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### Instructional Supervision and Staff Professional Development in Public Primary Schools of the English-Speaking Sub-System of Education in Cameroon

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#### Abstract

The study sought to investigate the relationship between instructional supervision and staff professional development in public primary schools of the English-speaking sub-system of education in Cameroon. The study specifically intended: to examine the relationship between head teachers' staff placement and staff professional development, to investigate the relationship between head teachers' assessment of staff and staff professional development. The researcher adopted two research questions and two hypotheses were formulated. The researcher used mixed methods of quantitative and qualitative approaches with two research designs including a cross-sectional survey and a case study. The accessible population was 915 head teachers and 5004 teachers. The multi-stage sampling procedure which involved simple random sampling and purposive sampling techniques were used to select a sample size of 300 teachers. The purposive and expert sampling techniques were used to select 10 head teachers for the interview. A questionnaire and a semi-structured interview guide were used to gather data. The instruments were validated in both face and content validity with CVI of 0.75

and reliability Cronbach's coefficient of 0.805 for the questionnaire. Data from questionnaire were analyzed through descriptive statistics. Data from the interview were analyzed thematically to corroborate the findings from the questionnaire. Hypotheses were analyzed using Pearson Product-Moment Correlation. The findings revealed that head teachers' staff placement ( $\bar{x} = 2.79 \pm .86$ ) and ( $r_{xy} = 0.377^*$ ); assessment of staff ( $\bar{x} = 3.09 \pm .83$ ) and ( $r_{xy} = 0.577^*$ ) both have a moderate and significant relationship ( $p = 0.000$ ) with staff professional development, rejecting the null hypotheses. It was therefore recommended that the Ministry of Basic Education and other educational authorities, should develop a strategic plan on periodic sustainable capacity building workshops/seminars for head teachers on: i) staff placement to enable them place teachers for instruction in order to identify their needs for in-service training ii) assessment of staff to enable them assess teachers' instruction so as to identify their strengths and weaknesses and sort them for professional development programs.

**Keywords:** Instructional Supervision, Staff Placement, Assessment of Staff, Staff Professional Development and Public Primary Schools

#### Introduction

Instructional supervision is considered a priority activity of school heads in the educational system of Cameroon (GESP, 2009). To this effect, school heads of educational institutions (head teachers of primary schools inclusive) are given the mandate to oversee instructional activities within their schools (Titanji, 2017) <sup>[19]</sup>. Article 34 of Decree No. 2001/041 of 19 February 2001 bearing on the organization of public schools and prescribing the duties of the school administrative personnel, defines a school head as a teacher who bears responsibilities in the school. He/she is someone who leads the school, receives and assigns teachers at work. He/she heads the decision making of the school and thus, he/she is the custodian of the school (Mbua, 2003) <sup>[14]</sup>. Staff professional development is crucial in schools nowadays. It could be argued that things are changing dramatically in the educational system which makes it expedient and imperative for all teachers to engage in continuing career-long professional training.

Tah (2021) <sup>[18]</sup> citing Ngala (1997) explains that the head teachers need to supervise teachers in class by ensuring that: lessons are well planned; lessons are structured with an interesting beginning; revision of previous knowledge and teachers' use of voice variation and summary of major points at the end; teachers use teaching aids properly; teachers have a good relationship with their students and teachers follow up the curriculum. The purpose of instructional supervision is to help teachers be aware of their teaching and its consequences for their learners (Glickman, Gordon and Ross-Gordon, 2004) <sup>[12]</sup>. Further, supervision

of instruction is a professional relationship that provides support and improves the practice of both teachers and supervisors (head teachers). Thus, it is a vehicle that facilitates growth, maintenance of professional standards and quality services. Glickman *et al.* (2004) <sup>[12]</sup> posit that effective instructional supervision requires well trained personnel with knowledge, interpersonal skills and technical skills that are prepared to provide the necessary and appropriate guidance and support to the teaching staff.

Instructional supervision evolved from the realization that human beings accomplish very little alone and that people do not accomplish much by simply belonging to a group where task is performed together. Hence, for the sustainability of any kind of group, there should be a common objective that the members are committed to. A direction is needed to channel the diverse and often disorganized efforts of individuals into a purposeful stream of productivity to attain the common goal. The supervisory activities of the head teacher enable every child to reach their individual academic success. The purpose of supervision during instruction is to improve the quality of teaching through improved skills of teachers which in turn improves pupils' academic performance. The activities involve improving teaching and learning; developing supervisory strategies; executing strategies for improvement; maintaining the school system; improving curriculum and library materials; evaluating pupils' progress and timetabling (Okumbe, 2007) <sup>[16]</sup>.

Professional development of teachers on continuous basis is important and the instructional supervisory role of the head teachers in ensuring the development of teachers professionally is essentially inevitable. It is on this note that the researcher was interested in investigating what instructional supervisory roles head teachers play in enhancing teachers' professional development in public primary schools of the English-speaking sub-system of education in Cameroon and whether primary school teachers in this area benefit from the instructional supervisory activities specifically, staff placement and assessment of staff (Tah, 2021) <sup>[18]</sup>.

