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## Effects of Educational Supervision on Students' Academic Performance in Nadowli District in the Upper West Region of Ghana

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### **Abstract:**

*The study finds out the effects of educational supervision on students' academic performance in the Nadowli District in the Upper West Region of Ghana. Four research questions were used for the study. The descriptive research design was employed for the study. Both the purposive and simple random sampling techniques were used to select 30 education officers and 100 teachers respectively for the study. The research instrument that was used to collect the data was the questionnaire. The data gathered was analyzed and presented in frequencies and percentages. The study revealed that most of the respondents agreed that educational supervision helped to improve quality of education. Also, it was realized that educational supervision in the district followed a top-down process. Again, it was revealed that the role of supervisors was providing assistance to teachers, providing feedback and providing of guidance and counselling services. The study further revealed that inadequacy of trained personnel posed a great challenge to educational supervision. Based on the findings, it was recommended that Supervisors should be encouraged and motivated by the Government, stakeholders, and Non-governmental organizations with incentives to enable them visit schools to supervise teachers. Much training, pre-service and in-service-training should be given to supervisors by Ghana Education Service.*

**Keywords:** Supervision, Academic performance, Education, Ghana.

### **1. Introduction**

#### *1.1. Background to the Study*

The evolution of instructional supervision is evident throughout history as a reflection of learning theory and social and political influences (Fine, 1997). According to Igwe (2001), to supervise means to guide, assist, direct, oversee, or to make sure that anticipated principles are met. Thus, supervision in a school implies the process of ensuring that principles, rules, regulations and methods prescribed for purposes of implementing and achieving the objectives of education are effectively carried out. Supervision therefore involves the use of expert knowledge and experiences to oversee evaluate and coordinate the process of improving teaching and learning activities in schools. Furthermore, supervision could be seen as an interaction involving some kind of established relationship between and among people, such that people influence others. To some extent this form of interactions are deeply challenged by a predetermined programme of instruction. According to Netzer and Kerey (1971), the systematization of the interaction of those responsible for operating within the structure of administration is called supervision. Thus, the supervisor is expected in the course of his/her duty, to initiate several activities that will lead to a successful merging of these two contexts in order to achieve harmony and satisfaction. Supervision is a multifaceted process that focuses on instruction to provide teachers with information to improve their teaching performance (Beach & Reinhartz, 1989). A common characteristic of instruction and supervision is that these processes occur in a face-to-face environment. Educational supervision is one of the few activities which can provide adequate competencies for effective teaching and learning throughout our schools. We all need to know more about the effects of educational supervision in Ghana especially in the Nadowli District. I am of the view that, the current trend of educational supervision issues today demands that the effects of supervision should be studied at all levels of education. The goal of instructional supervision is to assist teachers in improving instruction (Glickman, Gordon, & Ross-Gordon, 2001; Zepeda, 2003). Supervision of instruction is mandated by Departments of Education and local school districts to assist teachers in providing high quality instruction to public school students. The process of supervising a teacher in an instructional setting often involves direct assistance to improve the strategies of classroom practice through observation and evaluation of teacher performance (Glickman et al., 2001). This procedure is currently practiced in local school districts through checklists and narratives forms that evaluate teachers in a face-to-face setting. Effective supervision is seen as one key to the complex issue of improving the quality and efficiency of basic education, the quality of educational management and the quality of educational attainment. According to Shiundu and Omulando (1992), positive factors affecting quality of teachers have a role in improving quality of teaching and curriculum implementation by controlling unwanted absenteeism, negligence in lesson preparation and laxity in marking of books and feedback. They go on to assert that an effective supervisor should be a little more informed of modern methods of administration and those of teaching. It is the supervisor who is responsible for quality (Beardwell & Claydon,

2007); hence if head teachers played their role, there would be no need for quality debates. It is more so taking into consideration that Grauwe (2007) identified challenges confronting external supervision, particularly in developing countries and Africa, to include, among other things inadequate funds and vehicles for travel, poor supervision techniques, too many schools per officer, and time constraints (p. 12). There is also conflict between their advisory and control roles yielding little towards school performance and productivity due to poor human relations. Wanzare (2003) concluded that, school supervision is merely to ensure strict adherence to rules and regulations, and allegiance to principals. Not all, but also, there is hardly any follow up, even by the internal supervisor on the inspectors' behalf, hence the need to re-think internal supervision as a tool for attainment of quality education in Ghana. The prime aim of any supervisor is to institute change, not to maintain status quo, so as to improve performance for quality education. Many of these proposed changes originated from middle or upper level management, and then passed downwards for implementation (Beardwell & Claydon, 2007). Some of these changes may impose new standards; these will require for new skills, inconvenient, may change administrative structures and personnel roles, or this may put pressure on the status quo. As a link between the management and employees, the principal or head of every educational institution is responsible for seeing that changes are successfully introduced into the school (Samoei, 2009; Musungu, 2007). Akyeampong and Asante (2006) noted that both absenteeism and lateness are symptomatic of education systems that have weak teacher management structures, and are unable to provide incentives to motivate teachers to improve their attitudes toward work. Certain Penalties and punishment for lateness and absenteeism have been prescribed by the Ghana Education Service (GES) but head teachers seem unable to enforce them because the professional culture does not promote the necessary authority for enforcement (Akyeampong & Asante, 2006). This problem of supervision complicates issues because it affects teachers' commitment to work, observable attendance patterns and quality of service delivery in the classrooms and the school as a whole. It is in line with these foregoing situations that the effects of educational supervision and its impact on students' academic performance need to be examined. Supervision still has a long way to go in the educational system of Ghana. It is against this backdrop that this research needs to be carried out to help identify the role of educational supervision in improving students' academic performance.

## 2. Statement of the Problem

Taylor (1981) challenges the utility of quality control as a desirable concept and management approach in education. School supervision is perceived as a major tool for both quality control and for improving the quality of education (Young, 1981) and has received wide support internationally. School supervision services exist in nearly all districts; they have played key roles in the development of the public education system, by promoting the quality of schools and supporting their improvement. However, in many districts, these services are under increasingly heavy critique, because of their failure to have positive impact on quality teaching and learning in schools. This can be attributed to inadequate resources and series of poor management and planning decisions. It seems that supervisors/inspectors actually do assist improvements in the quality of performance of the pupils. By systematically monitoring the teaching and learning processes in various schools, by guiding instructors to achieve higher standards of teaching, and by evaluating 'objectively' the teaching-learning processes, inspectors/supervisors help in maintaining as well as upgrading performance standards. Against this background, many districts have attempted to reform their supervision system. These reforms are also inspired by the need to improve educational quality and by the recent trend towards more schools autonomy. Really, the ability of any school to be able to use its greater freedom efficiently and effectively will depend to a large extent on support services on which it can rely. Educational supervision may be needed to guide schools in their decision-making and to monitor the use they make of their resources, much research and studies have not been undertaken to assess the effects of supervision in the Nadowli district. It is against this background that the researcher seeks to find out the effects of educational supervision on students' academic performance in the Nadowli District in the Upper West Region of Ghana.

## 3. Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of this study was to examine the role of educational supervision in improving students' academic performance in the Nadowli District in the Upper West Region of Ghana.

## 4. Objectives of the Study

Specifically, the objectives of the study sought to:

- find out the rationale for educational supervision
- examine the structures of educational supervision
- outline the roles of supervisors in educational supervision
- examine the challenges supervisors encounter in educational supervision.

### 4.1. Research Questions

Based on the objectives of the study, the following research questions were used to for the study.

- What is the rationale for educational supervision?
- What are the structures of educational supervision?
- What are the roles of supervisors in educational supervision?

What is the challenges supervisors encounter in educational supervision?

