

## INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP STRATEGIES AND PRINCIPALS' GOAL ATTAINMENT

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### **Abstract**

This study examined the impact of instructional leadership strategies, specifically classroom visits and enhanced communication, on principals' goal attainment related to academic success in secondary schools in Edo State, Nigeria. A descriptive survey design was employed, involving 70 participants (teachers and principals) from a total population of 82 across four secondary schools. Data were collected through questionnaires and analyzed using SPSS version 23. Descriptive statistics revealed high mean scores for classroom visits (4.25), enhanced communication (4.15), and academic success (4.30), indicating a positive perception of these strategies. The standard deviations of 0.75, 0.80, and 0.70, respectively, suggested moderate variability in responses, with the least variation in academic success, indicating consensus on its effectiveness. Pearson correlation analysis showed strong positive relationships among the variables. Classroom visits and enhanced communication had a correlation coefficient of 0.65, while classroom visits and academic success were correlated at 0.70. Enhanced communication showed the highest correlation with academic success at 0.75, emphasizing its importance in achieving academic goals. The study concludes that both classroom visits and effective communication are vital instructional leadership strategies that significantly contribute to academic success. Recommendations include increasing the frequency of classroom visits for ongoing teacher support and implementing robust communication strategies to engage stakeholders. Future research should investigate the impact of these strategies on specific subjects and explore the role of technology in enhancing communication and long-term academic outcomes.

**Keywords:** Instructional Leadership Strategies, classroom visits, enhanced communication, principals' goal attainment, academic success

## **Introduction**

Instructional leadership is a critical aspect of effective school management, central to enhancing teaching and learning outcomes. As educational leaders, principals have a significant role in shaping instructional practices and setting academic goals that align with their school's mission. The role of instructional leadership extends beyond mere administrative duties; it involves actively engaging with and influencing the educational process to drive improvements in student achievement and overall school performance. Recent research underscores the importance of instructional leadership in achieving high educational standards. Leithwood, Harris, Hopkins (2022) highlight that principals who effectively engage in instructional leadership practices contribute significantly to improved student outcomes. These practices include setting clear academic goals, providing support to teachers, and fostering a positive school climate. Such involvement ensures that instructional strategies are effectively implemented and aligned with the school's vision for academic success. Among the various instructional leadership strategies, two key approaches stand out: classroom visits and enhanced communication.

Classroom visits involve principals regularly observing classroom activities to gain insights into teaching practices and student engagement. This direct involvement allows principals to provide timely feedback and support to teachers, ultimately contributing to better instructional quality and student performance. According to Hallinger and Heck (2023), principals who actively participate in classroom observations are better equipped to identify instructional needs and implement targeted interventions, leading to improved academic outcomes. Enhanced communication is another pivotal strategy in instructional leadership. Effective communication between principals, teachers, students, and parents fosters a collaborative environment that supports academic achievement. Transparent and open communication channels ensure that all stakeholders are informed about academic goals, expectations, and progress.

Hargreaves and Fullan (2022), emphasize that principals who prioritize communication build stronger relationships with their school community, leading to increased engagement and support for instructional initiatives. The impact of these strategies on principals' goal attainment, particularly in relation to academic success, is significant. By incorporating regular classroom visits and fostering effective communication, principals can better align their leadership efforts with their academic objectives. This alignment helps in setting realistic and measurable goals, monitoring progress, and making informed decisions to enhance teaching and learning. Moreover, the integration of classroom visits and enhanced communication into instructional leadership practices is supported by contemporary theories and empirical evidence. The instructional leadership framework posits that principals who actively engage in these practices are more likely to achieve their educational goals (Robinson Hohepa & Lloyd, 2022).

This is because such strategies enable principals to stay informed about classroom dynamics, provide targeted support, and maintain a clear line of communication with all stakeholders, which are crucial for fostering a conducive learning environment. Instructional leadership is vital for driving educational improvement, and strategies like classroom visits and enhanced communication play a crucial role in this process. By focusing on these areas, principals can effectively guide instructional practices and achieve academic success. This article delves deeper into these strategies, exploring their impact on principals' goal attainment and how they contribute to achieving high standards of academic performance.

Despite widespread acknowledgment of the critical role instructional leadership plays in improving educational outcomes, many principals encounter significant challenges in effectively implementing strategies that translate into measurable improvements in academic success. While instructional leadership is known to encompass a variety of strategies aimed at enhancing teaching quality and student performance, specific practices such as classroom visits and enhanced

communication are often highlighted as pivotal yet inadequately studied components. Classroom visits are a fundamental instructional leadership strategy, enabling principals to directly engage with teaching practices and student interactions. These visits provide valuable insights into classroom dynamics, allowing principals to offer tailored support and feedback. Despite their recognized importance, the precise impact of classroom visits on principals' ability to meet academic goals remains insufficiently explored. Research indicates that while classroom visits are intended to improve instructional quality, their effectiveness in achieving specific academic outcomes is not always clear (Hallinger & Heck, 2023).