Theoretically, the following theories were considered in the study: The Role Theory by Nyongesa (2007) <sup>[15]</sup> for objective one and the Collegial Theory (Bush, 2008) <sup>[4]</sup> for objective two. The head teacher is responsible for staff placement in the school as one of his/her instructional supervisory roles. Staff placement goes with role definition and establishing the expectations of the teachers. Conflict can arise when teachers have differing expectations from the head teacher. Conflict can also emerge when teachers feel they are professionally inadequate and unable to align their teaching approach with the evolving instructional methodology. This implies, the head teacher requires a collegial, helping, trust, confidential and mutual relationship and understanding during placement of staff for instruction.

The Collegial Theory by Bush (2008) <sup>[4]</sup> was adopted to support objective two. During instructional supervision, teachers can take turns assuming the role of assessment of colleagues as they help each other. Participation requires much training in conferencing, information collecting and other instructional supervisory assessment techniques. However, strategy for assessment of teachers during instruction is selected based on the level of experience, development and context. State and national policies may

also spell out procedures and approaches to be used to assess teacher's instruction.

In Cameroon, efforts to carry out instructional supervision for staff professional development, head teachers and teachers faced some challenges economically, socially, politically, administratively, health wise among others. Administratively and socio-politically, in developing a national system of education, the emphasis today is on a collectivist philosophy which takes into consideration the needs of society and the right of individuals to education. This philosophy has served to sanctify the development of a national system of education and as such, broaden the conception of the educational process (1998 Law for Guideline to Education; Report of the Sector-Wide Approach to Education, 2006 & Titanji, 2017) <sup>[9, 19]</sup>.

Socially, one widely held aim of education is to equip teachers with the knowledge, skills, attitudes and competencies that enable them to render useful services to themselves and to the learners. The formal education system of a nation is the principal institutional mechanism that is used for developing human skills and knowledge. Education is, therefore, viewed as an indispensable catalyst that strongly influences the development and economic fortunes of a nation and the quality of life of its people. This can be ensured through effective instructional supervision to make sure that the instructors are equipped with the skills and knowledge to face the ever-changing needs of the society (Todaro, 1992 cited in Tah, 2021) <sup>[18]</sup>.

In the economic context, nations, organizations and individuals spend huge sums on the provision and consumption of education for the citizen. In many developing countries formal education is the largest industry and greatest consumer of public revenues (Todaro, 1992; Mbua, 2003 <sup>[14]</sup> & Tah, 2021 <sup>[18]</sup>). In Cameroon, a great deal of human and financial resources is expended to support the public school system. As part of its expenditure, the government of Cameroon invests significantly in designing and implementing policies, including the training of personnel, to supervise instruction in the schools. It is certain that the school heads have a significant role to play in schools' instructional supervision especially in ensuring that teachers' development is given a priority because a teacher who is undeveloped will rarely maintain the professional standard required in teaching profession, hence the quality of his/her classroom teaching, pupils' assessment and management will be poor. Thus, the head teachers need to ensure that teachers are effectively supervised during instruction in order to attain quality education in schools with the help of their professional development (Decree No. 2001/041 of 19<sup>th</sup> February 2001, bearing on the organization of public school and prescribing the duties of the school administrative personnel in Cameroon). The head teachers of Basic Education in Cameroon are appointed from among the teachers with little consideration of their ability to carry out effective instructional supervision. Apart from gaining experience on the job through mentoring, workshops, conferences and seminars, there is no particular school in Cameroon to train head teachers for effective instructional supervision and other duties. The distance learning program offered in Cameroon, University of Buea, Faculty of Education, Department of Curriculum Studies and Teaching is for qualified Basic Education teachers as a whole not head teachers in particular. This distance learning program is yet

to offer opportunity for post-graduate training of aspiring school heads and teachers (Tah, 2021)<sup>[18]</sup>.

According to Law No. 98/004 of 14 April 1998, Chapter III Section (37) (1) teachers are the guarantors of quality education of the state and so in order to ensure the implementation and attainment of educational goals they must be constantly supervised to ensure quality outcomes. Therefore, head teachers have been legitimately entrusted with the task of supervising schools in order to achieve the educational goals. Instructional supervision requires that head teachers focus mainly on the teaching staff who implement curriculum directly through instruction. Head teachers therefore ought to give instructional supervision special place in their discharge of duties. Supervision of instruction in schools is very important and as a result only those teachers, who are trained, qualified, experienced and of high professional integrity ought to be promoted or appointed as head teachers. Poor performance is being registered in most schools yet head teachers are there expected to make a difference in pupils' academic performance through effective instructional supervision in effort to ensure staff professional development. The stakeholders are more and more becoming conscious of the need for the schools to be accountable of the results of the pupils they are teaching. This is exerting pressure on the head teachers to improve teaching in their schools. This pressure helps the head teachers to be keen on carrying out effective instructional supervision to improve staff professional development, hence pupils' academic performance. Head teachers have to pay attention to the instructional leadership activities that bring about effective instruction which lead to staff professional development and consequently, academic success of the pupils. Head teachers have to relate administrative tasks and processes by a well-established program of instructional supervision which helps to knit together the various activities towards achievement of school goals (Fonkeng and Tamajong, 2009)<sup>[11]</sup>.

