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ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE OF EDUCATION AND BEHAVIOURAL STUDIES
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT

**THE PRACTICE AND CHALLENGES OF INSTRUCTIONAL SUPERVISION AT
GOVERNMENTAL SECONDARY SCHOOL IN ARADA SUB CITY, ADDIS ABABA,
ETHIOPIA**

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**The Practice and Challenges of Instructional Supervision at Governmental
Secondary School in Arada Sub City, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia**

**Addis Ababa University
College of Education and Behavioral Studies
Department of Educational Planning and Management**

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School Leadership**

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Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

LETTER OF APPROVAL

This is to certify that the thesis prepared by Mululalem Beletew entitled '*Practice and Challenges of Instructional Supervision at Selected Governmental Schools in Arada Sub City of Addis Ababa City Administration*' and submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts in School Leadership complies with the regulation of the University and meets the accepted standards with respect to originality and quality.

APPROVED BY BOARD OF EXAMINERS

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Declaration

I hereby declare that this thesis entitled “*Practice and Challenges of Instructional Supervision at Selected Governmental Schools in Arada Sub City*” has been carried out by me under the guidance and supervision of Dr. Kenenissa Dabi. The thesis is original and has not been submitted for the award of any degree or diploma to any university or institutions.

Researcher’s name

Date

Signature

Mulualem Beletew

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ACRONYMS

BPR - Business Process Re-engineering

BSC - Balanced Scorecard

ESDP - Education Sector Development Program

FDRE - Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia

FGDs - Focus Group Discussions

GEQIP - General Education Quality Improvement Programme

MoE - Ministry of Education

PLCs - Professional Learning Communities

QUAL - Qualitative (in the context of data/research methods)

QUAN - Quantitative (in the context of data/research methods)

SIP - School Improvement Programme

SPSS - Statistical Package for Social Sciences

UN - United Nations

UNESCO - United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

Abstract

This study investigated the prevailing practices and challenges of instructional supervision in governmental secondary schools within Arada Sub-City, Addis Ababa, aiming to understand the significant gap between educational policy and classroom reality. Employing a descriptive survey design with a mixed-methods approach, the study collected data from 217 participants, including 185 teachers and 32 school leaders (principals, department heads and supervisors). Data were gathered through comprehensive questionnaires, analyzed using descriptive statistics (frequencies, percentages, means), and semi-structured interviews with principals, department heads, and cluster supervisors, which were subjected to thematic analysis. Findings reveal that instructional supervision is predominantly practiced as a top-down, bureaucratic ritual, fundamentally misaligned with modern developmental and collaborative principles. The supervisory cycle is procedurally incomplete: pre-observation conferences are virtually non-existent, classroom observations are infrequent (typically once per semester), feedback is generic and non-actionable, and systematic follow-up is absent. Consequently, the practice is perceived by a majority of participants as overwhelmingly ineffective, failing to contribute to teacher professional growth, improve overall teaching quality, or positively impact student learning outcomes. Alarming, the current model is often seen as a conservative force that stifles pedagogical innovation. The study identifies a set of interconnected and self-reinforcing challenges, creating a state of "systemic gridlock." The most significant impediments are the heavy administrative workload of supervisors, a critical deficit in practical training and capacity building, and constraining contextual factors such as large class sizes. These issues are compounded by a legacy of teacher mistrust, leading to a perception of supervision as an evaluative, fault-finding exercise rather than a supportive process. The study concludes that a profound policy-practice chasm exists, and the role of the instructional leader has been effectively displaced by that of an administrative manager, rendering supervision a hollow exercise in compliance. Based on these conclusions, the study recommends a multi-pronged approach: a structural redefinition of the school leader's role to reduce administrative burdens; the implementation of a mandatory, practice-based capacity-building program for all supervisors; the development of a coherent policy framework that clearly separates formative from summative evaluation; and school-level initiatives to foster a culture of trust through collaborative, teacher-led professional learning.

Keywords: *Instructional Supervision, Educational Leadership, Teacher Professional Development, Policy-Practice Gap, Educational Challenges, Ethiopia.*

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background of the Study

Globally, quality education is considered the bedrock of sustainable development, a catalyst for social mobility, and a fundamental human right. This global consensus is powerfully articulated in the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goal 4, which calls upon nations to "ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all" (UNESCO, 2016). However, the fulfillment of this goal extends beyond mere access to schools; it hinges on the quality of teaching and learning that occurs within them. A pivotal process for ensuring and continually enhancing this quality is instructional supervision, which serves as the primary mechanism for professional support and pedagogical improvement in educational institutions (Sergiovanni & Starratt, 2007).

Instructional supervision is a comprehensive process aimed at enhancing the overall quality of education by providing guidance, feedback, and professional support to teachers and school leaders in Ethiopian education systems (Tesfaw & Hofman, 2014). It is recognized as a key mechanism to monitor and improve pedagogical practices, while also supporting administrative functions within schools (Umoh, 2015).

The philosophy and practice of supervision have undergone a profound transformation over the past century. The traditional model, characterized by top-down inspection and administrative control, has been largely superseded by developmental, collaborative, and clinical models that prioritize teacher growth and empowerment (Glickman, Gordon, & Ross-Gordon, 2018). Modern instructional supervision is conceptualized as a collegial and reflective process aimed at providing differentiated, job-embedded support that helps teachers refine their instructional strategies to improve student outcomes (Zepeda, 2019). It is not about finding fault, but about fostering a professional learning community where teachers are co-inquirers into their own practice.

In the context of developing nations, particularly in Sub-Saharan Africa, the imperative for effective instructional supervision is even more critical. Education systems in the region frequently contend with systemic challenges such as overcrowded classrooms, inadequate teaching resources, a high proportion of under-qualified teachers, and limited opportunities for continuous professional development (World Bank, 2018; UNESCO, 2021). Within this

challenging landscape, supervision is not a luxury but a necessity. It functions as a crucial quality assurance tool to bridge the gap between curriculum goals and classroom implementation, ensuring that teachers are supported to deliver the best possible instruction despite systemic constraints (Oduro & MacBeath, 2003).

Cognizant of this, the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia has placed a strong emphasis on improving educational quality in its national policies. The Education Sector Development Program V (ESDP V) explicitly outlines strategies to enhance the quality and relevance of education, with instructional supervision identified as a key lever for change (Ministry of Education [MoE], 2015). The official policy framework mandates a system of school-based supervision, empowering principals, department heads, and senior teachers to provide continuous support to their colleagues. This decentralized approach is intended to make supervision more relevant, timely, and integrated into the daily life of the school (Teshome, 2017).

The evolution of instructional supervision practices is guided by national policies and frameworks developed by the Ministry of Education, which seek to standardize supervisory roles and responsibilities. Instructional supervision is implemented in secondary governmental schools using established protocols and guidelines that address curriculum delivery, teacher performance, and resource management. This multifaceted approach has been supported by various studies that underscore its potential to positively impact teaching quality and student outcomes, even as challenges remain in its practical implementation (Tufa, 2022).

Despite this robust policy framework, a persistent gap between policy intent and practical implementation remains a significant concern across the nation. Instructional supervision is an interactive process, and governmental schools in Ethiopia face challenges such as inadequate support for teachers, a lack of resources, and competency issues among supervisors, while practices are often undermined by administrative tasks and a lack of proper training (Terra, 2019; Roul, 2015; Abera, 2020). Supervision is “an intervention that is provided by a senior member of a profession to a junior member or members of that the same profession” (Afari-Yamoah, 2024). This relationship is evaluative, extends over time, and has the simultaneous purposes of enhancing the professional functioning of the junior members, monitoring the quality of professional services offered to the clients, and serving as a gatekeeper for those who are to enter the particular profession (Ferguson, 2005). Supervision

has gone through many challenges caused by the political, social, religious, and industrial forces. Supervision as a field of educational practice emerged slowly (Sullivan & Glanz, 2005).

This study narrows its focus to the specific context of governmental secondary schools in Arada sub-city, a central and historically significant administrative zone in Addis Ababa. As the nation's capital, Addis Ababa presents a unique educational environment characterized by high population density, socio-economic diversity, and intense public scrutiny. The schools in Arada sub-city are at the heart of this dynamic context. However, there is a paucity of empirical research that systematically examines how instructional supervision is actually practiced and what specific challenges are encountered by educators in this particular urban setting. This study seeks to fill this critical knowledge gap.

1.2. Statement of the Problem

The ideal model of instructional supervision, as outlined in educational literature and Ethiopian policy, is a collaborative, democratic, and developmental process that fosters continuous professional growth for teachers (Wiles & Bondi, 2014; MoE, 2015). It should involve a cyclical process of planning, classroom observation, analysis of teaching practices, and constructive feedback conferences, all conducted in a climate of mutual trust and respect (Pajak, 2012). The ultimate goal is to empower teachers to become reflective practitioners who continually enhance their instructional effectiveness, leading to improved student achievement.

However, a growing body of research from various regions in Ethiopia suggests a starkly different reality. Instructional supervision in Ethiopian secondary schools is not meeting expectations in areas such as helping teachers with planning, lesson presentation, and classroom management (Abera, 2020). Studies consistently indicate that instructional supervision is often reduced to a bureaucratic, ritualistic exercise. It is frequently perceived by teachers as an infrequent, judgmental inspection focused on administrative compliance and checklist completion rather than genuine pedagogical improvement (Ayalew, 2019; Bogale & Abebe, 2021). This traditional, top-down approach can breed resentment, anxiety, and resistance among teachers, effectively undermining the very goal of professional development and creating a culture of compliance rather than innovation (Wondimu, 2019).

Supervisors often spend more time on administrative duties rather than academic support, failing to provide regular and adequate assistance to teachers in professional and curriculum development (Etana, 2021). In the East Wollega Zone, findings reveal that English language teachers and cluster supervisors hold differing views on instructional supervision, which impacts its effectiveness (Terra, 2019). The current instructional supervision practices are not given proper attention by teachers and school-site supervisors (Roul, 2015). A research that was conducted by Gashaw (2008) on the practices of instructional supervision in secondary schools in the Asossa Zone shows that the current instructional supervision practices faced multiple problems like a lack of adequate professional support to newly teachers; less frequent classroom visits to enrich teachers instructionally and weak peer coaching by instructional supervisors; the focus of supervisors on administrative matters rather than on academic issues; and less mutual professional trust between supervisors and teachers. In addition, there are challenges related to the past supervision in schools such as inadequate opportunities to improve the teaching and learning process, training programs that were irrelevant for the professional development of teachers, and no properly designed systematic follow-up and support systems (Getachew, 2001 & Chanyalew, 2005).

The consequences of such ineffective supervision are detrimental to the educational system. When teachers do not receive meaningful support, they may experience professional isolation and demotivation, leading to stagnation in teaching methodologies. This directly impacts the quality of classroom instruction and can hinder students' academic progress. Key challenges cited in existing literature include supervisors' lack of specific pedagogical training, excessive administrative workloads that leave little time for supervision, a lack of necessary resources, and a cultural disconnect between the collaborative ideals of modern supervision and the hierarchical norms of some school environments (Tesfaye & Demssie, 2020).

While these general challenges are known, the specific manifestation of these practices and challenges within the unique urban context of governmental secondary schools in Addis Ababa, particularly in Arada sub-city, has not been adequately investigated. The pressures of

high-stakes examinations, larger school sizes, and diverse student populations in an urban setting may create a set of problems distinct from those in rural or other regional contexts. Therefore, a focused investigation is needed to understand the realities on the ground. This study will systematically assess the prevailing practices and challenges of instructional supervision in governmental secondary schools of Arada sub-city to provide evidence-based insights for targeted improvement.

