



MZUZU UNIVERSITY

FACULTY OF EDUCATION

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATIONS

**PRIMARY SCHOOL TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF
INSTRUCTIONAL SUPERVISION BY PRIMARY EDUCATION
ADVISORS: A CASE STUDY OF THREE PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN
MPONDA EDUCATION ZONE, ZOMBA**

A THESIS

BY

MICHAEL MOSES SITOLO

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CANDIDATE’S DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this dissertation entitled **“Primary School Teachers’ Perceptions of Instructional Supervision by Primary Education Advisors: A Case Study of Three Primary Schools in Mponda Education Zone, Zomba ”** is my original work. Sources used in producing this dissertation have been indicated both within the text and in the reference section.

.....

Full Legal Name

Signature:..... Date:.....

This research project has been submitted with the approval of:

.....

Dr. Sam Safuli

(University Supervisor-MZUNI)

.....

Mr C. Sangoma

(Head of Educational Foundations Department-MZUNI)

DEDICATION

To my parents, Baxter and Margaret Sitolo, for their unwavering support and encouragement. Deserving recognition is the entire Sitolo family for being with me through thick and thin. I greatly appreciate all forms of assistance and inspiration rendered to mein my academic endeavours. May God, who has greatly favoured me, continue to guide and bless us all.

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ABSTRACT

The quality of primary education in Malawi has been on the decline for a number of years. Unfortunately, instructional supervision which safeguards quality in education has been described as being weak and responsible for the deterioration in the quality of primary education hence the need for a solution to make the instructional supervision to be effective and vibrant.

In order for instructional supervision to be effective, teachers' perceptions on instruction should be taken into account. This would be useful to the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology officials who would make reforms so that instructional supervision meets teachers' expectations. Eventually, quality of education would improve as teachers would easily accept P.E.A.s recommendations and implement them. Therefore, it was imperative to embark on this study which aimed at investigating teachers' perceptions on the effectiveness of instructional supervision carried out by P.E.As.

The study involved fifteen teachers drawn from three public primary schools in Zomba urban. The research addressed questions pertaining to the teachers understanding of supervision, the conduct of supervision by P.E.As, impact of instructional supervision on teachers' professional lives and reforms that can be made to current instructional supervision.

Being a qualitative research, the researcher utilised individual interviews, document analysis and observation as instruments for data collection. Data analysis has revealed that teachers appreciate the existence of instructional supervision by P.E.As but would like some alterations to be made to the process. Amongst the various reforms that ought to be undertaken is: linkage of instructional supervision with promotion opportunities; consistency in the receipt of supervision forms and a reduction in the number of records prepared and updated by teachers.

Abbreviations and Acronyms used in this Dissertation

- BERA: British Education Research Association
- C.C.A.P: Church of Central Africa Presbyterian
- CPD: Continuous Professional Development
- D.E.M: District Education Manager
- DIAS: Department of Inspection and Advisory Service
- EDM: Education Division Managers
- FPE: Free Primary Education
- L.E.A: Local Education Authority
- MoEST: Ministry of Education, Science and Technology
- PEAs: Primary Education Advisors
- SACMEQ: Southern and Eastern Africa Consortium for Monitoring Education Quality
- S.E.E.D: South East Education Division
- TALULAR: Teaching and Learning Using Locally Available Resources
- TDC: Teacher Development Centre

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CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

1.0 Chapter Overview

The importance of education cannot be overemphasized. Given its significance to a nation's development, education needs a monitoring mechanism to check on its quality. Supervision is such a mechanism which strives to ensure that learners are being taught in an appropriate manner and to the acceptable standards. In order to ensure its effectiveness, teachers' perceptions on instructional supervision need to be taken into account. Thus, this chapter describes the current state of education in Malawi; defines supervision; explains the reasons for the renewed interest in supervision; and describes the supervision mechanism in Malawi. It also justifies why the research was worthy conducting. In addition, the chapter provides the research's purpose, theoretical framework, and definitions of terms used in this thesis.

1.1 Background Information

Education plays a crucial role in the social and economic development of a country hence leaving the Government with no choice but to provide it to its citizens. The Malawi Government highly values education such that it regards education as a human right enshrined in the constitution. According to Ng'ambi (2010), the Malawi constitution states that all persons are entitled to education and that the government expects that every Malawian should have at least five years of primary education. Kelly (2011) points out that education, particularly at the primary level, has long been regarded as an essential input to social and economic development. The relevance of primary education is not recognized by Malawi alone. Fiske (1998) asserts that the international community views basic education, of which primary education is a component, as both a fundamental human right and a necessity. In a display of the commitment that many countries have to primary education, the World Conference on Education for All was convened in 1990 in Jomtien, Thailand. The conference adopted the "World Declaration on Education for All" and agreed on a Framework for Action to meet Basic Learning Needs. The Framework for Action called upon countries to adopt policies and practices that would ensure "universal access

to, and completion of primary education or whatever higher level of education is considered as basic by the year 2000 (Fiske, 1998). Primary education has been emphasized in the education circles since it is viewed as the main means of providing basic education, particularly the skills of literacy, numeracy and life skills that are necessary for productive life and integration into one's community (Malawi/IEQ Project, 2001; Chiwaula, 2008).

In compliance with the Jomtien's World Conference on Education for All, the Malawi Government introduced the Free Primary Education (FPE) in 1994, a year in which democracy was reintroduced [Ng'ambi, 2010; Government of Malawi, 2004; Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MoEST), 2007]. The introduction of the free primary education resulted in an increase in the number of students enrolled in primary schools from 1.9 million to 3.2 million pupils in the 1994/1995 academic year (Malawi/IEQ Project, 2001). As of 2008, Ng'ambi (2010) says that there were 3 671 481 pupils enrolled in 5404 primary schools. Out of these, 298 were private primary schools, and 5106 public schools controlled by religious agencies and government. Malawi/IEQ Project (2001) asserts that the dramatic increase in pupil enrolment had an adverse impact on the quality of education. The standards have never ceased to dwindle in the country. The World Bank (2010) says that Malawi is offering poor and deteriorating quality education in primary schools. This is well demonstrated by poor performance of learners in the national examination for Standard 8 pupils whose pass rates have been dwindling each year between 2006/07 and 2011/12 from 74.4% in 2006 to 68.9% in 2011/12. Worse still, the results of the regional standardised test to measure the attainment of cognitive skills in primary education by SACMEC show Malawi consistently performing well below regional average. Malawi came 14th out of 14 countries in reading English and 13th out of 14 countries in Mathematics in 2000. No progress was measured in the follow up SACMEC exercise in 2007/8 (MoEST, 2013).

There are a number of factors responsible for the poor state of our education system since quality of education is the result of interaction of inputs, processes, and outcomes (Malawi/IEQ Project, 2001). Access to quality education is impeded by many factors including absence of a proper monitoring system that works to check adherence to the set education standards. MoEST (2008) acknowledges the existence of poor monitoring and supervisory systems which is a challenge to

provision of quality education in primary schools. It goes on to say that less than 10% of primary schools are visited by primary education advisors.

In a situation where education standards are declining, many countries have turned to supervision as a panacea. For instance, when critiques of American education system described their basic education as inadequate in the 1980s, major reforms focused in the area of the teacher supervisory process (Minnear-Peplinski, 2009). Oyewole and Ehinola (2014) bemoan that supervision of instruction has been a neglected part of school management in Nigeria. They insist that instructional supervision, if properly organized and executed, can lead to positive improvement in the achievement of effective learning and consequently lead to rising standards in the education system. The issue here is that it is not only a matter of supervising schools that can raise education but how it is executed that matters as well as how it is perceived by teachers. Hence, this study sets out to investigate teachers' perceptions of instructional supervision.

John (2011) points out that many authorities have come up with various definitions for supervision. He, however, defines supervision as the attempt through a second party intervention to ascertain, maintain and improve quality of work done. On the other hand, Oyewole and Ehinola (2014) describe supervision of instruction as the process of bringing about improvement in the teaching-learning process through a network cooperative activities and democratic relationship of persons concerned with teaching and learning. Supervision is the process of engaging teachers in instructional dialogue for the purpose of improving teaching and increasing student achievement (Sullivan, 2004).

1.2 Re-prioritisation of Instructional Supervision

Malawi is not the only country that is struggling with declining standards of education. Lillis (1992) says that the dominant issue for primary and secondary education in the developing countries is no longer quantitative expansion which was the main goal in the 1960s and 1970s, but rather arresting the trend of rapid deterioration in quality. According to Lillis (1992), the 1990 Conference of Education for All in Jomtien, Thailand, referred to the 1990s as the decade of educational quality improvement. He suggests that identification of successful systems and modalities of inspection and supervision may be used as model for directing systems and/or

developing existing ones and/or developing appropriate model of training to support the search for qualitative improvements in education that Jomtien called for in basic education.

Onasanya (2011) argues that if quality education is a thing seriously desired in schools so that the standard of education can be improved, school supervision must, therefore, be accorded high priority. Through school supervision, the supervisors assist in improving classroom instructions because teachers are made competent and efficient, parents are satisfied with the performance of their children, and children are motivated to work harder in order to achieve the required standard, hence in the long run, the goal of education is achieved (Onasanya, 2011).

As already stated, declining standards of education is not necessarily a third world phenomenon. Grauwe and Carron (1997) attests to the fact that both in developing and developed countries education policy-makers have shifted their attention from expansion issues to quality issues, particularly since the early 1980s. Hence in the 1990s the international community revived its interest in quality monitoring and supervision. This was after neglecting supervision in the 1970s when it was viewed as an old fashioned non-democratic practice. Therefore, some countries got rid of the supervision service (Grauwe and Carron, 2007). They suggest four reasons for the renewed interest in supervision and quality monitoring. First of all, in most countries, there is a feeling that the rapid expansion of education has led to the deterioration of quality. In addition to that, more recently, the “value for money” that permeates all sectors has also hit the education system. This is linked to stronger demand for accountability in the public service. At the same time, various studies have shown that one determinant of the quality education precisely relates to the weakening of quality monitoring devices, including supervision and provision of support services. Finally, the interest in supervision and quality control finds justification in the present trend towards school autonomy. In many countries, schools have been receiving more freedom in making decisions in fields as crucial as the curriculum, staff management and budget. This greater degree of freedom let to schools has provoked an equally greater demand for accountability and for monitoring procedures that should allow central governments to guarantee standards of quality and equity across the system (Grauwe and Carron, 2007; Oyewole and Ehinola, 2014).

1.3.0 Instructional Supervision in Malawi

Lillis (1992) affirms that the twin responsibilities of quality control and quality improvement are undertaken by inspectorates and supervisory services. In Malawi, supervisory services for primary schools are provided by the Department of Inspection and Advisory services (DIAS), Education Division Manager's (E.DM.'s) Office, Primary Education Advisors (PEAs), and Head teachers and senior staff in primary schools (Saiwa, 2008; Gunsaru, 2012; Ministry of Education, Science and Technology, 2012).

Both Gunsaru (2012) and Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (2012) identify two responsibilities of the Department of Inspection and Advisory Services which are: to inspect schools; and to provide professional advice to the teachers. Gunsaru (2012), and Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (2012) state six functions of the Department of Inspection and Advisory Services (DIAS) which include: enforcement, maintenance and evaluation of standards; initiation of the development and review of education curriculum; formulation of inspection and advisory policies; registration of both government and private schools; registration and licensing of teachers; and supervision of Education Division Officers. Gunsaru (2012) describes DIAS as the nerve system of the ministry in that through its inspectors and advisors and through their visits to schools and other education institutions; it has the capacity to monitor all aspects of the education system.

The Education Division Manager's Office, as already alluded to, plays a role in the provision of education and advisory services by providing inspection and advisory staff for both primary and secondary education levels. To this extent, therefore, the Office of the EDM works in collaboration with the DIAS since the inspectors and advisors at the office are part and parcel of DIAS staff. The PEA, on the other hand, provides advisory services in primary schools at a zone level and is based at Teacher Development Centre (TDC). According to Mattson (2006), having a decentralised ministry entails that instructional supervision is mostly done by local officials such as P.E.As while the decentralised ministry offices such as provincial offices are concerned with regulatory and administrative functions. Mattson (2006) points out that Malawi has 33 education districts and 315 education zones. Within each zone, there is a primary education adviser who is responsible for inspecting and providing pedagogical support to teachers. The P.E.As are each assigned 10-15 schools and are provided with a motorbike for transportation. Apart from that, P.E.As are provided a house and a monthly fuel allowance (Mulkeen, 2010;

Mulkeen and Chen, 2008) Further at primary school level, it is the head teacher and senior staff that exercise supervisory and disciplinary control over the teacher. However, they also provide professional advisory services to the teachers (Gunsaru, 2012; MoEST, 2012).

As already alluded to, PEAs are expected to play both inspection and supervisory roles. As a result, supervisors do a number of things so that they can achieve the purpose of which the main one is the ensuring of quality education. PEAs, as instructional supervisors for primary schools in Malawi are called, perform a number of duties among which are:

- Visiting schools regularly to guide, advise and support.
- Assisting school staff on curricular matters.
- Assisting school head with interpretation of government policies.
- Assessing training needs of head teachers, teachers and stakeholders.
- Leading in production of teaching and learning resources.
- Encouraging teachers in their academic and professional development.
- Encouraging community participation in schools.
- Organising school-based training for head teachers, teachers and stakeholders.
- Submitting curriculum implementation reports to the District Education Office.
- Distribution of teaching and learning materials.(P.E.A for Mponda Education Zone, 18/07/2015; Saiwa, 2008).

1.4 Problem Statement

Education in Malawi is experiencing a serious and debilitating crisis of low quality. Given that the primary education sector accommodates the largest number of learners, it is the one hardest hit (Saiwa, 2008; Ng'ambi, 2010; The World Bank, 2010). With such a deterioration in the quality of education, the challenge is placed at the door of effective supervision (Glickman,1985; Esia-Donkoh and Ofosu-Dwameno, 2014). Unfortunately, instructional supervision which is

expected to safeguard the quality of education is in crisis. Link Community Development International (www.ICinternational.org/Content/Program) contends that weak supervisory mechanism is contributing to underperformance in the primary education sector in Malawi. Worse still, despite the government's efforts to decentralise and democratise the supervisory mechanism in primary schools, Saiwa (2008) claimed that some teachers were scared of the Primary Education Advisors as the supervisors called in Malawi. Therefore, this situation raised a number of questions in the researcher such as why some feel threatened while others are not? Does it have an impact at all on the teaching profession? In order to address such questions, this study was carried out so that teachers' views on supervision by P.E.As would be known which could in turn assist in rejuvenating it. Put another way, Malawi has a poor education system in terms of quality. Yet the very same system that is supposed to ensure quality is weak as well. Hence the urgent need for the strengthening of supervisory mechanism by taking on board teachers' perceptions on the same.

Investigation of teachers' perceptions is so crucial in that they have a bearing on the effectiveness of instructional supervision. In order to have the desired effect on the teaching-learning process, supervision would need to take into account the perceptions of teachers. Mpofo (2007) points out that the improvement of teaching and learning process is dependent upon teachers' attitudes towards supervision. Unless teachers perceive supervision as a process of promoting professional growth and student learning, supervision will not have the desired effect. DeWitt (1977) asserts that instructional supervision can only succeed if it becomes part of, rather apart from, the visible community which it must also serve. On the other hand, Greene (1992) alludes to the fact that literature indicates that for teachers to change themselves or their teaching practices, they must believe in the supervision process.

Since standards of education are on the decline in Malawi, it should be in the interest of the Government of Malawi to ensure that instructional supervision aids in improving quality of education hence the need to gauge teachers' perceptions of instructional supervision as it would assist in making the process more effective.

1.5 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this research was to investigate teachers' perceptions of instructional supervision by P.E.A.s. The study also found out what changes teachers would prefer to be made to current practice of instructional supervision.

1.6 Research Questions

This study explored the following questions:

- how did the teachers understand supervision?
- how was instructional supervision carried out in the zone?
- what impact has instructional supervision by P.E.As had on the teachers?
- how best could instructional supervision by P.E.As be executed?

1.7 Significance of the Study

Teachers' perceptions are important in relation to the effectiveness of instruction. In order to have a reliable education system, Malawi needs instructional supervisors that are effective in their duties and have a positive impact on the teaching and learning process. This can only occur if their conduct and they, themselves are found to be acceptable and helpful to teachers. Anything short of this would not reverse the declining standards of education in our nation. Mpofu (2007) reiterates that the improvement of the teaching and learning process is dependent upon teachers' attitudes towards supervision. Unless teachers perceive supervision as a process of promoting professional growth and student learning, the supervision will not have the desired effect.

If the results of this study were to be made available to major stakeholders in education, they would be aware of the teachers' perceptions and be able to assist in establishing an instructional supervision process that would help in the improvement of the teaching and learning process in our schools. To begin with, officials at the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology would find this study to be useful as they would be able to know how the supervision practices were perceived by teachers and make reforms if necessary so as to improve effectiveness of supervision. In other words, the research could accord the ministry an opportunity to make

adjustment in instructional supervision by taking on board concerns and preferences that would be raised by the teachers.

This study would also be relevant to P.E.As who would also know how to conduct themselves in their subsequent supervision exercises. The research would bring to light what teachers expect of supervisors and supervision. As a result, the instructional supervisors would also have to modify their approaches to supervision so that they can be in line with teachers' expectations and needs.

If supervision was to be adjusted to teachers' needs and expectations, teachers would greatly benefit from such a change. With supervision that is responsive to their needs, teachers would have no choice but to accept the support that supervisors may render to them thereby improving their effectiveness and efficiency. In other words, teachers would be willing and much ready to polish up their methodology if they find supervision to be helpful in meeting the classroom challenges.

Learners would also be among the beneficiaries of this study. Since the supervisors may have to refine their approaches to supervision to meet teachers' expectations, the teachers in turn would sharpen their skills and methods of teaching thereby making the learning to be more effective. In short, improved supervision means improved teaching which in turn implies improved learning.

Finally, the country as a whole would benefit from the study since improved supervision of instruction will result in the realization of the goals of education that the nation has set. Put another way, since teaching would improve as a result of effective supervision, literacy levels would increase due to improved teaching and learning process. A reliable education system as a result of effective instructional supervision entails more educated citizens who would join the workforce hence increasing productivity. At the same time, the declining standards of education would change for the better following improvements in supervision.

1.8 Theoretical Framework

The study was based on and guided by symbolic interactionism. This perspective has a long intellectual history beginning with the German sociologist and economist, Max Weber (1864-1920) and American philosopher, George H. Mead, who emphasized the subjective meaning of human behaviours, the social process and pragmatism. Herbert Bruner, who studied with Mead

at the University of Chicago, is responsible for coining the term “symbolic interactionism” as well as formulating the most prominent version of the theory (Bentley, 2005). Blumer (1969) defines symbolic interaction as the way individuals interact with people and meaning they have for them. Symbolic interactionism befits this study since perspectives are a crucial concept in symbolic interaction. Thus the framework augurs well with the study’s goal which was to investigate teachers’ perceptions on instructional supervision is in line with social interactionism since teachers construct meanings about supervision as they come in contact with P.E.As.

For an interactionist, humans are pragmatic actors who continually must adjust their behaviour to reactions of other actors. In this sense, actors in supervision are the supervisees (teachers) and the supervisors. Buregeya (2011) reiterates that supervision by nature is a process and being so; it involves social interaction from pre-conference observation to post-conference observation. In supervision, it is the supervisors who seek adjustment of teacher’s methods and approaches so as to improve the learning process.

Blumer (1969) outlines three core premises of symbolic interactionism which include:

- People act toward things, including human beings, on basis of the meanings they have for them.
- These meanings are managed and transformed through an interactive process and
- Finally meanings prompt the person to action by making a change.

In this study, the respondents shared their experiences of instructional supervision by describing the value and meanings they attached to their interactions with P.E.As. The researcher investigated teachers’ perceptions constructed through their interaction with the P.E.As. Therefore, symbolic interactionism enabled the researcher to uncover the meanings of supervision constructed by teachers to freely express their views pertaining to instructional supervision as conducted by P.E.As. Teachers’ views on instructional supervision were disclosed in the interviews which are a form of dialogue. Chism et al (2008) contends that only through dialogue can one be aware of perceptions, feelings and attitudes of others and interpret their meanings and intent.

1.9 Definitions of Terms Used in this Dissertation

- *Instructional supervision*: is a process of facilitating the professional growth of teachers, primarily by giving the teacher feedback about classroom interactions and helping the teacher make use of that feedback in order to make teaching more effective (Grauwe and Carron, 2007).
- *Instructional supervisor*: is any certified individual assigned with the responsibility for the direction and guidance of the work of teaching staff members (Ekundayo, Oyerinde, and Kolawole, 2013)
- *Clinical supervision*: refers to supervisors' face to face contact with teachers with the double intention of improving instruction in the classroom and of improving professional growth which is a form of staff development (Mpofu, 2007).
- *Development supervision*: is the match of supervisory approach with teachers or group of teachers' developmental levels, expertise, and commitment (Glickman (2001) in Fritz and Miller (2003)).
- *Mentoring*: is a process that facilitates instructional improvement wherein an experienced educator agrees to provide assistance, support, and recommendations to another staff member or faculty members (Sullivan and Glanz, 2000).
- *Action research*: is an ongoing process of reflection that involves four basic steps: selecting focus, collecting data, analysis of data, and taking action (Sullivan and Glanz, 2000).
- *Paradigm*: is a loose collection of logically related assumptions, concepts or propositions that orient thinking and research (Mack, 2010).
- *Qualitative research*: is a reflective, interpretive, and descriptive effort to describe and understand actual instances of human action and experience from the perspective of participants who are living through a particular situation (Fischer, 2006).
- *Case study*: is a form of qualitative research that endeavours to discover meaning, to investigate process and to gain insight into and in-depth understanding of an individual group or situation (Lodico, Spaulding and Voegtle, 2006).

- *Sample*: is the subset of total population from which a researcher acquires information representative of the total population (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2005).
- *Purposeful sampling*: is a procedure where the research identifies key informants, that is, persons who have the specific knowledge about a topic being investigated (Lodico, Spaulding, and Voegtler, 2006).
- *Interview*: is an interchange of views between two or more people on a topic of mutual interest (Cohen, Manion, and Morrison, 2005).
- *Focus group*: is a carefully planned and moderated informal discussion where one person's ideas bounce off another's creating a chain reaction of informative dialogue (Anderson and Arsenault, 2005).
- *Validity*: refers to the extent to which research describes, measures or explores what it aims to describe, measure or explore (Willig, 2008).
- *Reliability*: refers to the consistency of a research measure (Marczyk, Dematteo and Festinger, 2006).
- *Data analysis*: refers to the computation of certain measures along with the search for patterns or relationships or differences that exist among data-groups (Kothari, 2004).
- *Coding*: is the process of identifying different segments of the data that describe related phenomena and labelling these parts using broad category names (Lodico, Spaulding, and Voegtler, 2006).
- *Ethics*: refers to principled sensitivity to the rights of others (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2005).
- *Informed consent*: implies that participants have been given information about procedures and risks involved in the study and have been informed that their participation is voluntary and that they have the right to withdraw from the study without repercussions (Lodico, Spaulding, and Voegtler, 2006).

CHAPTER TWO

Literature Review

2.0 Chapter Overview

Like any other profession, teachers normally work within systems where they are supervised, monitored and guided in their work (Mulkeen, 2010;107). According to OECD (2005) as the most significant resources in schools, teachers are critical in raising education standards. Improving the efficiency and quality of education depend, in large measure, on ensuring that teachers are highly skilled, well resourced and motivated to perform. Raising teachers' performance is perhaps the policy direction most likely to substantial gains in student learning. Hence supervision exists to raise teachers' and learners' performance in particular and education standards in general. This chapter defines the term "instructional supervision"; explains its origins; discusses the main types of instructional supervision; describes models of instructional supervision; and explains the principles of instructional supervision. The chapter also discusses qualities of an effective instructional supervisor; explains the role of instructional supervision; and describes teachers' perceptions of instructional supervision.

2.1 Meaning of the term "Instructional Supervision"

Olulube and Major (2014) argue that education is the most effective means that society possesses for confronting the challenges of the future. Providing effective education requires reliable education system. Reliability in this context means that education system is dependable and educational supervision plays a major role in guaranteeing a dependable system (Olulube and Major, 2014).

Surprisingly, there is no consensus on a single definition of educational supervision due to certain differences in orientation, perceptions, comprehension, familiarity with aspects of the framework and also analysis of its content (Ghapanchil Z., Baradan M., n.d). Sullivan (2004) concurs and states that defining supervision has been a source of much debate for years. Therefore, several definitions of supervision exist in the field (John, 2011; Minnear-Peplinski,

2009). How supervision is defined reflects how one perceives it. Overall, most authors view supervision as a process aimed at improving instruction. For example, Hismanoglu and Hismanoglu (2010) define educational supervision as a set of duties and comprehensive process which aim at helping the teacher to develop their profession to achieve their pedagogical objectives. Sullivan (2004), an advocate of supervision, defines it as a process of engaging teachers in instructional dialogue for the purpose of improving teaching and increasing student achievement. Besides that, John (2011) defines supervision as an attempt through a second party intervention to ascertain, maintain and improve the quality of work done. According to Oyewole and Ehinola (2014), supervision of instruction may be defined as the process of bringing about improvement in the teaching-learning process through a network of cooperative activities and democratic relationship of persons concerned with teaching and learning. Finally, supervision, as defined by Grauwe and Carron (2007), is a process of facilitating the professional growth of teacher, primarily by giving the teacher feedback about classroom interactions and helping the teacher make use of that feedback in order to make teaching more effective.