The English-speaking regions are part of the bilingual Cameroon whereby language of instruction for all subjects is English apart from French that is taught as a compulsory subject. In the 1996 constitution, French teachers were to be deployed to English primary schools to teach only French, that is, in the English sub-system of education. In the public primary schools, the French teachers were expected to teach this language and the English head teachers expected to supervise the instruction. The 1995 forum recommended that teachers in training schools should be taught French to enable them teach French in their classrooms yet it is not effective since instruction and supervision of French language in the primary schools is still facing a number of challenges (Tah, 2021)<sup>[18]</sup>.

Education For All (EFA) and Universal Primary Education (UPE), are some of the notable global educational policies implemented (UNESCO, 2013a/2013b). The effect of globalization on education, on the other hand today, has called for survival measures of education the world over and all organizations continuously strive for sustainable development and survival with no let up. Responding to this scenario, Armstrong (2004)<sup>[2]</sup> suggests that this survival can basically be ensured through adequate instructional supervision as one of the strategic survival approaches. As a manager in any organization, one must ensure that objectives are met and also that employees learn how to

enhance their performance through regular appraisals and supervision (Hunsaker & Hunsaker, 2009)<sup>[13]</sup>.

However, observations, articles and repeated educational research studies indicate that there is an on-going decline of instructional supervision in schools throughout the globe today (Bentley, 2005)<sup>[3]</sup>. This is specially the inadequate close instructional supervision as there is limited effort in keeping a close eye on the inspectors of schools. As a result, the school inspectors are reluctant to visit schools to monitor the head teachers, who in turn also are less closely supervising teachers. As an unreliable alternative, Esudu (2010)<sup>[10]</sup> asserted that supervision and monitoring is being done on phone and internet or e-mails by filling appraisal forms, yet there is no practical evidence that someone is performing in the field. This has reduced the quality of education. There is inadequate teaching due to high pupil-teacher ratio, and there is an overcrowding in classes that negatively affects the standard of education (the case of public primary schools in the English-speaking Cameroon not very much different). To make the matter worse, most teachers do not mind about improving their teaching, and report in school whenever they like and do teaching unenthusiastically (Tah, 2021)<sup>[18]</sup>.

At moment, the socio-political crisis in the English-speaking Cameroon since 2016, the global plague of the deadly pandemic Corona Virus Disease 2019 (COVID19) and the cholera outbreak in some parts of the regions are great threats to instructional supervision and staff professional development among others. According to statistics from the regional delegations of Basic Education for North-West and South-West 2019/2020 school year, most schools are not functional because of the crisis. Meanwhile, those that are functional are challenged by the measures to curb COVID19 in the schools (Tah, 2021)<sup>[18]</sup>.

### Statement of the Problem

Basic education sector is the foundation to every other education, so it ought to have highly qualified teachers and head teachers, yet their professional development is minimal. Teachers ought to maintain Continuous Professional Development (CPD) so as to meet up with the diverse needs of learners and the ever changing educational system. Most school heads ensure that policies and regulations approved by the Ministry of Basic Education are closely followed but pay less attention to effective instructional supervision through regular staff placement and assessment of staff among others which could aid them to sort staff for CPD programs according to their identified needs.

The researcher observed that some teachers have hardly changed their teaching methods or materials and are more resistant to any change in instruction. The researcher noticed that some school heads and teachers are not computer literate in this era that has learners who are technologically driven. Very few teachers of the primary schools have degrees, with quite few in the master and almost inexistent with the doctoral degree levels. The researcher discovered that there are a few untrained teachers in some schools paid by the Parent Teacher Association (PTA). These breed of teachers together with the regular ones really need professional development. The possible consequences are the spilt-over effects seen on most primary school graduates, who cannot adequately read, write, spell or carry out basic

numerical operations to enable them cope with studies in the secondary school or daily life activities in the society. Research has proven that, there is a widespread feeling that academic standards are fast falling with the case of the public primary schools so alarming. What then might have gone amiss to affect negatively the general output of pupils in the primary schools? The challenge is perhaps placed at the door post of “effective instructional supervision” with regard to identifying teachers’ needs for professional development programs. This study thus, was out to investigate the relationship between head teachers’ instructional supervision and staff professional development in public primary schools of the English-speaking sub-system of education in Cameroon.

### Objectives of the Study

This study was guided by two specific objectives:

1. To examine the relationship between head teachers’ staff placement and staff professional development in public primary schools of the English-speaking sub-system of education in Cameroon.
2. To investigate the relationship between head teachers’ assessment of staff and staff professional development.

### Research Questions

The specific research questions were:

1. To what extent is the relationship between head teachers’ staff placement and staff professional development?
2. How far is the relationship between head teachers’ assessment of staff and staff professional development?

### Statistical Hypotheses

**H<sub>01</sub>:** Head teachers’ staff placement has no significant relationship with staff professional development.

**H<sub>a1</sub>:** Head teachers’ staff placement has a significant relationship with staff professional development.

**H<sub>02</sub>:** Head teachers’ assessment of staff has no significant relationship with staff professional development.

