

Intensifying Instructional Supervision of Teachers Through School Head's Intentional Mentoring Strategy (SHIMS)

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this action research was to intensify instructional supervision of teachers through School Head's Intentional Mentoring Strategy or SHIMS. This underscored the importance of helping newly hired senior high school teachers who have no teaching experience and are still adjusting with public school system. Only two beginning senior high school teachers were the participants of this study and were chosen using purposive sampling technique. The SHIM Strategy highlighted four phases namely: Phase I – Comprehensive Checking of Lesson Plans or Learning Activity Sheets, Phase II – Lesson Delivery and Class Observation, Phase III – Post Conference and Feedbacking, and Phase IV – Writing a Reflection Journal. Data were gathered from observation notes, performance monitoring and coaching form, and reflection journal of the participants. It also guaranteed that strict compliance of the Data Privacy Act of 2012 is highly followed. Results showed that with the implemented strategy teachers manifested: improved self-reflection with their teaching practice and problem-solving capacities, improved behavior management skills, guided and provided with appropriate technical assistance, improved lesson planning and delivery, and intensified support system between school head and teachers. These noted good results may be shared during collaborative teaching practices, learning action cell sessions, research presentations and conferences.

Keywords: Instructional Supervision, Intentional Mentoring Strategy, School Heads, Action Research, Davao City

CONTEXT AND RATIONALE

One of the key functions of a school head is to provide guidance and technical assistance to teachers through instructional supervision. Educational leadership experts recommend that school heads spend 70% of their time on instructional supervision and 30% on administrative tasks. Instructional supervision is a key management function that helps improve teaching and student learning as emphasized in DepEd Order No. 24, s. 2020 titled: National Adoption and Implementation of the Philippine Professional Standards for School Heads.

As a school head, I am deeply concerned with the unpreparedness of newly hired teachers in our school due to lack of teaching experience. These two beginning teachers were exposed only to practice teaching when they were in college. As a result, I really need to provide technical assistance with more emphasis on effective instructional delivery. It was alarming to note that they still to be capacitated in lesson planning following the prescribed format in all learning areas they handled. One way of helping them is giving annotations and remarks to the parts of the lesson plan that need improvement and suggesting possible alternative activities appropriate to their lessons.

This dilemma relates to the study of Chong (2011) that some newly hired teachers experienced struggles and difficulties in teaching due to insufficient materials and supplies, discipline and classroom management, students' individual differences, parent relations, assessment, organization of class work, lack of material support, communication, understanding procedures and policies, using effective teaching strategies, planning and time management.

Furthermore, this study is anchored on the Instructional Leadership Theory of Hallinger (2008) where leadership focuses on the principal's role in guiding, supporting, and improving teaching and learning through direct involvement in instructional practices. The school headsets clear academic goals, ensures proper curriculum alignment, provides professional development, and assesses the effectiveness of teaching. Additionally, the objective is to create a learning environment where teachers are supported, and student outcomes are prioritized.

Moreover, this study is also based on the Reflective Supervision of Schön (1983) where grounded in the belief that teachers can improve their practice through deep self-reflection and the analysis of their teaching experiences. School heads encourage teachers to reflect critically on their instructional methods, classroom management, and student outcomes. The process is iterative, allowing teachers to continually refine their practices. The goal is to foster self-awareness and personal responsibility for teaching and learning, ultimately enhancing the quality of instruction.

Likewise, Sergiovanni and Starratt (2007) emphasized that instructional supervision is mainly concerned with improving schools by helping teachers to reflect on their practices, to learn more about what they do, why they do, and to develop professionally. This simply means that the main beneficiaries of instructional supervision are the teachers, which would result in better students' learning outcomes if done with diligence and consistency.

In this action research, the combination of both instructional and reflective supervision theories is applied. Primarily, this study aims to bridge the gap of instructional supervision of teachers to improve teaching performance and increase students' learning outcomes. Consequently, the need to have a practical yet effective intervention pertaining to instructional supervision of beginning teachers is really timely and a call to action.

Innovation, Intervention, And Strategy

School Heads' Intentional Mentoring Strategy (SHIMS) is a contextualized provision of technical assistance to beginning or newly hired teachers. This strategy is distinct from existing supervision practices in other schools and even in the entire division where most of school heads use only the typical supervision and mentoring strategy. Its main goal is to help teachers become effective and efficient in the teaching and learning process. The mode of giving technical assistance will be done daily to sustain that professional connection and strong mentoring relationship. To give clarity, technical assistance refers to sharing insights, pedagogical strategies, and other best practices that can help teachers improve their teaching performance. SHIMS has four phases namely: Phase I: Comprehensive Checking of Lesson Plans or Learning Activity Sheets, Phase II: Lesson Delivery and Class Observation, Phase III: Post Conference and Feedbacking, and Phase IV: Writing a Reflection Journal.

