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Supervision and Anarchy

Abstract

Supervision is an important task performed in
schools. This paper examines some of the problems
with supervision identified in the literature. It
explores the inconsistencies in supervisory practice.

Supervision and anarchy: the conjunction of these words
strikes one as paradoxical. The claim that an important
administrative task might be anarchistic seems far-fetched. The
rational and reality-oriented world of management appears remote
from claims that it is confused, disordered, and arbitrary. Yet
the literature has acknowledged the anarchy in teacher supervision
for many years, although little research has attempted to
understand it.

The purpose of this study is not to apply a philosophy of
anarchism to supervision but to explore the anarchy that already
inheres in supervision. This is done by examining the literature
and the dialogue of a collection of people who define themselves
as supervisors. The study illustrates how supervisors make sense
of their work.

Literature survey

There exists in the literature some suggestion of the
anarchy. Most of the writing is prescriptive rather than
descriptive. However, it has been recognized by some that
supervision is plagued by, "...the persisting lack of an adequate
theoretical base for either teaching or supervision...." (Storey and

Housego, 1980). It has been said of the present situation:

> The problem is ... an internal one: that in the absence
> of some cogent framework of educational values and
> of powerful theoretical systems, operational models,
> extensive bodies of case materials to consult, rigorous
> programs of professional training, and a broad
> literature of empirical research, supervision has neither
> a fundamental substantive content nor a consciously
> determined and universally recognized process - both
> its stuff and its method tend to be random, residual,
> frequently archaic; and eclectic in the worse sense.
> (Goldhammer, 1969, viii)

The inadequacy of the literature prompted Sullivan to
comment upon the "great gulf" between theory and practice. She
cautioned that, "Beginning supervisors are in for a surprise if they
believe the description of their work in the literature" (Sullivan,
1982, p.448). McNeil and Popham further state that supervisors
must resort to highly subjective procedures since there is "a lack
of objective criteria for evaluating performance" (McNeil and
Popham, 1973, p.228). Ryan (1967) adds:

> Value systems concerning teaching are relative rather
> than absolute. So far as specific characteristics of the
> teacher are concerned what is judged "good" teaching
> by one person, one community, or at one time, may
> not be similarly viewed as "good" by another person,
> another community, or at some time later. (p.51)

Some standard is necessary as a precondition for measurably
improving performance. Such standards are the means whereby
supervisors can move beyond relativity and subjectivity. Social
science research has not provided conclusive answers to
practitioners. The state of research on teaching was summarized
two decades ago by Biddle who said, "after forty years of
research we do not know who to define, prepare for, or measure
teacher competence" (Biddle and Ellena, eds., 1964, p.3). More
recently it has been acknowledged that, "research on teacher
performance and teaching effectiveness does not lead to a stable
list of measurable teaching behaviours effective in all teaching
contexts" (Darling-Hammond, Wise, and Pease, 1983, p.285-328).
It is generally agreed that, "the definitive theory for teaching has
not been formulated" (Ryan and Hickcox, 1980, p.77). Experts
have stated that, "there is little hope that research will bring
authoritativeness to supervision" (McNeil, 1982, p.32).

Ann Lewis offered this overview:

> The practices are unclear and the principles are
> "shoddy" charges Michael Scriven of the Evaluation
> Institute at the University of San Francisco.

> "Effective systems of evaluation do not exist in schools
> today", reports Rory Natrillo of the Stanford University
> Center for Research and Development in Teaching
> after looking at a ten year accumulation of literature
> on the subject.   Teacher organizations suggest their
> members to be wary of it.   And principals, "feel very
> vulnerable about it", says Stanley Schainker, an
> evaluation expert with the San Francisco Far West
> Laboratory for Educational Research and Development.
> But as we are too aware, "Yet everyone does it."
> (Lewis, 1972, p.7)

The organizational fact of the matter is that supervisors do
supervise with or without adequate theory.   In Canada, collective
agreements between teacher associations and school boards
increasingly specify certain procedures be observed, and, in the
United States, state legislatures have become involved by
mandating in law procedures for the review of teachers'
performance (Ryan and Hickcox, 1980).