1.3. Research Questions

This study aims to answer the following specific research questions:

1. What are the common methods and models of instructional supervision being practiced in governmental secondary schools of Arada sub-city?
2. What are the perceptions of teachers, principals, and supervisors regarding the effectiveness of the current practice of instructional supervision?
3. What are the major challenges that hinder the effective implementation of instructional supervision from the perspectives of teachers and supervisors?
4. What potential strategies could be employed to improve the practice of instructional supervision in these schools?

1.4. Objectives of the Study

1.4.1. General Objective

The general objective of this study is to assess the practices and challenges of instructional supervision in governmental secondary schools of Arada sub-city, Addis Ababa.

1.4.2. Specific Objectives

- ◆ To identify the common practices and approaches of instructional supervision employed in governmental secondary schools in Arada sub-city.
- ◆ To examine the perceptions of teachers, school leaders, and supervisors about the effectiveness of current supervisory practices.
- ◆ To investigate the key challenges encountered during the implementation of instructional supervision.
- ◆ To suggest viable strategies to mitigate the identified challenges and enhance the effectiveness of instructional supervision.

1.5. Significance of the Study

The findings of this study are expected to hold significant value for several stakeholders:

- **Policy Makers:** It will provide the Ministry of Education and the Addis Ababa Education Bureau with context-specific, empirical data to inform evidence-based policymaking and the revision of supervision guidelines and training programs.
- **School Leaders and Supervisors:** The study will illuminate the practical challenges they face and offer actionable recommendations, enhancing their capacity to implement more developmental and effective supervisory practices. It can also encourage a shift towards reflective leadership.
- **Teachers:** By articulating their experiences and perceptions, the study can advocate for a more supportive and less threatening supervisory environment, ultimately contributing to higher job satisfaction and fostering a culture of professional learning communities (PLCs).
- **Academic Community:** This research will contribute to the scholarly literature on educational leadership and management in Ethiopia, providing a valuable case study of instructional supervision in an urban African context and serving as a foundation for future comparative research.

1.6. Scope and Delimitation of the Study

To ensure a focused and in-depth investigation, the study is delimited as follows:

Geographically, the study is confined to governmental secondary schools (Grades 9-12) located within Arada sub-city, Addis Ababa. Specifically, Betelhem Secondary School, Dagmawi Menelik Secondary School, Dejazmach Belay Zeleke Secondary School, and Meskerem Secondary School are part of the study. Private, community, international, and other schools owned by non-government actors are excluded. The participants are limited to teachers, school principals, vice-principals, and cluster supervisors who are directly involved in the instructional supervision process within the selected schools.

The study is conceptually focused on the practices (methods, frequency, feedback mechanisms) and challenges of *instructional* supervision. It will not cover non-instructional administrative supervision, such as financial audits or facilities management, unless they are identified by participants as directly impacting the instructional supervisory process.

1.7. Definition of Key Terms

For the purpose of this study, the following key terms are operationally defined:

- **Instructional Supervision:** A formal and informal set of processes designed to provide information, support, and professional development to teachers with the primary aim of improving their instructional practice and enhancing student learning (as adapted from Glickman et al., 2018).
- **Practice:** The observable methods, techniques, procedures, and frequency of activities (e.g., classroom observation, pre- and post-observation conferences, peer coaching, provision of feedback) carried out by supervisors in the selected schools.
- **Challenges:** The obstacles, difficulties, constraints, and problems (e.g., lack of time, insufficient training, teacher resistance, resource shortages) that are perceived by participants to hinder the effective implementation of instructional supervision.
- **Governmental Secondary School:** A public educational institution in Ethiopia, funded and managed by the government, which provides education for Grades 9 through 12, as defined by the Ministry of Education (MoE, 2015).

1.8. Organization of the Study

This research thesis is organized into five chapters. Chapter one provides the introduction to the study. Chapter two presents a review of related literature on theoretical frameworks, empirical studies, and conceptual issues related to instructional supervision. Chapter three details the research design and methodology employed for data collection and analysis. Chapter four presents, analyzes, and interprets the data collected from the field. Finally, Chapter five summarizes the major findings, draws conclusions, and forwards recommendations based on the results of the study.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURES

2.1. Introduction

This chapter provides a comprehensive review of the theoretical, conceptual, and empirical literature pertinent to the study of instructional supervision. The central aim is to situate the present research within the existing body of knowledge, establish its theoretical foundations, and clearly delineate the research gap. The review begins by tracing the theoretical evolution of supervision, moving from autocratic inspection models to contemporary collaborative and developmental paradigms. It then conceptually defines instructional supervision and clarifies the roles of the key actors involved. Following this, the chapter synthesizes empirical findings on supervisory practices and challenges globally, within the African context, and specifically within Ethiopia. This synthesis culminates in a conceptual framework designed to guide the data collection and analysis for investigating the practices and challenges of instructional supervision in the specific urban context of Arada sub-city.

2.2. The Theoretical Foundations of Supervision

The definition, purpose, and practice of instructional supervision are deeply informed by the theoretical paradigms that have governed educational management.

2.2.1. From Scientific Management to Human Relations

The concept of supervision originated in the early 20th century, heavily influenced by Frederick Taylor's theory of **Scientific Management**. In this paradigm, schools were viewed as factories, and the supervisor's role was that of an inspector or foreman, tasked with ensuring teachers (as workers) adhered strictly to standardized procedures to maximize efficiency (Pajak, 2012). This "inspection model" was hierarchical, judgmental, and focused exclusively on compliance, fostering a school culture defined by anxiety and control rather than professional growth.

In response to the rigid and dehumanizing nature of scientific management, the **Human Relations** movement emerged in the mid-20th century. Drawing on the work of theorists like Elton Mayo, this approach reframed supervision, emphasizing the psychological and social

needs of teachers. The focus shifted to improving teacher morale, facilitating democratic leadership, and opening channels of communication, under the assumption that a satisfied and happy teacher would be a more effective one (Sergiovanni & Starratt, 2007). While this was a necessary humanistic correction, it was often criticized for prioritizing collegiality over rigorous instructional improvement.

2.2.2. Modern Developmental and Collaborative Models

Contemporary supervision theory integrates the need for humanistic support with a focused, systematic approach to instructional improvement.

1. Clinical Supervision

Developed by Cogan (1973) and Goldhammer et al. (1993), clinical supervision emerged as a systematic, data-driven process aimed directly at improving a teacher's classroom performance. It is a cyclical process involving: (1) a pre-observation conference (a collegial planning meeting), (2) intensive classroom observation (focused data collection), and (3) a post-observation conference (a reflective analysis of the data). Its central tenet is that instruction can only be improved through objective, shared evidence of practice, analyzed in a trusting, non-judgmental environment. Despite its theoretical strength, critics note that it is extremely time-intensive and requires specialized training that many school leaders lack (Zepeda, 2019).

2. Developmental Supervision

Articulated most comprehensively by Glickman, Gordon, and Ross-Gordon (2018), this model argues that effective supervision must be differentiated. It is based on the premise that teachers operate at different levels of experience, expertise, conceptual thinking, and commitment. Therefore, a "one-size-fits-all" supervisory approach is inherently ineffective. Glickman et al. (2018) propose a continuum of approaches that the supervisor must skillfully deploy:

1. **Directive Control:** A direct, authoritative style for struggling or novice teachers who require high structure and specific guidance.
2. **Directive Informational:** Providing direct suggestions and information, but with more explanation, for teachers who lack specific knowledge but are motivated.

3. **Collaborative:** A democratic, problem-solving approach where the supervisor and teacher are equal partners, suitable for competent, experienced teachers.
4. **Nondirective:** The supervisor acts as a facilitator and reflective listener, empowering highly autonomous and reflective master teachers. The primary challenge of this model lies in the supervisor's diagnostic ability to accurately assess a teacher's developmental stage and their dexterity in applying the correct corresponding style.

3. Transformational and Collaborative Models

More recent approaches view supervision as a component of broader instructional leadership, emphasizing teacher empowerment and organizational learning. This includes distributed leadership, peer coaching, and the facilitation of Professional Learning Communities (PLCs), where supervision becomes a shared, continuous, and job-embedded responsibility rather than a sporadic, hierarchical event (Harris, 2011; Zepeda, 2019).

2.3. Conceptualizing Instructional Supervision

For the purpose of this study, instructional supervision is operationally defined as *a comprehensive, developmental, and collaborative process of providing professional support, systematic feedback, and structured reflection to teachers, with the primary objective of enhancing their instructional practices, fostering continuous professional growth, and thereby improving student achievement* (adapted from Glickman et al., 2018; Zepeda, 2019). This definition explicitly rejects the compliance-driven inspection model and aligns with the developmental and collaborative theories that underpin modern quality assurance policies.

2.4 The Imperative of Instructional Supervision for Educational Quality

Ensuring quality education is a central goal for nations worldwide, and Ethiopia is no exception, as articulated in its Education Sector Development Programs (ESDPs) (MoE, 2021a). Within the complex ecosystem of factors influencing educational quality, the effectiveness of teaching stands paramount. Instructional supervision emerges as a critical mechanism designed to directly influence and enhance teaching quality, thereby contributing significantly to student learning and overall school effectiveness (Hallinger & Heck, 1998;

Sergiovanni & Starratt, 2007). It represents a formal process within the school system dedicated to observing, assessing, and supporting teachers' instructional practices to foster continuous professional growth and ensure alignment with educational goals (Zepeda, 2019).

However, the mere existence of a supervisory system does not guarantee its effectiveness. Research globally, and particularly in developing contexts like Sub-Saharan Africa, consistently points to a gap between the intended goals of supervision and its actual practice and impact (World Bank, 2018; UNESCO, 2017). Understanding the specific ways supervision is practiced and the obstacles it encounters within a particular context, such as the government secondary schools of Arada Sub-City in Addis Ababa, is crucial for devising targeted strategies for improvement. This literature review synthesizes theoretical perspectives, empirical findings on practices and challenges from international and Ethiopian contexts, and considers the policy landscape relevant to instructional supervision in Ethiopia.

2.5. Common Practices in Instructional Supervision

Effective instructional supervision typically encompasses a range of practices designed to provide insight into and support for teaching:

Systematic Classroom Observation: This remains a cornerstone practice, involving planned visits to classrooms to observe teaching methods, student engagement, classroom management, and the learning environment. The use of structured observation tools or protocols is often recommended to ensure focus and objectivity (Marshall, 2005).

Constructive Feedback and Dialogue: Providing specific, timely, actionable, and non-judgmental feedback is crucial. Effective feedback moves beyond simple evaluation to stimulate reflection and collaborative problem-solving through post-observation conferences (Brookhart, 2008; Hattie & Timperley, 2007).

Analysis of Instructional Planning: Reviewing lesson plans, unit plans, and assessment strategies to ensure alignment with curriculum standards, appropriateness for student needs, and pedagogical soundness.

Data Use for Improvement: Guiding teachers in collecting and analyzing student performance data to inform instructional decisions and identify areas for professional growth.

Facilitating Professional Development: Identifying collective needs through supervision and organizing relevant workshops, trainings, study groups, or connecting teachers with external opportunities (Darling-Hammond et al., 2017).

Mentoring and Induction Support: Providing targeted support for beginning teachers to help them navigate initial challenges and develop foundational skills.

In the Ethiopian context, including Arada Sub-City, studies confirm that activities like classroom observation and lesson plan checks are standard practices (Aregay, 2014; Berhe, 2020). However, the quality, frequency, and focus of these practices are often questioned. Feedback might be infrequent, general, or overly evaluative. The use of observation data for genuine instructional dialogue and planning is often limited. Furthermore, the integration of supervision with broader school improvement planning and targeted professional development appears weak in many cases (Abdissa, 2019; Atnafu, referenced 2014). The roles of internal supervisors (principals, department heads) versus external cluster supervisors can also lack clarity or effective coordination.