## 5. Review Of Related Literature

### 5.1. *The Rationale for Educational Supervision*

Supervision is viewed as a co-operative venture in which supervisors and teachers engage in dialogue for the purpose of improving instruction which logically should contribute to student improved learning and success (Hoy & Forsyth, 1986; Sergiovanni & Starratt, 2002; Sullivan & Glanz, 2000). The priority of all countries, especially the developing ones, is to improve the quality of schools and the achievement of students (De Grauwe, 2001) since learning outcomes depend largely on the quality of education being offered (Barro, 2006). Barro (2006) further notes that higher quality education fosters economic growth and development. But quality education partly depends on how well teachers are trained and supervised since they are one of the key inputs to education delivery (Lockheed & Verspoor, 1991). De Grauwe (2001) posits that national authorities rely strongly on the school supervision system to monitor both the quality of schools and key measures of its success, such as student achievement. Many researchers believe that supervision of instruction has the potential to improve classroom management and practices, and can contribute to greater student success in academics through the professional growth and improvement of teachers (Blasé & Blasé, 1999; Musaazi, 1985; Sergiovanni & Starratt, 2002; and Sullivan & Glanz, 1999). To achieve the objectives of supervision, supervisors of instruction generally advise, assist and support teachers (Hoy & Forsyth, 1986; Sergiovanni & Starratt, 2002). The International Institute for Educational Planning [IIEP], (2007) and United Nation Education Scientific and Culture Organisation [UNESCO], (2007) also inspect, control and evaluate teachers (IIEP/UNESCO, 2007). In a related way, Blasé and Blasé (1999) suggest that teachers put up their best when they are motivated. They note that effective instructional leadership impacts positively on teacher motivation, satisfaction, self-esteem, efficacy, and teachers' sense of security and their feelings of support. Improving the quality of education in Ghana, partly through the improvement of supervision, has been a priority of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports. The Government of Ghana introduced Free Compulsory Universal Basic Education (fCUBE) in 1996 to make education accessible to all children of school age and to improve the quality of education delivery. fCUBE has three main components: improving the quality of teaching and learning; improving access and participation; and improving management efficiency (Mankoe, 2006). The first and third components relate directly to the practice of supervision of instruction. The Ministry of Education represents the sector in strategic (Government and Development Partners) dialogue, and has the overall responsibility for education sector policy formulation, planning, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of projects and programmes. The Ghana Education Service (GES) is responsible for service delivery including deployment of teachers, allocation of textbooks, and supervision of schools and teachers. The Education sector of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports, in collaboration with the GES, has implemented a number of interventions to achieve the objectives of the components of the fCUBE. The Inspectorate Division at headquarters and Inspectorate Units at regional and district offices have been strengthened with the intention of providing effective supervision in schools. At the primary school level, for example, supervisory structures and practices have been put in place to improve instruction. The short-term goal of this initiative was to equip personnel involved in supervision in schools with the necessary competencies and skills to ensure effective delivery of education. In view of this, the government of Ghana occasionally provides in-service training courses and workshops at the national, regional and district levels to strengthen the management capacity of personnel in supervisory positions, and thereby to enhance their supervisory practices in the schools.

### 5.2. *Structures of Educational Supervision*

Decision-making about education in Ghana is basically a top-down process. Education policies that directly affect teachers, such as those related to supervision of instruction, are formulated at the top and handed down to teachers and head teachers for implementation (Baffour-Awuah, 2011). When new policies about supervision arise and funds are available, regional and district supervision personnel are given in-service training at the national level for onward transmission to classroom teachers and head teachers for implementation. Circuit supervisors use the outcomes of training programmes and the head teachers' appraisal guides (including supervision of instruction) formulated at the top to assess the performance of head teachers. Head teachers are also responsible for the management of affairs at the school level, yet they are accountable to the district directorate. Even though, as part of the 1997 Education Reforms, educational management has been decentralized to the district level, teachers (including head teachers) are not involved in making decisions which directly affect the conduct of their instructional practices (MOE, 2006). Decentralization is mainly concerned about budgeting and the disbursement of funds (financial management). Decision-making and implementation in the GES are guided by bureaucratic processes, and are rarely seen to be influenced by political or cultural values. Politically, the regional and district directorates of education are accountable to the Regional Ministers and District Chief Executives respectively (MOE, 2006). However, the implementation of educational policy is supervised by regional and district directorates of education. In the GES, appointments of officers and heads of institutions are based on rank, years of service and performance during a selection interview. Similarly, gender and ethnic issues do not affect decision-making in the GES. The selection of personnel to supervision positions is also based on merit, and not the tribe or gender or social standing of the individual. Prospective officers are not required to indicate either their religious affiliation or tribal group. Gender is also not an issue in the GES in terms of decision-making. Supervision of instruction in Ghana has generally been the responsibility of school inspectors and personnel within the schools. External supervisors (those located outside the schools) include the Assistant Director of Education responsible for supervision (ADE Supervision) and circuit supervisors at the district offices, regional inspectors and headquarters inspectors in the Ghana Education Service. At the primary school level, inspectors (or circuit supervisors) from the district education offices inspect school facilities and provide assistance and support to teachers and head teachers, while inspectors at the regional offices and headquarters normally conduct supervision in senior high schools, technical and teacher training colleges. ADE Supervision coordinates and monitors circuit supervisors to supervise teaching and learning in public basic schools. Circuit supervisors, however, do not directly supervise teaching and learning in private schools, but rather they inspect the facilities of these schools. Internally, head teachers in primary schools and headmasters in junior high schools supervise

instruction, while assistant headmasters or headmistresses and heads of department in senior high schools, and vice principals in technical and teacher training colleges (who are responsible for academic work) hold these responsibilities. It is worthy to note that heads of primary and junior high schools in Ghana perform administrative and managerial duties in addition to supervision of instruction. The Ghana Education Service mandates assistant head teachers and assistant headmasters/headmistresses in primary and junior high schools respectively to be at the helm of affairs while the heads are away on official duties or absent from school (MOE, 2006). At the district level other structures such as District Education Oversight Committees (DEOCs), School Management Committees, District Teacher Support Teams (DTSTs) and Parent-Teacher Associations (PTAs) have been established to contribute to school supervision. These bodies are to see to it that teachers attend school regularly and punctually, and make good use of instructional hours. Some teachers are in the habit of reporting to school late, "clocking off" earlier than the normal time and absenting themselves from school (MOE. 2006). It is worthy to note that the Ghana Education Service recognizes the importance of external supervision as a complement to on-site school supervision. The Director General of Ghana Education Service observed that quality education depends, among other things, on effective supervision and that is the more reason why GES is encouraging and empowering School Management Committees (SMCs) and Parent Teacher Associations (PTAs), which are important agents of school supervision (Ananga, 2011).

### *5.3. The Roles of Supervisors in Educational Supervision*

Researchers conceptualize effective supervision not as an end result or product, but rather as the collection of knowledge and skills that supervisors possess. Glickman, Gordon and Ross-Gordon (2004) posit that effective supervision requires well trained personnel with knowledge and skills who are prepared to provide the necessary and appropriate guidance and support to the teaching staff. According to Glickman, Gordon and Ross-Gordon (2004), these personal attributes are applied through the supervisory roles such as giving direct assistance to classroom teachers, group development, professional development, and curriculum development and action research. They believe that "this adhesive pulls together organizational goals and teacher needs and provides for improved learning" (p. 9). To facilitate effective supervisory processes Glickman, Gordon and Ross-Gordon (2004) propose that supervisors should perform the following roles: provide personal development by providing on-going contact with the individual teacher to observe and assist him/her in classroom instruction; ensure professional development by providing the learning opportunities for faculty provided or supported by the school and school system; and provide group development through the gathering together of teachers to make decisions on mutual instructional concern. Similarly, supervisors should support curriculum development through the revision and modification of content, plans and materials of classroom instruction (p. 10). More so, Gordon and Ross-Gordon (2004) also posit that supervisors should engage teachers in action research by systematically studying faculty to find out what is happening in the classroom and school with the aim of improving student learning. Neagley and Evans (1980) also conceive that effective supervision requires a high level of leadership. They propose that the successful supervisor should be intelligent, well trained in educational psychology, likable, experienced, and an expert in democratic group processes. Other researchers also share similar views as those upheld by Glickman and colleagues. For example, Glanz, Shulman and Sullivan (2006) believe that an effective head teacher possesses the following characteristics: he/she is situational aware of details and undercuts in the school; has intellectual stimulation of current theories and practices; is a change agent; and, actively involves teachers in design and implementation of important decisions and policies. They also believe that effective principals provide effective supervision. To them, an effective principal creates a culture of shared belief and sense of cooperation, monitors and evaluates the effectiveness of school practices, is resourceful and communicates and operates from strong ideas and beliefs about schooling. On their part, Blasé and Blasé (1999) propose a model of effective principal derived from data (findings) which consists of two major themes: talking with teachers to promote reflection and promoting professional growth. According to them, effective principals value dialogue that encouraged teachers to critically reflect on their learning and professional practice through the following strategies: making of suggestions about the programme, giving constant feedback, and provide modeling, using the method of inquiry and soliciting advice and opinions, and giving praise. They also argue that effective principals use six strategies to promote teachers' professional growth: emphasizing the study of teaching and learning; supporting collaboration efforts among educators; developing coaching relationships among educators; encouraging and supporting redesign of programmes; applying the principles of adult learning, growth, and development to all phases of staff development; and implementing action research to inform instructional decision making (p. 11). Furthermore, some researchers also believe that successful supervisors are those who link interpersonal skills with technical skills. In view of this, Brennen (2008) notes that an effective supervisor who links interpersonal with technical skills will be successful in improving instruction. He suggests that an effective supervisor should be able to build self-acceptance, moral, trust, and rapport between the two parties. Brennen suggests that the supervisor in an effective supervision process should not delve deeply into the role of a counsellor. The focus is always on the teaching act and not matters affecting the classroom teacher that are beyond the confines of the classroom. Objectivity, devoid of personal biases, should be the hallmark if supervision is to be effective, he asserts. It is for this reason that Brennen (2008) posits that effective supervision results when a supervisor clearly sets out the criteria to be used in the evaluative process and ensures that even if the final assessment is not a good one, the teacher will still benefit from the exercise and leave with his/her self-esteem intact. As shown above, all researchers share the belief that supervision is effective if the supervisor possesses and exhibits qualities and characteristics related to knowledge, interpersonal and technical skills. They are silent, however, on the direct causal effect of such qualities on student performance.