Others, especially those having traditional opinion of supervision, view supervision as a means of having control over educational institutions. For instance, Hornby (1962) in Giwa (1993) defines supervision as a process of observing, watching and directing work, workers and organisations or institutions.

2.2 Origin of Instructional Supervision

According to Sullivan (2004), supervision has Medieval Latin origins and was originally defined as a process of perusing or scanning a text for errors or deviations from original text. However, the origins of school supervision are traced by UK.essay.com to France under Napoleon's regime at the end of 18th century and other European countries followed the idea in the 19th century. For example, in the Netherlands, it was started in 1801. Traditionally, inspection and supervision were used as important tools to ensure efficiency and accountability in the education system. Currently, the terminologies inspection and supervision are used by different countries in different ways. Tyag (2010) as cited by UK.Essays.com distinguishes inspection from supervision in that inspection is a up-down approach which focuses on the assessment and evaluation of school based on stated standards, whereas supervision focuses on providing guidance, support and assessment to teachers in their teaching and learning process. Some

countries prefer the term “supervisor” to “inspector”. Grauwe (2007) points out that some countries have recently developed more specific terminologies for an instructional supervisor. For instance, Malawi uses “education methods advisor”, and Uganda ‘teacher development advisor”.

2.3.0 Major Types of Instructional Supervision

After having perused a number of literary works, the researcher has come across two main types of instructional supervision namely: bureaucratic supervision and democratic supervision. Minnear-Peplinski (2009) alludes to the fact that one would find various approaches in literature about effective supervision including: scientific management, democratic interaction approach, cooperative supervision, clinical supervision, group dynamics and peer emphasis. However, embedded within these processes are two philosophies of bureaucracy and professionalism (democratic supervision). She further states that these two philosophies have been opposite sides of a supervision continuum with the pendulum moving back and forth from late 1800s to present.

2.3.1 Bureaucratic Supervision

This is what Minnear-Peplinski (2009), Giwa (1993) and Sullivan (2004) have also called “supervision as inspection” or scientific management approach of supervision. It is the tradition opinion of supervision. Bureaucratic supervision relies on inspectional methods and seeks for efficiency above all else. Supervision as inspection is used to maintain standards of instruction rather than on the idea of improving them. Teachers for most part are seen as inept while supervisors are regarded as experts who have a final say in curriculum matters and supervision of teachers. As a result, many teachers perceive supervision as inspectional rather than a helping function (Minnear-Peplinski, 2009; Sullivan 2004). This concept of supervision as inspection evolved as a result of the view of scientific management wherein management felt workers are lazy and needed to be “pushed” or “coerced” (Minnear-Peplinski, 2009; Giwa, 1993). Bureaucratic supervision was dominant in the US between 1870 and 1920, and resurfaced in the 1950s and 1960s (Sullivan, 2004). Malawi was reliant on this method in the especially under one party era (1964-1994) (Saiwa, 2008). Sullivan (2004) points out that this sort of supervision attracts criticism from teachers and others. Consequently, supervisors tried to change their image as “snoopervisors” by adopting alternative methods of supervision.

2.3.2 Democratic Supervision

Sullivan (2004) attributes the origin of democratic supervision to Dewey's (1929) theories of democratic and scientific thinking as well as Hosis's (1920) ideas of democratic supervision. On the other hand, Minnear-Peplinski (2009) attributes the origin of democratic supervision to what she calls "progressive movement" in the 1920s. Professionalism, as democratic supervision is also known, (Sullivan, 2004; Minnear-Peplinski, 2009), developed out of the belief that teachers were professionals and as such, capable of guiding and participating in their own development and supervision. Guidance and assistance became the focus of progressive supervision and so supervisors were expected to build relationships with the teachers and provide a supportive environment for them (Minnear-Peplinski, 2009). Modern supervision, as democratic supervision is also called by Giwa (1993.), evolved as a result of human relation movement by which management thought that workers have initiative that they could perform well on the job without close supervision and that they could be efficiently and effectively mobilized towards mass production without being coerced or forced. This management human relation view is also related to the democratic concept of supervision which encourages cooperative practices in supervision (Giwa, 1993). Hence democratic supervision is also known as the human relation phase of supervision in which supervisor's role became to determine what teachers needed to be successful; it changed from being an evaluator to a facilitator (Minnear-Peplinski, 2009).

2.4.0 Models of Supervision according to Blase

There are many ways for conducting supervision hence the existence of numerous models of supervision. Blasé (2003) argues that the existence of an array of approaches to supervision is indicative of the substantial disagreement about its nature that has existed for more than 140 years. Blasé (2003) claims that despite the fact that many approaches to supervision are collaborative in nature; the practice of supervision has often been one of inspection, oversight and judgement. In order to be effective, supervision cannot rely exclusively in one model, but should combine their best characteristics as each process has distinct qualities that can contribute to teachers' growth and development as they seek to improve instruction. The models of supervision represent an era in the development of supervision. The models of supervision

include: traditional scientific image/model, democratic interaction approach, clinical supervision and developmental supervision (Blasé, 2003). The history of these models is based on the development of instructional supervision in United States of America.

2.4.1.0 Bureaucratic Models of Supervision

2.4.1.1 The Traditional Scientific Image/Model

This can be subdivided into two phases namely: community involvement stage and scientific Phase (Minnear-Peplinski, 2009).

Community Involvement Stage

The traditional scientific model is the earliest model of teacher supervision and was much prevalent during the late 1800s and the early 1900s. During the community involvement stage, laymen, who were non-professionals and untrained, carried out supervision. The use of non-professionals as supervisors should not come as a surprise. It was a reflection of the assumptions underlying the practice of supervision at that time. The assumption of supervisors were that: supervision does not require any special professional competence; it is not the duty of the supervisors to improve teaching; that teaching is not a discipline that has its own body of knowledge and methodology which can be learnt or taught; and that teachers alone are accountable for the performance of their students. With the increase in the number of schools and teachers, one of the teachers in each school was designated as principal to perform only managerial functions (Ogusanya M., Course Module: EDU 810; Sullivan, 2004; Minnear-Peplinski, 2009).

Scientific Phase

This came about as bureaucracy was being incorporated in the instructional supervision (Minnear-Peplinski, 2009). Further increases in schools and school population led to the replacement of non-professional supervisors with superintendents who were given additional responsibility for improving teaching and quality of instruction (Ogusanya, M., Course Module EDU 810). Therefore, a hierarchy of authority was established around the superintendents and principals to manage the booming population in schools. The general push by the 1900s was toward scientific and efficient supervision so that the position of the supervisor would gain

influence and considered legitimate. Supervisors were autocratic, and they supervised based on scientifically sound concepts associated with producing products (Minnear-Peplinski, 2009).

Bheloh et al. (2011) identify the traditional scientific model as inspectorate model of supervision. The proponents of this model believe in the authority of the supervisor who visits schools to investigate whether work is done according to the set of rules or not. He does not provide teachers the opportunity to give their opinions, straight away delineates the policy and demands its implementation. The teachers have to follow without questioning. In this model, knowledge is viewed as static entity not as changing reality. Rules are permanent and education standards can be improved by following rules (Bheloh et al, 2011). Mpofu, (2007), points out that this model is detested by many because of its oppressive nature which demoralizes the teacher.

2.4.1.2 Neo-scientific Model

This marked the re-emergence of scientific model of supervision and occurred during the 1950s and 1960s. After pursuing democratic supervision between 1920 up to 1950s, the education reverted to neo-scientific model (Minnear-Peplinski, 2009). This model is a result of the criticism of democratic supervision (Mpofu, 2007). However, neo-scientific model is different from the first scientific phase in that the objective evaluation of teachers expanded to take into account more of the elements that led to student learning and achievement in the second scientific phase of supervision (neo-scientific model). Sergiovanni and Starrat (1983) in Mpofu (2007) state that this model emphasizes the task dimension concern for highly specified performance objectives. This can be achieved at the expense of the human element. Code words in the model are teachers' competency, performance objectives and cost benefit analysis. In this model, impersonal technical or rational control mechanisms substitute the face to face close supervision. This image is too scientific and relies heavily on externally imposed authority and thus it is unfavourable to teachers (Mpofu, 2007).

2.5.0 Democratic Supervision Models

2.5.1 Democratic Interaction Approach

Ogusanya M.(Course Module: EDU 810) points out that the scientific management approach to supervision had little regard for the feelings, attitudes, emotions and morale of the teachers.

Hence the development of person oriented (democratic) supervision. The origins of democratic supervision date back to the democratic administration of the 1930's. This model is also known as human relations image of supervision (Mpofu, 2007) or human relations phase (Tracy and Mac Naughton, 1993 in Minnear-Peplinski, 2009). Snow-Gerrono (2008) asserts that this was a direct response to the hierarchical power structure advocated by the scientific management model of supervision. Mpofu (2007) states that the most important issue in this model is satisfaction of teachers as human beings, in this way it would be quite easy to lead and control them during the supervisory programme. In other words, teachers are made to feel happy and comfortable. However, this model has been criticized for being too permissive and focusing more on winning friends than the improvement of instruction (Mpofu, 2007).

Second Wave Human Relations Phase

Minnear-Peplinski (2009) alludes to the fact in the 1970s, there was a renewal in the human relation phase which Tracy and Mac Naughton (1993) in Minnear-Peplinski (2009) termed as the second wave human relations phase. Supervisors developed evaluative methods based on complex observation systems and they used objectives to measure teacher and student outcomes. As a result of the renewed interest in democratic supervision, several other models of supervision were developed. Sullivan (2004) points out that these other models and conceptions of supervision emerged in an attempt to extend democratic methods and to disassociate from bureaucratic and inspectional supervision. Clinical, developmental and transformational supervision among other models had a common goal in that they emerged to counter the effects of supervision's bureaucratic legacy (Sullivan, 2004). In the late 1960s and early 1970s publication by Cogan(1973) and Goldhammer (1963) introduced clinical supervision further spurring this reappearance of the human relations phase (Sullivan, 2004).

2.5.2 Clinical Supervision

According to Snow-Gerrono (2008), by 1970's clinical supervision emerged from the tensions with scientific, democratic and social efficiency movements. Cogan and Goldhammer are credited for the birth of clinical supervision (Snow-Gerrono, 2008). However, Sullivan (2004) highlights the controversy that surrounds the origin of clinical supervision. She says that most researchers identify Morris Cogan (1973) as progenitor of clinical supervision, although Pajak

(1989) credits Hill (1968) with incorporating a “lesser known version of the conference, observation, post-conference cycle of supervision. Tanner and Tanner (1987) acknowledging Cogan’s influence in developing the theory of clinical supervision, attributed the idea to Conant in 1936 (Sullivan, 2004).

Mpofu (2007) defines clinical supervision as face to face contact with teachers with the double intention of improving instruction in the classroom and of improving professional growth which is a form of staff development. Clinical supervision is conducted in a normal setting of classroom and involves the gathering data from direct teaching of actual teaching-learning events and condition. Clinical supervision demands utmost planning on the part of supervisor and supervisee (Behloh et al, 2011).

Pajak (2003) recognizes four families of clinical supervision namely: original clinical models, artistic/humanistic models, technical/didactic models, and developmental/reflective models. The original clinical models emphasize relationships, cooperative discovery, and development of teaching styles. On the other hand, artistic models stress on interpersonal relationships, intuition, artistry and idiosyncrasy. Technical models emphasize techniques of observation and feedback that reinforce conforming behaviours. Lastly, developmental models stress on teacher reflection which fosters growth (Pajak, 2003).

Atchade (2006) asserts that usually collaborative clinical supervision follows a cycle. One may use a three staged cycle (Glickman, Gordon, and Ross, 1995), five staged cycle (Reavis, 1976) or Cogan’s eight-phased cycle (Atchade, 2006). He recommends that any cycle of collaborative clinical supervision should be systematically followed; however, the supervisor may find it necessary to introduce or omit stages according to a particular teacher’s needs, experiences, self-growth, motivation and amount of time available to him (Atchade, 2006).

Clinical supervision involves three basic steps: pre-observation/planning conference, the observation and post-conference (Glickman, Gordon and Ross, 1995). On the other hand, Fritz and Miller (2003) recognize five major steps in clinical supervision with analysis/strategic stage and post conference analysis as additions to the aforementioned steps. The planning conference is designed to inform the instructional supervisor of the objectives for the lesson. The teacher prepares a detailed lesson plan for the instructional supervisor to critique and provide a basis for

suggestions. During the classroom/ data collection step, the instructional supervisor observes the teacher teaching the lesson outlined in the lesson plan. The supervisor should use an observation instrument to collect data on the lesson being taught. This procedure provides written information for the teacher in the post observation conference (Behlol et al., 2011; Fritz and Miller, 2003). Fritz and Miller (2003) argue that the analysis stage is the core of clinical supervision; the instructional supervisor conceptualizes what was observed in the classroom and converts the analysis into readable data for the teacher. The post-observation conference allows the instructional supervisor to dialogue with the teacher on the observed lesson and allows the teacher to give input on the lesson (Reavis, 1976). In addition, the instructional supervisor and the teacher work together to establish goals to be met at the next observation date (Behloh et al., 2011; Fritz and Miller, 2003). Fritz and Miller (2003) suggest that post conference analysis is primarily for the instructional supervisor, who must analyze of the best supervisory practices with the teacher. This analysis provides a reflection exercise to help the instructional supervisor to improve the next supervisory conference.

According to Goldhammer, Anderson, and Krajewski (1980), a variety of specific techniques are used in observing a lesson in clinical supervision. Such techniques include: selective verbatim, verbal flow, generic observation and question-response patterns. In selective verbatim, the supervisor records exactly what is being said, depending on the type of verbal behaviour to be collected. When using verbal flow technique, the supervisor records who is talking to whom. Verbal flow is one means of identifying how classroom procedures inhibit, encourage or allow students to participate in classroom interaction (Goldhammer, Anderson, and Krajewski, 1980). Glickman, Gordon and Ross (1995) allude to the fact that in generic observation a standard evaluation form is used. The supervisor makes anecdotal notes and comments on the class or class as a whole. Finally, in question-response patterns, the supervisor uses chart to record nature of student and teacher responses to generated questions (Glickman, Gordon and Ross, 1995).

Behloh et al (2011) stresses that clinical supervision is beneficial in that it provides objective feedback on instruction, assists teachers in developing strategy to promote learning; motivates the students and manages the classroom, and helps teachers to develop patience attitude towards continuous professional development. However, (Atchade, 2006) states that the problem with this is that there may be insufficient time such that the supervisor might have problems in getting

to know the teacher's behaviour very well. Also, the supervisor might have problems in protecting the teacher's dignity when dealing with the teacher's inner self and outer self (Atchade, 2006). Nonetheless, this model is very effective, especially for beginner teachers (Behloh et al., 2011).

Other Democratic Models of Supervision

Throughout the 1980s, educators continued to consider alternative methods of supervision to bureaucratic supervision and included developmental supervision, peer supervision and cognitive coaching (Snow-Gerrono, 2008; Sullivan, 2004).

2.5.3 Developmental Supervision

Glickman (2001), a proponent of developmental supervision (as cited in Fritz and Miller, 2003), defines developmental supervision as "the match of supervisory approach with teachers or group of teachers' developmental levels, expertise, and commitment. Peplinski (2009) states that Glickman's developmental supervision model is based on Goldhammer's clinical supervision, but Glickman focuses on teacher's cognitive development as facilitated by the supervisor. Glickman and Gordon (1987) explain that developmental supervision is based on three propositions. First, because of varied personal background and experiences, teachers operate at different levels of professional development. They vary in the way they view and relate to themselves, students and others. Teachers also differ in their ability to analyze instructional problems, to use a repertoire of problem-solving strategies and match appropriate strategies to particular situations. Furthermore, there are variations within the same teacher depending on the particular instructional topic or work events. Second, since teachers operate at different levels of thought, abilities and effectiveness, they need to be supervised in different ways. Teachers at lower developmental levels need less structure and a more active role in decision making. The third proposition is that the long-range goal of supervision should be to increase every teacher's and every faculty's ability to grow towards higher stages of thought. More reflective, self-directed teachers will be able to solve their own instructional problems and meet their students' educational needs (Glickman and Gordon, 1987).

Fritz and Miller (2003) state that supervisors in developmental supervision give three types of assistance: directive, collaborative and non- directive assistance. Slick (2000) identifies these

three types of assistance rendered to the teacher in developmental supervision as “styles of developmental supervision”. Thus, there is directive style, nondirective style and collaborative style of developmental supervision. Teachers who have low conceptual thinking, expertise and commitment to their teaching will be matched with directive assistance. Teachers at earliest stages of development often have problems making decisions and defining problems. Directive supervision places the supervisor as the expert in charge of working goals for the teacher. Teachers at moderate levels of abstract thinking, expertise, and commitment are best matched with collaborative assistance. With this type of assistance, the instructional supervisor and the teacher establish goals, identify how they will be achieved and as a team notes when the achievement should be noticed. The teachers who think abstractly and demonstrate high expertise and commitment to teaching are best matched with nondirective assistance. Nondirective assistance allows the teacher to be in control of how and when the goals will be achieved. The instructional supervisor is still involved, but takes a more passive role in the supervisory process. The behaviour of the instructional supervisor in this role include: listening, reflecting, clarifying, encouraging and problem solving (Slick, 2000)

2.5.4 Mentoring

According to Sullivan and Glanz (2000), mentoring is a process that facilitates instructional improvement wherein an experienced educator agrees to provide assistance, support, and recommendations to another staff member or faculty members. The mentor can work with a novice or less experienced teacher in a collaborative, and judgemental manner; and deliberate on ways instruction in the classroom may be improved, or the member can share expertise in specific area with other educators. Mentors are not judges or critics, but facilitators of instructional improvement. All interactions and recommendations between the mentor and faculty members are confidential (Sullivan and Glanz, 2000).

2.5.5 Peer Coaching

Sullivan and Glanz (2000) point out that peer coaching is an umbrella term for many different configurations of teachers-helping-teachers that have emerged since the 1980s. Some other terms often used interchangeably with peer coaching include peer assistance, collegial coaching, technical coaching, cognitive coaching and peer supervision. Most of these models pertain to

variations of peer-to-peer assistance of equals and do not involve evaluation (Sullivan and Glanz, 2000).

When two teachers observe each other, the one teaching is the “coach” and the one observing is the coached. Through the ongoing discussion of teaching and learning, curriculum development and implementation, peer coaching can become the heart of professional development. It encompasses all of the skills essential for supervisory leadership in the 21st century: collaborative relationships, participatory decision making, reflective listening and practice, and teacher self-direction- with the goal of expressed goal of developing autonomous professionals (Sullivan, and Glanz, 2000).

2.5.6 Action Research

Action research is a type of applied research that has re-emerged as popular way of involving educators in reflective activities about their work (Sullivan and Glanz, 2000). Minnear-Peplinski (2009) points out that action research is an extension of coaching and mentoring methods. Sullivan and Glanz (2000), define action research as an ongoing process of reflection that involves four basic steps: selecting focus, collecting data, analysis and interpreting data, and taking data. On the other hand, according to Zepeda (2007) in Minnear-Peplinski (2009), action research refers to groups of teachers working together to resolve problems or improve systems in schools by doing research and discussing results. Minnear-Peplinski (2009) traces the roots of action research to John Dewey. Sullivan and Glanz (2000) emphasize that action research, if properly used, can have immeasurable benefits, such as creating a systemwide mindset for school improvement and promoting reflection and self-improvement, among many others.

2.6.0 Supervision Models According to Grauwe and Carron

Grauwe and Carron (2008) identify four categories of supervision models namely: classical model, central control model, close-to-school support model and school-site model.

2.6.1 Classical Model

Classical model is called as such because it maintains the original roles of supervision which were to control and provide support in pedagogical and administrative areas. It came about as a result of adaptation of the supervision service to the expansion of the education system in line

with the deconcentration of administration that accompanied it. In order to undertake this ambitious mission, supervisors find themselves all the echelons of administration at district level, where, in general they exercise control over primary schools and provide support to teachers; at regional level, where they have the same tasks but in secondary schools; and at central level, where their role might include an evaluation of the education system, as done by General Inspectors in France. Classical Model has been criticised for the discrepancy between the very demanding nature of school supervision and scarce resources attributed to it; and its complex bureaucratic structure. Besides, the “classical” supervision is ineffective since it tends to focus on two almost contradictory tasks (control and support). It is also criticised because it tends to try to do too many things and because the administration works for its interest own rather those of its customers (Grauwe and Carron, 2008).

2.6.2 Central Control Model

According to Grauwe and Carron (2008), the criticisms made against Classic Model led to the development of the Central Control Model which is based on three convictions. First, supervision should concentrate on one task-control. Secondly, the heavy bureaucracy that characterises the classical model is not only expensive; it also prevents it from functioning effectively. Lastly, central control model holds the view that external supervision cannot on its own lead to school improvement. This is the responsibility of the actors at school level (the principal, the teachers, the board, the parent association). Grauwe and Carron (2008) point out that the role of supervision in this model is to inspect each school from time to time and to publish a public report. They state that the structure of this model reflects its role: central control and few, if any supervisory actors at lower levels, while support is made available through private providers. This model exists in its most pure form in several Anglo-Saxon countries particularly England and Wales, and New Zealand (Grauwe and Carron, 2008).

2.6.3 Close-to-School Support Model

The third supervision model is the close-to-school support model which distances from the tendency of the two models to consider schools as similar units. Instead, it takes into consideration the fact that schools do have different characteristics and needs. In this model, the core role of the supervision service is to assist the weakest school by offering them advice and

guidance on how to improve. To enable supervisors to make regular visits, most are based as close to the schools as possible, while central and provincial officers no longer visit schools, but are in charge respectively of policy-formulation and training. To avoid supervisors spending too much time on administration, a specific cadre of administration controllers may be created. And to ensure that they focus on the schools most in need of their support, a database identifies a fairly limited number of schools with which each supervisor has to work. The purest example of this model was developed in Chile, after the end of the Pinochet regime, when a new democratic government came in power. Supervision visits, in this model, are an important monitoring tool (Grauwe and Carron, 2008).

2.6.4 School-Site Supervision Model

The fourth and last model, according to Grauwe and Carron (2008), is the school-site supervision model in which there is non-existence of external supervision since the few countries having this model might have either abolished it or might have had never such a service. Such a model is present in countries characterised by great homogeneity, a society with few disparities, well motivated teachers, public trust in their professionalism, and strong parental interest in education. In such an environment, the teachers and the local community might appear the best monitors of quality and functioning of the school. These two groups are sufficiently close to the classroom to have a direct impact on the teaching process. The conviction exists, moreover, that the teaching staff have the skills and professional conscience to participate in self- and in peer-evaluation without having to be supervised from outside and that the local community is willing and competent to exercise some control over the school. Moreover, because of the low level of economic disparities and because of the cultural and social homogeneity, there is little need for strong central intervention, either to address those disparities or to ensure the respect of national norms, including the curriculum. The self-evaluation can be very informal, without much structure or organization, relying on the individual initiative of the teachers; or it can be the responsibility of a specific structure such as a school governing board, which can be in charge of one or a few schools. While there is no external supervision, there are central-like tools to monitor the schools, such as examination and test results and indicator systems. Countries where this model exists are also characterised by a fairly high level of school autonomy. These include:

Scandinavian countries such as Finland but also some states in the USA and Canada and some cantons in Switzerland (Grauwe and Carron, 2008).

2.7 Principles of Instructional Supervision

Ogusanya (Course Module: EDU 810) attests to the fact that there are a number of general principles, which guide the practice of supervision. The principles can be used to observe, analyze, explain and evaluate supervisory practices. They are as follows:

- All teachers have the right and the need for supervision.
- Supervision should be regularly conducted to meet the individual needs of the teachers and other personnel.
- Supervision should help to clarify educational objectives and goals for the principal and the teacher.
- Supervision should help improve attitudes and relationship of all school personnel in order to facilitate the realization of the school goals and objectives.
- Supervision should help to interpret government policies.
- Supervision must be adequately provided for in the school budget
- Supervision from within and outside the school should complement each other and are both necessary.
- Supervision is a dynamic and cooperative enterprise in the school system.
- Supervision should supply teachers the latest research findings on education relevant to their teaching. The ultimate goal of supervision is to achieve an improvement in the quality of learning by learners.
- There should be short-term, medium-term and long term planning for supervision.

