

EDUCATIONAL SUPERVISION: A 21ST CENTURY VERITABLE TOOL FOR SUSTAINABLE SCHOOL ENVIRONMENTS, IN AN INSECURITY ERA

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Abstract

The aim of this paper is to study the different theoretical aspects contributing to this modern concept of educational sustainability using supervision as a predator. In this paper, the researchers discuss the nature of a sustainable school environment with respect to its objectives, benefits and functions. It also throws light on the theoretical perspectives of modern educational supervision and the mechanisms of supervising a sustainable school programme. The paper also explores the rudiments of educational supervision and how it has passed through several developmental stages and how it has conceived in a more sustainable outlook. In this present period of digital age, which has revolutionized the whole education process, supervision becomes a major veritable tool to ensure sustainability and to develop the standard of education at all levels. Supervision during insecurity era is key for the sustainability of school environment. Presently, the scope of educational supervision is widened to comprehend the functions of an educational institution in the role of supervisors, hence upgrading the institution to facilitate the learning environment. It is however recommended that school administrators should strive to effectively utilize supervision to promote sustainable learning environment.

Key words: Education, Environments, School, Supervision, Sustainability

Introduction

The issue of achieving sustainability in the school system has been posing great challenges to educational stakeholders over the years. It is observed that some school environments are not sustainable for effective instructional processes. Adeniji (2012) submitted that a lot of teachers tend to use tree shades for teaching due to insufficient classrooms. This makes some teachers to start feeling like they lack sufficient academic skill and professional preparedness set to succeed in their career (Alaka & Obadara, 2013). Also, some schools are ill-equipped with poorly ventilated office spaces, insufficient learning and recreational facilities. There are also dysfunctional libraries, dilapidated laboratories, and

obsolete workshop facilities. There are equally insufficient pedagogical, scientific, methodological and technological innovations in the school programme (Alimi & Akinfolarin 2012). This results in delayed graduation, riots by students, corrupt practices, examination malpractices, high brain drain, incessant labour actions by academic and non-academic staff and production of half-baked graduates who might not meet labour market expectations (Amuche & Fan, 2014).

According to the International Council for Science and the International Social Science Council (2020) sustainability means the ability to act in a manner that exhibits awareness of how all things are connected and make well-considered choices for the greater good of all. Schools are great examples of interconnected systems to which principles of sustainability can be applied with wide-ranging benefits. Manas (2012) emphasized that such systems include the school building, its component materials, systems and operation; surrounding natural resources and ecosystems; students, staff, and the community; transportation methods, school budgets, and even environmental conditions. National Open University of Nigeria (NOUN: 2014) states that all these cannot be taken for granted in an age of dwindling resources and growing health awareness-, one in which the interconnectedness of systems has been shown to offer solutions for some of what ails humans. All hands therefore must be on deck as pioneers on the path to making sustainability a practicable solution for school programmes using effective supervisory mechanisms (Reisch, Cohen, Thørgersen & Tukker, 2016).

As stakeholders look toward to fulfilling the ambitious UN Sustainable Development Goals by 2030, the plan of action for people, planet, and prosperity cannot be met without acknowledging the important connection between educational development and a sustainable learning environment (UNESCO, 2020). They are inexplicably linked to the ability to transform pivotal knowledge into conscious action so students can become catalysts for future evolution. (National Open University of Nigeria NOUN, 2016). Moreover, sustainable schools are important in this 21st century because there is a need to give students the educational programme, physical place, and organizational culture to encourage the development of environmentally conscious global citizens. Students spend the majority of their day in a school building during their most crucial developmental years. McKeown (2016) stressed that in this time of pivotal growth, schools must be a space for creative thinking, a source of inspiration, and a starting point for developing a sense of awareness and responsibility. The journey to that goal begins with educating students in a healthy and sustainable environment through educational supervision in the school system (Nakpodia, 2016 & Manas, 2012).

According to Anuna (2004) the concept of educational supervision has passed through several developmental stages and has now been conceived in a more sustainable outlook especially in a bid to enhance the learning environment. Supervision is a creative and dynamic process giving friendly guidance and direction to teachers and pupils for improving themselves and the teaching-learning situation for the accomplishment of the desired goals of education

(Bhatnagar & Verma, 2022). Therefore, educational Supervision means an all-out effort of the school officials directed towards providing leadership to teachers and other educational workers for the improvement of institution. It involves both human and material elements. According to Harbison and Hanushek, (2022) the human elements are the pupils, parents, teachers and other employees, the community and other officials of the state. On the material side money, building, equipment, playgrounds etc. are included. Besides these, the curriculum, methods and techniques of teaching also come under the scope of supervision. supervision during insecurity era is necessary because it is as important as the establishment of the school environment itself, it also makes sense to state that where there is adequate Supervision, the level of teaching and learning improved drastically for the actualization of its goals and objectives

Teaching is a creative act. A teacher has to coordinate his thought with action. So the basic psychological problems underlying supervision is to see that the teaching is improved through supervisory techniques and supervisor is able to secure integration between teaching practices and sound principles of education on which the practices are based. As commonly used, the term ‘supervision’ means to guide and to stimulate the activities of others with a view to their improvement. It attempts to develop instructional programmes according to the needs of the youth of modern democratic society and also to provide materials and methods of teaching for enabling the children to learn more easily and effectively. There are various definitions of supervision in educational literature (Okendu, 2012; Obadara, 2015; & Ogunsaju, 2016).

