

## Research Article

**ACADEMIC SUPERVISION IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS****Prof. N. Pradhan<sup>1\*</sup>, Ms. Vandana Talegaonkar<sup>2</sup>, & Ms. Rina Chaudhury<sup>2</sup>****Abstract**

The study on Academic Supervision in Secondary Schools highlights the crucial role of principals and supervisors in ensuring quality education. While India has witnessed a massive expansion in school education, the challenge of maintaining quality remains. Academic supervision is identified as a key factor directly linked to students' achievement and teachers' professional growth. The paper explores the meaning, scope, and significance of academic supervision, emphasizing practices such as classroom observation, lesson plan monitoring, providing feedback, and maintaining discipline. An empirical survey of ten effective secondary schools in Baroda city reveals that supervisory practices vary widely, but essential strategies include taking rounds of schools, checking lesson plans, observing teaching, and guiding teachers. The findings underline the need for a structured model of academic supervision and specialized training programmes for supervisors. The study concludes that effective supervision, when oriented towards instructional improvement rather than inspection, can significantly enhance the teaching-learning process and contribute to quality education in secondary schools.

**Keywords :** *Academic supervision, instructional leadership, classroom observation, lesson planning, feedback, teacher development, quality education, secondary schools, educational management, Baroda study.*

In 1998 as per MHRD report 1998, there were eight lakh schools with fourteen crore children. The figure has raised to eleven lakh eighteen thousand five hundred (11, 18500) schools with sixteen crore eighty-one thousands of children enrolled today in the schools of India (NUEPA, 2007). The tremendous growth of education is a result of the policies of "Education for all" which is the main concern of Indian government today and there has been a constitutional provision for ensuring that in Article 45 of Indian Constitution. However, till now it has not been realized. Since a decade now, quality education is the major concern school level. In fact it is a concern at all levels of education. The curricula have been revamped several times to meet this objective in terms of National Curriculum Frame Work, 2001 and National Curriculum Frame Work, 2005. Teacher Education programmes have also been re-examined, modified and many refresher courses and in-service programmes have been organized for the sake of enhancing quality of teachers and thereby quality of education. However, one can notice little change in the quality of education imparted. It seems that in the whole of the attempt to achieve quality education, the school principals and supervisors have a major role to play. And in this regard, efforts made to enable Principals and Supervisors to carry out their roles are negligible. These people carry out many roles and academic supervision is one of the main roles having a direct linkage to students' academic attainments. The teachers in schools may have many problems and requirements to facilitate students' learning. Even if they may not have any problems and requirements, they need little guidance and help to select the right methods and approaches to help students to learn. In many of the Indian schools, supervision is taken as a job of ensuring students' discipline and teachers' co-ordination to accomplish curricular activities: The best of the schools is known to be the best mainly because the teachers are best and the quality of instruction teaching learning. Process in that school is carried out in the best manner. Building and

Head, Dept. of Educational Administration, the **M.S.University of Baroda, Baroda-2.**

- Research Fellows at the Dept. of Educational Administration, the M.S. University of Baroda, Baroda-2.

Infrastructure of schools do not have a major say. Though the teachers are often equipped with pre-service training, a continuous process to guide, motivate, correct, criticize and appreciate the teachers is necessary, primarily to lead to an improvement of teaching learning-process.

Academic supervision, encompassing all these, is one of the key tasks of the head of the school.

Supervision as a leadership role has emerged in recent years. In recent decades, attempts to restructure schools practices have emerged along with more governmental mandates and an explosion of technological advances. Thus, the tasks of supervision continued to grow and expand in many areas viz., developing people, curriculum development, instructional specialization, human relations, staff development, basic administration, management of change, and evaluation (Wiles & Bondi, 2000, p.23). Each of these areas involved the engagement of teachers in "instructional dialogue for the purpose of improving teaching and increasing students' achievement" (Sullivan & Glanz, 2000, p.24). So, supervision as a task may include many aspects but academic supervision as a concept is limited in its scope and includes tasks like classroom observation and feedback, lesson planning done by teachers and their checking, monitoring the accomplishment of class work and home work by students and its 'checking by teachers, students' discipline in school and its maintenance, feedback to teachers about their teaching and collecting information about teachers' teaching from multiple sources.

### **1. Meaning of Academic Supervision :**

The literature that is available on academic supervision of school reveals that the terms "supervision", "Instructional supervision" and "Instructional leadership" are used interchangeably. In this study academic supervision is viewed as a comprehensive term. It focuses on all academic related activities carried out in school. The activities viz., lesson planning by teachers, methods, approaches and material to be used by the teachers to carry out teaching-learning process, deciding the suitability of methods and approaches, work for teacher-pupil relationship in the classroom and in school complex and, the sincere efforts to create an overall learning environment in the school. In doing so, teachers have to be provided with guidance, help, assistance, and facilities regularly. So, the focus here in this study is how exactly the supervisors carry out these roles and what are the practices that are in operation in some of the best schools? It is expected that from the present practices of academic supervision 'in the best schools, some strategies may be worked out for the secondary schools that may help them to have quality education. ?

## **2. Rational for the study :**

The studies that are conducted so far on educational supervision reveal the following two points.

### **1. Focus on organization and management:**

Most of the staff development programmes for supervisor have focused on achieving a reform of supervision through changes in its organization and management. The programme paid less attention to the 'pedagogical' issues, in particular the interventions of supervisors in schools and in the classroom. Participants in the training courses are mainly staff in charge of the organization and management of supervision, and not so much practicing supervisors.

### **2. Strengthening skills and informing decision makers:**

Research and training has been undertaken with and for supervision managers as a continuous process. On the other hand, decision-makers have participated in seminars and management briefs are being prepared for supervisors. Research on existing supervision systems and on innovations and reforms has been the thrust area for \_many international organizations to develop quality of education. Researches on supervision, training of teachers in different courses and materials on 'reforming school supervision for quality improvement' gained momentum in recent years in the international scenario. Programmes having different activities in Korea, Mexico, Botswana and England with HEP initiatives have been conducted.