On the other hand, Onasanya (2011) identifies seven basic principles to help ensure the effectiveness of supervisory systems. These principles are comprehensive and include:

- A healing atmosphere: the school and supervisory environment should be rendered free of tension and emotional stress. It should be an atmosphere that provides incentives for outstanding work.
- Staff orientation: the quality and quantity of the work of the work must be specified in clear terms to staff during their orientation. The staff must be made to understand what is and what is not to be expected of them. This orientation should include materials that specify how and where to get the information and materials that will help them perform their work well.
- Guidance and staff training: staff should be offered any needed guidance, including how to carry out their assignment. Work standards should be set by supervisors and information on these standards should be provided in written form to all staff for the purposes of accountability. Schools must regularly arrange and participate in staff training and development to ensure that new techniques and approaches to education are always being introduced and understood.
- Immediate recognition of good work: good work should be recognised. The acknowledgement of good work done must be immediate and must be made in a public way so as to serve as incentive to others. Incentives such as public recognition and recommendation for promotion improve performances.
- Constructive criticism: substandard work should be constructively criticized. Positive and helpful advice and support should be offered to offending staff. Unlike recognition of good work, such constructive criticisms should be presented in private and should always be free of bias and/or prejudice.
- Opportunity for improvement: staff should be given opportunities to demonstrate their skills and ambitions. They should be encouraged, where appropriate, to take part in making decisions that will affect their schools and students. The type of empowerment or engagement will motivate staff to work harder and to take ownership over their classes and tasks.

- Motivation and encouragement: staff should be motivated and encouraged to increase their productivity. They should be encouraged to improve their abilities and to achieve organizational goal.

2.8 Qualities of an Effective Instructional Supervisor

Ekundayo, Oyerinde, and Kolawole (2013) describe a supervisor as any certified individual assigned with the responsibility for the direction and guidance of the work of teaching staff members. The individuals who function in supervisory position in the schools, who provide leadership to teachers and have the primary responsibility of working with teachers to increase the quality of student learning through improved instruction, are referred to as instructional supervisors, and may include head teachers, deputy head teachers, departmental heads, and master teachers (Wanzare, 2013). Wanzare (2013) identifies this type of supervision as internal supervision or school-based supervision. This is in contrast with external supervision conducted by external supervisors. Grauwe and Carron (2007) state the work of external supervision is that which done by officials such as inspectors, supervisors, advisors, coordinators, facilitators and many located out of school, at local , regional, or central levels. The common characteristics of all these officers are that: their explicit role is to control and support; they are located outside the school; and regular visits are an essential part of their mandate (Grauwe and Carron, 2007).

According to South Australian Government (2007), good supervisors usually come from a combination of different factors which include: personal qualities and attributes, personal knowledge and technical skills, experience and specific training in the role. This section explains these factors.

An effective supervisor is one who possesses subject and pedagogical knowledge. What this means is that as a supervisor one needs to be well versed in specific subject taught in schools as well as must have a teaching background. Supervision needs to be carried out by competent personnel so as to have a positive impact on the teaching and learning process. Munemo and Tom (2013) point out that effectiveness of supervision is dependent on the possession of the subject and pedagogical knowledge and skills in the supervisor. Such a supervisor is in a better position to influence the development of the concepts of the lesson preparation and presentation as well as sharpening problem-solving techniques in the supervisees (Munemo and Tom, 2013)

Supervision needs to be conducted by a person who has the necessary personal attributes and qualities for the exercise. An effective supervisor is one who is able to; to observe and reflect on practice; give constructive feedback; identify alternatives; manage time; motivate and teach (Ghapanchil, Baradan, n.d)

Instructional supervisors need to be experienced. Appropriate personal qualities, technical know-how, and training all help people, newly promoted into supervisory role-but “hands on” experience is still critical component of developing a good supervisor (South Australian Government, 2007). Before assuming the role of supervisor, one needs to be inducted by experienced supervisors. This must be done to enable the new supervisor gain experience so as to be able to handle supervisory matters decisively.

Giwa (1993) argues that there are certain characteristics that must be exhibited by the supervisor. These are as follows:

- Supervisors must give technical and professional advice to the supervisee. The advice given must not be forced upon the supervisee but be explained explicitly to them. The improvement of the professional growth of teachers must be the preoccupation of the supervisors.
- The supervisors must speak or advise in clear language. They should communicate in languages understandable and clear to the supervisees.
- There should be a relationship between supervisory activities and administrative-cum-teaching activities. Supervisors should not see themselves as administrators far removed from teaching and learning activities in the schools.
- They should employ participative decision making approach to supervision. This is with the intention of bringing closer the supervising agencies with the schools.

Enaigbe (2009) identifies eight major groups of skills for the instructional supervisor:

- Pedagogical skills-which include mastery of subject matter, teaching methods, improvisation, presentation of content, preparation of lesson notes and units.

- Evaluation skills-which include questioning, continuous assessment and examination skills.
- Disciplinary skills-that include class control, punishment, use of roles and regulations and maintenance of order.
- Motivational skills-which are issues bordering on rewards and reinforcement are emphasized.
- Reportorial skills-that involve documentation of report card, class register, log book, and attendance book
- Managerial skills- are skills on time management, good use of teaching aids, difficult situation and student behaviour.
- Interactive skills- which encompass creation of rapport, teachers' personality and general characteristics and cooperation.
- Analytical skills- include possession of mathematical ability, statistical computation, and interpretation of data.

2.9 Role of Instructional Supervision

Generally, supervision is regarded as an important tool in maintaining, and improving quality of education hence it has received wide support internationally (Lillis, 1992). Marshall (2005) points out that the theory of action behind supervision and evaluation is that they will improve teachers' effectiveness and therefore boost student achievement. However, he challenges that in as much as this assumption seems logical, conventional supervision is not an effective strategy for improving teaching and learning for a number of reasons. First, supervisors evaluate only a tiny amount of teaching. Besides, the isolated lessons observed, give an incomplete picture of instruction. Marshall (2005) further argues conventional supervision reinforces teacher isolation. Grauwe (1997) asserts that effectiveness of supervision is dependent on conditions of other factors such school infrastructure, availability of textbooks and teaching equipment.

Despite the criticisms, supervision continues to be valued as an important for maintenance and improvement of quality of education hence it plays a number of functions in the education

system. Grauwe and Carron (2007) differentiate what he calls “core functions” and other functions”. According to them, supervision staff is, generally, expected to play three different yet complementary core functions which are: control, support and advice, and liaison. The control function that relates to the original meaning of the word “inspection”, is at the heart of compliance monitoring. Put another way, a supervisor ensures that the teacher comply with the laws and regulations established by the government to direct the education sector. Still today, in many countries control is considered to be the essential function of supervisors by central ministries. Grauwe and Carron (2007) cite Spain as an example where the first function of the Inspectorate Service is to ensure that laws, regulations and any other legal dispositions of the educational administration are fulfilled in schools. Apart from that, supervisors provide advice and support to teachers. In most instances, support takes the form of advice given to teachers and head teachers during supervision visits, which cover both administrative and pedagogical issues. Other modalities of support include demonstration lessons, in-service programmes and organization of peer-learning. The final function of supervision stated by Grauwe and Carron (2007) is that supervisors are the main liaison agents between the top of the education system, where norms and rules are, and the schools, where education really takes place. In fact, Lillis (1992) identifies supervisors as the “eyes” and “ears” of the education system. They constitute a conduit between the administration at the central level entrusted with formulating education policies and those actors at the local level charged with implementing “official” policy decisions (Lillis, 1992). The liaison role is, however, not only vertical; increasingly, supervisors are entrusted with horizontal relations and have a privileged role play in identifying and spreading new ideas and good practices between schools (Grauwe and Carron, 2007).

Another rationale for instructional supervision is that supervisors undertake, as agents of educational administration, routine administrative tasks and role. These administrative duties involve routinely monitoring the maintainance of the supply of resources, monitoring their effective use, determining the supply and availability of teachers and career growth. In other words, they monitor not only quality control but also the supply and utilisation of fiscal and material resources and determine the career progression of teachers (Lillis, 1992).

Hismanoglu and Hismanoglu (2010) points out that instructional supervision tends to support teachers in the diagnosis of the difficulties in the teaching process and in the making of strategies

for overcoming them. According to Mpofu (2007), supervision of instruction is necessary in order to aid the teacher in coping with complexities and difficulties of teaching problems. She cites Zimbabwe as an example where the need for supervision arose in high schools because of an increase in the number of students. This brought so many challenges with regards to methodology and material of instruction for widely different pupils. Thus supervisors could assist the teachers by coming with the strategies of handling big classes and soliciting of materials of instruction.

Supervision encourages teachers to prepare themselves for lessons. In a study on the impact of supervision in Sri Lanka, it was found that supervision encourages better planning and preparation of teachers. Since the master teachers examined term notes, weekly notes and students' exercise books, the teachers tended to keep such records systematically (Grauwe and Carron, 2007).

In addition to that, supervision facilitates professional development of teachers. In other words, every now and then teachers need to be kept abreast with the latest knowledge in their respective subjects hence the need for them to be enlightened on curriculum changes, methodologies and every that is of paramount significance to their job. Hismanoglu and Hismanoglu (2010) argue that teachers cannot ignore professional growth as it raises the education standards which revolve around the issue of providing sufficient and equal opportunities for everybody. Mpofu (2007) concurs that supervision helps the teacher: to see real ends of education; to provide them with specific skills in lesson delivery; and to help them develop positive attitude about professional development. Ghapanchil and Baradan (n.d) concludes that almost all teachers need assistance and support during their journey from colleagues or supervisors to enhance their own development.

Supervision is also vital to student teachers in that it assists them to settle in their roles and responsibilities and helps them to maintain a professional attitude towards teaching and school community. It is also used to assess student teachers' performance and their readiness for the profession (NIE Handbook). Bashir (2012) argues that if teacher trainees embark on continuous practice with regular supervision, there is the possibility of putting an enhanced performance. Thus supervision helps the novice teachers to polish their skills since supervisors make recommendations in areas in which improvement is needed.

Finally, Lillis (1992) points out that supervisors actually do assist in the improvement of the quality of performance of the pupils. By systematically monitoring the instructional processes in schools, by guiding teachers to achieve higher standards of teaching, and by evaluating objectively the teaching-learning processes, supervisors help in maintaining as well as upgrading performance standards. They impact through teachers rather than directly upon pupils. Charles et al. (2012) underscores the significance of instructional supervision in lesson planning, preparation of lesson notes, inspection of records of work covered, schemes of work, students' progress reports, lesson attendance, utility of lesson prescribed, giving assignments and corrections and giving reports at the end of week as a teacher on duty have all been argued to contribute to better performance of students in examinations.

Teachers' Perceptions of Instructional Supervision

In the educational circles, most authors see instructional supervision as a process to improve the learning opportunities for students (Oyewole and Ehinola, 2014; Ekundayo, Oyerinde, and Kolawole, 2013). Ekundayo, Oyerinde and Kolawole (2013) attest to the fact that evidence from various studies shows that instructional supervision has always been regarded as an essential and integral part of school administration and basically geared towards the improvement of all factors in teaching and learning.

The emphasis on the benefits brought by supervision does not mean that supervision is always viewed positively by all teachers. According to Oigusanya (Course Module: EDU 810), supervision seems to mean different things to different people. Hence to a teacher or a subordinate being supervised, supervision may mean a challenge to his personality; to another teacher, supervision may mean an avenue for personal recognition; and to a principal it may mean an inquisition.

Sharma et al. (2011) point out that some teachers may regard supervision as either a school improvement tool or a tool for suppressing teachers. Those who perceive supervision as an improvement tool are even willing to indulge in self-supervision since it would improve their attitudes, classroom management and students' achievement. On the other hand, Sharma et al. (2011) cite the research carried by Blumberg (1980) which unearthed teachers' negative perceptions towards supervision with the teachers believing that supervisors were not of any

valuable assistance. Glickman (1980) argues that teachers of the same school can have different perceptions of what is useful to them. A supervisor's plan for instructional improvement might be a delight to one teacher and a bore to another. Teachers' attitudes towards instructional supervision determine the effectiveness of the process. Mpofu (2007) says that the improvement of teaching-learning process is dependent upon teachers' attitudes towards supervision. Unless teachers perceive supervision as a process of promoting professional growth and student learning, the supervision will not have the desired effect.

So as already highlighted above, teachers do hold two views about instructional supervision with some viewing it as necessary while others disdain it. There are a number of factors that shape teachers' perceptions of instructional supervision. Firstly, attention is given to the factors that result in the negative perceptions of supervision among teachers which include: attitudes of supervisors, association with politics, lack of professionalism amongst supervisors, poor communication skills of supervisors, the frequency of supervision visits, and its linkage to job security and promotion.

One of the core functions of supervisors is to control what happens in schools (Grauwe and Carron, 2007). This implies that they enforce regulations and standards set by central ministries. In other words, they make sure that teachers comply with the rules and regulations of the ministry of education. As a result, teachers complain about supervisors for being authoritarian, faultfinding and bureaucratic and moreover, biased, subjective and arbitrary (Grauwe and Carron, 2007). They further claim that almost all teachers in Bangladesh expressed a feeling that supervisors suffer from an attitude "of a controller and superior officer". According to the teachers, supervisors show little patience and respect for the teachers, even in the presence of learners. Their visits to schools for that reason lead to stress among teachers, rather than helping them to develop their skills (Grauwe and Carron, 2007).

Lillis (1992) states that supervisors are supposed to act as quality controllers in which they are expected to adjudicate on the promotion, upgrading, and career opportunities for teachers. The use of supervision for promotion and dismissal of teachers generate negative views of the process. In some countries such as Belgium, evaluation of teachers is an integral part of promotion (Grauwe and Carron, 2007) while in other countries such as the United States of America, teachers have phobia for supervision because of the possibility of losing their jobs

depending on their supervision reports. In a study carried out by Adewale (2014) titled “School Inspection or, and Supervision Effects in Public Secondary Schools in Ogun State, Nigeria”, it was regrettably discovered that most supervisors used their office title to create fear in the minds of teachers through their actions. As a consequence, the teachers had negative views about supervision. According to Grauwe and Carron (2007), teachers feel that supervision work should be more developmental and less control-oriented.

Carron and Grauwe (1997) assert that in some countries instructional supervision has been a political and politicised issue. In this case, supervisors are seen as part of authoritarian regimes. For example, in South Africa, the school was one of the battlefields of the anti-apartheid struggle. Inspectors and more surprisingly, subject advisors were seen as instruments of control and oppression. At the end of 1980s, through teachers’ defiance campaign, inspectors and subject advisors were refused access to schools and teachers, and teachers refused any form of evaluation of their schools’ work (Carron and Grauwe, 1997). Since supervisors have been associated with the politics practised in a country, their names have also been changing. Grauwe and Carron (2007) allude to the fact during the 1970s, the word “inspector” or even “supervisor” had a negative connotation and even became a taboo term in some countries. Inspection was seen as an old fashioned non-democratic institution and a few countries got rid not only of the terminology, but also of the supervision service itself (Grauwe and Grauwe, 2007).

However, other studies have revealed teachers’ satisfaction with supervision as an improvement tool of quality education. For instance, in a study on “Instructional Supervision Perceptions of Canadian and Ukrainian Beginning High-school teachers”, Kutsyuruba (2003) found out both Canadian and Ukrainian teachers were convinced of the need for instructional supervision. The mean score was 4.27 for the Ukrainian and Canadian respondents. The level of agreement with the statement that every teacher can benefit from was also high, 4.41 and 4.12 for the Canadian and Ukrainian teachers respectively. The overwhelming support for supervision in these countries can be attributed to the wide range of supervisory choices available to the beginning teachers. The teachers perceived supervision as important for a number of reasons. Some of the teachers stated that supervision is very important because it improves instruction and helps to make lessons more interesting. Others were of the view that supervision helps teachers to reach

their potential. Also, it was noted that when teachers are supervised, they work and prepare for classes better than when they are not supervised (Kutsyuruba, 2003).

A study conducted by Poirer (2009) from the same university as Kutsyuruba, University of Saskatchewan, found a contrary perspective of instructional supervision by teachers. Poirer's (2009) research findings revealed that the overall perspective of the theme of supervision was that it was evaluative in nature. Teachers perceived supervision as the way for the central office or the principal to see how effective teachers were in the classroom. Even though the participants highlighted teacher growth as one of the objectives of supervision, they felt that a number of barriers emerged to interfere with the growth of teachers.

A study titled "Supervisory Practices as perceived by Teachers and Supervisors in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia" carried out by Abdulkareem (2001) revealed differences in perceptions between supervisors and teachers. The results of his study indicated that, in general, supervisors perceive the supervisory practices more positively than teachers. Put another way, supervisors' perceptions of both actual and preferred supervisory practices are higher than the teachers'. The mean for the supervisors' perceptions of the actual supervisory practices is 151.07, while the teachers' mean is 127.11.

A research carried out by Ngara, Ngwarai and Ngara (2013) revealed that student teachers appreciated instructional supervision. This study involved twenty students from three teacher training colleges in Masvingo Province who were doing teaching practice in secondary schools in Masvingo Town in Zimbabwe. All twenty prospective teachers viewed their supervision while on teaching practice (T.P) as beneficial in several ways. For instance, it was viewed as critical in affording close monitoring of student teachers, giving guidance on critical aspects of teaching boosting trainee confidence, motivating the trainee and lesson demonstration by members (Ngara, Ngwarai and Ngara, 2013)..

In their study that involved 42 Turkish Cypriots and 8 English-speaking teachers working in English Preparatory Schools in three universities in North Cyprus, Hismanoglu and Hismanoglu (2010) found that majority of teachers contended the positive effect of instructional supervision on developing their field. 89% of teachers believed that supervisors encourage the teachers to be

aware of the latest developments in the field. About 85.7% agreed about the positive impact of supervisors on teachers' professional development.

Uniqueness of this Study

As discussed above, studies on how teachers perceive instructional supervision have been conducted elsewhere but most of them focused on the secondary and tertiary education. For instance, Mpofu (2007) focused on the secondary school teachers in Zimbabwe. Apart from that, Hismanoglu and Hismanoglu (2010) concentrated on English lecturers at a Cypriot university. In contrast, this study focused on primary school teachers. The fewer studies done abroad on primary school teachers included the head teacher, who in Malawi's setting is entrusted with internal supervision and are more preoccupied with administrative duties than teaching. As such this research zeroed in on ordinary teachers who are the primary targets of instructional supervision by P.E.As and are the ones responsible for the teaching. Another study conducted by Albdulkareem (2001) in Saudi Arabia was discriminatory in nature as it left out female teachers. This research was inclusive as it involved both male and female teachers. Moreover, these studies were conducted abroad. That is to say, the researcher did not come across any study from Malawi that exclusively focused on teachers' perceptions in instructional supervision by P.E.As. Hence this research is a reflection of teachers' experiences and expectations in instructional supervision from Malawian context.

CHAPTER THREE

Research Methodology

3.0 Chapter Overview

This chapter outlines how the study was been carried out. In this section, the researcher describes the paradigm in which the research was conducted; explains the research design that was utilised; and outlines the research ethics that the researcher upheld.

3.1 Paradigm of the Study

The first feature that qualified this study as a qualitative one was its paradigm. Mack (2010) defines a paradigm as a loose collection of logically related assumptions, concepts or propositions that orient thinking and research. According to Chism et al. (2008), a paradigm influences the research design. The researcher strongly believes that this study was couched in the interpretive paradigm for two reasons. Firstly, an interpretivist research assumes that there are multiple constructed realities. That is, different people have different perceptions of reality their attribution of meaning to events (Higgs et al., 2009). Similarly, teachers' understanding of instructional supervision may vary. Only through dialogue can one be aware of the perceptions, feelings and attitudes of others, and interpret their meanings and intent. Dialogue entails conversation which is in line with qualitative research which assumes that a profound understanding of the world can be gained through conversation in natural settings (Anderson and Arsenault, 2005). That conversation was facilitated through semi-structured interviews which Chism et al. (2008) identifies as the most common type of qualitative interview. Besides interviews, the researcher utilised observations and document reviews data collection methods which are predominant in interpretive paradigm (Mertens, 2003).

Secondly, interpretive research makes use of small sized sample. Of all the teachers in Zomba District, the researcher only made use of those operating in three schools in Mponda Education Zone. Bartlett (2007) argues that interpretive studies tend to be small scale aiming for detail and understanding rather than statistical representativeness. This study involved 15 participants in personal semi-structured interviews.

3.2.0 Research Design

In the study's quest to understand teachers' perceptions on effectiveness of instructional supervision as undertaken by P.E.As, qualitative research design was appropriate. Therefore, the research was qualitative in form of case study so as to understand effectiveness of instructional supervision by P.E.As from those who are targeted by it, the teachers.

3.2.1 Qualitative Research

Since the study sought to investigate teachers' perceptions on the effectiveness of instructional supervision as undertaken by P.E.As, qualitative research design was appropriate since it helps to gain insight into people's feelings, desires, thoughts and experiences about something. As stated earlier the aim of this study was investigate teachers' perceptions on instructional supervision as conducted by P.E.As hence necessitating the use of qualitative research. Kothari (2004) points out that qualitative research aims at discovering underlying motives and desires of participants using in-depth interviews. He further argues that any attitude or opinion research, a research designed to find how people feel or what they think about a particular subject is qualitative in nature. Through qualitative research, we can analyze the various factors which motivate people to behave in a particular manner or dislike a particular thing. Cresswell (2007) underscores the need to use qualitative study when the researcher needs to hear stories and experiences of others to understand the complexity of an issue. Fischer (2006) defines qualitative research as a reflective, interpretive, and descriptive effort to describe and understand actual instances of human action and experience from the perspective of participants who are living through a particular situation. Qualitative researchers focus on the study of phenomena and on giving voice to the feelings and perceptions of the participants under study. This is based on the belief that knowledge is derived from social setting and that understanding social knowledge is a legitimate scientific process (Lodico, Spaulding and Voegtler, 2006).

Lodico, Spaulding and Voegtler (2006) identify a number of characteristics of qualitative research. The first feature of qualitative studies is that they are carried out in naturalistic setting. Secondly, qualitative researchers ask broad research questions designed to explore, interpret, or understand the social context. Not only that, participants in qualitative research are selected through non-random methods based on whether the individuals have information vital to the

questions being asked. Besides, qualitative data collection techniques involve observation and interviews that bring the researcher in close contact with the participants. In addition to that, the qualitative researcher is likely to take an interactive role where she or he gets to know the participants and the social context in which they live. Furthermore, hypotheses in qualitative research are formed after the researcher begins data collection and are modified throughout the study as new data are collected and analyzed. Finally, the qualitative study, reports data in narrative form (Lodico, Spaulding, and Voegtler, 2006)

3.2.2 Case Study

As stated earlier, this study is a qualitative research in the form of case study. Lodico et al. (2006) define a case study as a form of qualitative research that endeavours to discover meaning, to investigate a process and to gain insight into and in-depth understanding of an individual group or situation. As stated before, case study research strategy is used when investigating a process. Therefore, the first reason why the researcher used a case study was because it was supervisory process that was under investigation especially the opinions that teachers have about it. For example, it addressed questions such as what does instructional supervision mean to teachers? How is it being carried in the zone? By trying to find the meaning that the teachers attach to supervisory process, the researcher gained an insight and in-depth understanding which is characteristic of case study research strategy. By also trying to understand how it is done, the research was in line case study research strategy which is concerned with how things happen and why? (Anderson and Arsenault, 2005).

Case studies are carried out by many qualitative researchers, like in this study, for they have many merits. Firstly, case studies recognize the complexity and embeddedness of social truths. Not only may case studies form an archive of descriptive material sufficiently rich to admit subsequent reinterpretation but also they are a step to action. Besides, case studies present research or evaluation data in more publicly accessible form than other kinds of research report. This means that case study research reports can be easily read and understood by the public. Finally, case study research can be undertaken by a single researcher without needing a full research team (Cohen, Manion, and Morrison, 2005).

3.2.3 Target Population

This study was conducted in Mponda Education Zone in Zomba Urban Education district which had a teacher population of about 276. Zomba Urban is in the South East Education Division which also includes other four districts namely: Zomba Rural, Balaka, Machinga and Mangochi. Zomba Urban Education district has two big education zones namely Mponda Education Zone and Likangala Education Zone which are unofficially divided into six sub zones. There are sixteen public primary schools in the district, 8 in each zone with a total pupil enrolment of 14, 916. Mponda Education Zone occupies the northern half Zomba Urban Education district with its T.D.C right in the Central Business District of Zomba City. Since the researcher resides in Zomba City, Mponda Education Zone was appropriate choice as that implied easy access to the schools involved in the study.

3.2.4 Sample Size

Not every teacher in Mponda Education Zone was involved in this research. Therefore, the researcher only accommodated a few of them in the study to serve as a sample. Cohen, Manion, and Morrison (2005) refer to a sample as the subset of the total population from which the researcher acquires information representative of the total population. Since the study is qualitative in nature, its sample is small (Cohen, Manion, and Morrison, 2005). Willig (2008) attests to the fact qualitative research tends to work with relative small numbers of participants. This is due to the time-consuming and labour-intensive nature of qualitative data collection and analysis (Willig, 2008; Fisher, 2006). Saunders et al. (2009) recommend that for a research whose aim is to understand commonality with a fairly homogenous group, 12 in-depth interviews should suffice. In this case, the researcher involved fifteen qualified teachers in semi-structured interviews on one-on- one basis in order to determine participants' feelings about instructional supervision. From each school, five respondents took part in individual interviews in their respective schools. The participants of the study were mere teachers since they are ones mostly involved in classroom instruction. Instructional supervision aims at making teachers to be more competent and more efficient in classroom instruction (Onasanya, 2011).

