015). Conceptually, supervision practices, such as classroom observation, feedback, and mentorship, are viewed as independent variables influencing teachers' job performance, which is measured by lesson preparation, delivery, engagement, and assessment. Intervening factors like resource availability and teacher motivation also shape these outcomes (Acheson & Gall, 2011).

Ibanda District in southwestern Uganda presents a unique case for studying supervision. While secondary school enrollment has grown, most private schools face shortages of trained teachers, limited infrastructure, and inconsistent leadership support (Mugisha, 2020). Headteachers are expected to supervise teachers regularly, but many lack the professional development and policy frameworks necessary to sustain effective practices. Some schools have adopted promising strategies such as regular observations and feedback, yet these remain unevenly applied across the district (Wamala, 2019).

Statement of the Problem

Headteachers should serve as instructional leaders, providing structured and supportive supervision to enhance teaching quality and student outcomes (Glickman, Gordon, & Ross-Gordon, 2014). However, supervision in many private secondary schools in Ibanda is irregular, focusing mainly on checking lesson plans or attendance registers. This minimalist approach undermines teacher development and contributes to widespread issues such as absenteeism, poor planning, low motivation, and weak use of learner-centered methods. The lack of a standardized supervision framework further exacerbates these challenges (Nsubuga, 2008). Against this backdrop, the first objective of the study was to identify the common supervision practices used by headteachers in private secondary schools in Ibanda District.

Literature review

Theoretical review

This study was guided by Douglas McGregor's X and Y Theories, which provide contrasting perspectives on employee motivation and management styles. McGregor's Theory X, introduced in 1957, posits that employees are inherently disinclined toward work, lacking ambition, and resistant to change. This theory suggests that to ensure effective performance, a strict and controlling supervisory approach is necessary (Lawter, Kopelman, & Prottas, 2015; Gannon & Boguszak, 2013). Under Theory X, supervision is characterized by close monitoring, coercion, and tight control to mitigate employees' natural aversion to work (Aithal & Kumar, 2016). In contrast, Theory Y offers a more optimistic view, asserting that work is as natural as play or rest, and that people inherently enjoy being productive. According to Theory Y, employees are self-motivated and capable of exercising self-direction and self-control when committed to organizational goals. This theory emphasizes the role of management in creating an environment that fosters self-direction and alignment with organizational objectives, suggesting that a supportive and participative supervisory style is more effective (Aithal & Kumar, 2016; Gannon & Boguszak, 2013).

The theoretical framework for this study, therefore, utilizes McGregor's X and Y Theories to explore the impact of head teachers' supervisory practices on teachers' job performance. The study investigates how different supervisory approaches whether strict and controlling (aligned with Theory X) or supportive and communicative (aligned with Theory Y) affect teachers' effectiveness and overall job satisfaction. This dual-theory approach enables a comprehensive

understanding of the potential outcomes of varying supervisory styles in the educational context.

Supervisory practices employed by head teachers in Private Secondary Schools

Research on supervisory practices by head teachers reveals diverse strategies and their effects on teaching and learning environments. Abdullah et al. (2022) investigated supervisory practices in Ugandan secondary schools and found that head teachers frequently employed practices such as scheduled classroom observations, regular performance reviews, and provision of feedback. These practices were linked to improvements in teachers' instructional techniques and student outcomes. However, Abdullah et al. noted that the lack of follow-up and insufficient resources limited the overall effectiveness of these practices. While the study highlighted a positive impact on instructional techniques and student outcomes, it also acknowledged limitations due to lack of follow-up and insufficient resources. The emphasis on practical application is commendable, but the study fails to delve deeply into how cultural and policy factors might influence these supervisory practices.

Ochieng (2021) examined the supervisory practices of head teachers in Kenyan secondary schools and found that regular classroom observations, constructive feedback, and professional development opportunities were prevalent. Ochieng emphasized that these practices significantly enhanced teachers' instructional skills and job satisfaction. However, the study underscores the variability of outcomes based on leadership styles and resources, which introduces a gap in addressing systemic factors that limit the adoption of effective practices across different contexts.