2.6. Key Actors and Roles in Supervision

In the Ethiopian context, supervisory responsibility is formally distributed among several key actors, as outlined by Ministry of Education frameworks (MoE, 2015):

- **The Principal and Vice-Principal:** As the primary instructional leaders, they are responsible for setting the supervisory agenda, conducting formal observations (clinical supervision), facilitating PLCs, and creating a supportive school culture. Their role is

pivotal, as they are the primary link between policy mandates and classroom implementation.

- **Department Heads:** Serving as subject-matter experts, department heads are expected to provide content-specific pedagogical support, mentor new teachers in their department, and conduct peer observations.
- **Cluster Supervisors:** These are external supervisors employed by the sub-city (or *Woreda*) education office. Their role is to provide technical support to a "cluster" of schools, ensure policy compliance, facilitate the sharing of best practices between schools, and provide training.

2.7. Pervasive Challenges to Effective Supervision

The gap between the potential and reality of instructional supervision stems from numerous interconnected challenges identified consistently across diverse contexts:

Capacity Deficits of Supervisors:

Inadequate Training: Supervisors often lack specific training in contemporary supervision models, observation techniques, providing constructive feedback, adult learning principles, and data analysis (Berhe, 2020; Oduro, 2004). Training may be non-existent, insufficient, or outdated.

Role Ambiguity and Overload: Principals and other school leaders face immense pressure from administrative, managerial, and community-related tasks, squeezing the time available for in-depth instructional leadership (Tiruneh, 2016; Bush & Glover, 2012). External supervisors often cover too many schools.

Lack of Specific Skills: Deficiencies in communication, interpersonal, conflict resolution, and change management skills hinder supervisors' ability to build trust and facilitate growth (Aregay, 2014).

Selection and Recruitment: Appointment to supervisory roles may sometimes be based on factors other than demonstrated instructional leadership capacity or relevant qualifications, as noted in studies related to Addis Ababa (Jimma University Journals study, 2024).

Teacher-Related Factors:

Negative Perceptions and Mistrust: A history of inspection-oriented supervision can lead teachers to view supervisors with suspicion, fearing negative evaluation rather than expecting support (Abdissa, 2019; Blasé & Blasé, 2000).

Resistance to Change: Teachers may be resistant to altering established practices, especially if feedback is poorly delivered or support is inadequate.

Lack of Engagement: High workload, low morale, or lack of perceived value can lead to passive engagement from teachers in the supervisory process.

Systemic, Policy, and Resource Constraints:

Policy Framework Issues: Supervision policies may be unclear, contradictory, poorly disseminated, or inconsistently implemented across schools or districts (Jimma University Journals study, 2024). Policy shifts related to broader reforms (e.g., Business Process Re-engineering - BPR, Balanced Scorecard - BSC in Ethiopia) may have unintended consequences for supervisory roles and practices.

Inadequate Resources: Shortages of funding for supervisor training, travel allowances (especially for external supervisors), teaching materials, and technology limit the scope and quality of supervision (Aregay, 2014; UNESCO, 2017).

Lack of Coherent Systems: Poor coordination between internal and external supervisors, weak links between supervision findings and professional development systems, and inadequate monitoring and evaluation of the supervision system itself.

Focus on Accountability over Development: Systemic pressures often prioritize summative teacher evaluation for accountability purposes, overshadowing the formative, developmental goals of supervision.

Large Class Sizes and School Conditions: Overcrowded classrooms and poor school infrastructure in many Ethiopian public schools create challenging teaching environments that supervision alone cannot easily overcome.

2.8. Implications of Ineffective Supervision

When instructional supervision fails to be effective, the consequences can be significant. It can lead to teacher isolation, stagnation of instructional practices, decreased teacher morale and motivation, and ultimately, hinder efforts to improve student learning outcomes (Ingersoll, 2012). Without effective support and feedback, teachers, especially novices, may struggle and potentially leave the profession. Furthermore, ineffective supervision represents a missed opportunity for systemic improvement, failing to identify and disseminate effective practices or address common challenges across schools. It undermines the potential for building strong professional learning communities focused on continuous improvement, a key goal of educational reforms in Ethiopia and elsewhere.

2.9. Empirical Review of Supervision Practices and Challenges

2.9.1. Global and Regional Findings

Even in developed education systems, a persistent challenge is the "evaluation-supervision dichotomy" (Nolan & Hoover, 2011). Principals often struggle to balance their administrative, managerial duties with the time-intensive work of developmental supervision. Furthermore, the mandatory nature of teacher evaluation (summative) often taints the trust required for developmental supervision (formative), causing teachers to be guarded and defensive rather than reflective (Hitt & Tucker, 2016).

In Sub-Saharan Africa, these challenges are magnified by systemic resource constraints. Research from Ghana (Oduro & MacBeath, 2003) and Nigeria (Adeyemi, 2010) highlights that despite policies advocating for clinical and democratic supervision, the dominant practice remains a rushed, fault-finding inspection. This is often attributed to large teacher-supervisor

ratios, lack of transportation for external supervisors, and a deep-seated administrative culture rooted in hierarchy and control.

2.9.2. Empirical Evidence from Ethiopia

A significant body of research conducted across various regions of Ethiopia confirms a critical gap between policy and practice, identifying consistent patterns in both practices and challenges.

Prevailing Practices:

Studies consistently report that supervision is practiced as an administrative formality rather than a developmental process. Ayalew (2019) found that practices in the Gamo Gofa Zone were dominated by checklists and rarely involved the crucial pre-conference or a collaborative post-observation dialogue. Similarly, Wondimu (2019), in a study in Addis Ababa, noted that teachers perceive supervision as an infrequent, judgmental event focused on finding errors rather than providing support. The collaborative principles of clinical supervision and the differentiated approaches of developmental supervision appear largely absent in practice (Tsfaye & Demssie, 2020).

Key Challenges:

The challenges identified in the Ethiopian literature can be categorized into three overlapping domains:

1. Human Resource and Capacity Challenges

The most frequently cited barrier is the supervisors' (principals, department heads, and cluster supervisors) lack of requisite skills and training. Many are promoted to leadership based on teaching seniority rather than demonstrated leadership competence and are not adequately trained in clinical observation, feedback techniques, or adult learning principles (Bogale & Abebe, 2021). Compounding this is the issue of role overload; school principals are consumed by administrative reporting and logistical duties, leaving little to no time for meaningful classroom observation and support (Tsfaye & Demssie, 2020).

2. Systemic and Material Challenges

This category includes a lack of essential resources. Cluster supervisors often cite a lack of transportation and budgets to visit their assigned schools regularly. Within schools, there is a

lack of materials, guidelines, and standardized tools for supervision (Ayalew, 2019). Furthermore, the cascade-style training model often fails to deliver practical skills to the school level, resulting in vague policy implementation.

3. Attitudinal and Cultural Challenges

As a legacy of the inspection model, many teachers harbor suspicion and fear towards supervision. Wondimu (2019) found that teachers often exhibit resistance, viewing supervisors as critics rather than allies. This defensive stance prevents the establishment of the psychological safety and trust that are prerequisites for the reflective dialogue necessary for genuine professional growth.

2.6. Summary and Research Gap

The literature confirms that while Ethiopian policy espouses modern, developmental supervision, the practice on the ground is largely traditional, infrequent, and fraught with challenges related to capacity, resources, and culture. However, the vast majority of these studies are concentrated in rural zones or regional capitals. Addis Ababa, as the nation's metropolitan capital, presents a distinct context with unique pressures—higher population density, greater administrative oversight, and potentially more diverse teacher backgrounds. Research specifically focusing on the dynamics within its central sub-cities, like Arada, is notably scarce. This study directly addresses this gap by providing a focused, mixed-methods investigation into the specific practices and challenges characterizing the governmental secondary schools in this critical urban setting.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODS

3.1. Introduction

This chapter provides a detailed blueprint of the research methodology used to investigate the practices and challenges of instructional supervision in selected governmental secondary schools of Arada sub-city. It delineates the research approach, research design, population and sampling strategies, instrumentation, and data analysis procedures. The chapter provides robust justifications for each methodological choice and concludes with a discussion of the procedures for ensuring validity, reliability, and the ethical conduct of the research.

3.2. Research Approach

This study employed a mixed-methods approach. Specifically, it utilized a convergent parallel design. This approach is superior for the research problem than a mono-method design, as neither quantitative nor qualitative data alone is sufficient to capture the complexity of the phenomenon. The quantitative (QUAN) data, gathered via questionnaires, has provided a broad overview of the prevalence, frequency, and extent of supervisory practices and perceived challenges. The qualitative (QUAL) data, gathered through interviews and focus groups, has also provide the rich, descriptive, and explanatory context needed to understand *why* these practices exist and *how* these challenges are experienced by participants (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2017).

A convergent design—where QUAN and QUAL data are collected concurrently but analyzed separately before being merged during interpretation—was chosen over a sequential design. The intent is not for one data set to merely explain the other, but for both data sets to be brought together to provide a more complete picture, allowing for both comparison and complementarity.

3.3. Research Design

The study is framed within a descriptive survey design. This design is the most appropriate for achieving the research objectives, which are focused on assessing and describing the current state of affairs (Kombo & Tromp, 2006). The descriptive design allows the researcher

to systematically gather, summarize, and describe the characteristics, practices, attitudes, and challenges related to instructional supervision as they naturally occur in the selected schools, without manipulating any variables.

3.4. Population, Sample, and Sampling Techniques

3.4.1. Target Population

The target population of this study consists of all teachers, principals, department heads, and cluster supervisors in the four governmental secondary schools (Grades 9-12) selected from Arada sub-city, Addis Ababa, during the 2023/2024 academic year. The total population is estimated to be approximately 419 (344 teachers, 52 department heads, 15 principals, and 8 cluster supervisors) responsible for these schools.

3.4.2. Sample Size and Sampling Techniques

A multi-stage sampling procedure was employed to select the study participants.

1. Selection of Schools

From the 10 high schools in the sub-city, four schools were selected using purposive sampling. This non-probability technique is justified here to ensure the inclusion of diverse school contexts and student population (two large and two medium-sized schools), which ensures the sample is representative of the sub-city's variations.

2. Selection of Respondents for Questionnaire (Quantitative)

Teachers: The sample size for teachers from the selected four schools was determined using the formula by Yamane (1967). This calculation yields a sample size of **185** teachers. These teachers were selected using proportional stratified random sampling. Each school was serving as a stratum, and the number of teachers drawn from each school was proportional to its total number of teachers, ensuring equitable representation. Individual teachers within each stratum were then selected using a simple random sampling (lottery) method.

The sample size for teacher participants was determined by using Yamane (1967) simplified formula.

$$n = \frac{N}{1+N(e)^2}$$

Where n is the sample size need to choose, N is the targeted population) and e is the desired level of precision (95 % of confidence level = 0.05).

$$n = \frac{344}{1 + 344(0.05)^2} = \frac{344}{1 + 344(0.0025)} = \frac{344}{1.86} = 185$$

3. Selection of Participants (Qualitative)

Participants for the qualitative strand will be selected using purposive sampling from the individuals at the sampled schools. This ensures that participants are information-rich. The sample included: 24 department heads (6 from Dagmawi Menelik and 4 from each of the three schools) 4 principals (one from each sampled school) for in-depth interviews; and 2 cluster supervisors (from each cluster) for in-depth interviews (See Table 1).

