

DEVELOPMENTAL SUPERVISION: AN EXPLORATORY STUDY OF A PROMISING MODEL

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Glickman's developmental supervision calls for the instructional leader to use alternative supervisory approaches to help teachers improve their instruction and cognitive growth.¹ In the tactical phase of Glickman's model, the supervisor diagnoses the teacher's conceptual level (CL), then selects the most appropriate supervisory approach. The developmental supervisor initially uses a directive approach (directing and standardizing) with low-CL teachers, a collaborative approach (presenting, problem solving, and negotiating) with moderate-CL teachers, and a nondirective approach (listening, clarifying, encouraging, and reflecting) with high-CL teachers.² In the strategic phase of developmental supervision, the supervisor fosters the teacher's growth in CL and problem-solving ability by gradually reducing the structure of the interactions with the teacher while gradually increasing the teacher's decision-making responsibility. The developmental supervisor attempts to move gradually from a directive approach to a collaborative approach and from a collaborative approach to a nondirective approach.³

The concept of tactically matching supervisory behaviors to teachers' developmental levels is the basis of the study reported here. In this study, supervisors diagnosed teachers' CL: high, moderate, or low. They attempted to use nondirective approaches with high-CL teachers, collaborative approaches with moderate-CL teachers, and directive approaches with low-CL teachers.

The research on CL indirectly supports developmental supervision. Low-CL teachers have difficulty defining problems, have fewer ways of responding

¹Carl D. Glickman, *Supervision of Instruction: A Developmental Approach*, 2nd ed. (Boston: Allyn & Bacon, 1990).

²Glickman has distinguished an *informational* directive approach in which the supervisor is the major source of information and provides the teacher with restricted choice from a *controlling* directive approach in which the supervisor determines the specific actions the teacher is to follow. For the purpose of this study, the term *directive approach* is synonymous with Glickman's informational directive approach. See Carl D. Glickman, *Supervision of Instruction: A Developmental Approach*, 2nd ed. (Boston: Allyn & Bacon, 1990).

³Carl D. Glickman and Stephen P. Gordon, "Clarifying Developmental Supervision," *Educational Leadership* 44 (May 1987): 64-68.

to problems, and want to be shown what to do.⁴ The optimal training environment for low-CL teachers is well structured, supportive, and fairly controlling.⁵ The environment is similar to the one created in a post-conference where the supervisor uses a directive approach.

Moderate-CL teachers can define a problem and think of one or two possible solutions, but they have trouble thinking through a comprehensive plan.⁶ They are striving for independence and want to solve their own problems, but they usually seek out assistance from others either before or after their initial efforts to solve a problem.⁷ A collaborative approach would allow teachers at this stage to share their perceptions and offer some possible alternatives for future action but still receive the benefit of the supervisor's perceptions and proposals. The negotiated action plan made during the collaborative conference would allow teachers to meet their needs of emerging independence. These teachers would have equal responsibility for formulating the plan and would receive the moderate guidance needed to ensure that the plan would lead to improved instruction.

High-CL teachers can view a problem from many perspectives, generate a variety of alternative plans, choose the most appropriate plan, and think through each step.⁸ They are autonomous, explorative, and creative.⁹ High-CL teachers exhibit high levels of positive instructional behaviors.¹⁰ The personal and professional characteristics of high-CL teachers are theoretically well suited for the teacher self-direction offered by the nondirective supervisory approach.

Although we can logically match teachers' CLs and supervisory approaches, we still need to test the actual effectiveness and success of the matches by researching the supervisor-teacher interaction that occurs when using the developmental model. Ginkel has found no significant relationships between teachers' CL and their preferences for a nondirective, collaborative,

⁴Carl D. Glickman, *Developmental Supervision. Alternative Practices for Helping Teachers Improve Instruction* (Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, 1981).

⁵Bruce Joyce and Marsha Weil, *Models of Thinking*, 2nd ed. (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1980).

⁶Carl D. Glickman, *Developmental Supervision. Alternative Practices for Helping Teachers Improve Instruction* (Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, 1981).