### *5.4. Challenges Supervisors encounter in Educational Supervision*

The main purpose of supervision is to work collaboratively with teachers, and provide them with the necessary assistance, guidance, and support to improve instruction. Some support systems in education delivery, as well as supervisor characteristics

and practices and the context within which supervisors work pose challenges to the smooth performance of their duties. Researchers have suggested that supervisors should possess some working knowledge and skills to be able to provide the necessary assistance, guidance, and support services to teachers for improved classroom practices (Glickman, Gordon & Ross-Gordon, 2004; Holland, 2004). Holland (2004) believes that educators (supervisors) must offer evidence that they have the necessary knowledge and skills to make important decisions about instruction. They should have credentials in the form of degrees and diplomas as a form of evidence. But, Holland (2004) acknowledges that credentials alone do not inspire trust. It is a common belief that academic qualifications and long term working experience provide people with knowledge and skills to be able to perform satisfactorily in an establishment. Researchers have not set a minimum qualification as a benchmark to be attained by supervisors, but minimum teaching qualifications differ from country to another. One difference may be between developed and developing nations. In most African countries the minimum teaching qualification is Teachers' Certificate "A" Post-middle or Postsecondary, whereas that of developed countries is a Bachelor of Education. However, most developing countries are now phasing out those qualifications and replacing them with degrees and diplomas (De Grauwe, 2001). It is expected that supervisors have higher qualifications than their teachers, or at worst, at par with them so that they will be able to provide them with the necessary guidance and support. A higher qualification like Bachelor of Educational Psychology or Diploma in Education is sufficient for persons in supervisory positions. De Grauwe (2001) found in four African countries that both qualifications and experience seemed important in the selection of supervisors, but at the primary level, many of the most experienced teachers did not have strong academic background because they entered the teaching profession a long time in the past when qualification requirements were low. He indicated, however, that apart from Tanzania the situation in the other countries has now improved, and supervisors (including head teachers) have strong background and qualifications which are higher than the teachers they supervise. In Botswana, for instance, teachers were by then trained up to Diploma level (De Grauwe, 2001). This finding is corroborated by Pansiri (2008). He also observed that diploma and degree qualifications were new programmes for primary school teachers which were introduced in the mid 1980s in Botswana. He found that most teachers were trained at the certificate levels: Primary teachers' Certificate (PTC), Primary High Teaching Certificate (PH), Primary Lower Teaching Certificate (PL), or Elementary Teaching Certificate (ETC). In Ghana, most primary school teachers (including headteachers) hold Teachers' Certificate "A" Post-middle or Postsecondary. Initial (basic) Teacher Training Colleges in Ghana have recently been up-graded to Diploma Awarding Institutions. In most African countries, headteachers are promoted on the basis of seniority and experience (De Grauwe, 2001), and by virtue of their position as heads, they automatically become the instructional supervisors at the school level. In some developing countries, most primary school teachers do not possess higher qualifications in the form of degrees and diplomas; so they occupy supervisory positions on the basis of seniority and long service. It would be proper for supervisors to possess higher qualifications and longer years of teaching experience than the teachers they supervise. Such supervisors would have sufficient knowledge and experience in both content and pedagogy to be able to confidently assist, guide and support their teachers. In Ghanaian primary schools, if two persons have the same qualification, the one with longer years of teaching experience is promoted to head the school, and subsequently becomes the instructional supervisor. The Ghana Education Service regards academic qualifications, such as degrees and diplomas, necessary for supervisory positions, but most primary school headteachers (supervisors) hold Teachers' Certificate "A" Post-secondary or Post-middle (MOE, 2007). With the introduction of the 1987 Education Reforms, the then headteachers who held Teachers' Certificate "A" Post-middle were replaced with Certificate "A" Postsecondary holders, even if the former were seniors in terms of long service. The minimum number of teaching years required for promotion to headteacher or supervisor differs from one country to another. In Ghana, longer years are preferred, but there is no minimum number of years. As already indicated above, the position depends on which teacher in the school has the highest qualification and longer years of service. However, there are situations where new graduate teachers work under the supervision of experienced headteachers with lower qualifications. The issue of concern is when a young degree holder from university is posted to a school to work under the supervision of a relatively older and experienced supervisor with lower qualifications. The former may not have the opportunity to try his/her new ideas if the supervisor uses a directive approach. In such situations, the supervisor may want to suggest to or direct the teacher as to what he/she should do and how it should be done. Innovation in instructional practices will be stifled, and the *status quo* in both instructional strategies and supervisory practices will be the norm. If academic qualifications should take precedence over experience, then one would have thought that new degree and diploma holders should be made to take over from headteachers (supervisors) who have lower qualifications but served for a longer number of years in teaching. But De Grauwe (2001) argues that appointing younger teachers fresh from the universities and providing them with specific training for these positions may also not solve the problem, because they may lack classroom experience. Another issue of concern is whether supervisors are given enough training to function properly in their practice. Carron and De Grauwe (1997) expressed little doubt that advisers, inspectors and other such staff need regular training, but they seldom receive it. They believe that whatever pattern of recruitment and promotion procedures, supervisors (advisers, inspectors or other such staff), need regular training but they are seldom provided with pre-service or in-service training. They note that throughout the history of supervision, training of supervisors has been considered important. They referred to the International Conference on Education (1937) "that persons appointed to supervisory positions be placed on a period of probation or by following a special course organised by a postgraduate Institution" (p. 30). They acknowledged, however, that pre-service or in-service training programmes are still few and far between. Apart from the training supervisors will receive, there is the urgent need for support instruments and materials to support practice. Data bases are needed to prepare and monitor the supervision work (Carron & De Grauwe, 1997). Access to the internet, bulletins and journals is another source of support to supervisors. Supervision guides and manuals may serve as reminders to supervisors about how certain practices and behaviour should be followed, and provide a uniform platform for supervisors to operate, thereby reassuring teachers of the personal biases which individual supervisors may introduce. They can guide practitioners to avoid relying solely on their own individual experiences or

orientation. There can be no effective supervision of instruction without instructional materials. Experience has shown that most schools lack even the basic materials and equipment for teaching such as textbooks, chalkboard, decent classroom for students. Apart from such cases of nothing to supervise, there are others where the problems are lack of facilities and materials for the supervisor to use. External supervisors (inspectors) for example, often do not have transport facilities and writing materials to carry out their inspectorial duties (Ogunu, 2005).

