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# Lecturers' Clinical Supervision Activities During School Practice- A Ugandan Context

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#### **ABSTRACT**

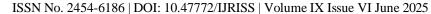
This study examined the clinical supervision activities conducted by lecturers during the June/July 2024 school practice at Bugema University. The purpose of the study was to investigate the extent to which lecturers engage in core clinical supervision tasks such as lesson planning support, classroom observation, and feedback provision to student teachers. The target population consisted of lecturers from Bugema University who were involved in supervising student teachers during the specified school practice period. A purposive sampling technique was used to select a sample of thirty-two (32) lecturers, including twenty (20) males and twelve (12) females, based on their active participation in the school practice supervision exercise. The study adopted a descriptive research design and employed a quantitative approach for data collection. A structured questionnaire, based on a fivepoint Likert scale, was used to gather data on various clinical supervision activities. Descriptive statistics, including means and standard deviations, were used to analyze the data. The findings revealed that lecturers were actively involved in key supervision activities. For example, respondents strongly agreed that they guided student teachers in preparing schemes of work (M = 4.97, SD = 0.177), creating lesson plans (M = 4.84, SD = 0.177) 0.369), and using instructional materials (M = 4.53, SD = 0.671). They also observed classroom teaching (M = 4.94, SD = 0.246), conducted post-observation analysis (M = 4.72, SD = 0.457), and provided feedback through post-observation conferences (M = 4.81, SD = 0.397). However, pre-observation conferencing was relatively weak (M = 3.44, SD = 1.435), indicating an area needing improvement. The study concluded that while lecturers demonstrated strong involvement in most clinical supervision practices, more emphasis should be placed on strengthening pre-observation conferencing to enhance the effectiveness of the school practice experience.

# INTRODUCTION

Clinical supervision is a vital element in the professional preparation of student teachers, serving as a structured, supportive, and developmental process through which experienced lecturers guide and assess student teachers during school practice. Unlike general supervision, clinical supervision involves systematic observation, feedback, and reflective dialogue aimed at improving instructional practices and promoting professional growth. It provides student teachers with the opportunity to refine their teaching skills, align theory with practice, and develop confidence in managing real classroom environments. In universities, lecturers play a central role in conducting clinical supervision during school practice. Their responsibilities include Pre-observation conferencing, classroom observation, post-observation feedback, and continuous mentoring. However, the effectiveness of these supervision activities often varies due to differences in preparation, supervision styles, workload, and institutional support. Despite its importance, there is limited research on how clinical supervision is practically implemented by lecturers during school practice, particularly within universities in Uganda.

#### STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

School practice is a critical component of teacher education, providing student teachers with the opportunity to translate theory into practice within real classroom settings. To ensure effective professional development, clinical supervision by lecturers plays a vital role in guiding, mentoring, and assessing the performance of student teachers. However, there are growing concerns about the adequacy, consistency, and relevance of the clinical





supervision activities conducted by lecturers during school practice. In many institutions, these activities are often irregular, poorly coordinated, or inadequately aligned with pedagogical goals, which may limit the professional growth of student teachers. Furthermore, variations in supervision strategies, limited lecturer involvement, and insufficient feedback mechanisms have been observed, raising questions about the quality and impact of the supervision process. This study seeks to investigate the nature, extent, and effectiveness of clinical supervision activities conducted by lecturers during school practice, with the aim of identifying gaps, challenges, and opportunities for improvement in teacher education programs