⁷D. E. Hunt, L. F. Butler, J. E. Noy, and M. E. Rosser, *Assessing Conceptual Level by the Paragraph Completion Method* (Toronto: Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, 1978).

⁸Carl D. Glickman, *Developmental Supervision. Alternative Practices for Helping Teachers Improve Instruction* (Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, 1981).

⁹Joyce E. Noy and David E. Hunt, "Student-directed Learning from Biographical Information Systems," *Canadian Journal of Behavioral Science* 4 (January 1972): 54-63.

¹⁰O. J. Harvey, B. Jack White, Misha S. Prather, Richard D. Alter, and James K. Hoffmeister, "Teachers' Belief Systems and Preschool Atmospheres," *Journal of Educational Psychology* 57 (No. 6, 1966): 373-381, David E. Hunt and Bruce R. Joyce, "Teacher Trainee Personality and Initial Teaching Style," *American Educational Research Journal* 7 (November 1970): 529-540.

or directive style.¹¹ This study focused on attempts to match supervisor approach to teacher CL during actual post-conferences and on participants' reactions to those post-conferences. The study's research objectives included gathering descriptive data on (1) supervisors' attempts to diagnose teachers' CL, (2) supervisors' effectiveness at using the three supervisory approaches of the developmental model (directive, collaborative, and nondirective), (3) teachers' evaluations of the approaches that were used effectively, and (4) supervisors' evaluations of the approaches that were used effectively and of developmental supervision in general.¹²

PARTICIPANTS

Sixteen supervisors enrolled in either graduate supervision courses or supervision workshops in a southeastern and midwestern state voluntarily participated in the study. From the teacher population for which they had supervisory responsibility, each supervisor diagnosed one low-CL teacher, one moderate-CL teacher, and one high-CL teacher. (One supervisor reported having no low-CL teacher.)

In all, 47 teachers agreed to take part in the study's clinical supervision cycles with their participating supervisors. The teachers represented a wide range of schools and teaching situations: urban, suburban, and rural school districts, elementary, middle, and high schools; all traditional content areas; and special education.

SUPERVISORS' TRAINING AND FIELD ACTIVITIES

Participating supervisors attended two 3-hour training sessions. Training activities included a review of the principles and stages of clinical supervision; an overview of the theory of developmental supervision; and skill training in nondirective, collaborative, and directive interpersonal behaviors. Skill training consisted of presentations, videotaped demonstrations, and role-playing with feedback.

The version of clinical supervision selected for the study consisted of seven phases: pre-conference, classroom observation, analysis and planning,

¹¹Katherine C. Ginkel, "An Overview of a Study Which Examined the Relationship between Elementary School Teachers' Preference for Supervisory Conference Approach and Conceptual Level of Development" (paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association, Montreal, April 1983).

¹²This article reviews selected aspects of the study. For a more extensive summary, see Stephen P. Gordon, "Developmental Supervision: Supervisor Flexibility and the Post-observation Conference" (paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association, San Francisco, March 1989). For the original and most comprehensive report on the study, see Stephen P. Gordon, "The Theory of Developmental Supervision: An Investigation of the Critical Aspects" (doctoral dissertation, University of Georgia, 1989).

post-conference, action plan, follow-up, and post-critique. Supervisors attempted to display a nondirective, collaborative, or directive supervisory approach during the post-conference, depending on the supervisor-perceived teacher CL.

DATA COLLECTION

Supervisors' Diagnoses of Teachers' CL

To gather data on supervisors' diagnoses of teachers' CL, I administered the Paragraph Completion Method, a semi-projective test designed to measure CL, to each teacher.¹³ This test allowed a comparison of supervisors' diagnoses to instrument-measured CL scores. Further, supervisors described in their logs the teacher behaviors on which their CL diagnoses were based.

Supervisors' Effectiveness with Each Approach

All post-conferences were recorded on audiotape. Thus, I could systematically analyze the supervisor behaviors used during each conference to determine the effectiveness of the intended approach. I used the Supervisor-Teacher Interaction Analysis System to analyze supervisor behaviors.

