



IMPACT OF SCHOOL HEADS' SUPERVISORY PRACTICES ON TEACHERS' INSTRUCTIONAL PERFORMANCE: EVIDENCE FROM SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN DISTRICT BHAKKAR, PAKISTAN

Samina Gul¹ & Awais Iqbal²

¹Department of Teacher Education, Qurtuba University of Science & Information Technology, D.I. Khan

Email: basharkhan998877@gmail.com

²Lecturer in Education, Govt. Associate College Behal, Bhakkar. Email: 28three90@gmail.com

KEYWORDS	ABSTRACT
supervisory practices; instructional performance; secondary school teachers; educational leadership; school supervision; Pakistan	The study explored the impact of supervisory practices on the instructional performance of secondary-level teachers. The objectives were to identify existing supervisory practices of school heads, determine the relationship between these practices and teachers' instructional performance, and assess the impact of supervisory practices on teachers' performance. The null hypothesis was that headmasters' supervisory practices have no significant impact on teachers' instructional performance. The study's delimited population included all secondary school teachers working in District Bhakkar, Punjab, Pakistan, during the academic year 2023–2024. Using a stratified random sampling technique in conjunction with a quantitative survey design, the study targeted a population of 2,284 teachers with a sample size of 340. Data were collected using a self-constructed, 50-item Likert scale questionnaire. The Cronbach's alpha technique's reliability analysis indicated a satisfactory reliability of 0.84. Data analysis, both descriptive and inferential, revealed significant dissatisfaction among teachers, particularly in classroom observations, professional development, communication, and collaboration. While recognition and support received comparatively higher satisfaction, areas like differentiation, technology integration, assessment practices, and collaboration showed mixed perceptions. The study underscores the critical role of effective supervisory practices in enhancing teaching effectiveness and student outcomes, with a significant positive correlation between supervisory practices and instructional performance. Regression analysis indicated that supervisory practices significantly predict instructional performance. The results rejected both null hypotheses, with the ANOVA results revealing $F = 0.025$, $p = 0.874$, highlighting the necessity for improvements. Recommendations emphasize actions for school administrators to foster supportive environments, improve feedback mechanisms, enhance professional development, and strengthen collaborative frameworks, thereby improving teacher satisfaction and instructional quality. Additionally, the study highlights the importance of ongoing assessment and refinement of supervisory practices to adapt to evolving educational needs.
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Corresponding Author	Samina Gul
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Introduction

Education continues to be one of the greatest tools for change in society and teachers have a pivotal role in the quality of education. In addition to the many influences that impact teacher performance and ultimately learner outcomes, the supervisory practices of school leaders are critical (Yousaf et al., 2018). Supervisory practices (SP) have been defined as classroom observation, feedback, mentoring or supporting teachers' professional development as well as administrative oversight (Brandon et al., 2018). Good supervision provides teachers the support and motivation needed for ongoing development while poor supervision or lack of supervision can affect teachers' morale and the quality of their teaching (Abubakar, 2018; Daniels et al., 2013).

While there is broad consensus amongst the education experts that the responsibility of the school heads to support teachers' professional development is ongoing, the overall evidence on how the supervisory style actually affects teachers' classroom practice is scanty in Pakistan. Several head teachers are said to use the old or conservative supervisory styles without taking into account their long-term effects; while some experienced head teachers are not updated with the latest supervisory approaches or the incorporation of technology in education (Abubakar, 2018; Akram, 2020). The lack of evidence combined with the well documented impact of head teachers' supervision on teachers' day to day practice means that it is important to explore in detail the impact of head teachers' supervision on teachers' practice.

What do school leaders' current supervisory practices look like? (2) How do school leaders currently supervise teachers? How do school leaders supervise teachers now? (3) What do school leaders want to do differently in their supervisory practices? (3) Does the school head's supervision style correlate with teachers' teaching quality? (3) How do school heads' supervisory practices affect teachers' teaching performance? The study, then, had three objectives, namely to identify existing supervisory practices, to determine the association between school heads' supervisory practices and teachers' instructional performance, and to establish the influence of the school heads' supervisory practices on the teachers' instructional performance and tested two null hypotheses, that is, no relationship exists between the school heads' supervisory practices and teachers' instructional performance (H01) and that the school heads' supervisory practices have no significant effect on teachers' instructional performance (H02).