Table 1: Study population and sample size distribution across schools and study groups

N0	Name the school/ Cluster	Number of total				Number of sample				
		Teachers	Department.	Principal.	Supervisor.	Teachers	Dept.	Princ.	Sup.	Total
1	Betlehem Secondary school	85	13	4	4	44	4	1	2	
2	D/Belay Zeleke Secondary school	65	13	3	-	34	4	1		
3	Meskerem Secondary school	67	13	4	-	35	4	1		
4	D/Menilik Secondary school	127	13	4	4	63	6	1	2	
5	D/M & Bet. Cluster	-	-		8		-		4	
Total		344	52	15	8	185	26	4	4	219

3.5. Data Collection Instruments

Questionnaire: A structured, self-administered questionnaire was the primary quantitative tool. It was adapted from previous validated studies (e.g., Wondimu, 2019; Bogale & Abebe, 2021) and the literature review. It is consisted of three sections: (a) Respondent demographic data; (b) Items measuring the practice of supervision (e.g., frequency of pre-conferences, observation methods, nature of feedback), using a 5-point Likert scale (1=Never to

5=Always); (c) Items measuring perceived effectiveness of instructional supervision, using a 5-point Likert scale (1= Strongly Disagree to 5= Strongly Agree), Items measuring the perceived severity of Challenges (e.g., supervisor workload, lack of training, teacher resistance), using a 5-point scale (1=Not a Challenge to 5=Very Severe Challenge).

Semi-Structured Interview Guides: Separate guides were developed for principals/cluster supervisors and department heads. The interview guides for leaders had probing questions on their supervisory philosophies, time allocation, strategies for feedback, and perceived barriers from a systemic level.

3.6. Validity and Reliability of Instruments

Validity: To ensure **content validity**, the draft instruments were submitted to a panel of experts, including two senior professors in the Department of Educational Leadership and one experienced secondary school principal from a non-sampled school, to review items for clarity, relevance, and comprehensiveness. Their feedback was used for revision.

Pilot Study: A pilot test of the questionnaire was conducted in one governmental secondary school in the neighboring Lideta sub-city (which has similar characteristics but is outside the study population). This allowed the researcher to check the clarity of instructions and items and to establish statistical reliability.

Reliability: The internal consistency (reliability) of the Likert-scale sections of the pilot test questionnaire was calculated using Cronbach's Alpha. A coefficient of $\alpha \geq 0.70$ is the standard threshold considered acceptable for the final instrument (Field, 2018). For qualitative data, credibility (the analogue to internal validity) was ensured through triangulation (comparing questionnaire data with interview data) and member checking (presenting summaries of interview findings to participants to confirm accuracy) (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

3.7. Data Collection Procedures

First, an official letter of introduction will be obtained from the university's research directorate. Second, this letter will be presented to the Addis Ababa Education Bureau and then the Arada Sub-City Education Office to secure official permission to conduct the study. Third, the researcher will visit the principals of the four sampled schools to explain the study's purpose, guarantee confidentiality, and build rapport. With their cooperation, the

questionnaires will be distributed to the sampled teachers (to be filled out and returned via department heads or a sealed collection box) and leaders. Concurrently, the researcher will schedule and personally conduct the audio-recorded interviews and FGDs at times and locations convenient to the participants to minimize disruption to the school schedule.

3.8. Methods of Data Analysis

The quantitative and qualitative data were analyzed separately before integration.

Quantitative Data Analysis: All valid questionnaires were coded and entered into the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) software, Version 26. Descriptive statistics (frequencies, percentages, mean scores and standard deviations) were calculated to answer research questions related to the current practices and the severity of challenges.

Qualitative Data Analysis: The audio recordings from interviews and FGDs were transcribed verbatim. The resulting text data was analyzed using Thematic Analysis, following the rigorous six-phase process described by Braun and Clarke (2006). This involved: (1) data familiarization, (2) generating initial codes, (3) searching for themes from the codes, (4) reviewing and refining themes, (5) defining and naming themes, and (6) producing the narrative report, using illustrative quotes to substantiate the findings.

Data Integration: In the final discussion chapter, the two datasets are converged (merged). This was achieved by juxtaposing the quantitative findings with the qualitative themes, often through a joint display matrix. This technique allows the qualitative narratives (the "why" and "how") to explain, contextualize, and elaborate upon the statistical patterns (the "what" and "how much") (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2017).

3.9. Ethical Considerations

The researcher exerted his effort to ensure the highest ethical standards throughout the research process.

1. **Informed Consent:** All participants (for questionnaires, interviews, and FGDs) were provided with a consent form clearly stating the research purpose, the voluntary nature of their participation, and their right to withdraw at any time without penalty.

2. **Confidentiality and Anonymity:** To protect participants, all identifying information was removed. Pseudonyms were used for schools and individuals in the final thesis. Questionnaires were collected and coded anonymous.
3. **Data Security:** All audio recordings, transcripts, and completed questionnaires were stored securely on a password-protected computer accessible only to the primary researcher and destroyed after the completion and successful defense of the thesis.
4. **Beneficence and Non-Maleficence:** The study is intended to provide benefits to the school system, and the researcher ensured that no participant is harmed, professionally or personally, as a result of their participation.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULT AND DISCUSSIONS

4.1. Introduction

This chapter provides a comprehensive analysis, interpretation, and discussion of the data gathered to investigate the practices and challenges of instructional supervision in government secondary schools of Arada Sub-City, Addis Ababa. The central aim of this research is to move beyond a superficial description of supervisory activities to a nuanced understanding of how these practices are implemented, perceived, and constrained within a specific urban Ethiopian context. The analysis is guided by the core research questions pertaining to the methods of supervision, their perceived effectiveness, the primary challenges encountered, and potential avenues for improvement.

Adhering to the mixed-methods, descriptive survey design detailed in Chapter Three, this chapter synthesizes quantitative data from questionnaires completed by 185 teachers and 30 school leaders (principals and department heads), and qualitative data from semi-structured interviews with these leaders and 2 cluster supervisors. The analysis is meticulously structured around the study's specific objectives and mirrors the thematic organization of the data collection instruments. Each section delves into a specific facet of supervision—its practices, perceived effectiveness, and the challenges impeding it. Within each section, quantitative findings for every relevant questionnaire item are presented, including frequencies, percentages, mean scores, and standard deviations. This statistical evidence is then interwoven with qualitative insights drawn directly from the interview guides for principals and supervisors, providing explanatory context for the numerical data.

The chapter is organized into thematic sections aligned with the study's specific objectives. Each section presents the quantitative findings in detailed tables, followed by an analysis of the statistical data and a presentation of corroborating qualitative evidence. Crucially, each section culminates in an in-depth discussion that situates the findings within the broader theoretical and empirical landscape of educational supervision, drawing comparisons with relevant literature from Ethiopia, Sub-Saharan Africa, and global contexts to illuminate the unique and shared aspects of the challenges in Arada Sub-City.

4.2. Demographic Profile of Study Participants

The findings of this study are grounded in the perspectives of 217 educational practitioners operating within the Arada Sub-City. The participant pool comprised 185 secondary school teachers who completed detailed questionnaires and 32 school leaders (principals, supervisors and department heads) who were interviewed. This quantitative data was further enriched by qualitative insights from semi-structured interviews with a purposive sample of 4 school principals, 24 department heads, and 4 cluster supervisors. A summary of the demographic characteristics of the full sample is presented in Table 2.

Table 2: Demographic Profile of Study Participants (N=217)

Characteristic	Category	Teacher (n=185)	Leader (n=32)	Total (N=217)	Percent (%)
sex	Male	115 (62.2%)	28 (87.5%)	143	66%
	Female	70 (37.8%)	4 (12.5%)	74	34%
Age	20-29 years	48 (25.9%)	0 (0%)	48	22.3%
	30-39 years	88 (47.6%)	7 (23.3%)	95	44.2%
	40-49 years	37 (20.0%)	15 (50.0%)	52	24.2%
	50+ years	12 (6.5%)	8 (26.7%)	20	9.3%
Service Experience	1-5 years	52 (28.1%)	0 (0%)	56	26.0%
	6-10 years	71 (38.4%)	4 (13.3%)	75	34.9%
	11-15 years	35 (18.9%)	5 (16.7%)	40	18.6%
	16+ years	27 (14.6%)	21 (70.0%)	44	20.5%
Education	Bachelor's Degree	160 (86.5%)	5 (16.7%)	165	76.7%
	Master's Degree	25 (13.5%)	25 (83.3%)	50	23.3%

The demographic data reveals several critical features of the study's context. First, a significant gender imbalance is evident, with males representing 66% of all participants. This disparity is skewed at the leadership level, where 87.5% of principals and department heads in the sample were male, reflecting broader systemic challenges in gender equity within educational management in the study areas.

Second, the data on age and service experience are closely intertwined and particularly illuminating. A substantial majority of teachers (66.5%) have ten years or less of professional

experience, with the largest cohort being early- to mid-career educators. In stark contrast, 70.0% of the leadership cohort has over 16 years of experience. This creates a distinct generational and experiential gap: a highly seasoned, veteran leadership corps is tasked with supervising a significantly younger, less-experienced teaching force. This context underscores the critical importance of effective developmental supervision, which is precisely the area where the study's findings reveal the greatest deficiencies.

Third, the educational qualification data highlights a clear academic hierarchy. The vast majority of teachers (86.5%) held a Bachelor's degree, while the overwhelming majority of leaders (83.3%) possessed a Master's degree. On paper, this positions school leaders as academic and pedagogical experts relative to the teachers they oversee. However, this potential for expert mentorship is largely unrealized, a central paradox that the subsequent findings will explore.

4.3. Prevailing Practices of Instructional Supervision

This section addresses the first research objective by dissecting the common practices of instructional supervision. The analysis is organized according to the supervisory cycle: Planning and Organization, Techniques and Implementation, Feedback and Follow-up, and Supervisor Competence.

The foundation of any effective supervisory system lies in its planning and organizational framework. This subsection examines the extent to which supervision is systematically planned and communicated.

Table 3: Respondents' Views on the Planning and Organization of Supervision

Practice of Instructional Supervision	Response Category	Frequency (f)	Percent (%)	Mean (M)	SD
1. Instructional supervision is regularly scheduled and conducted.	Disagree/Strongly Disagree	62	28.8%	3.15	1.02
	Neutral	65	30.2%		
	Agree/Strongly Agree	88	40.9%		
2. Supervisors communicate the objectives and focus areas of supervision in advance.	Disagree/Strongly Disagree	78	36.3%	2.89	1.15
	Neutral	71	33.0%		
	Agree/Strongly Agree	66	30.7%		
3. Teachers are involved in the planning of supervision activities.	Disagree/Strongly Disagree	138	64.2%	2.21	0.98
	Neutral	45	20.9%		

	Agree/Strongly Agree	32	14.9%		
4. The school has a clear written policy or guideline for instructional supervision.	Disagree/Strongly Disagree	85	39.5%	2.78	1.20
	Neutral	75	34.9%		
	Agree/Strongly Agree	55	25.6%		

The data shows a divided perception. While 40.9% agreed that supervision is regularly scheduled, a combined 59.1% were either neutral or disagreed. The neutral mean of 3.15 suggests inconsistency. This aligns with interview responses from principals, one of whom stated, "We have an annual plan, but it is a living document that changes constantly due to administrative pressures. 'Regular' is not the word I would use; 'sporadic' is more accurate." A principal's comment captured this inconsistency: "We create a master schedule at the start of the semester, but urgent administrative tasks and unexpected events mean it is rarely followed strictly. It becomes sporadic." This lack of predictability undermines the view of supervision as a systematic process (Zepeda, 2019).