Teachers' Evaluations of the Three Supervisory Approaches

I used three sources of data to determine teachers' reactions to the three supervisory approaches. One source was teachers' written responses to 11 open-ended questions on the post-conference, completed immediately after the post-conference—for example, "How did the post-conference compare to what you expected?" "Are you likely to change your teaching behavior as a result of the post-conference in which you just participated?" "How did you feel during the post-conference in which you just participated?" Completed forms were returned to me in sealed envelopes, and I did not share data from these forms with the supervisors.

A second source was audiotapes of post-critiques involving supervisors and teachers. Post-critique guides, with specific questions for supervisors to ask, converted the post-critiques to standardized open-ended interviews.¹⁴ For example, "Did you discover anything new about your teaching during the post-conference?" "In what ways could I change my style of supervision during post-conferences to be of greater help to you?"

The third source of data was a modified version of a 10-item, 8-point, bipolar semantic differential rating scale developed by Copeland and Atkin-

¹³D. E. Hunt, L. F. Butler, J. E. Noy, and M. E. Rosser, *Assessing Conceptual Level by the Paragraph Completion Method* (Toronto: Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, 1978).

¹⁴Michael Q. Patton, *Qualitative Evaluation Methods*, 2nd ed. (Beverly Hills: Sage, 1987).

son.¹⁵ This instrument allowed teachers to rate their post-conference on the following indicators: time spent in conference, supervisor's expertise, supervisor's comprehension of instructional problem, clarity of communication, supervisor's ability to help, supervisor's genuineness, how the post-conference made them feel, likelihood of asking supervisor for help when in need, and overall satisfaction with post-conference. I did not share the results of these ratings with the supervisors.

Supervisors' Evaluation of the Three Supervisory Approaches and Developmental Supervision

I used three sources of data to determine supervisors' reactions to the three supervisory approaches and developmental supervision in general. One source was supervisor logs. Supervisors kept separate logs for the three teachers they supervised. One section of each log contained open-ended items asking supervisors to evaluate the approach in question—for example, "Discuss your feelings during the post-conference," and "Evaluate the clarity of communication during the post-conference."

Another source was supervisors' written evaluations of their teachers' progress toward the instructional improvement objectives set during the post-conferences. Supervisors listed objectives set by each teacher, described follow-up procedures, and recorded their perceptions of whether or not each objective was met.

The third source of data was transcripts of my audiotaped debriefings of the supervisors. I took a general interview-guide approach.¹⁶ The debriefings addressed 10 topics relating to supervisors' evaluation of the three developmental approaches and developmental supervision in general.

DATA ANALYSIS

Supervisors' Diagnoses of Teachers' CL

Each CL diagnosis was compared to the results of the Paragraph Completion Method (PCM). The analysis went beyond comparing CL diagnoses with PCM scores. After an exhaustive review of the research literature, I compared supervisor descriptions of teacher behaviors on which CL diagnoses were based to descriptions found in the literature of teachers functioning at various CLs. For each diagnosis, I determined whether the behavioral indicators on

¹⁵Willis D. Copeland and Donald R. Atkinson, "Student Teachers' Perceptions of Directive and Nondirective Supervisory Behavior," *Journal of Educational Research* 71 (January/February 1978): 123-217.

¹⁶Michael Q. Patton, *Qualitative Evaluation Methods*, 2nd ed. (Beverly Hills: Sage, 1987).

which the diagnosis was based were consistent with behaviors reported in the literature as characteristic of the diagnosed CL.

Supervisors' Effectiveness with Each Approach

Using the Supervisor-Teacher Interaction Analysis System (STIAS), I analyzed supervisor behaviors during post-conferences. The STIAS was created to classify and code supervisors' and teachers' verbal behaviors. It includes 25 specific verbal behaviors that cluster into more general categories, including directive, collaborative, and nondirective supervisory approaches. The STIAS calls for coding post-conference verbal behavior every three seconds. It yields a directive-to-collaborative-to-nondirective ratio. The STIAS has been measured at up to .98 interrater reliability, and up to .90 interrater reliability. This analysis system determined the predominant supervisory approach that supervisors used in each post-conference. It enabled a comparison of prescribed approach with actual approach to determine supervisors' effectiveness at using the intended approach.