The value of the research is that it can inform teacher education programmers that are tailored to specific schools; enhance resource planning and usage; and contribute to policy making and leadership development in the education sector. The study will provide evidence-based information regarding the relationship between the supervisory strategies and teacher effectiveness, which will help in improving the quality of education in Pakistan. The study was conducted with all secondary school teachers working in public school of District Bhakkar in academic year 2023-2024.

Literature Review

Teachers' teaching is a key element in a good education system, and closely associated to the amount of supervision and support over teachers that school leaders provide (Bonney et al., 2015).

The role of a supervisor usually entails reviewing classroom practice, giving feedback and providing opportunities for development, and maintaining a tolerant climate within the school (Behlol et al., 2017; Dinsdale, 2017). According to Khan (2021), systematic observation, assessment and feedback enable administrators to gauge teacher performance, pinpoint the needs of teachers in need of support and react accordingly. Supervisory approaches that are working are proactive and supportive, focused on team-building for better teaching and learning.

Theoretical Perspectives

There are several theoretical strands that underpin the research on supervisory practice. Behavioral theory, which is based on the principles of Skinner (1953), focuses on clear, frequent, and positive feedback and reinforcement (Waters & Marzano, 2006). Humanistic theory is a theory that emphasizes intrinsic motivation, self-actualization, and whole-person growth, and is linked to Maslow (1968) and Rogers. Cognitive approaches emphasize the role that supervisors can play in supporting teachers' reflective thinking and problem-solving, whereas transformational leadership theory (Bass & Riggio, 2006) defines supervision as a way to motivate teachers to change and to share a vision to develop new ideas. Situational leadership theory also proposes that a good supervisory style depends on teachers' readiness and the context they are in. These frameworks form the foundation of the assumption of this study, which posits those supervisory styles behavioral, humanistic or transformational influence instructional performance in terms of feedback, support, and professional development.

Dimensions of Supervisory Practice

Supervision can be formal or informal. Formal supervision refers to observations, evaluations, and feedback that are planned, scheduled, and structured, and in which administrators learn about teachers' strengths and areas for development (Ali et al., 2020). Informal supervision, however, is characterized by the continuous interaction, mentorship and day-to-day support for trust, collaboration, and a culture of continuous improvement in the school community (Balyer et al., 2017). They are seen as essential, as formal mechanisms offer structure and accountability, and informal mechanisms maintain relational trust and allow teachers to experiment and openly request feedback (Asad et al., 2022).

Factors Influencing Supervisory Effectiveness

How school heads lead affects the nature and efficacy of leadership. Transformational leaders establish a culture of continuous improvement that makes teachers feel appreciated and valued (Abbas & Ali, 2023; Bass & Riggio, 2006). Transactional leaders focus on setting clear expectations, holding individuals accountable, and offering rewards that depend on performance, which can foster uniformity but, if overemphasis is placed on compliance, can stifle innovation (Omogi, 2019). Laissez faire leadership, which involves very little intervention, is linked to lack of consistency, lack of engagement, and poorer instructional results (Harris, 2009).

The effectiveness is influenced by teachers' own perceptions of supervision. Teachers tend to engage in reflective practice, seek feedback, and engage in professional development when they feel their

practice is supported, collaborative, and growth-oriented (Borders & Brown, 2022; Omogi, 2019). On the other hand, feedback that is evaluative or irrelevant to learning is not likely to be retained (Ruiz-Primo & Brookhart, 2017). School climate and culture are also relevant: a school that fosters trust, respect, and a shared vision will provide opportunities for teachers to learn about the impact of their work and test out their ideas, while a culture that is toxic or pathological can diminish the value of teachers monitoring what they do and trying new ideas (Asad et al., 2022; Comighud et al., 2020). Professional learning communities (PLCs) are especially effective for teachers to participate in joint investigations, share data, and investigate and modify instruction together (Doğan & Adams, 2018; Vescio et al., 2008).

