

**EXPLORING HOW EXTERNAL SUPERVISION IS PERCEIVED IN
TEACHING AND LEARNING PROCESS IN LILONGWE RURAL
WEST**

**M. Ed. IN CURRICULUM AND TEACHING STUDIES
(SOCIAL STUDIES EDUCATION) THESIS**

JOYCE JOSEPHINE MATUNGA

**UNIVERSITY OF MALAWI
CHANCELLOR COLLEGE**

MAY, 2016

**EXPLORING HOW EXTERNAL SUPERVISION IS PERCEIVED IN
TEACHING AND LEARNING PROCESS IN LILONGWE RURAL
WEST**

**MASTER OF EDUCATION (CURRICULUM AND TEACHING
STUDIES-SOCIAL STUDIES EDUCATION) THESIS**

By

JOYCE JOSEPHINE MATUNGA
B. Ed. (Science) – University of Malawi

Submitted to the Department of Curriculum and Teaching Studies, Faculty of Education
in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Education in
curriculum and teaching studies (Social Studies Education)

UNIVERSITY OF MALAWI
CHANCELLOR COLLEGE

MAY, 2016

DECLARATION

I, the undersigned, hereby declare that this thesis is my own original work which has not been submitted to any other institution for similar purposes. Where other people's work has been used, acknowledgements have been made accordingly.

JOYCE JOSEPHINE MATUNGA

Full Legal Name

Signature

Date

CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL

The undersigned certify that this thesis represents the student's own work and effort and has been submitted with our approval.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

R.Nyirongo, PhD (Lecturer)

Main Supervisor

Signature: _____ Date: _____

E. D.Kunkwenzu, PhD (Senior Lecturer)

Co-Supervisor

Signature: _____ Date: _____

A. Chauma, PhD (Lecturer)

Head of Department

DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to my husband Phaniel, and our two children Chabwera and Crocus, for their unwavering love, support, and patience throughout my studies. I also dedicate this endeavour to my mum and dad, Elida and Elliot Matunga for their prayers and encouragement. They are wonderful parents who have instilled in me cherished values for my life.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to express my sincere appreciation to my supervisors, Dr. Richard Nyirongo and Dr. Estery Kunkwenzu, for their help and guidance throughout the completion of this work. In a special way, I also thank the four Primary Education Advisors and the eight primary school teachers from Lilongwe Rural West Education District for the provision of necessary support to this study.

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to explore the perceptions of teachers and external supervisors regarding the role of supervision on teaching and learning in Lilongwe Rural West schools. The study seeks to establish the perceptions that teachers and supervisors have regarding instructional supervision. It was conducted within a qualitative research paradigm which was primarily interpretative of the external supervisors' and teachers' experiences to give meaning to the question under study. A phenomenological approach was used to ensure that it illuminates the explicit events of external supervisors' and teachers' perceptions on instructional supervision as a means of improving the teaching and learning process. The study used Purposive sampling based on respondents' characteristics relevant to the research problem. The sample had eight teachers and four PEAs. Data were obtained through qualitative data generation techniques, which included in-depth interviews, document analysis and observation. Data analysis was inductive in nature which aimed at capturing and discovering the meanings that external supervisors and teachers allotted to their experiences about external supervision. The results of the study indicated that teachers' perceptions of instructional supervision differ greatly from those of their external supervisors (PEAs). Specifically, the findings revealed that teachers perceive instructional supervision as more of inspection because instructional supervision procedures are not followed. They also perceive it as an exercise for discipline and fault finding. On the other hand, PEAs do not feel it necessary to follow standard.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT.....	vi
TABLE OF CONTENTS.....	vii
LIST OF TABLES.....	xii
LIST OF FIGURES	xiii
LIST OF APPENDICES.....	xiv
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS.....	xv
Chapter One	1
Introduction and Background	1
1.0 Chapter overview	1
1.1 Introduction.....	1
1.2 Background to the study	2
1.3 Brief history of supervision	4
1.4Supervision in Malawi	5
<i>1.4.1 Roles of Primary Education Advisors (PEAs) and Internal Supervisors</i>	<i>9</i>
1.5Statement of the problem	10
1.6Purpose of the study.....	11
1.7Research questions.....	11
<i>1.7.1 Key research question:</i>	<i>11</i>
<i>1.7.2 Sub-questions.....</i>	<i>11</i>
1.8Significance of the study.....	12

1.9 Definition of terms	12
1.10 Chapter summary	13
1.11 Thesis outline	13
Chapter Two.....	15
Literature Review and Conceptual Framework	15
2.0 Chapter overview	15
2.1 Review of related literature.....	15
2.1.1 <i>Concept of supervision</i>	15
2.1.2 <i>Supervision as a global phenomenon</i>	16
2.2 Conceptual framework.....	21
2.2.2 <i>Backward mapping approach</i>	24
2.3 Uniqueness of the study	26
2.4 Chapter summary	26
Chapter Three.....	27
Research Design and Methodology	27
3.0 Chapter overview	27
3.1 Research design	27
3.1.1 <i>Research approach</i>	27
3.1.2 <i>Methodology</i>	28
3.1.3 <i>The phenomenological approach</i>	29
3.2 Sampling	32

3.3 Access negotiations.....	34
3.4 Data generation	34
3.4.1 <i>Data generation techniques</i>	35
3.4.1.1 <i>Interviews</i>	35
3.4.1.2 <i>Direct instructional supervision observation</i>	37
3.4.1.3 <i>Document analysis</i>	39
3.5 Data analysis procedures.....	40
3.6 Ethical considerations	42
3.7 Credibility and trust worthiness of the findings.....	42
3.8 Limitations of the study	43
3.9 Chapter summary	44
Chapter Four	45
Findings and Discussions.....	45
4.0 Chapter overview	45
4.1 Characteristics of sampled PEAs	45
4.2 Characteristics of sampled primary school teachers.....	47
4.3 Data analysis and findings	48
4.3.1 <i>Perceptions of teachers on instructional supervision</i>	48
4.3.1.2 <i>Summary description of the perception of teachers on instructional supervision</i>	52
4.3.2 <i>Perceptions of PEAs on instructional supervision</i>	53
4.3.2.1 <i>Common themes - Perceptions of PEAs on instructional supervision</i>	55

4.3.2.2	<i>Summary description of the perceptions of PEAs on instructional supervision</i>	55
4.3.3	<i>Teachers understanding of instructional supervision</i>	57
4.3.3.1	<i>Common themes</i>	58
4.3.3.2	<i>Summary description of teachers understanding of instructional supervision</i>	59
4.3.4	<i>The role of instructional supervision to effective classroom instruction.....</i>	59
4.3.4.1	<i>Common themes</i>	61
4.3.4.2	<i>Summary description of the role of instructional supervision to effective classroom instruction.....</i>	62
4.4	<i>Discussion of the findings.....</i>	62
4.4.1	<i>Perceptions of teachers on instructional supervision.....</i>	63
4.4.2	<i>Perceptions of PEAs on instructional supervision</i>	67
4.4.3	<i>Teachers understanding of instructional supervision</i>	70
4.4.4	<i>The role of instructional supervision in effective classroom instruction.....</i>	72
4.5	<i>Chapter summary</i>	75
Chapter Five		76
Conclusion and Implications		76
5.0	<i>Chapter overview</i>	76
5.1	<i>Perception of teachers on instructional supervision.....</i>	76
5.2	<i>Perceptions of PEAs on instructional supervision</i>	77
5.3	<i>Teachers understanding of instructional supervision.....</i>	78

5.4 The role of instructional supervision in effective classroom instruction.....	79
5.5 Perception of teachers and external supervisors on instructional supervision....	79
5.6 Area for further research.....	80
REFERENCES	82
APPENDICES	87

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1: Number of schools and teachers in the four education zones.....	33
Table 2: Characteristics of sampled PEAs.....	46
Table 3: Characteristics of sampled primary school teachers.....	47
Table 4: Significant statements- Perceptions of teachers on instructional supervision ...	49
Table 5: Perceptions of PEAs on instructional supervision.....	53
Table 6: Teachers understanding of instructional supervision	57
Table 7: Relating the role of instructional supervision to effective classroom struction.	60

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1: Organisational Structure for DIAS.....	8
--	---

LIST OF APPENDICES

Appendix A: Letter from the Faculty of Education.....	87
Appendix B: Letter from the Division Office.....	88
Appendix C: Supervisor's (PEA's) Interview Guide.....	89
Appendix D: Teacher's Interview Guide.....	91
Appendix E: Observation Guide.....	93
Appendix F: Guiding Notes to Appendix E.....	98
Appendix G: Evidence Form (1) Primary Classroom Observations.....	100
Appendix H: Classroom Observation Form.....	102

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ADEA	Association for the Development of Education in Africa
CPD	Continuous Professional Development
CPEA	Coordinating Primary Education Advisor
DEM	District Education Manager
DIAS	Directorate of Inspection and Advisory Services
EDM	Education Division Manager
EFA	Education for All
FPE	Free Primary Education
IIEP	International Institute for Education Planning
IPTE	Initial Primary Teacher Education
MASTEP	Malawi Secondary Teacher Education Programme
MESR	Malawi Education Sector Reform
MITEP	Malawi Integrated Teacher Education Programme
MoEST	Ministry of Education Science and Technology
NESP	National Education Sector Plan
ODL	Open Distance Learning
PCAR	Primary Curriculum and Assessment Reform

PEA	Primary Education Advisor
PEMA	Principal Education Methods Advisor
SEMA	Senior Education Methods Advisor
SSCAR	Secondary School Curriculum and Assessment Reform
TDC	Teacher Development Centre
UNESCO	United Nations Education Scientific and Cultural Organisation
UPE	Universal Primary Education
USAID	United States Agency for International Development

Chapter One

Introduction and Background

1.0 Chapter overview

This chapter presents an introduction and background information to the study. The chapter also presents the statement of the problem, purpose of study, research questions and significance of the study.

1.1 Introduction

School supervision is a vehicle to enhance the performance of teachers in classroom instruction (Kosmoski, 1997). Its services have a key role in the development of the public education system through monitoring quality of schooling and supporting their improvement. There are several dimensions to school supervision and one of them is instructional supervision. Commonwealth Secretariat/ADEA (1998) defines instructional supervision as a constant process of checking and providing guidance in the teaching and learning process in a classroom. This is the most direct way of evaluating and improving the effectiveness of teaching. Improving teaching and learning is a complex process in which several elements should interact (USAID, 2010). Teachers are at the centre of this improvement process. Their acceptance of, and interaction with the supervisor in dealing with techniques, methods, models of teaching, or processes provide the catalyst for any supervisory success. Kutsyuruba (2003) argues that in order to ensure an optimum teaching and learning environment, teachers need to be not only well educated, but also part of the learning community through positive perceptions on supervision. It is, therefore, necessary to find out if

the teachers and supervisors in Malawi, who are the key participants in supervision, perceive instructional supervision as an effective means of improving teaching and learning. The way teachers view instructional supervision is very important in its outcomes because, as an interactive process, it depends on the source of supervision, the supervisor and the teacher.

1.2 Background to the study

For decades, the field of supervision in many countries has been suffering from unfriendly and unstable relations between teachers and supervisors (IIEP/ UNESCO, Module 2, 2007). Research has revealed that supervision in most countries suffers from problems such as lack of trust between teachers and supervisors, weakness in ways of communication, lack of cooperation and mutual understanding between teachers and supervisors, and lack of supervisors professional knowledge (Abdulkareem, 2001; IIEP/UNESCO, Module 2, 2007). Several studies done outside Malawi have examined perceptions of school participants (teachers, head teachers/principals, learners) and supervisors in regard to instructional supervision (Abdulkareem, 2001; Kutsyuruba, 2003; Mpofu, 2007; IIEP/UNESCO, Module 2, 2007; Milnneer-Peplinski, 2009). Most of these studies revealed negative perceptions of teachers towards instructional supervision. Scholarly studies on perception of instructional supervision by school participants have been done in countries outside Malawi. Their results and recommendations may not be the same and relevant to Malawi because of the differences in environment, social, political and economic factors.

In Malawi, there is very little literature on instructional supervision. Few studies have mentioned other areas of supervision. For instance, Chimombo (2005) reported insufficient supervisory services. Chibwana (1997) noted that classroom supervision

was below standard and Chimombo, Mwale, and Ndalama (2005) also observed inadequate supervisory visits for supervisors to discharge their roles. It is apparent from the literature in Malawi that not much is known on how teachers and supervisors perceive instructional supervision as an effective means of improving teaching and learning. MoEST (2004) explains that effective supervision is measured by the ability of supervisors to effectively prepare and train teachers on the job. Therefore any initiative aimed at effective supervision should include teachers and supervisors views regarding the importance or general understanding of instructional supervision.

In a bid to improve the education sector in Malawi, Government came up with broad education development plans that are stipulated in the National Education Sector Plan (NESP, 2008-2017). The NESP has three thematic areas which are to expand equitable access to education to enable all to benefit; to improve quality and relevance of education to reduce drop-out and repetition and promote effective learning; and to improve governance and management of the system to enable more effective delivery of services. It is clear that thematic area number two seems to have an element of instructional supervision as it aims at promoting effective learning.

In addition, there have been several reforms that Government has embarked on. Since the multiparty era after 1994, Government came up with the expansion of primary education through Free Primary Education (FPE) and Universal Primary Education (UPE), diversification of secondary schools and development of alternative delivery systems in terms of training of primary school teachers such as Malawi Integrated Teacher Education Programme (MITEP), Malawi Secondary Teacher Education Programme (MASTEP), Initial Primary Teacher Education (IPTE) and its parallel Open Distance Learning (ODL) Programme, Primary Curriculum and Assessment Reform (PCAR), and decentralisation of education system. In the recent past, the

Ministry of Education has also implemented other reforms through Malawi Education Sector Reform (MESR). Under MESR, there have been reforms such as reduced primary gross enrolment ratios, and increased net enrolment ratio; gender parity in primary and secondary school enrolment, reduced pupil-teacher ratio in primary schools, better measurement and monitoring of learning outcomes, systematic and regular inspection of all educational institutions, and greater decentralisation of management and financing of primary education. Most of these reforms showed poor progress and partially satisfactory after the Malawi Education Sector Reform 2010 – 2013 Performance Assessment report.

There are also other reforms in the pipeline such as Secondary School Curriculum and Assessment Reform (SSCAR) and restructuring of clear roles and reporting lines for inspectors and supervisors in DIAS. However, academic research on instructional supervision in Malawi has, over the years, not been provided to help the Ministry of Education to come up with better decisions for improving effective instructional supervision. It is, therefore, necessary to explore how external supervision is perceived as an effective means of improving teaching and learning process to ensure its efficiency. Furthermore, it is not clear as to whether the current reforms are addressing instructional supervision in primary schools.