To do their job supervisors must rely on their professional
judgment.   It is felt that with experience and training an
administrator can develop the judgment required to fairly assess
the quality of instruction and even assist teachers with their
work.   Problems with this reliance on professional judgment have
been recorded.   Worth (1961) reported that sixty-three school
superintendents and sixty-five school principals, after viewing a
fifteen minute videotape of a grade one teacher at work, ranged
in their ratings of her teaching performance from "Exceptional:
demonstrates a high level professional skill" to "Doubtful: has not
demonstrated suitability for teaching."   Worth's study reinforces
the fact that professional supervisors do not necessarily agree,
even about the same teacher.

Educators have evidence to further indicate that different
practitioners observing the same teacher will make very different
evaluations of that teacher.   The following experience is typical:

> One of the writers recalls - somewhat painfully -
> participating in a carefully controlled reliability study
> of supervisory ratings.   Five experienced, skilled
> supervisors did two separate evaluations of each of
> four student teachers.   Ratings were made of eleven
> aspects of their teaching.   The rating scale seemed
> both sophisticated and simple to complete.   All of the
> experimental classes were tape recorded and rated
> independently by an experimenter... The results?   The
> supervisors' disagreement about the teaching they were
> evaluating ranged from 50 to 100 percent. (Mosher and
> Purpel, 1972, p.50)

Obviously, the supervision of instruction under such conditions is

a difficult undertaking. The meaning of "good teaching" has more
to do with the perspective a supervisor brings to the situation
than with the application of eternal truths.

It is by exploring supervisory practice that researchers can
find out how supervision works in the absence of adequate theory.
This fact has been emphasized by writers who suggest that
supervisory effectiveness depends on situational factors (Stogdill,
1974, p.74; Darling-Hammond, Wise, and Pease, 1983, p.320).

The possibility of multiple conceptualizations of role has
been forwarded in theory. Goldhammer, Anderson, and Drajewski
(1980) state:

> In such a loosely organized situation, it is possible that
> some individuals in each group perceive the supervisor's
> role as emphasizing quality control, or the production
> of new courses of study and curricula. Others may
> conceive of the role as being largely concerned with
> evaluating curriculum and/or instruction. Still others
> see it as working with professional personnel to seek
> new answers, or releasing the potential energies of
> teachers who wish to find answers for themselves.
> Many other possibilities come to mind. (p.13)

Multiple conceptualizations in actual practice have been
recorded. Two cases recently cited are as follows:

> From my view of the documentation of a typical case
> of teacher dismissal, for example, I noted that the
> teacher had received a negative evaluation from the
> principal because s/he was not using a variety of
> materials; the ensuing evaluation by a superintendent
> was negative because the students, in using a variety
> of materials, were not studying the same topic. In
> another case I reviewed, the teacher was told by the
> principal to use more seatwork and to lecture less; the
> superintendent, on a subsequent visit, criticized the
> teacher for using too much seatwork and not teaching
> to the whole class. I would argue that neither the
> principals nor the superintendents concerned had solid
> evidence to suggest that their particular directives
> would improve the performance of the teacher in
> helping students learn the intended content. (Ryan,
> 1983, p.20)

Investigation of the meaning of supervision for trained
practitioners has documented confusion. From interviews, Haughey
(1980) collected these definitions:

> I have the responsibility that the curriculum is being
> taught and taught well, and that children have a good

environment for learning. I never think of going in to supervise and would hope teachers feel the same. I am going in to help -- it is because I see what is going on. I do need to know and I should know.

It means dispatching of duty... making sure that what is expected to be taught is taught and taught well.