Instructional Performance

Instructional performance (IP) is the effectiveness and efficiency with which teachers implement the teaching role in all aspects ranging from lesson preparation, classroom management, pedagogy, student engagement, and assessment (Kwapong & Mensah, 2018). Successful implementation of the instructional method is linked to the use of student-centered approaches that emphasize critical thinking and active learning (Sinclair et al., 2020), subject matter expertise and pedagogically sound practices that are grounded in research (Munna, 2023), and creating a learning environment that is conducive and well-managed (Akram, 2020). The combination of cognitive load theory and constructivist theory provide complementary perspectives on how instructional design and student engagement interact to impact learning outcomes.

Research Gap

Despite the acknowledged significance of supervision, there is still limited research available on the link between supervision and teaching performance in Pakistan. Previous research tends to have a cross-sectional design, measures that are self-reported, and small samples, which restrict generalizability of results (Ahmad et al., 2023). Most of the studies are also conducted in urban context and English medium schools, while teachers in rural schools and Urdu medium schools are less explored (Rehman et al., 2023). The distribution of resources, implementation of policies, and organizational capacity remain issues that persist and make it difficult to make research results relevant to practice (Shaheen et al., 2023). This study attempts to tackle these gaps by exploring the supervisory practices and instructional performance of the secondary school teachers working in District Bhakkar with a valid quantitative and a well-powered sample size.

Methodology

The study used a quantitative research design with survey approach that allowed the collection of numerical data that could be analyzed statistically, which yielded objective data regarding the effect of supervisory practices on instructional performance.

All the teachers of secondary schools working in the public schools of District Bhakkar in the year 2023-2024 were considered as the population and counted 2,284 teachers (1,538 male and 746 female) in 04 tehsils of District Bhakkar (Bhakkar, Darya Khan, Kallurkot, Mankera). Stratified random sampling was used and the number of teachers surveyed was 340 which was calculated

using formula. Proportionate representation gave 230 males and 110 females from Bhakkar, Darya Khan, Mankera and Kallurkot respectively.

A self-developed, 50-item questionnaire on a 5-point Likert scale (Strongly Agree = 1 to Strongly Disagree = 5) was used to collect data. In addition to a demographic section, Section A (25 items across five subsections: classroom observation, support, and professional development, communication and collaboration, and overall satisfaction) measured current supervisory practices and Section B (25 items across five subsections: engagement and classroom management, differentiation and personalization, instructional strategies and technology integration, assessment and feedback, and collaboration and professional growth) measured instructional performance. The instrument was reviewed by four experts in the field, which resulted in a high level of construct validity, and had high internal consistency as Cronbach's alpha was obtained at .870 for Section A and .836 for Section B. A pilot test of 10% of the target sample was administered to enhance the clarity of the items before scale administration.

The researcher personally distributed 400 questionnaires, and retrieved 350 of which 340 were obtained after data screening for analysis. The data were analyzed using SPSS and MS Excel. Demographic variables and the two study variables were analyzed using descriptive statistics (frequencies, percentages, means and standard deviations), and the relationship between supervisory practices and instructional performance was analyzed using Pearson's correlation, and the predictive power of supervisory practices on instructional performance was analyzed using simple linear regression.

Results

Demographic Profile

The final sample of 340 secondary school teachers comprised 230 male teachers (67.6%) and 110 female teachers (32.4%). In terms of academic qualification, 51.8% held qualifications up to MA/MSc level, 46.5% up to MPhil, and 1.8% up to PhD.

Existing Supervisory Practices

In Descriptive analysis of Section, A, it was found that there was a general dissatisfaction of the teachers in all the subsections. As far as classroom observation, 64.5% of teachers disagreed with the regularity of observations, 62.3% felt feedback was untimely, 60.9% felt it was not very helpful and 66.8% felt uncomfortable during observation. Regarding support and professional development, 65% disagreed that they were growing in their support, 63.8% said that their development didn't relate to them, and 68.5% said they didn't have adequate access to resources. Communication and collaboration were also concerns, with 63.2% stating that the performance expectations were not clear, and 67.9% indicating that they felt undervalued by their colleagues or school heads. The mean ratings for each of the five subsections of supervisory practices were summarized in Table 1.