National teams in a total of eleven countries in Asia, Africa and Latin America undertook a diagnosis of supervision services. Each diagnosis presents an overview of the organization and management at national level, and describes in detail the daily work of supervisors in a few selected districts. These studies look at the external supervision system and at new trends, putting greater emphasis on communities and on school actors. The IIEP has published these country analyses as well as two comparative analyses. It revealed that the programme does not simply aim at examining existing national supervision services but also seeks to identify and analyze innovative experiences, which carry useful lessons for the reform of the overall supervision system (IIEP Newsletter, Dec., 1998).

There are also Teaching Learning Modules and training workshops for supervisors. The IIEP has prepared a set of seven modules on 'Reforming school supervision for quality improvement'. Each module contains examples from different regions, and tasks for the reader. They are currently being developed into a set of self-learning modules. The modules have been used so far in the three training workshops organized by the Institute, with a total of 23 countries participating. In general, each country was represented by a central level and a regional level manager.

It is found from the available literature on Supervision services that it faces almost everywhere a myriad of problems. These reflect supervisors' lack of adaptation ability to a new environment, characterized by increased school autonomy and entrenched disparities.

The review of related literature also suggests that supervision is essential for quality education, supervision leads to job satisfaction of teachers, effective instructional leadership leads to quality products, and there is a need of developing model to prepare academic supervisors for school. It also revealed that supervision is made by talking with teachers to promote reflection and professional growth.

The present study is primarily essential in educational management because of one basic assumption that academic supervision is essential to improve the quality of instruction in school. It is seen that academic supervision is carried out in the secondary schools with different approaches and there by different practices are evolved. It is therefore thought essential to carry out an empirical survey to find out the different practices of academic supervision that are in operation in effective secondary schools. This research may help us to develop a model for training the future academic supervisors in academic supervision.

#### **4. Objectives of the study:**

The objectives formulated for the study are as follows;

1. To study the academic supervisory practices in the effective secondary schools.
2. To develop a model for academic supervision in schools.
3. To devise a training program for secondary school supervisors.

#### **5. Methodology:**

The present study is an empirical study whereby the existing practices of academic supervision in best schools were observed. People at the helm of the affairs viz., the principals

and supervisors were interviewed and the data were recorded immediately and analyzed subsequently.

As per the objective of the study, ten best secondary schools of Baroda city of Gujarat state, India were identified purposively. The best schools were those schools as judged by the researchers on the basis of schools result over the last five years, and the popularity of the schools in the city. The result of these schools is more than 90% pass at Secondary school examination conducted by Gujarat Board and CBSE. On the selection of the sample a second opinion was taken from experts i.e., educationists who knew the schools of Baroda city. The principals (n=10) and the supervisors (n=10) of these schools constituted the sample. The identified schools were different in nature in terms of management like management by private trust, managed by trusts founded by Industrial houses and government aided private schools. In terms of affiliation to the education board, they were: Gujarat State Education Board, and CBSE Education Board. In terms of medium of instruction, they are; English medium or Vernacular medium. These schools are co educational type schools. This ensured that different types of schools were included in the sample. The list of schools is given below.

The researchers personally visited the schools during working hours with prior permission of the Principals. During the visit, researchers accompanied and observe the supervisors when they were making supervision. Supervisors were also being observed when they were talking to teachers and discussing certain academic matters and providing feedback to them. They also requested the supervisors and principals to show the notebooks corrected by the teachers and seen by them subsequently. After all these observations for three to four days the researchers took appointment of the supervisors and principals and conducted an interview with the help of an unstructured interview schedule.

**Table-1: List of the sample school schools.**

Certain points pre-decided by the researchers to conduct interviews in the schools are;

1. aim of academic supervision,
2. academic supervisory practices adopted and followed,
3. problems if any encountered by supervisors and
4. the needed components of training program for school academic supervision.

Sr. No.	Name of the school & address	Board affiliation
1	New Era Secondary School, Sama , Baroda.	CBSE
2	Navrachana High School. Nizampura, Baroda.	CBSE
3	Mira the Happy School, Atladara, Baroda.	GSEB
4	Mothers' school, Gotri, Baroda.	GSEB
5	Shreyas High School, Manjalpur, Baroda.	GSEB
6	Basil High School, Old Padra Road, Baroda	GSEB
7	Baroda High School. Alkapuri, Baroda.GSEB	GSEB
8	Vidyani High School, Nizampura,	GSEB
9	Tejas Vidyalaya, High Tehsion Road, Baroda	GSEB
10	Alembic Vidyalaya, Gorwa, Baroda.	GSEB

These points were kept in mind, while conducting the interviews and the data collected through interviews were subjected to content analysis.

Based on the data about the present practices of academic supervision, and the literature available on this, an attempt has been made by the researchers to develop a model of academic supervision. This shall include components like objectives of supervision, practices of supervision, problems of supervision; skills require in carrying out academic supervision, development of the skills through some programmes, methods of developing those skills, and the tentative outcome of the programmes.

On the basis of the developed model as per objective one, the researchers designed a tentative programme. It was put before a selected number of 7 experts individually and their comments and observations were considered for the finalization of the components and mode of supervisors' training program. The program was then put to practice by selecting twenty supervisors of English medium secondary schools and the details of the outcome of the program as per the process and output was taken into consideration. The data collected for the study are qualitative in nature. All the data were put to content analysis and further the data were put to categorization.

## 6. Outcome of the Survey :

It was observed by the researchers that all the schools are having different practices for academic supervision. However, some of the prominent practices in most of these schools are presented below.

