
The Role of the Inspectorate in the Educational System in Kenema District

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ABSTRACT

This piece of work investigated the Role of the Inspectorate in the Educational System in Kenema District. A descriptive analytical survey design was used to carry out the study. All the senior personnel were involved in the sampling including twelve supervisors, one inspector, three organizers, two football coaches and the Deputy Director of Education in Kenema district. Questionnaires were used and interviews held as and when necessary. Findings of the study clearly identified the roles of the inspectorate in supervising Primary, Secondary, Technical, Vocational institutions and non-formal literacy centers.

It also explains the inadequate capacity of the inspectorate personnel in terms of human, material, finance and time for supervision. Participant's revealed some problems encountered during supervision exercises such as;

- Long distance with limited or no mobility
- Inadequate stationeries
- Too many schools and other learning institutions to be covered by very few supervisors within a limited time.
- No reimbursement of travelling claims and overnight allowances
- Unavailability of proper school records.
- Negative attitudes of some teachers towards ministry officials.
- Lack of adequate commitment of the supervisors themselves.

The study revealed that; most of the Inspectorate staff had Teachers' Certificate (T.C) and Higher Teachers' Certificate with only a small number who are graduates; most of the respondents are within ages 40 – 49 which a youthful age is; the respondents have some amount of working experience which can guide their work as supervisors; that the work load of the supervisors is too much as they are expected to supervise many schools with limited staff; The Inspectorate staff especially supervisors have challenges to cope within terms of capacity, resource materials and even training; the supervision is mostly done on monthly basis; the bulk of the supervision activities are record checking and general observation of school and the Teacher; the constraints need to be addressed or minimized as suggested and recommended by respondents for future improvement.

The study recommended that, Government fulfills her responsibility by providing adequate logistics for supervision exercises. E.g. adequate mobility, overnight allowances for distant schools, stationery, and even fuel for mobility; that recruitment process for supervisors and Inspectors be revisited and reviewed for quality selection of Inspectorate personnel; in- Service Training with regards Inspectors professional needs should be organized by the Ministry of Education to equip them for quality work; supervisors and school authorities to work hard for progress of the children or learners in schools.

Keywords: *This is a whole system or process of training, instructing of children, youths and adults and gaining of experiences.*

Introduction:

Sierra Leone had a good start in the Western type of education among the countries of the sub region. The educational system was inherited from the Colonial masters who were well structured and organized. There was a director of Education based at the headquarters Freetown and Education officer sent to the regions where schools were established.

Right from the start of formal Education in Sierra Leone, there were supervisors of schools. According to summer D.L. "Education in Sierra Leone"[1], a senior education officer was stationed in Kenema in 1938. That education officer was assisted by a supervising teacher and both of them were responsible for the organization and supervision of education in areas covering six districts in the Eastern Region or province. In actual fact, the supervision started with only two personnel in Kenema. The statement further revealed that the establishment of education office in Kenema resulted in closer contact and co-operation with protectorate school authorities and in the improvement of education facilities. The educational system was centralized with headquarters in Freetown and with no consistent policy.

The first realistic national education policy was promulgated by an Act of parliament in 1964. In that policy, provision was made for the Inspectorate both at headquarters and the regions as a supervisory body of educational institutions. During the period under review, before the war, there were structural changes wherein the highest officer in education apart from the minister or secretary of state became the chief education officer (CEO) and in the regions there were the Regional Principal Education Officers (RPEO).

In 1995 some changes occurred in the new Ministry of Education management frame work. It was stated in the education policy that "a decentralized directorate system of management shall be adopted. The Director General and chief to the secretary of state in the organization shall be the professional and administrative head of the Ministry of Education. The directorates shall

include planning educational programmes, educational services, Inspectorate, Resources personnel and finance and support services. All of these directorates are still in operation and based at headquarters in Freetown up to date.

For the inspectorate sector, it was further stated that "the day-to-day administration of education at regional and district levels shall be under the inspectorate of education. The deputy director becomes the administrative head of the region". (New education policy -1995.Paragraph 6.2.1).