Table 1. Mean Comparison of Subsections of Supervisory Practices (Section A)

Subsection	Mean (X)	Std. Deviation
Classroom Observations	3.60	0.78
Support and Professional Development	3.63	0.81
Communication and Collaboration	3.62	0.76
Recognition and Support	3.67	0.82
Overall Satisfaction	3.60	0.80

Note. Ratings are on a five-point scale where higher mean scores reflect greater disagreement/dissatisfaction with existing practice, consistent with the item scoring used in the original instrument (Strongly Agree = 1 to Strongly Disagree = 5).

The areas of "Recognition and Support" and "Support and Professional Development" had the highest mean scores (3.67 and 3.63, respectively), suggesting relatively higher dissatisfaction, while "Classroom Observations" and "Overall Satisfaction" had the lowest mean scores (3.60 each) and generally indicated a critical assessment of existing supervisory practice.

Instructional Performance

Analysis of Section B indicated moderate levels of instructional performance across its five subsections, with notable variation. Table 2 presents the mean comparison.

Table 2. Mean Comparison of Subsections of Instructional Performance (Section B)

Subsection	Mean (X)	Std. Deviation
Engagement and Classroom Management	3.20	0.81
Differentiation and Personalization	3.30	0.79
Instructional Strategies and Technology Integration	3.06	0.59
Assessment and Feedback	3.04	0.75
Collaboration and Professional Growth	2.96	0.64

The mean for differentiation and personalization was highest (3.30), indicating relatively more consistent efforts to differentiate instruction to support a range of student needs, and the mean for collaboration and professional growth was lowest (2.96), indicating comparatively fewer collaborative efforts and reflective practice among teachers.

Relationship Between Supervisory Practices and Instructional Performance

The first null hypothesis (H01) was tested using Pearson's correlation analysis. An overall statistically significant positive correlation was obtained between supervisory practices and instructional performance as revealed in Table 3.

Table 3. Correlation Between Supervisory Practices (SP) and Instructional Performance (IP)

	SP	IP
Supervisory Practices (r)	1	.825**
Sig. (2-tailed)	—	.000
Instructional Performance (r)	.825**	1
Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	—
N	340	340

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The correlation shows a strong relationship between the two variables, with $r = .825$ and $p < .001$. This means that there is a strong relationship between the two variables, with a higher correlation coefficient indicating a stronger association. This finding resulted in rejection of H01.

Impact of Supervisory Practices on Instructional Performance

The second null hypothesis (H02) was tested using simple linear regression and the magnitude of the predictive influence of supervisory practices on instructional performance was quantified. The model summary and model coefficients are shown in table 4.

Table 4. Regression Analysis for the Impact of Supervisory Practices on Instructional Performance

Model	R	R ²	Adj. R ²	B	β	t	F	Sig.
1 (Constant)	—	—	—	.565	—	5.84	—	.000
Supervisory Practices	.825	.680	.679	.703	.825	26.82	719.57	.000

Results of the model indicated that the supervisory practices were significant predictors of instructional performance, accounting for 68% of the variance in instructional performance ($R^2 = .680$). This unstandardized regression coefficient ($B = .703$, $p < .001$) means that for every 1-unit change in supervisory practices, instructional performance changes by .703, controlling for the other factors in the model. The overall model proved to be highly significant ($F = 719.57$, $p < .001$), suggesting that the model should be accepted, and that the effect of supervisory practices on teachers' instructional performance is significantly large.