1.3 Brief history of supervision

School supervision began in England as a process of external inspection by locally appointed citizens who were to check what the teachers were teaching and what the learners were learning. It became a formal activity by education administrators in the late 1830's (Gwynn, 1994). In the early twentieth century, the movement toward scientific management had an influence on school supervision to make it a flexible and dialogic process between the teacher and supervisor involving a shared professional

discretion. Later supervision became closely identified with various forms of clinical supervision that were initially developed by Morris Cogan and Robert Anderson (Kosmoski, 1997). Clinical supervision blended elements of objective and scientific classroom observation with aspects of collegial coaching, rational planning, and a flexible, inquiry-based concern with students learning. Present day concepts of supervision operate from the three main factors which are changes in ideas of how children learn, major advances in methods of teaching, and a tremendous growth in amount and variety of textbooks and teaching materials (USAID, 2010).

1.4 Supervision in Malawi

In Malawi, the Department of Education was established in 1926 to co-ordinate and supervise the work of the mission schools. Government officers paid friendly visits to mission schools (Banda, 1982). This was the beginning of some form of inspection and supervision. From the colonial era up to 1994, there was an Inspectorate Department within the Ministry of Education and the personnel were referred to as Inspectors who performed both roles of inspection and supervision (MoEST, 2004). The work of inspectors was mandated from section 48 of the Education Act (1962) which stated that “the Minister officially may, from time to time, with or without notice enter and inspect a school.” However, the combination of inspection and supervision by the same personnel caused confusion between officers, and teachers so that it was difficult to tell in one particular visit whether one was inspecting, supervising or advising the school.

Supervision is the process of giving continuous advice, support and direction for the improvement of teaching and learning. The central purpose of supervisory work in education is to promote students’ learning through effective classroom instruction. On the other hand, Inspection is an activity undertaken on behalf of the Ministry of

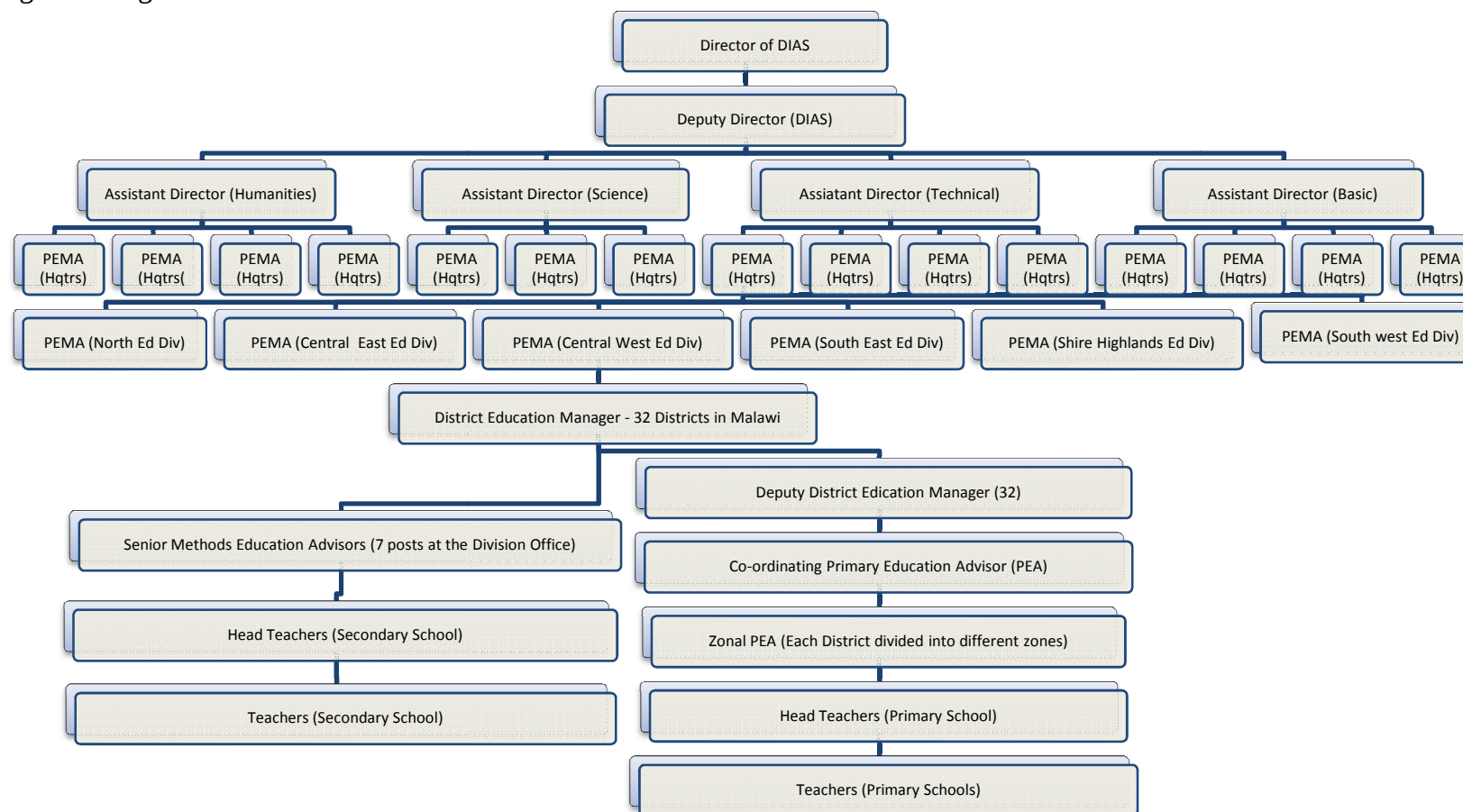
Education to evaluate and examine the standards of education taking place at an education institution based on established criteria. The purpose of inspection is to evaluate teachers and the school in order to effect improvements in quality of teaching and learning as well as learners achievements. With the advent of democracy, the inspection role was looked at as a policing mechanism and that it ignored the role of supervision and advisory (MoEST, 2004). To view supervision as a policing mechanism by school participants instilled unfriendly and unstable relations between school participants (teachers, head teachers, learners) and supervisors. However, as it is on the ground, it is not known whether school participants in Malawi suffer from the same policing syndrome. In addition, it is also not clear how teachers and supervisors themselves perceive supervision.

The current status of supervision in primary schools in Malawi is that at primary school level, supervisory structures and practices have been put in place to improve instruction delivery to students. There is a supervisory section at each District Education Office (DEO). At district level, the Co-ordinating Primary Education Advisor (CPEA) is responsible for co-ordinating primary school supervision of all external supervisors at that level. The term 'external supervisor' refers to supervisors who are located outside the school and are based either at local, regional or central education offices (IIEP/UNESCO, Module 1, 2007). In Malawi, external supervisors for primary schools are located in different educational zones within the district and are called Primary Education Advisors (PEAs). An educational zone in Malawi consists of 10-15 primary schools. According to MoEST (1998) some of the roles of instruction supervisors(PEAs) are to guide, advise, and support the teachers in a spirit of encouragement; to assists teachers on curricular matters; to assist the school with

its internal supervision programmes; and to take a lead in the production of teaching and learning resources.

This means that PEAs have to properly and effectively communicate with teachers in a way that maximizes the good outcomes of these tasks. In view of this, the Directorate of Inspection and Advisory Services (DIAS) at Ministry of Education Headquarter occasionally provides in-service training courses and workshops at district levels to strengthen the management capacity of personnel in supervisory positions, and thereby enhance their supervisory practices in primary schools (MoEST, 2004). Currently, it is not known, whether teachers still view supervision as a policing mechanism that is meant for fault-finding or not. Zepeda (2003) contends that instructional supervision aims at promoting growth, development, interaction, fault-free problem solving, and a commitment to build capacity in teachers. Although the Ministry of Education in Malawi through DIAS is focused on improving instructional supervision in Primary schools, much still needs to be done in areas of effective teaching, satisfactory classroom instruction, and appropriate use of resources (Kabuye, 2004). The success of instructional supervision depends on teachers and supervisors perceptions. For a long time in Malawi, teachers and supervisors have been involved in instructional supervision and yet their voices on this concept have not been heard and understood clearly. Functionally, the organisational structure of the DIAS is shown in Figure 1:

Figure 1: Organizational Structure for DIAS



Adapted from Kabuye (2004) EMAS annual conference.

From this organisational structure, the Director of DIAS is the overall high ranking officer in charge of the Directorate followed by the Deputy Director. Below the Deputy Director are the four Assistant Directors who supervise the several PEMAs under their charge and these PEMAs supervise SEMAs. The Education Division Manager (EDM) and the District Education Managers (DEM) are in charge of the administration functions of Education Programmes in each Division and District respectively. The EDM reports to the Director of Secondary Education while the DEM report to the Director of Basic Education and DCs.

1.4.1 Roles of Primary Education Advisors (PEAs) and Internal Supervisors

The PEA carries out supervisory and advisory functions for schools within his or her designated zone in a district. The specific functions include visiting schools regularly to guide, advise, mediate, and support the teacher on curriculum matters and internal supervision programmes. They also take a leading role in the production of the teaching, learning and assessment resources while monitoring their use in the classroom. Besides these roles, they also assess the training needs for school staff, organise school-based training, and encourage teachers in their academic and professional development. In addition, the PEA's interface with stakeholders by encouraging participation from schools, communities in the zone and also sharing information on education matters (Ministry of Education, Science and Technology, 1998). The PEAs are supported by the head teachers and teachers at a school and the work of the PEA is greatly enhanced by good co-operation from both the head teacher and teachers.

As for internal supervision, the head-teacher and section heads for infant, junior and senior sections are, by virtue of their positions, internal supervisors within their respective Primary Schools. Some of their roles include: facilitating teaching and learning by providing adequate resources; guiding, counselling and supervising teaching staff; creating conducive working environment for teachers and conducting staff meetings for improving teaching and learning standards (Ministry of Education and Culture, 1982).

1.5 Statement of the problem

Studies touching on the subject of supervision in Malawi are scarce. Few related studies available include; Chibwana (1997) who explored factors affecting teacher effectiveness in the implementation of general studies curriculum in the lower primary classes in Malawi and noted that classroom supervision was below standard; Chimombo (2005) studied quantity versus quality in education and observed that there were insufficient supervisory services. The two studies agree on low quality of supervisory services. Chimombo, Mwale, and Ndalama (2005) conducted a study to assess the conditions under which standard one pupils were learning and their achievement in the pre-literacy, pre-numeracy, basic literacy (Chichewa and English) and numeracy and the factors influencing this achievement in Malawian primary schools. Chimombo, Mwale, and Ndalama (2005) also observed that there were inadequate supervision visits for supervisors to discharge their roles. Within these studies little to nothing has been said about teachers and supervisors perceptions of the role of external supervision in improving teaching and learning in schools. The above studies in Malawi all focussed on how supervision is implemented in the schools but did not consider, within their observations, whether teachers and supervisors consider supervision to be an important

part in improving teaching and learning in schools. The process of discovering problems and challenges associated with supervision in schools is only possible with clear understanding of how teachers and supervisors perceive the concept and process of supervision in schools. Consequently, this study is an attempt to understand the perceptions of teachers and supervisors regarding the role of external supervision in improving teaching and learning in Lilongwe Rural West schools.

1.6 Purpose of the study

The purpose of this study is to explore the perceptions of teachers and supervisors regarding the role of supervision on teaching and learning in Lilongwe Rural West Schools.

1.7 Research questions.

The study was guided by a key research question and sub questions.

1.7.1 Key research question:

What perceptions do teachers and external supervisors have about the effectiveness of instructional supervision?

1.7.2 Sub-questions

1. What are the perceptions held by teachers on instructional supervision?
2. What are the perceptions held by external supervisors (PEAs) on instructional supervision?
3. How do teachers relate the role of instructional supervision to effective classroom instruction?
4. How do teachers understand/construe the concept of instructional supervision?

1.8 Significance of the study

Most academic studies in the area of instructional supervision are foreign and so they may not provide relevant solution to challenges in Malawi due to differences in social, political and economic factors. This study shall add to the body of knowledge in the field of supervision in education in Malawi, which is currently very limited. This new knowledge is likely to contribute to effective teaching and learning in Malawi. It will also increase information to the literature on how external instructional supervision works in Malawi and provide a general understanding in the field of supervision in primary education. This study will also serve as a spur for future studies on the provision of supervisory service in relation to effective teaching and learning. In addition, it may inform the Directorate of Inspection and Advisory Services to come up with better mechanisms in the provision of quality supervision that can improve teacher classroom instruction.

1.9 Definition of terms

This section presents definitions of the terms as they have been used in this thesis.

External supervision: It is a process of providing guidance and support to teachers to become competent in their work by supervisors who are located outside the school and are based either at a zone, district or education division offices.

Inspection: It is an activity undertaken on behalf of the Ministry of Education to evaluate and examine the standards of education taking place at an education institution.

Instructional supervision: This refers to a process in education that aims to promote growth, development, interaction, fault-free problem solving, and a commitment to build capacity in teachers for effective classroom instruction.

Perception: This means to see through something, to understand, to become aware of or take cognisance of something.

Understand: This means to translate or explain the meaning of words and sentences.

1.10 Chapter summary

This chapter has discussed the background to the study. Precisely, among other issues, the chapter has looked at the history of supervision as well as its current status in Malawi. The chapter has also provided the structure of the Directorate and the administrators who look after Education Divisions and Districts. Finally, the statement of the problem has also been stated. The next chapter presents conceptual framework and a review of related literature to the study.

1.11 Thesis outline

This thesis is divided into five chapters. Chapter one presents an introduction and background information to the study. Chapter two has a critical examination of the conceptual framework that guided the study and a discussion of related literature to the phenomenon under study. In specific terms, chapter two presents the underlying reasons for the provision of instructional supervision in teaching and learning process. The two conceptual frameworks that are used in the provision of instructional supervision in general, explain the importance of shared decision-making and understanding perceptions of both teachers and PEAs in carrying out instructional supervision process. Chapter

three discusses in detail the research design and methodology that the research employed. Chapter four centres discussion on the main findings of the study that has been accomplished by answering the four research questions. Finally, chapter five presents the conclusion drawn from the key findings as well as implications.

Chapter Two

Literature Review and Conceptual Framework

2.0 Chapter overview

This chapter critically examines the conceptual frameworks that guided the study. This is later followed by a discussion of the related literature to the phenomenon of supervision in two main sections. The first section looked at various studies on perceptions on instructional supervision from other countries. The second section draws studies from Malawi. However, not much has been presented because of the scantiness of research studies on supervision both in primary and secondary schools.

2.1 Review of related literature

2.1.1 Concept of supervision

The term ‘supervision’ has been in use since the industrial revolution period. It can be defined according to different aspects of the notion; but from an educational perspective and of great interest, is a definition which reveals supervision as a collaborative action aimed at developing effective instruction. Glickman (1985) defines supervision as ‘the school function that improves instruction through direct assistance to teachers, curriculum development, in-service training, group development, and action research’. From this definition it is clear that supervision is designed to assist teachers in dealing

with classroom instructional improvement, learn new models of teaching and assisting teachers as they conduct research on a new classroom management system as well as on pedagogical skills. In essence, the definition dwells on the supervisor facilitating change necessary for the teachers' instructional improvement in the classroom. Instructional supervision is a process in education, of which the primary purpose is to support and sustain all teachers in their goal of career-long growth and development which ultimately results in quality instruction (Igwe, 2001). Instructional supervision is indeed a process of providing guidance in the teaching and learning process. Both developed and developing countries use instructional supervision to support and help teachers keep up-to-date with new developments in teaching (Commonwealth Secretariat / ADEA, 1998). However, effective instructional supervision calls for understanding teachers' and supervisors' perceptions on instructional supervision to identify the areas that may hinder effective supervisory processes.