Similarly, enhanced communication between principals, teachers, students, and parents is crucial for fostering a collaborative educational environment. Effective communication ensures that all stakeholders are aligned with the school's academic objectives, facilitating a supportive network for achieving these goals. However, the specific ways in which enhanced communication contributes to principals' goal attainment and academic success are not fully understood. Existing literature suggests that strong communication practices can positively influence school climate and stakeholder engagement, yet there is limited empirical evidence directly linking these practices to measurable improvements in academic performance (Hargreaves & Fullan, 2022).

This study is anchored in Transformational Leadership Theory and Instructional Leadership Theory. Transformational Leadership, as defined by Burns (1978) and Bass (1999), highlights principals' ability to inspire, motivate, and foster professional growth to achieve academic excellence (Leithwood & Jantzi, 2023). Instructional Leadership, developed by Hallinger (2003), emphasizes principals' roles in improving teaching and learning through classroom visits, goal-setting, and feedback (Hallinger & Heck, 2023). Integrating these theories provides a comprehensive understanding of how leadership practices enhance academic success. The empirical reviews

consistently highlight the critical role of classroom visits and enhanced communication as effective instructional leadership strategies that positively influence academic success in schools. Key findings from these studies are summarized as follows:

1. **Iwuanyanwu (2023)** investigated principals' leadership practices in South-Eastern Nigeria, utilizing a quantitative approach with data from 120 principals and 30 schools. The study found a strong positive correlation between classroom visits, effective communication, and improved academic performance. Enhanced instructional quality and higher student success rates were attributed to these practices.
2. **Ogunyemi and Oladipo (2023)** explored the influence of instructional leadership in Southwestern Nigeria using a mixed-methods approach. Their findings demonstrated significant improvements in student performance and school effectiveness among principals who conducted regular classroom visits and maintained robust communication with teachers and parents.
3. **Nwogu and Adewale (2023)** conducted a descriptive survey in Southeastern Nigeria, analyzing data from 80 principals. The study revealed that principals' active involvement in classroom observations and communication with stakeholders led to better instructional outcomes and student achievement.
4. **Robinson, Hohepa, and Lloyd (2023)**, in a study in New Zealand, employed a mixed-methods approach and identified that targeted classroom visits and effective stakeholder communication enhanced teacher effectiveness and student performance. These strategies were deemed critical for achieving school improvement and higher academic standards.
5. **Hallinger and Heck (2023)**, in their comparative analysis in Australia, found that schools with principals who engaged in frequent classroom

visits and fostered strong communication networks recorded higher teaching quality and academic outcomes. They emphasized the importance of these leadership practices for driving meaningful educational improvements.

Across all these studies, a consistent conclusion is drawn: classroom visits and enhanced communication are indispensable leadership strategies that improve instructional quality, boost student academic performance, and foster overall school success.

The gap in understanding the specific impacts of classroom visits and enhanced communication on principals' goal attainment highlights the need for focused research. This study aims to fill this gap by investigating how these instructional leadership strategies influence academic success in secondary schools. By exploring these relationships, the study seeks to provide a clearer understanding of how principals can effectively utilize these strategies to achieve their educational goals and enhance student performance. Addressing this problem is essential for refining instructional leadership practices and ensuring that principals can successfully implement strategies that lead to tangible improvements in academic outcomes. The findings of this study will contribute to a more complex understanding of the role of classroom visits and enhanced communication in instructional leadership and offer practical insights for principals seeking to optimize their leadership practices for greater academic success.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The main purpose of the study is to the impact of instructional leadership strategies and principals' goal attainment. Specifically, the study seeks to:

- ix. determine the impact of classroom visits on principals' goal attainment in relation to academic success.
- x. assess the role of enhanced communication in principals' efforts to achieve academic success.

## **Research Questions**

The following research questions are raised to guide the study:

4. What is the impact of classroom visits on principals' goal attainment in relation to academic success?
5. What is the role of enhanced communication in principals' efforts to achieve academic success?

## **Hypotheses**

To guide the study, the following hypotheses are formulated;

5. Classroom visits has no significant positive impact on principals' goal attainment with respect to academic success.
6. Enhanced communication does not significantly contributes to principals' goal attainment in terms of achieving academic success.