In order to maintain their anonymity, the participants were assigned a letter and a figure for their identification. For instance, a participant from Zomba C.C.A.P is identified by the letter C together with a figure i.e C1, C2, C3, C4, and C5. Similarly, respondents from Zomba Police

Primary School are identified as P1, P2, P3, P4, and P5 as are participants from Matiya L.E.A who have been identified as M1, M2, M3, M4, and M5 in this study. The study only involved qualified teachers whose experience ranged from five to twenty three years.

Apart from the teachers, the researcher found it necessary to include the P.E.A of Mponda Education Zone so that she could shed more light on her duties whose detailed information proved tough to obtain from documented sources. She also provided the researcher with the teacher population. She is vastly experienced educator who served 30 years as a teacher but for four and half served as a P.E.A.

3.2.5 Sampling Procedure

The researcher utilised convenience sampling, an example of non-random sampling used in qualitative studies. Only teachers who were identified as being free during the interview period were included as participants. The researcher could not force a teacher out of a class for the interviews. Therefore, the researcher selected only the teachers that were available and were willing to participate so as to uphold the ethical principle of informed consent. Cohen, Manion, and Morrison. (2005) explain that in convenience sampling researchers select the nearest individuals to serve as respondents and continues that process until the required sample size has been obtained. By choosing the three primary schools in Mponda Education Zone, the researcher was in close contact with the respondents since he is based in that area. As convenience sample does not represent any group apart from itself, it does not seek to generalize about the wider population. A convenience sample may be the sampling strategy for a case study or a series of case studies (Cohen, Manion, and Morrison, 2005). The three primary schools involved in this study include: Zomba C.C.A.P, Zomba Police, and Matiya L.E.A.

3.2.6.0 Data Collection Procedure

Before data collection started for the research, the Mzuzu University sought the permission on behalf of the researcher through a letter addressed to the Zomba Urban District Education Manager requesting him to authorize the researcher to carry out research in the three primary schools. Upon arrival at the respective schools, the researcher provided the respondents with consent forms which they signed to show their willingness to participate in the research.

In order to collect data, the researcher used individualized/personal semi-structured interviews, observation method and document analysis as data collection tools which were appropriate for this case study research. Lodico, Spaulding and Voegtler (2006) consider gathering of data through multiple sources and perspectives as a key characteristic of the case study approach. They further argue that in case studies, no one qualitative method is used. Instead, multiple techniques including interviews, observations, and at times, the examination of documents and artifacts are employed. Willig (2008) and Cohen, Manion, and Morrison (2005) identify this tendency of utilising multiple data collection tools as triangulation. In fact, Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2006) also identify triangulation as multi-method approach.

On the other hand, Willig (2008) recommend triangulation as an ideal way of approaching case study research. Triangulation is advantageous in that it prevents researcher's bias or distortion of reality; and the more the methods contrast each other, the greater the researcher's confidence. Hence this research used the three data collection methods: personal semi-structured interviews, observation method and document analysis.

3.2.6.1 Semi-structured Interviews

One of the data collection methods used in this research were individual (one-to-one) semi-structured interviews. Kvale (1996) in Cohen, Manion, and Morrison (2005) defines an interview as an interchange of views between two or more people on a topic of mutual interest. On the otherhand, Lodico, Spaulding and Voegtler (2006) define an interview as a purposive conversation with a person or a group of persons.

As highlighted earlier, the researcher utilised individual semi-structured interviews. This implies that the researcher personally went into the field with a list of questions prepared in advance with the opportunity for probing further. Many qualitative interviews are conducted on one-on-one when the interviewer attempts to determine the participant's feelings, interpretation, or reaction to an event or a set of circumstances or life experiences. In one-on-one (individual) interviews the researcher lets participants express their thoughts in their own words (Lodico, Spaulding, and Voegtler, 2006; Cohen, Manion, and Morrison, 2005). In this study, the researcher interviewed fifteen teachers to whom open-ended questions were posed to enable them to express their opinions in unrestricted manner which is line with qualitative research. This augurs well with

Saunders et al. (2009) who assert that semi-structured interviews are most appropriate where questions are open-ended. An open-ended question allows participants to define and describe a situation or an event. It is used to encourage the interviewee to reveal attitudes or obtain facts (Saunders et al., 2009). Cohen et al. (2005) claim that open-ended questions are attractive for smaller scale research as in this case. Further, they put the responsibility for and ownership of the data much more firmly into the respondents' hands (Cohen et al). This goes on well with the purpose of the study which was to investigate teachers' perceptions on instructional supervision by P.E.As. Therefore, the researcher had no stake in findings except reporting results which reflected the desires and opinions of teachers which is in accordance with qualitative research.

3.2.6.2 Observation Method

Kothari (2004) claims that observation method is the most commonly used method of data collection especially in the studies relating to behavioural studies. Under observation method, the information is sought by the way of investigator's own direct observation without asking the respondents (Kothari, 2004). The researcher used this method to assess: teachers' self-esteem, cleanliness of classrooms and surroundings in general, as well as the dressing of teachers. As a complete observer, at no juncture did the researcher become a member of the teaching staff and participate in its activities (Lodico, Spaulding and Voegtle, 2006).

Kothari (2004) argues that observation method is significant in that it eliminates subjective bias. Secondly, the information observed relates only to what is currently happening. Lastly, this method is independent of respondents' willingness to respond. However, observation method is criticised for being expensive as well as providing very limited information (Kothari, 2004).

3.2.6.3 Document Analysis

Documents are another form of qualitative data collection tool. These may include documents that existed before the start of the study or those documents, such as journals, created after the study has begun as requested by the researcher. In this study, the researcher used a number of documents including: time books, log books, inspectional reports, supervision charts as well as lesson plan and schemes of work checklists. The researcher also made use of classroom charts, Malawi/IEQ Report, and Education Sector Implementation Plan II (2013/14-2017/18).

3.2.7 Validity

Validity can be defined as the extent to which research describes, measures or explores what it aims to describe, measure or explain (Willig, 2008). According to Marcyzk, Dematteo and Festinger (2005), validity refers to what the test or measurement strategy measures and how well it does so. Cohen, Manion, and Morrison (2005) claim that validity is the touchstone of all types of educational research. The qualitative methods to be used in this research namely, individual semi-structured interviews and focus groups, uphold the validity. They guarantee participant validation, ecological validity and concurrent validity of the research. This should not be a surprise as Willig (2008) alludes to fact that as a result of their flexibility and open-endedness, qualitative research methods provide the space for validity issues to be addressed.

Qualitative methodologies engage with concerns about validity in a number of ways. First, qualitative data collection techniques aim to ensure that participants are free to challenge and, if necessary, connect the researcher's assumptions about meanings investigated by research. Some qualitative researchers also obtain feedback on their study's findings from participants (participant validation). In this study, the researcher gave the respondents the opportunity of the challenging responses as recorded by the researcher. Second, much qualitative data collection take place in real-life settings such as work places or youth centres hence such studies have ecological validity. This research took place in schools which are the teachers' work place thereby ensuring ecological validity. Third, reflexivity ensures that the research process as a whole is scrutinized throughout and that the researcher continuously reviews his or her own role in the research. This discourages impositions of meaning by the researcher and this promotes validity. Lastly, the usage of the two data collection methods, known as triangulation, ensures concurrent validity. Concurrent validity can be achieved if data obtained in one instrument correlates simultaneously with data from another data collection tool (Willig, 2008).

3.2.8 Reliability

Reliability is essentially a synonym for consistency and replicability overtime, over instruments and over groups of respondents (Cohen, Manion, and Morrison, 2005) while to Marcyzk, Dematteo and Festinger (2005) reliability refers to the consistency of the measure. One way of controlling for reliability is to have a highly structured interview, the same format and sequence of words and questions for each respondent. To ensure reliability, the researcher used semi-structured interviews in which the same questions were put to respondents. Reliability can

further be enhanced by careful piloting of interview schedules. The interview guides used in this research were first piloted on a few teachers at a primary school in Chiradzulu district so that any inadequacies could be rectified (Cohen, Manion, and Morrison, 2005).

3.2.9.0 Data Analysis

According to Kothari (2004), the term “analysis” refers to the computation of certain measures along with search for patterns of relationships or differences that exist among data-groups. He opines that analysis of data in general involves a number of closely related operations which are performed with the purpose of summarizing the collected data and organizing these in such a manner that they answer the research questions.

Being a qualitative research, the study’s data analysis was unique in the sense that it occurred throughout the study and guided the ongoing process of data collection. Data collection and analysis in qualitative research are inductive process. This implied that numerous small pieces of data were collected and gradually combined or related to form broader, more general descriptions and conclusions (Lodico, Spaulding and Voegtler, 2006).

Lodico, Spaulding and Voegtler (2006) identify six steps of data analysis common to most qualitative studies which include: preparing and organizing the data, reviewing and exploring the data, coding data into categories, constructing descriptions of people, places and activities, building themes and testing hypotheses, and reporting and interpreting data. A case study, a form of qualitative research as this study is, also follows these steps. It must be noted that there may be some back-and-forth movement between the steps.

The first task of any qualitative researcher in data analysis is to make sure that data is in a form that can be easily analysed. To fulfil this task, the researcher took down notes as well as tape-recorded the participants as they were answering the questions. Then the researcher organized data according to the schools from which it was collected. After that, the data was reviewed in order to get the overall sense of what was in it. Following that, the researcher coded the data manually. Coding is the process of identifying different segments of the data that describe related phenomena and labelling these parts using broad category names. From these codes, the researcher built themes. Themes are typically “big ideas” that combine several codes in a way that allows the researcher to examine the foreshadowed questions guiding the research. Finally,

just as in most qualitative research, the researcher has reported the data narrative manner (Lodico, Spaulding and Voegtle, 2006).

3.3 Ethical Considerations

Willig (2008) states that case studies are concerned with the details of individual participant's life events. Hence the need for a researcher to obtain the respondents' informed consent and to guarantee them confidentiality and anonymity. All of these are fundamental concepts of research ethics. Cohen, Manion, and Morrison (2005) refer to ethics as a matter of principled sensitivity to the rights of others.

Informed consent is a fundamental concept which contributes to the bedrock of ethical procedures. Cohen, Manion, and Morrison (2005) define informed consent as the procedures in which individuals choose whether to participate in an investigation after being informed of facts that would likely to influence their decisions. According to Lodico, Spaulding and Voegtle (2006), informed consent implies that participants have been given about procedures and risks involved in the study and have been informed that their participation is voluntary and that they have the right to withdraw from the study without repercussions.

The principle of informed consent arises from the subject's right to freedom and self-determination. Consent thus protects and respects the right of self-determination and places some of the responsibility on the participant should anything go wrong in a research (Cohen, Manion, and Morrison, 2005). Before the research gets underway, the researcher needs to obtain voluntary informed consent from the participants (British Education Research Association, 2011). This researcher upheld this ethic by disseminating letters of consent to the respondents which they read and signed to demonstrate their willingness to participate in the research. In the letters, the researcher disclosed the purpose of the study to the respondents.

According to the British Education Research Association (BERA, 2011), a researcher must recognize the participants entitlement to privacy and must accord them their rights to confidentiality and anonymity. To uphold these rights, data collected was only used to meet the objectives of the research only. The participants were told how and why their personal will be stored and to what uses it will put and to whom it may be made available. At the same time, the researcher used a letter alongside a figure instead of the real names of the respondents and the

school to ensure that the participants and study area remain anonymous. Cohen, Manion, and Morrison (2005) argue that the essence of anonymity is that information provided by participants should in no way reveal their identity. They point out that anonymity can be achieved by asking participants to use alias of their own. Apart from that, names may be changed, places shifted and fictional events added to prevent acquaintances of subjects discovering their identity (Cohen, Manion, and Morrison, 2005). For instance, a participant from Zomba C.C.A.P is identified by the letter C together with a figure i.e C1, C2, C3, C4, and C5. Similarly, respondents from Zomba Police Primary School are identified as P1, P2, P3, P4, and P5 as are participants from Matiya L.E.A who have been identified as M1, M2, M3, M4, and M5 in this study. This was done to maintain their anonymity.

The researcher will respect participant's right to withdraw and shall at no time use coercions to persuade the participants to re-engage with the research work (Cohen, et al., 2005). They were made aware of their right to withdraw in the cover letters sent to their schools.

CHAPTER FOUR

Presentation of Research Data

4.0 Chapter Overview

This chapter presents the findings of the study on teachers' perceptions on the effectiveness of instructional supervision carried out by primary education advisors. First to be presented is the teachers' comprehension of the term "instructional supervision". Thereafter, it outlines how instructional supervision is conducted by P.E.As in Mponda Education Zone. After that the discussion focuses on the impact that instructional supervision has had on the careers of respective teachers involved in the study. The chapter winds up with the proposed alterations which the participants thought would improve instructional supervision.

4.1 Teachers' Understanding of the Term "Instructional Supervision"

The research first sought to appreciate the teachers' understanding of the term "instructional supervision". The research question was "how do the teachers understand the term instructional supervision?" In an attempt to address this question, the respondents came up with a variety of answers which the researcher has narrowed down into two categories. The majority of the teachers who participated in the study viewed instructional supervision as a form of evaluation. Evaluation can be regarded as an inspectoral view of instructional supervision. On the other hand, a single teacher equated instructional supervision to advisory services.

As explained above, the majority of the participants, fourteen to be exact, held the inspectoral view of instructional supervision. When asked to express their understanding of the term instructional supervision, the fourteen teachers were of the opinion that instructional supervision is evaluation as shown in the excerpts below:

"Instructional supervision refers to the observation of teaching according to government rules." (P4, 22/07/2015)

"Instructional supervision implies inspecting someone teaching and the school's surroundings." (C2, 21/07/2015)

"Instructional supervision is a process of finding out how teachers are performing their

their duties on the ground.” (M3, 23/07/2015)

However, only a single participant held the modern view of instructional supervision whose aim is to improve instruction. This kind of instructional supervision is neither evaluative nor judgemental but advisory in nature. According to P5, instructional supervision means advising teachers as a leader (22/07/2015).

This finding reflects the two views of supervision that exist: as inspection (evaluative in nature) and as advisory in nature which is the modern view of instructional supervision (Minnear-Peplinski, 2009; Sullivan, 2004; Giwa, 1993). This result also reflects the dual roles performed by the P.E.As: as advisors and as inspectors (Mattson, 2006).Saiwa (2008) criticized the dual roles of the P.E.As as they left teachers confused since they contradict each other.

4.2.0 Conduct of Supervision by P.E.As in Mponda Education Zone

4.2.1.0 How PEAs fulfil their Role as Supervisors in Mponda Education Zone

According to SACMEQ (2007), PEAs are expected to play both inspection and supervisory roles. The study has confirmed that PEAs perform both roles in an educational zone. As a result, supervisors do a number of things so that they can achieve the purpose of which the main one is the ensuring of quality education. PEAs, as instructional supervisors in Malawi are called, involve themselves in a number of activities as they carry their duties among which supervision visits, conducting teachers’ continued professional development, addressing indiscipline issues and influencing staffing of schools.

4.2.2.0 Inspectional Role

One of the core functions of supervision as pointed out by Grauwe and Carron (2007) is to control what goes in schools which implies inspection. In other words, a supervisor ensures that the teacher comply with the laws and regulations established by government to direct the education sector. Obiweluozor, Momoh and Ogbonnaya (2013) define inspection as a specific occasion when the entire school is examined and evaluated as a place of learning. Therefore, PEAs carry out supervision visits to various primary schools in Malawi in order to monitor teacher’s compliance with rules and regulations. As a matter of fact, the study’s participants

overwhelmingly recognised supervision visits as main duty of the PEAs. Substantiating this assertion are responses below:

“PEAs visit our school during which they observe lessons as well as telling teachers school rules and regulations (C2, 21/07/2015).

“PEAs fulfil their role as supervisors through supervision visits during which they check records as well as the surroundings (P3, 22/07/2015).”

Apart from that, PEAs address indiscipline issues that may arise amongst teachers. When a school has unruly teacher, the head teacher puts down the name of such a teacher in a log book. While on a supervision visit, the PEAs identify names of such teachers and caution them. P4 says

“At times, the PEA invites unruly teachers to TDCs where warnings are issued to them. The misbehaving teachers include: those who abscond their duties, chronic drunkards and those who display insubordination towards head teachers (22/07/2015).”

4.2.3.0 Support and Advisory Role

Apart from inspection, P.E.As provide pedagogical support to teachers (Mulkeen and Chen, 2008). No wonder that PEAs do conduct continued teacher professional development at zonal level. This was acknowledged by the respondents who said that in service training, as continued professional development is sometimes known, helps to iron out common teaching problems in a zone. In service training also assist teachers to keep abreast with changes occurring in the education sector. C4 says:

“During their supervision visits PEAs identify common lesson challenges across schools in the zone. Following that, they invite teachers of the classes concerned to the Teacher Development Centre where they rectify the common teaching mistakes .”
(21/07/2015)

Esia-Donkoh and Ofori-Dwameno (2014) recommend that teachers should undertake continuous and sustained professional development to help improve on education standards. Modern demands of teaching require teachers to undertake life-long development in their profession to update and upgrade their knowledge and skills to improve their teaching delivery. Worryingly however, a few teachers lamented about the discriminatory nature of continued teacher professional development. The disgruntled ones said that such intervention target the infant section and at times the senior section of the primary schools. The selective nature of the continuous professional development defeats what it stands for. Association of School and College Leaders (2008) defines continuous professional development as process which ensures that all staff at all stages in their careers are able to learn, progress and keep up to date with knowledge and pedagogical skills in order to have a positive impact on their organization and outcomes for learners. P5 complains:

“PEAs are selective in their in service training as they mostly concentrate on the infant section sidelining other classes (22/07/2015).”

Finally, PEAs carry other miscellaneous duties in their quest of ensuring that high standards of education are maintained. As M1 explains:

“A PEA sometimes sends teachers to understaffed schools. They may promote an ordinary teacher to a head teacher. They may as well recommend an industrious teacher to teach in the senior section (23/07/2015).

4.2.4.0 Which PEA normally supervises Mponda Education Zone?

According to Mulkeen (2010), Malawi has decentralised supervision system in which a single PEA is responsible for the supervision of up to fifteen schools in an education zone. However, being in an urban setting Mponda Education Zone was unique in the sense that joint supervision a common occurrence since there are many teachers given that it is in an urban area, a city for that matter. In other words, the P.E.A from Mponda Education Zone combine with her colleague from the neighbouring zone of Likangala.

4.2.5.0 Typical Supervision Visit

The first point of call for PEAs on the supervision visit is the head teachers' office where they do a number of things among which include: announcing their arrival to the head teacher, stating the purpose of the visit, signing in a visitor's book, checking master timetable and other records as well as informing the head teacher the classes being targeted by the supervision visit. After that, the PEAs conduct surrounding check which involves taking a look at the school yard and toilets. Then they may attend school assembly if they arrive on time.

Next, the PEAs scatter into classes pre-selected at the head teacher's office. The PEAs are welcomed into the class by its teacher who offers a seat to the PEA. By the time that the PEAs sit, they would have scanned the class for teacher's presentability, seating plan as well as teaching aids pasted on the walls. As PEAs sit, teachers surrender their records to them. These include lesson plan, scheme and records of work, punishment book, stock book and learner's profile.

The PEAs then proceed with lesson observation in which teacher's mastery of the topic, lesson presentation and learners' participation are of paramount importance. As the lesson is being observed, the teachers are graded by the PEA. These grades are scored on the lesson observation form. After that, the PEAs hold a post conference during which an assessment of the observed lesson is given with or without teacher's opinions being taken into account. Then the PEA explains to the teacher why a certain grade has been given and makes suggestions on how the teacher could have best approached the lesson. Lastly, the PEAs communicate to the teaching staff on their general observation, that is what they consider to be strengths and weaknesses of the school as a whole.(Interviewees, 21-23 July, 2015)

4.2.6.0 Frequency of Supervision Visits in Mponda Education Zone

According to the Ministry policy, P.E.As are expected to visit every school in their zone three times a year (Mattson, 2006). With regards to the frequency of supervision visits, Mponda Education Zone was doing much better in that on average the P.E.As paid them surprise supervision visit twice a term implying that in a year they are supervised for at least six times. Illustrative of this sentiments is the excerpt below:

“The P.E.As supervise us once in a term...no..no..no to be frank, we are

Supervised twice in a term (C4, 21/07/2015).”

However, three interviewees stated that they are supervised once in a term. Only one respondent indicated that the P.E.A supervises three times a term.

4.3.1.0 Impact of Instructional Supervision on Teaching

The next major research question that was tackled in the interviews was what impact has instructional supervision had on the teaching profession especially of the participants involved. The teachers came up with miscellaneous responses to the question on their perceptions on the impact of supervision as conducted by P.E.As since it was an open-ended one. Overall, the teachers unanimously indicated that instructional supervision by P.E.As has had a positive impact in their professional lives in one way or the other. C1 (FG, 21/07/2015) illustrates the significance of instructional supervision by giving the analogy below:

“Every job needs supervision. For instance, if you were to hire people to work in your garden, it is pertinent for you as the owner of the garden to visit it in order to see if the workers are doing their job and how well they are carrying it out. So if farm owners supervise their workers then why shouldn’t government deploy its P.E.As whom it has entrusted with the responsibility of supervising primary schools.”

The participants in this study cited a number of reasons as to why they find instructional supervision by P.E.As to be significant. The respondents pointed out that instructional supervision contributes to teachers’ preparedness, teaching methodologies, self esteem, and teacher professionalism. According to the respondents, instructional supervision influences learner performance, interviews, promotions and classroom management.

4.3.1.1 Improved Teaching Methods

In education, learners are there to acquire new knowledge and it is incumbent upon teachers to facilitate its acquisition. However, the challenge is how does the teacher make sure that the students grasp new concepts? It now boils down to the methods that the teacher chooses to utilise. In this regard, the P.E.As assist the teachers by introducing to teachers new methods of lesson delivery as well as refreshing the teachers’ memory with teaching methods which the teachers might have forgotten after completing their college education. Therefore, one of the

reasons for which instructional supervision by P.E.As is viewed positively by the teachers is because of the improved teaching strategies realised from such an exercise. Eleven respondents cited improved teaching methods as one of the ways in which they have benefited from instructional supervision as can be deduced from the excerpts below:

“Supervision has introduced me to new methods of teaching. The PEA introduces the teacher to new teaching techniques during post conference so that the teacher can be able to approach the lessons differently.” (M3, 23/07/2015)

“Supervision has dissuaded me from sticking to one method of teaching. PEAs have encouraged me to use various teaching methods.” (M4, 23/07/2015)

“Instructional supervision has transformed me into a teacher that is learner conscious. I now use learner- centred methods such as group work.” (P3, 22/07/2015)

The study established that the teachers employ a variety of teaching methods in order to effectively deliver the lessons as per recommended by the P.E.As. Even the log books from all the three schools involved in the study indicate that the P.E.As applaud the teachers for using what the P.E.As described as “appropriate teaching methods”. Most of the teaching methods utilised by the teachers in the schools under study were learner-centred. After concluding their instructional supervision visit at Matiya L.E.A school on 24th May, 2016, the P.E.As commended the teachers for clarifying misconceptions and uncertainties of the learners. In addition to that, the P.E.As commended the teachers for using a wide range of assessment methods during lessons (log book). These examples only serve to illustrate that the instructional supervision by P.E.As encourages the teachers to apply teaching methods that promote learner participation. Even an inspectional visit to Zomba C.C.A.P confirmed that learners took responsibilities in group work. Not only were the learners in group work but also in oral work (Inspectional Report, 25/02/2016).

The usage of various teaching methods had been inculcated in the teachers such as even internal supervision done by head teachers, deputy head teachers and sectional heads produced similar findings. For instance, supervision of a Chichewa lesson in Std 1 carried out by the head teacher for Zomba Police primary school on 4th June, 2016 confirmed teachers’ usage of various

teaching methods as the teacher concerned utilised question and answer, explanation, and story telling as the teaching methods in the lesson (Head teacher's Observation Protocol).

4.3.1.2 Vigorous Teacher Preparedness

From researcher's own experience, learners appreciate being taught by teachers who are conversant with topics and well organised. This calls for planning before lesson delivery. This could imply teachers making lesson notes from various sources; drawing the necessary diagrams on chart paper as well as writing lesson plans. However, as one becomes more experienced in teaching there is a tendency of neglecting some aspects of planning. Therefore, instructional supervision by P.E.As reminds teachers of the need for thorough lesson preparations. Hence the other reason for which teachers expressed their support for instructional supervision is that it encourages teachers' preparedness for lessons. In other words, instructional supervision by the P.E.As ensures that teachers remain committed to their profession by being ever prepared for lessons. All interviewees believed that instructional supervision by P.E.As enhances teachers' preparedness. Illustrative of this assertion, that instructional supervision improves teachers' readiness, are the excerpts below:

"I think instructional supervision ensures that teachers are vigilant in their duties to avoid being caught off guard if a PEA visits them. That is why I always make sure that I write a lesson plan for the next working day at home." (M5, 23/07/2015)

"As a result of instructional supervision, teachers are always ready. For that reason, we ensure that we have teaching and learning aids for good lesson delivery." (M3, 23/07/2015)

"Certainly instructional supervision has helped me quite a lot. It has encouraged me to use real objects as teaching and learning aids." (P1, 22/07/2015)

In Mponda Education Zone, the P.E.A was very vigilant in as far as preparation of schemes of work was concerned. The researcher found out in the zone teachers had to submit schemes of work to their respective head teachers for checking a week before the opening of a school term. After that, the head teachers dispatched the schemes of work to the T.D.C where they were further scrutinised by the P.E.A. Then the P.E.A ensured that the teachers got their schemes of

work by the time the school opened. In so doing instructional supervision ensures that every teacher has important teaching records especially schemes and records of work.