# **METHODOLOGY**

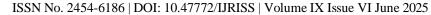
The study employed a a mixed methods design to explore the clinical supervision activities conducted by lecturers during school practice. The research was conducted among lecturers at Bugema University who actively participated in the supervision of student teachers during the June/July 2024 school practice exercise. A total of thirty-two (32) lecturers were purposively selected to participate in the study. The purposive sampling technique was adopted to ensure that only lecturers who had firsthand experience in supervising student teachers during the specified school practice period were included. This sampling approach was considered appropriate for obtaining rich and relevant data from knowledgeable participants. The sample comprised twenty (20) male and twelve (12) female lecturers, reflecting the gender distribution among the supervisory team. The lecturers were drawn from various academic departments within the school of Education to ensure diversity in perspectives and experiences related to school practice supervision. Data was collected through questionnaires and semi-structured interviews. These methods were chosen to enable in-depth exploration of the lecturers' experiences, supervision strategies, challenges encountered, and perceived effectiveness of the clinical supervision activities they conducted. All interviews, discussions and questionnaires were conducted in English, with consent from participants, and later transcribed for analysis. Thematic analysis was used to examine the data, allowing for the identification of common patterns, themes, and insights related to the supervision practices.

#### LITERATURE REVIEW

Intan (2018) conducted a study on Teachers lesson plan development in accordance with 2013 curriculum and its implementation, with a specific focus on teaching reading and writing. The aim of the study was to analyze English teachers lesson plan in classroom practice and whether or not the implementations were in line with lesson plan in classroom practice and whether or not the lesson plans had met the demand of 2013 curriculum. The study employed a qualitative research design by applying a descriptive study as its framework, which was conducted in three different senior high schools in Bandung. All data were collected from document analysis, three times non-participant classroom observations and semi structure interview. Findings obtained in this study revealed that teachers employed Systematic Planning Model in developing the lesson plan and fulfilled all elements of the lesson plan as suggested by the Regulation of Ministry of Education and Culture. The findings further suggested that the teacher needs more enhancement and guidance in developing lesson plan as well as a commitment and awareness to provide an effective teaching and learning process. The study was made through qualitative methods, leaving leaving out quantitative methods that this study bridged.

Similarly, Kolman (2018) made an insightful study on Clinical Supervision in Teacher Preparation, focusing on the Practices of University-Affiliated Supervisors. The study was based on qualitative research paradigm where ten university supervisors were interviewed. The findings suggested that these supervisors provide feedback on the technical aspects of teaching to candidates they perceive as struggling, and broader and more complex feedback to those they perceive as excelling. However this study employed only qualitative data and did not consider the quantitative aspect. This implies that more evidence can be obtained if both approaches are employed and therefore creating a gap for another study.

In the same vein, Kemal (2017) analysed the Views of Educational Supervisors on Clinical Supervision in Turkey. The aim of the study was to investigate how current teacher supervision in Turkey is conducted. A phenomenological research design was used in the study. The study group consisted of 53 educational supervisors working in the province of Antalya. A structured form consisted of both open and close ended questions was delivered to the supervisors participated in the study. Data was gathered using oral and written interviews. According to the results of the study, supervision was categorized under four stages; the stage before





reaching the school setting, Pre-observation, observation, and post-observation. The views of educational supervisors were positive regarding the applicability of clinical supervision. However, the researcher never used other methods of data collection like document review and observation which this research fulfilled.

Another insightful study was conducted by Maxwell (2015) on Planning to Teach, by Interrogating the Link among the Curricula, the Syllabi, Schemes and Lesson Plans in the Teaching Process. The study was triggered by the confusion in learning institutions where most teachers and their students couldn't distinguish between curriculum and syllabus. The respondents were seven seasoned teachers and five pre-service student teachers at one of the secondary schools in Masvingo Rural. It was established that most teachers could not distinguish between the terms curriculum and syllabus, yet they had passed through teachers training program at college or university. It was also discovered that teaching and learning were highly complex and pervasive phenomena, and therefore in a formal setting they had to be well structured for efficiency and effectiveness. A successful formal teaching and learning process, thus, required proper selection and arrangement of the teaching items or materials. However he considered schools in Masvingo and never cared about other areas, leaving a geographical gap which this study bridged.