Supervision? - the improvement of instruction. It can be separate from evaluation and it is an unfortunate role for principals that they are required to do both. It is easiest at the beginning of the year but as the year goes on it becomes harder to help. It is not difficult to combine the roles when you are positive about what is happening. Basically I may withdraw from the supervisory process when it is likely that it is going to be negative -- it is a contradictory role. (p.10)

The consequences of the anarchy associated with supervision have been felt in the everyday lives of educators. Teachers have reported that the time spent with supervisors was "utterly wasteful" (Blumberg & Amidon, 1965). Supervisors have been met with "open and hidden opposition" (Canadian Education Association, 1979, p.52). Supervision has been called, "a private cold war", by Blumberg, who suggests that, "Teachers tend to say they find their supervision of little value" while "Supervisors tend to say they find their work has a lot of value" (Blumberg, 1980, p.19).

Proponents of supervision have been unable to find much evidence to show that any kind of supervision makes a difference (Dussault, 1970, p.57; Mosher and Purpel, 1972, p.50). In cases of teacher dismissal even the courts have shown reluctance to accept the credibility of supervisory practice (Martin, 1983). The literature's exhortations and detailed process statements have not met the challenge. Policy documents further reflect this failure. There is even evidence to suggest that the net effect of a supervision system on teachers may be an overall decline in their performance (Brown, 1962, p.178-184).

There is an anarchy associated with supervision. Evidence to support this statement is readily available in the literature. The goal of this study was to further understand the variance in supervisory behaviour, to make sense of the anarchy. The achievement has been to produce an explanation, a way of understanding the meaning of supervision through understanding individual supervisors.

The study

This research investigated the subjective meanings that supervisors place on the experience of supervision. The problem was to "see" supervision through the eyes of those who supervise. In question form: How do supervisors understand their actions as supervisors? This approach to the study of formal organization implies that, "the attention of the researcher be focused not on specific organizational behaviour but on the way organizational members interpret their own organizational world..." (Jehenson, 1973, p.220). What do supervisors think they are doing?

An in-depth, open-ended interview format emerged from some initial pilot work as the most appropriate research method to use. The strength of this kind of interview lies in its ability to elicit personal opinions, knowledge, and understandings, and to be open to divergent views. It is questionable at best to assume that the retrospective impressions of administrators about their supervisory practices constitute adequate support for constructing a picture of what really occurred, but it is not the specifics of behaviour actually exhibited which were of primary interest in this investigation. The meanings that inform individual behaviour were under investigation. In the words of Bogdan and Taylor (1975), "the important reality is what people imagine it to be" (p.2).

The study did not take the simplistic position that perception is reality. It does, however, consider anything that has effect as real. Perceptions of the social world are real in the sense that they have an effect in the social world through individuals' actions. It is in this sense that people are killed by "empty" guns.

Five supervisors were interviewed on site and the interviews were taped and later transcribed. A follow-up interview was scheduled with each one after the previous interview had been transcribed. The researcher reflected back on the transcript to note points that needed clarification and to note areas that had not been fully explored. Interviews took place so that the researcher and the participants were satisfied that the supervisor's understanding of supervision had been explained. An average of three interviews of approximately one hour exhausted the topic.

Five educators with supervisory responsibilities - a superintendent, a high school principal, an elementary principal and vice-principal, and a department head - are reported on at this time. The variance in the behaviour of these supervisors was analysed and accounted for by way of an interpretive tool labeled "supervisory orientation". It was found that each behaved in a unique but consistent manner. Each was guided by his or her own supervisory orientation. Since no two supervisors had the same orientation it is difficult to speculate on the number of orientations possible. This aspect of the study will be reported

on in detail in the following section of this discussion.

Supervisory orientation

Supervisory practises were characterized by unique and preeminent orientations identified by the researcher. These emerged as the researcher reflected upon the common themes and differences in supervisors' accounts. A description of each orientation "grounded" in the supervisors' own words can be reported.

Supervisor as politician.

Participant one's orientation to supervision was as "politician". He appeared to define his supervisory situation mostly in terms of manoeuvering for power in a group. He suggested that he himself was being supervised through a "whole informal network of supervision that dictates how well you're doing." "Everything's laid on in response to perceptions." He further stated that there was, "a huge network out there that's constantly talking to one another, constantly evaluating, constantly shifting, constantly generalizing." And, "That is very much on my mind most of the time." He followed group pressure over personal conviction.

