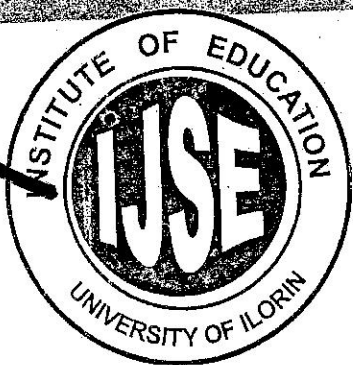


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MODELS OF SUPERVISORY PROCESS: FRAMEWORK FOR EFFECTIVE SUPERVISION OF TEACHERS ON TEACHING PRACTICE

ADENIYI F. O. (Ph.D.)

Abstract

The most commonly used model of supervision is directive, non-collaborative model, which has become a tradition. However, several researches and investigations affirmed that giving commands to student – teachers on how to behave in the classroom is not a very productive way to approach the supervisory process. The thrust of this paper therefore is to expose a number of alternative models for supervision and each supervisor will have to determine which supervisory behaviours work well through his/her choice of the models.

Introduction

Teaching practice (TP) is an organized programme directed towards exposing student teachers to all the school programmes which covers all the three domains of learning. Bolarin and Akinpelu (1999) see TP as a period of educational exposure which affords the teachers-in-training an opportunity to be in a real teaching and learning environment and allows them to put into practice what they have been taught by their teachers or lecturers. According to Idowu (2001), TP can be simply described as a training programme organized to prepare student teachers for the actual teaching experiences.

TP is one of the compulsory courses for all NCE students. According to National Curriculum for Colleges of Education (NCE) minimum standards, TP is compulsory for all students registered for NCE programme, and it is 12-week duration. The important areas covered include: lesson planning, microteaching, lesson notes, instructional technology and teaching skills.

The supervisory process is generally concerned with achieving the objectives the teacher education programme specified for the practicum. More particularly, it is concerned with facilitating the learning and development of their pupils. Also, it aimed at developing in student teachers the concern for and skill in self-supervision, autonomy in planning, analyzing and improving teacher performance for themselves. (Turkey 1982). According to Olaoye (2001), the following are some of the objectives identified with T.P:

- a. To help student teachers develop positive attitude towards the teaching profession.
- b. To expose student teachers to real life classroom experiences under the supervision of professional teachers.
- c. To enable them discover their own strengths and weaknesses in teaching, and develop opportunities to overcome and consolidate them.

There are many things that a supervisor needs to do beyond just evaluating a trainee teachers' performance in a lesson. According to Thorn (2001) there are two broad based categories of supervisor roles. They are technical/assessment roles and personal/development roles.

The technical assessment roles involve coaching the student teachers in classroom-based skills, informing them of wider curriculum issues, helping in goal formation and classification and evaluating classroom performance. The personal development roles involves motivating the student teachers, boosting their confidence, counselling and listening to problems by helping to reduce feelings of anxiety and finally helping the teacher to settle into the school and problem solving.

Models of Supervision

The roles of the supervisor fall into five categories. These categories were elicited from many teachers and teachers' educators in several countries and appear to be a fairly representatives sample. The five categories according to Gebhard (1984) are directive, alternative, collaborative, non-directive, creative and self-help-explorative.

Directive Supervision: The role of the supervisor in directive supervision is to direct and inform the teacher, model teaching behaviours, and evaluate the teacher's mastery of defined behaviours. Three problems are identified with directive supervision. First, there is the problem of how the supervisor defines "Good teaching". Second, this model may give rise to feelings of defensiveness and low self-esteem on the part of the teacher. Third, there is the problem of assigning ultimate responsibility for what goes on in the classroom. What makes a good teaching according to Gebhard (1984) is not how effective but based on the perception of people about that teaching. It is not probably good teaching that people see; it is more likely their idea of what good teaching should be. Most people would agree that good teaching means that learning takes place. But how do we identify what specific teaching behaviour cause the students to learn? Many years of process-product research have failed to identify specific teaching behaviours, which are unambiguously linked to learning outcomes. Despite this, "the ultimate aim is still to end up with something helpful to say to teachers and their trainers (Allunght 1983). The search for effective teaching goes on for these reasons, it is difficult to justify prescribing what teachers should do in the classroom.