**Table-2: Supervisory practices observed in the effective schools**

Sr. No	Supervisory practices	No. of Schools found practicing	Total schools observed
1	Taking rounds of the school	10 (100%)	10
2	Monitoring lesson plans of teachers	10 (100%)	10
3	Class room observations	9 (90%)	10
4	Correction of notebooks by teachers	10 (100%)	10
5	Getting information about teachers	8 (80%)	10
6	Providing feedback to teachers	10 (100%)	10

Detailed presentations of these practices observed in the effective schools along with the data collected through interviews and pertinent observations are presented below.

### ‘Taking rounds of the school:

The school as an organization primarily exists to facilitate teaching learning process between the teachers and the learners. To ensure this, it is imperative that the instructional situation be surveyed. Taking round of the school is a commonly followed practice for this purpose. However, in the selected effective schools, there are a variety of practices in taking rounds. Some of the supervisors and principals were just walking on the corridor, while walking; they used to peep in to ass rooms, giving a smile at the teachers in the class, entering some classes and say good morning to students and teachers, asking something about studies to the students and teachers (rarely). If by chance they get any phone call or any sort of urgency comes, they



use to abandon the round half way. This signifies that secondary importance is accorded by most of the principals and supervisors to supervision. Sometimes they use to talk to student/s found on the corridor, many times they scold the students if found outside the class room. Principals and supervisors felt that the major aim of this exercise of taking round is to check if the general business of the school is running smoothly; such as all teachers are teaching, and all the students are in their respective classes with their teachers and are engaged in learning. This implies that the supervisors ensure that no unwanted incidence like student indiscipline, parents entering school premises without the necessary permission etc. occurs. It also ensures that the routine necessary. Teaching facilities like blackboard, chalks, and proper sitting arrangements are made available to the teachers. If any discrepancy or problem is observed; immediate assistance is provided. This practice is a common practice observed in all the effective schools.

It was observed from the schools surveyed that all the principals and supervisors adopted this practice and followed it diligently. Some of the principal took a round of the school right after the assembly while some left this particular round for the supervisor. The number of the rounds per day was not fixed, neither the time. If the principal was not in a position to take round, then the supervisor had to do so in his/her place. The rounds taken by the principal and the supervisor were independent of each other. Generally, it was found that the principal took the round of the school and only if the school was very big then this responsibility was entrusted to the supervisor. The focus of this round was to see that all the students are in the class, all the teachers are in the classrooms, and teaching is going on. Occasionally, these rounds were also used for an informal chat with the students, wherever possible. It was observed that in some schools the supervisors' rounds were more focused as they looked for more details such as whether. The teachers are teaching according to the lesson plan submitted. This particular activity indicates that it is very difficult to compartmentalize the various ways of supervising and the two separate activities? of taking rounds and of observing classroom teaching can be clubbed together.

It appears that the major aim of this practice is to see that the business of school is going on properly. However, there are a lot of differences observed in the details of this practice. Supervisors and principals have evolved their own procedure? There is no set procedure for taking rounds and things to be done during taking rounds. The issues regarding the number of

rounds to be taken, the time to be devoted for each round, the details to be observed and the feedback mechanism needs to be resolved and evolved. These visits are too short and its major aim seems to be control teachers and to ensure that the teaching-learning in school runs properly. Whether this practice leads to any professional growth of the teachers and or improvement of classroom teaching is questionable. Thus, is it actually a beneficiary instructional supervisory practice? It needs to be examined. On enquiry, it was found that it helps to monitor classroom teaching of teachers. They know that they are being observed and therefore, teaching as an act is taken seriously by the teachers. This was said by all the ten supervisors and ten principals interviewed. Teachers felt that it is really having a positive dimension because they are sure that they are doing their tasks as expected of them. To make it really helpful and a beneficial activity, few more dimensions to this practice can be added.

**Strategy:**

The major aim of this practice is to see that instructional activity begins in the classrooms smoothly as soon as the school starts. It needs to be informed to all the teachers that the supervisors are always present to facilitate and assist in the instructional activities in the school. Though all the teachers are well aware of the tasks to be done during particular day, it is necessary that the supervisor is taking rounds or is positioned in such a place that he/she can be approached easily and immediately for any needed instructional support/help. For instance, a particular class is not cleaned or enough number of benches is not there, assistance for solving this problem can be obtained easily.

Each school may adapt the norms of the practices of taking round based on the criteria mentioned below.

1. Size of a school
2. A New school or a well-established school
3. Shift system and
4. Points of disturbance in school.

The size of the school and the school's layout is crucial to decide whether the rounds are to be taken by the principal alone or s/he along with the supervisor/s or by a further delegation to a senior teacher.

A new and upcoming school requires greater attention and more frequent supervision by the supervisors than the new one as the latter one use to have already

established norms of functioning.

Another point of attention is the shift system in which it is of utmost importance that the next shift begins its functions smoothly and in time. This involves that the students from the first shift have the building well in time, there is a gap for cleaning and the second shift begins its work smoothly.

During the working of a school, there are certain points of general disturbance such as dispersal after assembly, going to classrooms after recess, and shifting of students to laboratories, playground and library etc. The supervisor should see to it that this transition is smooth.

### **Knowledge and Skills for this practice**

The supervisor needs to possess certain knowledge and skills for carrying out this activity effectively. S/he must have the following knowledge and skills.

***Knowledge: The supervisors shall have the following knowledge.***

- ♣ School's master timetable.
- ♣ Identification of periods of transition.
- ♣ The layout of the school building.
- ♣ Dynamics of teachers' behavior.
- ♣ Dynamics of students' behavior.

### ***Skills***

- ♣ Evolving different routes of passage in the school premises
- ♣ Identifying location of most disturbance in the school premises
- ♣ Observation skills of students' and teachers' behavior.
- ♣ Communication skills to deal with teachers and students.
- ♣ Human relation skill.