This superintendent identified several "audiences" or groups with whom he had to work. These included principals, fellow workers in the immediate office, region-wide administrators, parents, and trustees. In any given issue, "one of those audiences can predominate." Survival entailed, "getting feedback from everybody." Negotiation was essential since very often as in the case of a trustee, "She's going to need me and I'm going to need her." In this view, it seems that "There are no blacks and whites. It's all greys and shades." Successful negotiation with the appropriate audience determined the perception of his effectiveness. In his subjective organizational environment he believed, "I guess I'm effective as long as I'm not fired." Developing authority was discussed as a critical factor. Authority could be enhanced with information. His associations with other superintendents gave him knowledge that others did not possess, and thus respect. Past experiences, self-reliance, and reliability also added to that respect, and so to his authority. Symbolic authority was exercised by his presence at school events where he represented an order who approved and was interested in what is taking place in schools. Inclusion of the discussion on getting and maintaining authority and influence was an indicator of the political orientation.

Knowledge about events lower down the organizational hierarchy was described as necessary as it could be used to get respect and authority from peers and superiors. Toward this end the superintendent said, "If I can develop a network of people who

trust me or whatever, to communicate with me so I know what's going on out there, then I am perceived not as a fountain of knowledge, but as if they want to know, he'll know kind of person." Once again the theme of manoeuvering for power in a group emerged.

The superintendent's duties reportedly revolved around principals more than teachers. His comments on both, however, further revealed his "politician" orientation to management. Guidelines for principals were negotiated with a principal's group in a retreat setting. The parties support one another in day-to-day activities although the superintendent maintained that when final decisions were are made, "it's my perceptions that count, not theirs." The areas suggested by the superintendent as part of principals' evaluations were derived from research. They were consensual norms not the superintendent's personal criteria.

Principals, it would seem, were also evaluated on their ability to manage everyday conflict with a minimum of public controversy and negative repercussions for the superintendent's image. A good principal could capably manage perceptions. Political skills were similarly valued in teachers. Good teachers could effectively control and manage students and yet maintain good rapport.

Teachers who did not follow orders or who were ineffective at the exercise of power in class would reportedly be dismissed. The superintendent described how most ineffective teachers would be negotiated out. The teacher, administrators, and teacher federation representatives would be involved. The "politician" orientation was apparent again in the superintendent's view of his role in support of dismissal. In one case he seemed to see his role as supporting a principal and gave the researcher the impression that a teacher should be fired not entirely for undesirable classroom performance but for having been a "troublemaker" in a school.

A political orientation to teacher evaluation was apparent in other statements. He acknowledged that a supervisor's perception of a teacher was influenced by others' comments. He stated, "what parents are saying, what the kids are saying to their parents about that teacher -- it's a form of supervision" especially when it is, "reported to a superior". Similarly, "If I get fifteen phone calls that say the same thing about the principal, I've got to think the guy has a problem relating with his community or problems with his supervision practises or there is a problem somewhere."

The exercise of authority was described in terms of will and power. He felt that all things being equal, persistence (i.e., unrelenting will) would prevail. A supervisor had to have the "guts" to make a decision and stand by it. The everyday

technique of management involved staying in tune with the political environment and exercising legal bureaucratic power over the principals he supervised.

The superintendent would appear to have perceived himself as working in an essentially political environment where people's perceptions determined effectiveness and he had to perform to meet the expectations of various audiences. He exercised his influence on events through negotiations, will, and power. In light of this, the everyday paperwork was relatively insignificant, little more than, "the paper chase, trying to make it rational as possible, and analysing it."

Supervisor as judge

Participant two's orientation to supervision can be described as "judge". This high school principal's primary concern was with making a good assessment of a teacher. Even though he felt the supervision policy tried to be "more helpful" he meant by this only that judgments could be better communicated.