2.1.2 Supervision as a global phenomenon

There is vast international literature on the perceptions of school participants as well as internal and external supervision in primary schools, secondary schools and colleges. However, there is limited research documentation on teachers and external supervisors' perceptions of supervision with regard to effectiveness as a means of improving teaching and learning process in Malawi. According to IIEP/UNESCO, Module 1, (2007), external instructional supervision has been touted as a tool to improve education quality in general, and specifically effective teaching and learning.

A number of research studies on perceptions in regard to supervision have been carried out by various researchers. Kutsyuruba (2003) carried out a study to examine beginning teacher's perceptions of actual ideal approaches to supervision and their perceived connections to professional development in Canadian and Ukrainian high schools. The findings revealed that in both countries, most supervision did not promote trust and collaboration, lacked support, advice and help and was, rather, judgemental. The study also revealed that supervision visits were inadequate in both countries. The beginning teachers perceived instructional supervision in their countries as unhelpful machinery that did not meet their individual professional needs. Beach and Reinhartz (1989) emphasise that instructional supervision should not be viewed as one in which teachers are 'lacking' or 'deficient' to 'fix' the deficiency. On the contrary, the supervisors together with teachers, need to move along an infinite growth continuum in guiding and supporting the teacher. Kosmoski (1997) considered instructional supervision as an opportunity for competent teachers to explore the ways of improving instruction and professional development.

Mpofu (2007) did a study to determine how teachers in secondary schools in Harare region perceive classroom instructional supervision. The results showed that most teachers understood what instructional supervision is all about but they preferred heads of department to external supervisors to supervise them. However, the study did not investigate reasons as to why most teachers opted for internal supervision by their heads of department. As much as the teachers in the Harare region understand about the importance of instructional supervision, it may not yield effective results because they do not prefer external supervisors. The study needed a clear investigation to establish the

exact reasons as to why they preferred internal supervisors regardless of their knowledge of instructional supervision. Kutsyuruba (2003) contends that maximum teaching and learning is obtained when key participants in instructional supervision have positive perceptions about the supervision process.

Another study conducted by Sharm, Yusoff, Kannan, and Binti-Baba (2011) on perceptions of teachers and principals on instructional supervision in three Asian countries of India, Malaysia and Thailand revealed alarming findings. Evidences of findings accounted for instructional supervision as being just eye service, a paper completion and punitive process and non-beneficial to the teachers. The participants stressed on the need for involving teachers, principals, subject teachers and subject specialist to make instructional supervision practices more meaningful. The study had similar findings to Mpofu (2007) where teachers preferred internal instructional supervision as opposed to external supervision.

However, in Malawi, there are no subject specialists as PEAs are neither subject teachers nor known specialists for specific subjects in primary education. Primary school teachers and PEAs are supposed to be conversant with all primary school subjects. The PEAs and teachers are trained in all subjects offered in primary schools. This is a very important issue; but may not be the correct perceptions for key participants of instructional supervision in Malawi. Sergiovanni and Starratt (2002) point out that supervision should be viewed as a co-operative venture in which supervisors and teachers engage in dialogue for the purpose of improving instruction delivery which, logically, should contribute to student improved learning and success. However some research findings reveal that instructional supervision is unable to bring desirable outcomes in schools.

These findings put in question the situation of instructional supervision in Malawi as it is perceived by teachers and supervisors.

The IIEP / UNESCO, Module 2, (2007) outline a number of research studies that reveal dissatisfaction with instructional supervision. In some of its studies, for instance, in Bangladesh, most teachers expressed a feeling that supervision staff suffers from an attitude of 'controller and superior Officer'. This kind of attitude hinders the effectiveness of supervision. In Nepal, many teachers perceive supervision as a threat; and in Korea, teachers also complain about supervisor's authoritarian and bureaucratic attitudes and their lack of professional knowledge. The IIEP / UNESCO, Module, (2007) research studies add that supervisors' perceptions in Uttar Pradesh in India, Chile and Zimbabwe reveal that their attitude is more evaluative than supportive. The supervisors also feel that instructional supervision is difficult to perform because they are often responsible for too many teachers.

In Malawi, no scholarly studies have been done on perceptions of teachers and supervisors on the roles of supervision. Very few studies have mentioned supervision in their findings and reports. Chibwana (1997) explored factors affecting teacher effectiveness in the implementation of General Studies curriculum in the lower primary classes in Malawi. Supervision was one form of support that was explored in the study by dwelling on the roles which the head-teachers and PEAS were assuming in the implementation of general studies. A sample of 32 teachers using random sampling was used. The study revealed that there was very little assistance from PEAs as regards the teaching of General Studies. It was noted that none of the 32 teachers in the sample had ever been supervised by a PEA in their classes whilst teaching General Studies.

Discussions with teachers, head-teachers and records in the school visitor's book showed that PEAs rarely visited schools on supervisory visits; and even if PEAS visited a school, their advisory visits were too general in nature and that their visits were not subject specific. However, this study did not focus on supervision as an area of its study and how supervision was perceived as an effective means of improving teaching and learning. The study sets a very good ground to explore both teachers and supervisors understanding and perceptions on instructional supervision.

Chimombo, Mwale and Ndalama (2005) conducted a study to assess the conditions under which standard one pupils were learning and their achievement in pre-numeracy, basic literacy (Chichewa and English) and numeracy and the factors influencing their achievement in Malawian primary schools. Another element in the study was to investigate teacher professional support by school inspectors or PEAs. Teachers were asked to give a number of visits by Inspectors or PEAs in 2004 and 2005 and what the inspectors or PEAs did when they visited the school. The findings revealed that supervision visits were inadequate for supervisors to discharge their roles. The study partially focussed on supervision because PEAs were supposed to regularly visit schools to support and advise teachers to ensure effective teaching and learning. Glickman, Gordon and Ross – Gordon (2004) point out that supervision is good machinery to upgrade teachers into required standard and improvement in classroom instruction regardless of their level of experience and devotion. There is need to explore how PEAs perceive instructional supervision as it may reveal how they view instructional supervision and how it affects pedagogical issues.

Chimombo (2005) observed that the core problem with primary education in Malawi is linked with lack of various education supplies in addition to insufficient supervisory services. The study did not directly investigate supervision. As such, there remains insufficient empirical evidence to assess this claim.

It is apparent from the published sources in Malawi that not much is known on how teachers and supervisors perceive instructional supervision as an effective means of improving teaching and learning.

Having reviewed the literature, most studies showed dissatisfaction from most key participants in instructional supervision which was viewed as an unhelpful machinery in the improvement of classroom instruction. In light of all this researched works, my study will focus on the perceptions and understanding of instructional supervision by PEAs, teachers and head teachers to establish the position of instructional supervision in Malawi.

2.2 Conceptual framework

A conceptual framework is a set of broad ideas and principles taken from relevant fields of enquiry and used to structure a research (Henning, Rensburg, & Smit, 2004). The conceptual framework for this study was based on the key concepts of the human resource image of supervision and backward mapping theories. These theories have relevant concepts to the study that explain the importance of shared decision-making by the supervisor and the teacher. They also help to explain the importance of understanding perceptions of individuals involved in carrying out instructional programme in order to yield intended outcomes.

2.2.1 Human resources image of supervision

The Human Resources Image of supervision was originally developed by Sergiovanni and Starratt in 1983. The image identifies four images¹ of instructional supervision that can be practised in schools. These are: the traditional scientific management image²; the human relations image³; the 'neo-scientific management' image⁴; and the human resources image of supervision⁵. The human resources approach helped to explore the concepts and understandings that underlie this study. The approach explains that behaviour is the function of interacting dimensions. There has to be harmony between idiographic and nomothetic objectives and, therefore, behaviour. Idiographic needs are those of the individual; nomothetic needs refer to the needs of a group. This model suggests that between the needs and objectives of an individual (idiographic) and those of a group or organisation, there has to be harmony. The supervisors' needs and those of the teachers' should not be in conflict if job satisfaction is to be achieved. According to Sergiovanni and Starratt (1983) model, the study may inform the Directorate of Inspection and Advisory Services to come up with better mechanisms in the provision of quality supervision that can improve teacher classroom instruction. There are three variables which influence the functional value of supervision and these are: initiating, mediating and effectiveness. In the human resources supervisory patterns, supervisions usually work from initiating variables to direct effectiveness. The approach calls for

¹Images of instructional supervision:

²The traditional scientific management image; based on close supervision, control, accountability and efficiency.

³The human relations image; based on the premise of meeting people's social needs at work for productivity.

⁴The neo-scientific management' image; based on a more impersonal way to control workers what to do by introducing standardized criterion

⁵The human resources image of supervision; based on a higher regard for human need, potential and satisfaction.

united effort in decision making and other educational matters if instruction programme is to be improved. The approach, therefore, treats instructional supervision as a shared responsibility by all concerned. The approach also treats supervisors as resource people who are always ready to help the teachers.

The human resources model was developed in a period that was characterised by co-operative curriculum development and in-service education courses, the aim of which was instructional improvement (Sergiovanni & Starratt, 1983). It, therefore, demands the availability of an open, rather than closed system. The approach is seen to call for availability of a structure that will offer opportunities for creative participation, satisfaction and shared responsibility.

According to this model, supervisors are supposed to encourage and involve all those who are concerned to share responsibilities, participate in decision making and problem solving during instructional supervision. If this fails to take place, teachers are going to feel out of place and look at supervisors as 'controllers'. If teachers view instructional supervision as a mechanism to control their use of classroom instruction, then the whole instructional supervision process will not be effective.

Secondly, the key participants are made to realise the significance of their shared responsibilities, distributed according to expertise and knowledge. This means that both teachers and supervisors need to understand the aim of instructional supervision and their roles if it is to be successful. Supervisors need to realise that the function of instructional supervision is that of leading and co-ordinating teachers, allocating human resources and providing appropriate skills to problem solving (Sergiovanni & Starratt, 1983). However, the approach has also an additional concept of morale. Improved morale of both teachers

and supervisors is another desired goal of this approach, if they are to be efficient and effective. This is another critical aspect in supervision because supervisors who have low morale cannot expend the necessary effort to instructional supervision. In the same way, teachers with low morale cannot display positive response to instructional supervision that leads to improved teaching and learning.

The human resources image of supervision has two main limitations as outlined by (Sergiovanni & Starratt, 1983). Firstly, the approach is based on the premise that there is an interaction between the initiating, mediating and effectiveness variables. Secondly, the outcome of supervisory behaviour is influenced by the mediation, which in turn depends upon the effects of initiating variable on it. The implication of this approach is that thorough planning is essential if supervisory service is to be effective. However, the approach is going to be used because of its relevance to this study. The approach stresses the importance of a collaborative effort among all parties involved in the instructional supervision process. It also considers communication as a facilitative factor in supervisory success. Observation of the healthy attitude will enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of instructional supervision.

2.2.2 Backward mapping approach

Apart from the human resource image concept, the study was also guided by the Backward Mapping approach concept that was developed by Richard F. Elmore in 1978. The other concept is usually used in the implementation of research and policy decisions. However, I found the concept very relevant to the study because the approach postulates that it is easy to influence a programme and that success of a programme is not necessarily a result of control and authority but the exercise of discretion of the problem at hand. Elmore

(1979-1980) argues that it is not a programme that solves the problem but someone with immediate proximity. In this case, teachers and supervisors are the ones that identify the problems during instruction and are the most suitable to collaboratively find solutions to the instruction problem.

The logic of Backward Mapping approach is that it begins with a statement of the specific behaviour at the lowest level of the implementation process that generates the need for a programme or activity. This means that teachers and supervisors should understand the objectives and aim of instructional supervision as they are at the lowest level of its implementation. The way teachers and supervisors perceive instructional supervision affects its implementation process. The views of teachers and supervisors should be highly considered if we are to produce desired results of instructional supervision. In essence, the Backward Mapping approach tackles the issues of implementation before and while the programme is being created.

One of the disadvantages of the approach is a heavy reliance on delegated discretionary powers to the implementers of the programme to come up with solutions that are suboptimal and not in the interest of organisation. Some of its advantages are that it focuses on the process by which problem solving occurs and the output that result from problem solving. In addition, it does not work on assumptions that the key players in the implementation of instructional supervision have vested interest in (Sergiovanni&Starratt, 1983). This approach uses the actor's perceptions and their relationship to decision making and implementation of a programme that can also be applied to instructional supervision. This study will use Backward Mapping approach concepts because of its ability to discover forces influencing instructional supervision.

The approach is relevant to this study because it follows clear reasoning on how teachers' and supervisors' perceptions at the onset of supervision influence instructional supervision process.

The conceptual framework of this study is based on the key concepts of the Human resource and Backward mapping theories. This conceptual framework will guide analysis of the findings in the study.

2.3 Uniqueness of the study

Having reviewed various related literature to this study, it is important to highlight how this research study is unique. From the literature, there has been no study on the perception of teachers and PEAs on instructional supervision. It is clear that PEAs are of the view that they conduct supervisory services in primary schools. However, PEAs' perceptions and that of teachers on instructional supervision in Malawi are not known. No study has uncovered this despite its importance to ensure effective instructional supervision.

2.4 Chapter summary

This chapter has reviewed various issues that could have a component on the phenomenon of supervision. Supervision has been defined and the chapter has also discussed the human resources image (Sergiovanni&Starratt, 1983) and Backward Mapping approach (Elmore, 1978). The next chapter will discuss the research design and methodology used in the study.

Chapter Three

Research Design and Methodology

3.0 Chapter overview

This chapter presents in detail the research design and methodology which includes sampling procedures, data collection methods and analysis. The chapter also outlines how issues of trustworthiness and ethical considerations were ensured in the study. Finally, the chapter presents the limitations of the study.

3.1 Research design

Liamputtong and Ezzy (2005) define a research design as the logical and systematic planning and directing a piece of research. Creswell (2009) adds that a research plan reflects a given research worldview, strategies and methods of data collection and analysis. The choice of a research design in this study was based on several elements including philosophical assumptions, strategies of inquiry, specific research methods, personal experiences of the researcher as well as the research questions. The main purpose of a research design is to have an overall plan for collecting data in order to answer the research question (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2000).

3.1.1 Research approach

This study was conducted within a qualitative research approach, since the aim of the study was to explore how external supervision is perceived by those involved in the process of supervision. As such, the choice of this research approach was based on the nature of the research problem under study. In addition, the selected approach constituted

one of the key tasks of informing the whole research process. Robson (2000) states that 'the general principle is that the research strategy or strategies, and methods or techniques employed, must be appropriate for the question (s) you want to answer.' Hence, this study was conducted within a qualitative research approach as data was more likely to deal with people's perceptions, interpretations and the meanings they attached to a phenomenon. This approach was most appropriate in this study since it implied a direct concern with experience as it was 'lived' or 'felt' or 'undergone'. Qualitative research approach is fundamentally interpretative because it assumes that humans use what they see, hear and feel to make meaning of social phenomena (Fraenkel&Wallen, 2000). The approach, therefore, examined life experiences in an effort to understand and give them meaning. This was done by systematically collecting and analysing narrative materials using methods that ensured credibility of both the data and the results.