In this era of technological advancement, literature on current instructional practices and content knowledge abound on the internet data bases, bulletins and journals. Blasé and Blasé (1999) found that principals who participated in their study enhanced their teachers' reflective behaviour by distributing literature on instructional practices to them. Such materials are relatively inaccessible to supervisors/educators in less-developed countries. Schools in developing countries often do not have access to computers, let alone being connected to the internet. Searching the internet and data bases for relevant instructional materials and making them available to their teachers is relatively difficult, therefore, for supervisors in developing countries. Similarly, most schools do not have access to education newsletters, bulletins and journals that cover current issues about supervision and instructional practices. The presence of supervision guides and manuals has the potential to improve supervision practices because they serve as reference materials for practice. Similarly, education newsletters, bulletins and journals provide supervisors with current trends in instructional strategies and content materials which they can make available to the teachers they supervise. The absence of these may pose a challenge to practice. Another challenge to supervision is a situation where headteachers, by virtue of their position, are administrators, financial managers and instructional supervisors. Such heads have relatively little time for supervision of instruction. When a choice is to be made between administrative and pedagogical duties, the latter suffers (De Grauwe, 2001). De Grauwe contends that supervisors may focus their attention on administration rather than pedagogy, because they have much power over administrative decisions. De Grauwe (2001) conceives the situation to be worse in developing countries than developed ones, because the latter can afford to employ several staff (e.g. administrative as opposed to pedagogic supervisors), so that the workload of each officer becomes less heavy and responsibilities become much clearer. According to Ogunu (2005), secondary school principals are so weighed down by routine administrative burden that they hardly find time to visit the classrooms and observe how the teachers are teaching. When principals give more time to correspondence with the Ministry of Education and its parastatals, community affairs, parents and a host of other visitors and in the process neglect their primary duty of overseeing instruction in the schools, we cannot expect good performance from students. Some unscrupulous teachers easily exploit the school head's neglect of supervision to achieve their selfish ambitions. A respondent in Rous' (2004) study indicated that she would have liked her supervisor's opinions on how to deal with certain children's behaviour, but she (the supervisor) did not have time. Other participants in the same study reported that their supervisors were not seen in their classrooms enough. Rous' study of public primary schools in the US state of Kentucky is a study conducted in a developed country, but she did not mention whether the principals (supervisors) had multiple duties/responsibilities. In a similar study in a rural public school district in the US, Bays (2001) found that principals performed duties in the areas of management, administration and supervision. She described the separation of these functions as an "artificial" activity for the principals she observed, as they moved from one type of activity to another constantly throughout the day. Bays observed that administrative and management issues took much of the principals' time and energies and detracted them from providing constant direct supervision to teachers. In Ghanaian public primary schools, headteachers perform "a magnitude of tasks", and those in remote and deprived communities combine their supervisory roles with full-time teaching and visiting pupils in their communities (Oduro, 2008). In such situations, supervisors may not be able to sufficiently supervise instruction. Carron and De Grauwe (1997) observe that countries such as Spain, France and Guinea which separate administrative from pedagogical supervision do not experience such problems. Thus, combining administrative and supervisory duties is another challenge to supervision of instruction. The way and manner that teachers react to supervision of instruction is another concern to supervisory practices. If teachers, who are the direct beneficiaries of instructional supervision, have a negative attitude towards the practice, the whole process will not yield the desired results. This is because supervision which aims at providing assistance, guidance and support for teachers to effectively provide instruction thrives on co-operation, respect and mutual trust. Some teachers see supervision as a tool used by administrators to control and intimidate them. This notion makes teachers feel unsafe and threatened when they experience any form of supervision. Ayse Bas (2002) found in Turkish private primary schools that some teachers who participated in his study felt supervision was an intrusion into their private instructional practices. Teachers in his study bemoaned that the principal's intrusive monitoring and physical presence changed the "setting" in the classrooms which resulted in false impressions. According to the teachers, there was always an element of stress and overreaction on the part of teachers and students during classroom observations. Supervisors' approach to supervision may pose a challenge to supervision of instruction. Supervisors in Ayse Bas's (2002) study (Turkish private primary schools) used controlling and intimidation approaches in their supervisory practices. The teachers confided in the researcher that they lived in a state of fear and frustration of dismissal due to the system's summative nature. This is supportive of Oliva and Pawlas's (1997) perception that some school supervisors or inspectors, as they are called in other countries, continue to fulfil their tasks with an authoritarian approach. Some respondents in Rous's (2004) study expressed feelings of fear and disappointment, which were associated with the use of criticism by instructional supervisors. The supervisors' criticisms were reported to have stifled the teachers' use of innovative practices. Yimaz, Tadan, and Ouz (2009) found that supervisors in Turkish primary schools who participated in their study used the traditional approach to supervision, and such activities were geared towards the determination of conditions, to assess and control, whereas activities like supporting, guiding and improving were ignored.

##### 5.5. Empirical Studies

In Botswana and Zimbabwe formal induction training programmes existed, but not all newly appointed supervisors had the opportunity to attend (De Grauwe, 2001). De Grauwe (2001) observed that the in-service training courses which took place in the

four countries were not integrated within the overall capacity-building programme, and did not focus sufficiently on supervision issues. According to De Grauwe (2001), many of those training programmes were ad-hoc and were related to the implementation of a particular project.

Carron and De Grauwe (1997) also note that developing countries are in want of a well-organised system to prepare both supervision and support staff for their role and to keep them up to date. In a related study conducted in Ghana by Oduro (2008), about 75 percent of the interview participants (heads) reported that they received little or no training in leadership and, therefore, used trial and error techniques to address challenges they encountered in their leadership roles. He also found that 72 percent of the heads had some training in leadership and management, but lasted between one day and two weeks. This study did not mention supervision directly. The situation is different in developed nations. Citing EURYDICE, Carron and De Grauwe (1997) found that primary school supervisors in Ireland pass through a probation period of six months, whereas their counterparts in Portugal followed a one year course. Glanz, Shulman and Sullivan (2007) note that coaches, unlike school heads and other supervisors in New York Public Schools, did not have any formal training in classroom observation and supervision. Glanz, et al. (2007) and Hawk and Hill (2003) found that coaches in the US and New Zealand respectively received training in subject specific areas, but not generics training (general supervision). This suggests the supervisors in those countries had formal training in supervision, but these researchers did not provide specific details. Bays (2001) also indicated that in the US, administrator training is a certification requirement. Such training provides principals with knowledge of supervision theory, practice, and personnel management that prepares them with general strategies to supervise all their teachers. Bays also found in her study that only one principal out of nine had background experience and training in instructional practices for students with disabilities. This suggests that, apart from generic training in supervisory practices, principals posted to special schools may be given training in that special field. In the absence of pre-service or in-service training, supervisors may be inclined to rely on their experiences with their previous supervisors over the years, as well as their existing knowledge in administration and pedagogy. In such situations, practices may differ from one supervisor to another in the same education system. There is also the possibility of stagnation in practice, instead of innovation and improvement. Empirical study by Rous (2004) has also shown that informal visits motivated teachers to improve their instructional strategies and teachers' time-on-task. Rous (2004) in her study of selected public primary school teachers in the USA found that most teachers believed that their supervisors' frequent visits and calls were important activities, whereas others reported that their supervisors were not seen in the classrooms enough. She observed that teachers were energized when supervisors "dropped by" the classrooms and interacted with the students. This was seen as a demonstration of supervisors' concern for teachers, students and programmes. Oduro (2008) conducted a similar study in Ghana and the study has shown that frequent visits to classrooms are necessary to improve teachers' time-on-task. Oduro (2008) and the World Bank report (2011) on Education in Ghana: Improving equity, efficiency and accountability of education delivery, have found that some teachers in public primary schools in Ghana are in the habit of absenting themselves from school. The World Bank report revealed that only 109 out of 197 school days are fully operational as teachers spent other days engaged in activities such as going to banks to collect salaries, attending of social gatherings and funerals, and sometimes travelling long distances to their schools. Empirical studies have shown that although some supervisors were able to observe lessons, others were unable to do so. Some participants in Pansiri's (2008) study indicated that their supervisors visited classrooms with the intention of supervising instruction but were unable to provide professional support to the teachers. However, other participants reported their supervisors observed classes and wrote notes based solely on what was occurring in the classroom. Pansiri did not show the proportion in each case. The group of participants who received feedback reported that their supervisors carried out classroom supervision positively. Pansiri did not, however, indicate whether those supervisors who could not offer professional support to the teachers were not knowledgeable in the subjects been taught or limited in expertise. Rous (2004) also reported that supervisors in her US study did not have enough time to observe lessons. Some participants in her study reported that their supervisors were not seen in their classrooms enough. Another supervisory practice which researchers have found to be fruitful is the provision of suggestions to guide instruction (Blasé & Blasé, 2004). Suggestions serve as guides to help teachers choose among alternative plans, varied teaching strategies, and classroom management practices. Blasé and Blasé (2004) observe that principals (supervisors) make suggestions in such a way as to broaden, or enrich teachers' thinking and strengths. They note that suggestions encourage creativity and innovation, as well as support work environment. The teachers in Blasé and Blasé's (1999) study overwhelmingly reported that successful principals (supervisors) offered suggestions to improve teaching and learning, vary their instructional methods, and help solve problems. The participants found principals' suggestions fruitful and strongly enhanced reflection and informed instructional behaviour. Rous' (2004) findings were consistent with this. Public primary school teachers in her US study reported that their principals commonly offered suggestions. The teachers acknowledged that when their supervisors offered helpful suggestions on instructional practices, it increased their ability to solve classroom problems. Rous observed that teachers in her study were willing to try suggestions which were offered sincerely and positively. The use of the word "helpful" in the report suggests that not all suggestions may be useful to the teachers. Visiting classrooms and providing feedback to teachers is considered one of the major roles of supervisors. Feedback provides teachers help them reflect on what actually took place in the teaching-learning process. Blasé and Blasé (2004) believe that feedback should not be a formality, but should serve as a guide for instructional improvement when it is given genuinely. Similarly, feedback (whether formally or informal, written or oral) should focus on observations rather than perspectives. Blasé and Blasé (2004) theorized that feedback reflectively informs teacher behaviour; and this results in teachers implementing new ideas, trying out a variety of instructional practices, responding to student diversity, and planning more carefully and achieving better focus. Teachers in Blasé and Blasé's (1999) study reported that effective principals provided them with positive feedback about observed lessons. They indicated that such feedback was specific; expressed caring, interest and support in a non-judgmental way; and encouraged them to think and re-evaluate their strategies. Similarly, Rous (2004) also reported that in the US public schools, feedback offered by supervisors was a formal behaviour, and was objective and based