Similarly, Mwangi and Wambua (2022) investigated the impact of supervisory practices in Tanzanian secondary schools. Their findings indicated that head teachers who engaged in frequent and supportive supervision, including mentorship and collaborative planning, fostered a more positive work environment and improved teacher performance. They argued that supportive supervision led to higher teacher motivation and better student outcomes. Nevertheless, Mwangi and Wambua pointed out that inconsistencies in

supervision practices due to administrative challenges and lack of training for head teachers undermined the overall effectiveness. However, the study does not sufficiently address how administrative challenges could be systematically mitigated, leaving gaps in policy recommendations.

Kassahun (2023) conducted a study in Ethiopian secondary schools and found that head teachers employed various supervisory practices, including setting clear performance expectations and providing regular feedback. Kassahun highlighted that while these practices improved teachers' adherence to educational standards, the lack of systematic implementation and follow-up created gaps in achieving desired outcomes. Kassahun's study underscores the need for structured and consistent supervisory approaches to maximize their impact. The study's acknowledgment of inconsistent implementation without providing actionable solutions for addressing these inconsistencies, limiting the applicability of its findings.

Njeri (2023) conducted a study in Kenyan secondary schools and discovered that head teachers who incorporated participatory supervision practices, such as involving teachers in decision-making and collaborative goal setting, achieved higher levels of teacher engagement and performance. Njeri's study suggested that participatory practices fostered a supportive work environment and enhanced teachers' commitment to their roles. Nevertheless, Njeri's research did not address how external factors, such as school size and socio-economic conditions, influenced the implementation of these practices. While this approach is innovative, the study did not explore how external factors such as socio-economic disparities or school size might affect the efficacy of participatory practices.

Karanja and Muthoni (2024) examined the supervisory practices in Private Secondary Schools in Rwanda and highlighted that head teachers who focused on coaching and mentoring, alongside traditional supervision methods, saw significant improvements in teachers' professional development and job satisfaction. Their study emphasized the positive impact of a coaching-oriented approach on teachers' skills and motivation. However, Karanja and Muthoni's

study also revealed that inconsistent application of mentoring practices and varying levels of head teacher expertise in coaching were notable challenges.

Wanjiku (2024) explored supervisory practices in Private Secondary Schools in Tanzania and identified that effective head teachers used a combination of directive and supportive supervision to address diverse teacher needs. Wanjiku's findings showed that while directive supervision helped in enforcing standards and discipline, supportive supervision contributed to building teachers' confidence and improving their performance. Despite these insights, Wanjiku's study highlighted a gap in understanding how the balance between directive and supportive practices affected different types of teachers. However, the inconsistency in mentoring practices and varying levels of head teacher expertise suggest a need for structured training programs, a point the study only briefly mentions.

Methodology

Research Design and Approach

The study employed a descriptive survey design within a mixed-methods framework to examine the influence of headteachers' supervision practices on teachers' job performance in private secondary schools in Ibanda District. Quantitative data were collected through structured questionnaires administered to teachers, while qualitative insights were obtained through semi-structured interviews with headteachers and directors of studies. This design facilitated triangulation, ensuring both breadth and depth in understanding supervision practices and their relationship with teacher performance.

Population, Sampling, and Data Collection

The target population comprised headteachers and teachers from private secondary schools in Ibanda District. Using Krejcie and Morgan's (1970) sample size table, 108 respondents were selected, including 10 headteachers (purposively sampled) and 98 teachers (randomly sampled). Data were collected using self-administered questionnaires for teachers and interview guides for headteachers. Questionnaires captured quantitative indicators of supervision and job performance, while interviews provided contextual narratives on supervisory practices and challenges.

Data Quality Control and Analysis

Instrument validity was established through expert review and computation of the Content Validity Index, while reliability was tested using the split-half method, achieving acceptable thresholds. Quantitative data were analyzed using SPSS, employing descriptive statistics, correlations, and regression analysis to establish relationships between variables. Qualitative data were thematically analyzed to identify patterns and perceptions of supervision practices. Findings from both strands were integrated to enhance validity and provide a holistic understanding of how headteachers' supervision influences teacher job performance.