The second problem with directive supervision is that it can make teachers see themselves as inferior to the supervisor and this can lower their self-esteem. The teacher trainees often see their supervisor as a threat and threat according to Rardin (1977) produces a "half-in-half-out-engagement" which is not the best. In other words, threat can cause teachers to become defensive toward the supervisors judgments. Rowe (1973) pointed out that if we feel that we are being judged, we lose the "right to be wrong" and if we lose right to be wrong, we can also lose the courage to try new ideas, to explore more than one alternative, and to explore freely.

A third problem with directive supervision is that a prescriptive approach forces teachers to comply with what the supervisor thinks they should do. Blatchford (1976) Fanselow (1987), Gebad, Galtén, and Oprandy and Jarvig (1976) have all strongly suggested that this keeps the responsibility for decision making with the teacher educator instead of shifting it to the teacher.

Alternative supervision

Copeland (1982) discovered in his research on teacher's attitudes to supervision that some teachers feel the need to be told what to do when they first begin to teach. He attributes this to their insecurity in facing students without having the skills to cope with the situation. Teachers from a number of countries have also pointed out that if the teacher is not given direction by the supervisor, then the supervisor is not considered qualified. However, there is a way to direct teaching without prescribing what they should do. This way is through a model that Freeman (1982) calls alternative supervision. In this model, the supervisor's role is to suggest a variety of alternatives to what the teacher has done in the classroom. Having a limited number of choices can reduce teachers' anxiety over deciding what to do next and yet it still gives them the responsibility for decision-making. Freeman points out that alternative supervision works best when the supervisor does not favour any one alternatives and is not judgmental. The purpose of offering alternatives is to widen the level of what a teacher will consider doing. Fanselor (1987) suggested that teachers should try the opposite of what they usually do. For example, if students usually read silently, the teacher can generate a lesson in which students read aloud to the whole class or in pairs. Another way is to duplicate inside the classroom what goes on outside of the classroom setting. For example, the teacher can have the students stand up when conversing. He also trained teacher to be aware of "leader" (opposite of golden) moments – to identify consistent problems – and to try alternative behaviours to resolve the problem, for example, if students always come late to class, the teacher could offer coffee or another reward to those who come on time or simply talk with the students or write notes to them about the importance of coming early to the class. The aim according to him is for teachers to try alternative behaviour and pay attention to the consequences. If teachers are provided with strategies that give them a way to understand the consequences of what they do, teachers can gradually rely on themselves to make teaching decisions.

Collaborative supervision

Collaborative supervision involves the supervision working with the student teachers, but not directs them. The supervisor actively participates with the teacher in any decisions that are made and attempts to establish a sharing relationship. Cogan (1973) advocates such a model, which he calls "clinical supervision". Cogan believes that teaching is mostly a problem-solving process that requires a sharing of ideas between the teachers and the supervisor. The teacher and supervisor work together in addressing a problem in the teachers' classroom teaching. They pose a hypothesis, experiment, and implement, strategies that appear to offer a reasonable solution to the problem under consideration.

Non-directive supervision

This involves supervisors listening and demonstrating an understanding of what the student teacher (ST) has said. Curran (1978) based on the work of Rogger (1978) calls this an understanding response. This is a "recognized" version of what the speaker has said. In this model of supervision, the supervisor does not repeat word-for-word what the teacher has said but rather restates how he or she has understood the teacher's comments. According to Deawling and Sheppard (1976), early and Bolitho (1981) and Freeman (1982), if the supervisor employs a non-

directive model of supervision, the teacher trainee would be free to express and clarify his/her ideas and has the feeling of support and trust developed between him/her and the supervisor. The teacher trainee would have the chance to try new idea, and would also have chance to raise questions about him/herself as a teacher and about the consequences his/her teaching may have on the students.