**H<sub>a2</sub>:** Head teachers’ assessment of staff has a significant relationship with staff professional development.

### Justification of the Study

The justification for the choice of staff placement (induction) as a variable for the study was to verify head teachers’ instructional activities in the school with respect to placing staff for instruction and how this can enhance staff professional development. This is because the teacher can only teach what he/she knows. They can acquire job satisfaction if the head teacher considers the teacher’s work environment such as school culture and climate during placement of newly transferred staff, old/experienced staff among others. This can boost the moral and tune of the school thereby enhancing self-satisfaction, confidence, assiduity among the teachers. With regard to staff placement, many unanswered questions remain, such as: On what basis do commentators in African communities (English-speaking sub-system of education in Cameroon inclusive) judge the state of supervision of instruction pertaining to placement of staff in the schools? What is the relationship between staff placement with respect to supervision of instruction and staff professional development? The researcher was out to find out all of these in this study. The role theory by Nyongesa (2007) [15] was

used to support head teachers’ staff placement because placement goes with role deposition and reduction of work load for both newly posted and old staff. The head teacher serves as a role model, coach, mentor and monitor in discharging the duties of instructional supervision for staff professional development.

The second variable was staff assessment. This is because head teachers need to assess the teachers during instructional supervision to be able to know their needs and sort them for professional development programs. In assessing teachers, he/she will also be able to conduct appropriate staff placement, reward/incentives among others. On the other hand, assessment of staff by head teachers to identify their needs for professional development remains a call for concern in Basic Education especially in the North-West and South-West regions of Cameroon. What knowledge and skills do school-site supervisors require to be able to perform their duties effectively pertaining to staff assessment? Overall, what is the state of supervision of instruction in public primary schools in English-speaking sub-system of education in Cameroon? The nature and quality of instructional supervision within a school is presumed to have effects on the expertise, practice and job satisfaction of teachers and by extension ultimately, on pupils’ outcomes such as achievement. The collegial theory by Bush (2008) [4] was selected to support head teachers’ assessment of staff because the head teacher is expected to use his/her interpersonal skills while supervising the teachers by being friendly, patient and understanding among others.

The justification for the choice of English-speaking sub-system of education in Cameroon for the study was that the regions have faced challenges of inadequate teachers’ instructional supervision and limited teachers’ professional development opportunities. Some teachers assumed teaching responsibility without adequate designed program for continuous professional development. This situation poses a concern on the role of the head teachers as internal instructional supervisors and further raises doubt about teachers’ relevance in the changing educational system in Cameroon in general and English-speaking regions in particular. The public primary schools were selected because they serve as exemplary to others and are funded by the state.

### Scope of the Study

Geographically, the study was delimited to English-speaking sub-system of education in Cameroon. These are the two English-speaking regions: South-West Region and North-West Region.

Content wise, the study investigated the relationship between head teachers’ instructional supervision and staff professional development. The independent variable was instructional supervision with two indicators as: staff placement and assessment of staff. The dependent variable was staff professional development with indicators as: promotion of staff, appointment of staff, bringing in new programs by staff, research proposals and publications by staff, compiling questions for assessment of learners, changing grades or levels, career advancement and others. The study focused on head teachers’ instructional supervision because it plays a central role in building teachers’ professional development.



Theoretically, the study was delimited to two theories that matched with the two specific objectives. With regard to methodology the study was delimited to the cross-sectional survey and case study designs. The mixed methods were used with the quantitative and qualitative approaches employed. The different approaches used in the study were to provide room for triangulation which contributed to the objectivity of the data collected. The cross-sectional survey research design was used because the participants in the study were of different academic and professional qualifications and the data were collected once across the sample. Meanwhile, the case study design was used because the qualitative approach dealt with few key informant cases for corroboration of the findings.

### Research Design

The quantitative and qualitative research approaches were used. The use of mixed methods was for the purpose of triangulation due to the fact that the individual strength of one method offsets the other method's weakness. Research explains that mixing methods is not primarily to search for corroboration, but rather to expand understanding of the phenomenon under investigation. However, corroboration reached by different approaches does provide researchers with greater confidence in their conclusions (Anim, 2005). Therefore, the entire research design was convergent parallel mixed methods because the quantitative and qualitative data were both collected simultaneously and analyzed together (Creswell, 2014).

### Area of the Study

This study was carried out within the English-speaking sub-system of education in Cameroon. English-speaking Cameroon constitutes South-West and North-West Regions which are part of the ten regions of the country.

South-West Region has Buea as the regional capital. The region is divided into six major administrative divisions namely; Fako, Koupe-Muanenguba, Lebialem, Manyu, Meme, and Ndian. These are in turn broken down into thirty-one (31) sub-divisions. The South-West Region of Cameroon occupies a surface land area of 25,410km<sup>2</sup> (9,810sq.mi), a population of 1,553,320 (2015) and a density of 61/km<sup>2</sup> (160/sq. mi) (Kimengsi & Tasam, 2013). According to Google Scholar (2020), the region is largely inhabited by the Bakwerians (especially in Limbe), the Balong tribe (especially in Muyuka) and the Bangwas (especially in Lebialem). Some of these inhabitants are teachers and head teachers of public primary schools.