solely on class observation. Teachers in this study saw feedback to be constructive, and very helpful to them in their instructional practices. Pansiri (2008) also reported that 70 percent of public primary school teachers in Botswana who participated in his study indicated their supervisors provided them with constructive feedback about classroom observation. However, these findings are inconsistent with Bays' (2001) findings in rural districts in the state of Virginia. She found that instructional support and specific feedback for teacher participants in the area of special education appeared to be limited. Researchers have theorized that lesson demonstration can improve teachers' instructional practices (Blasé & Blasé, 2004; Glanz, Shulman & Sullivan, 2006). Supervisors use demonstration lessons to assist teachers individually and in groups. This practice is not only used to guide new and inexperienced teachers, but veterans as well. Supervisors may learn strategies from teachers during their classroom observations, and transfer such learned activity to other teachers to try them out in their classrooms. Research study by Rous (2004) has shown that supervisors use lesson demonstrations to help teachers to improve their instructional practices. US pre-school teachers in Rous' (2004) study reported that their instructional supervisors modelled appropriate techniques, and admitted that such practices were a good source of assistance in dealing with children with special needs. Similarly, Blasé and Blasé (1999) found in the US that those supervisors in their study demonstrated teaching techniques during classroom visits. In Blasé and Blasé's study, participants did not consider the supervisors' actions as intrusive, because the latter had already cultivated respectful and trusting relationship with teachers. On the flip side, 71 percent of the teachers in Botswana who participated in Pansiri's (2008) study indicated that their supervisors neither gave demonstration lessons nor coached them on how to handle certain topics or lessons. Glanz, Shulman and Sullivan (2006) also found in the US that supervisors in their study never modelled teaching. One participant remarked "she (principal) doesn't model anything" (p. 15). It is widely believed that teaching-learning resources can improve instruction. An empirical research study has shown that some instructional supervisors ensured that teachers were provided with, and assisted to select appropriate teaching materials and resources to improve instruction (Rous, 2004). Rous (2004) indicated that although some supervisors in her study in the US public schools provided teachers with resources, materials, and funds to support classroom activities, others reported instances where instructional supervisors failed to provide resources needed by teachers to implement quality instruction. In Botswana, 59 percent of the teachers in the public primary schools Pansiri (2008) studied reported that they did not have "all" the teaching materials they needed for their classes. Only 22 percent of the participants in his study said they were provided with enough teaching materials. This situation of insufficient learning resources may be due to economic reasons and not peculiar to Botswana alone but common in public schools in other developing countries as well. In some African public schools (including Ghana), textbooks are supplied by the government, but headteachers have to make requisition for the quantity needed in every subject. With respect to other teaching resources, the schools procure what they require. In Pansiri's study, 53 percent of his teacher participants reported that their supervisors did not involve them in resource selection and procurement. Under the new policy, heads in Ghana are expected to involve teachers in the preparation of the School Performance Improvement Plan (SPIP). The teaching materials and resources (apart from textbooks) which the school would need for an academic year are included on the item list of the SPIP.

## 6. Methodology

### 6.1. Research Design

A research design, according to Fraenkel and Wallen (2000), refers to all the processes needed for collecting and analyzing data gathered for a research. This study employed the descriptive analytical studies research design. It is non-experimental, conducted without interfering with the natural setting or manipulation of study variables. The data gathered are directed toward the determination of the nature of a situation as it existed at the time of study. This design was appropriate because the study attempted to describe some aspects of a population by selecting samples of individuals who were asked to complete a questionnaire. The above does not suggest that descriptive research design is without problems. But it is known that the design leads to the situation where respondents take responses when completing a questionnaire. A descriptive research is basically designed to find out existing situation of a particular phenomenon of concern. Descriptive research deals with the relationship among non-manipulated variables. In descriptive research, the events or conditions either already exist or have occurred and the researcher mainly selects the relevant variables for an analysis for their relationships. It was also to enable the researcher explain and describe situations on the ground in relation to the variables of the study. The rationale for descriptive survey is that:

- It tells what a situation is in a systematic manner.
- It involves hypothesis formulation and testing or research questions and answers describing the situation.
- It involves collection of accurate data for the purpose of determining the current nature of the subject of study.
- It uses logical methods for inductive/deductive reasoning to arrive at generalizations. (Best & Kahn, 1995; Fraenkel & Wallen, 2000).

The descriptive survey follows specific procedures and makes possible interpretation of data collected. Here, research questions are raised and answered in a descriptive way. Any other person, therefore, can follow the same procedure and come out with the same results. The descriptive survey minimizes personality values; beliefs and predisposition of the researcher since there are laid down procedures to follow. The descriptive survey also provides the researcher with an instrument (questionnaire) which is easier for the collection of data for the study (Best & Kahn, 1995; Fraenkel & Wallen, 2000). Notwithstanding these strengths, descriptive survey has its own weakness. The main weakness of descriptive survey is that, it is not sufficiently comprehensive to provide answers. Also, the descriptive survey cannot establish cause and effect relationships. More so, the research cannot deduce conclusively the cause of the phenomena or predict what the future phenomena will be. Although descriptive survey design in the opinion of McMillan (1996), cannot help the researcher to establish a causal relationship between variables, it was used to conduct this study because it enabled me to observe, describe and interpret the prevailing factors that are associated with the topic under



study. Moreover, the use of this design permitted me to study and describe in a systematic manner, all factors as well as other events and conditions that already existed with regard to the issue under investigation. Fraenkel and Wallen (2000) also state that descriptive survey has the potential of providing a lot of information from quite a large number of individuals in a study. Hence, it was employed to carry out the study because the design could enable the researcher to obtain evidence from a large group of respondents concerning the topic under study.

### *6.2. Population*

The study was limited to Nadowli District in the Upper West Region of Ghana. The target population for the study included the District Director of Education (DDE), Assistant Director of Education [ADE (supervision)], Headteachers, and all teachers in the District. These people are those who are abreast with relevant information and knowledge in the issue under study. The decision of the researcher to include all these people was to enable him gather extensive and in-depth information on the issue under investigation.