The neutral mean of 2.89, with 36.3% disagreeing, indicates that the purpose of supervision is not clearly communicated beforehand. This directly contradicts the principles of clinical supervision, which mandate a pre-conference to establish a shared focus (Cogan, 1973). A department head confirmed, "Teachers often only know we are coming a day before. They are told the *time*, not the *purpose*."

This item reveals a critical flaw. A decisive 64.2% of respondents disagreed that teachers are involved in planning, reflected in the low mean of 2.21. These points to a top-down, non-democratic process. When asked about their role in planning, a principal admitted, "The overall framework and schedule are directives from the sub-city. Our role is primarily implementation and monitoring, not collaborative development with teachers."

The neutral-to-negative score (M=2.78), with 39.5% disagreeing that a clear written policy exists, suggests a lack of codified, accessible guidelines at the school level. This creates ambiguity and reinforces the ad-hoc nature of the process.

Table 4: Respondents' Views on Supervision Techniques

Practice of Instructional Supervision	Response Category	Frequency (f)	Percent (%)	Mean (M)	SD
1. Supervisors use a variety of supervision techniques (e.g., classroom observation, peer observation, mentoring).	Disagree/Strongly Disagree	115	53.5%	2.45	1.10
	Neutral	58	27.0%		
	Agree/Strongly Agree	42	19.5%		
2. Classroom observations are conducted frequently enough to provide meaningful feedback.	Disagree/Strongly Disagree	101	47.0%	2.60	1.21
	Neutral	64	29.8%		
	Agree/Strongly Agree	50	23.3%		
3. Supervisors effectively demonstrate and model good teaching practices when needed.	Disagree/Strongly Disagree	110	51.2%	2.49	1.18
	Neutral	65	30.2%		
	Agree/Strongly Agree	40	18.6%		
4. Supervision focuses on improving teaching methodologies and instructional strategies.	Disagree/Strongly Disagree	70	32.6%	3.05	1.08
	Neutral	80	37.2%		
	Agree/Strongly Agree	65	30.2%		

A clear majority (53.5%) disagreed that diverse techniques are used ($M=2.45$). This confirms a monolithic approach. When principals were asked about ensuring a variety of techniques, one responded, "Our primary and, honestly, only tool is the standard classroom observation checklist. We lack the time and training for things like coaching cycles or lesson study."

Nearly half of the respondents (47.0%) disagreed that observations are frequent enough. This was universally confirmed in interviews, with all participants stating that formal observations occur "once per semester."

A majority (51.2%) disagreed that supervisors model good teaching ($M=2.49$). Supervision is thus positioned as an act of evaluation, not instruction. This represents a failure to utilize supervision as a direct tool for job-embedded professional learning. The neutral mean of 3.05 suggests ambiguity. While the *stated* goal may be to improve methodology, the actual practice, as perceived by respondents, does not consistently achieve this. A department head

noted, "The checklist has items about methodology, so we tick the boxes. But the conversation is rarely a deep dive into *why* one strategy is better than another."

A majority of respondents (53.5%) disagreed that a variety of techniques are used (M=2.45). This indicates a monolithic approach, likely centered on traditional classroom observation checklists. This fails to operationalize the theory of differentiated supervision, which posits that supervisory approaches should be tailored to teachers' individual levels of experience and expertise (Glickman, Gordon, & Ross-Gordon, 2018).

The neutral-to-negative score (M=2.60), with 47.0% disagreeing that observations are frequent enough, points to another critical flaw. Qualitative data confirmed this, with multiple interviewees stating that formal observations occur "once per semester." Such infrequent contact is insufficient to build trust or provide the ongoing support necessary for meaningful teacher development (Danielson, 2007).

Table 5: Respondents' Views on Feedback and Follow-up

Practice of Instructional Supervision	Response Category	Frequency (f)	Percent (%)	Mean (M)	SD
1. Feedback sessions after observations are held promptly and are constructive.	Disagree/Strongly Disagree	85	39.5%	2.75	1.18
	Neutral	78	36.3%		
	Agree/Strongly Agree	52	24.2%		
2. Feedback provided by supervisors is specific, actionable, and based on evidence.	Disagree/Strongly Disagree	102	47.4%	2.55	1.25
	Neutral	73	34.0%		
	Agree/Strongly Agree	40	18.6%		
3. There is a clear follow-up process to ensure teachers implement suggested improvements.	Disagree/Strongly Disagree	131	60.9%	2.30	1.05
	Neutral	55	25.6%		
	Agree/Strongly Agree	29	13.5%		
4. Supervisors offer ongoing support and resources to help teachers address areas for improvement.	Disagree/Strongly Disagree	125	58.1%	2.35	1.12
	Neutral	60	27.9%		
	Agree/Strongly Agree	30	14.0%		

The neutral score (M=2.75) indicates inconsistency. When asked about assessing feedback quality, a principal stated, "I review the forms, but the feedback is often just a signature or a single generic sentence. It's rarely a detailed, constructive dialogue."

A plurality of 47.4% disagreed that feedback is specific and actionable (M=2.55). A teacher's interview comment vividly illustrates this: "The comment on my form just said 'improve classroom management.' What does that mean? How should I do it? There was no discussion of strategies, no modeling. It's not helpful." This aligns with research by Brookhart (2008) emphasizing that for feedback to be effective, it must be specific, non-judgmental, and focused on a clear target.

The absence of follow-up is a point of strong consensus, with 60.9% disagreeing (M=2.30). This breaks the cycle of continuous improvement. Similarly, 58.1% disagreed that supervisors offer ongoing support (M=2.35). This reinforces the perception of supervision as an isolated "hit-and-run" event. Principals, when asked about resource allocation, confirmed that there is no specific budget allocated for post-observation support or materials.

The collective findings portray a supervisory model in Arada Sub-City that is antithetical to contemporary best practices. It is a top-down, infrequent, and procedurally incomplete system that more closely resembles the "inspection" paradigm of the early 20th century than the collaborative, reflective models advocated in modern literature. This starkly mirrors the conclusions of Abebe (2014), who found a failure to implement the full clinical cycle and an over-reliance on infrequent observation. The persistence of this model across diverse Ethiopian contexts (Belay & Kassa, 2021 in Amhara; Tesfaye & Demssie, 2020 in Oromia) suggests it is a deeply embedded, systemic issue rooted in a bureaucratic educational culture rather than a lack of individual capacity alone.

Table 6: Respondents' Views on Supervisor Competence and Professionalism

Practice of Instructional Supervision	Response Category	Frequency (f)	Percent (%)	Mean (M)	SD
1. Supervisors demonstrate good knowledge of subject matter and pedagogical methods.	Disagree/Strongly Disagree	55	25.6%	3.25	1.15
	Neutral	75	34.9%		
	Agree/Strongly Agree	85	39.5%		
2. Supervisors maintain a professional and supportive	Disagree/Strongly Disagree	68	31.6%	3.08	1.22

demeanor during supervision.	Neutral	79	36.7%		
	Agree/Strongly Agree	68	31.6%		
3. Supervisors treat teachers with respect and foster a trusting relationship.	Disagree/Strongly Disagree	72	33.5%	3.00	1.25
	Neutral	78	36.3%		
	Agree/Strongly Agree	65	30.2%		
4. Supervisors are up-to-date with current educational trends and best practices.	Disagree/Strongly Disagree	118	54.9%	2.40	1.17
	Neutral	60	27.9%		
	Agree/Strongly Agree	37	17.2%		

This is the only area with a slightly positive leaning ($M=3.25$), suggesting supervisors are generally seen as competent in their subjects. The perfectly neutral means (3.08 and 3.00) with responses evenly distributed across categories indicate a deep ambivalence. Supervisors are not consistently seen as either supportive or unsupportive. This lack of a clearly positive, trusting relationship is a major barrier to effective supervision.

A strong majority (54.9%) disagreed that supervisors are up-to-date with current trends ($M=2.40$). This is a critical finding, suggesting supervisors are enforcing outdated norms rather than driving innovation. When asked about supervisors' pedagogical knowledge (Interview Guide, Part B, Q3), a principal admitted, "Many of our department heads are excellent teachers of the old school. They are not familiar with concepts like differentiated instruction or project-based learning, so they cannot supervise it effectively."

The item-level analysis confirms a systemic and procedural failure. The supervisory model in Arada Sub-City is characterized by non-collaborative planning, infrequent and monolithic observations, generic feedback, and a near-total absence of follow-up. This mirrors the findings of Abebe (2014), who concluded that supervisors "did not implement the pre-class observation conference in a proper manner." The lack of trust and the perception that supervisors are not current with pedagogical trends further erode the system's legitimacy. The practice on the ground is a textbook example of what Sergiovanni and Starratt (2007) call "bureaucratic supervision," which prioritizes compliance and control over professional growth and learning.

"The national framework (ESDP V) speaks of school-based, continuous, and supportive supervision. But in practice, it has become an inspection. Our reports to the Woreda focus on

completion rates—how many teachers were 'supervised'—not on the quality of the interaction or the impact on teaching."

The practices observed in Arada Sub-City represent a significant regression from the principles of modern instructional supervision. The findings depict a system that operates closer to a Scientific Management or Taylorist inspection model, focused on compliance and efficiency, rather than the collaborative and developmental models championed by theorists like Cogan (1973) and Glickman et al. (2018). The core tenets of Clinical Supervision—a collaborative pre-conference, systematic observation, and a reflective post-conference—are conspicuously absent.

These findings are strikingly consistent with a large body of empirical research across Ethiopia. Abebe (2014) found a near-total failure to implement the pre-class observation conference in Kamashi Zone, a finding mirrored in this study. More recently, a study by Belay and Kassa (2021) in the Amhara region similarly concluded that supervision was "characterized by traditional inspection practices rather than collaborative and democratic approaches." The persistence of this model across different regions and over time suggests it is a deeply entrenched systemic issue.

Globally, particularly in developing contexts, this "inspection paradigm" remains a stubborn challenge. Research from Ghana (Oduro & MacBeath, 2003) and Nigeria (Adeyemi, 2010) highlights how large supervisor-to-teacher ratios and a culture of administrative hierarchy undermine attempts to introduce more democratic supervisory models. The practices in Arada Sub-City, therefore, are not an isolated anomaly but are symptomatic of a wider struggle to shift educational supervision from a tool of control to a mechanism for professional empowerment.

4.4. Perceived Effectiveness of Instructional Supervision

This section addresses the second objective, examining stakeholders' perceptions of the effectiveness of these practices in fostering professional growth, improving teaching quality, and enhancing student learning.

Respondents rated their agreement with several statements assessing the outcomes and impact of supervision. The results, showing a strong perception of ineffectiveness, are detailed in Table 7.

Table 7: Respondents' Perceptions of the Effectiveness of Instructional Supervision

Items	Response Category	Frequency (f)	Percent (%)	Mean (M)	SD
1. Contributes significantly to my professional growth.	Disagree/Strongly Disagree	98	45.6%	2.58	1.19
	Neutral	75	34.9%		
	Agree/Strongly Agree	42	19.5%		
2. Improves the overall quality of teaching and learning.	Disagree/Strongly Disagree	88	40.9%	2.70	1.09
	Neutral	83	38.6%		
	Agree/Strongly Agree	44	20.5%		
3. Student learning outcomes have improved as a result.	Disagree/Strongly Disagree	112	52.1%	2.44	1.15
	Neutral	68	31.6%		
	Agree/Strongly Agree	35	16.3%		
4. Encourages innovation and experimentation.	Disagree/Strongly Disagree	120	55.8%	2.38	1.14
	Neutral	65	30.2%		
	Agree/Strongly Agree	30	14.0%		

The data unequivocally demonstrates that educators do not believe the current supervisory system is effective. A majority of respondents (52.1%) explicitly disagreed that supervision improves student learning outcomes (M=2.44). This is a critical finding, as the ultimate goal of supervision is to enhance student achievement (Zepeda, 2019). Furthermore, a large plurality of respondents (45.6%) disagreed that supervision contributes to their professional growth (M=2.58), and 42.3% disagreed that the feedback they receive is helpful for improving their methods (M=2.67). The consistently low mean scores, hovering around the "disagree" and "neutral" marks, signify a system that is, at best, having no positive impact and, at worst, is perceived as irrelevant to the core tasks of teaching and learning.