Results

Response Rate

The study targeted a total of 108 respondents, comprising 10 head teachers and 98 teachers. Impressively, all 108 questionnaires were returned fully completed, resulting in a 100% response rate. According to Mugenda and Mugenda (2003), a response rate of 70% and above is considered excellent for social science research. Similarly, Creswell (2014) emphasizes that higher response rates enhance the representativeness and credibility of study findings by minimizing the risk of non-response bias. Therefore, the 100% response rate achieved in this study not only demonstrates the strong commitment and cooperation of the participants but also significantly strengthens the reliability, validity, and generalizability of the research results.

Common supervision practices used by headteachers in private secondary schools in Ibanda District, Southwestern Uganda.

The first objective of this study was to identify the common supervision practices used by head teachers in private secondary schools in Ibanda District, Southwestern Uganda. To achieve this, the researcher employed a combination of quantitative and qualitative approaches, utilizing questionnaires, interviews, and document reviews to gather comprehensive data from both teachers and head teachers. This approach enabled the study to capture not only the frequency and types of supervisory practices applied but also the perceptions and experiences of teachers regarding their effectiveness.

Table 1: Common supervision practices used by headteachers in private secondary schools in

Ibanda District

Statement	S.A	A	N	D	SD	Mean	Std Dev
My head teacher regularly conducts classroom observations to monitor teaching practice	25 (23.1%)	68 (63.0%)	2 (1.9%)	8 (7.4%)	5 (4.6%)	1.69	.793
I receive timely feedback after class observations.	10 (9.3%)	28 (25.9%)	30 27.8%)	0(0%)	40 (37.0%)	3.57	1.18
Feedback from the head teacher has helped improve my teaching skills.	15 (13.9%)	81 (75%)	0	12 (11.1%)	0	2.09	0.753
The head teacher reviews my lesson plans and schemes of work.	23 (21 %.)	77 71.3%)	0	8 (7.4%)	0	1.86	0.601
My head teacher provides mentorship and coaching support	52 (48.1%)	42 (38.9%)	10 (9.3%)	4 (3.7%)	0(0%)	1.69	.793
Supervision in my school is focused on professional development, not just fault-finding.	33 (30.6%)	69 (63.9%)	6 (5.6%)	0	0	1.75	.549
The head teacher organizes in-service training or workshops.	17 (15.7%)	73 (67.6%)	10 (9.3%)	8 (7.4)	0	2.08	.738
Supervision practices are consistent and follow a clear schedule.	15 (13.9%)	39 (36.1%)	26 (24.1%)	16 (14.8%)	12 (11.1%)	2.73	1.204
I participate in regular meetings to discuss performance and teaching improvement.	15 (13.9%)	40 (37.0%)	19 (17.6%)	30 (27.8%)	4 (3.7%)	2.73	1.130
The head teacher encourages peer learning and collaboration among teachers	40 (37.0%)	37 (34.3%)	20 (18.5%)	6 (5.6%)	5 (4.6%)	2.06	1.096

Source: Field data 2025

Table 1 presents the common supervision practices used by head teachers in private secondary schools in Ibanda District. The findings indicate that the majority of teachers strongly agreed (23.1%) or agreed (63.0%) that head teachers regularly conducted classroom observations to monitor teaching practices, with a low mean score of 1.69 and a standard deviation of 0.793, suggesting high agreement and consistency in responses. This

implies that classroom observation is a widely used supervisory tool. During interviews, one head teacher emphasized:

"I block out two mornings every week just for learning walks and full-period observations; it keeps instruction visible and supports targeted coaching."

This testimony underscores the deliberate effort by school leaders to keep classroom practice within

their oversight. The literature equally emphasizes the importance of classroom observation. Sergiovanni (2009) argues that routine observation provides opportunities for teachers to reflect on their practice, while Robinson (2011) notes that effective instructional leaders rely heavily on observations to identify areas of strength and weakness. Similarly, Marshall (2013) insists that consistent lesson observation fosters accountability and improvement in instructional quality.