Objectives of Educational Supervision in a Sustainable School Setting

The objectives of supervision can be listed as follows as stipulated by Harbison and Hanushek (2022):

1. To unify and integrate educational effort: Supervision must be prepared with the aim of coordinating different available resources and materials that are available simultaneously by combining and integrating the efforts put in by the entire staff.
2. To improve knowledge and skills of teachers: The planning for supervision revolves around the work, the philosophy and the approach of the teachers. In order to accomplish the majority of the school's work efficiently, the teachers must learn to work together in groups and one of the major objectives of supervision is the enhancement of teachers' skills in working in a cooperative manner.
3. To incorporate new trends: In order to accomplish an improvement in the delivery and understanding of instructions, the school practices which are followed need to be updated with the changes in contemporary educational thinking and practice. It is the responsibility of the supervisor to help the educational workers to keep abreast of the

new educational movements, to study and learn new methods of teaching and to apply these new techniques in the classroom situations.

4. Improvement of teaching–learning situation: The main objectives of supervision is the evaluation and development of the teaching learning situation. The objectives of democratic supervision are the evaluation and development of the teaching –learning situation. The objectives of democratic supervision are to help teachers to evaluate themselves with the help of inputs given by supervisor. The prime constituents of the teaching –learning process are the students, teachers, curriculum materials and information, classroom management, and the socio physical environment.
5. Promotion of good relationship: For achieving complete effectiveness, supervision depends upon the relation that exists between teachers and the supervisors. In order to accomplish most of the school’s work, the teachers must learn to work with cooperation and that can only be possible if they share a good relation with the supervisor. One of the objectives of supervision is the enhancement of good interpersonal relations. For effective and efficient supervisions, healthy relationship must be developed and maintained between supervisor–administrator, teacher- supervisor, and administrators–teachers.

Types of Educational Supervision

Programmes could be conducted in various ways. The three types of educational supervision are as follows:

Corrective Type: The purpose of employing this type of supervision for a sustainable school environment does not have any beneficial function. In the corrective supervision, the supervision always tries to find loopholes and shortcomings in everything. He takes into account only the drawbacks of the teacher, the classroom situation, the institution, and so on. He rarely provides any recommendations for improvement. He takes into account only the drawbacks and shortcomings, and even more eager to bring them to the notice of the concerned authorities. But a supervisor must remember that the progress depends on a judicious combination of encouragement of good work and removal of defects.

Advantages of corrective type of supervision are –

1. Teachers and students pay more emphasis on regularity and punctuality as they are aware that they are under supervision that they will be checked and evaluated by the supervisor.
2. Everyone in the institution becomes conscious of their shortcomings and tries to overcome them by coming well prepared.

Disadvantages of corrective supervision are –

1. It discourages the teachers as they are under supervision all the time. Therefore, it is not a healthy type of supervision for a sustainable school environment.
2. Teachers attain a negative attitude which is detrimental for the teaching learning process.
3. Teachers and learners fail to do their duties with enthusiasm and vitality which results in

lack of growth. There is no thriving of a creative academic climate in the school.

Preventive Type

In this category of supervision, the teachers and the principals are themselves able to prevent troubles and problems. Preventive supervision paves the path for the teachers to expect and predict new teaching situations and find suitable methods and means to eliminate any kind of deficiencies. Being an experienced person, the supervisor can foresee all type of problems that can arise during the functioning of schools. But for such a supervision to be successful, the supervisors needs to be extremely well trained. Regarding this, Effiong (2016) asserted that below are the demerits of preventive supervision. They are:

1. The jobs of teachers and of the head become easy as the solutions for the problems are thought beforehand.
2. It helps in the development of outstanding qualities in teachers like imagination and forecasting, appropriate planning and being solution oriented and so on. The teaching - learning procedure becomes more beneficial.

Glavic (2016) maintained that the disadvantages of preventive supervision are-

1. Thee teachers have to lookout for all kind of problems that may arise and be ready with their possible solutions before and during the process of teaching. Hence, their workload increases and they are under more pressure.
2. If the supervisors aren't well trained in forecasting and predicting, the supervision process may not be at all effective and lead to wastage of time and resources.
3. The teachers may fail to become creative as their whole focus is on problems.

Creative Type

In creative supervision the supervisor brings himself down to the level of working of the teachers. He acknowledges the good work of the teachers who take initiatives and try to be innovative and experiment in the area of education. The impact of creative supervision on the

teachers is very healthy and durable. It motives them to feel free to initiative and innovate; they can themselves think and decide about matters related to objectives, curriculum, organization and planning of content, and discover the optimum ways of learning and presenting content, teaching methods and methods of evaluation (Global sustainability survey, 2019).