Interviews provided a clear rationale for this perception of ineffectiveness. A teacher with five years of experience commented:

"How can it be effective? The feedback is always the same and always vague: 'use more teaching aids,' 'engage students more.' There is no practical demonstration, no offer of resources, and no follow-up to see if I am

struggling to implement the advice. It is a judgment, not a help. It does not change my practice."

This view was implicitly supported by a principal who noted the disconnect between supervision and other school improvement initiatives:

"The supervision reports are filed away. They are not used to inform our school's professional development plan or to identify teachers who need specific mentoring. There is a disconnect; supervision happens in a silo, separate from our real efforts to improve teaching quality like PLCs (Professional Learning Communities)."

The perceived ineffectiveness of supervision is a direct and logical outcome of the flawed practices detailed in the previous section. When supervision is a ritualistic, non-collaborative act, it fails to create the psychological safety and provide the specific, actionable feedback necessary for adult learning and professional growth (Sergiovanni & Starratt, 2007). The perception of ineffectiveness is the inevitable outcome of a procedurally flawed and non-collaborative supervisory system. If the process is not designed to support learning, it is logical that participants do not perceive it as effective. This resonates with the "evaluation-supervision dichotomy" described by Nolan and Hoover (2011), where a focus on accountability and judgment (as perceived by teachers) taints the trust required for developmental (formative) supervision.

Instructional supervision is perceived as ineffective and irrelevant to the core mission of the school. The process, as practiced, fails to meet the criteria for effective adult learning; it is not collaborative, it is not reflective, and it is not supportive. This directly leads to the perception of ineffectiveness, a conclusion that aligns with a vast body of literature linking flawed supervisory processes to a lack of impact (Wondimu, 2019; Tesfaye & Demssie, 2020). The finding that supervision may actively stifle innovation is a profound indictment, suggesting it functions as a mechanism for bureaucratic control and pedagogical conservatism rather than as a catalyst for improvement.

This profound disconnect between supervisory activity and meaningful impact is a recurring theme in the literature. Abebe's (2014) study similarly concluded that the contribution of supervision to professional development was "insignificant." A study on teacher perceptions

in secondary schools in Addis Ababa by Wondimu (2019) also found that teachers viewed supervision as a judgmental event focused on error-finding rather than genuine support, thereby limiting its effectiveness.

The finding that supervision is seen as disconnected from student learning is particularly damning. As Hallinger and Heck (1998) have argued in their influential work on instructional leadership, the value of any leadership practice must ultimately be judged by its impact on student outcomes. The educators in Arada Sub-City see no such impact. This represents not just a failure of implementation but a failure of the system to fulfill its fundamental purpose. It constitutes a missed opportunity for systemic improvement and undermines the potential for building the strong professional learning communities that are key to sustained educational reform (Harris, 2011).

4.5. Major Challenges Hindering Effective Instructional Supervision

This section addresses the third research objective: to investigate the key challenges that supervisors and teachers perceive as hindering the effective implementation of instructional supervision.

Respondents rated the severity of various challenges on a 5-point scale (1 = Not a Challenge; 5 = Very Significant Challenge). The results are presented in Table 8.

Table 8: Respondents' Views on the Major Challenges of Instructional Supervision

Items	Significant/Very Significant	Frequency (f)	Percent (%)	Mean (M)	Rank
1. Heavy administrative workload of supervisors.	Significant/Very Significant	185	86.0%	4.35	1
2. Insufficient training or capacity building for supervisors.	Significant/Very Significant	168	78.1%	4.15	2
3. Inadequate classroom infrastructure (e.g., large class sizes).	Significant/Very Significant	155	72.1%	3.98	3
4. Shortage of qualified and experienced supervisors.	Significant/Very Significant	135	62.8%	3.88	4
5. Lack of sufficient time for supervisors to conduct thorough and frequent	Significant/Very Significant	140	65.1%	3.85	5

supervision.					
6. Teachers perceiving supervision as evaluative rather than supportive.	Significant/Very Significant	120	55.8%	3.75	6
7. Lack of clear and consistent guidelines or policies from higher authorities.	Significant/Very Significant	115	53.5%	3.68	7
8. Lack of adequate financial resources.	Significant/Very Significant	118	54.9%	3.65	8

The data reveals a clear consensus on the primary obstacles. An overwhelming 86.0% of respondents identified the heavy administrative workload of supervisors as a significant or very significant challenge, making it the highest-ranked impediment (M=4.35). This was the most dominant theme in interviews with principals about systemic challenges, with one stating, "The system measures my effectiveness through on-time report submission, not by the quality of my instructional leadership. The incentives are all wrong."

A supervisor's candid admission during an interview encapsulates the interplay of these challenges:

"The sub-city expects me to be an instructional leader, but they bury me in compliance paperwork. That's the workload problem. They promote senior teachers to be department heads but give them zero training on how to be a supervisor. That's the capacity problem. Then we go into a classroom of 35 students and are expected to give feedback on active learning. It is expected from us to conduct 20 supervisions per week and provide feedback following that. That's the context problem. Given all this, of course the teachers see us with suspicion. The entire system is set up for failure."

The challenges identified constitute a "wicked problem" where multiple factors are interconnected and mutually reinforcing. The finding that workload is the primary barrier is a cornerstone of modern educational leadership research. Scholars have extensively documented the "role conflict" principals face, being pulled between managerial duties and instructional leadership, with the former often taking precedence due to bureaucratic pressures (Bush & Glover, 2012). The challenge of context—large number of supervision expected to be supervised from the supervisors and inadequate resources—cannot be overstated. This contextual reality, as noted by researchers like Oduro and MacBeath (2003)

in Ghana, can render even the best-laid supervisory plans impractical. These three challenges are interconnected and mutually reinforcing, creating a formidable barrier to the improvement of instructional supervision.

The interviews provided powerful, lived-in accounts of these challenges. A school principal described the reality of "role overload":

"I am buried in paperwork. Reports for the sub-city, budget justifications, procurement forms, attendance data... they are endless. My calendar is filled with meetings, not classroom visits. The system forces me to be an administrator first and an instructional leader a distant second. There is simply no time to do supervision properly."

The issue of role overload and excessive administrative burden is perhaps the most cited barrier to effective instructional leadership globally. Scholars like Bush & Glover (2012) have described how accountability pressures and bureaucratic demands systematically divert principals' attention away from the core business of teaching and learning. This study confirms that this is the paramount challenge in the urban context of Addis Ababa.

This is closely followed by insufficient training for supervisors, which 78.1% of respondents rated as significant or very significant (M=4.15). The third major challenge relates to the teaching context itself, with 72.1% pointing to inadequate infrastructure and large class sizes (M=3.98).

The training deficit was articulated with frustration by a department head:

"I became a supervisor based on my years of service. I received an insufficient orientation that was mostly about how to fill out the new forms. The trainings we received are not also given by professionals and a consistent capacity building training is not provided."

The critical lack of training is another universally acknowledged impediment to supervisory reform. As argued by scholars like Zepeda (2019), supervision is a complex skill set that is not innate; it must be learned. The promotion of educators into supervisory roles based on seniority without concomitant capacity building is a systemic flaw documented by Abebe (2014) and Bogale & Abebe (2021). The lack of capacity due to insufficient training is

equally critical. This finding resonates strongly with Abebe (2014), who identified the "absence of in-service training programs" as a key problem. As Bogale and Abebe (2021) argue, without specific training in modern, non-judgmental supervisory models, supervisors naturally default to the inspection-based methods they themselves experienced, thereby perpetuating a cycle of ineffective practice. This is not a failure of individual will but a systemic failure of professional preparation.

Teacher resistance (59.5%) and the perception of supervision as evaluative (55.8%) are identified as major interpersonal barriers, creating what one principal called a "culture of suspicion." Unclear policies (53.5%) and a lack of financial resources (54.9%) were also rated as significant systemic constraints. The negative attitudes of teachers are a direct result of the historical application of an inspection model. This creates a culture of "defensive routines" where teachers seek to protect themselves from judgment rather than engaging in open reflection (Argyris, 1990). Breaking this cycle requires a fundamental shift in both the practice and the perception of supervision, moving it from a mechanism of control to a process of collaborative inquiry.

The challenges identified in Arada Sub-City are not a simple list of independent problems; they constitute a complex, interconnected system, a "vicious cycle" of ineffectiveness. The findings are remarkably and distressingly consistent with the challenges cataloged by Abebe (2014) a decade earlier, including lack of training, heavy workload, negative teacher perceptions, and a lack of resources (manuals and budget).

This cycle can be conceptualized as follows: Systemic Pressures (workload, policy ambiguity, resource scarcity) lead to a Capacity Deficit (lack of training). This combination results in the implementation of Flawed Practices (infrequent, non-collaborative inspection). These practices, in turn, generate Negative Perceptions (ineffectiveness, irrelevance, and mistrust) among teachers. These negative attitudes then create a Culture of Resistance, which makes the already difficult job of the untrained, overburdened supervisor nearly impossible. This systems-level gridlock, documented extensively in literature on educational reform in developing contexts (e.g., World Bank, 2018), is the central problem that must be addressed to make instructional supervision a meaningful endeavor in Arada Sub-City.

The challenges identified create a powerful, self-reinforcing cycle of failure. The findings are remarkably consistent with the comprehensive list of challenges identified by Abebe (2014),

including lack of training, scarcity of experienced supervisors, heavy workload, negative teacher perceptions, and absence of supervision manuals (a policy issue). This consistency across a decade and in different regions (rural Kamashi vs. urban Addis Ababa) strongly suggests these are chronic, national-level problems. The "wicked problem" of supervision in Ethiopia is thus defined by a system that overburdens its leaders, fails to build their capacity, provides inadequate resources, and operates within a culture of mistrust. Until these foundational, systemic challenges are addressed, any attempt at superficial reform of supervisory practices is unlikely to succeed.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1. Introduction

This final chapter serves to synthesize the entirety of the research undertaking. It begins by providing a concise summary of the major findings that emerged from the exhaustive analysis in Chapter Four. Following this summary, the chapter presents a series of overarching conclusions that interpret the deeper meaning and implications of these findings, answering the "so what?" question of the research. Finally, based on these conclusions, the chapter puts forth a set of concrete, actionable recommendations targeted at various stakeholders within the educational system. The overarching aim of this study was to conduct an in-depth assessment of the practices and challenges of instructional supervision in government secondary schools of Arada Sub-City, Addis Ababa. To this end, the research was guided by the following key questions:

1. What are the common methods, models, and procedures of instructional supervision currently being practiced?
2. What are the perceptions of teachers, principals, and supervisors regarding the effectiveness of these practices on professional growth and student learning?
3. What are the major challenges that hinder the effective implementation of instructional supervision?
4. What potential strategies could be employed to improve the practice of instructional supervision in these schools?

The findings and conclusions drawn from the data provide a clear, if sobering, answer to these questions, forming the basis for the recommendations that conclude this thesis.

5.2. Summary of Major Findings

The detailed analysis of quantitative and qualitative data presented in Chapter Four yielded several major findings, which are summarized below in accordance with the study's primary objectives.