The P.E.As' emphasis on the need for teachers to possess schemes and records of work and records of work compelled the administrations of the three schools under study to introduce checklists to indicate teachers' submission of such records. From the checklists, the researcher deduced that the majority of the teachers were committed to preparation of lesson plans and updating of schemes and records of work. For instance, in the fourteen-week long second term of 2015/2016 school session, 45 teachers out of 52 teachers of Zomba Police Primary School consistently submitted their schemes of work for checking every week for ten consecutive weeks; two teachers submitted their schemes of work for seven consecutive weeks, other two teachers for six consecutive weeks. Only one teacher submitted once. However, it should be borne in mind that the sectional heads who are responsible for ticking in the checklist to indicate submission of lessons sometimes fail to do so due to either laziness or many engagements.

Apart from that, the notion that instructional supervision by P.E.As enhances teachers' level of preparedness could be substantiated by an inspectional report produced for Zomba C.C.A.P Primary School 25th February, 2016. The report commended the teachers for having updated schemes of work and lesson plans. It should be noted that school inspectional visits are unannounced in order to find schools in their natural state (Saiwa, 2008).

On two separate occasions, P.E.As applauded teachers of Matiya L.E.A for being in possession of the required teaching records. These supervision visits were conducted on 10th February, 2016 and 24th May, 2016(Log Book). The challenge, however, was lack of seriousness in updating records and inadequate planning by a few teachers. Such teachers are strongly cautioned by both the P.E.As and the head teachers.

The interviewees' claim that instructional supervision by P.E.As encourages them to use teaching aids was collaborated by the researcher's classroom observations. The researcher observed that each class he managed to enter had charts pasted or hung on the walls, a situation the teachers described as "talking walls". Besides that the classes had learning centres known as shopping corner in the infant classes such as 1 and 2 ; and nature table for senior classes such as Standards 6,7, and 8. The Standard 1 B at Zomba C.C.A.P Primary School that the researcher

managed to visit had charts literally covering any available space on the walls. Placed at the back of the classroom was the shopping corner on which empty bottles and packets of manufactured products were put. Such empty packages included: empty cans of soft drinks, empty packets of powdered Daisy soap, empty bottles of body lotion, an empty bottle of bottled water and empty packet of powdered Anchor milk. During Mathematics lessons especially on bills, prices are assigned to the items with one learner acting as seller and other few learners acting as consumers. On the other hand, nature tables contain specimen used during science lessons such as leaves.

The P.E.As acknowledged teachers' utilisation of teaching and learning aids during their supervision visits. For example, after such a visit on 24th May, 2016 to Matiya L.E.A, the two P.E.As that made the visit applauded the teachers for using TALULAR (Teaching and Learning Using Locally Available Resources). This indicates that the P.E.As' efforts in leading the teachers in the production of teaching and learning resources are bearing fruits.

4.3.1.3 Self Esteem Boost

Before one can believe in you, you should be the first to believe in yourself. For learners to appreciate teacher's abilities in lesson delivery, the onus is on the teachers to be confident in their comprehension of the topics as well as their teaching strategies. Having PEAs in their class every now and then increases teachers' confidence in facing strangers at school as well as in handling of a lesson even with an intruder in class. Apart from that, since supervision highlights the teachers' weaknesses and offers suggestions on how to improve, the teachers approach the subsequent lessons with so much confidence. This is because they become aware of how to best approach and deliver the lessons. The respondents, eight to be exact, found supervision to be useful in that it raised their self esteem. As C2 disclosed:

“Instructional supervision has addressed my esteem issues. It encourages me to perform without fear. This is so because PEAs are always polishing my weaknesses. Hence it increases my confidence levels since I know I am doing the right thing having had my mistakes corrected in previous supervision visits.” (C2, 21/07/2015)

“Supervision visits have boosted my self esteem. I now can face any visitor in my class or school in general with no fear. This is due to the fact that we are used to visits

by inspectors and PEAs which has terminated the fear of having an intruder amongst us.”
(C4, 21/07/2015)

After having interacted with them during the interviews, the researcher found the participating teachers to be confident. They introduced themselves very well and were friendly which enabled the researcher to seek more clarifications from the interviewees. The participants were so comfortable that they could ask the researcher to repeat questions they had not understood. Others took the researcher to task to qualify his questions. For instance, upon being asked what qualities she would look for in an instructional supervisor, M2 responded by saying that it should have been qualities of *good* supervisor.

The teachers were not just comfortable with the researcher but also deliver their lessons with confidence even in the presence of a supervisor. An observational form prepared by the head teacher of Zomba Police Primary School on 4th June, 2016 for a Chichewa lesson in Standard 1 indicated that she was confident as signified by her mobility in order to assist the learners despite the presence of the head teacher. The teacher was also able to tell a story which grabbed learners' attention. This only serves to illustrate that P.E.As' had a positive impact on teachers as the teachers were comfortable with a variety of teaching methods and classroom management techniques as suggested by the P.E.As. In fact, log books obtained from the three schools portrayed an image of confident teachers who were able to use a wide of assessment methods and appropriate teaching methods during lessons. The teachers were also able to use teaching resources effectively. Only confident teachers who believed in what they were doing could have done all that.

4.3.1.4 Enhanced Teacher Professionalism

As professionals, teachers are obliged to carry themselves in their duties in a manner that is in line with the ethics of the job. MoEST has a clear code of conduct for teachers which outlines expected and acceptable standards of teacher behaviour. Having a code of conduct alone is not enough but its implementation matters. Hence instructional supervision by P.E.As ensures that the teachers adhere to the ethics of the teaching profession. Even though they are the targets of the code of ethics, the teachers expressed some positivity towards instructional supervision since it aids in maintaining professionalism in teaching. All participants pointed out that instructional supervision ensures that teacher act in accordance with professional ethics of their job. M2 said:

“Whenever PEAs visit our school, they focus much on punctuality and presentability. They encourage teachers to be punctual for work. The PEAs also stress on the need for teachers to be always presentable when on duty. We are told that as role models, teachers need to put on a neck tie as well as polished shoes.” (23/07/2015)

One of spheres of teachers’ professional lives that they have to conform are the ethics guiding their job particularly dressing. Visits made to the schools involved in the study demonstrated that teachers carry themselves in manner befitting their status as role models. The researcher observed that some male teachers were smartly dressed in clean ironed shirts that they tucked in. Others were putting on jackets. Covering their feet were polished shoes while hanging around their necks were neck ties. Female teachers were not to be outsmarted as each of them put on decent clothes that were not revealing sensitive parts of their bodies such as thighs and breasts. Also invisible were golf shirts, jeans, sports shoes, long hair and beard in men as well as plastic shoes. All these were done to comply with the dressing code recommended by MoEST but enforced by the P.E.As. This only serves to illustrate that instructional supervision by influences the kind of clothes that teachers were as well as their grooming habits.

Instructional supervision has definitely inculcated professionalism in the teachers such that each school that was involved in the study had a time book which enhanced teachers’ punctuality since the teachers signed in it in order to indicate the time they reported for duties. MoEST expects teachers to be at their duty post by 7:00 AM. At 7:15 AM teachers are anticipated to organise and attend school assembly and by 7:30 AM lessons are expected to commence on every working day of the week. The study revealed that teachers strive to comply with MoEST’s set time as proven by availability of the time books in the three schools. In terms of punctuality, the most exemplary teachers were Standard 8 teachers from Zomba Police Primary Schools whose lessons began as early as 5:00 AM. However, comparison of the three schools established that overall it was Matiya L.E.A Primary School that excelled in as far as punctuality was concerned. In the third term of 2015/16 school session, on average, more than of the teachers that reported for duties at Matiya L.E.A arrived at the school premises before 7:00 AM as indicated in the time book. For example, on 17th May, 2016, 26 teachers arrived at Matiya L.E.A School premises before 7:00 AM while only six teachers came after 7:00 AM. Matiya L.E.A outdid the other two schools in terms of punctuality because the administration resolved to draw a line in

the time book in order to separate latecomers from those teachers who reported early for their duties on each working day. Although the other two schools fell short, the greater majority of teachers were at work by 7:30 AM. It should be noted that a few teachers chose to rush into classrooms instead of signing in the time books upon realising that they were up against the recommended time for commencing classes. Another factor that has to be taken into consideration is the fact that the schools have a serious housing shortage problem which implies the teachers have to commute to these schools from distant townships. As regards Matiya L.E.A Primary School, it has one teacher's house occupied by the head teacher. However, it is located in the densely populated Chikanda township which accords the teachers an opportunity of getting rental houses at relatively reasonable prices much closer to school.

4.3.1.5 Improved Learner Performance

The success of learners brings pride to the teacher but their failure brings condemnation upon the teacher. Effective teaching is one of the contributing factors towards the success of learners. That is, improved learner performance is reliant upon the appropriateness of the teaching strategies employed by the teacher. Instructional supervision indirectly influences learners in that the P.E.As may recommend certain teaching methods to the teachers which upon their use might lead to effective learning. In addition to that, the P.E.As demand that teachers must always be in possession of documents which aid in lesson delivery such as lesson plans. This ensures the readiness of teachers. Given the fact that it is incumbent upon P.E.As to make suggestions on how to improve the learning process, it was not surprising to come across teachers who argued that instructional supervision by P.E.As has resulted in improved learner performance. In fact nine teachers interviewed pointed out improved learner performance as one of the positives of instructional supervision. C2 revealed:

“I find instructional supervision by P.E.As to be useful as it enables us, as teachers, to become effective in our teaching. The P.E.As make valuable recommendations on how to improve lessons such as teaching methods and use of learning aids. This has resulted in effective teaching which in turn has led to improved performance of my learners.” (21/07/2015)

“Being a Standard 8 teacher, I can attest to the fact instructional supervision has

improved learners' performance. I have seen that the number of learners being selected to secondary schools has increased. This is so because the P.E.As emphasize on learner-centred methodologies" (P5, 22/07/2015)

The belief that instructional supervision by P.E.As had improved learner performance may have arisen from the fact that the schools had experienced success as evidenced by increasing number of learners who were being selected to secondary schools. Even Zomba Municipal Assembly (2007) boasted that the 2006 results were particularly striking in the sense that the district managed to send to Kamuzu Academy six pupils, an achievement only a few districts in Malawi, if any, registered in 2006. Mponda Education Zone being part of the district had a share of the success. For instance, Zomba Police Primary School which outperforms the other two schools has seen its number of students being selected to secondary schools increasing. According to PSLCE results displayed on the walls of P.E.A's TDC office and the head teacher's office at Zomba Police Primary School, the number of learners selected to national secondary schools rose from 4 in 2012 to 6 in 2015. There was also an increase in the number of learners selected to Community Day Secondary Schools from 14 in 2012 to 70 in 2015.

However, when one disregards the increasing number of learners and considers the pass rates and selection percentage, it can be established the zone has not been excelling as portrayed by the teachers and the municipal assembly. In fact the pass rates and selection percentage have been fluctuating and in other cases declining. For example, the pass rate in P.S.LC.E at Matiya L.E.A was 78% in 2013 but decreased to 71% in 2015. Similarly, the pass rate for Zomba Police declined from 94% in 2013 to 85% in 2015. At Zomba C.C.A.P Primary School, the pass rate was fluctuating: placed at 91% in 2013; 67% in 2014 and 84% in 2015. An Inspectional report for Zomba C.C.A.P Primary School produced on 25th February, 2016 described learners' performance in the national examination as average. This is to say that in as much as the P.E.As' supervision could be held responsible for the increasing number of learners being selected to secondary schools but overall the performance of the learners was not outstanding one. For example, no student was selected to national secondary schools from both Zomba C.C.A.P Primary School and Matiya L.E.A in the same period. Students from these schools have only been to conventional secondary schools and community day secondary schools.

4.3.1.6 Prepares Teachers for Interviews

As one carries out duties as expected of the post in any profession, the person always harbours aspirations of better perks as well as promotions. Getting better perks in teaching in Malawian public schools entails being invited to and attending interviews which either may be oral or written. The majority of the questions in the interviews are in tandem with the teaching profession. For instance, they may ask teachers to mention the records they are supposed to have. During instructional supervision, the P.E.As look for certain records which the teachers must possess such as learners' attendance register. So when the teachers are asked questions pertaining to records, they draw upon the knowledge they acquire from their interaction with P.E.As. In other words, instructional supervision by P.E.As indirectly prepares the teachers for interviews since it inculcates in the teacher professionalism which comes to the rescue of teachers during interviews which seek to inquire the level of professionalism before teachers are considered for promotion. Seven respondents considered instructional supervision as being vital in preparation for interviews. M2 had this to say:

“As for me, I find instructional supervision to be useful when I go for interviews. When one is asked during the interviews to mention the records a teacher is supposed to be in possession of, it is easy to answer since PEAs always seek for such records during their supervision visits.” (23/07/2015)

4.3.1.7 Improved Classroom Management

For the pupils to learn, the classroom conditions need to be conducive for learning. However, on each working day, teachers are faced with management issues in classroom ranging from indiscipline cases to seating plan. Instruction supervision comes handy as the teachers confront classroom management challenges. Eight respondents disclosed in the interviews that instructional supervision has aided them in becoming better classroom managers. As C2 maintained:

“Instructional supervision assists in classroom management. In my case, supervision has helped me in becoming gender sensitive especially when it comes to the distribution of questions in a class as well as seating plan. PEAs recommend that if for example, a teacher poses a question to a boy, the next question should go to a girl. Similarly, when it comes to seating plan, a teacher must make sure that a boy sits

beside a girl. That is, boys should sit among girls and vice versa.” (21/07/2015)

The emphasis on the use of group work or pair work or participatory methods in general by P.E.As has been helpful. These methods help to reduce indiscipline cases as learners know that they may be requested by the teacher to answer a question or to be involved in the lesson anytime (P2, 22/07/2015).

As explained earlier, the P.E.As do emphasize on cleanliness hence during their supervision visit they look out for the cleanliness of the school premises including the classrooms. The researcher observed that before commencement of lessons at 7:30 AM, the learners had to sweep the classrooms as well as the surroundings in for the pupils to get educated in clean environment as recommended by the P.E.As.

Besides that, P.E.As stress on the need for utilisation of learner-centred methods which calls for building of good relationship with learners. Such methods aid in reducing tension that might spoil the good learning environment. An inspectional visit to Zomba C.C.A.P Primary School on 25th February, 2016 revealed that learners took responsibility in group work. Given that the learners were preoccupied with group activities, the lessons captured students’ interest thereby reducing learners’ indiscipline.

Apart from that, P.E.As not only lead teachers in the production of teaching resources but also guide teachers on how to use them so as to have an atmosphere which is conducive to learning. Instructional supervision by P.E.As in Mponda Education seemed to be paying dividends since the P.E.As during their supervision visit to Matiya L.E.A Primary School on 10th February, 2016 found out that “available resources were evenly distributed and the learners *did not scramble* for them. This illustrates that the teachers have taken heed of P.E.As’ advice on how to use teaching resources i.e having enough teaching and learning aids to prevent chaos in classroom.

4.3.1.8 Class Allocation

The study established that instructional supervision has a role to play when it comes to assigning of teachers to various classes. This is so since instructional supervision enables the P.E.As to unearth teachers’ level of competency and skills. One of the duties of P.E.As upon arrival at various schools for supervision visit is to evaluate lesson delivery. As the P.E.As observe the lessons, they analyse teachers’ capabilities. If the teacher puts up an exceptional performance,

the P.E.As may recommend to the head teachers that such teachers be shifted to high classes. However, if the P.E.As come across an incompetent teacher, they may recommend that such teachers be moved to lower classes. The prerogative of assigning teachers to such classes rests in the hands of the head teachers who take into consideration the work rate of an individual teacher. As the P.E.As carry out instructional supervision, they may identify hardworking teachers whom they may recommend to the head teachers to be shifted to the senior section where they may help the school with improved results. Supporting instructional supervision were ten participants who argued that instructional supervision enables a hardworking teachers to be shifted to higher classes. M5 said:

“Instructional supervision enables PEAs to identify teachers who are performing well . If they do, they may recommend that these teachers be moved to the senior section if they were teachers in lower classes.” (23/07/2015)

“The P.E.A may also make recommendation for a teacher to be shifted to lower classes after identification of the teacher’s weaknesses (P3, 22/07/2015).

It should be taken into account that these class allocations may be done either immediately after a supervision visit or later on depending on the severity of incompetence. If the P.E.As identify minor weaknesses in a teacher, the reallocation may done in the next school session. If the mistakes are too grave, the head teacher may reallocate such teachers immediately. It should be noted, too, that instructional supervision only influences the class allocation but the prerogative to do still rests in the hands of the head teachers.

4.3.2 Feelings that Presence of a P.E.A generates in a Teacher

One of the activities that the P.E.As do upon arrival at a school is lesson observation. This implies that they have to physically visit a classroom in order to observe and evaluate a teacher’s lesson. The intrusion by P.E.As into classrooms changes the atmosphere even the students may take notice of that. Given the impact that P.E.As have on classroom atmosphere, the question was what feelings does such presence create in the teacher? The presence of a PEA in a classroom seems not to shake the teachers. The majority of respondents interviewed, thirteen of them, expressed no fear of having an instructional supervisor in their class. As P5 claimed:

“I feel confident when the PEAs enter my class since they are professional colleagues

(22/07/2015)

“As for me, I am comfortable with the PEA’s presence since it demonstrates that teachers are valued by the education authorities. Besides, I love teaching hence no fear at all (

23/07/2015)

While expressing their confidence in supervision, three respondents were frank enough to disclose the fear that they had at the beginning of their teaching profession. As C4 explained

“I do not fear the PEA’s presence since they are humans just as us but I was afraid of them in the early years of my career (C4, 21/07/2015).”

However, two interviewees pointed out that the feelings that presence of a PEA generates in teachers depend on the teachers’ preparedness. P2 declared:

“A teacher, I for one, cannot fear supervision as long as you are prepared. It is only those that are unprepared, for example those who do not have lesson plans, that can be afraid of PEA’s presence (22/07/2015).”

4.3.3 Relationship between Teachers and PEAs

The understanding between an instructional supervisor and a teacher is a determinant of effectiveness of instructional supervision. The question here was: how do P.E.As relate to teachers in Mponda Education Zone? In other words, is there enmity or friendship between teachers and P.E.As? As stated earlier, teachers are likely to accept an approachable instructional supervisor but are likely to resent a harsh one. Luckily enough, the study has established that the relationship between teachers and PEAs is cordial in Mponda Education Zone. In fact eleven of the fifteen respondents individually interviewed expressed satisfaction with the relationship between teachers and PEAs as can be seen below:

“We have a cordial relationship with the PEAs since they are there to help. So a person cannot complain about someone who is rendering help.” (C1, 21/07/2015)

“I find PEAs to be friendly since they are simply doing their job.” (C2, 21/07/2015)

In as much as the remaining respondents concur with others on the existence of good working relationship with PEAs, they pointed out that the relationship depends on the PEA's personality as well as teachers' commitment to work.

“The relationship between teachers and PEAs is reliant upon the PEA as an individual. Some shout during post conferences while others talk to us as colleagues.” (C4, 21/07/2015)

“Normally, the relationship between PEAs and teachers is good. However, it all depends on teacher's adherence to professional rules. If you do not follow the rules, you may find them to be harsh.” (M1, 23/07/2015)

4.3.4 PEAs' Attitude towards Teachers

The attitude of instructional supervisors matters in as far as effectiveness of instructional supervision is concerned. The question asked was: how are the teachers viewed by the P.E.As? i.e as colleagues or subordinates? The majority of the respondents were of the view that PEAs regard teachers as professional colleagues. This was the view of thirteen of fifteen individual interviewees. As P4 explained:

“PEAs are friendly since they once served as teachers. As a result, they know the situation on the ground hence we expect them to assist us.” (22/07/2015)

Although three respondents amongst the thirteen recognized the positive attitude of PEAs towards teachers, they stated that it depends on the PEA's personality and teacher's professional record.

“Usually, PEAs approach teachers with a positive mind but they become unfriendly if they come across a teacher with poor professional record.” (P3, 22/07/2015).

While supporting the claim that the P.E.As in Mponda Education Zone view the teachers positively, one teacher feared for the future when it comes to PEAs' attitude. C4 said

“For now the PEAs are friendly but there is a danger of backsliding into inspectorate which is much stricter. The government has reintroduced the inspectorate which is retrogressive as that would mark an attitudinal shift into negativity with PEAs becoming

harsher (21/07/2015)

Only two interviewees expressed their displeasure with PEAs' attitude.

“PEAs have negative attitude towards teachers. They always blame us for poor learner performance without taking into account other factors such as text book availability.” (M4, 23/07/2015)

4.4.5 Qualities of a good PEA (Instructional Supervisor)

During the study, the respondents were granted the opportunity of describing what they consider to be the qualities of a good PEA. The respondents came up with a number of features of an ideal instructional supervisor, in Malawi case, known as a PEA. The frequently mentioned qualities of a good PEA were friendliness and honesty. Apart from that, teachers expect PEAs to be fair, exemplary, impartial, constructive in their criticisms, and regular with their visits. It should be known right away that no teacher was able to come up with all the attributes of a good P.E.A as described below. In most cases, the respondents managed to mention at least one attribute.

Teachers face a number of challenges in their profession to which solutions are needed hence they seek for an instruction supervisor who is helpful. That assistance can only be rendered if the PEAs are approachable. Therefore, all the fifteen teachers expect PEAs to be friendly. Thus friendliness is the first quality of an ideal instructional supervisor which was mentioned by all the fifteen participants. As P4 explained

“A PEA should not display a gloomy face as that can scare away teachers who want to seek for assistance (22/07/2015).”

Apart from that, teachers would prefer PEAs to rate them without any preconceived vendetta. That is, the respondents, five in total, expect their performance in class to be the determinant of the score they obtain on a supervision form. In other words, teachers expect an instructional supervisor to be fair when it comes to scoring of teachers' performance. M2 asserted

“PEAs should be fair especially when it comes to grades given to teachers after supervision. They should discuss the grades with the teachers concerned. In other words, they should justify the grades to teachers not just giving the grade without liasing with the teachers (23/07/2015).”

“The grade given on the supervision form should reflect teacher’s performance. PEAs should give grades in accordance with the performance not depending feelings or grudges which may cloud their judgement (M5,23/07/2015).”

Three respondents expressed their desire for P.E.As to be individuals who should be exemplary. Since PEAs offer suggestions and solutions to challenges to teachers, they must themselves to adhere to the recommendations they utter. For example,

“If PEAs stress on presentability of teachers, the PEAs themselves must be smartly dressed as well (M4, 23/07/2015).”

“When PEAs pay us a visit, they emphasize on the need for teachers to be hardworking. so if they are to be taken seriously, they need to be industrious as well not just lazing about about at Teacher Development Centres (P1, 23/07/2015).”

During a lesson, certain things may go right but others wrongly for teacher. P.E.As need to include all of these on assessment so that the post observation conference can reflect the true performance of the teacher. As a post conference is being held, teachers expect the PEAs to express their opinions in an honest manner. Put another way, teachers expect to get feedback from the PEAs that is straight to the point. Eight teachers cited honesty as one the characteristic of a good instructional supervisor. As P3 explained:

“PEAs should be frank in their comments. They should not make general comments. For instance, they may say that the lesson was good without pinpointing the lessons’ successes. Truth needs to be told. If there are weaknesses, they should be pointed out as well (22/07/2015).”

Frequency of supervision visits matters when it comes to the qualities of an effective PEA. The respondents unanimously agreed that an effective instructional supervisor is the one that conduct regular supervision visits.

“I could prefer to have a PEA who regularly visits the schools in order to check how the suggestions made during a previous supervision are being implemented (M3, 23/07/2015).”