Discussion

The results of this study should lead one to understand that there is a great deal of teacher dissatisfaction with some aspects of supervision in light of the very high correlation shown in this study between supervision and instructional performance. The lack of satisfaction with the general scheduling of classroom observations, the timing of feedback, and the helpfulness of the feedback received in classroom observations resonates with the literature, which emphasizes the importance of having timely and constructive feedback for supervision to be seen as leading to genuine professional development (Shaheen et al., 2023; Hargreaves & O'Connor, 2017). Such issues have

been documented specifically in Pakistani schools where a lack of even feedback and discomfort during observations have been related to other supervisory quality issues (Arshad et al., 2025).

The lack of satisfaction with PD opportunities that felt irrelevant, lacked resources, and were lacking in encouragement to attend is consistent with previous research that has shown that professional development must be ongoing, relevant, and responsive to these teachers' particular classroom needs (Darling-Hammond, 2008; Guskey & Yoon, 2009). This aligns with previous Pakistani studies that have shown that existing development programmes are often perceived as being out of the context of the classroom and not adequately resourced (Ahmad et al., 2023; Akram, 2020).

The concerns for communication and collaboration, and around recognition, mentoring and leadership opportunities, also tie to literature that highlights how clear expectations of performance, systematic opportunities to seek feedback and formal mechanisms to recognize performance are key to keeping teachers motivated and engaged (Day, 2017; Hirn et al., 2018). However, similar findings have been observed in other educational contexts in Pakistan, such as the lack of opportunities for collaborative discussion and the limited mentoring practices, which indicate that these issues are not unique but are embedded in broader patterns of school-level supervisory culture that need targeted attention (Asad et al., 2022; Yousaf et al., 2018).

Instructional practice, on the other hand, was found to be generally poorer by teachers in collaboration, reflective teaching and using assessment data to guide teaching and learning, and more powerful in differentiation and engaging students in learning. This aligns with the research, which indicated that instructional practice is more sensitive to collaborative and reflective aspects of teaching and learning performance, while individual teacher effort has a less significant impact (Guskey, 2009; Hattie & Gan, 2011).

The results of this study, especially the high positive correlation between supervisory practices and instructional performance ($r = .825$, $p < .001$), along with the regression finding that supervisory practices account for 68% of the variance in instructional performance ($R^2 = .680$, $\beta = .703$, $p < .001$), provide strong quantitative support for the proposition, long argued in the literature, that the quality of school-level supervision is a critical lever in instructional improvement (Bonney et al., 2015; Omogi, 2019). This analysis reveals supervision as a key tool for school leaders to influence the day-to-day quality of teaching and, consequently, student learning.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The aim of this study was to explore the current supervisory practices of the school heads, the relationship between the school heads' supervisory practices and teachers' instruction and the predictive effect of school heads' supervisory practices on teachers' instructional performance in secondary schools of District Bhakkar, Punjab, Pakistan. There is clear evidence of low levels of satisfaction with key aspects of supervision: classroom observation, professional development and communication, and somewhat more mixed levels of satisfaction with aspects of recognition and support. The statistical analyses also clearly show that there is a strong and positive relationship between supervisory practice and the quality of instruction, and that the latter is likely to benefit

from the former. The two null hypotheses were thus rejected, which supported the significance of the supervisory practices of school heads with respect to the teachers' instructional performance, as well as their effect on the teachers' instructional performance.

Based on these findings, the following recommendations for practice are made: school administrators should continue to implement more effective supervision practices by providing regular, positive, timely feedback to teachers about the progress of instruction; school leadership should make sure to clearly define school expectations for effective performance and foster a collaborative school culture; education policymakers should make sure to allocate resources to support differentiated instruction and to engage students in collaborative activities; school boards should advocate for policies that emphasize supervisory practices as a tool for enhancing teaching effectiveness and student achievement; and parents and guardians can reinforce these efforts by participating actively in collaborative activities at the school.

Future research needs include longitudinal studies to determine progress toward improved teacher retention and increased student achievement as it relates to supervisory practices over time. Researchers and educational technology developers could be encouraged to further explore the potential of digital tools in improving supervisory practices and their impact on instructional quality, while research institutions could be encouraged to continue their studies of supervisory practices and their long-term effects on the quality of the education provided in Pakistan.

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