Teachers' Evaluations of the Three Supervisory Approaches

I analyzed teachers' written responses to open-ended questions separately from post-critique transcripts. The procedures were similar for both types of data. The data reduction consisted of coding each complete teacher thought. No predetermined categories were used for coding; categories emerged from the data. A combination of analytic induction and constant comparison was used as new categories were developed, old categories were deleted, teacher thoughts were reassigned to more appropriate categories, and categories were split and merged as coding continued.

The data display consisted of displaying reduced data on a series of matrices that allowed me to identify and compare themes running through teacher perceptions of directive, collaborative, and nondirective supervision. Because supervisory approaches used during the six ineffective post-conferences were not consistent with the developmental model, I did not consider teacher perceptions of these conferences in comparing reactions to the three approaches.

I triangulated the data from teachers' open-ended written and oral reactions to the various supervisory approaches displayed on separate series of matrices. These two types of data were generally consistent with each other. In the few cases where the data conflicted, I gave the open-ended written data more weight because of the confidential manner in which that data was gathered. Using quantitative data derived from responses to the semantic differential rating scale, I verified and supplemented the results of the qualitative analysis and compared item and overall means derived from ratings of directive, collaborative, and nondirective conferences.

Supervisors' Evaluations of the Three Supervisory Approaches and Developmental Supervision

The analysis of supervisors' responses to open-ended questions asked in logs and during debriefing sessions essentially followed the same path as the analysis of teachers' open-ended perceptions. I identified and compared the themes running through supervisors' perceptions of directive, collaborative, and nondirective approaches.

I assigned outcome scores to the action plans designed during post-conferences. The outcome scores were based on supervisors' evaluation reports of teachers' progress toward instructional improvement objectives. A second phase of outcome analysis called for scores to be weighted for degree of difficulty. I compared the means of initial and weighted outcome scores for directive, collaborative, and nondirective conferences. Finally, I triangulated the data from the three sources (logs, evaluations of progress toward objectives, and debriefings).

The latter part of the debriefing sessions dealt with supervisors' evaluations of developmental supervision in general. I displayed the reduced data from relevant portions of the transcripts on a separate series of matrices and identified the themes running through supervisors' perceptions.

RESULTS

Supervisors' Diagnoses of Teachers' CL

Supervisors' diagnoses of teachers' CL tended to disagree with CL measurements from the PCM, only 40.4 percent of the supervisor diagnoses agreed with the instrument-measured CL scores. However, for 85 percent of the diagnoses, descriptions of teachers diagnosed at various CLs were clearly consistent with descriptions of teachers at corresponding CLs reported in the literature.

Supervisor reports on teacher behaviors provided revealing profiles of teachers diagnosed at different CLs. Most low-CL teachers were described as continuously requesting direction from supervisors or other teachers, experiencing serious problems with classroom management, and using a limited repertoire of instructional strategies. Other characteristics were ascribed to smaller numbers of teachers from this group: reluctance to discuss problems, fear of supervision, insecurity, inability to define problems, routine and ineffective responses to chronic problems, inflexibility, rule orientation, and inability to cope with stress.

Most moderate-CL teachers were described as desiring collaborative decision making, becoming more open to suggestions, moving toward independence, and placing a high value on cooperation in the classroom and school. Most of the teachers reportedly had established firm parameters relative to behavioral and academic expectations but had provided alterna-

tives and flexibility within those parameters. Smaller numbers of moderate-CL teachers were described as requesting moderate levels of assistance, being highly personable, placing a high value on amicable relationships with others, and feeling more confident and secure than low-CL teachers.

Most high-CL teachers were perceived as resourceful, creative, innovative, student-centered, and autonomous. Smaller numbers of these teachers were described as highly motivated; fostering an open, warm, and relaxed classroom environment; school leaders; extremely self-confident; highly cooperative; and experiencing few discipline problems.