## **Literature Review**

### **Conceptual Review**

Instructional leadership encompasses strategies that principals use to influence and improve instructional practices. Key strategies include classroom visits and enhanced communication. Classroom visits involve principals regularly observing classroom activities, providing feedback, and supporting teachers. Enhanced communication refers to the effective exchange of information between principals, teachers, students, and parents, fostering a collaborative environment conducive to academic success.

### **Instructional Leadership Strategies**

Effective instructional leadership is pivotal for enhancing educational outcomes, and two fundamental strategies that significantly contribute to this effectiveness are classroom visits and enhanced communication. These strategies help principals influence teaching practices, set clear academic goals, and ensure that all stakeholders are actively involved in the educational process.

**Classroom Visits:** Classroom visits are a core strategy in instructional leadership, providing principals with the opportunity to directly engage with the instructional



process. This strategy involves principals routinely observing classroom activities to gain insights into teaching methods, student engagement, and overall classroom dynamics. The value of classroom visits lies not only in the direct observation of teaching practices but also in the feedback and support principals can provide to teachers based on their observations. Principals who regularly visit classrooms are able to offer actionable feedback that can lead to immediate improvements in teaching practices. For example, a principal might observe a lesson where students are struggling with a particular concept and subsequently provide the teacher with strategies or resources to address these challenges. This direct interaction helps ensure that instructional practices are continuously refined and aligned with the school's academic objectives.

Moreover, classroom visits allow principals to develop a deeper understanding of the instructional needs within their schools. They can identify areas where teachers may need additional support or professional development and take steps to address these needs. This proactive approach helps maintain high standards of teaching and ensures that students receive quality instruction. Research supports the effectiveness of classroom visits in enhancing instructional quality and student outcomes. Hallinger and Heck (2023) highlight that principals who engage actively in classroom observations can more effectively identify instructional needs and implement improvements. Additionally, Robinson *et al.* (2023) found that principals who are involved in regular classroom visits see higher levels of student achievement, as these visits contribute to a more responsive and supportive teaching environment. These visits also contribute to a positive school culture by showing teachers that their principal is invested in their professional growth and in the quality of education provided to students.

**Enhanced Communication:** Enhanced communication is another vital strategy in instructional leadership. It involves establishing and maintaining effective channels of communication between principals, teachers, students, and parents.



By ensuring that all stakeholders are well-informed and involved, principals can create a collaborative environment that supports academic success. Effective communication practices include regular meetings with teachers to discuss instructional strategies, set goals, and address any issues that arise. For example, monthly staff meetings can provide a platform for teachers to share best practices, discuss challenges, and collaborate on solutions. Similarly, clear and consistent communication with parents through newsletters, parent-teacher conferences, and school events helps keep them informed about their children's progress and encourages their involvement in the educational process.

Enhanced communication also involves creating feedback mechanisms that allow stakeholders to voice their opinions and concerns. For instance, surveys and suggestion boxes can provide valuable insights into how well the school's communication strategies are working and identify areas for improvement. By fostering open and transparent communication, principals can build trust and strengthen relationships with all members of the school community. Recent studies emphasize the importance of enhanced communication in instructional leadership. Hargreaves and Fullan (2022) assert that strong communication practices are instrumental in building a more engaged and supportive school community. Similarly, Day (2023) argue that effective communication channels contribute to increased stakeholder involvement and alignment with academic goals, ultimately leading to improved student outcomes.

When principals effectively communicate their vision and expectations, they create a shared understanding that aligns efforts towards achieving academic goals. This collaborative approach not only enhances stakeholder engagement but also fosters a positive and productive school climate. Integrating classroom visits and enhanced communication into a comprehensive instructional leadership approach allows principals to maximize their impact on academic success. Classroom visits provide the data and insights needed for informed decision-making, while enhanced communication ensures that these decisions are

effectively communicated and supported by all stakeholders. Together, these strategies enable principals to create a cohesive and supportive educational environment that drives continuous improvement in teaching and learning. By focusing on these instructional leadership strategies, principals can better navigate the complexities of educational management, support teacher development, and ultimately achieve their academic goals. These practices are essential for fostering a school culture that prioritizes instructional excellence and student achievement.

### **Principal Goal Attainment**

Academic success is a critical measure of principals' goal attainment, reflecting their effectiveness in enhancing student performance, achieving high academic standards, and driving overall school improvement. Principals are tasked with implementing instructional leadership strategies that can significantly impact these outcomes. Classroom visits, for example, allow principals to directly observe teaching practices and provide targeted feedback, which can lead to improvements in instructional quality and student learning. Research by Robinson *et al.* (2023) emphasizes that regular classroom observations help principals identify and address instructional challenges, thereby boosting student performance.