Phase I. Comprehensive Checking of Lesson Plans or Learning Activity Sheets. The submission of lesson plan is on a weekly basis, preferably every Monday. During the checking, a checklist is used to ensure that expected deliverables are evident. The teacher is notified when there are noted corrections and suggestions to ensure more engaging authentic learning episodes. Annotations and other remarks shall be indicated for the teachers' guidance. Likewise, the same process would apply if the teacher prepared a learning activity sheet.

Phase II. Lesson Delivery and Class Observation. In this phase, the teacher will be observed through frequent short-period and walkthrough observations that would run for approximately 10-15 minutes for technical assistance purposes only which means non-rated, formative, and developmental approach. The teacher will be informed of this manner, however, only the observer knows the focus or specific area of instructional practices or areas of concern will be observed.

Phase III. Post Conference and Feedbacking. After regular short-period class observations, a post conference with the teacher is conducted, preferably every Friday, to discuss the results of the class observations highlighting the good points and those needing improvement. Giving of technical assistance and recommendations is done in this phase.

Phase IV. Writing a Reflection Journal. A prescribed format of reflection shall be given to the teacher. Then, the teacher writes all his/her significant learnings of the week including the ways forward, insights and realizations. The teacher also may share some critical incidents or challenges where he/she addressed them. The reflection can be very brief or concise so that it will not demand more time on the part of the teacher. Submission of reflection is every Friday of the week.

It is essential also that after all the phases of the proposed strategy, monitoring and evaluation will be conducted to gather feedback for continuous improvement.

Action Research Question

How does School Head's Intentional Mentoring Strategy help in intensifying instructional supervision of teachers?

Action Research Method

This study utilized action research design focusing on the implementation of SHIMS to teachers highlighting the feedback and best practices which are worthy of emulation to other school heads and principals. With the limited number of participants in this study and the short duration of the intervention, this can be replicated on a large-scale quantitative study with more participants and diverse contexts to have more empirical research findings and possibly assess long-term effects on teaching practices and student outcomes.

Participants/Other Sources of Data and Information

The participants in this action research were the two newly hired senior high school teachers of Sirib National High School. These two teachers were both without teaching experience, hence, they need more guidance and technical assistance in performing their duties and functions and most importantly in dealing with the teaching and learning process in the classroom.

Data Gathering Methods

The primary sources of data were based on the gathered observations, performance monitoring and coaching forms, and feedback from the identified target of the study. The implementation of the intervention was conducted over a period of six months, from October 2024 to March 2025. In the first phase of the intervention, a checklist was made to ensure that all parts of the lesson plan are followed and that teacher's activity is clearly indicated. In the second phase, class observation tool was used to assess the teacher's delivery of the lesson, the strengths, weaknesses, and recommendations were deliberately noted. In the third phase, post conference form was used to highlight what went well and what did not go well and thus the feedback followed. In the last phase was writing a reflection journal where the significant learnings, the ways forward, and the insights were shared. All data gathered were analyzed and discussed qualitatively. To ensure credibility of the data gathered, simple triangulation was used through interviewing the participants and the academic heads.

Data Analysis Plan

The gathered observation notes and monitoring forms including the feedback of teachers were analyzed thematically to generate themes or results on the helpfulness of the intentional provision of technical assistance to teachers. The analysis ensured that the action research question is answered comprehensively. The results were triangulated to ensure its validity and credibility. It is also presented through tables for a clearer understanding of the results.

Ethical Considerations

The researcher ensured confidentiality of data in compliance with the Data Privacy Act of 2012. The names of the participants will be kept anonymous. Results will be for purposes of strengthening the implementation of

instructional supervision among teachers. The researcher sought approval from the Schools Division Superintendent. Participation in this research was purely voluntary, and no coercion of whatever sort was committed.

DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

When the School Heads' Intentional Mentoring Strategy (SHIMS) was implemented, the following results were manifested among the teachers: Improved self-reflection with their teaching practice and problem-solving capacities; Improved behavior management skills; Guided and provided appropriate technical assistance; Improved lesson planning and delivery; and Intensified support system between school head and teachers.

Improved self-reflection with their teaching practice and problem-solving capacities. Writing a reflection journal every week made the teachers more reflective in planning and delivery of the lessons. They were able to identify critical incidents and problems they encountered which in turn they find solutions or coping mechanism to address them. In this manner, teachers become more sensitive and conscious of improving their teaching practice because they would be able to identify their difficulties or challenges. Chalikandy (2014) regarded reflection as a tool for professional development, where teachers spend a moment to analyze their teaching activities or critically examine their actions, intentions, motives and attitudes towards learning and learners.