### *6.3. Sample and Sampling Procedure*

The researcher initially thought of doing a census survey by involving all Headteachers and teachers in the area for the study but was restrained by the fact that the population was too large and some were not easily accessible. Therefore, the accessible population was considered. A representative sample of the accessible population was therefore viewed in the study to be the best option. Best and Khan (1995) have expressed the view that the primary purpose of a research is to discover principles that have universal application but to study a whole population to arrive at generalization would be impracticable, if not impossible" (P. 10). This made the researcher to use a representative sample of the population for the study. A stratified sampling technique was employed to sample 20 schools for the study. They were put into strata (groups) as primary schools, Junior High Schools and Senior High Schools. For fair representation, they were further put into groups of males and females. After that a simple random sampling was then applied to sample the respondents. Simple random sampling is a method of selecting samples such that all members of the various groups stand equal opportunity of being chosen. The lottery method of the simple random sampling was used. The male and female names were segregated and coded, and each code matched with a particular sex. It was then written on slips of paper, folded and put into a container. This was done separately for males and for females. The folded paper slips were mixed thoroughly and a number of slips were picked at random. Picking was done by teachers until the required number for male and female was obtained. In all, a sample size of one hundred (100) teachers was chosen for the study. Purposive sampling was engaged to select 20 Headteachers, 8 Circuit Supervisors, one District Director of Education, and one Assistant Director of Education (supervision) for the study. This gives the total sample size of one hundred and thirty (130).

### *6.4. Research Instrument*

The research instrument that was used to collect the data was the questionnaire. The research used a questionnaire to collect data from the respondents. The decision of the researcher to use the questionnaire was that those people are literate and can response to the questions. A questionnaire comprises a number of questions or statements that relate to the purpose of a study. It is a data-gathering instrument through which respondents are made to answer questions or respond to a given statement in writing (Best & Kahn, 1995). This method gives the necessary information the researcher wants from the respondents. With regards to the questionnaire, twenty-five (25) items in all were designed for each respondent. The questionnaires were divided into five sections A, B, C, D, and E. Section A covers the background information of respondents including gender. The rest of the sections dealt with the research questions. This was done in order to help the researcher to elicit for adequate information on the topic under study.

### *6.5. Validity and Reliability of the Instruments*

Validity of the instruments was ensured by using appropriate sampling techniques and data instrumentation in measuring the concepts of the research instrument. Other experts in research made useful suggestions to help in fine tuning the questionnaires. The reliability of the instruments was obtained through pre-testing of the instruments on a cross section of the target population. Respondents used in pre-testing the instrument were asked to make comments on the clarity of the questions. These comments were taken into consideration to make the questions as clear as possible.

### *6.6. Pre-testing of the Instrument*

Pre-testing of questionnaires on a sample of respondents drawn from the target population is useful in fine tuning aspects of the questions that could otherwise make it difficult for respondents to interpret questions as intended (Foddy, 1995). Gall, Borg and Gall (1996) have stressed the need for pilot-testing of survey instruments before administering the instruments to the respondents. The researcher did a pre-testing of the study by using fifty teachers from Sombo Primary and Junior High School, Goli Primary and Junior High School, Queen of Peace Primary and Junior High School in the District. The reliability of the instruments was confirmed by examining the individual test items with the Cronbach's alpha (Gall et al. 1996). The Cronbach alpha values for the pre-test were 0.83 and 0.83 for the first and second set of the questionnaires respectively.

### *6.7. Data Collection Procedure*

The researcher obtained a letter of introduction from the Institute of Educational Planning and Administration in the University of Cape Coast in order to enable him secure trust from the respondents. In order to get respondents to respond to the instrument on time, the researcher made an initial contact explaining the objective of the dissertation and soliciting the respondents' cooperation.

The researcher met the respondents and explained to them the rationale and purpose of the study and appealing to them to participate in the study. The researcher took time to explain the items to the respondents to enhance the validity of the data. A number of follow ups were made to ascertain whether the respondents had completed the questionnaires. The visits were necessary because they provided opportunity for further explanations to respondents who had some difficulties. One hundred and twenty (130) of the instruments were retrieved within one week representing 100% and was used for data analysis.

## 7. Data Analysis

The raw data collected from the respondents was processed by coding the questionnaires. The questionnaires were analyzed using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS version 16) and the results presented in frequency and percentages.

## 8. Results And Discussion

### 8.1. Background characteristics of respondents

This section gives background information about respondents. It deals with the gender and age of respondents from which the data was collected. Table 1 shows the distribution of the respondents by gender.

| Gender | Officers |       | Teachers |       |
|--------|----------|-------|----------|-------|
|        | No.      | %     | No.      | %     |
| Male   | 21       | 70.0  | 70       | 70.0  |
| Female | 9        | 30.0  | 30       | 30.0  |
| Total  | 30       | 100.0 | 100      | 100.0 |

Table 1: Distribution of Respondents by Gender

From Table 1, out of the total number of 20 officers' respondents 21 (70.0%) were males, whereas 9 (30.0%) were females. On the part of the teachers' respondents 70 (70.0%) were males and 30 (30.0%) were females. From the result males represented the majority. This difference could be attributed to the fact that there were more males than females in the sample of respondents used for the study.

### 8.2. Age Distribution of Parents Respondents

Item 3 of the questionnaire sought to elicit information on the ages of the respondents. The respondents were varied in ages. Table 2 shows the age distribution of respondents.

| Age           | Officers |       | Teachers |       |
|---------------|----------|-------|----------|-------|
|               | No.      | %     | No.      | %     |
| 20-25years    | -        | -     | 10       | 10.0  |
| 26-30years    | 3        | 10.0  | 20       | 20.0  |
| 31-35years    | 15       | 50.0  | 55       | 55.0  |
| 36-40years    | 9        | 30.0  | 10       | 10.0  |
| Above 40years | 3        | 10.0  | 5        | 5.0   |
| Total         | 30       | 100.0 | 100      | 100.0 |

Table 2: Age Distribution of Respondents

From Table 2, it is realized that majority of the officers 15 (50.0%) were between the ages of 31-35years, while 9 (30.0%) were between the ages of 36-40years, and 3 (10.0%) were between 26-30years and above 40 years. This implies that most of the officers selected for the study were between the ages of 31-36 years. On the part of the teachers' respondents majority 55 (55.0%) were between the ages of 31-35years. This means that most of the respondents were in the youthful ages.

### 8.3. Presentation and Analysis of Main Result

This part of the study deals with the presentation and discussion of the major findings that emerged from the research. These main results are organized and discussed in accordance with each research question.

Research Question 1: What are the Rationale for Educational Supervision?

Research question 1 sought to find out from the respondents the rationale for educational supervision. Items 4 to 8 of the questionnaire under section B were designed to assist in answering the research question. Table 3 represents the result. Respondents were asked to indicate the extent to which they agree with the statement using the tools below; SA-Strongly agree, A-Agree, D-disagree, SD-Strongly disagree.

| Statement   | Officers      |      |      |      | Teachers       |      |      |     |
|---|---------------|------|------|------|----------------|------|------|-----|
|   | SA            | A    | D    | SD   | SA             | A    | D    | SD  |
|   | %             | %    | %    | %    | %              | %    | %    | %   |
| Supervision helps to improve quality of education | 30.0          | 40.0 | 20.0 | 10.0 | 50.0           | 30.0 | 15.0 | 5.0 |
| Supervision improves classroom practice           | 40.0          | 50.0 | 10.0 | -    | 60.0           | 30.0 | 10.0 | -   |
| It improves quality of teaching and learning      | 30.0          | 20.0 | 40.0 | 10.0 | 20.0           | 5.0  | 70.0 | 5.0 |
| provision of in-service-training                  | 50.0          | 30.0 | 20.0 | -    | 10.0           | 10.0 | 80.0 | -   |
|   | Officers N=30 |      |      |      | Teachers N=100 |      |      |     |

Table 3: Rationale for Educational Supervision

In discussing the results, Strongly Agree (SA) and Agree (A) are collapsed to mean agree, and Strongly Disagree (SD) and Disagree (D) were also collapsed as meaning disagree. The result from Table 3 revealed that 21 (70.0%) of the officers' respondents agreed that supervision helped to improve quality of education, 9 (30.0%) of the respondents disagreed to the statement. Also, 80 (80.0%) of the teachers' respondents agreed that supervision helped to improve quality of education, whereas 20 (20.0%) disagreed. This is in line with the view of De Grauwe (2001) that the priority of all countries, especially the developing ones, is to improve the quality of schools and the achievement of students since learning outcomes depend largely on the quality of education being offered. Barro (2006) supported this that higher quality education fosters economic growth and development. On the issue of whether or not supervision improves classroom practice, 27 (90.0%) of the officers and 90 (90.0%) of the teachers agreed to the statement. This supports the findings of Blasé and Blasé (1999); Musaaazi (1985); Sergiovanni and Starratt (2002); and Sullivan and Glanz (1999), who found that supervision of instruction has the potential to improve classroom practices, and contribute to student success through the professional growth and improvement of teachers. But, in terms of supervision improving quality of teaching and learning, the result was the same in the officers' response. For the teachers, 75 (75.0%) of the respondents disagreed, whereas 25 (25.0%) agreed. Concerning provision of in-service training, 24 (80.0%) of the officers agreed and 6 (20.0%) disagreed. From the teachers' respondents, 80 (80.0%) disagreed and 20 (20.0%) agreed. There was contradiction between the results of the officials and teachers. This means that the officers incharge of educational supervision and teachers have different views about the rationale for educational supervision.