However, the non-directive model of supervision can cause anxiety for the trainee teacher if the supervisor has simply been using the surface techniques while ignoring the deeper philosophical principles of the model. In the deeper philosophical level, there is need to understand the importance of working with the whole person of the learner (Curran 1976, 1978, Radin 1977, Taylor 1997, Stevick 1980) Curran advocated such techniques as the non-judgmental "understanding response" to break down the defenses of learners to facilitate a feeling of security, and to build a trusting relationship between learners and the teacher. This missing relationship allows the teacher and learners to "quest" together to find answers to each learner's questions.

Creative Model of Supervision

This model encourages freedom and creativity in three different ways. It can allow for –

- A combination of models or a combination of supervisory behaviours from different models.
- A shifting of supervisory responsibilities from the supervisor to other sources i.e. teachers can be responsible for their own supervision through the use of teacher centers where they can find answers to questions.
- An application of insights from other fields that are not found in any of the models e.g. using observation system originally developed for research, working with only one model can be appropriate, but it can also be limiting. Sometimes a combination of different models might be needed. Freeman (1982) believed that a particular supervisory approach is selected based on the type of information the teacher is seeking.

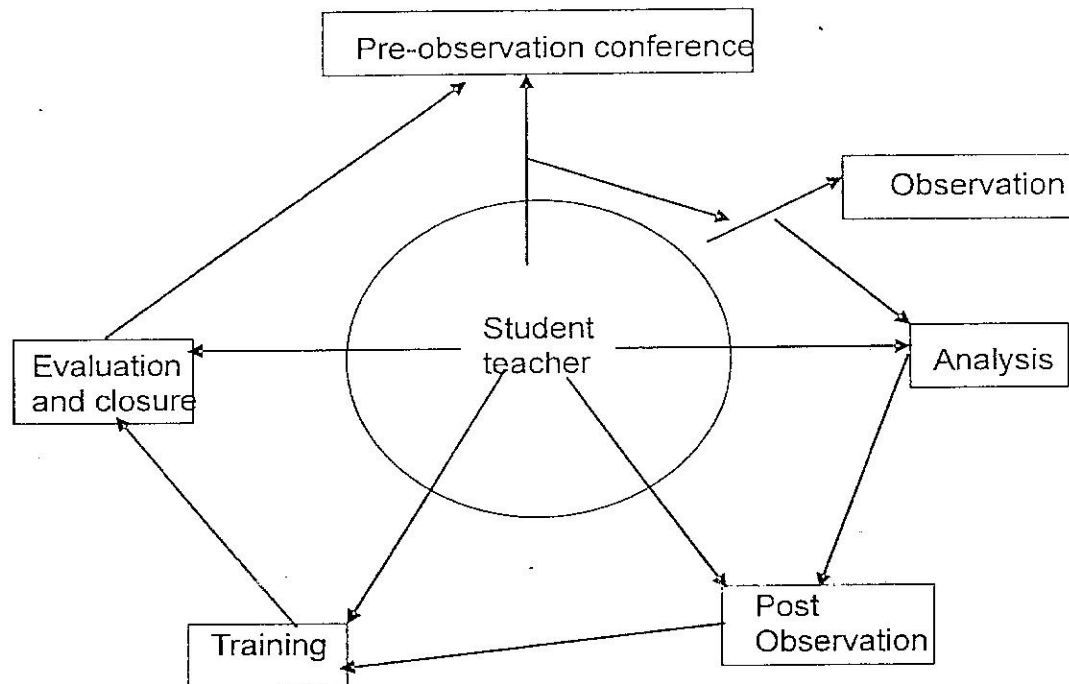
Self-help explorative supervision model

This model is an extension of creative supervision. This provides opportunities for both teachers and supervisors to gain awareness of their teaching through observation and exploitation. The teacher trainee is not seen as a "cheaper" (which is the basis for other models) but as another (perhaps) experienced teacher who is interested in learning more about his or her own teaching and instills in teachers desire to do the same. The aim is for both the supervisor and the supervisor to explore teaching through observation of their own and others' teaching in order to gain an awareness of teaching behaviours and their consequences, as well as to generate alternative ways to teach. According to Fenselowo (1998), when we observe others to gains elf-knowledge and self-highlight and when we generate our own alternatives based on what we see others do, we construct our knowledge.

