PEER SUPERVISION:

AN ANALYSIS

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ABSTRACT

Peer supervision and peer evaluation are interchangeable terms in the literature on teacher supervision and evaluation. This creative project addresses the issues of peer supervision and peer evaluation through extensive reviews in both areas. Chapter one provides an introduction to the project. Chapter two is a literature review on peer supervision including: (a) definitions of peer supervision, (b) reasons for peer supervision, (c) barriers to peer supervision, (d) limitations of peer supervision, (e) benefits of the peer process, and (f) major research in the area.

Chapter three reviews the literature on peer evaluation. The chapter contains the (a) purpose of evaluation, (b) reasons for peer evaluation, (c) current state of evaluations, (d) problems of peer evaluation, (e) conditions necessary for peer evaluations, (f) benefits of peer evaluation, (g) major studies, and (h) major models of peer evaluation. Chapter four provides an analysis of a peer supervision dyad. The analysis provided is based upon the Horizontal Evaluation Model and current related literature. The final chapter investigates the perceptions of teachers involved in peer supervision at the Conrich Elementary School, Calgary, Alberta. A questionnaire was administered to determine how the teachers perceived peer supervision in terms of barriers, limitations and major benefits of the peer process. The findings are analyzed and discussed using insights garnered from the literature reviews. A major reference list is included, as well, the questionnaire is appended.

I would like one day to see schools in which teachers can function as professional colleagues, where a part of their professional life was to visit the classroom of their colleagues, and to observe and share with them in a supportive, informed, and useful way what they have seen.

Elliot Eisner

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Webster's Third New International Dictionary gives the following definition of supervision:

> The act, process, or occupation of supervising: direction, inspection, and critical evaluation: oversight.

The inspiration for this project came as a result of participating in the Ed. 5530 graduate class taught by Dr. David Townsend, and from working as project coordinator in a peer supervision project at the Blood Indian Reserve during the 1988-1989 school year.

It became evident to me that supervision, and in particular instructional supervision falls within the bounds of Webster's definition. Supervision within most schools involves direction, inspection and critical evaluation. It soon became apparent that one of my interests was to examine and research the literature in the area of peer supervision (Chapter Two). This led to an analysis and a review of the literature in the related field of peer evaluation (Chapter Three).

The action research component of the project involves an analysis of a case study in peer supervision (Chapter Four) and a mini- research project at Conrich Elementary School on peer supervision in the framework of peer evaluation (Chapter Five).

CHAPTER TWO

PEER SUPERVISION: A REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Introduction

Viewed in the context of strategies that actually seek to understand and improve teaching and the quality of classroom life, the rationale, principles and practices of peer supervision are something of an enigma. Cogan (1973) and Goldhammer (1969) believed that collegiality and collaboration were the major cornerstones of a strategy likely to succeed in improving teaching. Their argument, and the main theme of the literature on peer supervision, is that if you want teachers to *improve* and *change*, then it is necessary to work *with them* rather than *on them*.

If supervision, with the goal of improving instruction could be carried out so that teachers perceive it as a challenge without threat it is most likely that the focus of such supervision would be *on the act of teaching* and not *on the teacher*. Peer supervision, with its emphasis on formative rather than summative evaluation, is arguably one approach that focuses attention in such a way.

Peer supervision has occurred in many different forms in the teaching profession. Although their actions may not have been described as peer supervision, teachers have historically always exerted influence on the behavior of their peers (Alfonso, 1977). Traditionally, older, more experienced teachers have acted as "mentors" to young, inexperienced teachers, giving them guidance in teaching and helping them understand what to expect from administrators and supervisors. Such influence may often be coercive and

very powerful, and may even work against the good of the organization. While this type of influence is informal and idiosyncratic the norms that develop in response to it may either frustrate or support existing supervisory efforts.

The work of Abrahamson (1972), Cogan (1973), Goldhammer (1969), and Manolakes (1975) has yielded information about the kind of supervision that is highly personal, clinically evaluative, and classroom based. From such descriptions peer supervision derives much of its character and appeal.

Why is peer supervision needed? Many writers and professional educators within and outside the supervision field have dealt with this question. Howsam (1976) contends that efforts to evaluate the character of the teaching profession and improve opportunities for teachers have been the main concerns for ever expanding teaching organizations. Berneman (1977) emphasizes a similar perspective by indicating that the desire and concern for professionalism within various teacher organizations is tantamount.

From a management perspective, Weiner (1974) notes that affording individuals, in *any setting*, an opportunity to participate in a choice of aims, procedures, and assessment processes leads to greater probabilities of achievement and motivation to learn and to change and a sense of self-responsibility for consummating needed change.