Research Question 2: What are the Structures of Educational Supervision?

Research question 2 sought to find out the structures of educational supervision. The selected respondents were asked to indicate the extent to which they agree with the statement using likert scale. SA= strongly agree A= agree D= disagree and SD= strongly disagree. Table 4 illustrates their responses.

| Statement                                 | Officers      |      |      |      | Teachers       |      |      |      |
|---|---------------|------|------|------|----------------|------|------|------|
|   | SA            | A    | D    | SD   | SA             | A    | D    | SD   |
|   | %             | %    | %    | %    | %              | %    | %    | %    |
| National level supervisors                | 10.0          | 90.0 | -    | -    | 50.0           | 30.0 | 15.0 | 5.0  |
| Regional level supervisor                 | 40.0          | 50.0 | 10.0 | -    | 60.0           | 30.0 | 10.0 | -    |
| District level supervisors                | 30.0          | 20.0 | 40.0 | 10.0 | 20.0           | 5.0  | 70.0 | 5.0  |
| Internal supervisors                      | 50.0          | 30.0 | 20.0 | -    | 80.0           | 10.0 | 10.0 | -    |
| External supervisors                      | 40.0          | 10.0 | 50.0 | -    | 40.0           | 20.0 | 30.0 | 10.0 |
| Supervision is generally top-down process | 40.0          | 60.0 | -    | -    | 80.0           | 20.0 | -    | -    |
|   | Officers N=30 |      |      |      | Teachers N=100 |      |      |      |

Table 4: Features of Educational Supervision  
Officers N=30 Teachers N=100

The statistics from Table 4 revealed that all the officers' respondents 30 (100.0%) agreed that supervision starts from the national level, 80 (80.0%) of the teachers also agreed to the statement. Also, 27 (90.0%) of the officers and 90 (90.0%) of the teachers responded that supervision is decentralized from the national to the regional level. In all, both the officers and teachers agreed that supervision was generally top-down-process. This confirms the work of Baffour-Awuah (2011) that decision-making about education in Ghana is basically a top-down process. He noted that education policies that directly affect teachers, such as those related to supervision of instruction, are formulated at the top and handed down to teachers and headteachers for implementation. Similarly, the results are also in line with the Ministry of Education Report (2006) which stated that even though, as part of the 1997 Education Reforms, educational management has been decentralized to the district level, teachers (including headteachers) are not involved in making decisions which directly affect the conduct of their instructional practices (MOE, 2006). Decision-making and implementation in the GES are guided by bureaucratic processes, and are rarely seen to be influenced by political or cultural values. Politically, the regional and district directorates of education are accountable to the Regional Ministers and District Chief Executives respectively (MOE, 2006).

Research Question 3: What are the Roles of Supervisors in Educational Supervision?

The researcher was interested in finding out from the respondents the roles of supervisors in educational supervision. The respondents were asked to indicate the extent to which they agreed to the statement using the following tools; SA-Strongly agree, A-Agree, D-disagree, SD-Strongly disagree. The result is illustrated in table 5.

| Statement   | Officers      |        |        |         | Teachers       |        |        |         |
|---|---------------|--------|--------|---------|----------------|--------|--------|---------|
|   | SA<br>%       | A<br>% | D<br>% | SD<br>% | SA<br>%        | A<br>% | D<br>% | SD<br>% |
| Providing assistance to teachers                  | 30.0          | 40.0   | 20.0   | 10.0    | 50.0           | 30.0   | 15.0   | 5.0     |
| Support in curriculum development and improvement | 40.0          | 50.0   | 10.0   | -       | 60.0           | 30.0   | 10.0   | -       |
| Providing of feedback                             | 60.0          | 30.0   | -      | 10.0    | 70.0           | 5.0    | 20.0   | 5.0     |
| Providing guidance and counselling                | 50.0          | 30.0   | 20.0   | -       | 70.0           | 30.0   | -      | -       |
|   | Officers N=30 |        |        |         | Teachers N=100 |        |        |         |

Table 5: Roles of Supervisors in Educational Supervision  
Officers N=30 Teachers N=100

The study further revealed from Table 5 that 21 (70.0%) of the officers' respondents agreed that the role of supervisors was providing assistance to teachers, 9 (30.0%) disagreed and 80 (80.0%) of the teachers agreed to the statement and 20 (20.0%) disagreed. This result supports the view of Glickman, Gordon and Ross-Gordon (2004) that supervisors should perform the following roles: providing personal development by providing on-going contact with the individual teacher to observe and assist him/her in classroom instruction; ensuring professional development by providing the learning opportunities for faculty provided or supported by the school and school system; and providing group development through the gathering together of teachers to make decisions on mutual instructional concern. The finding is consistent with that of Rous (2004) in her study when she found that some instructional supervisors ensured that teachers were provided with, and assisted to select appropriate teaching materials and resources to improve instruction. She indicated further that although some supervisors in her study in the US public schools provided teachers with resources, materials, and funds to support classroom activities, others reported instances where instructional supervisors failed to provide resources needed by teachers to implement quality instruction. Also, it was realized that 27 (90.0%) of the officers and 90 (90.0%) of the teachers agreed that one of the roles of supervisors was curriculum development and improvement. The result is in line with findings of Glickman, Gordon and Ross-Gordon (2004) who found that supervisors supported in curriculum development through the revision and modification of content, plans and materials of classroom instruction. More so, supervisors engaged teachers in action research by systematically studying faculty to find out what is happening in the classroom and school with the aim of improving students learning. On the issue of providing feedback, all the officers 30 (100.0%) and 75 (75.0%) of the teachers all agreed that one of the roles of educational supervisors was providing of feedback on educational issues. The result confirms the findings of Blasé and Blasé (1999). According to them, effective principals value dialogue that encouraged teachers to critically reflect on their learning and professional practice. This is done through the following strategies: making suggestions, giving feedback, modelling, using inquiry and soliciting advice and opinions, and giving praise. Visiting classrooms and providing feedback to teachers is considered one of the major roles of supervisors. Feedback provides teachers help them reflect on what actually took place in the teaching-learning process. Blasé and Blasé (2004) believe that feedback should not be a formality, but should serve as a guide for instructional improvement when it is given genuinely. Blasé and Blasé (2004) theorized that feedback reflectively informs teacher behaviour; and this results in teachers implementing new ideas, trying out a variety of instructional practices, responding to student diversity, and planning more carefully and achieving better focus. Feedback (whether formally or informal, written or oral) should focus on observations rather than perspectives. Similarly, Rous (2004) also reported that in the US public schools, feedback offered by supervisors was a formal behaviour, and was objective and based solely on class observation. Teachers in this study saw feedback to be constructive, and very helpful to them in their instructional practices. More interestingly, all the teachers 100 (100.0%) and 24 (80.0%) of the officers agreed that the role of supervisors was providing of guidance and counselling services. This is consistent with the view of Gordon and Ross-Gordon (2004) that effective supervision requires well trained personnel with knowledge, interpersonal skills, and technical skills who are prepared to provide the necessary and appropriate guidance and support to the teaching staff. According to them, these personal attributes are applied through the supervisory roles of direct assistance to teachers, group development, professional development, and curriculum development and action research. Brennen (2008) supports this and noted that an effective supervisor who links interpersonal with technical skills will be successful in improving instruction. He suggested that an effective supervisor should be able to build self-acceptance, moral, trust, and rapport between the two parties. On the contrary, Brennen (2008) suggested that the supervisor in an effective supervision process should not delve deeply into the role of a counsellor. The focus is always on the teaching act, rather than matters affecting the teacher that are beyond the confines of the classroom. Objectivity, devoid of personal biases, should be the hallmark if supervision is to be effective, he asserts.