The supervisor seemed to emphasize judging teachers' performances instead of cooperatively working with teachers on classroom improvement. Consequently, he felt that, "seeing someone every third year from the school is adequate." His purpose for a visit would be, "as simple as I'm coming in to see what kind of teacher you are." He might want to evaluate "things that had been suggested to a teacher" or simply anything else he felt like commenting on. Judgments were made outside classrooms too. The principal stated, "I'm supervising a teacher if a teacher comes in and asks me what I think of a program..."

His practice, as he described it, was to act in a judgmental role. If he thought a teacher was adequate he did not return to the class. Once judgments were made and communicated to a teacher in a report he did not work with the teacher to make the changes. In contravention of formal policy the supervisor did not ask teachers to sign reports to acknowledge having seen them. This practice is in keeping with the logic that the goal is to pass judgment, not to look for agreement or an acknowledgement of the judgments made.

If teachers were judged to meet minimum expectations the principal claimed not to involve himself with them. In cases where complaints from parents or students were received he would encourage the parties to talk directly to one another and not through him. "Hard core problems" that met his minimum standards he would similarly, "tend to live with." This applied even where he did not personally like a teacher.

In practice he, "sat there in class, and you do this off the top of your head, depending on the nature of what class it is and

how things strike you, part way through, I just started numbering different activities." If he judged the class in question to be acceptable he simply offered compliments and suggested a few ideas on a report.

If the supervisor judged something to be inappropriate about a teacher, he acted. He once withheld a teacher's salary increment because the teacher dressed too flamboyantly. He compared this problem to a teacher who had bad breath saying, "Kids won't go for extra help to a teacher who's got bad breath because they can't stand being breathed upon." To the flamboyant dresser he said, "I think you're competent but you haven't demonstrated it in what the kids are doing, and here's the reason. I think clothes are the reason." Criteria for effective teachers were not articulated in any detail.

Consistent with his orientation, this supervisor reported he made judgments and ordered compliance. Difficult supervision was described in terms of: "Tough is where the teacher is not very good and won't admit it." Teachers thought to be poor were moved or fired. The principal seemed to use few, if any, techniques for compliance other than direct orders.

Supervisor as bureaucrat

Participant three's primary orientation to supervision can be described as a bureaucrat. His approach to supervision was guided by a basic concern for the fulfilling of obligations within the context of his understanding of the organizational environment. The operative definition of the supervisory situation, his understanding of effective teaching, and his techniques for influencing others all reflect this orientation to responsibilities.

The elementary principal defined the supervisory situation in terms of an organizational hierarchy. "And it's the same old story whether it is supervision, whether it is home and school, whether it is an activity outside of the school, so goes the principal, so goes the school, so goes the superintendent for his schools." The principal was most concerned with the teachers under his charge and his immediate superior. At one point in casual conversation during the study the principal suggested he would not want to be a superintendent because then he would have several immediate bosses rather than one clearly defined superior. He was comfortable in a well defined bureaucratic hierarchy.

Initiative in his case meant implementing an idea even before his superior requested it. He said of his latest new school thrust, "I thought, well, this is coming down the pipe anyway so why not get in with all two feet." He took pride in teachers who had implemented an idea that was strongly promoted by the superintendent. He viewed the school organization as a process

where an idea, "...trickles down the line to the principal and teacher." Formal policy was less significant than formal policy his immediate superior supported.

Effective teaching meant doing something consistent with the latest policy. Moreover, it included not being complained about by others. Teachers who had once been satisfactory became unsatisfactory if they failed to adopt the latest policy fad, which was equated with improving the lot of kids. With this background it is possible to make sense of the statement, "If we can't improve the lot of kids in the classroom it doesn't matter how good a teacher you are." Complaints from others (i.e., parents, teachers) could also be interpreted as signs of ineffectiveness. In the principal's example, "and no way do I want to be getting phone calls from parents.... You just can't take it. It will drive you around the bend."