### **6.1. Monitoring lesson plans of teachers :**

In order that the instructional activity is effective and meaningful, the principal and the supervisors need to ensure that at least a basic minimum in terms of teaching is being carried out in the class. One of the ways to ensure this is through monitoring the lesson plans. A lesson plan is a guide and an outline of the proposed learning experiences that will be provided by the teachers in the classroom and may be beyond that.

There are several myths about lesson plan. Some of these myths are common to new teachers, others persist after years of teaching and reemerge in the teachers' recline after time to time. Quina (1989) has identified a few myths, which are as follows:

1. There is no right way to write lesson plans.
2. Lesson plans are rigid, they allow no flexibility.
3. Teachers feel that lesson plan is not needed.
4. Many feel that they can create a plan as they go to the class. This will result in more creative teaching.

However in reality, Lesson planning is an extremely important activity as the effectiveness of teaching depends on the plan. The school principals/supervisors may arrive at certain consensus about the myths in consultation with the teachers. These could be about the format of the lesson plan, the details of the lesson plan and their periodicity at which it has to be written.

The data reveal that for academic supervision, controlling the teaching through the lesson plans is an important practice adopted in all the schools. There was a unanimous agreement among all the twenty principals and the supervisors about the importance of lesson plans, they differed in their opinion about when it should be submitted, who should check it and in what detail. It was found that nineteen of the principals and supervisors ask the teachers to submit the lesson plans at the beginning of the day. One principal however differed in this practice and insisted on submitting lesson plan at the end of the day for the teaching to be done the next day. Some of the principals read the lesson plans very diligently, cross checking its concurrence with the yearly syllabus and teaching in the parallel classes (different sections of the same standard), mention of teaching aids, values to be incorporated in the lesson and so on. However, it was noted that most of the principals did not go through the lesson plans in great detail regularly. They just signed the lesson plans to make the teachers believe that their lesson plans are checked every day. Some of the principals considered this as the "core-controlling device" and so kept this task with them while some of the principals delegated this duty to the supervisors calling it a "routine task". Some of the principals and the supervisors wrote comment on the lesson-plans itself as feedback while some of them provided the feedback informally and orally on one-to-one basis. In order to check whether the lesson plans reflected the actual classroom teaching in terms of some innovations introduced or teaching

aids used or such other things, the principal and supervisors depended upon their general impression of the teachers. This also was a factor for deciding whose lesson plan should be checked in greater detail. One of the principals trusted the authenticity of the lesson plans but when in doubt casually talked to the teacher about the innovation s/he had planned. Also, an informal chat with the students helped the principal to decide whether a teacher actually practiced what was presented in the lesson plan. One of the principals took a very practical stand on this issue "There is no need to prepare elaborate lesson plans. Just the name of the lesson and the major teaching points are enough". It seems that this principal has given greater autonomy to teachers. It can be noted that this school is a well-established one and most of the teachers are having experience more than ten years. So, the principal has developed a sort of faith in them and has no doubt in his mind about the quality of efforts put by the teachers.

Academic supervision can be strengthened if monitoring through lesson plans is done effectively. Principals and the supervisors need to develop certain skills for this. First of all they must be familiar with the objectives of teaching different subjects, different formats of lesson plans, innovative teaching in different subjects, different teaching aids and gadgets required. Various strategies can be adopted to make this practice effective.

**Strategy:**

The data collected by interviewing the experts, principals and supervisors revealed that the principals and supervisors shall be doing the following and they need a strategic plan to carry out their tasks properly.

1. Senior and/or competent teachers' help may be taken in deciding the format of lesson plan.
2. Delegation of checking of lesson plan can be made to the senior and competent subject teachers.
3. The first period may be kept free for the senior/competent teachers who have been delegated the task of checking the lesson plan.
4. A yearly plan and a unit wise plan can also be prepared by a group of subject teachers. The lesson plan can be just an exercise in planning the teaching activity for a day based on a quick review of this plan.
5. A periodic exchange of views on general teaching and the lesson plans can be held by the supervisors and a group of subject teachers.

6. A periodic workshop on the teaching aids and the gadgets in different subjects can be organized by the principal/supervisor under the leadership of experts in different subjects.

### **Knowledge and Skills for this practice**

The supervisors shall have the following knowledge and skills with them to carry out this job.

#### **Knowledge:**

1. They shall have the content knowledge of different subjects.
2. Know the different instructional objectives.
3. Entry level behavior needed by students for different lessons.
4. Know the different methods and approaches of teaching.
5. Know the suitability of methods and approaches of teaching in different subjects and age groups.

#### **Skills:**

1. Able to write the instructional objectives in different subjects.
2. Guide teachers and mobilizing them to prepare lesson plan well in advance.
3. Provide leadership to teachers in academics.

### **6.3. Observation of Classroom Teaching**

Classroom teaching represents the execution of lesson plan/s prepared by the teachers. It is the crux of the teaching learning process that goes on in the school. In a planned program of supervision, particularly when teachers have helped to formulate the plan, the classroom visits fit logically into the picture. Indicating the importance of classroom visits, Jacobson, Logsdon and Wiegman, 1973 stated that "Classroom visitation can be of benefit to both the principal and the teachers when properly employed". Even Wiles & Bondi (2000) had said that "the heart of supervision will always be the improvement of classroom teaching". But they further caution that classroom visits in too many cases only results in inspection and rating rather than -in analysis of the learning situation or diagnosis of pupil difficulties and follow up remedial instruction. It is thus clear that classroom visitation is a potential practice to facilitate improvement in instruction of the teachers but its potential can be fully exploited when it is employed thoughtfully and with proper planning.