As a part of the awareness generating process, teachers visit each other's classes or gather to observe a fellow teacher's class in progress. During these observations, teachers take notes in order to capture what is going on. Teachers also audiotape their own teaching or have their teaching video-taped. These tapes are later used as a way for teachers to study their teaching alone or with other

teachers. Teachers or supervisees practice describing the teaching they see rather than judging it. Language that covers the notions of good, bad, better, best or worse is discouraged, because judgments impede clear understanding.

Stages of supervisory process



Six-stage cycle of the supervisory process

The first stage of supervision is the pre-observation conference, where the supervisor and the student teacher meet for necessary introduction both of themselves and the assignment in hand. Here the supervisor plays the role of counsellor. This is followed by observation, where the supervisor pays a detailed attention to every activity engaged in the practicum. Here the supervisor plays the role of observer. The analysis stage is the third stage where the supervisor plays the role of manager. The post-observation stage is the fourth stage where the supervisor gives feedback to the teacher trainee about the performance during his observation. The fifth stage is that of training where the supervisor acts as an instructor. The final stage is evaluation and closure; here the supervisor plays the role of evaluator.

Roles of Supervisor in Supervisory Process

There are six major roles linked with these stages of the supervisory process. They are – manager, counsellor, instructor, observer, feedback, and evaluator. According to Turney (1982), the manager role is concerned with the purposeful and smooth operation of the practice. It includes those supervisory behaviours that contribute both to successful planning and organizing of the practicum and to the development of common understanding, cooperation and morale of all participants. This role facilitates the setting for the pursuit of other roles.

Instructor role is concerned with assisting students to explore and improve their teaching plans and performances through the acquisition of information, the development of concepts and understandings, the building and refinement of teaching skills and the use of problem solving which guide the pre-and post-observation conferences as well as in special training sessions.

Counsellor: The counsellor role is based on a sensitivity and concern for the student as a person and as a developing teacher. It deals with interpersonal and affective aspects of student teachers. It also helps students to develop positive attitudes, resolve concerns and clarify behaviours.

The **observer** role is concerned with systematically and purposefully viewing and accurately recording data on the teaching of the student teacher. The information recorded must be transmitted to the student teacher to indicate the strength and weaknesses of the student.

Feedback: Through the role, the supervisor conveys to the student teacher selected information arising from the observation of teaching. This is to help the student improve as teacher by gauging progress and planning ways of surmounting difficulties.

Evaluator: The evaluator role is concerned with making sound judgments about the level of the students' development as a teacher in relation to the aims of the practicum. The judgment is based on evidence accumulated from successive feedback sessions with the student teacher.

The above roles are however interrelated to form an integrated approach to teacher supervision.

Conclusion

Many supervisors seem to limit their approach to supervision and their choice of supervisory behaviours, in doing so, they risk restricting or in the case of very discrete supervision, even retarding teachers' progress in assessing responsibility for their own teaching and in developing their talent as professional teachers. This should not be, for there is a wide choice of supervisory behaviours that teachers' educators can select from. Each supervisor will have to discover which supervisory behaviours work well. However, for a supervisor to use any of the above model would depend on the following:

- Personal disposition of the supervisor.
- Views of the supervisor on his/her role.
- Personal disposition of the trainee teacher.
- Expectations of the trainee teacher as to what supervisors' expectations should do. These are in turn likely to be affected by institutional expectations of the supervisor-trainee teacher roles (Gabhard 1984).

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