The results further showed a divided response concerning the provision of timely feedback after observations (Mean ≈ 3.57, SD ≈ 1.18). While some teachers acknowledged receiving immediate feedback, others expressed dissatisfaction with delays in communication. One head teacher admitted: *"I try to debrief within 48 hours, but exam seasons stretch us, some feedback slips to the next week, which I know blunts its impact."* This reveals that though feedback mechanisms exist, time constraints sometimes hinder their effectiveness. According to Hattie and Timperley (2007), the effectiveness of feedback depends largely on its timeliness, specificity, and clarity. Zepeda (2017) similarly stresses that delayed feedback weakens the opportunity for immediate correction and learning. Danielson (2011) adds that structured post-observation conferences conducted promptly help teachers better internalize and implement the suggestions.

Most respondents agreed that feedback from the head teacher has helped them improve their teaching skills (Mean = 2.09, SD = 0.753). This suggests that, when provided, feedback is not only valued but also utilized for professional growth. One head teacher explained: *"When I anchor feedback in actual student work and model a strategy the same week, I see teachers try it the very next lesson."* This shows that effective feedback is practical and directly linked to classroom practice. Blase and Blase (2000) contend that constructive feedback that models best practices can significantly improve teacher performance. Likewise, Kraft, Blazar, and Hogan (2018) establish that targeted, evidence-based feedback has long-term benefits for both teaching quality and student outcomes.

The study also found that head teachers often review lesson plans and schemes of work as part of their supervisory role (Mean = 1.86, SD = 0.601). This reflects a culture of accountability and planning discipline. One head teacher remarked: *"Every Thursday I sign off on lesson plans and schemes; I'm checking alignment, objectives, activities, and assessment must match."* This practice ensures consistency in curriculum delivery and adherence to national standards. According to Ornstein and Hunkins (2016), reviewing instructional plans ensures coherence and prevents gaps in teaching. Stronge (2018) also highlights that regular plan reviews help to align classroom activities with learning outcomes, thereby improving curriculum coverage and teaching effectiveness.

Findings indicated strong agreement that head teachers provide mentorship and coaching support to their teachers (Mean = 1.69, SD = 0.781). This portrays supervision as a supportive rather than punitive process. As one head teacher explained: *"Each new teacher is paired with a veteran; we co-plan, I co-teach once a month, and we keep a coaching log."* Such testimonies point to structured mentorship systems that foster professional growth. The literature affirms that mentorship and coaching are powerful tools for developing teaching capacity. Darling-Hammond, Hyler, and Gardner (2017) observe that mentoring enhances instructional strategies, while Kraft et al. (2018) assert that continuous coaching leads to sustainable improvements in classroom practice.

Respondents strongly agreed that supervision in their schools is focused on professional development rather than fault-finding (Mean = 1.75, SD = 0.542). This demonstrates a shift from a traditional inspection model to a developmental one. As one head teacher proudly stated: *"Our mantra is 'support before sanction', we identify one leverage point and practice it until it sticks."* Such a philosophy promotes teacher confidence and openness to improvement. Glickman, Gordon, and Ross-Gordon (2014) argue that supervision that prioritizes teacher growth rather than judgment creates trust and motivates improvement. Bryk et al. (2010) further emphasize that developmental supervision cultures are linked to stronger teacher collaboration and improved student learning.

The results showed that head teachers also organize in-service training or workshops for

teachers (Mean = 2.08, SD = 0.819). This suggests that professional development activities are a valued supervisory practice. One head teacher noted: *"Once a term we run a Saturday institute on assessment, differentiation, or literacy across subjects, followed by classroom try-outs."* This testimony reflects deliberate planning for capacity-building. Desimone and Garet (2015) argue that sustained professional development programs, particularly those connected to classroom application, positively influence teaching. Similarly, Darling-Hammond et al. (2017) highlight that workshops aligned with teachers' needs and school goals are effective in raising instructional quality.

The study also revealed that there were mixed views about the consistency of supervision schedules (Mean = 2.73, SD = 1.130). While some schools had predictable systems, others reported irregularities. One head teacher candidly stated: *"We publish a supervision calendar, but national exams and co-curriculars often bump visits teachers feel that unpredictability."* This suggests that although schools aspire to regular supervision, competing responsibilities often interfere. According to Zepeda (2017), consistency in supervision schedules enhances teacher preparedness and promotes accountability. Danielson (2011) also emphasizes that structured and predictable supervision cycles encourage teachers to engage meaningfully in the process.