In the present study, the respondents i.e., the principals and the supervisors of the schools, considered classroom observation as an important activity that needs to be closely

observed. But the manner in which this supervisory activity was conducted differed. Most of the principals and supervisors observed the classroom teaching from outside. While taking the round, they sometimes "stood near the door" to understand "what was being taught" and "how the students were responding". Another principal remarked, "I do not enter the classroom to observe the teacher (teaching)". She feels that it is an insult to the teacher. They are sufficiently responsible and mature. And it does not look good with the students as audience. However, she did enter classrooms when she found any class not being managed properly-and that too with a motive to help the teacher and she does it tactfully. Most of the principals observed the classroom teaching from inside the class only for the new teachers as they needed "to be helped" and she or he wanted to be sure that "the performance of teacher was in accordance with the school's standard". A different stand was taken by yet another principal who made a time table for the lesson observation (classroom teaching). He also stressed the importance of observing teaching of new teachers but he also stated that "the old teachers also need to be observed for there is still something they can improve upon". He further opined that "this task is the most important task of a principal and if some principals don't find time for it, they are not worth of their posts".

Observe is an action word. Observation in an educational setting could be effective if it leads to positive action change for the improvement of instruction. The data reveals that there was no dispute over the importance and crucial nature of this activity in the improvement of instructional process in the school. It was observed that overall, all the principals/supervisors generally favored observing the lesson (teaching) from outside the classroom. A significant fact that emerges is that a great deal of sensitivity is attached to this practice in terms of insult of teacher and/ loss of faith in the teachers. The variation in this practice and variation in ideas among the supervisors indicated that a systematized approach to this practice is not followed: such as periodicity of classroom observation, variation of observation from teacher to teacher (in terms of new and experienced}, and how much time is to be devoted in the classroom observation. The data also revealed that the supervisor/principal observed the overall teaching learning process and the focus of each was different as to whether any teaching learning is going on in the class, or some innovation is being practiced, or to help the teacher if the students are indiscipline.

***Strategy:***

To make the classroom observation effective the following strategies can be adopted:

**1. Establish rapport with teachers:**

The principal/supervisor should establish good rapport with the teachers and develop the relation of mutual trust and faith. While the principal/supervisor is observing the class of a teacher, the teacher should not get a feeling of insult and should understand that he/she is just performing his/her duty. Teachers should be convinced that the common purpose for both the teacher and the supervisor here is to bring improvement in classroom teaching and to ensure that the students learn properly. The principal should make the teacher understand that their problem is his problem. It is only with joint efforts that they can solve problems.

**2. Planned Activity**

Observation of classroom teaching has to be a planned activity if it has to benefit the improvement of instructional process in general and the teaching practice in particular. Having a definite purpose to classroom visitation is essential. The purpose of the practice needs to be clarified, as it will be different for experienced teacher, truant teacher and new teacher. It needs to be planned on the part of the principal/supervisor as to how long he will be observing the class and whether the class will be observed from outside or inside. There are also certain etiquettes that the principal/supervisor needs to follow while observing the classroom teaching such as no derogatory remarks should be passed to any teacher in front of the students etc. Mutual respect and professionalism is the key word.

**3. Principal's capabilities:**

For a proper classroom-teaching observation, the principal/supervisor should have the knowledge of the subjects he/she is observing. If the supervisor does not have the technical know-how of the subject to be observed then he should think of alternative ways of supervision like, instead of observing the classroom teaching himself/herself, it can be delegated to the senior teacher from the same subject.

**4. Space for the principal:**

It is observed that generally when the principal or the supervisor enters the classroom for observation, a sort of commotion occurs as all the students try to offer a sitting place to the entrant/s. This also distracts the teacher. It is suggested that a permanent sitting place be kept for the supervisor/principal in a corner (a suitable place from where he can see every one of



the classroom. Students and teachers may be instructed to mind their work without being bothered about supervisor's comfort and showing him courtesy in all formal manner.

### **5. Academic Culture :**

The academic culture of the school should be so developed that the teachers have faith that their weak points will not be a matter of punishment or ridicule. They should also have such interest that they take opportunity of observing the best teaching practices of experienced and/or enthusiastic teachers; The teachers should develop such confidence that they do not hesitate to invite the principals to observe their innovative teaching practices. The principal also promote the practices of observing the teaching of different teachers in free time in the best tradition of mentoring. If a teacher feels that he is introducing some innovation, he/she shall invite the other teachers of the school to come and observe and after the class hour, they may share the experiences.

#### **Knowledge and skills required to carry out this responsibility:**

##### **Knowledge:**

1. Conceptual clarity of subject that are taught
2. Modern gadgets that are in use.
3. Classroom process that enables students to learn.
4. Testing procedures that are essential in classrooms.
5. Concept of well managed classroom.

##### **Skills:**

1. Teaching skills needed for an effective teacher.
2. Human skills to establish good rapport with teachers and students.
3. Skills of managing classrooms.

### **6.4. Notebook correction**

Students' written work is an extension of the classroom teaching. It provides the students with a relatively permanent base for learning. It also reflects the student's learning and the mastery of various skills required in the written work. This is important in the view of Indian Examination system being primarily written one. It therefore needs to be carefully monitored by the teachers to check its completion, its correctness and offer suggestions for further improvement. Also, the students' written work indicates to the parents the teaching learning process occurring in the school. •

All the principals and supervisors in the present study considered monitoring of teachers' correction of students' written work to be very vital for effective academic supervision. One of the principal prepared a time table too systematically ·"observe the notebooks of all the classes". She carefully noted the "corrections" made by the teacher, "corrected herself" if needed, and provided oral feedback to the concerned teacher about it. Most of the other principals delegated this duty to the supervisors. The supervisors differed in their approach. Some supervisors regularly collected note books to check the "completion of written work" and "teachers' correction". Some supervisors randomly collected notebooks from students, white some supervisors collected all the notebooks but checked randomly only few of them. In one of the schools, the supervisors informed that "teachers are not expected to correct the students' work in great detail, especially in the higher classes (secondary section). She only checks that the written work is done and puts her signature". In yet another selected effective school, written work such as essays, journals and map work were corrected in detail. The regular exercise at the end of lesson was to be completed by students themselves and the teachers did not correct.