Important towns include the regional capital Buea and divisional capitals Limbe, Kumba, Fontem, Bangem, Mundemba and Mamfe. Limbe in particular is a popular tourist resort notable for its fine beaches, zoo and botanic garden. Korup National Park in Ndian Division is also a major attraction. The hanging bridge on the Cross River in Mamfe linking to Akwaya Sub-Division is also another touristic site. Buea itself sits at the foot of Mount Cameroon and possesses an almost temperate climate markedly different from the rest of the regions. The region is notable for having the first English-speaking University in Cameroon which is the University of Buea, "a place to be" as is often called.

The North-West Region is made up of seven administrative divisions. They are: Boyo, Menchum, Ngo-Ketunjia or Ngoketunjia, Mezam, Bui, Donga Mantung and Momo

divisions. Each division is further sub-divided into sub-divisions, a total of thirty-four. Bamenda is the regional capital of North-West Region. Important towns include the regional capital Bamenda and divisional capitals are Bamenda, Kumbo, Nkambe, Mbengwi, Fundong, Wum and Ndop. It has one major metropolitan city, Bamenda, with several other towns such as Mbengwi, Wum, Ndu, Batibo, Bambui and Oshie.

It is situated on the western high plateau with a cold climate. The North-West Region of Cameroon occupies a surface land area of 17,300 km<sup>2</sup> (6,700 sq. mi), population of 1,968,578 (2017) as the third most populated region in the country and a density of 110/km<sup>2</sup> (290/sq. mi). The North-West Region has many ethnic groups, including immigrants from other regions and countries among who are public primary school teachers and head teachers. Nigeria is well represented, as it borders the region to both the north and the north-west. The native population comprises a variety of ethnic and linguistic groups. The main ethnic groups are of Tikar origin: Tikari, Widikum, Fulani, and Moghamo. The most widely spoken languages in the region include Mungaka, Limbum spoken by the Wimbun people of Donga Mantung Division; Yamba, spoken by the Yamba people also of the Donga Mantung Division; Bafmen, Oku, Noni, Lamnso, Ngemba, Pidgin English, Balikumbat, Papiakum, Moghamo and Nkom.

The North-West Region has unique attractions, including the second highest mountain (Mt Oku with height 3011m) in West Africa. It is home to many rare birds such as the distinctive red crested Bannerman's turaco, which is unique to this region. There are also many crater lakes such as Lake Oku, Lake Awing and Lake Nyos. The largest remaining mountain forest in the North-West Region is the Kilum-Ijim Forest. Menchum Falls in Wum and Abbi Falls in Mbengwi Sub-Division are also located here.

The principal public hospital for the Region is the Bamenda Regional Hospital. The Catholic General Hospital Shisong Kumbo, Bansa Baptist Hospital, Kumbo, Belo and Mbingo Baptist Hospitals are among the most renowned mission hospitals. These have helped to resolve the health needs of the region. The region is notable for having the second English-speaking University in Cameroon which is the University of Bamenda.

However, English-speaking Cameroon as a whole is located in the "armpit" of Africa; it is sandwiched between Nigeria, to the east with French-speaking Cameroon and to the south with the Equatorial Guinean Island of Bioko. The regions equally have many secondary, primary and nursery schools scattered in the various divisions and sub - divisions being; public, mission and lay-private schools with teacher training colleges and technical schools inclusive.

### Population of the Study

The population of this study was made up of all head teachers (4,029) and teachers (13,416) of public primary schools in English-speaking sub-system of education in Cameroon. This was according to statistics from North-West and South-West regional delegations of Basic Education in 2020. The research targeted the entire population for purpose of generalization of results of the findings.

The accessible population was 5,004 teachers and 915 head teachers because most schools were not functional at the time of the study due to the socio-political crisis in the two regions. They represented the population and provided

adequate information about head teachers' instructional supervision and its relationship with staff professional development.

### Sample and Sampling Techniques

The sample size was 300 teachers and 10 head teachers. The researchers used multi-stage sampling involving the simple random sampling and purposive sampling techniques in the process of selection of the sample size for teachers. The

researcher used simple random sampling to come out with 60 schools in Fako and Mezam Divisions from where the teachers were drawn purposively. The researcher purposively left out all class six teachers because it is an examination class where instructional supervision may not likely follow the stipulated trends. The purposive and expert sampling techniques were used to select 10 head teachers for the interview.

**Table 1:** Distribution of the Sample Size of the Study

Division	Subdivision/Council Area	No. of Public Primary Schools	No. of Teachers		No. of Head Teachers
			Trained (Grade 1)	Untrained (Acad. Qual)	
Fako	Buea	10	50	0	1
	Limbe I	6	50	0	1
	Limbe II	1	5	0	1
	Limbe III	2	10	0	1
	Tiko	10	23	2	1
	West coast	3	9	1	1
Mezam	Bamenda I	10	25	0	1
	Bamenda II	20	50	0	1
	Bamenda III	10	40	0	1
	Santa	8	34	1	1
Total	10	60	296	4	10

Note. Table 1 from the Regional Delegations of Basic Education for North-West and South-West (2020) shows that the sample size constituted three hundred (300) teachers (296 trained and 4 untrained) and ten (10) head teachers drawn from sixty (60) schools in ten (10) sub-divisions/council areas.