Respondents indicated varied experiences regarding regular meetings to discuss performance and teaching improvement (Mean = 2.73, SD = 1.130). While some teachers regularly participated, others reported irregular attendance. One head teacher explained: *"Departments meet fortnightly to review results and plan reteaching; attendance is strong in exam classes but spotty elsewhere."* This suggests that while meetings are valued, their consistency is not universal. Robinson (2011) observes that collaborative review of performance data enhances instructional responses. DuFour, DuFour, and Eaker (2008) also argue that departmental meetings and professional learning communities foster collective responsibility for teaching and learning outcomes and finally, findings showed that head teachers encourage peer learning and collaboration among teachers (Mean = 2.06, SD = 1.096). This points to

a growing emphasis on collaborative professional cultures. One head teacher highlighted: *"We run monthly peer observations, no evaluation, just 'see-one, try-one, share-one'; it's boosted strategy spread far faster than memos."* Such practices create safe spaces for shared learning. Vescio, Ross, and Adams (2008) found that professional learning communities build teacher capacity through peer learning, while Hargreaves and Fullan (2012) emphasize that collaboration strengthens collective efficacy, which is critical for sustained school improvement.

The analysis shows that classroom observation, lesson plan reviews, mentorship, professional development, and in-service training were the most dominant and consistent supervision practices used by head teachers. On the other hand, feedback timeliness, supervision scheduling, and regular performance meetings were less consistent, indicating areas that need improvement to enhance supervision effectiveness in private secondary schools in Ibanda District.

Discussions

Supervision practices used by headteachers in private secondary schools in Ibanda District, Southwestern Uganda.

The study revealed that classroom observation was the most consistently applied supervisory practice by head teachers in private secondary schools in Ibanda District, with a high level of agreement among teachers (Mean = 1.69, SD = 0.793). This aligns closely with prior studies in Uganda, Kenya, Tanzania, and Ethiopia, which underscore classroom observation as a central tool in instructional supervision (Abdullah et al., 2022; Ochieng, 2021; Mwangi & Wambua, 2022; Kassahun, 2023). During interviews, one head teacher emphasized: *"I block out two mornings every week just for learning walks and full-period observations; it keeps instruction visible and supports targeted coaching."* This testimony illustrates deliberate efforts to maintain instructional oversight, echoing Sergiovanni (2009), who argues that regular observation encourages reflection and self-improvement among teachers. Similarly, Robinson (2011) and Marshall (2013) note that structured lesson observations provide an evidence-based

foundation for identifying areas of strength and areas requiring improvement.

The findings also highlighted mixed responses regarding the timeliness of feedback after classroom observations (Mean ≈ 3.57, SD ≈ 1.18). While some teachers acknowledged prompt feedback, others noted delays, particularly during exam periods. One head teacher admitted: *"I try to debrief within 48 hours, but exam seasons stretch us; some feedback slips to the next week, which I know blunts its impact."* This finding resonates with Hattie and Timperley (2007), who emphasize that timely feedback is critical for effective instructional improvement. Zepeda (2017) similarly stresses that delays weaken the immediate applicability of feedback, while Danielson (2011) recommends structured post-observation conferences to maximize teacher learning. The study confirms that although feedback mechanisms exist, their effectiveness is constrained by competing responsibilities and time pressures, echoing gaps highlighted in prior research (Abdullah et al., 2022; Mwangi & Wambua, 2022).

The study found strong evidence that mentorship and coaching were prominent in supervisory practices (Mean = 1.69, SD = 0.781). Teachers reported that pairing novice educators with experienced mentors enhanced instructional skills and confidence. One head teacher explained: *"Each new teacher is paired with a veteran; we co-plan, I co-teach once a month, and we keep a coaching log."* This aligns with Darling-Hammond, Hyler, and Gardner (2017), who argue that mentoring strengthens teachers' instructional strategies, while Kraft et al. (2018) emphasize that sustained coaching fosters long-term improvement. The findings support the literature, particularly Karanja and Muthoni (2024) and Wanjiku (2024), which highlight that coaching-oriented approaches enhance teacher motivation and professional development, though the current study also shows that consistent implementation remains a challenge in some schools.