The discussion reveals that observation of teachers' correction of students' written work is considered important for academic supervision. The actual practice adopted for it indicates that, the major criteria are to check the completion of written work. However, it was found that a few principals and supervisors did look for quality of correction made by the teachers.

**Strategy:**

Notebook correction refers monitoring of the written work done by the students. This instructional activity needs to be monitored closely and in a planned manner. The focus of this supervisory practice should be to check whether the written work is according to the lesson plan, whether it is given regularly, and corrected regularly.

**i. The mode of supervising notebook correction:**

Given the large number of students in the class and the other activities of the supervisors, it is practically impossible to correct all the notebooks. A proper system according to the local contexts but catering to the major focus of this supervisory activity should be developed. One way can be selecting at random some 5-10% of students' note book and seeing them thoroughly. Another way can be to collect all the notebooks and check randomly. A third way can be check completion of work in some. A delegation of task can be

done for this wherein the principal. checks the notebooks for ensuring completion and delegates the task to a senior subject teacher to ensure the quality of correction. Whatever may be the practice, the supervisor/principals shall have a uniform policy for correction of students' notebooks subject- wise.

#### **ii. Feedback:**

A mechanism for giving feedback to the teachers also needs to be developed. Some suggestions in this regard are maintaining a logbook, oral feedback be given personally or writing a letter to the concerned teacher or sending back some notebooks which are corrected unsatisfactorily to the concerned teacher.

#### **Required Knowledge and skills for carrying out this responsibility:**

In order to carry out the supervision of notebooks of students, and that the teachers are carrying out their responsibilities properly, the supervisors are required to possess the following knowledge and skills.

#### **Knowledge:**

1. Knowledge of the importance of maintaining notebooks.
2. Knowledge of the different works that are to be assigned by teachers and making the students to complete those works.
3. Knowledge of the suitable feedbacks that can be given to the teachers.

#### **Skills:**

1. Skills of checking notebooks of all types of students; bright and dull.
2. Skills of checking notebooks in all subjects in limited time.
3. Skills of providing feedback to teachers.
4. Skills of reporting to the Principals about the notebooks' checking by teachers.

#### **6.5. Collecting Information about teachers' performance**

The teachers' activity is aimed ultimately for student's learning. The best lesson plan and/or the best teaching aid will be a waste if it has not succeeded in reaching the students and helping them to learn. In the present context, this becomes much more important as the students and indirectly the parents are considered as important stakeholders. The students and their parents then form an important source of information for academic supervision. Teaching is an interdependent activity as there are a number of teachers, teaching the same subject in different sections of a class. Also, there is always a group of teachers teaching the same subject

in different standards such as a group of English teachers or a group of Science teachers. Thus a peer impression and a peer feedback necessarily help in improving the teaching learning process.

In the present study, as against the previously discussed practices, all the principals took this particular practice very seriously. They took active interest in it. They kept the procedure and information collected in this respect to themselves. The different ways of collecting feedback on the teachers' performance were as follows:

- a. Casual conversation with the students in the class or outside classroom.
- b. Talking to a group of students especially invited to the principal's office.
- c. Talking to the parents.
- d. Talking to teachers in the staff meeting and in other formal and informal sessions.

One of the principals was-very specific in talking to only "good students" about a fortnight before the exams to check if "the course is completed, students are satisfied and the correction of notebook is done by the teachers." Some of the school had a system of "suggestion box" in which students and parents could give their views on any teachers' teaching (performance). One of the schools distributed feedback forms to students randomly. The same school planned to develop a system for feedback from parents on a teacher's performance.

The supervisors also followed the same pattern and reported their impressions to the principals. In most of the schools the principals and supervisors shared information on teachers' performance informally. One supervisor said, "We don't have any fixed schedule for meeting and we meet often during the day." In another school, the principal and supervisor had slotted the lunch break for this activity. But one of the schools had a rigid schedule "Friday 10 am meeting" in which apart from the general activities, feedback on the teachers' performance was given to the principal by the supervisor. The principal of the same school commented "I wish, I had more time to go to the classes and talk to the children. I have to depend on my supervisors. But I still manage to talk to a few classes. This also helps me to know how authentic my supervisor's information is".

From the above analysis a question that emerges is, Is supervision then "snooper vision"? The active involvement and the seriousness that the principals attach to feedback on

teacher's performance appears to suggest this. In this connection one principal observed, "We cannot disregard students and parents satisfaction today. Moreover, I respect a teacher's autonomy. I never enter her/his class. I must know whether s/he does her job well". Academic supervision is a joint effort to be made by the principal and the supervisors and thus demands a faith and trust between the two. If this practice is used as a means to cross-check the supervisor's ability, it only shows a lack of trust between the two. The data also reveals that feedback from the peers/teachers about the teachers' performance is still an unexplored area which can be used for effective supervision.

**Knowledge and Skills required for supervisors:**

The school supervisors require the following Knowledge and skills to carry out the information role suitably.

**Knowledge:**

1. Know types of information to be collected about teachers (not personal information).
2. Know the different techniques of information collection.
3. Know the appropriate sources of information.
4. Know the process of information validation.

**Skills:**

1. Able to collate the information and apply them properly for teacher development.
2. Able to build confidence among the teachers, students and parents.

**Strategy:**

Information on teachers' performance can be an effective way of academic supervision. Few suggestions for this are presented below.

While collecting information from various sources such as teachers, students, and parents, certain care must be taken.