Staff was managed partly in a bureaucratic style. The principal accepted his statement of goals from the superintendent. He implemented these goals closely following the policy procedures and adding any new ideas sanctioned by his superior. He also employed peer pressure and reinforcement. For example, in order to promote a change, an individual teacher who would willingly choose to implement one of the approved ideas was sought out. Once successfully implemented, he would create a public situation where the same teacher then would be held up as an example to others. The principal commented, "I find they pack things up right, left, and centre" and "That goes over bigger than me telling them that this is a good idea, the vice-principal, the superintendent, forget it." All this was done in as friendly a manner as possible.

His anecdotes about supervision typically ended with an exhortatory testimonial like, "Experienced teachers admit every year that they have done a better job because of the supervision practice." Teachers would be checked on and encouraged to take on a goal, like that of the exemplar teacher, in their formal supervision cycle. Formal procedures were eventually used to ensure that teachers changed.

Supervisor as nurturer

Participant four's orientation to supervision can be interpretively described as "nurturer". His inclination was to want to help people grow in ways they saw fit although he recognized that both he and the teacher worked under outside constraints. He was reluctant to impose his will. The source of his reluctance he attributed to his "philosophical background". His "Rogerian approach" suggested that, "I should be promoting growth, and I should involve people from within themselves and help them grow that way - and from my own makeup it's just not natural for me to have to say look, that is it." He refused to discuss supervision

situations where conflict had arisen because he was not "comfortable" discussing them.

As to the goals of supervision, the participant reported, "I don't know really what they were before and I'm not sure that we can agree what they are now." His preferred way of establishing goals emerged in his comment, "In the business of supervision... the teacher has definite goals which I look at and work on and spend a lot of time on with the teacher...." He wanted supervision goals to come from teachers. He concluded that, "supervision is more open, more free" than a formal teacher evaluation.

The supervisor distinguished between supervision and evaluation. "I'd see supervision as just growth without the evaluative component." At the same time he recognized that certain "we" expectations had to be met. He was reluctant to be in the role of enforcer since supervision was best if it was not overly "directive, arbitrary, and artificial" in the way that he himself had experienced it. Ideally, he wanted to, "Try to work with them rather than imposing something, if possible."

The vice-principal's orientation to supervision may have been in transition. He was uncomfortable in talking about supervision. The political nature of supervision was recognized. The question he asked himself was:

> Are there people too, from a different set of experiences, who don't know about Carl Rogers for example, active listening for example, but who know the expectations and know they can get their way... authoritatively? If so I want to find out about that because if it would be better to take a different stance from time to time than the one I'm accustomed to, I should know about it.

This supervisor wanted to know if he could "handle it."

Supervisor as salesman

Participant five's orientation to supervision was characterized in his own words as "salesman". He described his role as that of presenting the policy to teachers in such a way that they "bought" it. His work was "marketing" to teachers. The supervisor complained about the process of supervision policy implementation. What he had was a policy that he wanted to support but with limited opportunity to use his own "marketing" strategy to sell it. Some aspects of implementation used by the school system were criticized on the grounds that they were "bad marketing". He defined the supervisor's role saying, "When they are the messengers of administrative policy they at least are administrators' lackies."

The department head did not offer a description of good teachers except to say that he would not receive negative feedback from peers, students, or parents about them. He was concerned with influencing teachers as opposed to evaluating them. Evaluation was the responsibility of the more senior administrators.

The present supervision policy asked teachers to identify areas of weakness with which they would like assistance. The supervisor noted that in training workshops this was said to work. In practise it was extremely difficult to get teachers to give up their defensiveness and work in trust and cooperation. High school teachers in particular liked to use subject knowledge superiority to reduce the credibility of supervisors. The supervision policy in general had created a sense of no involvement, of imposition, and even of fear. Teachers thought of it as just another "bandwagon". His problem was to overcome client resistance and "get results".

The supervisor stated that he tried to "sell" teachers on looking at the aspects of their teaching that were identified in broad policy. He felt that the process helped him to reason a common definition of teaching. From the senior administration's point of view, he felt, "the most important thing is that we all do the same thing." He was concerned with imparting common understandings whereas formal policy emphasized a common supervision process.