### Description of the Research Instruments

The researchers used a questionnaire and an interview guide. Each of the statements on the questionnaire contains four possible responses: strongly disagree (SD) = 1, disagree (D) = 2, agree (A) = 3 and strongly agree (SA) = 4. The respondent taking the test reacts to every statement by marking a tick on one of the response options. The questionnaire was made up of four sections of 43 items. Section A: demographic information; section B: head teachers' staff placement; section C: head teachers' assessment of staff and section D: evidence of staff professional development. The interview guide focused on the following: demographic information, the instructional supervisory activities of the head teacher in enhancing staff professional development according to the stated objectives.

### Validity and Reliability of the Research Instruments

Content validity and face validity were used. In order to ascertain face validity, the researchers prepared the instruments and gave to experts to read through and make sure necessary corrections and suggestions on grammar, organization of questions, presentation, typographical quality, clarity of instructions, ease of completion and timing of instruments were adequate. Further, content validity for the questionnaire was estimated at 0.75 and the rule is that  $CVI \geq 0.7$ . This implied that the instrument was accepted valid.

The reliability of the instruments was done through the split-half technique in two (2) primary schools in Buea, South-West Region of Cameroon. The exercise was carried out with 20 teachers. These primary schools did not take part in the actual study. The data obtained were compiled and

computed to get the Cronbach's alpha ( $\alpha$ ) coefficient estimated at 0.805 which implies that the internal consistency of the instrument was high and correct for data collection. The interview guide was trial-tested with the 2 head teachers of the primary schools.

### Data Collection Procedures

The researcher presented a permit to relevant offices during the collection of data from the field. The researcher also obtained some basic information concerning the schools, from the regional delegation offices. The researcher and research assistant then planned and visited seminar grounds to seek permission and administer the instruments. The questionnaire was administered to all the 300 teachers (296 trained and 4 untrained) and 10 head teachers were interviewed.

### Data Analysis Procedures

The researchers prepared a marking guide for the questionnaire together with the analyst. This was followed by preparing a respondent code. The items on the Likert scale were also coded as follows: strongly agree, agree, disagree and strongly disagree were assigned 4, 3, 2 and 1 for positively weighted items respectively. Meanwhile, negatively weighted items took the reverse, that is: 1, 2, 3 and 4 respectively. The data were analyzed using descriptive statistics of frequencies, sum, mean score and standard deviations. Data from the interview were analyzed thematically.

Hypotheses were analyzed using Pearson product-moment correlation. This was because non-parametric statistics are distribution free statistics that can describe some attributes of the study population and also the relationship with some other attributes across the population. Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Analysis computed using the following formula for all the two hypotheses: Pearson Product-

$$\text{Moment Correlation } (r_{xy}) = \frac{n \sum xy - \sum x \sum y}{\sqrt{[n \sum x^2 - (\sum x)^2][n \sum y^2 - (\sum y)^2]}}$$

**Where:**  $x$  = independent variable,  $y$  = dependent variable and  $r_{xy}$  = correlation coefficient for  $x$  and  $y$ . The magnitude of the relationship between the variables ranged from 0 to 1. When it falls between 0.3 and 0.59 it is rated as moderate. Finally, when it is rated between 0.6 and 1, it is considered high. The sample of the study was large enough to give sufficient power to the analysis of the hypotheses.

### Ethical Considerations

A permit was presented to the authorities who organized the various seminars in Fako and Mezam Divisions in order to seek permission to administer the instruments. A cover letter

was attached to the instruments stating the identification of the researcher (name, university, department and research topic, purpose of the study and researcher's contact). The researcher respected other norms of research.

### Presentation of Findings

Descriptive data analysis for all variables used in the study is presented in table 2 below. The sum statistic, mean scores, standard deviations and decisions arrived at about the survey statements on staff placement and assessment of staff to enhance staff professional development are shown on the table.

**Table 2:** Head teachers' staff placement and staff professional development

S. No	Section D: Staff Placement: The head teacher	$\bar{X}$	S	Decision
1	Conducts induction for newly posted teachers	33.11	.82	A
2	Conducts induction for transferred staff	2.95	.83	A
3	Conducts induction for old staff when new programs come in	3.01	.85	A
4	Pairs up new teachers with experienced old ones for mentoring	33.20	.81	A
5	Considers work over-load for teachers	2.92	.88	A
6	Considers inadequate professional support for teachers	2.20	.88	D
7	Considers culture shocks of teachers	2.79	.87	A
8	Considers inadequate resources for teachers	2.17	.91	D
	MRS	2.79	.86	A

MRS = Mean response score,  $\bar{x}$  = Mean score, S = Standard deviation

From the analyses on table 2, the respondents opined that head teachers conduct induction for newly posted teachers, transferred staff, and old staff when new programs come in; pair up new teachers with experienced old ones for mentoring; consider work over-load for teachers, inadequate professional support for teachers, culture shocks of teachers, and inadequate resources for teachers. The mean response score for the section shows that there is high relationship between head teachers' staff placement and staff professional development ( $\bar{x} = 2.79 \pm .86$ ).