Primary school teachers employed by government must be subjected to supervision in which all are treated equally. Thus the respondents, three in number, expressed their desire to have a PEA who is impartial when it comes to awarding of a supervision grade. M5 complained:

“PEAs sometimes favour teachers who are their friends by giving them good grades. When they come on a supervision visit, such PEAs just chat with their favourite teachers in the class instead of supervising them. PEAs should not favour any teacher when it comes to instructional supervision (23/07/2015)”

Seven respondents also expressed their desire to have a PEA who recognizes good teaching performance. Supervision should not be a fault finding exercise. M2 lamented:

“PEAs are mostly interested in teacher’s weaknesses. They should also tell the teachers to keep it up where they have done well rather than simply turning a blind eye to such good performances.” (23/07/2015)

Instructional supervision accords the teachers a chance of knowing their performances. Thus, they look forward to post observation conferences during which teachers’ strengths and weaknesses are identified. However, when it comes to instructional supervision, the manner in which feedback is given also matters. For every action, there is reaction. If a P.E.A or any other supervisor for that matter makes comments in a respectable manner, a teacher would not resist taking on board the suggestions put forward by the P.E.A. The opposite can be true. Therefore, the respondents would prefer PEAs to provide constructive criticism. The need for constructive criticism was raised by four teachers. As M3 said:

“A good P.E.A is one who respects a teacher before the learners. P.E.As should not correct teacher’s mistakes in the presence of learners. A certain teacher in Balaka abandoned a class after a P.E.A took over the teaching of the lesson in order to deliver it in manner that he wanted. Teachers should, therefore, be given the feedback in a private discussion.” (23/07/2015)

“During post conference, PEAs need to point out teacher’s mistakes in a friendly tone. They should not shout at a teacher if something has gone wrong in a lesson as the teacher may decide to hit back rendering the whole exercise to

be useless.” (P2, 22/07/2015)

4.5.0 Teachers’ preferred Alterations to Current Instructional Supervision

Overall, teachers appreciated the work being done by PEAs. In other words, all teachers supported the existence of instructional supervision conducted by P.E.As. Four of the teachers involved in the study, in fact, were in full support of the current instructional supervision as carried out by P.E.As implying that no changes should be introduced. However, eleven respondents pointed out that instructional supervision should continue to exist but with some modifications which are discussed below. It should, however, be noted from the onset that some of the suggestions made by the teachers are unique in that the researcher has not come across studies in which teachers demanded for the similar modifications. This truly reflects the nature of qualitative research whose aim is not to make generalisations but giving voice to the feelings and perceptions of the participants under study.

4.5.1 The Need for the Receipt of Supervision/Lesson Observation Forms

As explained earlier, the majority of the teachers view instructional supervision as evaluation of lesson delivery. Therefore, they expect feedback on their performance. That is, teachers expect that at the end of lesson observation, their strengths and weaknesses would be identified which assists in honing their teaching skills. The preferable means of providing this feedback is through the use of lesson observation forms. Unlike oral feedback, the lesson observation forms grant the teacher an opportunity of reminding the teacher of the improvements that must be made so as to make the teaching and learning better. If the teachers forget the suggestions made by the P.E.As, they turn to the lesson observation forms. However, a number of respondents complained that after being supervised, they are not given a copy of their supervision forms. Therefore, they expressed their desire for these forms to be given to them. This change was suggested by six interviewees. As C2 moaned:

“I am not pleased with the current situation whereby after being supervised, PEAs just leave the school without handing a copy of supervision form to the teacher whose lesson they have just observed. I need the supervision form so that I can see how I have been assessed.” (21/07/2015)

“I do not like just being shown the grade I have scored after having been supervised.

The least PEAs could do is to give us the supervision forms so that we could go over the forms thoroughly to know exactly what is expected of us.” (M4, 23/07/2015).

“It would have been better to be given supervision forms so that you can remember your mistakes. However, the P.E.A takes the forms to TDC since they claim that they have insufficient forms (P4, 22/07/2015).”

4.5.2 Connecting Supervision with Promotions

Each and every professional aspires for better perks and post. In the teaching profession in Malawi, this most of the time implies being successful during interviews organized by the Teaching Service Commission of Malawi. The challenge, however, is what a large number of teachers consider to be unfair criterion that is utilised when promoting the teachers. Under the current arrangement, a teacher is promoted based on performance during the interviews and not on lesson delivery. That being the case, a number of lazy teachers are promoted on account of their success during interviews. This demoralises many industrious teachers, who despite their efforts in class, are left out when it comes to promotion. No wonder that some of the participants expressed their disillusionment with instructional supervision as it has no bearing what so ever on the possibilities of getting promotion. That is why seven respondents expressed their desire for good performance to be recognized and rewarded. In other words, supervision needs to have a bearing on teachers’ careers. C3 said:

“As a teacher, I wish supervision could be linked to promotion. It is unfair for lazy teachers to be promoted without taking into consideration of the supervision forms. Of what use are supervision forms if they do not influence promotion?” (21/07/2015).

“I would like to see supervision being put to use. For instance, they could use it for promotion even when it comes to selection of workshop participants. Those teachers who are performing well as revealed by supervision should be considered for such rewards. It should be similar to other departments such as the police where hard work is honoured with promotions(P2, 22/07/2015)

“The grades that one scores from supervision should have an impact on career progress. Teachers who are doing satisfactory job should be considered for promotion, upgrading

or assigned other responsibilities.’ (M3, 23/07/2015).

4.5.3 Focus on the Class Time Table

In schools, time is of essence. As a result, all activities and lessons are allocated their time on the class timetable which has to be honoured by the teaching staff as well as the learners. For instance, if time allocated for a certain teacher has elapsed, the concerned teacher winds up the lesson to pave way for the colleague. This is well known and encouraged by the officials in the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology. Contrary to teachers’ expectations, P.E.As occasionally disregard the timetable and let their wishes takeover. They may, for example, choose to supervise a subject, which has been already taught or a subject whose time is not yet. Such sudden changes annoy the teachers. Eight respondents argued that it is desirable that PEAs begin to respect the class timetable. The timetable indicates which time a subject is to be taught and in what order. Therefore, teachers need not short-changed by the PEAs. C2 whined:

“Sometimes when the PEAs come, they demand that we teach a subject that is not due at that particular time. They may request a teacher to teach a subject a subject that they want to supervise but is not appearing on the time table. The PEAs should not tell teachers to teach subjects that are not appearing on the timetable in a particular period on a particular day since it disturbs and confuses the teachers.” (21/07/2015)

“If there are two of us in a class, a PEA may compel me or any other teacher to teach the partner’s subject just because the owner is absent. I hate it when such a thing happens to me. The PEA needs to supervise the subjects for which the teacher is prepared in a particular period on a specific day.” (M5, 23/07/2015)

4.5.4 Timing of Instructional Supervision Visits

The P.E.As have every right to visit any school of their preference within their zone. In fact, the majority of the teachers have no problems with supervision visits. However, the scheduling of such visits has an influence on how they are viewed by the teachers. Are they meant to be an interruption to teachers’ planned activities or they are meant for the betterment of teachers and learners? Such a question has to be considered by the P.E.As as they produce their supervision schedule. Five respondents expressed concern in the way PEAs time their supervision visits. P4 lamented:

“Timing of supervision is sometimes an inconvenience. A P.E.A may sometime visit on the first day of the term, when the school is not in full swing with teachers busy perfecting their records as well as leading students in cleaning the dirty surroundings. They should come in the second or third week.” (22/07/2015)

“PEAs should be mindful of the time they conduct the supervision exercise. They should not come to supervise us at the end of the term since we get busy with examinations. Imagine a PEA asking you to teach when you are supposed to give a test to the learners. That is being inconsiderate.” (P5, 22/07/2015)

“ P.E.As should at least come in the second week. It is difficult to be visited on the first day of the term especially in new class like Standard 1 where you do not know most of the names of the students. They should give the teacher time to acclimatise. P.E.As should not visit the schools at the end of the term since it interferes with revision (M4, 23/07/ 2015).”

4.5.5 Need for Consistent Post-Observation Conferences

It is in the interest of teachers to become the best they can. For them to improve, they need to know what their weaknesses are as well as their strengths. It is, therefore, necessary for the teachers to be supplied with feedback soon after having been supervised by the P.E.As. That is why each lesson observation needs to be followed by post conference during which both the instructional supervisor and the teacher deliberate on the teacher’s performance. However, the P.E.As are inconsistent with holding of post observation conferences. Therefore, five teachers involved in the study desire to have post observation conferences so that they may liaise with instructional supervisors on their performance after being supervised. C3 protested:

“After supervision, the PEA sometimes simply dumps the supervision forms at the headteacher’s office without giving feedback to the individual teachers concerned. They may also give general comments to the whole staff instead of an individual teacher. I sometimes have to follow the PEAs for them to give me feedback on my lesson. I really wish they could discuss with us immediately after supervising our lessons in private.” (21/07/2015)

4.5.6 Empathy

Being human, teachers are prone to errors. Thus during a lesson a teacher may come short of expected standards. Hence, the instructional supervisor ought to give the teachers an opportunity to justify their performance before being given the inevitable assessment by the instructional supervisor. One of the attributes of a good instructional supervisor is empathy, which means appreciating somebody's dilemma from that person's point of view. Five respondents were of the view that PEAs need to understand issues from teachers' perspective. The respondents complained that PEAs turn deaf ears to teachers' explanations for any shortfall identified in the supervision exercise. As M2 complained:

“Whatever inadequacies are identified at a school, the blame always goes to the teachers. PEAs are always involved in a blame game of teachers without taking into consideration of other factors. They may, for example, blame teachers for poor learner performance without taking into account the unavailability of textbooks. If a teacher tries to reason with them, they do not accept any form of defence put forward by the teachers. In my own case, due to the malfunctioning of locks of classroom doors, intruders stole the teaching and learning aids but when the PEA found nothing on the class walls I was vehemently criticised for not taking the profession seriously. In this regard, PEAs act fault finders looking for the tiniest mistakes.” (23/07/2015)

“PEAs have negative attitude towards teachers in that they blame the teachers’ for learners’ poor performance. The learners come with lots of negativity towards school given high levels of illiteracy in our society yet when learners fail due to lack of commitment to their studies it is always the teacher who shoulders the blame.” (M4, 23/07/2015)

4.5.7 Choice of Subjects to be supervised

No person can excel in everything. Similarly, teachers have the subjects they enjoy most teaching and therefore are more likely to accept to have them supervised. This problem lies in the way the primary school teachers are trained in Malawi. The primary school teachers in Malawi expected to teach any subject and any class without consideration for their strengths and

weaknesses. The study has revealed teachers' resentment of being supervised in subjects they consider to be challenging. No teacher can be comfortable being supervised in challenging subjects. Therefore, there is a need to revisit recruitment and training of teachers in Malawi. If some of our teachers cannot deliver in certain subjects, then what sort of education is the nation providing to its citizens? Amazing as it may sound, six participants expressed their desire to be given a choice of which subjects they can be supervised by the P.E.As.

"I would have loved if PEAs would supervise me in my favourite subjects since we are graded. Yet they may supervise a subject that you struggle with resulting in a poor grade." (M4, 23/07/2015)

"In spite of being a Chewa by tribe, I hate teaching Chichewa and I do not like it when I am supervised in such a subject. So it could have been lovely if I could be supervised in my favourite subjects." (C3, 21/07/2015)

4.5.8 Impartiality of PEAs

One of the qualities of good instructional supervisor cited by a number of the participants was impartiality. The P.E.As need to be objective in the evaluation of the lessons. They should not let grudges they have with some teachers to resurface during the evaluation. At the same time, the P.E.As should not exempt any teacher from such an exercise on account of being their friends. Equal treatment for all must be the principle. Four respondents were concerned with the discriminatory manner in which some PEAs supervise the teachers. It was disclosed that some PEAs have their favourite teachers whom they relate to as friends hence exempting them from supervision exercise. M5 said:

"In general, PEAs should be impartial in the way they give their supervision scores. They favour their friends whom they award good grades. Instead of supervising them, the PEAs spend their time in classes chatting with them as their friends." (23/07/2015)

4.5.9 Emphasize Records less but Lesson Delivery more

Teaching involves much more than standing in front of learners inculcating them with knowledge. Teachers in public primary schools in Malawi are required by MoEST to prepare lesson plans, schemes and records of work as well as producing and maintaining various records

such as stock book, learners' profile and learners' progress book among others. Apart from that they are expected to produce learning aids as well as performing other duties which may be assigned to them by the head teacher. Since teachers' records are an area of focus of instructional supervision by P.E.As, the teachers always strive to prepare and update them. Not only are the teachers' records too numerous but they also have to be prepared for large classes which is time consuming. This takes much of teachers' time leaving them inadequately prepared for the lessons. The study revealed that primary school teachers are supposed to produce fourteen different records which they have to update from time to time. Five respondents complained that this consumes much of their time and interferes with lesson preparations. Hence the need for PEAs to shift much of their attention to lesson delivery rather than stressing on records negatively affects teachers' preparation for lessons. In other words, the number of teaching records needs to be reduced to only include the most important ones for lesson delivery such schemes and records of work as well as lesson plans.

“As teachers, we are overburdened by records which we should prepare and update of which there are twelve in total. For example, recording of written exercise results for each learner for a big class like mine is not only tiresome but time consuming as well. So I wish that PEAs could concentrate on what goes in class rather than the records.” (P4, 22/07/2015).

“The large number of records prepared by the teachers interferes with lesson preparation. As a result, it encourages deceit in a teacher so we end up concocting them to please the P.E.A.(P5, 22/07/2015).

4.5 Limitations and Delimitations of the Study

Limitations

- At one school the researcher was asked by a certain teacher if there were material or financial benefits for taking part in the study as was done by other researcher. Therefore, such expectations could affect their responses as the researcher was unable to provide such enticements.

- In certain interviews, teachers were distracted by their colleagues who wanted to have a chat and some pupils who wanted teachers' guidance on some issues. This affected the quality of certain interviews.
- The research only involved teachers from three public primary schools whose views may not be representative of opinions of teachers in other public primary schools let alone in private primary schools.

Delimitations

- The researcher only involved fifteen teachers from three urban public primary schools in the study. Therefore, sweeping generalisations cannot be made about rural schools as the study is qualitative in nature.
- Excluded from the study were head teachers who in their own right are on-site supervisors and are most of the time engaged in administrative duties leaving the rest to do the teaching. Also excluded were student teachers who were unavailable in the schools under study.
- The interviews were conducted in late July, 2015.

CHAPTER FIVE

Discussion and Analysis of Findings

5.0 Chapter Overview

This chapter analyses and discusses the findings of the study on teachers' perceptions on effectiveness instructional supervision as conducted by primary education advisors. The discussion begins with an explanation on teachers' understanding of the term "instructional supervision". It then outlines how instructional supervision is conducted by P.E.As in Mponda Education Zone. After that the discussion focuses on the impact that instructional supervision have had on the careers of respective teachers involved in the study. The discussion is concluded with the suggestions raised by respondents on how to improve instructional supervision.

5.1 Teachers' Understanding of the Term "Instructional Supervision"

Teachers in the study understood the concept of supervision differently hence they came up with various definitions of instructional supervision but this should not come as a surprise since various authorities have failed to reach consensus on a single definition of the term supervision (John, 2011). However, the numerous meanings of instructional supervision reflect the two angles from which instructional supervision can be viewed. That is, it can be viewed as fault finding tool hence likened to inspection. It can also be viewed as a tool for improvement which is the modern view of supervision (Sharma et al, 2011).

When asked to express their own understanding of the term "instructional supervision, the majority of the participants in the study, fourteen to be precise, described instructional supervision as evaluation of teaching. This is consistent with the findings of Poirer (2009) whose study revealed that teachers perceived instructional supervision as being evaluative in nature. Teachers perceived supervision as the way for the Central Office or the principal to see exactly how effective teachers were in the classroom (Poirer, 2009). In the literature the researcher has come across, evaluation of teachers' performance reflect the inspectoral view of supervision (Minnear-Peplinski, 2009; Giwa, 1993; Sullivan, 2004). As stated earlier, fourteen teachers in this research had the inspectional view of instructional supervision. For instance, P4 defined instructional supervision as an assessment of teaching according to MoEST's standards.

According to C2, supervision meant inspecting lesson delivery and the school's surroundings. On the other hand, M3 (23/07/2015) defined instructional supervision as a process of finding out how teachers were performing their duties on the ground.

However, only a single participant had a modern view of supervision, that which seeks to improve instruction. In fact, the modern version of supervision aims at helping the teacher to become a better teacher, especially in his capacity to deliver quality instruction to the students (Eya and Chukwu, 2012). In this case, the instructional supervisor is viewed as advisor and the supervision is non judgemental in nature (Minnear-Peplinski, 2009). According to P5 (22/07/2015), instructional supervision means advising teachers as a leader.

5.2.0 Conduct of Instructional Supervision in Mponda Education Zone

According to SACMEQ (2007), PEAs are expected to play both inspection and supervisory roles. The study has confirmed that PEAs perform both roles in an educational zone. Saiwa (2008) warned that by combining the two roles, the teachers were left confused since they contradict: supervision is supportive, developmental and non-judgemental while inspection is evaluative in nature.

5.2.1 Inspectional Role of P.E.As

The research established that PEAs carry out supervision visits to various primary schools in Malawi in order to monitor teacher's compliance with government policy. This was well clarified by P3 who contended that P.E.As fulfilled their roles through supervision visits during which they checked records as well as the surroundings (22/07/2015). Echoing similar sentiments was C2 who said that P.E.As visited their school in order to not only observe lessons but also to enforce school rules and regulations. According to Olulube and Major (2014), the first motive for which instructional supervisors inspect schools is to acquire an overview of the quality of education in accordance with the performance indicators for an education system. In other words, a supervisor ensures that the teacher comply with the standards and regulations established by government to direct the education sector.

Apart from that, the participants pointed out that P.E.As resolved indiscipline issues that may arise amongst teachers within their zone. When a school has unruly teacher, the head teacher

puts down the name of such a teacher in a log book. While on a supervision visit, the PEAs identify names of such teachers and caution them. Sometimes the P.E.As may send the offenders to the D.E.M's office to determine the appropriate action on perpetual offenders (P4, 22/07/2015). Olulube and Major (2014) affirm that instructional supervisors assist in addressing deviant behaviour among teachers.

5.2.2 Support and Advisory Role of P.E.As

Apart from inspection, P.E.As provide pedagogical support to teachers (Mulkeen and Chen, 2008). In most instances, support takes the form of advice given to teachers during supervision visits, which cover both administrative and pedagogical issues. Other modalities of support include: demonstration lessons, in-service programmes and organization of peer learning (Grauwe and Carron, 2007). No wonder that PEAs do conduct continuous teacher professional development (CPD) at zonal level (Mattson, 2006). This was acknowledged by the respondents who said that in-service training, as continuous professional development is sometimes known, helps to iron out common teaching problems in a zone. Confirming this was C4 who asserted that P.E.As identified common instructional challenges across schools in the zone during their supervision visits,. Following that, they invited teachers of the classes concerned to the Teacher Development Centre so that they could rectify the common teaching mistakes.

CPD is also sometimes done in Mponda Education Zone to share good practices observed at certain schools within the zone. It should also be borne in mind that in-service training of the teachers is done not only at the T.D.C but also within schools by the selected teachers sent to T.D.Cs share with the rest of the staff the new developments at their schools. Therefore, in-service training also assist teachers to keep abreast with changes occurring in the education sector (Mulkeen, 2010).

Esia-Donkoh and Ofori-Dwameno (2014) recommend that teachers should undertake continuous and sustained professional development to help improve on education standards. Modern demands of teaching require teachers to undertake life-long development in their profession to update and upgrade their knowledge and skills to improve their teaching delivery. Worryingly however, a few teachers lamented about the discriminatory nature of continued teacher professional development. The disgruntled ones said that such intervention target the infant section and at times the senior section of the primary schools. P5 complained that P.E.As

were selective in their in-service training as they mostly concentrated on the infant section sidelining those teachers serving in senior classes. The selective nature of the continuous professional development defeats what it stands for. Association of School and College Leaders (2008) defines continuous professional development as process which ensures that all staff at all stages in their careers are able to learn, progress and keep up to date with knowledge and pedagogical skills in order to have a positive impact on their organization and outcomes for learners.

Finally, PEAs carry other miscellaneous duties in their quest of ensuring that high standards of education are maintained. For instance, the P.E.As influence teaching staff numbers in schools by reporting teacher shortages the D.E.M who sends teachers to the understaffed schools. According to Obiweluzor, Momoh and Ogbonnaya (2013), instructional supervisors ensure that the individual teachers perform the duties for which they were scheduled. They also help in appropriate expenditure of school funds (Obiweluzor, Momoh and Ogbonnaya, 2013).

5.2.3 Which PEA normally supervises Mponda Education Zone?

According to Mulkeen (2010), Malawi has decentralised supervision system in which a single PEA is responsible for the supervision of up to fifteen schools in an education zone. However, being in an urban setting Mponda Education Zone is unique in the sense that joint supervision a common occurrence since there are many teachers given that it is in an urban area, a city for that matter. In other words, the P.E.A from Mponda Education Zone combine with her colleague from the neighbouring zone of Likangala.

5.2.4 Typical Supervision Visit

The first point of call for PEAs on the supervision visit is the head teachers' office where they do a number of things among which include: announcing their arrival to the head teacher, stating the purpose of the visit, signing in a visitor's book, checking master timetable and other records as well as informing the head teacher the classes being targeted by the supervision visit. After that, the PEAs conduct surrounding check which involves taking a look at the school yard and toilets. Then they may attend school assembly if they arrive on time.

Next, the PEAs scatter into classes pre-selected at the head teacher's office. The PEAs are welcomed into the class by its teacher who offers a seat to the PEA. By the time that the PEAs sit, they would have scanned the class for teacher's presentability, seating plan as well as teaching aids pasted on the walls. As PEAs sit, teachers surrender their records to them. These include lesson plan, scheme and records of work, punishment book, stock book and learner's profile.

The PEAs then proceed with lesson observation in which teacher's mastery of the topic, lesson presentation and learners' participation are of paramount importance. As the lesson is being observed, the teachers are graded by the PEA. These grades are scored on the lesson observation form. After that, the PEAs hold a post conference during which an assessment of the observed lesson is given with or without teacher's opinions being taken into account. Then the PEA explains to the teacher why a certain grade has been given and makes suggestions on how the teacher could have best approached the lesson. Lastly, the PEAs communicate to the teaching staff on their general observation, that is what they consider to be strengths and weaknesses of the school as a whole.(Interviewees, 21-23 July, 2015)

5.2.5 Frequency of Supervision Visits in Mponda Education Zone

According to the Ministry policy, P.E.As are expected to visit every school in their zone three times a year (Mattson, 2006). With regards to the frequency of supervision visits, Mponda Education Zone was doing much better in that on average the P.E.As paid them surprise supervision visit twice a term implying that in a year they are supervised for at least six times. Illustrative of this sentiments is the excerpt below:

“The P.E.As supervise us once in a term...no..no..no to be frank, we are

Supervised twice in a term (C4, 21/07/2015).”

However, three interviewees stated that they are supervised once in a term. Only one respondent indicated that the P.E.A supervises three times a term.

5.3.1.0 Impact of Instructional Supervision on Teaching

Ekundayo, Oyerinde and Kolawole (2013) allude to fact that evidence from various studies shows that instructional supervision has always been regarded as an essential and integral part of

school administration and basically geared towards the improvement of all factors in teaching and learning. Since supervision is regarded as an important tool in maintaining and improving quality of education, it has received wide support internationally (Lillis, 1992). Therefore, unsurprisingly, all the respondents believed that supervision has had a positive impact on their teaching profession. Supportive of this stance was P2 who confessed to having stepped in updating records of work as result of supervision. Sharing this sentiment was M1 who indicated that her teaching had improved after having been informed of her weaknesses and strengths by the P.E.As.

The respondents pointed out that instructional supervision contributes to teachers' preparedness, teaching methodologies, self esteem, and teacher professionalism. According to the respondents, instructional supervision influences learner performance, interviews, promotions and classroom management. Concurring with the respondents are Kotirde and Yunos (2008) who assert that supervision is designed to achieve improvement in instruction, resolution of school constraints, maintainance of superordinate-subordinate cooperation, professionalism and autonomy of staff, and achievement of intrinsic motivation.

5.3.1.1 Improved Teaching Methods

Hismanoglu and Hismanoglu (2010) point out that instructional supervision tends to provide support in the diagnosis of the difficulties in the teaching process and in making strategies for overcoming them. In this study, the interviewees stated that instructional supervision improves teaching methods which help the learners to understand the lessons much better. This augurs well with the results obtained by Ochieng in Kenya (2013) in which 71.4% of the teachers indicated that instruction supervision assisted them in improving their pedagogical skills. A study carried by Mpofu (2007) in Zimbabwe found out that instructional supervisors assisted teachers in coming up with strategies of handling big classes. Similar findings were obtained in a study carried out by Esia-Donkoh and Ofosu-Dwameno (2014) at Winneba in Ghana. In their study, 70% of the teachers involved specifically agreed that instructional supervision trains teachers to use modern teaching techniques and methods. Through supervision, teachers are introduced to new methods of teaching. At the same time, PEAs recommend the use and the applicability of a variety teaching methods. Therefore, one of the reasons for which instructional supervision by P.E.As is viewed positively by the teachers is because of the improved teaching

strategies realised from such an exercise. Eleven respondents cited improved teaching methods as one of the ways in which they have benefited from instructional supervision. M3 commended P.E.As for having equipped him with new teaching techniques. Similarly, P3 attributed her utilisation of learner-centred teaching methods to instructional supervision by P.E.As.