3.1.2 Methodology

Methodology links a particular philosophy to the appropriate research methods and bridges philosophical notions to practical applicable research strategies (Blaxter, Huges & Tight, 2001). This means that methodology in this study was associated with the design, conduct and knowledge generation. Sarantakos (2005) further explains that methodologies prepare packages of appropriate research designs to be employed by researchers, instructing them where to focus the research activity and how to recognise the extra knowledge. In this case, methodology held a critical position in the research process and that its choice depended on the research approach in order to ensure coherence of the design in the study.

3.1.3 The phenomenological approach

The methodology that was used in this study was phenomenology. This methodology was appropriate for this study because it irradiates the specific events of an experience. It also emphasizes on describing the world from the point of view of the persons who live and experience the phenomena under study. This shows that one is able to identify phenomena through how lived experiences are perceived by the actors in a situation.

Cresswell (2009) defines phenomenology as an approach that provides a strategy of inquiry in which the researcher identifies the essence of human experiences about a phenomenon as described by participants. This means that the approach is used to capture 'lived experiences' of study participants. The methodology, in its true sense, is a poeticizing activity that tries to involve the original voices to describe experiences and their meanings. Phenomenology approach sets aside preconceived ideas, and enables one to objectively describe a phenomenon under study. This is called 'bracketing' which assumes that people can separate their personal knowledge from their life experiences (Byrne, 2001; Nieswiadom, 1993 as quoted by Creswell, 2009; Lester, 1999). In other words, 'bracketing' in this case, is used to describe the suspension process where the bracketed matter does not cease to exist but it is rather put out of action temporarily. The methodology brings to the fore the experiences and perspectives of individuals which challenge structural or normative assumptions.

Phenomenology, as a research approach, has got its strengths and limitations. To begin with, the approach provides a rich and complete description of human experiences and meaning. Its findings are also allowed to emerge rather than being imposed by an investigator. In addition, careful techniques are used to keep descriptions as faithfully as

possible to the experiential raw data. This is accomplished by extreme care in moving step by step and in being mindful not to change, or distort anything originally presented by the participants' feedback. The researcher also attempts to 'bracket' presuppositions and biases to hold them in consciousness through all phases of the research and minimize their influence on the findings. Ngand White (2011) contend that multiple data collection are expected to offer a credible insight into the lived experiences leading to a great time investment. Sanders(1982) adds that the approach enables a researcher to study one's immediate apprehensions of an experience according to one's reflection on the phenomena under study.

However, phenomenology depends on the articulate skills of the participants who provided the information. At the same time, the language and terms employed in phenomenological inquiry are usually difficult. Relevant conclusions depend on the particular participants chosen for the study. This approach may miss information about broader periods of the development of an experience in its orientation toward a particular time frame or moment. Other authorities like Ng, and White (2011) mention two other limitations of phenomenology approach. Firstly, they point out that the smaller number of participants may pose a threat to the credibility of the data. Secondly, they note that the choices of data collection methods within this approach are limited and usually the main one is in-depth interviews.

In a bid to overcome the stated limitations, I looked at the issues and dealt with them accordingly. Firstly, on the issue of language, I studied the meanings of the few technical Greek terms from Sanders,(1982) that were used in the study such as 'noema' which means a total meaning of what is expected or rather objective statement; 'Noesis' which is

a mode of experiencing a phenomenon; and 'Eidos' which means the idea or form. The knowledge of the meanings of the Greek terms was vital in collecting and analysing the data correctly. Secondly, on the articulation skills, I considered only important information provided by the participants, and I was not taken away by the enunciation of information given by respondents. Finally, as a critical rule of phenomenology of not favouring a large number of participants to yield more information, I concentrated on quality of information and also engaged in the in-depth probing. It was noted, therefore, that the limitations did not in any way hinder the appropriateness of the methodology to the question under study.

Phenomenology methodology was the most appropriate methodology for this study because it is the most fundamental method of gauging the perceptions and lived experiences of participants in a qualitative research. The approach is good at surfacing deep issues and making voices of the voiceless heard. Most importantly, the methodology helped me, as a researcher, to irradiate the specific events in order to identify how teachers and PEAs perceive instructional supervision as a means of improving the teaching and learning process. As Sanders (1982) puts it: 'The task of the phenomenological researcher is the descriptive investigation of the contents of conscious phenomena, both objective and subjective. It is believed that human beings develop meanings through the experience of being born human and through collective experiences, background and the world in which they live (Ng, & White, 2011). This indicated that the methodology was able to search for essences of human experience about how supervision is perceived as a means of improving teaching and learning process as described by teachers and PEAs.

3.2 Sampling

Henning, Rensburg, and Smit (2004) define sampling as a process of selecting research participants. They contend that there is need for careful consideration in order to select people who fit the criteria of the desirable participants. The criterion was based on the research question under study. The study used purposive sampling because participants were selected based on specific characteristics, context and phenomenon that I wanted to study in depth. As a researcher, I selected research participants who were knowledgeable and were able to provide the best information about the phenomenon under study. The choice of participants was based on the criteria needed in the sampling which required qualified and experienced teachers and PEAs. The main principle behind purposive sampling is to enable the researcher satisfy his/her specific needs in answering the question under study (Robson, 2000). I purposively selected a sample by setting, gender and experience as criteria. The study had twelve participants. There were four education primary school zones that were selected from Lilongwe Rural West district out of twenty available. The information contained in Table 1 summarises the number of schools and teachers in particular zones in Lilongwe Rural West Education District where the research was conducted. This information provides a general picture on the number of schools and teachers supervised by a PEA in a zone:

Table 1: Number of schools and teachers in the four education zones

Zone	Number of PEA	Number of schools	Number of Teachers		
			Male	Female	Total
A	1	11	96	123	289
B	1	8	76	42	118
C	1	11	111	107	218
D	1	12	110	42	152

In each zone, one full primary school was selected, two qualified teachers, one female and one male from each school of not less than two years' experience, four PEAs two female and two males were drawn from the four selected zones. The selection of PEAs from different education zones and teachers from different zones and schools created a variation that enabled broad range of perspectives to be sought about perceptions of instructional supervision when analysing the data. Teachers and PEAs were selected because they are the players in instructional supervision. The selected sample had particular expertise with the ability to advance the question under study. In this case, purposive sampling was more appropriate to this study as it seeks to explore teachers and PEAs' perceptions on instructional supervision.

3.3 Access negotiations

Before conducting the study, access to research sites in Central West Education Division was negotiated with responsible officers at all levels. I held meetings with the Education Division Manager for Central West Education Division Office, the District Education Manager for Lilongwe Rural West Education Office and the schools administration on my intention to conduct the research study. At all levels, I was granted approvals to access the PEAs and the teachers at the schools. After making the necessary contacts, I visited the participating PEAs and teachers in their designated working areas.

3.4 Data generation

Data collection is where the researcher carefully collects information about phenomena under study using selected methods of investigation. The study used phenomenological approach hence qualitative techniques of data generation were used. Sanders (1982) points out some principles of data collection in a phenomenology approach. Firstly, it is the prolonged engagement with participants. In this study, this was achieved through in-depth, intensive and interactive interviews twice for each participant for approximately 35 minutes each. Secondly, it is triangulation. Sanders, Lewis, and Thornhill (2009) define triangulation as ‘the use of different data collection techniques in one study in order to ensure that the data is valid’. The study used three methods of data collection to compliment and authenticate the findings of the study.

The study gave credible findings by generating data through multiple sources which included in-depth interviews, document analysis and observation. The final principle is ‘bracketing’. This means to stay away from suppositions and enter into the lived experience. To achieve this, the participants were asked to set aside their collaborative

understanding of the phenomenon under study and shared their reflection as it is 'lived'. I as a researcher too, I ensured that I set aside my own experiences about the phenomena to understand those of the participants in the study. During the first visit, I interviewed the PEA at the TDC and then went to the selected school to interview the two teachers. The second and third visits were for classroom observation, interviews and document analysis. The field data collection took a period of four weeks.

3.4.1 Data generation techniques

The study used both primary and secondary data:

3.4.1.1 Interviews

A very important method used in qualitative research is interviewing. An interview as defined by Gay, Mills and Airasian (2006) is a purposeful interaction in which one person is trying to obtain information from another by asking relevant questions. Phenomenology approach requires capturing rich descriptions of phenomena in/and their settings. For this reason, this study used in-depth semi-structured oral interviews as one of its data collection methods. In-depth interviews are repeated face-to-face encounters between the researcher and informants directed towards understanding informants' perspectives on their lives, experiences or situations as expressed in their own words (Kumar, 2005).

Semi-structured interviews consist of a series of questions designed to elicit specific answers on the part of the respondents that are used to obtain information that can later be compared and contrasted (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2000). The questions were directed to the participants' experiences, feelings, perceptions and convictions about the phenomenon

under study. The data were generated from a sample of four PEAs and eight teachers on the basis of their experience, gender and the PEAs termly instructional supervision programme. The four PEAs were those responsible for supervising schools within particular zones in Lilongwe Rural West District. The eight teachers were those teaching in the schools within the four selected PEAs designated zones. For the qualitative nature of the study, four PEAs and eight teachers; two teachers from each zone, was considered sufficient number of PEAs and teachers to generate substantive rich data suitable for the purpose of the study (Sanders, 1982).

Each teacher and PEA was interviewed separately and two times for approximately thirty five minutes. The repeated contacts and the adequate time assigned to each interview created a rapport between me, as a researcher, and the respondents (teachers and PEAs) and this enhanced their confidence in the study. It also enabled me as a researcher to generate data up to saturation point. Data saturation is when a researcher is not able to obtain any new information after repeated and prolonged engagements with participants in his or her findings (Kumar, 2005).

In addition, understanding and confidence between us lead to in-depth and accurate information. The interview situation permitted follow up of verbal leads and, thus, obtained more data and greater clarity. I, as a researcher, took detailed notes during interviews and tape recorded the interviews as a backup. Cresswell (2009) argues that it is not appropriate to make notes as the interview is in progress because it is distracting to the subject, and also disrupts the flow of the interview. As a researcher, I felt that notes taken soon after the interview may not be detailed. In addition, the detailed notes were helpful in saving time when transcribing the recorded data. However, good quality

listening and note taking skills were used in the process of the interview so that it was done without disruptions.

The interviews were conducted before supervision session and each participant was interviewed separately. During interviews, the focus was on the teachers and PEAs experiences and perceptions about instructional supervision in primary schools. The interview guide contained both semi-structured and a few (3) open-ended questions. Interviews can explore and probe participants' responses to gather more in-depth data about their experience and feelings (Gay, Mills & Airasian, 2006). This study, therefore, used in-depth semi-structured interviews to investigate interests, feelings, concerns, views, and values that finally revealed the perceptions of teachers and PEAs on instructional supervision. See Appendices B and C.

3.4.1.2 Direct instructional supervision observation

The other method that this study used to collect data was direct instructional supervision observation. Kumar (2005) defines observation as a purposeful, systematic and selective way of watching and listening to interaction or phenomenon as it takes place. In other words, observation involves systematic observation, recording, description, analysis and interpretation of people's behaviour. Observation was used in conjunction with in-depth oral interviews to increase validity of the study. Rossman and Rallis (2003) argue that observations take the researcher inside the setting thereby discovering the complexities in the social setting as well as helping in taking note of the participant's body language.

The study, therefore, used observations because they provide an opportunity of seeing things that may routinely escape conscious awareness. In addition, observations helped

me as a researcher to learn things that the participants may not be (could have not been) willing to talk about them in an interview. I observed the whole instructional supervision process between the PEA and the teacher except during feedback time. The process started from planning conferencing, classroom observation and feedback conferencing or post conferencing. On the side of the PEA, the interest was to observe their approach to instruction, communication skills, professionalism, relationship of the PEA with the teacher, behaviour and general practices in instructional supervision process.

On the part of the teachers, observations focused their participation, relationship with the PEA, and behaviour in the whole instructional supervision process. The observations were structured and an observation schedule was used for recording the observations. This guided me as a researcher on the focus of observations in order to ensure uniformity of the data collected. Given the nature of this study, it was a non-participant observation, and retrospective interviews were conducted that focused on the recent instructional supervision which I observed.

The purpose of this observation was to investigate the actual practices and behaviour and views of both the PEAs and teachers about instructional supervision. For the sake of this study, I, as a researcher, was not present during the post observation conference and post conference analysis between the teachers and the PEAs to avoid observer effect. Assurance was given to the teachers and PEAs that I was only a researcher and I was not there to assess them. I was conducting research for academic purposes only. I took note of where the post-observation conference and post-conference analysis were held to ensure collegial relationship as some teachers would be tensed up and disturbed if the post-observation meetings were held in places like the head-teacher's office. The ideal

place for such meetings are places where teachers ought to feel free to express themselves such as the classrooms, which is their normal working place, or in a private open place around the school as this would level and consolidate the collegial talk. In addition, after their post conference session, the teachers and PEAs were asked separately to give their views about the observed instructional supervision. An observation guide was used as a tool for data collection.(See Appendix D).

3.4.1.3 Document analysis

Document analysis is a secondary source of data collection method and is used for a specific purpose. In a phenomenology approach, documents are used to verify issues (Creswell, 2005). Previous supervision reports that the teacher received were analysed. This was done to see how and what PEAs record during supervision of teachers. Interest in the instructional supervision reports was in the following areas: finding out whether the PEAs provide teachers with objective feedback on their classroom instruction; checking the PEAs' ability to diagnose and collaboratively solve instruction problems with the teachers; and to find out whether the PEA helps teachers to develop skills in using instructional strategies. Analysis of supervision reports enabled me, as a researcher, to obtain the language and thoughts of the PEAs.

During interviews, I discussed with the teachers how they felt about the PEAs remarks in the lesson observation form and also how the supervisor felt the teacher took the lesson observation report. This was done to relate PEAs and teachers perceptions. I planned to review supervision and advisory report files, visitors' book, and supervision instrument for the PEA. Supervision and advisory reports were not available in all the study schools because the PEAs do not provide such reports to schools. The researcher checked with

the PEAs on their reports after supervisory visits and noted that such reports were indeed not available although such reports are expected to be found in the head teacher's files. Only two teachers out of the eight that were involved in the study produced a lesson observation form used by the PEA as a written feedback to the teachers. This feedback form was the only available report to the teachers and not a formal supervision report that was supposed to be given to the head teacher after the supervision exercise. The visitors' book was also reviewed to find out if the PEA visits the school for instructional supervision. Analysis of these documents gave me required information about instructional supervision as conducted by PEAs.