According to Kılıçaslan, (2010), clinical supervision was based on a perception that teachers may welcome a supervisory style focused on their own interests and expectations. The main purpose of clinical supervision was to increase the professional performance of teachers and to improve instructional effectiveness. The most distinctiveness of clinical supervision was to stress directly teacher-supervisor interaction, and to focus on enhancing the professional quality of teachers That the clinical supervision increases individual consciousness, personal and professional competencies, and self-confidence of teachers, it caused an increase in job satisfaction, and decreased burnout levels of teachers. Clinical supervision not only provided the efficiency of learning and teaching process in class via in-service training of teachers, but also assisted teachers to climb the peak in their profession by reaching the top stage "Self- actualization" as stated in Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs.

An insightful study conducted by Chaula et al (2024) examined the influence of school heads' clinical supervision practices on teachers' professional competency development in public secondary schools in Tanzania. It was a mixed-methods research approach that involved Tanzanian school heads and teachers. Survey data from 94 participants were quantitatively analyzed, and narrative data from 28 informants were subject to content analysis. Based on narrative findings, clinical supervision was the factor in developing teachers' professional competencies: searching for teaching and learning resources, understanding the subject matter, organizing lessons, conducting interactive teaching and learning, and evaluating students' learning. The descriptive results showed Pre-observation of the lesson plans (M = 1.79) ranked at strongly agreed responses. Pre-observation of schemes of work, classroom observation, supervisory feedback, teachers' professional support, and post-observation had a range of (M = 1.86) and (M = 2.06) ranked at agreed responses. These findings detail that school heads' clinical supervision practices positively influenced teachers' professional competency development. This study opposes my findings where the Pre-observation conference was found least done by lecturers in Ugandan Universities. Secondly, the study looked at only secondary schools and never bothered what takes place in Universities, a gap this research will bridge.

#### **FINDINGS**

Clinical supervision activities employed by lecturers during school practice

Statement	SD		D		NS		A		SA		Mean	Sd
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%		
Lecturers guide students on how to write schemes of work	0	0	0	0	0		1	3.1	31	96.9	4.97	0.177
Lecturers guide students on how to write lesson plans	0	0	0	0	0		5	15.6	27	84.4	4.84	0.369

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Lecturers teach students on how to develop materials and use them for teaching	1	3.1	0	0	0		12	37.5	19	59.4	4.53	0.671
Lecturers hold demonstration lessons for the students	1	3.1	1	3.1	0		9	28.1	21	65.6	4.50	0.916
Lecturers hold a pre observation conference during school practice to agree on how the lesson will be delivered	4	12. 5	7	21. 9	1	3.1	11	34.4	9	28.1	3.44	1.435
Lecturers sit in class and observe how the lesson is delivered by the student as I record the behaviors of a teacher	0	0	0	0	0		2	6.2	30	93.8	4.94	0.246
Lecturers analyze data after observing the teaching	0	0	0	0	0		9	28.1	23	71.9	4.72	0.457
Lecturers conduct a post observation conference	0	0	0	0	0		6	18.8	26	81.2	4.81	0.397
lecturers hold a post observation conference analysis with a student.	0	0	0	0	0		6	18.8	26	81.2	4.50	0.762

Source: Primary data 2024

Regarding the clinical supervision activities employed by lecturers during school practice, 1(3.1%) of the respondents agreed that lecturers guide students on how to make schemes of work, 31(96.9%) strongly agreed. Guiding students involves teaching them the correct formats for each subject taught at primary level, and content for each scheme of work. This has helped most students to be orderly in teaching, manage time and to have a comprehensive coverage of the syllabus. The main purpose of a scheme is to show the breakdown of topics into teachable subtopics. Students before leaving the colleges for schools where they practice from must make schemes of work under the guidance of lecturers. These schemes of work are later approved by lecturers to make them authentic and viable for use in classroom context. One respondent noted that,

"A scheme of work helps in selecting content that rhymes with the level of learners. In addition, it helps one to be orderly, and to teach according to stipulated time. This facilitates timely syllabus completion".

Some comments that were seen on schemes of work include: Approved for use in teaching, Good schemes of work seen, Permitted to use the schemes in classroom teaching, etc.