The prevailing practice of instructional supervision is overwhelmingly characterized by a top-down, non-collaborative, and compliance-oriented model. It does not align with the principles of modern developmental, clinical, or collaborative supervision frameworks. A decisive majority of respondents (64.2%) confirmed that teachers are not involved in the planning process.

The supervisory cycle is procedurally broken. The foundational pre-observation conference for collaborative goal-setting is virtually non-existent. Observations are infrequent (typically once per semester), brief, and rely on a monolithic checklist approach, with 53.5% of respondents confirming a lack of varied techniques. Post-observation feedback is widely perceived as generic and non-actionable. The cycle completely breaks down at the final stage, with a near-total absence of systematic follow-up or ongoing support, as confirmed by 60.9% of participants.

While supervisors are generally seen as competent in their subject matter, there is no consensus that they are supportive or foster trusting relationships. Furthermore, they are widely perceived as not being up-to-date with current pedagogical trends (54.9% disagreed), positioning them as enforcers of old norms rather than leaders of instructional innovation.

There is a strong consensus among teachers and school leaders that instructional supervision, as currently practiced, is ineffective. A significant plurality of respondents reported that supervision does not contribute to their professional growth (45.6% disagreed) or help improve their teaching methods. There is no perceived link between supervisory activities and the overall improvement of teaching quality in the schools.

A clear majority of participants (52.1%) explicitly stated that instructional supervision efforts have not led to any discernible improvement in student learning outcomes. Rather than encouraging innovation and experimentation, the current supervisory practice is perceived as a conservative force that may actively discourage teachers from trying new pedagogical strategies (55.8% disagreed), for fear of deviating from traditional, checklist-aligned methods.

The challenges are not isolated issues but form a powerful, self-reinforcing system of constraints. The single most significant challenge, identified as "significant" or "very significant" by an overwhelming 86.0% of respondents, is the heavy and relentless

administrative workload placed on school leaders, which diverts their time and focus away from instructional leadership. The second most significant challenge (78.1%) is the insufficient training and professional development for supervisors. School leaders are placed in supervisory roles without being equipped with the necessary skills in clinical supervision, coaching, or providing constructive feedback. Other major challenges include inadequate classroom infrastructure, particularly large class sizes (72.1%), a legacy of teacher mistrust and negative perceptions of supervision as a fault-finding exercise, and a lack of clear, consistent policies and guidelines.

5.3. Conclusions

Based on the synthesis of the above findings, this study draws the following four overarching conclusions:

There is a profound and deeply entrenched chasm between the espoused national policy of developmental, collaborative supervision and the reality of its implementation in Arada Sub-City. The practice on the ground is not merely a flawed version of the policy; it is a fundamentally different paradigm altogether. It remains rooted in a bureaucratic, inspection-oriented model, suggesting a systemic "decoupling" where formal policies are adopted for legitimacy but are not reflected in the core activities of the organization.

The current practice of instructional supervision can be concluded to be a form of administrative ritualism. It is a series of procedural steps performed to satisfy bureaucratic reporting requirements rather than to engage in meaningful professional dialogue and foster pedagogical improvement. Lacking the essential elements of trust, collaboration, specific feedback, and continuous follow-up, the process is largely hollowed out of its pedagogical purpose, rendering it an exercise in compliance rather than a catalyst for learning.

The challenges hindering effective supervision are not independent variables but constitute a state of "systemic gridlock." An overburdened and untrained leadership (the capacity deficit) resorts to simplistic, inspection-based methods (the flawed practice), which in turn reinforces a culture of mistrust and fear among teachers (the attitudinal barrier). This negative culture makes any attempt at genuine, collaborative supervision nearly impossible, thus perpetuating the cycle. The system is trapped in a low-functioning equilibrium from which it cannot easily escape without fundamental, structural intervention.

The systemic pressures, particularly the overwhelming administrative workload, have effectively displaced the role of the school principal and department head from "instructional leader" to "administrative manager." Their primary function has shifted from guiding teaching and learning to ensuring compliance with bureaucratic mandates. Until the role of the school leader is structurally reoriented to prioritize and protect time for instructional leadership, any reform aimed at improving supervision is destined for failure.

5.4. Recommendations

Derived from the conclusions above, the following recommendations are proposed to address the systemic challenges and transform instructional supervision from an administrative ritual into a powerful lever for school improvement. The recommendations are targeted at different levels of the educational hierarchy.

1. **Structural Role Redefinition and Workload Reduction:** The most critical challenge is workload. It is recommended that policymakers conduct a formal review of the roles and responsibilities of school principals with the explicit aim of reducing administrative burdens. This could involve creating dedicated **School Operations Manager** positions to handle non-instructional tasks (e.g., procurement, facilities, routine reporting), thereby liberating principals to focus on their core mandate as instructional leaders.
2. **Develop and Disseminate a Coherent and Practical Supervisory Framework:** It is recommended that a clear, practical, and context-sensitive national supervision manual be developed. This framework must explicitly distinguish between **formative (developmental) supervision**, which should be non-evaluative, frequent, and collaborative, and **summative (appraisal) evaluation**, which serves accountability purposes. This formal separation is crucial for building teacher trust.
1. **Implement a Mandatory, Certified, and Practice-Based Capacity Building Program:** It is strongly recommended to move beyond sporadic, one-off workshops. A mandatory and certified training program for all school-based supervisors (principals, vice-principals, and department heads) should be designed and implemented. This program must be practical and skill-based, focusing on the core competencies of modern supervision: conducting the clinical supervision cycle, peer coaching, giving specific and actionable feedback, analyzing classroom observation data, and fostering adult learning.

1. **Proactively Foster a School Culture of Collaborative Professionalism and Trust:** While awaiting systemic changes, school leaders can take proactive steps to change the culture around supervision. It is recommended that they begin by introducing and championing **voluntary, non-evaluative, and teacher-led** forms of professional learning, such as **lesson study** or **peer coaching triads**. By demonstrating that observation can be a safe and supportive process for learning, leaders can begin to rebuild the trust that is essential for any form of effective supervision.
2. **Contextualize Supervisory Feedback:** Given the reality of large classes, it is recommended that supervisors shift their feedback focus. Instead of offering generic advice based on an ideal classroom, feedback should be contextualized and collaborative, framed around the question: "Given these challenging conditions, what is one high-leverage strategy we can work on together that might make a difference?" This approach respects the teacher's reality and positions the supervisor as a pragmatic problem-solving partner rather than an idealistic critic.

5.5. Suggestions for Further Research

This study has illuminated the state of instructional supervision in a specific urban context. To build upon this work, the following avenues for future research are suggested:

- **A Longitudinal Intervention Study:** To assess the impact of implementing the recommendations above, particularly the introduction of a comprehensive training program and the reduction of administrative workload.
- **A Comparative Study:** To compare the practices and challenges of supervision in government schools with those in private schools in Addis Ababa, which may operate under different administrative pressures and resource constraints.
- **Investigating the Role of the "Middle Tier":** A dedicated study focusing on the capacity, challenges, and influence of cluster and Woreda-level supervisors, who are critical but often overlooked actors in the system.
- **Exploring Student Perceptions:** Research that seeks to correlate changes in supervisory practices with changes in students' perceptions of teaching quality and classroom engagement.

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ANNEXES

Annex I: Questionnaire

Questionnaire on the Practice and Challenges of Instructional Supervision at Selected Governmental Secondary Schools in Arada Sub-City, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

Dear Respondent,

I am a Master of Arts student in School Leadership at Addis Ababa University. As a partial fulfillment of my MA degree, this questionnaire is designed to gather information on the practice and challenges of instructional supervision in governmental secondary schools within Arada Sub-City. Your honest and thoughtful responses are crucial for the success of this research. All information provided will be kept strictly confidential and used solely for academic purposes. Please answer all questions to the best of your knowledge.

Thank you for your time and cooperation.

Part I: Demographic Information

Please mark (✓) the appropriate box or fill in the blank.

1. Gender:

- Male
- Female

2. Age (in years):

- 20-29
- 30-39
- 40-49
- 50 and above

3. Current Position:

- School Principal
- Vice Principal
- Department Head
- Senior Teacher
- Teacher
- Supervisor (if applicable)

4. Years of Experience in Current Position:

- 1-5 years
- 6-10 years
- 11-15 years
- 16 years and above

5. Highest Educational Qualification:

- Diploma
- Bachelor's Degree
- Master's Degree
- PhD
- Other (please specify): _____

Part II: Practice of Instructional Supervision

Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements regarding the practice of instructional supervision in your school. Use the following scale:

- 1 = Strongly Disagree (SD)
- 2 = Disagree (D)
- 3 = Neutral (N)
- 4 = Agree (A)
- 5 = Strongly Agree (SA)

A. Planning and Organization of Supervision

S/N	Statement	SD	D	N	A	SA
1	Instructional supervision is regularly scheduled and conducted in my school.					
2	Supervisors communicate the objectives and focus areas of supervision in advance.					
3	Teachers are involved in the planning of supervision activities.					
4	The school has a clear written policy or guideline for instructional supervision.					

B. Supervision Techniques and Implementation

S/N	Statement	SD	D	N	A	SA
5	Supervisors use a variety of supervision techniques (e.g., classroom observation, peer observation, mentoring).					
6	Classroom observations are conducted frequently enough to provide meaningful feedback.					
7	Supervisors effectively demonstrate and model good teaching practices when needed.					
8	Supervision focuses on improving teaching methodologies and					

	instructional strategies.					
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C. Feedback and Follow-up Mechanisms

S/N	Statement	SD	D	N	A	SA
9	Feedback sessions after observations are held promptly and are constructive.					
10	Feedback provided by supervisors is specific, actionable, and based on evidence.					
11	There is a clear follow-up process to ensure teachers implement suggested improvements.					
12	Supervisors offer ongoing support and resources to help teachers address areas for improvement.					

D. Supervisor Competence and Professionalism

S/N	Statement	SD	D	N	A	SA
13	Supervisors demonstrate good knowledge of subject matter and pedagogical methods.					
14	Supervisors maintain a professional and supportive demeanor during supervision.					
15	Supervisors treat teachers with respect and foster a trusting relationship.					
16	Supervisors are up-to-date with current educational trends and best practices.					

E. Impact and Outcomes of Supervision

S/N	Statement	SD	D	N	A	SA
17	Instructional supervision contributes significantly to my professional growth as a teacher.					
18	Supervision helps improve the overall quality of teaching and learning in the school.					
19	Student learning outcomes have improved as a result of instructional supervision efforts.					
20	Supervision encourages innovation and experimentation with new teaching strategies.					

Part III: Perceived Effectiveness of Instructional Supervision

This section is designed to assess your perception of the effectiveness of the current supervision practices. Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements.

1 = Strongly Disagree (SD) | 2 = Disagree (D) | 3 = Neutral (N) | 4 = Agree (A) | 5 = Strongly Agree (SA)

S/N	Statement	SD	D	N	A	SA
1.	The current supervision process is effective in identifying my professional strengths and weaknesses.					

2.	The feedback I receive from supervisors is effective in helping me improve my teaching methods.					
3.	Overall, instructional supervision in my school effectively contributes to the professional growth of teachers.					
4.	The follow-up support provided after supervision is effective in ensuring improvements are made.					
5.	Instructional supervision, as practiced, has led to a noticeable improvement in the quality of teaching in the school.					
6.	The current supervisory practices are effective in encouraging teachers to be more innovative and reflective.					
7.	Supervision is effective in fostering a collaborative culture among teachers.					
8.	The current system is effective in improving student learning outcomes.					