Supervisors' Effectiveness with Each Approach

Only 1 of the 16 supervisors did not attempt a directive approach. I never received one audiotape of one supervisor attempting a directive approach. One supervisor tried to use the nondirective approach twice. With these anomalies accounted for, I used the STIAS to analyze 14 attempts at directive supervision, 16 efforts at collaborative supervision, and 17 attempts at nondirective supervision. Supervisors who used the directive approach were effective in 13 of 14 attempts. All 16 attempts at collaborative supervision were effective. Of 17 attempts at nondirective supervision, 12 were effective. In all, 41 of 47 planned approaches were effectively carried out.

Teacher's Evaluations of the Three Supervisory Approaches

Teachers involved in effective nondirective, collaborative, and directive post-conferences generally reported highly positive reactions to the supervisory approach. Regardless of the approach used, most teachers reported that they had experienced positive feelings during the conference, predicted that the conference would help them significantly improve their teaching, and said they would prefer that their supervisor use the same approach in future conferences.

When teachers talked about specific supervisor behaviors they valued, some contrasts in reactions to different approaches became apparent. Teachers supervised with a directive approach placed a high value on their supervisor's suggestions for instructional improvement. One teacher said, "I wasn't expecting to get such great ideas. The post-observation conference made me see things in my class I had not seen. It was very helpful." Another teacher had this reaction:

I'm changing my approach to instruction, [and] the type of materials used, and I'm making myself more aware of positive interactions with students. I've made a turnabout in my teaching because of this observation. I began using the supervisor's suggestions the day of the post-observation conference, right after the meeting.

On the other hand, teachers supervised with a nondirective approach tended to value being given decision-making responsibility. According to one teacher:

The supervisor asked questions that helped me list possible solutions. . . Having *me* list suggestions and objectives instead of someone telling me what to do helps. Setting my own goals gives me something to look forward to.

Another teacher said:

I thought it [the nondirective approach] was very helpful, and I appreciate very much being led to lean upon my own ideas. I feel like it's up to me in a classroom to put things to work. And if someone tells me a specific set of rules, or gives me a prescribed formula for going about doing something, that sort of makes me feel like spontaneity is just done away with. And when you work with pride, you really can't have things that way. So I very much have to be responsible, really responsible, for my own decisions and working out my own problems.

Teachers supervised with a collaborative approach appreciated the supervisor's suggestions, the opportunity to participate in professional dialogue on their instructional problems, and the mutual decision making that took place during the post-conference. These themes point to generally positive teacher evaluations of the three supervisory approaches. A holistic weighing of each teacher's positive, negative, and neutral comments revealed that teachers tended to value collaborative conferences somewhat more than the directive conferences, and the directive conferences somewhat more than the nondirective conferences.

Mean scores derived from the bipolar semantic differential rating scale verified the results of the qualitative analysis, the quantitative ratings reflected highly positive teacher perceptions of all three approaches. The overall means of the collaborative, directive, and nondirective approach were 6.800, 6.385, and 6.333, respectively, on an 8-point scale. The collaborative approach received the highest means on value of time spent in conference, supervisor's expertise, supervisor's comprehension of teacher's problem, productivity of conference, supervisor's ability to help, likelihood of asking supervisor for help when in need, and overall satisfaction with conferences. The directive approach was rated highest in clarity of communication and supervisor's genuineness. The nondirective approach was rated highest on how the post-conference made the teacher feel.

Supervisors' Evaluations of the Three Supervisory Approaches and Developmental Supervision

The supervisors generally conveyed highly positive perceptions of each type of effective conference. Most supervisors who carried out effective directive, collaborative, and nondirective conferences expressed confidence that they had, in fact, effectively carried out the intended approach. A perception of effectiveness was one indicator of positive value for the approach being evaluated.