3.5 Data analysis procedures

Bogdan and Bicklien (1992) state that, 'analysis involves working with data, organizing them, breaking them into manageable units, synthesizing them, searching for patterns, discovering what is important and what is to be learned, and deciding what you will tell others'. Given the phenomenological approach of this study, analysis was inductive in nature with an aim of capturing and exploring the meanings that participants assigned to their experiences. Analysis of data began when the first data were generated. Creswell (2009) explains that qualitative data analysis is conducted in three concurrent stages of gathering data, making interpretations and writing reports. The aim of an analysis is mainly to make sense out of text and image data. Phenomenological research uses the analysis of significant statements, the generation of meaning units, and the development of an essence description (Creswell, 2009).

The analysis followed the four levels of phenomenological analysis of data as outlined by Sanders(1982). Firstly, there was description of the phenomena as revealed in the taped

interviews. At this level, the data were organized by transcribing the interviews, editing the field notes, sorting out and arranging the data to clean it up. The transcribed narratives identified and described the qualities of human experience and consciousness that gave the participant a unique identity and outlook.

The second level was the identification of themes that emerged from the descriptions. At this level, all the data were read through several times in order to get a feel of what it was being said and identified key themes and issues in each text. The themes referred to commonalities present within and between narratives. The themes were identified based on the importance and centrality accorded to them rather than on the frequency with which they occur (Sanders, 1982). There was a coding process that helped in the generation of categories of themes that was used for identifying significant statements, and determining meaning of the statement. Creswell (2009) defines coding as a process of organizing the material into chunks or segments of text before bringing meaning to information.

The third level was development of noetic correlation for the individual's perception of the reality of the phenomena under investigation. The interpretation of the correlations was fundamental to the identification of essences. The final level was the abstraction of essence or universal correlates which was the observable trend that was seen from the general rich descriptions of the lived experiences of the phenomena under study. The outcome of the analysis was a statement responding to the research question that was validated by examples from the data.

3.6 Ethical considerations

My study considered ethical issues to ensure that it was conducted according to professional and ethical standards. Sarantakos (2005) explains that ethics aim at making research more systematic and accountable by introducing laws which regulate the access to information as well as the behaviour of the investigations. One central aspect of research ethics is to protect the research participants from any harm whether physical, mental or legal. Firstly, I, as a researcher, sought permission to carry out the study from Central West Education Division Manager and also from Lilongwe Rural West District Education Manager. Secondly, participants consented to participate in the study willingly. Lastly, to protect the participants' privacy and sensitivity, the study avoided using names of participants; but instead used numbers as identities to ensure that there was complete anonymity and confidentiality.

3.7 Credibility and trust worthiness of the findings

Trustworthiness or credibility is the degree to which the qualitative data to be collected accurately gauges what we are trying to measure (Gay, Mills & Airasian, 2006). No method of data collection will guarantee one hundred percent accuracy (Kumar, 2007). Kumar (2007) further observes that the quality of the researcher's information is dependent upon several methodological, situational and respondent-related factors and the researchers' ability in either controlling or minimising the effect of those factors in the process of data collection. Given the qualitative nature of this study, as a researcher, I facilitated the trustworthiness of my research findings by triangulating the data collection strategies and data sources. Triangulation helped to obtain a more complete picture of

what was being studied and to cross-check information. Triangulation allowed verification of data in ensuring greater validity of a phenomenological qualitative data.

Secondly, the research instruments were pre-tested at two primary schools for two teachers and one PEA for Likuni zone in Lilongwe West District. This enabled me to face the real situation of how teachers and PEAs respond to the interview schedules. The piloting of the instruments also helped me to assess feasibility of what was proposed in terms of time, effort and resources. Following the piloting of the instruments, modifications were made where necessary. This assisted me in filling the gaps where inaccurate data would have been collected. Thirdly, structural corroboration or coherence was established to ensure that no internal conflicts or contradictions existed. Fourthly, the prolonged and repeated interviews and the retrospectives interviews with the PEAs and teachers in this phenomenology study ensured capturing the essence of the phenomena under study. In addition, in-depth semi-structured interviews that involved more than one session helped to produce rich data from the participants' 'lived' experience. As a researcher, I set aside my preconceived ideas about instructional supervision and focused on the participants lived experience. Finally, member checks were done to cross check and get validation from participants of the overall report before sharing it in final form.

3.8 Limitations of the study

The study had some limitations. In the first place, the study was confined to Lilongwe Rural West Education District only due to limited resources used in the research. The observer effect could have been another limitation as my presence as the Senior Education Methods Advisor would have tempted the PEAs and the teachers to stage the instructional supervision process. However, to rule out this observer effect, I behaved as a

student looking for credible information on how they carry out instructional supervision without any biased view of the subject. I further observed two instructional supervisions for the same teacher and this gave reliable and trustworthy results.

3.9 Chapter summary

This chapter has discussed the study design and methodology that was used to answer the research questions of the study. It has also discussed the data generation methods, data analysis, the credibility and trustworthiness of the findings and the limitations of the study. The next chapter presents the findings of the study.

Chapter Four

Findings and Discussions

4.0 Chapter overview

This Chapter discusses the findings of the study. The purpose of the study was to explore how external supervision is perceived as an effective means of improving the teaching and learning process. This was accomplished by answering four research questions: Firstly, what are the perceptions held by teachers on instructional supervision? Secondly, what are the perceptions held by external supervisors (PEAs) on instructional supervision? Thirdly, how do teachers relate the role of instructional supervision to effective classroom instruction? Finally, how do teachers understand or construe the concept of instructional supervision? This chapter centers discussion on the results and the findings of the study in relation to these four research questions.

4.1 Characteristics of sampled PEAs

This section describes the characteristics of PEAs and Primary School Teachers who were involved in the study. The description is in terms of gender, academic and professional qualifications, and experience of PEAs. This is to provide a better appreciation on the level of education and experience of the sample chosen and bring out clear perceptions on external supervision.

The Table 2 shows the characteristics of the PEAs that were involved in the study

Table 2: Characteristics of sampled PEAs

Education Zone	Sex of the PEA		Academic Qualification	Professional Qualification and Experience				
	Male	Female		P8	PT1	PT2	Teaching Experience	Supervisory Experience
Zone A		1	MSCE	1			21	9
Zone B	1		MSCE			1	18	5
Zone C		1	MSCE			1	20	7
Zone D	1		MSCE		1		20	3
Total	2	2		1	1	2		

Out of the four PEAs that were involved, two were females and two were males. All the four PEAs hold MSCE as the highest academic qualification whilst their job grading varied from P8 to PT2. Ordinarily, each qualified primary school teacher from the Teacher Training Colleges join the teaching profession at PT4 (Grade L) which is Primary School Teacher. After promotion, the teacher is given a PT3 (Grade K) which is Senior Primary School Teacher and further promotions move them to PT2 (Grade J) which is Principal Primary School Teacher. With long service and experience, teachers, are eligible for promotion to PT1 (Grade I) which is Chief Primary School Teacher. The final grade for Primary School teachers is P8 (Grade PH) which is Primary School Head Teacher. All PEAs that were involved in the study had a minimum of 18 years teaching

experience before their appointment as PEAs. Their experience in the post of PEA varied between 3 to 9 years.

4.2 Characteristics of sampled primary school teachers

Primary school teachers that were involved in the study were drawn from the four zones in Lilongwe Rural West Education District where the PEAs were expected to supervise. The sample was demarcated by gender, academic qualifications and experience because the research design required qualified teachers having more than two years' experience. Such teachers would have better personal experiences than newly qualified and inexperienced teachers. The characteristics of the teachers who were sampled are shown in Table 3:

Table 3: Characteristics of sampled primary school teachers

Education Zone	Sex of Teacher		Academic Qualifications	Years of Experience	Professional Qualifications			
	Male	Female			PT1	PT2	PT3	PT4
Zone A	1		JCE	9				1
Zone A		1	MSCE	13				1
Zone B	1		JCE	9				1
Zone B		1	MSCE	12				1
Zone C	1		MSCE	5				1
Zone C		1	MSCE	25			1	
Zone D	1		JCE	9				1
Zone D		1	MSCE	8			1	
Totals	4	4			0	0	2	6

From Table 3, four teachers involved in the study were males and four were females. This balance was a deliberate decision taken to have an equal number of male and female teachers in the study. In terms of academic qualifications, five had MSCE while three had JCE. The sample also had six PT4 teachers and two PT3 teachers. The sample had more PT4 teachers than PT3 teachers although there are more teachers with MSCE than JCE academic qualifications amongst these teachers. Ordinarily, one would expect that MSCE teachers would have PT3 grading.

4.3 Data analysis and findings

To answer the question on how external supervision is perceived as an effective means of improving teachers and learning process in Lilongwe West District, the PEAs and teachers experiences and/or perceptions were explored through in-depth interviews, observations and document analysis. The full analysis was done following the procedures already explained in section 3.5.

4.3.1 Perceptions of teachers on instructional supervision

The answers by teacher respondents to the question “What are the perceptions held by teachers on instructional supervision?” followed the data analysis pattern as described above. Information in Table 4 summarises the significant statements and the formulated meanings:

Table 4: Significant statements- Perceptions of teachers on instructional supervision

No	Significant statements	Formulated meanings
1	I look at the Peas instructional supervision as inspection.	Instructional supervision is perceived as inspection.
2	It is an exercise that is done to check on how I am teaching.	Instructional supervision is perceived as a visit to check on how teachers are delivering their lessons in order to help them.
3	It is an activity meant to encourage us to work hard especially when the PEA is using good language in advising us.	
4	It is a time for the PEA to help me in my work so that I can deliver my lessons very well.	
5	The main exercise by the PEA on instructional supervision is to check teaching records.	Instructional supervision is perceived as an occasion to predominantly check for teaching records.
6	It is a time when I feel that my boss has come to see how I am working.	Instructional supervision is perceived as an occasion for the PEAs to dictate the teachers on how they should work.
7	It is a special time where I believe that the PEAs remark must be obeyed without question.	

No	Significant statements	Formulated meanings
8	It is a disciplinarian exercise where the PEAs shout at us when we make mistakes in teaching.	Instructional supervision is perceived as a disciplinarian exercise for teachers.
9	It is sometimes an occasion when I get discouraged as my PEA has neither diplomacy nor tact in giving me the feedback on my work.	
10	I look at it as a discussion opportunity with the PEA on teaching which is abused as PEAs do not listen to us.	Instructional supervision is perceived as a non-collaborative discussion where PEAs predominantly criticise teachers' lessons.
11	I feel it is time for the PEA to criticize my lesson.	
12	It is one of my frustrating times as a PEA comes like a policeman to catch a thief.	Instructional supervision is perceived as a fault finding mission by PEAs.
13	It is an exercise where the PEAs find fault with my teaching.	
14	I feel its good intention is sidelined and instead the PEAs use it as a weapon to threaten us that we are not going to get a promotion because of our failure to teach well.	Instructional supervision is perceived as a weapon to threaten teachers to improve their teaching due to the new appraisal system for
15	I feel it is now being used as a weapon to threaten	

No	Significant statements	Formulated meanings
	us due to the new appraisal system for promotions.	promotions.
16	I look at lesson observation by the PEA as a time predominantly to be assessed on my lesson delivery.	Instructional supervision is perceived as an exercise to grade teachers on how they deliver their lessons.
17	It is a mission for the PEA to grade me on how I deliver my lessons.	

From the above formulated meanings, certain common themes emerged. These themes were an indication of the common views of the teachers that were involved in the study. The themes are presented in section 4.3.1.1

4.3.1.1 Common themes - Perceptions of teachers on instructional supervision

1. Inspection:
 - a. Teachers look at instructional supervision being conducted as inspection.
 - b. The timing of their visits is unpredictable.
2. Professional Knowledge by PEAs is used for:
 - a. Fault-finding;
 - b. A threat for promotions;
 - c. A job-grading exercise;
 - d. A discipline exercise;
 - e. Checking teaching records.

3. Interactive process (Conduct and approach) between PEAs and Teachers shows that: The teachers passively participate in the discussions because the PEA is not taken as a colleague.

A cluster of themes was drawn up from the formulated meaning of the original statements of the participants. These themes were, then, validated against the original statements to ensure that the themes covered all that were said. In summarizing the themes above, an exhaustive description of the perceptions of teachers on instructional supervision was crafted from the integration of the themes. That summary description brings out the essence of teacher perception on instructional supervision. Section 4.3.1.2 is a summary description of teachers' perceptions on instructional supervision.

4.3.1.2 Summary description of the perception of teachers on instructional supervision

Given the findings from the teachers' direct narration, most teachers perceived instructional supervision as more of inspection because the PEAs do not follow instructional supervision procedures which constitute a pre-observation phase, the actual lesson observation, and the discussion of the observed lesson. The PEA's conduct of instructional supervision goes against the spirit of initiative expected from teachers. Most PEAs conduct instructional supervision as inspection because they operate using the provisions of section 48 of the Education Act (1962) which gave powers to the Minister to inspect a school with or without notice at any time and they do not distinguish the process of supervision from inspection. There is no commitment, lack of professional knowledge and proper planning of the PEAs instructional supervision which is a core part of the PEAs mandate. The perceptions of the teachers on instructional supervision as an

exercise for discipline, threat for promotions and fault-finding on the part of the PEAs is justified from the conduct and statements by the PEAs. The frustrations that the teachers experience during instructional supervision are a direct contribution of the ineffective instructional supervision by the PEAs. However, some teachers said that instructional supervision is an activity that is meant to encourage them to work hard and help them to deliver their lessons very well.

4.3.2 Perceptions of PEAs on instructional supervision

The answers by respondents to the question “What are the perceptions held by PEAs on instructional supervision?” followed a similar data analysis pattern as described in 4.3.1. Information in Table 5 summarises the significant statements and the formulated meanings:

Table 5: Perceptions of PEAs on instructional supervision

No	Significant statements	Formulated Meanings of Significant statements
1	I look at instructional supervision as one of my roles to advise and discuss with teachers about their problems in teaching.	The PEA considers Instructional supervision as a time to advise and discuss with teachers’ problems in teaching.
2	It is a time when teachers identify their weak areas during lesson delivery and seek advice.	PEAs give teachers an opportunity to freely identify areas that they need help in.
3	It is an opportunity for teachers to give their views on their work.	

No	Significant statements	Formulated Meanings of Significant statements
4	It is a process of identifying the solutions to the problems and implementing them.	The PEA identifies teachers' problems and comes up with solutions.
5	It is identifying teachers' problems in teaching and learning to come up with CPDs.	
6	It is helping teachers on how to plan for their work.	The PEA knows planning lessons better than the teacher.
7	It is not my major activity although teachers expect it to be so.	The PEAs think that instructional supervision is not their main work but rather administrative issues.
8	The main work for me as a PEA is to deal with administration issues rather than instructional supervision.	
9	It is not an opportunity to portray who is superior between the PEA and the teacher.	The PEA feels that instructional supervision is an opportunity to network with teachers in a collegial manner to improve the classroom instruction.
10	It is time for me to learn some pedagogical skills from teachers who are very good.	
11	It is a time for me to freely work with teachers as colleagues in improving teaching and learning.	