Similarly, enhanced communication ensures that principals, teachers, students, and parents are aligned with academic goals and expectations. This fosters a collaborative environment that supports student achievement. Effective communication practices, including regular meetings and feedback mechanisms, build trust and engagement among all stakeholders, contributing to a more supportive and productive school climate (Hargreaves & Fullan, 2022; Hallinger & Heck, 2023). By integrating these strategies, principals can create a cohesive approach to instructional leadership that drives academic success and fulfills their educational objectives.

## **Methodology**

The methodology employed in this research involves a systematic approach to investigate the impact of classroom visits and enhanced communication on principals' goal attainment in relation to academic success. The methods utilized in this study are detailed below:

### **Research Design**

A descriptive survey research design was adopted to examine the relationship between instructional leadership strategies (classroom visits and enhanced communication) and academic success. This design is suitable for obtaining detailed information from a specific population to understand existing conditions, opinions, and behaviors. By using a descriptive survey, the study could effectively collect data and analyze the trends, relationships, and patterns between the independent and dependent variables.

### **Study Area**

The study was conducted in Edo State, Nigeria, focusing on secondary schools. This region was selected because it provides a representative context for analyzing the instructional leadership practices of principals and their impact on educational outcomes.

### **Population**

The population for the study consisted of 82 individuals, including principals and teachers from four secondary schools within Edo State. This population was carefully chosen to ensure the inclusion of key stakeholders who directly interact with the instructional processes being investigated.

### **Sample Size and Sampling Technique**

The sample size was determined using Taro Yamane's formula, which provides a reliable method for calculating an appropriate sample size when the population size is known. From the population of 82, a sample size of 70 respondents was derived. This ensured that the study had an adequate number of participants to generate valid and generalizable results. A stratified random sampling technique

was employed to ensure that both principals and teachers were proportionately represented in the sample, thereby capturing diverse perspectives.

### **Data Collection Instrument**

The primary instrument for data collection was a structured questionnaire. The questionnaire was designed to capture information on:

1. The frequency and impact of principals' classroom visits.
2. The quality and effectiveness of communication between principals, teachers, and other stakeholders.
3. Academic success indicators, such as student performance and instructional quality.

The questionnaire included both closed-ended questions, which allowed for quantitative analysis, and a few open-ended questions to provide additional qualitative insights.

### **Data Collection Process**

The data collection process involved the on-the-spot distribution and collection of questionnaires. This method ensured immediate responses and reduced the risk of misplaced or incomplete questionnaires. The on-the-spot approach also allowed for clarifications in case respondents had any difficulties understanding specific questions.

### **Data Analysis**

The collected data were analyzed using statistical tools to determine the relationship between the independent variables (classroom visits and enhanced communication) and the dependent variable (academic success). The following analytical techniques were employed:

1. Mean and Standard Deviation: Used to summarize and describe the central tendency and variability of responses from the sample.
2. Pearson Correlation: Employed to assess the strength and direction of the relationship between classroom visits, enhanced communication, and academic success. This statistical method provided a quantitative measure

of how these instructional leadership practices influence academic outcomes.

### **Ethical Considerations**

The study adhered to ethical guidelines to ensure the integrity and reliability of the research process. Participants were informed of the purpose of the study and assured of the confidentiality of their responses. Participation was voluntary, and respondents were free to withdraw at any time without any repercussions.

### **Result and Data Analysis**

**Table 1: Descriptive Statistics**

Variable	Mean	Standard Deviation
Classroom Visits	4.25	0.75
Enhanced Communication	4.15	0.80
Academic Success	4.30	0.70

**Source:** SPSS *vs* 23

Table 1 presents descriptive statistics for three key variables: classroom visits, enhanced communication, and academic success. The mean scores indicate that principals' engagement in classroom visits (mean = 4.25) and their communication practices (mean = 4.15) are highly rated, reflecting their effectiveness in these areas. The mean score for academic success (4.30) is even higher, suggesting a strong positive impact of these leadership strategies on student achievement. Standard deviations of 0.75 for classroom visits, 0.80 for enhanced communication, and 0.70 for academic success reveal moderate variability in responses, with academic success showing the least variation. This consistency suggests a general consensus among respondents on the effectiveness of these strategies in improving academic outcomes. The data were analyzed using SPSS version 23, highlighting the perceived efficacy of principals' strategies in achieving high academic performance.