Techniques were employed to "sell" the policy to teachers. In a casual setting he would, "Essentially enter into the conversation through analysis of action." Teachers would typically be asked what they thought was happening and he would offer, "to come in and take a look and see what's happening with that other set of eyes." He would try to negotiate with the teacher to identify a problem with which he could be seen to help. An invitation of some kind was sought. He would try to help so, "they decide, well he isn't out to get me, then away we go." Next he would make suggestions and thus his influence would be exercised.

The formal imposition of the supervision policy was inconsistent with the participant's natural leadership style. Consequently, he resisted the explicit formalizing of influence which, by his personality and wit, he could accomplish informally. He felt restricted by the formal process. It interfered with his casual-disarming style. He complained that formal supervision was lengthy, time consuming and only one facet of his job. "For all the nitty gritties that make the plant operate, avoid the (prescribed) approach...." He described his practise as working in the "spirit" of policy while not, technically, following it.

Conclusion

Theory and research have failed to provide an adequate body of knowledge to guide supervisors. Policy documents reflect this failure. Nevertheless, supervisors do supervise. It is important, then, that we understand this everyday phenomenon. What do they think they are doing?

There is an anarchy to supervision. Evidence to support this statement is readily available in the literature. The achievement of this study has been to produce an explanation, a way of understanding the meanings of supervision through understanding individual supervisors. It has made sense of the anarchy at the level of individual supervisors.

The study found that supervisory behaviour was guided by a specific orientation to the task. Consider how the orientations that were described might affect supervision with a teacher. The first supervisor would supervise a teacher by keying to whatever political forces were at work and had most influence. A good teacher would generally be in control and exercising influence in a reasonable way. However, teacher effectiveness would be mainly judged using the supervisor's criteria and that judgment would be determined by the political realities surrounding the situation.

Participant two's orientation was that of judge. If no complaints had been received and teachers had a reasonable appearance they would be judged competent. Some comments for changing behaviour might be made but would not normally be followed up. If something was unacceptable in the supervisor's view there would be action taken to eliminate the teacher from the situation with no inclination toward trying to help the teacher change.

The third supervisor would try to get a teacher to implement an idea sanctioned by his immediate superior. His bureaucratic orientation resulted in his following very closely whatever procedures were outlined in policy. Success would be measured in terms of how a teacher implemented a new idea without weight being assigned to the possible impact on student performance. Most importantly this supervisor's superior should be informed and pleased.

A nurturing orientation guided supervisor four. He would try to make teachers identify their own developmental ideas. The supervisor's role was to support and encourage. If teachers' plans proved inconsistent with board policy the supervisor would have to act even in opposition to his own orientation.

The supervisor was uncomfortable with imposing ideas and making judgments. The inconsistencies of these beliefs and his

obligations made him helpful to some teachers but unhappy and perhaps ineffective at imposing administratively sanctioned values.

The last supervisor's "salesman" orientation meant that his focus was on process. A natural style of influencing others would, whenever possible, be employed instead of the formal process. He understood his role as the selling of sanctioned ideas to teachers. Success was in convincing others through his personal marketing strategy.

Therefore, the single line teacher working in a school district in which all the supervisory personnel had been trained in a similar manner could be transferred, dismissed, safeguarded due to political reasons, ignored if properly dressed, encouraged to implement a superior's idea, supported and encouraged in their own priorities, or subjected to a "hard sell". These orientations to the supervisory function guided everyday practice and could better predict the experience of supervision than a reading of formal policy.

The variance in supervisory behaviour has been accounted for by way of the heuristic tool labelled supervisory orientation. It was found that each supervisor had a unique and recognizable core orientation that guided supervisory practise. Supervisors made their own sense of their role responsibility. The literature about supervision does not recognize the full effect of orientations such as those identified and described in this work. Administrative science needs more tools like this if it is to move beyond broad generalization to understand the variance, the way in which each person is and makes the organizations we experience in everyday life.

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