Improved behavior management skills. Behavior management skills involve creating a positive and predictable environment, establishing clear expectations, and using strategies to encourage desired behaviors while addressing challenging ones, ultimately fostering a respectful and productive setting. Intentional mentoring helped teachers in strengthening their behavior management skills. They started building strong positive relationships with individuals through getting to know more of their students and understanding their needs and strengths for instructional planning. Besides, teachers established clear expectations which are essential for individuals to understand what is expected of them, leading to better compliance. Likewise, they manifested consistent enforcement of rules and expectations is vital for students to understand what to expect and comply with the rules.

Moreover, teachers practiced proactive strategies such as positive reinforcement, modeling, routines and structure, positive language. They focus on rewarding and reinforcing positive behaviors to encourage their repetition. Teachers also tried to model the desired behaviors they expect from their students. Establishing clear routines and structures can help create a predictable and organized environment, reducing potential for disruptive behaviors. The use of positive and encouraging language when addressing behaviors were observed during their handling of classes.

The above manifested improvement of behavioral management skills of teachers supports the idea of Stevenson, VanLone, and Barber (2020) that teachers' skill in fostering students' engagement and limiting disruptive behavior is important for maintaining a safe, productive, and effective learning environment.

Guided and provided appropriate technical assistance. Newly hired teachers really need guidance and technical assistance considering that everything is new to them. This intentional mentoring strategy lets teachers find refuge when seeking help in terms of instructional delivery. They usually experienced some difficulty in choosing appropriate teaching strategy for senior high school students, thus, with this intervention, relevant options were provided which they can contextually apply in their lessons. They were guided from planning to proper delivery of the lessons because of the pre-and-post conferences conducted. Besides, it is emphasized by Cadag (2024) that school heads need to provide forms of technical assistance to the teachers, to ensure that necessary resources, such as teaching materials or technology, are made available to support teachers' improvement efforts.

Improved lesson planning and delivery. One positive result manifested in this strategy was the prompt submission of lesson plans and learning activity sheets. A monitoring checklist for every submission of lesson was implemented to ensure quality of lessons. The teachers became conscious of the submission knowing that

they are being monitored and checked. At the start, their submitted lesson plans were not following the DepEd prescribed format, hence, they were given the soft copy of the template and were properly oriented about it. With constant guidance and tracking, teachers' lessons became more comprehensive and more achievable. Another is lesson objectives and assessment were aligned. During the preconference, it is ensured that learning competencies are aligned with the learning area curriculum guide or most essential learning competencies. Assessment is given importance so that daily lesson objectives are achieved. A noted improvement in appropriate assessment tools was greatly observed.

As a result, with the improved lesson planning and delivery, increased learner achievement was noted. The results of weekly assessment showed better improvement. However, there were students that needed enrichment activities to cope with the lesson.

Likewise, the result is aligned with the study of Amalia and Imperiani (2013) that mentoring and coaching greatly in designing lesson plans comprehensively and eventually would result to effective lesson delivery in the classroom.

Intensified support system between school head and teachers. SHIM strategy helped strengthen the collaboration and support system of both the school head and teachers. This showed open line communication and the avenue to have collegial discussions, sharing of best practices, and addressing problems with possible solutions. Further, it is easier on the part of the school head to show support and provide technical assistance to teachers. Establishing a support system to beginning teachers is necessary as suggested in the study of Menon (2012), who pointed out also that one way of overcoming problems faced by beginning teachers is to provide support through better and more frequent communication, and openness in the organizational climate. He further recommended the introduction of comprehensive induction programs and effective mentoring practices.

Reflection

As a school leader, I play a vital role in guiding my teachers not only the newly hired but as well as all other teachers. I need to manage my time well so that instructional supervision and mentoring will be given utmost importance despite various related tasks that I need to address. I must capacitate myself so that I can share more with my teachers, especially with the content and pedagogical approaches I realized that I should have a listening heart and mind to my teachers.

If given a chance, I would elevate this concern to policymakers and education officials to intensify the implementation of teacher induction program to newly hired senior high school teachers for them to be prepared with the system and culture in the public school system. The induction program implementation maybe also reviewed to determine what needs to be improved. Besides, careful designing of supervision strategies, mentoring and coaching styles may be taken into consideration to ensure the teacher's readiness and effectiveness in teaching.

Plans For Dissemination And Utilization

The results of this action research may be disseminated in various research platforms of the Department of Education. A research public forum shall be conducted for teachers, head teachers, master teachers and school heads for benchmarking purposes. This strategy can be applied in their respective schools based on their own context. This will also be published in an online open access journal for wider dissemination. Moreover, the results of this action research and its intervention will also serve as the basis for formulating comprehensive and effective supervisory instructional plans among school heads and principals.

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