4.3.2.1 Common themes - Perceptions of PEAs on instructional supervision

From the above formulated meanings, the common themes that emerge are as follows:

(a) Advisory and Supervisory Services:

1. Provision of possible solutions to work-related problems;
2. Collaborative dialogue between PEA and teacher;
3. Failure to follow standard instructional supervision procedure.;
4. Identifying blind spots in the teacher's delivery of lessons.

(b) Poor coordination of roles:

1. PEAs do not follow the roles in their job descriptions as shown from the formulated meanings of their statements;
2. Prioritise easy jobs (e.g. administrative issues rather than instructional supervision).

(c) Expert attitude:

1. PEAs perceived themselves to be more knowledgeable than teachers.

4.3.2.2 Summary description of the perceptions of PEAs on instructional supervision

Given the findings from what the PEAs said, most PEAs perceived instructional supervision as a time to advise and discuss the problems teachers experience in their teaching. From their actions, it can be construed that they do not feel it is necessary to follow the standard procedure before and after advisory work. This omission compromises the quality of their work in instructional supervision. It is also quite clear that the PEAs tend to prioritise school projects and administrative issues like discipline of absentee and late-coming teachers and engagement in zonal education activities rather

than instructional supervision which gives the impression that they perceive them to be more important than their core tasks.

It appears like the PEAs tend to avoid instructional supervision because of the taxing nature of the assignment as it is slow and iterative and it can be done for a few teachers in a zone of several teachers. Coupled with budgetary constraints and the time available for the exercise, PEAs tend to choose administrative duties in preference of instructional supervision. This obviously leads to poor coordination of their roles as they sideline critical jobs meant to improve classroom instruction. In the process of performing their chosen administrative tasks, the PEAs perceive themselves to be more knowledgeable than teachers.

This defeats the tenets of instructional supervision which are to improve instruction and learning in the classroom; to prepare teachers to be self-improving and directing in classroom; to diagnose and solve instructional problems in schools; to provide effective teaching and learning; and finally, to help teachers develop positive attitude towards continuing professional development. The PEAs focus on administration tasks may not achieve the purpose of preparing teachers to diagnose and solve instructional problems for effective teaching and learning. However, some PEAs perceive instructional supervision as an opportunity for teachers to give their views on their work and also to help teachers plan for their work. From their narration, there was an indication that there is an element of an opportunity to network with teachers in a collegial manner to improve classroom instruction.

4.3.3 Teachers understanding of instructional supervision

The responses to the question “How do teachers understand the concept of instructional supervision?” also followed a similar data analysis pattern as described in 4.3.2. Information in Table 6 summarises the significant statements and the formulated meanings:

Table 6: Teachers understanding of instructional supervision

No	Significant statements	Formulated Meanings of Significant statements
1	It is when the supervisor observes how I am teaching and whether learners are able to learn well	A time to correct teachers’ weak areas in order to improve their classroom instruction
2	A time for supervisors to observe how learners are responding to the lesson.	
3	It is when the PEA corrects teachers’ weak areas in order to improve classroom instruction.	It is when the PEA assesses teachers on how they are teaching.
5	It is an exercise carried out by PEAs to grade my teaching.	
6	It is an exercise that is done in the same way as lesson observation during school inspection	A surprise visit by the PEA to see how teachers are teaching.

No	Significant statements	Formulated Meanings of Significant statements
7	It is an occasion when the supervisor gets into classes without notice to see how we are teaching	
8	A time to check how a teacher prepares for his or her lesson.	It is a lesson observation by PEAs just like the one done by inspectors during inspection.
9	It is a rare occasion when the PEA visit our classrooms to physically see how we are delivering lessons	

4.3.3.1 Common themes

From the above formulated meanings of significant statements, the following common themes are emerging:

1. Supervisory Experts:
 - a) PEAs posing as more knowledgeable than teachers;
 - b) PEAs act of an observer to point out mistakes made by teachers.
2. Assessment Exercise:
 - a) Instructional supervision understood as a process of assessing or grading teachers.

3. Confusion between supervision and inspection:

- a) PEAs planning to observe teachers lessons without notice;
- b) Teachers do not see any difference from the conduct of PEAs when they are involved in instructional supervision or when the school has been visited for inspection.

4.3.3.2 Summary description of teachers understanding of instructional supervision

Given the findings from what the teachers said, most of the teachers understand instructional supervision as an exercise where their PEAs visit them to point out mistakes they may have made during lesson delivery. This leads to teachers understanding that the PEAs have expert knowledge above teachers. PEAs, therefore, feel justified to tell teachers what to do and what not to do. In the same connection, they visit them without notice so that they can catch them unawares. No wonder, there is a great deal of confusion as to the difference between instructional supervision and inspection.

4.3.4 The role of instructional supervision to effective classroom instruction

The answers by respondents to the question “How do teachers relate the role of instructional supervision to effective classroom instruction?” also followed a similar data analysis pattern as described in 4.3.3. Information in Table 7 summarises the significant statements and the formulated meanings:

Table 7: Relating the role of instructional supervision to effective classroom instruction

No	Significant statements	Formulated Meanings of Significant statements
1	The PEA helps me to improve in my weak areas.	The PEAs can help teachers to improve in their classroom instruction.
2	Four years ago the PEA observed my lesson and assisted me in some areas.	
3	The PEA's visits to our schools for lesson observation are very infrequent.	The PEAs do not prioritize lesson observation in their supervisory services.
4	It seems the zonal PEA has no proper program for lesson observation of different teachers in her zone.	
5	If the zonal PEA was observing my lessons frequently, I would have been improving in my lesson delivery.	Teachers are not benefiting from the PEAs instructional supervision as they take long periods of time to conduct instructional supervision.
6	The PEA's lesson observation is not adequate to make me acquire new knowledge and skills for my teaching.	
7	I wish I could be supervised more so	

No	Significant statements	Formulated Meanings of Significant statements
	that I can know where I am not doing well in my teaching.	
8	The PEAs supervision does not make any difference in the way I teach.	There is a disconnection between the PEAs' supervision work and the teachers' work.
9	The PEA is not fulfilling his job because he/she concentrates on checking schemes and lesson plans without observing lessons.	The PEAs are not fulfilling their major role of instruction as they concentrate on checking schemes of work and lesson plans.
10	Lack of good feedback has not helped me to realize whether I have improved in my teaching.	Lack of good feedback has weakened the realization of improved classroom instruction.

4.3.4.1 Common themes

1. Value-adding service:

- a) Teachers believe that instructional supervision can indeed help teachers to improve in their classroom instruction.

2. Low Appreciation of the Service by PEAs:
 - a) Inadequate visits;
 - b) Failure to conduct periodic instructional supervision;
 - c) Concentration on teaching records.
3. Poor feedback mechanism:
 - a) Lack of good feedback to supervised teacher.

4.3.4.2 Summary description of the role of instructional supervision to effective classroom instruction.

According to the findings from what was said, most teachers believe that instructional supervision is a value adding service that can indeed help teachers to improve in their classroom instruction. They seem to relate the role of instructional supervision to effective classroom delivery positively. This is, however, being hindered by the way PEAs conduct instructional supervision. There is low appreciation of the service by PEAs themselves because of their inadequate visits, failure to conduct periodic instructional supervision, concentration on teaching records only and poor feedback mechanism. The stated set backs are causing instructional supervision to be ineffective despite its clear positive intended objective.

4.4 Discussion of the findings

The phenomenological analysis resulted in a summary description of the essential structure of perception of teachers stated in Table 4. This section will discuss these findings.

4.4.1 Perceptions of teachers on instructional supervision

Instructional supervision is carried out by PEAs to help primary school teachers improve their instruction delivery to students. According to their job description, the Zonal PEAs are supposed to visit every teacher in their zones at least once a term for instructional supervision. The PEAs are recruited solely for advisory and supervisory services in primary schools in their zones. However, the lived experiences of the participants in this study have shown that instructional supervision is being conducted as inspection. The PEAs do not follow instructional supervision procedures. There is no pre-lesson observation discussion expected by the standard procedure. Malawi Institute of Education and Brandon University (1990) outlines three basic phases of instructional supervision expected to be followed by PEAs. This standard procedure requires that there should be a pre-observation discussion, which is a planning phase. In this phase, the supervisor meets the teacher concerned, set the areas and date for observations, and then agree on the way supervision would take place.

The second phase requires lesson observation where the PEA observes the teacher based on the areas agreed during the pre-observation phase and takes notes on the agreed problem areas. Afterwards, they are expected to have a post-lesson observation phase where the PEA and the teacher review the data collected by the supervisor, discuss the data based on what was agreed and plan for a follow-up meeting or lesson. However, sometimes, there is no post-observation discussion and the frequency of visits by the PEA is poor. In addition, the teachers do not actively participate in the discussions with the PEAs because they do not take them as colleagues. Furthermore, the teachers continually observe that the PEAs emphasis is on teaching records, which is the head-teacher's domain. The teachers, therefore, find very little assistance for their professional development and growth to impact on their job performance from the PEAs in their zones. Two of the interviewees had this to say:

“From 2010 up to now, the zonal PEA has not conducted any lesson observation to any teacher at this school apart from coming here to check on schemes and records of work and lesson plans for teachers but I wish to be properly supervised regularly so that I can know where I am making mistakes so that I can make an improvement of such areas and become a better teacher.”(**Teacher 1, 24th May, 2013**)

“I was last supervised in 2009. You can see that the long period I have not been supervised cannot allow me to acquire adequate and new knowledge in my classroom supervision.”(**Teacher 7, 24th May, 2013**)

These two statements are an indication that instructional supervision is not done frequently. It takes several years for some teachers to be supervised. There is also an element of the need to conduct supervision properly as stated by the participants. This was in line with the findings of most of the reviewed studies from other countries like Sri Lanka, Bangladesh and Nepal which portrayed the same sentiments of irregular and bad planning of visits coupled with less time spent in the classrooms for lesson observation (IIEP/UNESCO, Module 2, 2007). Teachers need frequent or systematically designed instructional supervision that can meet their needs to help them improve their classroom instruction.

The lived experiences of the participants in this study also showed that the PEAs' professional knowledge is used for fault-finding, threats for promotions, job-grading exercise, disciplinary exercise and checking teaching records. The challenge of conducting instructional supervision as a way of assessing teachers leads to teachers either being withdrawn or not giving their best when supervision is in progress. For example, one teacher refused to give a detailed overview of her lesson in answer to the PEA's question during the post-lesson discussion arguing that the PEA had already graded her and that her answers would not change her grade. As a result of this

perception, most teachers tend to resent the PEAs when they visit the schools in the name of instructional supervision. For some of those teachers who received supervision, one teacher had this to say:

“The Instructional supervision visits are just surprises all the time. I have never had any prior discussion and neither have I had any advance notification of the lesson observation since I started teaching. I have not benefited much from the zonal PEA as his visits are very rare with a focus on grading my lesson delivery neither does he listen nor understand my concerns. I wish the zonal PEA was also able to carry out instructional supervision in a friendly manner so that he should help me in lesson delivery.”(**Teacher 4, 28th May, 2013**)

The above statement testifies to the fact that those teachers who are supervised have received very little assistance from the PEAs as they are not following required procedure. It is clear that the PEA just comes to conduct instructional supervision without the pre-observation discussions and without agreeing on areas which need to be observed. This shows that there is no pre-observation discussion and no advance notification of the lessons to be observed. Where post-conference observation was done, it was just one-way communication from the PEA to the teacher.

Elmore's (1979-1980) backward mapping approach concept that has been used in the study provides an acceptable clarification as it recognizes the need to begin with a statement of specific behavior at the lowest level of implementation process that generates the need for an activity. The conceptual framework implies that there is need for opportunities for creative participation, satisfaction and shared responsibility when carrying out instructional supervision. This means that teachers should not be taken by surprise about instructional supervision. Teachers and supervisors need to jointly work

out the aim of particular instructional supervision and that the teachers' views should be highly considered if instructional supervision is to produce the desired results. From this study, however, this is not being done and this brings ineffectiveness of instructional supervision.

Commonwealth Secretariat/ADEA (1998) describes instructional supervision as a constant process of checking and providing guidance in teaching and learning process in a classroom. The human resources image (Sergiovanni & Starratt, 1983) concept, that has also been used in the study implies that both supervisor's and teacher's needs should not be in conflict if job satisfaction is to be achieved. From the findings of this study, there is an obvious conflict between the teachers' perceptions on instructional supervision that they should be regularly supervised and the PEA's conduct in practice. The effect of this conflict is to reduce the quality of lesson delivery.

The human resources image also expects supervisors to be treated as resource people who are always ready to help the teachers agree with findings as some teachers clearly indicated that they would like to be regularly supervised. The finding that teachers would need regular visits is a positive outcome that would enhance the objectives of instructional supervision. Zepeda (2003) contends that interaction between the supervisor and the teacher is important for supervision because it builds capacity in teachers which is a positive aspect of instructional supervision. One other finding under this question on perception of teachers on instructional supervision was that there were some interaction between PEAs and teachers that led teachers to, unfortunately, passively participating in the discussions. The reasons for the passive interaction revealed that the PEAs were

perceived to be more knowledgeable than teachers and that they were not taken as colleagues but as officers too high in rank for meaningful dialogue.

4.4.2 Perceptions of PEAs on instructional supervision

From the literature review, the IIEP/UNESCO, Module 2, (2007) research studies, revealed that external supervisors perceptions in Ultra Pradesh in India, Chile and Zimbabwe to instructional supervision is more of evaluative than supportive. This is different from the findings of the study which indicated that supervisors look at instructional supervision as an activity that provides possible solutions to any work related problem of the primary school teachers. These findings show that instructional supervision is more of a diagnostic process of finding teachers' problems than the expected supportive roles to teachers' work. The PEAs believe that they are the ones to identify blind spots in the delivery of lessons and are the experts to provide effective pedagogical skills to a teacher that will improve classroom instruction. Another PEA had this to say:

“During instructional supervision, I tell teachers their mistakes, how they can work and how to improve in their classroom instruction.” (PEA 1, 22nd May, 2013)

This shows that PEAs pose as experts. The expert perception to instructional supervision highly defeats the principle of instructional supervision. Beach and Reinhartz (1989) explain that supervisors, together with teachers, need to move along an infinite growth continuum in guiding and supporting the teacher. However, at the same time, the PEAs perceived instructional supervision as an exercise that is done as a collaborative dialogue between the PEA and the teacher to improve classroom instruction. It can, therefore, be argued that the two perceptions by PEAs bring another weird concern to instructional

supervision as they cannot go hand in hand if meaningful instruction is to be realized. In fact, the contradicting perceptions of PEAs provide an impetus for a study to uncover the reasons for the perceived 'expert' perception. If the PEAs 'expert' perception is dealt with, the 'collaborative dialogue' perception would bear meaningful results to instructional supervision. Cogan (1973) explains that the worthiness of the whole program of instructional supervision will be seen if the supervisors are democratic and fair. The collaborative dialogue enables the teachers to feel that PEA is there to serve them and to help them become more effective teachers.

The human resources model that has been used in the study as part of the conceptual framework, calls for united effort in decision making which treats instructional supervision as a shared responsibility by both the PEA and the teacher. According to this model the 'expert' perception to instructional supervision does not have a room for collaborative dialogue and furthermore, it does not offer chances for creative participation and shared responsibilities. The human resources model, therefore, provides a relevant guide to effective instructional supervision.