The study established that the teachers employ a variety of teaching methods in order to effectively deliver the lessons as per recommended by the P.E.As. Even the log books from all the three schools involved in the study indicate that the P.E.As applaud the teachers for using what the P.E.As described as “appropriate teaching methods”. Most of the teaching methods utilised by the teachers in the schools under study were learner-centred. After concluding their instructional supervision visit at Matiya L.E.A school on 24th May, 2016, the P.E.As commended the teachers for clarifying misconceptions and uncertainties of the learners. In addition to that, the P.E.As commended the teachers for using a wide range of assessment methods during lessons (log book). These examples only serve to illustrate that the instructional supervision by P.E.As encourages the teachers to apply teaching methods that promote learner participation. Even an inspectional visit to Zomba C.C.A.P confirmed that learners took responsibilities in group work. Not only were the learners in group work but also in oral work (Inspectional Report, 25/02/2016).

The usage of various teaching methods had been inculcated in the teachers such as even internal supervision done by head teachers, deputy head teachers and sectional heads produced similar findings. For instance, supervision of a Chichewa lesson in Std 1 carried out by the head teacher for Zomba Police primary school on 4th June, 2016 confirmed teachers’ usage of various teaching methods as the teacher concerned utilised question and answer, explanation, and story telling as the teaching methods in the lesson (Head teacher’s Observation Protocol).

5.3.1.2 Vigorous Teacher Preparedness

From researcher’s own experience, learners appreciate being taught by teachers who are conversant with topics and are well organised. This calls for planning before lesson delivery. This could imply teachers making lesson notes from various sources; drawing the necessary diagrams on chart paper as well as writing lesson plans. However, as one becomes more experienced in teaching there is a tendency of neglecting some aspects of planning. Therefore,

instructional supervision by P.E.As reminds teachers of the need for thorough lesson preparations. In other words, instructional supervision by the P.E.As ensures that teachers remain committed to their profession by being ever prepared for lessons. All the interviewees believe that instructional supervision enhances teachers' preparedness. For instance, M5 claimed that P.E.As' surprise supervision visits ensured that teachers remained vigilant in their duties. Therefore, she always wrote lesson plans a day before the actual teaching. On the other hand, P1 claimed that instructional supervision had encouraged her to use real objects as teaching and learning aids.

This finding corresponds to the results of a study on the "Assessment of the Impact of Supervision in Sri Lanka" in which it was found that supervision encourages better planning and preparation of teachers. Since the master teachers, as instructional supervisors are called in Sri Lanka, examined term notes, weekly notes and students' exercise books, the teachers tended to keep such records systematically (Grauwe and Carron, 2007). However, Ochieng's findings contradict that because he reported that 73.8% of teachers involved in his study denied that instructional supervisors helped teachers on how to prepare lesson plans and schemes of work.

In Mponda Education Zone, the P.E.A was very vigilant in as far as preparation of schemes of work was concerned. The researcher found out in the zone teachers had to submit schemes of work to their respective head teachers for checking a week before the opening of a school term. After that, the head teachers dispatched the schemes of work to the T.D.C where they were further scrutinised by the P.E.A. Then the P.E.A ensured that the teachers got their schemes of work by the time the school opened. In so doing instructional supervision ensures that every teacher has important teaching records especially schemes and records of work.

The P.E.As' emphasis on the need for teachers to possess schemes and records of work and records of work compelled the administrations of the three schools under study to introduce checklists to indicate teachers' submission of such records. From the checklists, the researcher deduced that the majority of the teachers were committed to preparation of lesson plans and updating of schemes and records of work. For instance, in the fourteen-week long second term of 2015/2016 school session, 45 teachers out of 52 teachers of Zomba Police Primary School consistently submitted their schemes of work for checking every week for ten consecutive weeks; two teachers submitted their schemes of work for seven consecutive weeks, other two

teachers for six consecutive weeks. Only one teacher submitted once. However, it should be borne in mind that the sectional heads who are responsible for ticking in the checklist to indicate submission of lessons sometimes fail to do so due to either laziness or many engagements.

Apart from that, the notion that instructional supervision by P.E.As enhances teachers' level of preparedness could be substantiated by an inspectional report produced for Zomba C.C.A.P Primary School 25th February, 2016. The report commended the teachers for having updated schemes of work and lesson plans. It should be noted that school inspectional visits are unannounced in order to find schools in their natural state (Saiwa, 2008).

On two separate occasions, P.E.As applauded teachers of Matiya L.E.A for being in possession of the required teaching records. These supervision visits were conducted on 10th February, 2016 and 24th May, 2016(Log Book). The challenge, however, was lack of seriousness in updating records and inadequate planning by a few teachers. Such teachers are strongly cautioned by both the P.E.As and the head teachers.

The interviewees' claim that instructional supervision by P.E.As encourages them to use teaching aids was collaborated by the researcher's classroom observations. The researcher observed that each class he managed to enter had charts pasted or hung on the walls, a situation the teachers described as "talking walls". Besides that the classes had learning centres known as shopping corner in the infant classes such as 1 and 2 ; and nature table for senior classes such as Standards 6,7, and 8. The Standard 1 B at Zomba C.C.A.P Primary School that the researcher managed to visit had charts literally covering any available space on the walls. Placed at the back of the classroom was the shopping corner on which empty bottles and packets of manufactured products were put. Such empty packages included: empty cans of soft drinks, empty packets of powdered Daisy soap, empty bottles of body lotion, an empty bottle of bottled water and empty packet of powdered Anchor milk. During Mathematics lessons especially on bills, prices are assigned to the items with one learner acting as a seller and other few learners acting as consumers. On the other hand, nature tables contain specimen used during science lessons such as leaves.

The P.E.As acknowledged teachers' utilisation of teaching and learning aids during their supervision visits. For example, after such a visit on 24th May, 2016 to Matiya L.E.A, the two

P.E.As that made the visit applauded the teachers for using TALULAR (Teaching and Learning Using Locally Available Resources). This indicates that the P.E.As' efforts in leading the teachers in the production of teaching and learning resources are bearing fruits.

5.3.1.3 Self Esteem Boost

Before one can believe in you, you should be the first to believe in yourself. For learners to appreciate teacher's abilities in lesson delivery, the onus is on the teachers to be confident in their comprehension of the topics as well as their teaching strategies. Having PEAs in their class every now and then has increased teachers' confidence in facing strangers at school as well as in handling of a lesson even with an intruder in class. In other words, the respondents, eight to be exact, found supervision to be useful in that it raised their self esteem. According to C2, instructional supervision had encouraged her to teach without fear having had corrected her mistakes as suggested by the P.E.As. C4 pointed out that P.E.As' instructional supervision visits had increased her self-confidence in interacting with strangers in class or school in general.

A similar result was obtained in Zimbabwe by Ngara, Ngwarai, and Ngara (2013) in which student teachers, who were the participants in their study, indicated that one of reasons for which they appreciated instructional supervision was that it boosted their confidence.

After having interacted with them during the interviews, the researcher found the participating teachers to be confident. They introduced themselves very well and were friendly which enabled the researcher to seek more clarifications from the interviewees. The participants were so comfortable that they could ask the researcher to repeat questions they had not understood. Others took the researcher to task to qualify his questions. For instance, upon being asked what qualities she would look for in an instructional supervisor, M2 responded by saying that it should have been qualities of *good* supervisor.

The teachers were not just comfortable with the researcher but also deliver their lessons with confidence even in the presence of a supervisor. An observational form prepared by the head teacher of Zomba Police Primary School on 4th June, 2016 for a Chichewa lesson in Standard 1 indicated that the was confident as signified by her mobility in order to assist the learners despite the presence of the head teacher. The teacher was also able to tell a story which grabbed learners' attention. This only serves to illustrate that P.E.As' had a positive impact on teachers as the

teachers were comfortable with a variety of teaching methods and classroom management techniques as suggested by the P.E.As. In fact, log books obtained from the three schools portrayed an image of confident teachers who were able to use a wide of assessment methods and appropriate teaching methods during lessons. The teachers were also able to use teaching resources effectively. Only confident teachers who believed in what they were doing could have done all that.

5.3.1.4 Enhanced Teacher Professionalism

As professionals, teachers are obliged to carry themselves in their in ways that is in line with the ethics of the job. MoEST has a clear code of conduct for teachers which outlines expected and acceptable standards of teacher behaviour. Having a code of conduct alone is not enough but its implementation matters. Hence instructional supervision by P.E.As ensures that the teachers adhere to the ethics of the teaching profession. Even though they are the targets of the code of ethics, the teachers expressed some positivity towards instructional supervision since it aids in maintaining professionalism in teaching. The interviews revealed that instructional supervision promotes professionalism among teachers. This corresponds with the results obtained by Ndebele in a study conducted in Zimbabwe in which 55% of the teachers who participated claimed that instructional supervision addressed their needs for growth as professionals. All the interviewees in this study cited professionalism as one of the areas that is enhanced by instructional supervision. M2 argued that P.E.As enhanced teacher professionalism in that they recommended to the teachers to be punctual and presentable.

One of spheres of teachers' professional lives that has to conform to the ethics guiding their job is dressing. Visits made to the schools involved in the study demonstrated that teachers carry themselves in manner befitting their status as role models. The researcher observed that some male teachers were smartly dressed in clean ironed shirts that they tucked in. Others were putting on jackets. Covering their feet were polished shoes while hanging around their necks were neck ties. Female teachers were not to be outsmarted as each of them put on decent clothes that were not revealing sensitive parts of their bodies such as thighs and breasts. Also invisible were golf shirts, jeans, sports shoes, long hair and beard in men as well as plastic shoes. All these were done to comply with the dressing code recommended by MoEST but enforced by the P.E.As.

This only serves to illustrate that instructional supervision by influences the kind of clothes that teachers were as well as their grooming habits.

Instructional supervision has definitely inculcated professionalism in the teachers such that each school that was involved in the study had a time book which enhanced teachers' punctuality since the teachers signed in it in order to indicate the time they reported for duties. MoEST expects teachers to be at their duty post by 7:00 AM. At 7:15 AM teachers are anticipated to organise and attend school assembly and by 7:30 AM lessons are expected to commence on every working day of the week. The study revealed that teachers strive to comply with MoEST's set time as proven by availability of the time books in the three schools. In terms of punctuality, the most exemplary teachers were Standard 8 teachers from Zomba Police Primary Schools whose lessons began as early as 5:00 AM. However, comparison of the three schools established that overall it was Matiya L.E.A Primary School that excelled in as far as punctuality was concerned. In the third term of 2015/16 school session, on average, more than of the teachers that reported for duties at Matiya L.E.A arrived at the school premises before 7:00 AM as indicated in the time book. For example, on 17th May, 2016, 26 teachers arrived at Matiya L.E.A School premises before 7:00 AM while only six teachers came after 7:00 AM. Matiya L.E.A outdid the other two schools in terms of punctuality because the administration resolved to draw a line in the time book in order to separate latecomers from those teachers who reported early for their duties on each working day. Although the other two schools fell short, the greater majority of teachers were at work by 7:30 AM. It should be noted that a few teachers chose to rush into classrooms instead of signing in the time books upon realising that they were up against the recommended time for commencing classes. Another factor that has to be taken into consideration is the fact that the schools have a serious housing shortage problem which implies the teachers have to commute to these schools from distant townships. As regards Matiya L.E.A Primary School, it has one teacher's house occupied by the head teacher. However, it is located in the densely populated Chikanda township which accords the teachers an opportunity of getting rental houses at relatively reasonable prices much closer to school.

5.3.1.5 Improved Learner Performance

Marshall (2005) argues that the theory of action behind supervision and evaluation is that they will improve teacher's effectiveness and therefore boost student performance. Concurring with

Marshall is Lillis (1992) who points out that supervisors actually do assist in the improvement of quality of performance of the pupils. Instructional supervision indirectly influences learners in that the P.E.As may recommend certain teaching methods to the teachers which upon their use might lead to effective learning. In addition to that, the P.E.As demand that teachers must always be in possession of documents which aid in lesson delivery such as lesson plans. This ensures the readiness of teachers. Given the fact that it is incumbent upon P.E.As to make suggestions on how to improve the teaching and learning process, it was not surprising to come across teachers who argued that instructional supervision by P.E.As has resulted in improved learner performance. In agreement with this assertion were nine of the respondents who linked instructional supervision to improved learner performance in the individual interviews. Being a Standard 8 teacher, P5 attested to the fact that instructional supervision had improved learners' performance as evidenced by the increased number of learners being selected to secondary schools. This was so because P.E.As emphasized on learner-centred teaching methods.

The belief that instructional supervision by P.E.As had improved learner performance may have arisen from the fact that the schools had experienced success as evidenced by increasing number of learners who were being selected to secondary schools. Even Zomba Municipal Assembly (2007) boasted that the 2006 results were particularly striking in the sense that the district managed to send to Kamuzu Academy six pupils, an achievement only a few districts in Malawi, if any, registered in 2006. Mponda Education Zone being part of the district had a share of the success. For instance, Zomba Police Primary School which outperforms the other two schools has seen its number of students being selected to secondary schools increasing. According to PSLCE results displayed on the walls of P.E.A's TDC office and the head teacher's office at Zomba Police Primary School, the number of learners selected to national secondary schools rose from 4 in 2012 to 6 in 2015. There was also an increase in the number of learners selected to Community Day Secondary Schools from 14 in 2012 to 70 in 2015.

However, when one disregards the increasing number of learners and considers the pass rates and selection percentage, it can be established the zone has not been excelling as portrayed by the teachers and the municipal assembly. In fact the pass rates and selection percentage have been fluctuating and in other cases declining. For example, the pass rate in P.S.LC.E at Matiya L.E.A was 78% in 2013 but decreased to 71% in 2015. Similarly, the pass rate for Zomba Police

declined from 94% in 2013 to 85% in 2015. At Zomba C.C.A.P Primary School, the pass rate was fluctuating: placed at 91% in 2013; 67% in 2014 and 84% in 2015. An Inspectional report for Zomba C.C.A.P Primary School produced on 25th February, 2016 described learners' performance in the national examination as average. This is to say that in as much as the P.E.As' supervision could be held responsible for the increasing number of learners being selected to secondary schools but overall the performance of the learners was not outstanding one. For example, no student was selected to national secondary schools from both Zomba C.C.A.P Primary School and Matiya L.E.A in the same period. Students from these schools have only been to conventional secondary schools and community day secondary schools.

5.3.1.6 Prepares Teachers for Interviews

As one carries out duties as expected of the post in any profession, the person always harbours aspirations of better perks as well as promotions. Getting better perks in teaching in Malawian public schools entails being invited to and attending interviews which either may be oral or written. The majority of the questions are in tandem with the teaching profession. For instance, they may ask teachers to mention the records they are supposed to have. During instructional supervision, the P.E.As look for certain records which the teachers must possess such as learners' attendance register. So when the teachers are asked questions pertaining to records, they draw upon the knowledge they acquire from their interaction with P.E.As. In other words, instructional supervision by P.E.As indirectly prepares the teachers for interviews since it inculcates in the teacher professionalism which comes to the rescue of teachers during interviews which seek to inquire the level of professionalism before teachers are considered for promotion. Seven respondents considered instructional supervision as being vital in preparation for interviews. M2 insisted that he found instructional supervision to be useful when he went for interviews since some of the questions related to the records which were sought for by P.E.As on their supervision visits.

5.3.1.7 Improved Classroom Management

On each working day, teachers are faced with management issues in classroom ranging from indiscipline cases to seating plan. Instructional supervision comes handy as the teachers confront classroom management challenges. Eight respondents disclosed in the interviews that instructional supervision has aided them in becoming better classroom managers. C2 disclosed

that instructional supervision had helped her to become gender-sensitive especially in the distribution of questions during lessons as well as classroom seating plan. This corresponds to the finding obtained at Winneba in Ghana by Esia-Donkoh and Oforu-Dwameno in 2014 in which 76.4% of the teachers involved in the study agreed that supervision makes them to be familiar with different techniques of classroom management.

As explained earlier, the P.E.As do emphasize on cleanliness hence during their supervision visit they look out for the cleanliness of the school premises including the classrooms. The researcher observed that before commencement of lessons at 7:30 AM, the learners had to sweep the classrooms as well as the surroundings in for the pupils to get educated in clean environment as recommended by the P.E.As.

Besides that, P.E.As stress on the need for utilisation of learner-centred methods which calls for building of good relationship with learners. Such methods aid in reducing tension that might spoil the good learning environment. An inspectional visit to Zomba C.C.A.P Primary School on 25th February, 2016 revealed that learners took responsibility in group work. Given that the learners were preoccupied with group activities, the lessons captured students' interest thereby reducing learners' indiscipline.

Apart from that, P.E.As not only lead teachers in the production of teaching resources but also guide teachers on how to use them so as to have an atmosphere which is conducive to learning. Instructional supervision by P.E.As in Mponda Education seemed to be paying dividends since the P.E.As during their supervision visit to Matiya L.E.A Primary School on 10th February, 2016 found out that “available resources were evenly distributed and the learners *did not scramble* for them. This illustrates that the teachers have taken heed of P.E.As' advice on how to use teaching resources i.e having enough teaching and learning aids to prevent chaos in classroom.

5.3.1.8 Class Allocation

Obiweluzor, Momoh and Ogbonnaya (2013) assert that supervision helps to discover special abilities or qualities possessed by teachers in the school. This can be used as a guide for staff development (Obiweluzor, Momoh, and Ogbonnaya, 2013). The study established that instructional supervision has a role to play when it comes to assigning of teachers to various classes. This is so since instructional supervision enables the P.E.As to unearth teachers' level of

competency and skills. One of the duties of P.E.As upon arrival at various schools for supervision visit is to evaluate lesson delivery. As the P.E.As observe the lessons, they analyse teachers' capabilities. If the teacher puts up an exceptional performance, the P.E.As may recommend to the head teachers that such teachers be shifted to high classes. However, if the P.E.As come across an incompetent teacher, they may recommend that such teachers be moved to lower classes. The prerogative of assigning teachers to such classes rests in the hands of the head teachers who take into consideration the work rate of an individual teacher. Supporting instructional supervision were ten participants who argued that instructional supervision enables hardworking teachers to be shifted to higher classes. M5 said that instructional supervision enabled P.E.As to know teachers' performance thereby enabling them to recommend to head teachers as to which class should be assigned.

It should be taken into account that these class allocations may be done either immediately after a supervision visit or later on depending on the severity of incompetence. If the P.E.As identify minor weaknesses in a teacher, the reallocation may be done in the next school session. If the mistakes are too grave, the head teacher may reallocate such teachers immediately. It should be noted, too, that instructional supervision only influences the class allocation but the prerogative to do still rests in the hands of the head teachers.

5.3.2 Feelings that Presence of a PEA generates in a Teacher

One of the activities that the P.E.As do upon arrival at a school is lesson observation. This implies that they have to physically visit a classroom in order to observe and evaluate a teacher's lesson. The intrusion by P.E.As into classrooms changes the atmosphere even the students may take notice of that. Given the impact that P.E.As have on classroom atmosphere, the question was what feelings does such presence create in the teacher? The presence of a PEA in a classroom seems not to shake the teachers. The majority of respondents interviewed, thirteen of them, expressed no fear of having an instructional supervisor in their class. This finding is similar to that of Mpofu (2007) whose study revealed that the majority of teachers, 66% to be specific, had no phobia for presence of instructional supervisors in class. Similar findings were obtained in a research carried out in Kenya by Mwangi et al. (2014) who indicated that 67% of the teachers felt that presence of external instructional supervisors did not elicit anxiety in them showing that supervisor-teacher relationship was congenial. From this study, P5 indicated that

she felt confident whenever the P.E.A entered her class since they were professional colleagues. On the other hand, M2 expressed her comfortability with P.E.As' presence since it only demonstrated that education authorities highly value teachers.

While expressing their confidence in supervision, three respondents were frank enough to disclose the fear that they had at the beginning of their teaching profession. For instance, C4 said that she did not P.E.A's presence but was afraid of them in the early years of her career.

However, two interviewees pointed out that the feelings that presence of a PEA generates in teachers depended on the teachers' preparedness. P2 argued that a teacher, herself included, could not fear supervision as long as one was prepared. According to her, it was only the unprepared teachers, such as those with no lesson plans, that could be afraid of P.E.A's presence.

5.3.3 Relationship between Teachers and PEAs

Onasanya (2011) recommends that supervisory environment should be rendered free of tension and emotional stress. In fact, Ogusanya (Course Module: EDU 810) states that supervision should help improve attitudes and relationship of all school personnel in order to facilitate the realization of school goals and objectives. Luckily enough, the study has established that the relationship between teachers and PEAs is cordial in Mponda Education Zone. In fact eleven of the fifteen respondents individually interviewed expressed total satisfaction with the relationship between teachers and PEAs. C1, for example, asserted that the teachers had a cordial relationship with P.E.As since the P.E.As were there to help. Concurring with her was C2 who said that she found the P.E.As to be friendly since they were simply doing their job.

In as much as the remaining respondents concur with others on the existence of good working relationship with PEAs, they pointed out that the relationship depends on the PEA's personality as well as teachers' commitment to work. C4 pointed out that the relationship between teachers and P.E.As was reliant upon the P.E.A's personality. Some shouted during post conferences while others talked to them as professional colleagues. While acknowledging the existence of good relationship between P.E.As and teachers, M1 stressed that the relationship depended on the teachers' adherence to professional ethics. If the rules are not followed, the P.E.As may become harsh.

5.3.4 PEAs' Attitude towards Teachers

The majority of the respondents were of the view that PEAs approach teachers with positive mind. This was the view of thirteen of fifteen individual interviewees. This is a welcome development since instructional supervision can be viewed as being helpful only if the teachers believe that supervision is intended to assist them in improving instruction. However, when supervisors are viewed as critics, the teachers feel so uncomfortable that they cannot relay their problems to supervisors (Abdulkareem, 2001). Expressing satisfaction with P.E.As attitude towards teachers in this study was P4 who said that P.E.As were friendly since they once served as teachers. As a result, they knew the situation on the ground hence the teachers expected the P.E.As to assist them (22/07/2015).

Although three respondents amongst the thirteen recognize the positive attitude of PEAs towards teachers, they stated that it depends on the PEA's personality and teacher's professional record. Representative of this assertion was P3 who stated that P.E.As usually approached teachers with positive mind but they became unfriendly if they came across a teacher with poor professional record (P3, 22/07/2015).

While supporting the claim that P.E.As in Mponda Education Zone viewed the teachers positively, one teacher feared for the future when it comes to PEAs' attitude. C4 lamented that the re-introduction of the inspectorate was retrogressive as that marked an attitudinal shift into negativity with the possibility of P.E.As becoming harsher (21/07/2015).

Only two interviewees expressed displeasure with PEAs' attitude. In this regard, M4 complained that P.E.As had negative attitude towards teachers. He went on to say that P.E.As always blamed teachers for poor learner performance without taking into consideration other factors such as textbooks' availability(M4, 23/07/2015)

5.3.5 Qualities of a good PEA (Instructional Supervisor)

As stated earlier, good supervisors come from a combination of different factors which include: personal qualities and attributes, personal knowledge and technical skills, experience and specific training in the role (South Australian Government, 2007). During the study, the respondents were granted the opportunity of describing what they consider to be the qualities of a good PEA. The respondents came up with a number of features of an ideal instructional

supervisor, in Malawi's case, known as a PEA. The frequently mentioned qualities of a good PEA were friendliness and honesty. Apart from that, teachers expect PEAs to be fair, exemplary, impartial, constructive in their criticisms, and regular with their visits.

Giwa (1993) states that instructional supervisors should not see themselves as administrators far removed from teaching and learning activities. This implies that supervisors need to interact with teachers as professional colleagues. Teachers face a number of challenges in their profession to which they solution hence they seek for an instructional supervisor who is helpful. That assistance can only be rendered if the PEAs are approachable. Therefore, all the fifteen teachers expect PEAs to be friendly. Thus friendliness is the first quality of an ideal instructional supervisor. In support of this quality was P4 who expected a P.E.A to be cheerful and approachable so as not to scare away teachers who seek for assistance (22/07/2015).

Apart from that, teachers would prefer PEAs to rate them without any preconceived vendetta. That is, the respondents, five in total, expect their performance in class to be the determinant of the score they obtain on a supervision form. In other words, teachers expect an instructional supervisor to be fair. This result is similar to that obtained in Zimbabwe by Tshabalala (2013) in a study in which teachers expressed their desire for supervisors to use supervision for professional reason and not to victimise teachers or settle grudges that have nothing to do with the education of the child. M2, of Mponda Education Zone, argued that PEAs should be fair especially when it came to grades given to teachers after supervision. They should discuss the grades with the teachers concerned. In other words, they should justify the grades to teachers not just giving the grade without liasing with the teachers (23/07/2015). Similarly, M5 pointed out that the grade given on the supervision form should reflect teacher's performance. PEAs should give grades in accordance with the performance not depending feelings or grudges which might cloud their judgement (M5, 23/07/2015)."