**Null hypothesis (H<sub>01</sub>):** Head teachers' staff placement has no significant relationship with staff professional development.

**Alternative hypothesis (H<sub>a1</sub>):** Head teachers' staff placement has a significant relationship with staff professional development.

**Table 3:** Relationship between Head Teachers' Staff Placement and Staff Professional Development (N=287)

Variable	$\sum X$	$\sum X^2$	$\sum Y$	$\sum Y^2$	$\sum XY$	$r_{xy}$	p-value
Staff Placement (X)	6411	145829	14783	40.377*	0.000		
Staff Professional Development (Y)	6539	157353					

$p^* < 0.05$ ;  $df = 285$ ; critical  $r_{xy} = 0.113$ ; (N= 287)

### Verification of Hypothesis One

Data analyses on table 3 shows that at alpha level of significance 0.05 with degree of freedom 285, the calculated or computed correlation coefficient value  $r_{xy}$ -computed is 0.377\* which is higher compared to the critical value of 0.113 ( $r_{xy}$ -critical). Also, given that the calculated p-value is 0.000 which is far lower than 0.05, the interpretation here is that there is a significant and moderate relationship between head teachers' staff placement and staff professional

development. The positive sign of the  $r_{xy}$ -computed value implies that staff professional development may likely improve when head teachers' staff placement become more appropriate.

### Interview of Head Teachers on Staff Placement

About how they conduct induction (placement) of newly posted staff, transferred staff and/or old staff, the head teachers said newly transferred staff are orientated and paired with serious ones, are attached to any teacher who masters a class well so that he/she can fill up the lapses, old staff are sent to classes where they are best fitted, find out about his/her former school and class taught, his/her qualification and others. "For old staff I find out his/her competence and seek his/her consent". They also said that they consider teacher's age, sex and experience; the age of the pupils; consider teacher's longevity in service; health and status.

Considering work load distribution, they said that work is distributed proportionately to the number and ability of the teachers, according to availability and encourage creativity, according to class and level. They consider teacher's age and when distributing the materials, all teachers receive equal instructional materials and assemble the teachers as they collect their materials and sign in the inventory book.

Managing cultural shock for teachers, they said: counseling is done when need arises, just consultation, respect cultural values of teachers, treat them according to their cultural backgrounds, manage all teachers equally no matter their cultural backgrounds, work with teacher to feel his/her pain, by the teaching of national languages and culture, organize cultural day in school and encourage flexibility.

**Table 4:** Head Teachers' Assessment of Staff and Staff Professional Development

S. No	Section E Assessment of Staff: The head teacher:	$\bar{X}$	S	Decision
1	Assesses level of lesson objectives	3.33	.73	A
2	Praises teachers for specific teaching behaviors	3.31	.75	A
3	Ensures that teachers have adequate teaching materials	3.17	.83	A
4	Makes informal assessments of the classrooms	3.05	.78	A
5	Formally assesses teaching and learning	3.25	.77	A
6	Provides objective feedback about staff class assessment	3.11	.81	A
7	Checks students' books	2.89	.95	A
8	Focuses more on teachers' weaknesses	2.61	1.0	A
	MRS	3.09	.83	A

MRS = Mean Response Score,  $\bar{x}$  = Mean Score, S = Standard Deviation

From the analyses on table 4, the respondents opined that head teachers assess level of lesson objectives, praises teachers for specific teaching behaviors, ensure that teachers have adequate teaching materials, make informal assessments of the classrooms, formally assesses teaching and learning, provide object feedback about staff class assessment, checks students' books, and focuses more on teachers' weaknesses. The mean response score for the section shows that there is high relationship between head teachers' assessment of staff and staff professional development ( $\bar{x} = 3.09 \pm .83$ ).

**Null hypothesis (Ho<sub>2</sub>):** Head teachers' assessment of staff has no significant relationship with staff professional development.

**Alternative hypothesis (Ha<sub>2</sub>):** Head teachers' assessment of staff has a significant relationship with staff professional development.

**Table 5:** Relationship between Head Teachers' Assessment of Staff and Staff Professional Development (N=287)

Variable	$\sum X$	$\sum X^2$	$\sum Y$	$\sum Y^2$	$\sum XY$	$\Gamma_{xy}$	P-value
Assessment of Staff (X)	7095	179881	165189	0.577*	0.000		
Staff Professional Development (Y)	6539	157353					

$p^* < 0.05$ ;  $df = 285$ ; critical  $\Gamma_{xy} = 0.113$ ; (N= 287)

### Verification of Hypothesis Two

Data analyses on table 5 shows that at alpha level of significance 0.05 with degree of freedom 285, the calculated or computed correlation coefficient value  $r_{xy}$ -computed is 0.577\* which is higher compared to the critical value of 0.113 ( $\Gamma_{xy}$ -critical). Also, given that the calculated p-value is 0.000 which is far lower than 0.05, the interpretation here is that there is a significant and moderate relationship between head teachers' assessment of staff and staff professional development. The positive sign of the  $r_{xy}$ -computed value implies that staff professional development may likely improve when head teachers' assessment of staff become more frequent.