It is also indicated that PEAs perceive instructional supervision as not their major role.

Two of the PEAs had this to say:

“I think teachers do not really understand our work as a supervisor because they think of classroom instructional supervision as our major activity. We are engaged in more administrative duties and not instructional supervision. For instance, solving disciplinary issues of teachers like drinking, not drawing schemes of work and lesson plans, and in certain cases village heads call us to complain of our teachers that they are misbehaving. So you can see most of our time is spent on such issues”. **(PEA 2, 15th May, 2013)**

It is clear that PEAs have a poor coordination of roles. They prioritise other jobs as opposed to instructional supervision. PEAs give less time on real pedagogical issues and give more time to administrative tasks. The statements of PEAs themselves are so clear that they are appointed, given job descriptions but not inducted. For example, two of the PEAs also had this to say:

“In 2004, I went for interviews for a substantive PEA position. I passed that interview and from 2004 to date, I have been a PEA for my zone. I was not inducted after being appointed as a PEA. I started working using the knowledge I got from the Brandon University courses at MIE in 1994 and also through learning from colleagues”. **(PEA 1, 22nd May 2013)**

“I was not inducted nor have I gone for any training since I was appointed as a PEA in 2010. I did not know where to start from; but I relied on my colleagues to help me go about with the job. I can say that up to now, I am not fully conversant with the job although I am able to carry out supervision.” **(PEA 4, 11th June, 2013)**

All this is coming up because the PEAs are not given any induction course on how to work as a PEA when they are appointed. Furthermore, the PEAs are not given any handbook or manual or guidelines on their work. The coordinating PEA for the district simply tells them about their work and that they would learn from their friends when they go for supervision. Such induction, if it was done properly, would help the PEAs to have the hands-on and practical understanding of the actual work from the experienced supervisors.

The backward mapping approach in the conceptual framework used in this study, emphasize that both teachers and supervisors should understand the objectives and aim of instructional supervision as they are the key players for its implementation. It is necessary

for PEAs to be inducted so that they coordinate and prioritise their major roles accordingly.

4.4.3 Teachers understanding of instructional supervision

The findings of the study are different from a study in Sri Lanka conducted by IIEP/ UNESCO, Module, 2 (2007) on how supervision and support acted positively or negatively on teachers' work. The study revealed that teachers in Sri Lanka understand instructional supervision as a process that is oriented toward teacher control and discipline and not exclusively toward pedagogical development. The lived experiences in the study showed that most teachers understand instructional supervision as a process of rating or assessing teachers. Rating is a summative judgment of teacher performance issued on the professional evaluation form based upon direct classroom observations. The teachers' understanding of instructional supervision as rating was evident in the way PEAs carry out instructional supervision. The interviews and observations that were done by the researcher indicated that teachers were very much concerned with the grade that the supervisor gave them.

As a department, DIAS is aware that the PEAs use two different forms for supervision although there is no clear direction as to which form they are supposed to use. The researcher found out that some PEAs used a form called "**EVIDENCE FORM (1) PRIMARY CLASSROOM OBSERVATIONS**" (see Appendix 1) which is supposed to be used during inspection only. Another set of PEAs used a form called "**CLASSROOM OBSERVATION FORM**" (see Appendix 2). One out of the four PEAs that participated in the study, however, used Appendix 1 Lesson Observation Forms. These forms had performance criteria for each attributes for observation such teaching, learning,

attainment, pupils' attitudes and behavior, and assessment. The fact that there is no standard supervisory form is a recipe for confusion in the work of the PEAs during instructional supervision. Most teachers indicated that they were not very conversant with the lesson observation forms used by PEAs. When it came to discussions after the lesson, the PEAs only tell the teachers their observed deficiencies and areas that need improvement. The PEAs also tell the teacher his or her grade for the lesson. One of the teachers had this to say:

“When the PEA comes for lesson observation, I am put off because I know that they usually come to predominantly rate my teaching and not necessarily to help me improve my teaching. In fact, when the zonal PEA visited my class to observe my lesson last year, he told me, even before we started the discussions on how I taught my lesson that I deserved a “4” as my overall grade which is unsatisfactory. I was, therefore, not in a mood to hold a meaningful dialogue with him.”(Teacher 3, 4th June, 2013)

This indicates that teachers associate instructional supervision with the grading of their lessons. The supervisory process is seen as a way of gathering information mainly for appraisal purposes. Teachers ought to understand that the appraisal system follows a different procedure and this is done by the head teacher; and the interview process verifies the head teacher's rating of the teachers' performance for purposes of promotion. Teachers usually see that the PEAs lesson observation leans more towards the rating than actual support and assistance to help them improve. The PEAs use of the rating tool which has descriptive features under each observable teaching and learning segment that is not known by teachers is intimidating.

According to the human resources model that has also been used in the study, demands the availability of an open and not closed system in order to bring about effective instructional supervision. The model therefore, provide a guide that teachers expect the PEAs to treat them as respectable colleagues who should involve them in open and frank discussion on the lesson delivered to jointly identify areas that need improvement and to formulate possible solutions together. It is evident in the study that teachers expect that the PEAs would be open, facilitative and supportive so that they both act as change agents to desired teacher classroom instruction.

It has also been indicated, from the study, that there is confusion between instructional supervision and inspection. Teachers do not see any difference from the conduct of PEAs when they are involved in instructional supervision and when the school has been visited for inspection. From both teachers' experiences and the researchers' observations, teachers were not notified in advance of the classroom visits, neither was there any pre-observation discussion that would have set the tone of the observable behavior during lesson delivery. Instructional supervision would be much easier if PEAs and teachers worked hand in hand before and even after the observation process. Evidence gathered in the study show that some teachers do not know if the PEAs are conducting instructional supervision or inspection.

4.4.4 The role of instructional supervision in effective classroom instruction

The results of the study have shown that teachers believe that instructional supervision is a value adding service to their classroom work. These findings agree with other reviewed studies from other countries particularly Zimbabwe, which portrayed teachers understanding of instructional supervision as improvement of instructional

supervision as well as teacher growth to improve the learning activities of the students (Mpofu, 2007). However, the study further shows that the teacher's belief on the role of instructional supervision to effective classroom instruction is quite contrary to what happens on the ground. From the data collected, the role of instructional supervision is being hindered by low appreciation of the services by PEAs themselves because of inadequate instructional supervision visits to schools; failure to conduct periodic instructional supervision; concentration on teaching records and lack of good feedback to supervised teachers. The findings of this study have similar views to Chibwana (1997) and Chimombo, Mwale and Ndalama (2005) where both studies revealed that PEAs assistance to primary school teachers was very little. One of the participants had this to say:

“The PEA rarely visits our school for lesson observation, I can say once in a blue moon. She normally comes at this school to check schemes and records of work at the beginning of the term or sometimes asks the head-teacher to take all the teachers schemes of work to the Teacher Development Centre (TDC) for checking. Whenever she carries out lesson observation, she supervises very few teachers because we are many here. In my case, I was supervised in the first term of last academic year and I was only told that your lesson was quite okay.”(**Teacher 6, 3rd June, 2013**)

This shows that whilst teachers believe that instructional supervision can indeed help them to improve in their classroom instruction, the needed services are not adequately rendered to them by the PEAs. This means that instructional supervision is not delivering a desirable end to classroom instruction for many teachers. Zepeda (2003) explains that instructional supervision should support the improvement of instruction by observing teaching, giving suggestions, coaching, or demonstrating a teaching skill

or an alternative teaching method. Elmores' (1978) backward mapping approach concepts seems to provide a plausible clarification as it indicates in the study that teachers have the knowledge of the role of instructional supervision to effective classroom instruction. The concept implies that certain challenges may have caused one group of the key participants who are PEAs to slacken off in the delivery of instructional supervision.

The unavailability of supervision and advisory reports at the schools gave no evidence that the PEAs carry out supervision as expected. The data gathered from the primary sources was not in tandem with the secondary data from analysis of supervision reports.

4.5 Chapter summary

This chapter has presented the details of the data collected from the field. As the research was a phenomenological study, the data collected was analysed using significant statements which were, then, organised into formulated meanings that led to common themes and summary statements for each research question. Finally, each research question was discussed according to the findings of the study in relation to the conceptual framework that was used to guide the research work. The next chapter presents conclusion and implications of the study.

Chapter Five

Conclusion and Implications

5.0 Chapter overview

The purpose of this study was to explore the perceptions of teachers and PEAs on the role of instructional supervision on teaching and learning. The research had one main research question asked on the perceptions of teachers and external supervisors on instructional supervision. The four sub-questions were, firstly, on the perceptions held by teachers on instructional supervision. Secondly, there was a question on the perceptions held by PEAs on instructional supervision. Thirdly, the researcher questioned on how teachers relate the role of classroom supervision to effective classroom instruction. Finally, the wrap-up question was on how teachers construe the concept of classroom supervision. These questions basically, addressed issues of perceptions on instructional supervision. This chapter will give a summary of the key findings that have been drawn and also highlight possible implications and gaps for future studies.

5.1 Perception of teachers on instructional supervision

According to the findings of the study, teachers perceive instructional supervision as the same as inspection. This is because of lack of unified supervision guidelines. Teachers do not see the difference between inspection and instructional supervision. The human resources image of supervision requires harmony between ideographic and nomothetic objectives and behavior. It is clear that the teachers' perceptions on instructional

supervision are not the same as that of PEAs. These findings put instructional supervision in a very awkward situation because the teachers' perceptions would erode the aims and objectives of instructional supervision if not dealt with speedily. It is important that each instructional supervision visit should have its aims clearly stated and communicated to the teachers. For instance, if a teacher does not understand the aim of the PEAs visit in a classroom or is not aware of the classroom visit itself, he or she is more likely to consider it an inspection visit as inspection is not usually announced in advance. The study has found out that the PEAs should follow standard procedures of instructional supervision when visiting schools if the teacher's perception would change to consider instructional supervision as different from inspection. The study has revealed that teachers' perceptions on instructional supervision are different from its main aim and objectives.

5.2 Perceptions of PEAs on instructional supervision

The findings of the study revealed that PEAs perceive instructional supervision as an exercise that is carried out to help teachers improve their classroom instruction. However from what was observed during the study, PEAs do not use the standard procedure of instructional supervision, which heavily relies on planning for the classroom observation process. The backward mapping approach of the conceptual framework postulates that it is not a programme that solves the problem but someone with the immediate proximity. The study showed that the PEAs do not begin with a statement of specific behavior at the onset of the instructional supervision process to identify problems that teachers need support in.

This study actually has revealed that the PEAs do not follow the procedures for instructional supervision because the PEAs are not inducted in their work after their

appointment. There is also lack of supervision of PEAs from the District Education Management office which contribute to this problem. In addition, there is no common and shared understanding on the work of PEAs by their supervisors at the District Office. As teachers are not involved by PEAs in the planning of their instructional supervision, the study found out that their participation was not as active as one would expect. Teachers' involvement in the pre-observation discussion and post-observation discussion would make classroom visitations more productive and more convenient for teachers. Unfortunately, however, the lack of their involvement makes the whole process fail to deliver positive results and it just consolidates the negative perception that teachers hold on instructional supervision.

5.3 Teachers understanding of instructional supervision

The results of the study established that teachers understand instructional supervision in the same way they understand inspection. Under the human resources model of the conceptual framework, supervisors are expected to encourage and involve those who are concerned in the decision-making process. As teachers are not involved in the planning of the instructional supervision, they apprehend that instructional supervision is predominantly an exercise for PEAs to point out their mistakes and grade them. They do not see it as a supportive role of colleagues in the profession. This might account for this understanding since PEAs do not meet teachers and share their plans in the pre-observation discussion in preparation for lesson observation.

Furthermore, the study revealed that teachers do not take PEAs as colleagues as PEAs fail to demonstrate the collegial attitude by working together in following the instructional supervisory standard procedures. It is important that PEAs must create and sustain

settings in which teachers feel safe to admit mistakes, to try new instructional strategies and disclose aspects of their teaching. The environment that most PEAs create during their periodic visits to the schools is so tense and unfriendly that teachers' perceptions of instructional supervision have been more resentful toward PEAs than the collegial relationship one would expect from those who may want to help teachers to become successful in their work.

5.4 The role of instructional supervision in effective classroom instruction

The findings of the study have shown that teachers believe that instructional supervision is a value adding service that can indeed help teachers to improve their classroom instruction. Unfortunately, the actual supervisory service by PEAs does not seem to reflect the value addition expected by teachers. Despite the teachers' high recognition of the role of instructional supervision to effective classroom instruction, the findings showed that there is low appreciation of this service by the PEAs and this tends to undermine the role of instructional supervision. The study also showed that teachers indeed believe that the role of instructional supervision helps teachers and provide them with new experiences in classroom instruction which ultimately improves teaching.

5.5 Perception of teachers and external supervisors on instructional supervision

The purpose of this study was to explore perceptions of teachers and external supervisors on the role of instructional supervision in teaching and learning. This question had four sub-questions that have since been concluded in sections 5.1, 5.2, 5.3 and 5.4 of this chapter. In this last section of the thesis, the main research question shall be answered in light of the findings of the study.

The findings of the study have clearly shown that teachers' perceptions are different from the perceptions of external supervisors (PEAs). Teachers expect that PEAs are their colleagues to work with them to enable them improve their teaching. However, the PEAs visit the schools in the name of instructional supervision; but the work actually carried out is predominantly inspection. On the other hand, the PEAs perceive that the work they do when they visit the schools is meant to improve the teachers classroom instruction.

The different perceptions of the two main players in instructional supervision put the whole supervisory services in primary school of Lilongwe Rural West in a very awkward situation. This is in conformity to the human resource and backward mapping conceptual frameworks that have guided the study as there is no shared decision-making between the PEAs and the teachers. If the decision-making had been shared, there would have been a good rapport between teachers and PEAs that would necessitate the achievement of instructional supervision objectives.

5.6 Area for further research

This study has revealed teachers and PEAs perceptions on instructional supervision. In the course of the study, there were areas such as recruitment of PEAs vis-à-vis their identification, induction, and career development that need further research. These areas raised questions such as the criteria used to evaluate whether they are delivering their services or not. This study noted a need to investigate on why the PEAs think that they are conducting instructional supervision when, in fact, they are carrying out school inspection. The confusion of the inspection and supervision services need to be clarified as this lack of clarity tends to deploy the PEAs in areas they are not assigned.

Furthermore, there is also a need to investigate on how PEAs ascertain whether teachers have been assisted after they have done their perceived instructional supervision. There is no measure on whether teachers have been assisted after the perceived instruction supervision because professional knowledge is paramount in supervision to ensure that teachers are assisted in dealing with classroom instruction. If these areas had been researched on, they would have brought a better understanding of instructional supervision.