Because supervisors perceived themselves as effective, they did not necessarily feel equally comfortable during each post-conference. Most super-

visors who effectively used the directive approach said they felt uncomfortable being directive. The primary reason reported for the discomfort was a supervisory orientation in conflict with directive supervision. One supervisor mirrored the feelings of the majority: "It is difficult for me to be directive. I operate from a collaborative [orientation], and I really want teacher feedback. This was an experienced and competent teacher. It was awkward trying to be directive." Many supervisors who felt uncomfortable with the directive approach reported that their discomfort lessened as the conference continued and the teacher responded positively to the approach. The supervisor quoted above also said: "Once I got into the conference, the teacher was interested in direction. So it was easy for me to give directions, because she wanted specific things."

Supervisors were split in their reports on level of comfort with the nondirective approach. Half of the effective nondirective supervisors said they were at ease throughout the nondirective conference. One supervisor said, "I thoroughly enjoyed it. I learned new approaches to increasing children's thinking levels. I felt she was teaching me." The remaining supervisors said they felt either uncomfortable or frustrated during the nondirective post-conference. One supervisor expressed his frustration as follows:

I had to be constantly aware of the nondirective approach. A few times I had to bite my tongue to keep from adding comments. I felt a little frustrated in that the teacher asked for my advice, but I turned it into a question for her.

Another supervisor who had been nondirective said, "I wanted more input. I wanted to step in and suggest summer school and some other alternatives."

Most supervisors reported feeling at ease throughout their collaborative post-conference. Reasons for feeling comfortable during collaboration varied, including the teacher seemed unthreatened, the teacher was receptive, the approach was easy to use; the supervisor was excited about the approach, and the supervisor felt confident, effective, and successful.

Despite the expressions of discomfort during directive and nondirective post-conferences, most supervisors considered the clarity of communication during each effective conference good or excellent. For all three types of conferences, effective supervisors said that, in retrospect, they considered the approach used to be appropriate for the teacher. A theme running through perceptions of each approach was that teachers responded positively to the supervisor's approach. One supervisor discussed a teacher's reaction to the directive approach:

[The teacher] was at a loss as to what to do and wanted specific directions for a plan of action. . . . She was *very* receptive to what was being said. It was as if she was hanging onto every word, because she was desperate for the advice that I was offering.

Supervisors discussing teacher reactions consistently remarked that teachers involved in collaborative post-conferences shared ideas and accepted input well. Supervisors talking about teachers involved in nondirective conferences repeatedly stated that the teacher had "carried the conference." One supervisor said, "The teacher took the presentation of [observation] data and interpreted it for herself, set an appropriate higher level objective, and devised three actions to achieve objectives and help her with formal evaluation." Another supervisor, initially suspicious of the nondirective approach, said:

I was sure the teacher was of high CL, but I really wondered if the process worked. As she began to talk and I reviewed the [observation] data, I was amazed at her responses and interpretation. . . . I asked her perceptions of the class, and she just started rattling off, and it worked! I was able to ask her to expand on several things that she started, and it just went real well. I felt she was comfortable. I felt she was *insightful*. When I presented my data to her, it was like, "O.K., I didn't pick up on that. That's interesting." She asked for a follow-up observation, which surprised me a little bit. She said, "There's no way I could gather this kind of data myself."

Another indicator of supervisors' value for particular approaches was their perceptions of teachers' cooperation during action plans emerging from post-conferences. A theme running through supervisors' perceptions of each effective approach was that the teacher seriously tried to improve instruction. One supervisor's perception of a collaborative teacher's response was typical of supervisors' perceptions of all three groups of teachers:

I could not have asked for better cooperation. She was open about possible solutions, and she gave her time for all the work. She had thought out what would result when she tried my suggestions. She really tried to implement the objectives.

I asked supervisors which of the three approaches they planned to use in the future. Most who had carried out the collaborative approach, a narrow majority of those who had been effectively nondirective, and just under half of those who had effectively used the directive approach said they would definitely use those approaches regularly in the future. Some supervisors who had been effectively directive and nondirective said they would probably not use those approaches in an initial conference with a teacher but would eventually use the two approaches with a few teachers. One supervisor said that she probably never would use the directive approach in the future.