### Interview of Head Teachers on Assessment of Staff

About how head teachers assess achievement of lesson objectives, they said: routine supervision is done regularly, through the pupils' books, class tests and pupils' output, through results, by the use of evaluation and examinations and through performance of the pupils.

To motivate teachers to teach they said that they do the following: give good remarks, materials and financial incentives, buy textbooks for teachers, visit classroom and

present model lesson, give them bonuses, constant encouragement, surprise them for outings and give incentives following hard work and give them instructional materials, praise them.

About what they do after supervision of teachers and those who perform well, they said: the teachers are congratulated and encouraged to keep up, give prompt feedback and education in areas of lapses, praise them, provide more incentives, appreciate them by using encouraging words/remarks and positive language.

About teachers who do not perform well as indicated during supervision, the head teachers said that they encourage them and try to dialogue with them to ascertain what caused their poor performance and encourage them to pay attention during seminars, point out their lapses and give them corrections, ask them to work harder, encourage them to pick-up, bring them closer and encourage them to do more research and copy from those who perform well, hold small meeting and we talk it out amicably. "I point out the areas where there were problems", we have staff counseling, give exemplary lessons, organize peer teaching and conferences, they are encouraged to review their teaching strategies, they are paired with serious mentors on the staff, they are placed on impromptu supervision and counseling.

### Discussion of Findings

The findings about the relationship between head teachers' staff placement and staff professional development showed that, staff professional development will likely improve if head teachers' staff placement is more frequent. This is supported by Nyongesa (2007) <sup>[15]</sup> in his role theory where he sees an organization (school) as a social system where individuals (head teachers) define the roles of the staff through placement, the role of others and establish the expectations for each role. Conflict can result when teachers have differing expectations from the head teacher. Conflict can also emerge when teachers feel they are professionally inadequate and unable to align their teaching approach with the evolving instructional methodology which encourages more learners' participation in teaching-learning process than teacher-centered approach. Conflict during staff placement can lead to ineffective instructional supervision which will likely have negative impact on staff professional development and achievement of school objectives as a whole. Therefore, the head teacher has to be tactful and skillful in the process of staff placement so as to minimize the consequences of errors created in the effort, as added by Okumbe (2007) <sup>[16]</sup>.

The findings about the relationship between head teachers' staff assessment and staff professional development showed that, staff professional development will likely improve if



head teachers' staff assessment is more frequent. These findings are supported by the Collegial Theory (Bush, 2008) [4]. Teachers take turns assuming the role of assessment of colleagues as they help each other (Sergiovanni, 2006) [17]. But for teachers to assume the position of supervisors in assessment (peer supervision), Sergiovanni suggests that they (peers) need training and experience. According to Sergiovanni, participation requires much more training in conferencing, information collecting and other supervisory assessment techniques than typically necessary for other forms of instructional supervision.

### Conclusions

Pertaining to staff placement by head teachers, it was concluded that staff professional development may likely improve with appropriate head teachers' staff placement. The study established that there is a significant and moderate relationship between head teachers' staff placement and staff professional development in public primary schools of the English-speaking sub-system of education in Cameroon. Also, the study established that head teachers' assessment of staff has moderate and significant relationship with staff professional development in public primary schools of the English-speaking sub-system of education in Cameroon. This implies that if staff professional development has to improve head teachers have to work hard to improve on the strategies and techniques employed in carrying out instructional supervision. Adequate provision of instructional supervisory activities and professional development programs such as placement and/or assessment of teachers will help them develop the competence needed in the teaching profession.

### Recommendations

The Ministry of Basic Education, as well as other educational authorities in this sector should develop a strategic plan on periodic capacity building workshops for head teachers on instructional supervision of teachers. Particularly, on staff placement in terms of new staff, old/experienced staff, purpose of professional program, academic/social/political programs, work load and cultural shock to enhance staff professional development. This can help the head teachers to coordinate peer coaching, mentoring, modelling, cooperation and collaboration among their staff and themselves in the various schools hence, professional development can be assured.

It should be same with staff assessment using formal assessment, making notes on classroom scenes, discussing the assessment with the teacher, providing feedback to the teacher, using standard assessment checklists and informing staff about assessment criteria to enhance staff professional development. This can help the head teachers during assessment of teachers' instruction, to be able to identify their strengths and weaknesses thereby, sort them for professional development programs. The work load of head teachers should be reduced by embarking on massive recruitment of competent teachers so as to alleviate the shortage of teaching staff currently experienced in schools so that they can have adequate time to supervise teachers.

### Contributions of the Study to Knowledge

The study has established the relationship that exists between instructional supervisory activities namely: (staff placement and assessment of staff) and staff professional

development. The findings of the study have increased our knowledge on what it takes to achieve effective instructional supervision for adequate staff professional development in the English-speaking sub-system of education in Cameroon context as well as trends of professional development among public primary school teachers.

Lastly, implications of the findings of the study point to the fact that if instructional supervision continues to be practiced poorly, staff professional development in the public primary schools will continue to remain low. Therefore, the adaptation and innovation by teachers in effort to stay abreast with the changing needs of learners to new knowledge in the involvement of technologies in the teaching-learning process will become wanting.

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