REFERENCES

- Abdulkareem, R. (2001). *Supervisory practices as perceived by teachers and supervisors in Riyadh schools*. Saudi Arabia: Ohio University.
- Banda, K.N. (1982). *A brief history of education in Malawi*. Blantyre: Dzuka Publishing Company.
- Beach, D. B. & Reinhartz, J. (1989). *Supervision: Focus on supervision*: New York: Harper and Row.
- Blaxter, L., Hughes, C., & Tight, M. (2001). *How to research* (2nd ed.). Buckingham: Open University Press.
- Byrne, M.M. (2001). Understanding life experiences through a phenomenological approach to research. *AORN journal*, 73 (4), 830-832.
- Bogdan, R.C., & Bicklen, S. (1992). *Research for education: An introduction to theory and methods*. Boston: Allyn and Bacon.
- Chibwana, M.(1997). *Factors affecting teacher effectiveness in the implementation of general studies curriculum in the lower primary classes in Malawi*. Zomba: Centre for Educational Research and Training.
- Chimombo, J. (2005). Quantity versus quality in education. Case studies in Malawi. *International Review of Education*, 51(2-3), 155-172.
- Chimombo, J. Mwale, L, & Ndalama, L. (2005). *An assessment of schooling conditions and standard one achievement levels in pre-numeracy, basic literacy and numeracy in Malawian primary schools*. Zomba: Centre for Educational Research and Training.

- Commonwealth Secretariat/ADEA, (1998). *Better Schools: Resource materials for school inspectors*. London: The Chameleon Press Ltd.
- Creswell, J. W. (2005). *Educational research: planning, conducting and evaluating qualitative and quantitative research* (6th ed.). Upper Saddle River, N. J: Merrill.
- Cresswell, J.W. (2009). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches* (3rd ed.). Los Angeles: Sage Publications Inc.
- Elmore, R.F. (1979-1980). Backward mapping: Implementation research and policy decisions. *Political Science Quarterly*, 94 (3), 601-616.
- Elmore, R. F. (1978). Backward mapping: Organizational models of social program implementation policy. *Political Science Quarterly*, 26 (2), 185-228.
- Fraenkel, I. R., & Wallen, E. (2000). *How to design and evaluate research in education* (4th ed.). New York: McGraw-Hill Higher Education.
- Gay, L. R., Mills, G. E., & Airasian, P. (2006). *Educational Research: Competencies for analysis and applications* (8th ed.). New Jersey: Pearson Education, Inc.
- Glickman, C.D. (1985). *Supervision of Instruction: A developmental approach*. Boston: Allyn and Bacon, Inc.
- Glickman, C.D; Gordon, S.P., & Ross-Gordon, J.M. (2004). *Supervision and instructional leadership: A developmental approach*. (6th ed.). Boston: Pearson Education, Inc.
- Gwynn, J.M. (1994). *Theory and practice of Supervision*. New York: Dodd, Mead and company.
- Henning, E. Rensberg, W. V., & Smit, B. (2004). *Finding your way in qualitative research*. Pretoria: Van Schaik Publishers.

- Igwe, S.O. (2001). *Supervision, education and quality control in education in Nwagwu, N.A. Current issues in educational management*. Benin: Ambik Press Ltd.
- International Institute for Educational Planning, (2007). *Supervision: A Key component of quality monitoring systems* (Module 1). Paris: UNESCO
- International Institute for Educational Planning, (2007). *Supervision: Roles and functions of supervisors* (Module 2). Paris: UNESCO.
- Kabuye, M. G., (2004, December). *The need for capacity building in inspectorate*. Paper resented at Education Methods and Advisory services annual Conference, Malawi, Salima.
- Kosmoski, G.J. (1997). *Supervision*. East Maple Lane Mequon: Stylet Publishing Co. Inc.
- Kumar, R. (2005). *Research methodology: A Step by Step guide for beginners* (2nded.). New Delhi: Dorling Kindersley Pvt. Ltd.
- Kutsyuruba, B. (2003). *Institutional Supervision: Perceptions of Canadian and Ukrainian beginning High – School teachers*. Saskatoon: University of Saskatchewan.
- Lester, S. (1999). *An introduction to phenomenological research*. Retrieved 11 March, 2011, from <http://www.s.lester<at>devmts.co.uk>.
- Liamputtong, P., & Ezzy, D. (2005). *Qualitative research methods* (2nded.). Oxford: University Press.
- Malawi Government. (1962). *Education Act*: Zomba: Government Press.
- Malawi Government. (2014). *Malawi education performance assessment framework*. Retrieved 29th June, 2014, from

www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/67318/malawi-education-performance-assessment-framework.pdf

Malawi Institute of Education and Brandon University (1990). *In-service teacher education programme learning module for inspection and supervision*. Lilongwe, Malawi: Ministry of Education and Culture and Canadian International Development Agency.

Milnear-Peplinski, R. M. (2009). *Principals' and teachers' perceptions of teacher supervision*. Las Vegas: University of Nevada.

Ministry of Education and Culture (1982). *Primary school administration* (Handbook). Lilongwe: Ministry of Education & Culture .

Ministry of Education, Science & Technology (2008). *National education sector plan (2008-2017)*. Lilongwe: Malawi Government.

Ministry of Education, Science & Technology (2004). *National training programme in headship: Facilitator support notes*. Lilongwe: Malawi government.

Ministry of Education, Science & Technology (1998). *Teacher development centre handbook* (2nd ed.). Lilongwe: Malawi School Support Systems Programme.

Mpofu, L. C. C. (2007). *Perception of classroom supervision by Secondary School teachers in the Harare region*. Harare: Tshwane University of Technology.

Ng, C. K. C., & White, P. (2011). *Phenomenology: A qualitative research*. Retrieved 24 March, 2011, from http://www.sor.org/public/pdf/research/research_started/qualitative_research_design.pdf

Robson, C. (2000). *Real world research: A resource for social scientists and practitioner – researchers*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishers Inc.

- Rossman, G. B., & Rallis, S.F. (2003). *Learning in the field: An introduction to qualitative research* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Sanders, M., Lewis, P., Thornhill, A. (2009). *Research methods for social science students* (5th ed.). London: Pearson Education.
- Sanders, P. (1982). Phenomenology: A new way of viewing organizational research. *The Academy of management Review*, 7 (3), 353 – 360.
- Sarantakos, S. (2005). *Social research* (3rd ed.). New York: Palgrave Mac Millan.
- Sergiovanni, T. J., & Starratt, R. J. (2002). *Supervision: A redefinition* (7th ed.). New York: MacGraw-Hill.
- Sergiovanni, T. J., & Starratt, R. J. (1983). *Supervision: human perspectives*. New York: MacGraw-Hill.
- Sharma, S., Yusoff, M., Kannan, S., & Binti-Baba, S. (2011). Perceptions of teachers and Principals on instructional supervision in three Asian countries. *International Journal of Social Sciences and Humanity*, 1 (3), xx-rr.
- USAID, (2010). Supportive teacher supervision. *Educational Quality in the Developing world*, 7 (4), 1-4.
- West, M., Morgon, D., & Sewter, M. (2000). *Review of school inspection services in Malawi: Report and recommendations*. Lilongwe: Malawi.
- Zepeda, S. (2003). *The principal as an instructional leader: A handbook of supervision, eye on education*. New York: Harper and Row.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

LETTER FROM THE FACULTY OF EDUCATION, CHANCELLOR COLLEGE

APPENDIX B

**LETTER FROM THE EDUCATION MANAGER AT THE CENTRAL WEST
EDUCATION DIVISION**

APPENDIX C

INSTRUMENT 1: SUPERVISOR'S (PEAs) INTERVIEW GUIDE

PEA's Name (optional): _____ Zone: _____

Sex: Male ☐ Female ☐

Highest Academic Qualification: _____ Date Administered: _____

1. What is your career path from the time you joined the Ministry of Education, Science & Technology (MoEST)?
2. How long have you been employed as a Primary Education Advisor (PEA)?
3. Were you inducted in the job of a PEA by the Directorate of Inspection and Supervision (DIAS) (i.e. being told the practical expectation of your job)?
4. What kind of training have you undergone before or after being appointed as a PEA?
5. Describe your job as a PEA?
6. In practice, what do you actually do when you visit a school?
7. How often do you supervise teachers at a school?
 - a. Do you wish to supervise more times than you do?
 - i. If yes, why?
 - ii. If no, why not?
8. Describe your relationship with teachers when you visit the schools?
9. Explain, in detail, the response of teachers to your work when you visit the schools?

10. Describe how your role as a PEA serves any useful purpose in teaching and learning in primary schools?
11. What challenges do you face when carrying out your duties of supervision in primary schools?
 - a. How do you overcome the challenges?
12. Is there anything you would like to add on the issues we have discussed?

APPENDIX D

INSTRUMENT 2: TEACHER'S INTERVIEW GUIDE

Teacher's Name (optional): _____ Zone: _____

Name of School: _____

Sex: Male ☐ Female ☐

Highest Academic Qualification: _____ Date Administered: _____

1. What is your career path from the time you joined the Ministry of Education, Science & Technology (MoEST)?
2. How long have you been employed as a teacher?
3. What do you think is the job description of a Primary Education Advisor (PEA)?
4. Explain what you know about the PEA's supervision?
5. How many times have you been supervised in this academic year by the PEA?
 - a. Do you wish to be supervised more?
 - i. If yes, why?
 - ii. If no, why not?
6. Describe your relationship with PEA when he/she visits your school?
7. Explain if you have experienced any relevance in the work of the PEA to your classroom work?
8. Describe what the PEA actually does during his/her school visit?
9. Explain, in detail, the feedback of the PEAs to you as a teacher, when he/she supervises your lessons?

10. In your assessment of your PEA, do you think he/she helps you to improve your classroom instruction?
 - a. If yes, what makes you think so?
 - b. If no, what makes you think so?
11. Explain any challenges you face when the PEA visits your classroom or your school.
12. What is your comment about the role of the PEA in teaching and learning?
13. Is there anything you would like to add on the issues we have discussed?

APPENDIX E

INSTRUMENT 3: OBSERVATION GUIDE

PEA's Name (Optional): _____ Sex: Male ☐ Female ☐

PEA's experience (years): ☐

Teacher's Name (optional): _____ Sex: Male ☐ Female ☐

Teaching experience (years): ☐

Name of School: _____ Zone: _____

Division: _____ District: _____

Class Observed: _____ Observer's Name: _____

Date: _____

1. Classroom atmosphere: _____
2. Teacher/supervisor relationship: _____
3. Teachers' comments after the post conference: _____

Retrospective Interviews: To the PEA:

1. What did you see in this lesson? _____
2. Did the teacher agree with your observations in lesson? _____

3. What advice have you given to the teacher?_____
4. How are you going to make follow-up on the issues?_____
5. What will you do if advice is not adhered to?_____

To the teacher:

1. How did the supervision go?_____
2. What was the advice that you received?_____
3. How do you take it and why?_____

4. Did you collaboratively come to solutions of the issues that were raised?_____

Appendix F

Guiding Notes to Appendix F

Evidence Form (1) Primary Classroom Observations

Prompt Sheet This sheet is intended to help inspectors when observing classes during an inspection. Wherever possible, inspectors should note the positive (+) or negative (-) example of these features. If the feature in the class being observed is neither (+) nor (-), then do not waste the space mentioning it. Inspectors should try to comment on as many features under each heading as possible. Remember that the features you cite may be used as examples in the final report. Make sure that the comments you make match the grade you award under each section	
Teaching • Effectiveness of planning • Introduction and sequence of content • Use of basic teaching skills • Preparation and use of teaching and learning resources • Appropriateness of methods • Use of T/L resources • Level of subject knowledge •	• Understanding of pupils needs • Effectiveness of resource use • Achievement of lesson objectives/success criteria • Class management and control • Assessment and feedback • Promotion of home study • Appropriateness of language used
Learning • Acquire new knowledge or skills, develop idea, increase understanding; • Show interest, work productively at good pace, apply effort, learn for themselves; • Follow instructions and ask pertinent questions; • Sustain concentration, understand how well they have done and how they can improve; • Work in books shows development over time; • Degree of pupil participation.	

Attainment • What do children know? How does this compare with what they ought to know (as in syllabuses)? • What can children do and how does this compare with what they ought to be able to do? • What do children understand and how does this compare with what they ought to understand? • What attitudes to learning do they have and how do they compare with what they ought to have? • Look for strengths and limitations in knowledge, skills, understanding, attitudes? • Any variations in attainment between boys and girls?
Pupils attitude and behavior • Pupils attentiveness and interest in the lesson; • Appropriateness of teacher's behaviour towards pupils; • Appropriate attitude of pupils towards teachers; • Willingness to take responsibility; • Degree of pupil participation.
Assessment • Does the teacher ask questions to check on pupils understanding? • Does he/she ask questions to check on skills gained? • Does the teacher give written work regularly? • Is written work marked? • Is clear feedback given for exercises? • Promotion of home study?

Adapted from West, Morgon, & Sewter, (2000). Review of school inspection in Malawi: Report and recommendations.

APPENDIX G

EVIDENCE FORM (1) PRIMARY CLASSROOM OBSERVATIONS

School name:	Teacher's name:
Number on Roll:	Class:
Lesson Subject	Date: / / Time: from to
Lesson topic	Number in class: (f) (m) Total: Age range: Youngest Oldest
Success criteria	Inspector's name:
Teaching:	
Learning:	

Attainment:	☐
Pupils Attitude:	☐
Assessment:	☐
EFA goals (Inclusion):	☐
Overall Grade based on teaching, learning and attainment	☐

APPENDIX H

CLASSROOM OBSERVATION FORM

Name of the teacher:.....

Date:.....

Registration Number:.....

Employee No.:.....

Subject:.....

Topic:.....

Class:.....

Time – From:.....

To:.....

Name of school:.....

Name of Zone:.....

No. on Roll:.....

Attendance – Boys:..... Girls:.....

Evaluation Item	Marks	Scores	Remarks
1. LESSON PREPARATION			
A. Clear definition of success criteria	4		
B. Logical sequence of teaching and learning	4		
C. Suitability of content	4		
D. Teaching, learning and assessment resources	4		

2. LESSON PRESENTATION			
A. Appropriateness of introduction	4		
B. Logical presentation of content	4		
C. Use of chalkboard	4		
D. Use of teaching and learning resources	4		
E. Learners' participation	4		
F. Use of questioning techniques	4		
G. Clarity of instructions and explanations	4		
H. Mastery of the matter	4		
I. Achievement of success criteria	4		
J. Appropriateness of conclusion	4		
K. Time management	4		
L. Use of variety of participatory methods	4		
3. CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT			
A. Learners participation	4		
B. Organization of pupils' activities	4		
C. Teacher/learner relationship	4		
D. Management of teaching resources	4		
4. UPKEEP OF RECORDS			
A. Maintenance of schemes of work	4		
B. Previous lesson plans	4		
C. Assessment records	4		
D. Attendance register	4		
E. Teacher's time-table	2		

5. TEACHERS PRESENTABILITY			
A. Appropriateness of dress	2		
Total	100		

Name of PEA:.....

Date:.....

Teacher's signature:.....

Date:.....

Ratings are defined as follows:

0 = Not done

0-39 = E

1 = weak

40-49 = D

2 = adequate

50-69 = C

3 = good

70-84 = B

4 = outstanding

85-100 = A

Advice given:

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....