On the aspect of guiding students on how to make a lesson plans, 5 (15.6%) agreed that lecturers guide students while 27(84.4%) strongly agreed. lecturers guide students during lesson planning to improve their knowledge and skills of planning for teaching. This has helped in ensuring that good quality teachers are produced for handling pupils. This is in line with one respondent who noted that;

"Lesson planning is very Key because it determines the quality of teaching. Teachers with good lesson planning Skills deliver effectively with confidence as compared to those with low lesson planning skills"

A lesson plan that could be used for supervision would read "Supervised on... (date).

Results also revealed that 19 (59.4%) strongly agreed that lecturers teach students on how to develop materials and use them for teaching, 12 (37.5%) agreed and 1(3.1%) of the respondents disagreed. Learners understand





better when the teacher uses materials that concretize the content being taught. These materials are categorized into Visual, audio Visual and real objects. Materials create a deeper understanding of the content that is being taught. This is in line with one respondent who noted that

"As an administrator, I make sure that lecturers are provided with all the resources required to make sure that lecturers assist student teachers in acquiring the skill of developing materials".

Findings further revealed that 21(65.6%) strongly agreed that lecturers hold demonstration lessons for student teachers, 9(28.1%) agreed, 1(3.1%) disagreed, and 1(3.1%) of respondents strongly disagreed. Majority of the respondents agreed that lecturers hold demonstration lessons for student teachers before they release them for school practice. Demonstration lessons helped students to know various methods of handling a particular content, materials to use and how to use them, confidence and time management. This helped student teachers to develop proper classroom practices which are operationalized during school practice. However due to limited time, minority of the lecturers don't hold such lessons, something that compromises the acquisition of skills by a student teacher. One respondent was quoted saying that

"As administrators, we reserve time for demonstration lessons before dispatching students to their various schools of practice. Demonstration lessons help learners acquire methods of teaching and materials usage"

Findings further revealed that 9 (28.1%) strongly agreed that lecturers hold Pre-observation conferences to agree on how the lesson will be delivered, 11 (34.4%) agreed, 1(3.1%) were not sure, 7(21.9%) disagreed while, 4(12.5%) of the respondents strongly disagreed. Pre-observation conference is done with the purpose breaking the ice, creating a rapport, and making a student aware that he/she is going to be supervised in the next couple of minutes. Pre-observation conference is also done with the aim of agreeing on the behaviors of a teacher in the forthcoming lesson i.e. methods, time, question distribution, learning materials, class movement, chalkboard use, assessment criteria etc. However, because of a mammoth of students in colleges, and considering the available time made it harder for lecturers to make conduct a Pre-observation conference. One respondent noted that;

"I would hold a Pre-observation conference but because of having many students with limited time, it becomes very hard for me".

However, in holding Pre-observation conferences, Pre-observation reports are supposed to be filled and no respondent could produce one.

Results revealed that 30(93.8%) of respondents strongly agreed that that lecturers sit in class and observe how the lesson is being delivered by the student as they record the behaviors of a student teacher whereas 2(6.6%) of the respondents agreed. This is the time for the teacher to implement what was agreed upon with the supervisor in planning conference. The supervisor observes records, collects evidence that will inform the post observation discussion

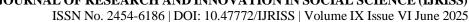
One respondent asserted that,

When time is due for supervision, I sit in class, observe and record what has transpired in the lesson on anecdotal form. This form is always in three sections i.e. matters arising from the lesson, points to retain and points for improvement.

It's through this record that the supervisor will base on to quantify the lesson of the student teacher.

Regarding the issue of analyzing data after observing the teaching, 23 (71.9%) strongly agreed while 9 (28.1%) of respondents agreed. This is a stage before the post observation conference. The supervisor makes an analysis in terms of student teachers and learners patterns of the lesson he/she has observed. The analysis requires the supervisor to employ the STF criteria to determine the patterns to be discussed during the feedback conference. STF stands for salience, Treatability and Finesse.