In general, supervisors positively evaluated all three approaches. A holistic weighing of each supervisor's positive, negative, and neutral open-ended responses revealed that supervisors tended to value collaborative conferences somewhat more than nondirective conferences, and nondirective conferences somewhat more than directive conferences.

Means of outcome scores assigned to supervisor reports on teacher progress toward instructional improvement objectives indicated that teachers involved in each type of conference achieved a high level of progress. In contrast to the open-ended data, outcome means were highest for the non-

directive approach, and second highest for the collaborative approach. Outcome means were third highest for the directive approach. These rankings remained the same when the outcome scores were weighted for difficulty of improvement objectives.

In terms of supervisor evaluation of developmental supervision in general, nearly all supervisors expressed either generally or extremely positive overall perceptions of the model and considered the use of alternative supervisory approaches vital to the success of the post-conferences. Nearly all said they planned to use the basic strategies of developmental supervision.

CONCLUSIONS

Supervisors' Diagnoses of Teachers' CL

The level of accuracy assigned to supervisors' diagnoses of teachers' CL depends on the criterion for accuracy. If the criterion is a match of supervisor diagnosis with the teacher's PCM-measured CL, then supervisor accuracy was low (40.4 percent). On the other hand, if the criterion is a match of diagnosis with observed teacher behaviors that are consistent with descriptions of teachers at the diagnosed CL found in the literature, then supervisor accuracy was fairly high (85 percent). Perhaps many supervisor diagnoses were inconsistent with PCM scores because, in many cases, the PCM correctly measured the teacher's *general* CL, and the supervisor correctly diagnosed the teacher as acting at a different CL in the *specific* educational situation observed. This explanation is consistent with CL theory.¹⁷

Supervisors' Effectiveness with Each Approach

Of all attempted approaches, 87.2 percent were used, suggesting that supervisors generally were highly effective during the post-conference. The results showing that 92.8 percent of the attempted directive approaches and 100 percent of the attempted collaborative approaches were used indicate that supervisors were extremely effective at using those approaches. The results showing that 70.6 percent of attempted nondirective attempts were effective indicate more difficulty with using that approach. Some supervisors' ineffectiveness at nondirective supervision may have been due to insufficient training in the nondirective approach, not a lack of potential to use that style.

Teachers' Evaluations of the Three Supervisory Approaches

Although teachers conveyed generally positive perceptions of all three supervisory approaches, their responses to nondirective supervision were

¹⁷O. J. Harvey, David Hunt, and Harold Schroder, *Conceptual Systems and Personality Organization* (New York: Wiley & Sons, 1961).

somewhat less positive than their reactions to directive and collaborative supervision. Perhaps teachers are simply not used to being given decision-making responsibility during post-conferences.¹⁸ Teachers expressed generally positive reactions to all three supervisory approaches, a result that supports the theory of developmental supervision and contradicts those maintaining that there is one best approach to supervising all teachers.

Supervisors' Evaluations of the Three Supervisory Approaches and Developmental Supervision

The pattern of supervisors responding most positively to the collaborative approach may have been due partially to a bias in favor of collaboration expressed by nearly all supervisors during the training sessions. Glickman may have explained the tendency toward a collaborative orientation: "Collaboration appears to be the democratic way of doing things. Most of us have been schooled in equality and democracy, and collaboration appears to be democracy in action."¹⁹

Compared to the other two approaches, supervisors responded somewhat less positively to the directive approach. Initial bias against the directive approach, expressed by most supervisors during training, is one possible explanation for this result. Or perhaps teachers matched with a directive approach in many cases are more difficult to supervise than other teachers. In other words, a directive approach may be the best possible match for low-CL teachers, but still it may not lead supervisors to the same level of success as the collaborative and nondirective approaches do with moderate- and high-CL teachers. Supervisor evaluations of the directive approach were sufficiently positive to consider it a viable, promising supervisory approach.