Information from teachers: Supervisors and principals can collect information from peer teachers, preferably of the same subject group.

Information from students: Different categories of students such as brilliant, average, and below \_average must be approached for information about the teacher's performance. This is very important as the teacher has to cater to the needs of all these three types of students and ensure that she reaches all of them. However one should be cautious in t1sing such information because the students are not that mature to comment on teachers' teaching.

Information from Parents/PTA: A time slot should be devoted to an exchange of ideas and information between the parents and teachers about the teaching learning process, needs of the students, and the teachers' performance in general. This can prove to be an effective platform for a direct face to face sharing of information and clearing of misunderstanding regarding the teaching learning process. The teachers can also be given an opportunity to express their views.

#### **6.6. Feedback given to teachers on their performance:**

To accomplish the task of effective teaching learning process, the teachers, supervisors and the principals have to work together as professionals. The teaching learning process is a highly interdependent and inter-related process where each one can contribute for the improvement of the other. Feedback plays an important role in this process. The purpose of different practices of academic supervision cannot be achieved if proper feedback is not provided to the teachers. It is because then only the teachers will be unaware of the areas for improvement. According to Sullivan and Glanz (2000), "Whether or not any positive change occurs, depends primarily on the quality of feedback that is provided." This confirms that a teacher needs feedback about the work that will help him or her to improve.

It is found from this study that most of the principals provided feedback informally, sometimes formally but orally. The principals maintained a diary note for such feedback discussions. Observations of serious nature and shortcoming on the part of the teacher were discussed in one to one interactions in the principal's office. General observations were made in the staff meeting. Some supervisors/principals wrote comments on the lesson plan and student's notebooks but also said that it is very difficult to find time to do so. One of the principals expressed "I make my expectations about work, be it a lesson plan or examination paper setting. I myself conduct workshop for it. So there is no need to write comments."

Most of the principals stated that they were very democratic in their approach in giving feedback. They always gave an opportunity to the teachers to explain their own perspectives.

Overall, the mechanisms or practices of giving feedback appear to be as per the objectives of academic supervision. But these practices can be made more comprehensive to help teachers.

**Knowledge and skills required:**

The Knowledge and skills required to carry out the function of providing feedback was found as follows:

***Knowledge:***

1. Know the appropriate feedback mechanism to be followed in giving feedback to teachers.
2. Know the importance of giving feedback to teachers.
3. Identify the academic and non-academic areas of giving feedback to teachers.

***Skills:***

1. Able to give appropriate written and verbal feedback to teachers.
2. Able to exercise judgment to give formal and informal feedback to teachers.
3. Able to establish human relation and upholding personal dignity of teachers while giving feedback.

***Strategy:***

Feedback should be given formally and officially. It must clearly indicate the areas in which the teacher needs to improve like content up-gradation, instructional methodology, human relation, use of technology etc. The record of the feedback must be maintained for each term and each teacher separately. This should be signed by the teacher, supervisor and the principal. Such kind of feedback can be discussed later on by the principal and the supervisors amongst themselves or between the groups of subject teachers. The aim of such discussion should be to look for alternatives for the limitations cited so that not only the single teacher but the group of teachers can improve. The feedback and the resultant discussion with the teacher concerned must be considered as a reflection on the teaching learning process of the school.

**7. A Model for preparing professional supervisors:**

Developing a programme for the training of supervisor was the primary and ultimate goal of this piece of research. As the data collected from the principal and supervisor was analyzed qualitatively, it revealed the following.

### 7.1. Objectives of the programme :

The basic objective was to prepare effective school supervisors for academic supervision. It was found from the above presentation of data that the supervisors should have the following knowledge and skills.

#### **Knowledge:**

The supervisors and principals, who carry out the academic supervisory duty of schools are required *to* have the following knowledge *to* carry out supervision work efficiently.

1. Knowledge of school's master timetable.
2. Identification of periods of transition from one class *to* the other after the completion one period.
3. Knowledge of the layout of the school building and the different classrooms.
4. Know the complexity of the dynamics of teachers' behavior.
5. Know the complexity of the dynamics of students' behavior.
6. They shall have the content knowledge of different subjects.
7. Know the different instructional objectives,
8. Know the entry level behavior needed by students for different lessons.
9. Know the different methods and approaches of teaching.
10. Know the suitability of methods and approaches of teaching in different subjects and age groups.
11. Knowledge of modern gadgets that are in use for different subjects.
12. Know the variety of classroom process that enables students to learn.
13. Knowledge of testing procedures those are essential in classrooms.
14. Know the concept of well managed classroom.
15. Knowledge of the importance of maintaining notebooks.
16. Knowledge of the different works that are to be assigned by teachers and making the students to complete those works.
17. Know types of information to be collected about teachers for improving classroom process (not personal information).
18. Know the different techniques of information collection:
19. Know the appropriate sources of information about classroom transaction.
20. Know the process of information validation.



21. Know the importance of giving feedback to teachers.
22. Identify the academic and non-academic areas of giving feedback to teachers.
23. Know the appropriate feedback mechanism to be followed in giving feedback to teachers.

The list of 23 knowledge categories can be meaningfully reduced to the following categories. A supervisor needs the following knowledge essentially to become an effective supervisor.

1. Knowledge of contents, methods and techniques,
2. Knowledge of annual plan, unit plan, and lesson plan
3. Knowledge of feedbacks and different mechanisms of giving feedbacks
4. Knowledge of teachers' tasks
5. Knowledge of a well-managed classroom
6. Knowledge of time table and physical layout of the school premise
7. Knowledge of different information needed and sources of these information

#### **Skills:**

The Following skills are needed to make supervisors more effective.