On the aspect of conducting a post observation conference, outcomes reveal that 26(81.2%) strongly agreed that





lecturers conduct a post observation conference while 6 (18.8%), of the respondents agreed. As soon as the supervisor accomplished the issue of analyzing data, he/she sat down with a supervisee to discuss on the lesson that was observed. The supervisor employs different approaches at this level to make sure that student teacher knows his/her level of performance. This stage assists the supervisee to understand his strength, weaknesses and designing strategies for improvement. This is in line with one respondent who noted that;

"Post observation conference has been assisting me and the supervisee in selecting specific areas for follow up in the next round of supervision".

This post observation conference gives a student chance to be nearer to the supervisor. Since the supervisor is the most experienced person, it's a great opportunity for this student to get knowledge and skills of handling content in a classroom context.

More to that, findings also revealed that 26 (81.2%) strongly agreed that lecturers hold a post observation conference analysis with students while 6 (18.8%) agreed. At post conference analysis a supervisor and the supervisee gave a judgment on how well the post observation conference was handled. The student teacher gave feedback to the supervisor on what he/she gained from the conference. On the other side the supervisor used this time to quantify the lesson of a student teacher. This was done by reflecting on what had transpired in the teaching and learning process from pre observation up to post observation conferences.

#### DISCUSSION

Many respondents strongly agreed that lecturers teach students how to make schemes of work. A scheme of work is a document deemed necessary for any person who intends to carry out any teaching. A professional teacher is not allowed to go to class without a scheme of work. A scheme of work helps a teacher to have a systematic flow of content in regard to the available time frame. It is a must for all the student teachers to end a two year course after acquiring enough skills for scheming. This was also supported by Barnabas (2018) who said that a scheme of work is needed for effective curriculum implementation. The scheme of work is usually prepared by one or more teachers teaching the same subject in the school. The major sources of information for scheme of work among others include Curriculum, Syllabus, Textbooks and Environment. He also added that better schemes of work map out clearly how resources, class activities and assessment strategies will be used to teach each topic and assess students' progress in learning. As students progress through the scheme of work, there is an expectation that their perception of the interconnections between units, topics and subtopics will be enhanced. By the help of situated learning theory, student teachers through legitimate peripheral participation learn from their experts how to write schemes of work.

A bulk of the respondents strongly agreed that lecturers guide students on how to make lesson plans. On a daily basis, student teachers write lesson plans for each subject to be taught the following day. Writing a lesson plan helps a student teacher to have a systematic classroom instruction. Lesson plans spell out the methods to be used, learning materials, assessment activities, etc. These students come from home without any idea of making lesson plans, but through situated learning theory (expert-novice relationship) they are able to learn. This helps a student teacher to have mastery of content and to deliver with confidence. This concurs with Annie, (2017) who said that lesson plans help teachers plan what will happen during a class period from moment to moment. Trends in a classroom such as active learning strategies, activities assessment, are all embedded in making lesson plans and following them while teaching. It was also supported by Intan, (2018) who asserted that the student teacher needs more enhancement and guidance in developing lesson plans as well as a commitment and awareness to provide an effective teaching and learning process.

A multitude of lecturers teach their students on how to develop materials and use them for learning. These materials are used in the process of teaching and learning. Learning aids helps a learner to have a link of content that is being taught. This rhymes with Maxwell (2015) who said that a successful formal teaching and learning process, thus, requires proper selection and arrangement of the teaching items or materials. Selection and sequencing of learning content and methodologies thereof take place in the curriculum, syllabus, and scheme of work and lesson plan stages.