Lamin [2] in his manual for technical supervision clearly stated that "Education as a development activity requires efficient system of monitoring inputs, processes and outcomes in order to enable decision makers and implementers to have clear understanding of the development process and reopened to the changing needs of the programmes". Efficient system of monitoring and supervision had been and still is a major problem in the educational system especially with Kenema City.

The situation got worsened during the past decade or so, due to rapid increase in enrolment in schools and other technical/vocational institutions following the implementation of the 6-3-3-4 system of education. The increase had not been marked by equal expansion of inspectorate staff and provision of adequate logistics for effective monitoring and supervision. Therefore, the lack of control and limited monitoring and supervision had definitely reduced the effectiveness of the inspectorate in Kenema City.

The identified problem from a critical view point is negatively affecting the performance of pupils/students in both internal and external examinations and even the output of teachers in this part of the country. The problem needs attention for improvement in the educational standard of pupils/students in Kenema and the environs.

In respect of the above, the following must be adhered to as put by various writers and documents
EDUCATION ACT 2004 STATES:"It shall be the duty of the Minister to cause inspection of every school to be made by Inspectors at such intervals as shall be determined by the Minister".

Lamin 1999[2] states "There are two (2) forms of supervision: - Traditional and Technical". Page 4 of the Manual states: "We are all probably familiar with the Traditional form of supervision which was shrouded in secrecy and evoke fear in the teacher. The chief purpose of supervision in its Traditional form was to hunt for faults and reprimand the defaulting teacher. Technical supervision is a scientific method of overseeing the implementation of educational programmes and its aim chiefly facilitating creativity among teachers assisting them to overcome their lapses.

It is preventive, creative, curative rather than fault finding or policing. It is an integral part of teaching, learning inputs and processes and is deliberately used to enhance the achievement of literacy programme goals". A similar sentiment on supervision was expressed by Fadder [4] "To foster teaching progression, a teacher needs to give a careful attention to structuring sequential tasks and identifying the goals to be achieved. As with other programmes, supervision should reflect a clear idea of starting point, root and destination to help teachers successfully execute skills, supervisor must provide strategies which enable teachers to progress and achieve while also improving their convenience.

Banjo 1953[5] says: "The Headmasters in their special duties in schools must be involved in supervision because; he will receive the Lion's share of praise for the success of the work done there, as well as blame for its failure. For this reason, he must be in close touch with every class and must direct the effort of his assistant so as to secure co-ordination and efficiency".

SLADEA 2006[6] categorizes the role of supervisors as follows:

- To understand fully the work/project to be supervised.
- To be familiar with the project/work objectives and agree with them.
- To ensure that the objectives of the project are met and be able to advice or device problem solving mechanism for the project to continue or succeed.
- To ensure that enumerations are paid without dubious statics.
- Supervise technically and not traditionally.
- Avoid confrontation with teachers
- Write supervision reports and give feed backs as and when necessary.

UNESCO Newsletter 2004[7] gives valid points in decentralization and school improvement in any local district which is applicable to Sierra Leone situation and Kenema City inspectorate.

It starts by asking questions "How are the quality of schools monitored?"

- How efficient are local officers and school managers in their area?
- What resources are available to local offices and schools and how are they used?
- How are different categories of teachers recruited and managed?

Further in the newsletter, a key mission of local education office was highlighted to be:

- To monitor the quality of the teaching in the schools and examine teaching at regular intervals.
- It also explains supervision to have less impact if not accompanied by control and support within the school.

- The head teacher’s role as supervisor also features here.
- Reality a good number do not perform that role because of other official duties.
- Some heads who have administrative techniques delegate that function to either senior teachers or deputy heads.
- Putting square pegs in round holes is one major point the paper highlights.
- This means the wrong persons are put in the light positions which hinder their performance.

One last point explains how inadequate resources like positions which hinders their performance.

Sesay 2001[8] states thus: “Inspectors/Supervisor should visit individual school to evaluate teachers at work and to report on an administration organization, staffing, discipline, financial management, physical facilities and general academic performance. The visits must be some days duration. The objective been to assist, inspire and develop”.