Part IV: Challenges of Instructional Supervision

Please indicate the extent to which the following factors are challenges to effective instructional supervision in your school. Use the following scale:

- 1 = Not a Challenge (NC)
- 2 = Minor Challenge (MiC)
- 3 = Moderate Challenge (MoC)
- 4 = Significant Challenge (SC)
- 5 = Very Significant Challenge (VSC)

A. Supervisor Capacity and Training

S/N	Challenge Factor	NC	MiC	MoC	SC	VSC
1	Insufficient training or capacity building for supervisors on effective supervision techniques.					
2	Shortage of qualified and experienced supervisors in the school.					
3	Lack of ongoing professional development opportunities for supervisors.					
4	Supervisors' limited knowledge in certain subject areas or modern pedagogy.					

B. Time and Workload Constraints

S/N	Challenge Factor	NC	MiC	MoC	SC	VSC
5	Lack of sufficient time for supervisors to conduct thorough and frequent supervision.					
6	Heavy administrative workload of supervisors diverting attention from instructional supervision.					
7	Teachers' busy schedules making it difficult to find time for observation and feedback.					
8	Insufficient time allocated for follow-up and monitoring of teacher improvements.					

C. Resources and Support Systems

S/N	Challenge Factor	NC	MiC	MoC	SC	VSC
9	Lack of adequate financial resources to support supervision activities (e.g., training, materials).					
10	Shortage of instructional materials or technological tools needed for effective teaching and supervision.					
11	Limited access to professional literature or research on instructional practices for supervisors and teachers.					
12	Inadequate classroom infrastructure (e.g., large class sizes, poor learning environment) hindering supervision.					

D. Teacher Attitudes and Participation

S/N	Challenge Factor	NC	MiC	MoC	SC	VSC
13	Resistance or negative attitude from some teachers towards being supervised.					
14	Teachers perceiving supervision as evaluative rather than supportive.					
15	Limited active participation of teachers in the supervision process (e.g., self-assessment).					
16	Fear of criticism or judgment among teachers during supervision.					

E. Policy and Communication Issues

S/N	Challenge Factor	NC	MiC	MoC	SC	VSC
17	Lack of clear and consistent guidelines or policies on instructional supervision from higher authorities (Sub-City, Education Bureau).					
18	Poor communication and feedback channels between supervisors and teachers.					
19	Inconsistent application of supervision policies across different departments or supervisors.					
20	Lack of recognition or incentives for effective supervision practices.					

Part V: Open-ended Questions

Please provide detailed answers to the following questions.

1. What do you consider to be the most effective aspects of instructional supervision currently practiced in your school?

2. In your opinion, what makes the current instructional supervision practice in your school **effective** or **ineffective**? Please explain. _____

3. What are the significant challenges that limit the **effectiveness** of instructional supervision in your school? _____

4. What specific suggestions do you have for **enhancing the effectiveness** of instructional supervision? _____

THANK YOU FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION!

Annex II: In-Depth Interview Guide for SCHOOL PRINCIPALS

Research Title: The Practice and Challenges of Instructional Supervision at Governmental Secondary Schools in Arada Sub-City, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

Interviewer: _____

Interviewee: _____

School: _____

Date: _____

Time: _____

Location: _____

Introduction (5-10 minutes):

- "Good morning/afternoon, Mr./Ms. Thank you for taking the time to speak with me today."
- "My name is _____, and I am a researcher from _____. My research focuses on understanding the practice and challenges of instructional supervision in governmental secondary schools in Arada Sub-City."
- "Your insights as a School Principal are incredibly valuable to this study, as you have an overarching view of the school's operations and its instructional quality. The purpose of this interview is to gather your detailed perspectives and experiences regarding instructional supervision at your school."
- "Please be assured that your responses will be kept strictly confidential. Your name and the name of your school will not be used in any reports or publications. We are interested in your professional opinions, not personal evaluations."
- "The interview will take approximately [45-60] minutes. Do you have any questions before we begin?"
- "I would like to audio-record this interview to ensure accuracy and allow me to focus on our conversation. The recording will only be used for transcription and analysis purposes and will be deleted upon completion of the research. Is that acceptable to you?" (Obtain verbal consent).

Part A: Background and Context (5-10 minutes)

1. Could you please briefly describe your journey and experience as a school principal, particularly regarding academic and instructional leadership?
2. In your perspective, what is the strategic importance of instructional supervision in achieving your school's educational goals and improving student outcomes?
3. How do national or sub-city level policies on instructional supervision influence your school's approach to supervision?

Part B: Practice of Instructional Supervision from a Principal's Perspective (20-25 minutes)

Sub-section 1: Policy, Planning and Organization

1. How does your school formulate its instructional supervision policy or plan? What are the key elements of this plan?
 - *Probes:* Is it aligned with higher-level directives? Who contributes to its development?
2. What is your role as a principal in the planning, implementation, and monitoring of instructional supervision across the school?
3. How do you ensure that all supervisory staff (e.g., Vice Principals, Department Heads) understand their roles and responsibilities in instructional supervision?

Sub-section 2: Implementation and Oversight

1. What mechanisms do you have in place to ensure that instructional supervision is conducted regularly and effectively by the designated supervisors?
 - *Probes:* How do you monitor their activities?
2. How do you ensure a variety of supervision techniques are employed, not just traditional classroom observations?
3. From your observation, how effectively do supervisors demonstrate knowledge of subject matter and pedagogical methods during their supervision activities?

Sub-section 3: Quality of Feedback and Follow-up

1. How do you assess the quality and effectiveness of the feedback provided by supervisors to teachers?
 - *Probes:* Are you involved in reviewing feedback? Do you receive reports?
2. What systems are in place at the school level to ensure that the feedback leads to genuine teacher development and improved classroom practice?
3. How does the school track the progress of teachers based on supervision feedback and subsequent professional development?

Sub-section 4: Resource Allocation and Support

1. What resources (e.g., financial, materials, time and professional development) does your school allocate to support effective instructional supervision?
2. How do you ensure that supervisors and teachers have access to the necessary resources to engage in meaningful supervision and professional growth?
3. What role does external support (e.g., from the Sub-City Education Office) play in enhancing instructional supervision at your school?

Part C: Challenges and Mitigation Strategies (15-20 minutes)

Sub-section 1: Challenges in Supervisor Capacity and Performance

1. What challenges do you observe among your supervisory staff (Vice Principals, Department Heads) regarding their competence or motivation to conduct effective instructional supervision?
2. How do you address gaps in supervisor training or experience? What specific development opportunities do you provide?

Sub-section 2: Operational and Systemic Challenges

1. How do time constraints and the heavy workload of supervisory staff affect the quality and frequency of supervision? What strategies have you implemented to mitigate this?
2. What challenges do you face in ensuring that supervision is seen as a supportive and developmental process, rather than a punitive one, by all staff?
3. Are there any policy or bureaucratic hurdles at the sub-city or higher level that impede effective instructional supervision at your school?

Sub-section 3: Teacher Engagement and Culture

1. What challenges do you encounter regarding teachers' acceptance of and engagement with instructional supervision?
2. How do you foster a school culture where teachers are receptive to feedback and actively seek professional growth through supervision?

Part D: Overall Assessment and Recommendations (5-10 minutes)

1. In your overall assessment, how effective is instructional supervision in your school in contributing to improved teaching quality and student learning outcomes?
2. What are the most crucial actions you believe need to be taken at the school, sub-city, or national level to significantly improve the practice of instructional supervision?
a)

THANK YOU FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION!

Annex III: In-Depth Interview Guide for SCHOOL SUPERVISORS

Research Title: The Practice and Challenges of Instructional Supervision at Governmental Secondary Schools in Arada Sub-City, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

Interviewer: _____
Interviewee: _____
School: _____
Date: _____
Time: _____
Location: _____

Introduction (5-10 minutes):

- "Good morning/afternoon, Mr./Ms. Thank you for taking the time to speak with me today."
- "My name is _____, and I am a researcher from _____. My research focuses on understanding the practice and challenges of instructional supervision in governmental secondary schools in Arada Sub-City."
- "Your insights as a Supervisor who is directly involved in guiding teachers are invaluable to this study. The purpose of this interview is to gather your detailed perspectives and experiences regarding instructional supervision in your department/area."
- "Please be assured that your responses will be kept strictly confidential. Your name and the name of your school will not be used in any reports or publications. We are interested in your professional opinions, not personal evaluations."
- "The interview will take approximately [45-60] minutes. Do you have any questions before we begin?"
- "I would like to audio-record this interview to ensure accuracy and allow me to focus on our conversation. The recording will only be used for transcription and analysis purposes and will be deleted upon completion of the research. Is that acceptable to you?" (Obtain verbal consent).

Part A: Background and Context (5-10 minutes)

1. Could you please describe your current role at the school and your specific responsibilities regarding instructional supervision within your department/area?
2. How long have you been in this supervisory role? What was your experience as a teacher prior to this role?
3. In your view, what is the primary goal you aim to achieve when supervising teachers?
4. How do you understand the concept of 'instructional supervision' as it applies to your day-to-day activities?

Part B: Practice of Instructional Supervision from a Supervisor's Perspective (20-25 minutes)

Sub-section 1: Planning and Execution

1. How do you typically plan your supervision activities for the teachers under your guidance?
 - *Probes:* Is it based on an annual plan? How do you prioritize teachers or areas of focus?
2. To what extent do you involve teachers in setting the agenda or focus for their supervision sessions?
3. Can you describe the initial steps you take when preparing for a supervision activity, such as a classroom observation?

Sub-section 2: Supervision Techniques and Implementation

1. What specific supervision techniques do you most frequently use (e.g., classroom observation, mentoring, peer observation, lesson study, coaching)? Why these methods?
2. Can you describe your process during a classroom observation? What specific aspects of teaching and learning do you focus on?
3. How do you tailor your supervision approach to the individual needs and experience levels of different teachers?
4. How do you ensure that your supervision is perceived as supportive and developmental, rather than purely evaluative?

Sub-section 3: Delivering Feedback and Supporting Teacher Growth

1. Describe in detail how you provide feedback to teachers after a supervision activity.
 - *Probes:* When is it given? What format? How do you ensure it's constructive and not critical?
2. Can you give an example of a time your feedback led to a significant improvement in a teacher's practice? What was the process like?
3. What kind of follow-up activities do you undertake to ensure teachers implement the suggestions and continuously improve?
4. How do you link the outcomes of your supervision to relevant professional development opportunities for teachers?

Sub-section 4: Supervisor Competence and Resources

1. What knowledge, skills, and attitudes do you believe are most critical for you to be an effective instructional supervisor?
2. What training or professional development have you personally received that enhanced your supervisory skills?
3. Do you feel you have adequate resources (e.g., time, materials, support from school leadership) to perform your supervisory duties effectively?

Part C: Challenges Faced in Instructional Supervision (15-20 minutes)

Sub-section 1: Personal and Professional Challenges

1. What are the most significant challenges you personally encounter when conducting instructional supervision?
 - *Probes:* Lack of specific skills? Difficulty managing teacher resistance?
2. Do you feel adequately trained and equipped to handle the diverse needs and challenges presented by different teachers? If not, what areas need development?

Sub-section 2: Operational and Systemic Barriers

1. How does your workload (administrative tasks, teaching duties, etc.) impact the time you can dedicate to quality instructional supervision?
2. What challenges do you face in securing necessary resources (e.g., up-to-date pedagogical materials, time for collaborative planning) for your supervision efforts?
3. What are the common challenges you face when teachers are resistant or unreceptive to your feedback and guidance? How do you typically address this?

Sub-section 3: Policy, Communication, and School Culture

1. Are the school's or sub-city's policies on instructional supervision always clear and easy to implement in practice? Where are the ambiguities?
2. How do communication issues