#### 8.4. Challenges of Educational Supervision

The researcher was equally interested in finding out the challenges of educational supervision. Research question 4 sought to find answers to this. Respondents were asked to indicate which variables affect educational supervision. Table 6 represents the results.

| Statement                                       | Officers |                |      |      | Teachers |      |      |     |
|---|----------|----------------|------|------|----------|------|------|-----|
|   | SA       | A              | D    | SD   | SA       | A    | D    | SD  |
|   | %        | %              | %    | %    | %        | %    | %    | %   |
| Inadequate trained personnel                    | 30.0     | 60.0           | -    | 10.0 | 60.0     | 20.0 | 20.0 | -   |
| Inadequate pre-service and in-service training  | 40.0     | 50.0           | 10.0 | -    | 60.0     | 30.0 | 10.0 | -   |
| Problem of support of instruments and materials | 30.0     | 20.0           | 40.0 | 10.0 | 20.0     | 5.0  | 70.0 | 5.0 |
| Too many responsibilities                       | -        | 30.0           | 10.0 | 60.0 | 10.0     | 10.0 | 80.0 | -   |
| Attitude of supervisors towards supervision     | 40.0     | 60.0           | -    | -    | 80.0     | 20.0 | -    | -   |
| Officers N=30                                   |          | Teachers N=100 |      |      |          |      |      |     |

Table 6: Challenges of Educational Supervision  
Officers N=30 Teachers N=100

From Table 6, it is seen that majority of the officers' respondents 27 (90.0%), 80 (80.0%) of the teachers agreed that inadequacy of trained personnel posed a great challenge to educational supervision. The finding agreed with Glickman, Gordon and Ross-Gordon (2004) and Holland (2004) who have suggested that supervisors should possess some working knowledge and skills to be able to provide the necessary assistance, guidance, and support services to teachers for improved classroom practices. Holland (2004) believes that educators (supervisors) must offer evidence that they have the necessary knowledge and skills to make important decisions about instruction, and credentials in the form of degrees and diplomas are a form of evidence, but acknowledges that credentials alone do not inspire trust. Though, Ghana Education Service regards academic qualifications, such as degrees and diplomas, necessary for supervisory positions, but the results showed that most primary school headteachers (supervisors) hold Teachers' Certificate "A" Post-secondary and act as supervisors. The findings of De Grauwe (2001) supported this and concluded that most teachers do not possess higher qualifications in the form of degrees and diplomas; but are promoted on the basis of seniority and experience, and by virtue of their position as heads, they automatically become the instructional supervisors at the school level so they occupy supervisory positions on the basis of seniority and long service. It would be proper for supervisors to possess higher qualifications and longer years of teaching experience than the teachers they supervise. Such supervisors would have sufficient knowledge and experience in both content and pedagogy to be able to confidently assist, guide and support their teachers. Again, 27(90.0%) of the officers and 90 (90.0%) of the teachers agreed that inadequate pre-service and in-service training was a challenge to supervisors in educational supervision. This confirms the views of Carron and De Grauwe (1997) that advisers, inspectors and other such staff need regular training, but they seldom receive it. They believe that whatever pattern of recruitment and promotion procedures, supervisors (advisers, inspectors or other such staff), need regular training but they are seldom provided with pre-service or in-service training. In addition, 75 (75.0%) of the teachers disagreed that inadequate instrument and materials was not a problem in educational supervision, the officers were undecided since 50% of them agreed and 50% disagreed. This is contrary to the findings of Carron and De Grauwe (1997) that apart from the training supervisors will receive, there is the urgent need for support instruments and materials to support practice. Data bases are needed to prepare and monitor the supervision work. Access to the internet, bulletins and journals is another source of support to supervisors. Supervision guides and manuals may serve as reminders to supervisors about how certain practices and behaviour should be followed, and provide a uniform platform for supervisors to operate, thereby reassuring teachers of the personal biases which individual supervisors may introduce. Both the officers and the teachers did not see workload or many responsibilities on the supervisors as a challenge in educational supervision. This finding contradict that of Ogunu (2005) that principals are so weighed down by routine administrative burden that they hardly find time to visit the classrooms and observe how the teachers are teaching. Oduro (2008) supported this and concluded that in Ghanaian public primary schools, headteachers perform "a magnitude of tasks", and those in remote and deprived communities combine their supervisory roles with full-time teaching and visiting pupils in their communities. In such situations, supervisors may not be able to sufficiently supervise instruction. All the officers and teachers agreed that the attitude of supervisors towards supervision was a challenge to educational supervision. This supports Oliva and Pawlas's (1997) perception that some school supervisors or inspectors, as they are called in other countries, continue to fulfil their tasks with an authoritarian approach. Some respondents in Rous' (2004) study expressed feelings of fear and disappointment, which were associated with the use of criticism by instructional supervisors. The supervisors' criticisms were reported to have stifled the teachers' use of innovative practices. Similar studies conducted in Ghana have shown that frequent visits to classrooms are necessary to improve teachers' time-on-task. Oduro (2008) and the World Bank report (2011) have found that some teachers in public primary schools in Ghana are in the habit of absenting themselves from school. The World Bank report revealed that only 109 out of 197 school days are fully operational as teachers spent other days engaged in activities such as collecting salaries, attending funerals, and travelling long distances to their schools.

## 9. Conclusions And Recommendations

The following represent the summary of the findings.

- A greater number of the respondents, 21 (70.0%) of the officers' respondents agreed that supervision helped to improve quality of education, 9 (30.0%) of the respondents disagreed to the statement. Also, 80 (80.0%) of the teachers' respondents agreed that supervision helped to improve quality of education, whereas 20 (20.0%) disagreed.
- The study revealed that all the officers' respondents 30 (100.0%) agreed that supervision starts from the national level, 80 (80.0%) of the teachers also agreed to the statement. Also, 27 (90.0%) of the officers and 90 (90.0%) of the teachers responded that supervision is decentralised from the national to the regional level. In all, both the officers and teachers agreed that supervision was generally top-down-process.
- Also, it was realised that 21 (70.0%) of the officers' respondents agreed that the role of supervisors was providing assistance to teachers, and 80 (80.0%) of the teachers agreed to the statement. On the issue of providing feedback, all the officers 30 (100.0%) and 75 (75.0%) of the teachers all agreed that one of the roles of educational supervisors was providing of feedback on educational issues. More interestingly, all the teachers 100 (100.0%) and 24 (80.0%) of the officers agreed that the role of supervisors was providing of guidance and counselling services.
- Majority of the respondents 27 (90.0%), 80 (80.0%) of the teachers agreed that inadequacy of trained personnel posed a great challenge to educational supervision. Again, 27 (90.0%) of the officers and 90 (90.0%) of the teachers agreed that inadequate pre-service and in-service training was a challenge to supervisors in educational supervision. In addition, 75 (75.0%) of the teachers disagreed that inadequate instrument and materials was not a problem in educational supervision, the officers were undecided since 50% of them agreed and 50% disagreed.

### 9.1. Conclusions

From the findings of the study, the researcher made the following conclusions. In the first place, since most of the respondents agreed that supervision helped to improve quality of education, it can be concluded that this was one of the rationale for educational supervision in the Nadowli District. Again, it was realized that both the officers and teachers agreed that supervision was generally top-down-process. This means that the structures of educational supervision in the Nadowli District followed a line of hierarchy whereby programmes and decisions are taken from the National level and passed on to the regional, district and school level. Also, the study revealed that majority of the respondents agreed that the role of supervisors was providing assistance to teachers, providing feedback and providing of guidance and counselling services. Based on this, the researcher therefore concluded that these are roles which supervisors performed most. Finally, it was revealed that majority of the respondents of the teachers agreed that inadequacy of trained personnel posed a great challenge to educational supervision. Again, 27 (90.0%) of the officers and 90 (90.0%) of the teachers agreed that inadequate pre-service and in-service training was a challenge to supervisors in educational supervision. On this note, the researcher therefore concluded that the inadequacy of pre-service and in-service training were a challenge to educational supervision in the Nadowli District.

### 9.2. Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study and the conclusions that have been drawn, the following recommendations are made to help improve the effects of educational supervision in the Nadowli District. Supervisors should be encouraged and motivated by the stakeholders, Government and Non-governmental organisations to enable them visits schools to supervise teachers. Supervisory Personnel at the local and national levels should take their responsibilities seriously by engaging on educational activities that could enhance their skills. These include, among others, strategic seminars, workshops, regular visits and exchange programmes pursuit of higher educational qualification. This will help to increase the effects of supervision. Much training, pre-service and in-service-training should be given to supervisors. This would help to solve the problem of inadequacy of pre-service and in-service training.

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