1. Able to write the instructional objectives in different subjects.
2. Guide teachers and mobilizing them to prepare lesson plan well in advance.
3. Provide leadership to teachers in academics by leading from front.
4. Evolving different routes of passage in the school premises that s/he can follow to make supervision.
5. Able to identifying location of most disturbances in the school premises.
6. Observation skills of students' and teachers' behavior.
7. Communication skills to deal with teachers and students.
8. Human relation skill.
9. Demonstrate teaching skills needed for an effective teacher.
10. Human skills to establish good rapport with teachers and students.
11. Skills of managing classrooms.
12. Skills of checking notebooks of all types of students; bright and dull.
13. Skills of checking notebooks in all subjects in limited time.
14. Skills of providing feedback to teachers.
15. Skills of reporting to the Principals about the notebooks checking by teachers.

16. Able to collate the information and apply them properly for teacher development.
17. Able to built confidence among the teachers, students and parents.
18. Able to give appropriate written and verbal feedback to teachers.
19. Able to exercise judgments to give formal and informal feedback to teachers.
20. Able to establish human relation and upholding personal dignity of teachers while giving feedback.

The above listed skills can be categorized under three skills viz., conceptual, technical, and human skills.

### **1. Conceptual skill:**

To provide proper direction to the teachers, supervisors who are the middle level managers in school organizations should have the basic idea of what the school is established for, what are the values that it will cherish, how the different subjects are needed for the all round development of the students, what are the contemporary demands of the society and nation etc. He should have the skills of developing/modifying the objectives, mission and vision of the school. These are essential for the supervisor to give a direction to teachers' activities.

### **2. Technical skill:**

Supervisors are also teachers and they shall possess all the technical know-how of the profession. They require to have not only content knowledge, but also the needed instructional skills, and in preparing annual plans and translate the same into action. Only then they can discover the academic problems faced by teachers and students and provide necessary feedback.

### **3. Human Relations skill:**

A supervisor deals with people viz., the teachers, students, and principal. In doing so, he has to develop communication skills, skills of finding out the difficulties and requirements of people. He shall be a task cum people-oriented person. It requires tactfulness and maturity on the part of supervisor.

**So, the objectives of the programme shall be to;**

- 1) Impart the knowledge and skills of modern and relevant methods and approaches of teaching.
- 2) Provide up to date knowledge of content and school syllabus.

- 3) Integrate ICT in Instruction.
- 4) Understand the procedure of fostering all-round development of students.
- 5) Enable to recognize the training needs and strength of teachers.
- 6) Develop a concept of a well-managed classroom.
- 7) Provide appropriate feedback to teachers in oral and written form both formally and informally.
- 8) Build human relation with the teachers and build a climate of co-operation among them.
- 9) Establish liaison between the teachers-students and the school authority.
- 10) Enable them to prepare school time-table, delegate tasks to different teachers.
- 11) Enable them to develop communication skills.
- 12) Understand the contemporary demands of the society and tune the teaching learning process accordingly.

## **7.2. Method and Approach of the Programme:**

The method of developing the knowledge and skills among the in-service school supervisors can be by organizing workshop for few days. It can also be done by organizing formal courses by the State Council of Educational Research and Training (SCERT) and also by the Dept. of Education, MHRD, New Delhi thorough the NCERT, New Delhi. The model shall include symposia, practical, demonstration, discussion and project work. Experts in educational administration like experienced school principals of effective schools, university professors dealing with school administration, district education officers dealing with school administration directly can be invited to act as resource persons. It can also be a formal short term course work that can be offered by university departments of education. The problems and issues of supervisors be addressed in the workshop and the approach shall be clientele (supervisor) centered rather than a programmed one. So, there is a need to make the method and approach of the programme flexible rather than rigid. National Council of Teacher education (NCTE), New Delhi, which is a statutory body of the Govt. of India, shall also evolve such courses to develop quality of school education in the country. The train teachers by themselves after few years of experience cannot become effective supervisors and shoulder the responsibility of school supervision. Therefore, this can also form an integral part of pre-service teacher education program.

## 8. Conclusion:

The finding of the study reveals that academic supervision is taken seriously by the principals and supervisors of the schools. The principals and the supervisors play an active role in this. However, it appears that though the practices adopted are more or less similar in all the schools, the emphasis it lays, and the manner in which it was practiced differed from school to school. Each school seemed to have formulated the limits of a particular practice and followed it stringently. It thus can be said that the school principals and the supervisors did not have a sound and adequate knowledge base of the practice and the required skills needed for supervisor. The programme developed can go a long way in providing a Philip to the supervisors in carrying out their roles and making schools more effective.

## References:

Blase, J. and Blase J. (2000) Effective instructional leadership: Teachers' perspectives on how principals promote teaching and learning in schools, *Journal of Educational Administration*, May 2000 MCB UP Ltd. Vol. 38 No. 2 pp130 141.

Burke, R.L. (2001) Supervision and service quality, *Measuring Business Excellence*, MCB UP Ltd., Dec 2001 Volume: 5 Issue: 4 Page: 28-31

NUEPA (2007) Elementary Education in Urban/ Rural India- Where do we stand? Analytical Tables, NUEPA, Sri Aurobindo Marg, New Delhi

Nir, A. E.(2003) The impact of school-based management on supervision instructors' professional considerations , *International Journal of Educational Management*. Volume: 17 Issue: 2 pp 49 58.

Ralph, E.G. (2005) Enhancing managers' supervisory effectiveness: a promising model

*Journal of Management Development*, Emerald Group Publishing Limited, Mar 2005 Volume: 24 Issue: 3 Page: 267 -284

Smith, D.M. and Holdaway E.A. (1995) Constraints on the effectiveness of schools and their principals

*International Journal of Educational Management*. MCB UP Ltd. Oct., 1995 Volume: 9 Issue: 5 pp 31- 39

Titus. O. (2001) How satisfied are academics with the behaviour/supervision of their line managers?