The main objectives of this research include;

- To identify the role of the Kenema City inspectorate.
- Highlight constraints encountered in the monitoring and supervision process by the Kenema City inspectorate.
- To outline suggestions/recommendations to address the constraints encountered during supervision and monitoring.

Methodology:

This research was tailored to investigate the Role of the Kenema City Inspectorate in the Educational System. It was a fact finding exercise where the inspectorate role was identified with its accompanied constraints, suggestions and recommendations that could help minimize the constraint in the locality and the nation as a whole.

Questionnaires were developed and distributed for completion and collected after two weeks. Interviews of some staff members were done on the spot. Twelve questionnaires were given to supervisors of schools, one to inspector, three to organizers and two to Physical Health Officers (coaches).

The method used in analyzing the collected data involved descriptive statistics such as frequency counts, averages and percentages of issues. The interviewee’s responses made to the different variable were collated and analyzed. Percentages were also worked out on the negative and positive responses. The percentages from the responses were used to arrive at conclusions of the study.

Result and Discussion:

Table 1 - Number and Percentage of Respondents according to positions held in the Inspectorate.

Position	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Deputy Director of Education	1	5.3%
Supervisor	12	63.2%
Inspector	1	5.3%
Organizer	3	15.8%
Physical Health Officers (Coaches)	2	10.5%

SOURCE: Data collected 2019

Table 1 reveals that 63.2% of the respondents were supervisors while 15.8% were organizers in the inspectorate Office.

Table 2 - Number and Percentage of Respondents according to Qualification

Qualification	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Teacher’s Elementary Certificate (TEC)	1	5.3%
Teacher’s Certificate (TC)	12	63.8%
Higher Teacher’s Certificate (HTC)	13	68.4%
Diploma	1	5.3%
Degree	5	26.3%

Data collected 2019

Table 2 reveals that 68.4% of the respondents hold Higher Teacher’s Certificate. 63.8% holds the Teacher’s Certificate and only 26.3% are graduates.

Table 3- Number and Percentage of Respondents according to Age Range

Age Range	Frequency	Percentage (%)
60 – 69 years	-	0%
50 – 59 years	7	36.8%
40 – 49 years	12	63.2%
30 – 39 years	-	0%

Data collected 2019

Table 3 reveals that 63.2% of the respondents are between the age range 40 – 49 years and 36.8% are in their fifties.

Table 4 – Number and Percentage of Respondents according to work experience in the Inspectorate Office

Work Experience Year	Frequency	Percentage (%)
10 – 11 and above years	7	5.3%
8 – 9 years	2	63.2%
7 – 8 years	5	5.3%
5 – 6 years	3	15.8%
3 – 4 years	2	10.5%
1 – 2 years	1	5.3%

Data collected 2019

Table 4 reveals that 36.8% of the respondents have a working experience from 10 – 11 years and above while 26.3% are within the years 7 – 8.

Table 5 – Number and percentage of respondents according to the type of schools/institutions monitored and supervised.

Type of School/Institution	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Pre-school	12	63.2%
Primary	12	63.2%
Secondary	5	26.3%
Technical & Vocational	12	63.2%
Non – Formal	2	10.5%
Tertiary	0	0%

Data collected 2019

Table 5 explains that 26.3% of the respondents' supports are motor bikes, 10.5% are Bicycles and 5.3% refers to vehicle and stationery. None of the respondents monitors/supervises Tertiary Institution.

Table 6 – Number and percentage of respondents' support for monitoring and Supervision exercise

Item	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Vehicles		5.3%
Bicycles		10.5%
Motor Bikes		26.3%
Stationery		5.3%

Data collected 2019

Table 6 explains that 26.3% of the respondents' supports are motor bikes, 10.5% are Bicycles and 5.3% refers to vehicle and stationery.

Table 7 – Number and percentage of respondents Training duration in supervision.