A mammoth of respondents strongly agreed that lecturers hold demonstration lessons for students. Demonstration lesson of each subject taught at primary level are held for student teachers when they are about to leave for school practice. Demonstration lessons help learners to acquire methods of teaching. Students also learn how to use materials in the teaching and learning process to ensure mastery of content. This was supported by Indah (2020) who said that teacher demonstrations are important because they provide students with experiences of real events, phenomena and processes, helping them learn, raise students' interest and motivation, and enable student teachers to focus on a particular phenomenon in a classroom context. He also added that teacher-orchestrated demonstrations are regarded as being the most effective forms of practical work by which learners can derive learning benefits, such as acquiring an understanding of science concepts, developing practical skills and developing an interest in learning. Indah (2020) still confirm that demonstration lessons are beneficial in developing basic skills of teaching which consists of boosting student-teachers' self-confidence, the evaluation given, communication skill, chalkboard skill, questioning skill, reinforcement skill, classroom management skill, lesson planning skill, and time management skill.

Many lecturers agreed that they hold a Pre-observation conference as part of clinical supervision during school practice. This is the first conference that the student teacher holds with a supervisor. It is held with an intention of breaking the ice and building a relationship. A tutor is supposed to take a Pre-observation record to justify that the conference was done. However there was no record produced by any respondent, an indicator that some lecturers don't do it. Pre-observation conference is done with the purpose of articulating the instructional strategies of the incoming lesson. Key areas of the lesson like methods, competencies, instructional materials, sitting arrangement, voice projection, and time management are all talked about in the Pre-observation conference. This was also highlighted by Murphy (2015) who asserted that the purpose for the Pre-observation conference is to gain an under-standing of the details of the lesson that has been designed, the lesson's objectives and the student teacher's expectations for his/her lesson. He also asserted that the main purpose of a Pre-observation meeting is for the two members to meet so that both can agree on the relevant contextual information prior to the class observation. The supervisor is always interested in the Objectives of the lesson: to know exactly what the teacher hopes to accomplish over the course of the lesson, instructional methods, materials to be used and assessment strategies. This helps to set a proper dialogue after the lesson that is devoid of misunderstandings.

A multitude of lecturers also approved that lecturers sit in class and observe how the lesson is being delivered by the student teacher. This is the observation phase of clinical supervision. It is done after a Pre-observation conference and after ascertaining that a student teacher is ready for a lesson. The supervisor sits and observes how the student teacher delivers the lesson as he/she records the behaviors of a teacher in that lesson. Classroom observation helps a teacher to implement what had been formerly learnt in class as theory and what had been agreed upon in the Pre-observation conference. This agrees with Tawalbeh (2020) who said that this is the stage where the supervisor sits in on one or more classroom sessions, records the instructor's teaching practices and student actions, and then meets with the instructor to discuss the observations. Iakovou (2020) also supported it saying that the main purpose behind the classroom observation is to allow a teacher to get feedback from an objective, experienced observer and to involve in context-specific discussions about teaching with supervisor. It is through this classroom observation that the supervisor will be able to give relevant feedback. Using data collected with validated observational tools anchors feedback in teachers' practice along dimensions of teaching that are meaningful and has been shown to improve student achievement.

More to that, majority of the respondents confirmed that lecturers conduct a post observation conference. This is also called a feedback conference. The supervisor sits with the Supervisee to make a discussion on what transpired in the lesson. The supervisor uses any approach deemed necessary depending on the performance level of a student. Post observation conference helps the teacher to have a feedback on the lesson and to identify the areas of excellence and the areas that need improvement. Supervisor and teacher interaction at post observation conference helps a teacher learn and acquire skills from the most experienced person, a true meaning of situated learning theory. This was also supported by Mette et al (2015), who mentioned that supervisors' post-conference was accounted for in building teachers' capacity to self-reflect about teaching. He also added that through self-reflection, post observation conference helped the teacher to improve his/her pedagogical skills, and created a positive change about teaching and learning.





#### CONCLUSION

In conclusion, while the clinical supervision practices in universities are generally strong, the effectiveness of the supervision process could be further enhanced by integrating Pre-observation conferencing as a standard component. Strengthening this area would contribute to a more comprehensive supervision approach and promote deeper reflection, better planning, and improved teaching practices among student teachers

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