Many supervisors said they would be cautious and selective in their future use of the directive and nondirective approaches, a finding consistent with the theory of developmental supervision. Glickman, for example, has suggested that the directive approach might be appropriate initially for 5 to 10 percent of teachers, and the nondirective approach for 10 to 20 percent of teachers, in a typical school.²⁰

In summary, supervisors' perceptions of all three approaches were consistent with the theory of developmental supervision. Their evaluations of developmental supervision in general were highly positive.

¹⁸ Arthur Blumberg and Philip Cusick, "Supervisor-Teacher Interaction: An Analysis of Verbal Behavior," *Education* 91 (September/October 1970): 126-134.

¹⁹ Carl D. Glickman, *Supervision of Instruction. A Developmental Approach*, 2nd ed. (Boston: Allyn & Bacon, 1990).

²⁰ Carl D. Glickman, *Developmental Supervision: Alternative Practices for Helping Teachers Improve Instruction* (Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, 1981).

RECOMMENDATIONS

Supervisor Training

The 6 hours of supervisor training in developmental supervision was less than optimal; I suggest at least 12 hours of training, implemented in four 3-hour sessions. I recommend that supervisors receive more extensive training in diagnosing teachers' CL. This training might include viewing scenarios of teachers on videotape or reading written descriptions of teacher behaviors before diagnosing teachers' CL. Feedback and discussion would follow practice at diagnosing teacher CL. I also recommend more extensive discussion of rationales for using the various approaches and more extensive role-playing of and coaching in the three approaches, with special attention given to the nondirective approach.

Research

The results of this initial study of developmental supervision are sufficiently promising to warrant more extensive studies of the model. One study might involve using directive, collaborative, and nondirective approaches with each participating teacher, then comparing the effects of each approach on low-, moderate-, and high-CL teachers; CL experts would determine each teacher's CL. Outcome measures would include supervisors' and teachers' perceptions of the approaches' success, as well as objective measures of instructional improvement.

A quasi-experimental study might involve four equivalent groups of teachers, each divided into three subgroups of equal size. One subgroup of each group would consist of high-CL teachers, one of moderate-CL teachers, and one of low-CL teachers; CL experts would determine each teacher's CL. Members of each group could be selected using stratified random-selection procedures. Supervisors would attempt a nondirective approach with all teachers (all CL subgroups) in one group, a collaborative approach with all teachers in the second group, and a directive approach with all teachers in the third group. Finally, teachers in the fourth group would receive no supervision. This design would allow a comparison of the effects of each approach, and of no supervision, on teachers of each CL group. Outcome measures would be supervisors' and teachers' perceptions of the approaches' success, as well as objective measures of instructional improvement.

Practice

I recommend that only supervisors who show a philosophical commitment to the developmental model and who volunteer to participate in a

developmental program be expected to use developmental supervision. Formal training in developmental supervision is essential for all supervisors, and more specialized and intensive training should be provided for supervisors who are themselves functioning at less than a moderately high CL. I recommend a program of ongoing support for supervisors using developmental supervision.

Despite the low level of agreement between supervisors' diagnoses of teacher CL and PCM-measured teacher CL, I recommend that supervisors base their diagnoses of teacher CL on their observations of and interactions with teachers. If a supervisor is unsure of a teacher's CL, I recommend a collaborative approach for the initial post-conference with the teacher. How the teacher responds to the collaborative approach in the initial conference can then become the basis for deciding which approach to use in the next post-conference.

Finally, I recommend that instructional leaders using developmental supervision must be allowed the flexibility to adapt the model—to mix and match alternative supervisory approaches—to meet the unique needs of individual teachers.

FINAL COMMENTS

Like most exploratory studies, the research reported here has raised as well as answered questions on the subject of investigation. Although much more research needs to be carried out, the theory of developmental supervision is potentially of enormous value to supervisors, teachers, and ultimately, students. A theory with such potential deserves the serious examination of theoreticians, researchers, and practitioners. I urge educational leaders who sense the potential of this theory to join in the continuing exploration of developmental supervision.²¹

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²¹ *Editor's Note:* This study received the 1989 Outstanding Dissertation Award in the supervision category from the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

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