Training Duration	Frequency	Percentage (%)
5 days and above	2	10.5%
4 days	2	10.5%
3 days	2	10.5%
2 days	1	5.3%
1 day	2	10.5%
0 day	10	52.6%

Data collected 2019

Table 7 reveals that 52.6% of respondents received no training in supervision and 10.5% says they had some.

Table 8 – Number and Percentage of Respondents' supervision frequency.

How Often	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Weekly	1	5.3%
Monthly	12	63.2%
Yearly	-	0%
Quarterly	6	31.5%

Data collected 2019

Table 8 explains that 63.2% of the respondents monitor and supervise Schools/Institutions on monthly basis while 31.5% supervise on quarterly basis.

Table 9 - Number and percentage of Respondents' monitoring and supervision activities.

Supervision Activity	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Checking Records	12	63.2%

Observation of School environment	12	63.2%
Use if Teaching/Learning Materials	1	5.3%
Content Delivery	3	15.8%
Listening Survey	2	10.5%
Classroom Pupils participation	4	21.8%
Checking, Learning Books	6	31.5%
Teachers' commitment	7	36.8%
General Observation	7	36.8%

Data collected 2019

Table 9 reveals that 63.2% of the respondents check records and observe school environments, 36.8% out general observation and check on teachers' commitment to duty.

Table 10 – Number and percentage of Respondents' monitoring and supervision constraints.

Supervision Constraints	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Lack of adequate mobility	13	68.4%
Lack of incentives	18	94.7%
Little or no proper record keeping in schools	8	42.1%
Inadequate Teaching/Learning materials in Schools	12	63.2%
Too many schools to supervise	19	100%
Far distances to cover on foot	8	42.1%
Little or no training on supervision	10	52.6%
Inadequate personnel for supervision	13	68.4%
Late payment of subsidies to schools	9	47.4%
No job satisfaction	6	31.5%
Unattractive salary scale	17	9.4%
Lack of stationery supply	18	94.7%

Table 10 reveals that 100% of respondents monitoring and supervision constraint is too many schools to supervise. 95% of the constraints are lack of incentives and stationery, while 89.4% earns unattractive salary and 68.4% lack of mobility.

Table 11 – Number and percentage of Respondents' supervision constraint effects.

Supervision Constraint Effects	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Spending longer time on supervision	19	100%
Delay in reporting system	16	84.2%
Lethargy in carrying out supervision	11	57.8%
Poor concentration at work/lack of commitment	14	73.6%
Lack of respect for supervisors	9	47.4%
Lack of information supply	2	10.5%

Table 11 reveals that 100% of the respondents' supervision constraints effect is spending long time on supervision. 84.2% is the delay in the reporting system while 73.6% reveals lack of commitment and poor concentration at work.

Table 12 – Number and percentage of Respondents' suggestions to minimize the constraints.

Suggestions to minimize constraints	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Provision of adequate mobility to staff	19	100%
Make/create a conducive working environment	19	100%
Teachers to respect authorities	13	68.4%
Salaries to be attractive and paid promptly	19	100%

Provision of Teaching/Learning/Materials	19	84.2%
Payment of overnight allowances for supervision exercises	15	78.9%

Data collected 2019

Table 12 reveals that 100% of the respondents suggest provision of adequate mobility to staff, create a conducive working environment and salaries to be attractive and promptly paid.

Table 13 – Number and percentage of participants’ recommendations for improvement in supervision.

	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Provision of adequate mobility	19	100%
Salary increase and prompt payment	19	100%
Creating a conducive working environment	19	100%
Payment of overnight allowances	15	78.9%
Creation of good working relationship between Teachers and Supervisors	18	94.7%
Provision of Stationery to staff	18	94.7%
Organize training for Inspectorate Staff	17	89.4%

Data collected 2019

Table 13 reveals that 100% of the respondents’ recommendations are provision of adequate mobility, salary increase and prompt payment and creation of a conducive working environment.

The study reveals that;

63.2% of the respondents were supervisors while 15.8% organizers in the Inspectorate Office. This indicates that the bulk of the supervisory work in the Inspectorate is done by the Supervisors. This will surely affect the performance of their work.