Obiweluozor, Momoh and Ogbonnaya (2013) argued that if supervision was to be effective, the teaching staff must be given an orientation about the quality of work by the instructional supervisors. Concurring with this assertion were three participants who expressed their desire for PEAs to be individuals who should be exemplary. Since PEAs offer suggestions and solutions to challenges to teachers, they must themselves to adhere to the recommendations they utter. For example, M4 suggested that if P.E.As stressed on presentability of teachers, the P.E.As

themselves must be smartly dressed as well. Sharing this sentiment was P1 who emphasized on the need for P.E.As to be industrious so that they could be taken seriously by the teachers instead of loafing at Teacher Development Centres (23/07/2015)

One of the principles of an effective supervisory system is guidance. The staff should be offered any needed guidance, including how to carry out their assignment (Onasanya, 2011). During a lesson, certain things may go right but others wrongly for teacher. P.E.As need to include all of these in their assessment so that the post observation conference can reflect the true performance of the teacher. As a post conference is being held, teachers expect the PEAs to express their opinions in an honest manner. Put another way, teachers expect to get feedback from the PEAs that is straight to the point. Eight teachers cited honesty as one the characteristic of a good instructional supervisor which guide teachers on what to maintain and what to discard. Illustrative of this point was P3 who asserted that it was necessary for P.E.As to pinpoint both the strengths and weaknesses of a lesson (22/07/2015).

Frequency of supervision visits matters when it comes to the qualities of an effective PEA. The respondents unanimously agreed that an effective instructional supervisor is the one that conduct regular supervision visits. Elaborating this point was M3 who preferred a P.E.A who regularly visited the schools in order to check how their suggestions were being implemented by the teachers (M3, 23/07/2015).

Primary school teachers employed by government must be subjected to supervision in which all are treated equally. Thus the respondents, four in number, expressed their desire to have a PEA who is impartial when it comes to awarding of a supervision grade. M5 complained that PEAs sometimes favoured teachers who were their friends by giving them good grades. When they came on a supervision visit, such PEAs just chatted with their favourite teachers in the class instead of supervising them. PEAs should not favour any teacher when it comes to instructional supervision (23/07/2015).

Onasanya (2011) points out that immediate recognition of good work is another principle of effective supervision. The acknowledgement of good work must be done immediately and must be made public way to serve as an incentive to others. Seven respondents also expressed their desire to have a PEA who recognizes good teaching performance. Supervision should not be

only a fault finding exercise. M2 lamented that PEAs were mostly interested in teacher's weaknesses. She went on to that P.E.As should also tell the teachers to keep it up where they have done well rather than simply turning a blind eye to such good performance (23/07/2015).

For every action there is a reaction goes the saying. Similarly when it comes to instructional supervision, the manner in which feedback is given also matters. Onasanya (2011) stresses the need for substandard work to be criticized in constructive manner. Ryan and Gotfried (2012) concur that it is the role of a supervisor to create an environment where the staff feel a level of comfort and trust that allows them to experience an open, honest reflection with their peers without fear of ridicule or disrespect. Therefore, four respondents would prefer PEAs to provide constructive criticism. M3 said that a good P.E.A was one who corrected teachers' mistakes in a private discussion instead of criticizing the teachers before the learners (23/07/2015). Besides that, P2 expressed the need for P.E.As to point out teachers' mistakes in friendly tone (P2, 22/07/2015).

5.4.0 Teachers' preferred Alterations to Current Instructional Supervision

Overall, teachers appreciated the work being done by PEAs. In other words, all teachers supported the existence of instructional supervision conducted by P.E.As. Four of the teachers involved in the study, in fact, were in full support of the current instructional supervision as carried out by P.E.As implying that no changes should be introduced. However, eleven respondents pointed out that instructional supervision should continue to exist but with some modifications which are discussed below. It should, however, be noted from the onset that some of the suggestions made by the teachers are unique in that the researcher has not come across studies in which teachers demanded for the similar modifications. This truly reflects the nature of qualitative research whose aim is not to make generalisations but giving voice to the feelings and perceptions of the participants under study. It should also be borne in mind that none of the teachers was able to suggest all the modifications as discussed below.

5.4.1 The Need for the Receipt of Supervision/Lesson Observation Forms

One of the means through which feedback about class interactions can be provided to the teachers is lesson observation reports (Marshall, 2005). Since supervisors are expected to give feedback, they observe and record the conduct of a lesson. Instructional supervision needs to

include feedback if it is to have positive impact on lesson delivery. Marshall (2005) asserts that provision of feedback is beneficial to the teacher in that the strengths of the supervisee are identified and built upon. At the same time, feedback assists in the identification of weaknesses of the supervisee which provides the basis for staff development and provides the teacher an immediate audience with which to discuss the experience (Marshall, 2005). A number of respondents complained that after being supervised, they were not given a copy of their supervision form. Therefore, they expressed their desire for these forms to be given to them. This change was suggested by six interviewees. Desiring this change was C2 who criticised P.E.As for not handing copies of supervision forms to the teachers whose lessons they had just observed. Sharing the same sentiments was M4 who expressed the need for P.E.As to give teachers supervision forms so that they could revisit the P.E.A's feedback (23/07/2015).

5.4.2 Connecting Supervision with Promotions

Mulkeen (2010) asserts that for most professionals, opportunities for promotions provide an important motivation for performance and professional development; they also assist institutions in retaining skilled staff. For promotional systems to have value in motivating teachers to improve their performance, the selection must be perceived to be genuinely based on merit (Mulkeen, 2010). Unfortunately, the challenge in Malawi is what a large number of teachers consider to be unfair criterion that is utilised when promoting the teachers. Under the current arrangement, a teacher is promoted based on performance during the interviews which are conducted a panel of three including representatives of the Ministry of Education, the Teaching Service Commission and an independent observer. That being the case, numerous lazy teachers are promoted on account of their success during interviews. This demoralises many industrious teachers, who despite their efforts in class, are left out when it comes to promotion (Mulkeen, 2010).

Mulkeen and Chen (2008) argue that the absence of an assessment of performance in determining promotion provides little incentive for teachers to improve the quality of their work. No wonder that some of the participants expressed their disillusionment with instructional supervision as it has no bearing what so ever on the possibilities of getting promotion. That was why seven respondents expressed their desire for good performance to be recognized and rewarded. In other words, supervision needs to have a bearing on teachers' careers. In support of

this was C3 who expressed the desire for promotions to be made after taking into consideration the performance of teachers as revealed by the supervision forms. Similarly, M3 suggested that the grades that one obtains after supervision should have an impact on teachers' career progress including being considered for promotion, upgrading or any other responsibility (M3, 23/07/2015).

The concern for current promotion system used in Malawi has been raised before. Kadzamira (2006) lamented that promotion criteria used in Malawi are demoralising as they are not based on performance, years of experience, or recognition of professional qualifications. She went on to point out that most teachers interviewed in a V.S.O study highlighted the fact that promotions based on interviews, as currently used in Malawi, were not the best method to assess teacher competency. Even the Teacher Service Commission was aware of the limitations of the current system and had proposed that inspection reports and performance appraisal system by head teachers and inspectors should be introduced when assessing teachers for promotions (Kadzamira, 2006).

5.4.3 Focus on the Class Time Table

In schools, time is of essence. As a result, all activities and lessons are allocated their time on the class timetable which has to be honoured by the teaching staff as well as the learners. For instance, if time allocated for a certain has elapsed, the concerned teacher winds up the lesson to pave way for the colleague. This is well known and encouraged by the officials in the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology. Contrary to teachers' expectations, P.E.As occasionally disregard the timetable and let their wishes to takeover. They may, for example, choose to supervise a subject, which has been already taught or a subject whose time is not yet. Such sudden changes annoy the teachers. Eight respondents argued that it was desirable that PEAs begin to respect the class timetable. The timetable indicates which time a subject is to be taught and in what order. Therefore, teachers need not short-changed by the PEAs. For example, C2 complained that at times P.E.As ordered a teacher to teach a subject that was not due at that particular time. Concurring with this was M5 who lamented that sometimes a P.E.A might compel a teacher to teach a subject of an absent colleague for which they might not be prepared to teach (M5, 23/07/2015).

5.4.4 Timing of Instructional Supervision Visits

The P.E.As have every right to visit any school of their preference. In fact, all of the teachers in the study had no problems with supervision visits. However, the scheduling of such visits has influence how they are viewed by the teachers. Are they meant to be an interruption to teachers' planned activities or they are meant for the betterment of teachers and learners? Such a question has to be considered by the P.E.As as they produce their supervision schedule. Five respondents expressed concern in the way PEAs time their supervision visits. For example, P4 called on P.E.As not visit the schools in the first week since during such a week teachers spend their time perfecting their records as well as supervising students in cleaning the dirty surroundings. In the same vein, P5 called on P.E.As to desist from conducting their lesson observation visits in the final weeks of a term since it interferes with the schools' examination timetables (P5, 22/07/2015.)

5.4.5 Need for Consistent Post-Observation Conferences

Post-observation conference allows the instructional supervisor to dialogue with the teacher on the observed lesson and allows the teacher to give input on the lesson (Reavis, 1976). According to Hismanoglu and Hismanoglu (2010), instructional supervisors are supposed to hold a meeting with the teachers during which observations and evaluations are shared and that a supervision report is written on observations, defects, improper and desirable practices so as to make suggestions and provide insights for the coming supervisions. However, the P.E.As are inconsistent with holding of post observation conferences. Therefore, five teachers involved in the study desire to have post observation conferences so that they may liaise with instructional supervisors on their performance after being supervised. Clarifying this point, C3 criticized P.E.As for not having an immediate private dialogue with the teachers in order to give the teachers feedback on the lessons observed. She, therefore, expressed her desire for teachers to have private dialogue with the P.E.As immediately after lesson observation. She also said that P.E.As made general comments to the whole teaching staff at the end of their supervision visit instead of dealing with individual teachers. She also disclosed that at times she had to follow the P.E.As in order to get feedback on her lessons (21/07/2015).

This confirms the findings of study done by Tshabalala (2013) in which most teachers indicated that they preferred immediate post instructional discussion. They revealed that this helped them to have a rough idea of what the supervision report would look like. They also added that during this discussion session, weak and strong points of the lesson are highlighted (Tshabalala, 2013).

5.4.6 Empathy

Kotirde and Yunos (2008) describe good supervisors as ones that are empathetic, genuine, open and flexible as they respect supervisees as persons and as developing professionals and sensitive to individual differences of the supervisees. Blasé (2003) recommends that supervision should relinquish its technocratic surveillance of teachers and work towards a just and democratic world. Mattson (2006) warned that when an instructional supervisor finds it difficult to shift from a strict, supervisory role as an advisor, it makes it difficult for teachers to share real problems. Five respondents were of the view that PEAs need to understand issues from teachers' perspective. The respondents complained that PEAs turn deaf ears to teachers' explanations for any shortfall identified in the supervision exercise. According to M2, P.E.As acted as faultfinders looking for the tiniest mistakes in a teacher. He pointed out that P.E.As sometimes disregard teachers' explanations as they try to respond to criticisms levelled against them by the P.E.As. Citing his own example, he disclosed that at one time he was criticised for not having charts yet P.E.As did not appreciate the fact that his classroom's doors could not be locked due technical fault which enabled intruders to remove and tear the charts. Similarly, M4 called for P.E.As to stop blaming teachers for poor learner performance yet there could be other factors responsible for that such as laziness on the part of learners (M4, 23/07/2015).

This is consistent with the findings of research carried out by Abdulkareem (2001) in Saudi Arabia. In his study, teachers expressed their desire for supervisors to treat teachers with respect and trust. Thus, supervisors should improve their interpersonal communication skills and strive to avoid distorted messages while communicating with teachers. The top-to-down style in their work should be minimized and kept only for the formal administrative measures (Abdulkareem, 2001). Ndebele (2013) recommends that improvement of teaching must start with respect for the personality of the teachers and their work.

5.4.7 Choice of Subjects to be supervised

No person can excel in everything. Similarly, teachers have the subjects they enjoy most teaching and therefore are more likely to accept to have them supervised. This problem lies in the way the primary school teachers are trained in Malawi. The primary school teachers in Malawi expected to any subject and any class without consideration for their strengths and weaknesses. The study has revealed teachers' resentment of being supervised in subjects they consider to be challenging. No teacher can be comfortable being supervised in challenging subjects. Therefore, there is a need to revisit recruitment and training of teachers in Malawi. If some of our teachers cannot deliver in certain subjects, then what sort of education is the nation providing to its citizens? Amazing as it may sound, six participants expressed their desire to be given a choice of which subjects they can be supervised by the P.E.As. For instance, M4 wished she could only be supervised in her favourite subjects since they were graded. As it was, P.E.As could supervise any subject including those that she found to be challenging resulting in a poor grade. Concurring with her was C3, who indicated that she disliked teaching Chichewa and she was displeased more having Chichewa lessons supervised by P.E.As (C3, 21/07/2015).

5.4.8 Impartiality of PEAs

One of the qualities of good instructional supervisor cited by a number of the participants was impartiality. The P.E.As need to be objective in the evaluation of the lessons. They should not let grudges they have with some teachers to resurface during the evaluation. At the same time, the P.E.As should not exempt any teacher from such an exercise on account of being their friends. Equal treatment for all must be the principle. Four respondents were concerned with the discriminatory manner in which some PEAs supervise the teachers. It was disclosed that some PEAs have their favourite teachers whom they relate to as friends hence exempting them from supervision exercise. M5 stated that in general, PEAs should be impartial in the way they gave their supervision scores. However, she lamented that they favoured their friends whom they awarded good grades. Instead of supervising them, the PEAs might spend their time in classes chatting with them as their friends.” (23/07/2015)

5.4.9 Emphasize Records less but Lesson Delivery more

Teaching involves much more than standing in front of learners inculcating them with knowledge. Teachers in public primary schools in Malawi are required by MoEST to prepare

lesson plans, schemes and records of work as well as producing and maintaining various records such as stock book, learners' profile and learners' progress book among others. Apart from that, they are expected to produce learning aids as well as performing other duties which may be assigned to them by the head teacher. Since teachers' records are an area of focus of instructional supervision by P.E.As, the teachers always strive to prepare and update them. Not only are the teachers' records too numerous but they also have prepared for large classes which is time consuming. This takes much of teachers' time leaving them inadequately prepared for the lessons. The study revealed that primary school teachers were supposed to produce fourteen different records which they have to update from time to time. Five respondents complained that this consumes much of their time and interferes with lesson preparations. Hence the need for PEAs to shift much of their attention to lesson delivery rather than stressing on records negatively affects teachers' preparation for lessons. In other words, the number of teaching records needs to be reduced to only include the most important ones for lesson delivery such schemes and records of work as well as lesson plans. Illustrating this point was P4 who complained that teachers were overburdened by records which they prepared and updated of which there were fourteen in total. For example, recording of written exercise results for each learner for a big class like hers was not only tiresome but time consuming as well. So she wished that PEAs could concentrate on what goes in class rather than the records (P4, 22/07/2015).

This is in line with the results obtained in study carried out by Abdulkareem (2001) in which teachers called for supervision to focus on improving teachers' performance instead of evaluation. The primary goal of supervision is to help and support teachers to adapt, adopt and refine the instructional practices they are to perform in classroom (Abdulkareem, 2001). In agreement with this are the findings of study conducted in Canada by Poirer (2009) in which teachers complained that increased teacher workloads interfered with the development of teachers' skills and abilities. Similarly, Mulkeen (2010) found out that supervisors in African English-speaking countries, Malawi included, were inadequately prepared to provide pedagogical support, and much of their feedback seemed to focus more on mechanical issues such as lesson planning and the use of teaching materials.

CHAPTER SIX

Summary, Conclusion and Recommendations

6.0 Chapter overview

So far the study has described instructional supervision as a concept. It has also explained the implication of teachers' perceptions on effectiveness of instructional supervision. In addition to that, the study has described the research methodology utilised by the researcher as well as presented, discussed and analysed study's findings. This chapter does the following: gives a brief summary of the study; draws conclusions based on the research's findings; and makes recommendations which may be valuable to various education stakeholders including officials at MoEST and instructional supervisors.

6.1 Summary of the Study

With Malawi's declining education standards in mind, the researcher investigated teacher's perceptions of instructional supervision since their perceptions have implications on the effectiveness of instructional supervision. Effective instructional supervision entails improved teaching which in turn leads to quality education. Involved in the study were fifteen teachers from three public primary schools in Mponda Education Zone in Zomba City. These participants were conveniently sampled from a zonal teacher population of about 262 since the researcher resides in the same city. This study was qualitative in nature in the form of a multiple case study as the researcher intended to investigate on the effectiveness of instructional supervision as carried by P.E.As from the perspective of public primary school teachers. Data was collected from the respondents through individual face to face interviews and focus group discussions. The data has been presented in narrative form since it was a qualitative research.

6.2.0 Research Questions

The study sought to address the following questions:

- What was teachers' understanding of the term instructional supervision?
- How was instructional supervision carried out in the zone?
- What impact has instructional supervision had on their teaching profession?

- How best could instructional supervision be executed?

6.2.1 Teachers' Understanding of Instructional Supervision

The first objective of this research was to find out from the teachers what instructional supervision meant to them. The majority of the respondents, fourteen to be precise, equated instructional supervision to evaluation which is judgemental in nature. That is to say, the participants regarded as a fault-finding exercise as P.E.As check if teachers are meeting the standards set by MoEST. Only one participant identified instructional supervision as an advisory exercise in which teachers are assisted to be more effective.

6.2.2 Conduct of Supervision by P.E.As

The second task of the study was to establish how external supervision is carried out by the P.E.A in the zone. The study established that in Mponda Education Zone instructional supervision is done jointly with the assistance of a colleague from the neighbouring Likangala Education Zone from the same city of Zomba. The P.E.As conduct supervision visits during which they look for teachers' punctuality, teachers' presentability, teachers' records, teaching and learning aids, lesson presentation among many other things. The P.E.As also arranged for professional development in the form in-service training at the Teacher Development Centre.

6.2.3 Impact of Instructional Supervision conducted by P.E.As

Thirdly, the study aimed at finding out teachers' perceptions of the current instructional supervision in public primary schools. The respondents highlighted a number of positives from the current instructional supervision including frequent supervision visits and the cordial relationship with P.E.As. They also believe that it is beneficial in numerous ways such as: improved classroom management, improved learner performance, self esteem boost on the part of teachers, enhanced professionalism, improved teaching methods, and improved teacher preparedness.

6.2.4 Better Instructional Supervision

In as much as the respondents drew a lot of positives from the current instructional supervision, they indicated the need for alterations to be made to service. This was the participants' response to the final research question on how instructional supervision could be best executed. The teachers emphasized on the need for P.E.As to provide them with lesson observation forms so that they can have concrete feedback. Some called for instructional supervision to be linked to promotion. Besides, they expressed their desire for P.E.As to focus on and follow classroom timetable whenever they are on a supervision visit. Instructional supervisors also have to reconsider the timing of instructional supervision visits. Not only that, the teachers pointed out the need for P.E.As to hold post conferences after lesson observation so that they can know where to improve. Furthermore, the respondents would also have liked if P.E.As could be empathetic and impartial. Last but not least, some wanted the instructional supervisors to emphasize less on records but more on the lesson delivery. Finally, others would have preferred if P.E.As could supervise them in the subjects they were good at.

6.3 Conclusion

The study has revealed that the teachers were unanimously for instructional supervision as they found it beneficial in their profession. It is significant in that it improves classroom management, teaching methodologies, learners' performance, teachers' preparedness and self esteem.

Despite acknowledging and appreciating the current instructional supervision, the teachers were able to articulate their preferences in the exercise. The teachers disclosed that it could be better to be supervised by P.E.As, as instructional supervisors are known in Malawi, who are impartial, fair, friendly, exemplary, constructive in criticisms, honesty and empathetic.

In addition to that, the respondents suggested a number of reforms that can be made to improve the current instructional supervisory practices. The teachers argued for the need: for P.E.As to give them a copy of their lesson observation forms; for linking supervision with promotion; for following class timetable; and for post conferences. They also expressed the desire for P.E.As to rethink and revisit the timing of instructional supervision. No longer should it be conducted during terminal examination time.

6.4 Recommendations

In as much as the research has established teachers' appreciation and acceptance of instructional supervision, there is always room for improvement. As such that the researcher came up with a number of recommendations. Firstly, all teachers need to be considered for continuous professional development since they all face challenges in the classrooms. The current trend seems to favour those in the infant section.

In addition to that, there needs to be a cessation in the P.E.As' tendency of compelling teachers into teaching subjects not meant for a particular period on the class timetable and subjects of other absent teachers for which they may not be prepared. Using force against teachers would only generate teachers' resentment for supervision thereby rendering the whole exercise to be ineffective.

The government must also link instructional supervision with certain rewards so as to motivate hard working teachers. Such rewards include promotions as well as being considered for workshops. The current set up result in lazy teachers being promoted since their performance as indicated on lesson observation forms is not taken into account.

P.E.As need to be consistent with their post- observation conferences. After lesson observation, every teacher needs to be provided with feedback. The current trend whereby P.E.As may either leave a school without holding post conferences with individual teachers or without giving the teachers their own copies of lesson observation forms leaves teachers in suspense. Therefore, the P.E.As need to make sure that they leave a school after having provided the teachers with copies of lesson observation forms as well as having held post conferences with the teachers.

Besides that, favouritism should not have a place in instructional supervision as it demoralizes other teachers who are not friends of the P.E.As. Therefore, P.E.As must provide supervision grades that reflect teachers' performances and not their relationship with the P.E.As. In other words, performances of all teachers should be subjected to fair assessment. No teacher should be spared from the exercise.

Apart from that, P.E.As' interference with terminal examinations does not make sense. P.E.As should not stop exams just in order for them to observe lessons. Therefore, supervision visits

should not tamper with terminal examination timetable as it not only disturbs the teachers but the learners as well since they prepare to sit for a particular exam paper on a specific day.

Furthermore, P.E.As need to embrace democratic style of leadership so as not to scare the teachers from instructional supervision. Put another way, the P.E.As need to listen to teachers' explanations before passing judgement on the teachers. The tendency of lambasting teachers without P.E.As evaluating their explanations leaves teachers disgusted with the whole exercise. This is a democratic era as such supervision should be democratic as well.

Finally, Government needs to revisit the primary school teacher training programmes especially the recruitment aspect. It should either recruit those that have performed well in the national exams at secondary school level or teachers must specialize in certain subjects based on the grades they obtain in the national exams, MSCE. Just imagine a teacher complaining about P.E.As supervising subjects in which they consider themselves to be weak. If teachers cannot competently deliver in such subjects, then what sort of future leaders are we going to have? I am afraid ..half baked citizens.

6.5 Suggestions for further Research

Due to the limited scope of study, the researcher makes the following suggestions for further research:

- A similar study could be carried out in rural areas of Malawi and abroad.
- A similar research could be carried out on student teachers in Malawi and beyond.
- A similar research could be carried out in private schools.
- A similar research could be carried out in secondary schools.
- Teachers' perceptions of instructional supervision by head teachers may also be investigated.
- So can challenges faced by P.E.As as they carry instructional supervision.

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INTERVIEW GUIDE

- i) Identify yourself.
- ii) How long have you been in the profession?
- iii) What is your own understanding of the term “supervision”?
- iv) Why do you think supervision exists?
- v) How do the Primary Education Advisors fulfill this purpose?
- vi) Who supervises teachers in an education zone? Is it a P.E.A from the same zone or from another zone?
- vii) On average, how many times are you supervised in a term?
- viii) How do you get to know about an impending supervision visit?
- ix) What feeling does an impending supervision visit generate in you as a teacher?
Why?
- x) What does a supervision visit involve? Does it have a pre-conference or post-conference? What sort of instruments do P.E.A.s use?
- xi) Describe your ideal P.E.A (instructional supervisor).
- xii) From your experience, how would you describe the relationship between the Primary Education Advisors and teachers?
- xiii) What sort of attitude do Primary Education Advisors display towards teachers?
- xiv) What do you feel about the current supervision practices by P.E.As?

Thank you for your time and cooperation

TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF INSTRUCTIONAL SUPERVISION

LETTER OF CONSENT FOR TEACHER PARTICIPANT

Dear _____,

I appreciate that you have accepted to participate in the research study titled "Teachers' Perceptions of Instructional Supervision: A Case Study of Teachers from Three Public Primary Schools in Mponda Education Zone". The ultimate goal of this academic research is to investigate how teachers perceive instructional supervision. The significance of this research lies in the fact that teachers' perceptions have a bearing on the effectiveness of instructional supervision.

In this study, the researcher shall interview you in order to discuss your understanding of, experiences and preferences in supervision. These interviews shall be transcribed verbatim. That is, the researcher shall be writing down your responses to the questions that will be put to you during the interviews.

Besides that, be informed that your participation in the research is voluntary. At the same time, the researcher assures you that your identity as well as that of your school shall be protected through nondisclosure of your name and that of your school. The published thesis shall be sent to Mzuzu University for assessment and storage.

If you have any questions about your participation or your rights as a participant in this study, you may contact me on the following phone number 0884489844 or my supervisor, Dr Sam Safuli, Department of Education and Teaching Studies, at 0888220331.

I, _____, understand the information provided above, agree to take part in the study and acknowledge the reception of a copy of consent form.

Date: _____

Participant's signature: _____

Researcher's signature: _____