According to Fehintola (2014) the advantages of creative supervision are:

1. It makes teachers creative and research-minded. Teachers become independent and feel motivated to do their job without much pressure.
2. It provides a healthy social climate and is a great tool to handle the prevailing problems.
3. Creativity and an attitude of innovation and experimentation opens the way for progressive leaps in the educational process.

Contrarily, Ebiringha, (2017) strongly argued that a disadvantage of creative supervision is that there is a great possibility of the misuse of freedom being provided, thus hampering the efficient functioning.

Benefits of supervising and promoting sustainable school environments

1. Sustainable schools create an environment where teachers and students can cultivate a positive and progressive school culture. Teachers have more opportunities to devise unique learning opportunities and students benefit through increased participation and productivity and improved problem-solving and critical thinking skills.
2. Sustainable schools are the teaching tool that bring together environmental education and community engagement. These collaborative activities inspire all members of the school community, which creates a culture of continuous learning, growth, and development.

Ayeni (2011) opined that while existing studies on school building quality basically point to improved student behavior and better teaching in higher-quality facilities, what is needed is more firm policy advice about the types of capital investments that would be most conducive to learning and to good teaching. This would help those who manage construction dollars better target and maximize the return on such investments (Ayeni & Akinola, 2018). Following are some considerations for school boards to ponder when exploring this territory as pointed out by Ayegba (2019):

Choosing the School Site

Ayegba (2019) stressed that wise selection and use of a site can provide opportunities to study ecosystems, monitor stream quality, reduce transportation costs and reduce non-point-

source pollution. Educators and parents have a renewed interest in putting schools on smaller, central sites that allow these institutions to fulfill their time-honored role as community centers.

1. Select a site on public transportation lines and with bike and foot access to encourage physical activity and community interaction while avoiding harm to the atmosphere (avoid the greenhouse effect).
2. Investigate past uses of the site; e.g., was it the site of an underground storage tank, landfill, or mine that could lead to soil contamination).

Planning the Design (new or remodel)

According to Archibong (2013) the following steps ought not to be ignored:

1. Incorporate materials with a low environmental impact: reused, with recycled content, and renewable. These avoid the energy and pollution costs of extracting virgin materials.
2. Choose high-quality local materials, when appropriate, to support your local economy and preclude shipping-related air pollution and fuel use.
3. Aim for a high-performance facility, which greatly reduces energy and water needs over its lifetime. While the cost of a high-performance building may initially be higher, you'll more than make up for it with lower operating costs.
4. Select a design that provides adequate air flow and avoids materials that give off toxic substances. The healthier the students and staff are, the more they will be able to accomplish.
5. Incorporate natural lighting and outdoor views, which has been demonstrated to enhance student performance.
6. Design for community or local governmental uses, encouraging community involvement and supplying more learning opportunities for students.
7. Preserve and upgrade existing schools (especially those that students can already walk to). This extends the life of existing resources and avoids consumption of new ones.

Building Operation Pointers

According to Archibong (2010) the following ought to be taken into consideration:

1. The building should be commissioned to ensure it performs at the level to which it was designed. Systems must be inspected, tested, monitored and periodically retested.

2. The cost and effort to prevent most air-quality problems is significantly less than what it takes to diagnose and resolve such problems after they develop.
3. Use surfaces that are easy to clean and maintain, and ensure a regular cleaning schedule to reduce asthma triggers.
4. Use only non-toxic materials for cleaning, maintenance and landscaping to reduce the dangers to people and the environment.
5. Involve students in facility operation and monitoring to teach them about building design, indoor environmental quality, financial principles, and their local ecosystem. They'll also learn math, science, health, business and social studies skills.

Conclusion

Educational supervision, as a process brings all the aspects of sustainable school environment into a fruitful and harmonious whole, in order to ensure an optimum teaching-learning environment. It becomes a major instrument to ensure quality and to develop the standard of education. Lastly it can be concluded by saying that Educational Supervision is thus, an old concept with new meanings in this 21st century at all phases of its evolution since the development of the educational programmes has always been the ultimate goal of educational supervision.

Suggestions

Based on the literature reviewed in this study, the following suggestions were made to improve school administration professionalism through robust instructional supervision and improving the sustainability of the school environment:

1. A remedial supervision mechanism should be developed and built into the school system by the Government, teachers, educational planners, policy makers, curriculum planners and parents in order to promote sustainable school environments.
2. The Inspectorate Unit of the Ministry of Education should be properly staffed with qualified supervisors that are radical enough to articulate changes within the current supervision dynamics eliminate the issues of unsustainability via poor site selection in the school system.
3. Regular evaluation of the instructional process, school administration procedure and educational outcomes by the supervisors so designated from within and outside the educational institution should be intensified so that conformities can be appreciated and improved upon while non-conformities can be identified, sanctioned and corrected appropriately and timely.

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