Reviewing lesson plans and schemes of work emerged as another widely adopted practice (Mean = 1.86, SD = 0.601), reinforcing accountability and curriculum alignment. One head teacher remarked: *"Every Thursday I sign off on lesson plans and schemes; I'm checking alignment,*
objectives, activities, and assessment must match." This practice aligns with Ornstein and Hunkins (2016), who note that plan reviews ensure coherence in teaching, and Stronge (2018), who emphasizes their role in improving instructional effectiveness. Similarly, Mwangi and Wambua (2022) found that structured plan review improves adherence to standards and enhances classroom outcomes.

In-service training and professional development activities were widely appreciated by teachers (Mean = 2.08, SD = 0.738). Head teachers organized workshops and continuous learning sessions, echoing Njeri (2023) and Desimone and Garet (2015), who argue that targeted, needs-based professional development significantly enhances instructional quality. One head teacher noted: *"Once a term we run a Saturday institute on assessment, differentiation, or literacy across subjects, followed by classroom try-outs."* This confirms that professional development linked to classroom application is critical for translating supervision into tangible teacher improvement, as highlighted in the literature (Darling-Hammond et al., 2017).

The study identified areas of inconsistency, particularly in supervision scheduling (Mean = 2.73, SD = 1.204) and regular performance meetings (Mean = 2.73, SD = 1.130). Teachers reported variability in observing scheduled supervision, largely due to competing responsibilities such as exams and extracurricular activities. One head teacher explained: *"We publish a supervision calendar, but national exams and co-curriculars often bump visits; teachers feel that unpredictability."* This finding corresponds with the literature indicating that inconsistency in supervision undermines effectiveness (Kassahun, 2023; Wanjiku, 2024). Consistent and predictable supervision cycles are emphasized by Zepeda (2017) and Danielson (2011) as key to fostering accountability and professional growth.

The study highlighted the promotion of peer learning and collaborative professional cultures (Mean = 2.06, SD = 1.096). Teachers appreciated opportunities for peer observation and shared strategy sessions. One head teacher explained: *"We run monthly peer observations, no evaluation, just 'see-one, try-one, share-one'; it's*

boosted strategy spread far faster than memos." This reflects the growing recognition of collaborative cultures in improving instructional quality, supporting Vescio, Ross, and Adams (2008), and Hargreaves and Fullan (2012), who stress that professional learning communities foster collective efficacy and sustained improvement.

The study therefore, confirms that head teachers in Ibanda District employ a mix of instructional, mentorship, and professional development-oriented supervisory practices. Practices such as classroom observation, lesson plan reviews, mentorship, and in-service training align with global research demonstrating their effectiveness in enhancing teacher performance and student outcomes (Abdullah et al., 2022; Darling-Hammond et al., 2017; Robinson, 2011). However, inconsistencies in feedback timeliness, supervision scheduling, and performance meetings reflect systemic challenges that limit the full potential of these strategies, echoing gaps noted in prior literature (Mwangi & Wambua, 2022; Kassahun, 2023; Wanjiku, 2024). Qualitative testimonies further reinforce that supportive supervision fosters professional growth, teacher motivation, and collaboration, suggesting that the adoption of structured, consistent, and participatory practices can maximize supervision effectiveness in private secondary schools.

Conclusions

The study concludes that headteachers in private secondary schools in Ibanda District employ a variety of supervision practices, including classroom observations, lesson plan reviews, mentorship, feedback provision, and in-service training, which overall support teacher professional growth and accountability.

Recommendation

For Headteachers: Private secondary school headteachers in Ibanda District should continue to implement structured and consistent supervision practices, including regular classroom observations, timely feedback, mentorship, and professional development activities. Emphasis should be placed on ensuring feedback is prompt and actionable, and that supervision schedules are adhered to, to maximize teachers' professional growth and instructional effectiveness.

For Teachers: Teachers should actively engage in supervision processes, including mentoring sessions, feedback discussions, and professional development opportunities. They should also collaborate more with colleagues to share best practices, improve lesson planning, and enhance teaching strategies for diverse learners.

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