68.4% of the respondents hold a Higher Teachers’ Certificate and 63.8% hold a Teachers’ Certificate while only 26.3% are graduates. This creates a serious gap in terms of qualification since Supervisors will be supervising Teachers with higher qualification especially in secondary and tertiary institutions.

63.2% of the respondents were between the age range 40 – 49 years and 36.8% in their fifties. This indicates that most workers or staff members were still in their youthful age.

36.8% of the respondents have a working experience from 10 – 11 years and above, while 26.3% were within the years 7 – 8 working experience. This shows that an appreciable number are knowledgeable in supervision work.

63.2% of the respondents monitor and supervise Pre-schools, Primary and Technical and Vocational Institutions. 26.3% monitor and supervise secondary schools while none of the supervisors monitor and supervise Tertiary Institutions. This indicates that the work load of the Supervisors is too much since they have to supervise or expected to supervise many schools. On the other hand, Secondary and Tertiary Institutions are neglected.

26.3% of the respondents’ supports for supervision are motor bikes and 10.5% are bicycles. This shows that the Inspectorate staff has limited support for supervision. It is a major challenge and can greatly militate against their effectiveness.

52.6% of the respondents received no special training in supervision and 10.5% say they received some. The effectiveness of any functionary is the appropriate training but it is clear that Supervisors of the Inspectorate were not adequately trained for the job and therefore cannot measure up to expectation.

63.2% of the respondents monitor and supervise schools/institutions on monthly basis. While 31.5% supervise on quarterly basis. This proves that almost all of the Supervisors go on monthly routine visits.

63.2% of the respondents check school records and observe school environments. 36.8% carry out general observation and check on teacher’s commitment. This indicates that the bulk of the supervision activities are checking of school records and the school environment and also the commitment of the teacher.

100% of respondents’ monitoring and supervision constraint was that, they had too many schools to supervise. 95% of the constraints are lack of incentives and stationery, while 89.4% is unattractive salary and 68.4% lack of mobility. This revealed that Supervisors have numerous constraints that impede their effectiveness.

100% of the respondents’ supervision constraint effect is spending longer time on supervision field. 84.2% is the delay in the reporting system, while 73.6% reveals lack of commitment and poor concentration at work. This gives the justification for the ineffectiveness of supervisors at work.

100% of the respondents suggested provision of adequate mobility to staff, creation of conducive working environment and salaries to be attractive and promptly paid. These suggestions were really necessary and appropriate since effective work goes with adequate provision of logistics and if these are provided, supervision constraints would be minimized.

100% of the respondents' recommendations to the appropriate authorities were provision of adequate mobility, salary increase and prompt payment of it and then creation of a conducive working environment.

Conclusion and Recommendations:

Conclusion

It was concluded that;

- Most of the Inspectorate Staff holds Teacher's Certificate (TC) and Higher Teachers Certificate with only a small number who are graduates.
- Most of the respondents were within ages 40 – 49 which a youthful age is.
- The respondents have some amount of working experiences which can guide their work as Supervisors.
- That the work load of the supervisors appeared to be too much as they are expected to supervise many schools with limited staff.
- The Inspectorate staff especially Supervisors have a lot of challenges to cope with in terms of capacity, recourse materials and even training.
- The supervision is mostly done on monthly basis.
- The bulk of the supervision activities were record checking and general observation of school and the Teacher.
- The Supervisors encounter a lot problems and those constraints heavily militate against their effectiveness
- The constraints need to be addressed or minimized as suggested and recommended by respondents for future improvement.

Recommendations

This study recommended the following:

- That Government fulfills her responsibility by providing adequate logistics for supervision exercises. E.g. adequate mobility, overnight allowances for distant schools, stationery, and even fuel for mobility.
- That recruitment process for Supervisors and Inspectors be revisited and reviewed for quality selection of Inspectorate Personnel.
- In-Service Trainings with regards Inspector's professional needs should be organized by the Ministry of Education to equip them for quality work.
- Supervisors and school authorities to work hand in hand for progress.

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