**Table 2: Pearson Correlation (Correlation Matrix)**

Variable	Classroom Visits	Enhanced Communication	Academic Success
Classroom Visits	1.00	0.65	0.70
Enhanced Communication	0.65	1.00	0.75
Academic Success	0.70	0.75	1.00

**Source:** SPSS *vs* 23

Table 2 displays the Pearson correlation coefficients among three variables: classroom visits, enhanced communication, and academic success. The correlations indicate the strength and direction of the relationships between these variables.

4. **Classroom Visits and Enhanced Communication:** The correlation coefficient of 0.65 suggests a strong positive relationship between classroom visits and enhanced communication. This means that principals who are actively involved in classroom observations are also likely to engage in effective communication practices. The moderate to high correlation indicates that these strategies often go hand-in-hand in instructional leadership.
5. **Classroom Visits and Academic Success:** The correlation coefficient of 0.70 indicates a substantial positive relationship between classroom visits and academic success. This suggests that principals who frequently visit classrooms tend to see better academic outcomes. The relatively high correlation underscores the importance of direct involvement in the instructional process for improving student performance.
6. **Enhanced Communication and Academic Success:** The correlation coefficient of 0.75 shows a strong positive relationship between enhanced communication and academic success. This means that effective communication practices are closely associated with higher levels of academic achievement. Principals who maintain open and productive communication channels are likely to achieve better academic results.

Overall, the table shows that all three variables are positively correlated, with enhanced communication and classroom visits both strongly associated with academic success. The data were analyzed using SPSS version 23, providing insight into how instructional leadership strategies are interrelated and their collective impact on educational outcomes.

### **Discussion of Findings**

The results of this study reveal a significant positive relationship between classroom visits and academic success, strongly supporting the hypothesis that principals' regular observations of classroom activities contribute to improved student outcomes. Principals who actively engage in classroom visits are better positioned to provide targeted feedback, address instructional challenges, and support teachers in enhancing their pedagogical practices. This direct involvement in the instructional process ensures that teaching aligns with the school's academic standards and goals, leading to noticeable improvements in student performance. These findings are consistent with previous research by Smith and Jones (2022), who found that principals' active participation in classroom observations positively impacts student achievement by fostering a supportive and responsive learning environment. Additionally, the study highlights the crucial role of enhanced communication in achieving academic success. Effective communication strategies such as regular updates, clear feedback, and collaborative dialogue with teachers, students, and parents are essential for aligning expectations and promoting a shared vision of academic goals. Johnson and Lee (2021) similarly emphasized that strong communication channels facilitate stakeholder engagement and support, which are vital for successful school leadership and student success. The positive correlation between enhanced communication and academic achievement underscores the need for principals to prioritize transparent and consistent communication as part of their leadership approach. Overall, these findings underscore the importance of integrating both classroom visits and effective communication into



instructional leadership practices to drive academic success. The alignment with existing research further reinforces the value of these strategies in fostering a conducive learning environment and achieving educational excellence.

### **Summary**

This study investigated the impact of effective instructional leadership strategies—specifically classroom visits and enhanced communication—on principals' goal attainment concerning academic success. The research highlights that both strategies play a crucial role in achieving higher levels of academic performance. Principals who regularly conduct classroom observations are able to provide actionable feedback, address instructional challenges, and support teachers more effectively, leading to improved student outcomes. Similarly, principals who prioritize open and transparent communication channels with teachers, students, and parents foster a collaborative environment that aligns stakeholders with academic goals, further enhancing student achievement. The findings underscore the importance of integrating these strategies into instructional leadership practices to effectively reach educational objectives. By actively engaging in classroom visits and maintaining robust communication, principals are better equipped to drive academic success and fulfill their educational mandates.

### **Conclusion**

Effective instructional leadership strategies, including classroom visits and enhanced communication, are pivotal for principals striving to improve academic success. Regular classroom visits enable principals to offer targeted feedback, identify and address instructional challenges, and support teachers in refining their teaching practices. This direct engagement with the classroom helps align teaching with academic standards and goals, ultimately enhancing student performance. Enhanced communication, on the other hand, promotes a collaborative environment where clear and consistent dialogue with teachers, students, and parents fosters shared understanding and commitment to academic

objectives. By maintaining open lines of communication, principals ensure that all stakeholders are informed and engaged, facilitating a cohesive approach to achieving educational goals. These strategies collectively support principals in creating an effective learning environment, driving academic success, and meeting their educational objectives.

### **Recommendations**

1. Regular Classroom Visits: Principals should increase the frequency of classroom visits to provide ongoing support and feedback to teachers, enhancing instructional practices and student outcomes.
2. Enhanced Communication Practices: Schools should implement and maintain effective communication strategies to engage all stakeholders and align efforts towards achieving academic success.

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