Lortie (1975) reports that teachers, regardless of what help or advice they receive, still turn to other teachers as their first source of professional help. Foster (1969) in writing about the main goals of the *Association of Supervision and Curriculum Development* notes that the association has struggled long and hard to make a supervisor a colleague of teachers rather than someone

who is recognized and functions only as an authority figure. Elliott (1976) suggests that through collaborative alliances, teachers have the capacity to develop a practical reflective approach that can enrich their senses of what is feasible and possible as well as transform those understandings into realities.

Researchers and writers in the area of staff development and teacher inservice make various claims regarding the need for peer collaborative efforts and peer observations. Sparks (1983), in a major study on inservice for teachers, discovered that teachers rarely have an opportunity to meet with each other to share ideas, develop trust and esteem, heighten morale and help reduce threat. He suggests that teachers must work together if these negative factors are to be reduced or obliterated.

Lortie (1975) and Rothberg (1985), indicate that the problem that exists in high schools is one of isolation. Rothberg in a major study on school effectiveness, claims that if we want *school improvement* and want schools to be effective then teacher isolation must be reduced.

Williams (1978), in an earlier review of staff development studies, similarly addresses the benefits of reduced isolation for teachers. He contends that the literature suggests that staff development efforts are more effective if teachers are collaboratively involved in a problem solving mode.

One way to think about what follows in this chapter is to think about the findings in terms of two images of cooperation among the teachers. In one image teachers arrive at school, go to their classrooms, close the door, and do their own work. They then leave the school without having had any dealings or contact with other teachers. They want it that way. They don't want advice,

support, assistance or leadership from other teachers. Teaching to them is a personal activity, not one done in cooperation or collaboration with other professionals.

In a second image teachers are often found together talking about and working on teaching. They seek each other's advice and assistance. They share tasks, observe and supervise each other, admire and encourage the attainment of goals. They hold a conception of teaching as a collective undertaking, in which they engage together.

This chapter deals with the process of peer supervision in light of the second image. In it, I have attempted to describe the sheer abundance of literature on the subject. The chapter is divided into six major sections: (a) definitions of peer supervision, (b) reasons for peer supervision, (c) barriers to effective peer supervision, (d) limitations of peer supervision, and (e) major research in the area of peer supervision.

Definitions of Peer Supervision

The first mention of activities involving peer observation appears in an article by Amidon, Kies and Palisi (1966). They define *group supervision* as being similar to group counseling; that is a group process in which communication is open, cohesiveness is encouraged, group goals are clarified, and group norms are clarified for understanding. The act of teaching is observed so that improvement of instruction can take place. Feedback is to be offered in the form of observation rather than interpretation.

Alfonso (1977) claims that peer supervision is an elusive concept and that

the definition is evolving and constantly changing. He defines peer supervision "as the process of peer observation, analysis, feedback and evaluation of classroom performance by one's peer for the purpose of improving instruction" (p. 600).

The *Teacher Growth Process* is a form of peer supervision that allows teachers to "set personal goals which they feel will help improve weaknesses or strengthen those qualities they consider strong points" (Sullivan, 1979, p. 14).

Thompson (1979) defines peer supervision as a helping relationship among teacher colleagues. For Thompson, peer supervision is a process and an adjunct to a broader program for instructional improvement. He states that peer supervision is the same as clinical supervision, with one's peer filling in for the role of the supervisor.

Another team approach, consisting of three teachers, one with a particular need and two who offer assistance has been called *peer observation* (Ellis, Smith & Abbott, 1979). To them, peer observation "is a process that is teacher oriented, teacher involving and simple to execute" (p. 424).

The College of Education at Texas Tech uses a particular form of peer supervision known as *team observation* (Skoog, 1980). This involves a peer observation cycle which emphasizes collection and analysis of data drawn from classroom observations. The observee identifies problems and concerns to guide colleagues in observing, describing, and critiquing teaching. A collegial team concept is followed.

Warren and Goldsberry (1982) advocate the use of the term *colleague*

consultation to describe a form of peer-delivered supervision incorporating the principles of team building with direct observation and conferral to improve teachers' classroom performance.

Elsewhere, Alfonso and Goldsberry (1982) have defined *colleagueship* as a "relationship characterized by collaborative efforts to accomplish common goals" (p. 95), that is, mutual involvement in identifying, selecting and achieving objectives.

Peer clinical supervision is a term suggested by McFaul and Cooper (1983) in a study in three urban elementary schools. The authors contend that peer clinical supervision is a process "that develops the collaborative problem solving efforts of teachers in a trusting environment so that they might collect and use descriptive classroom feedback on topics of their concern to improve their teaching performance" (p. 34).

Peer observation or supervision means "observation of a colleague's teaching to produce feedback for that colleague around some pre-determined focus" (Saphier, 1985, p. 4). This involves experimentation, collaboration, and instructional improvement. The author claims the optional aspect in the process involves one giving colleagues feedback on a specific experiment they are attempting to be involved in, not general or evaluative feedback.

Teacher advisors engage in a form of peer supervision but in roles comparable to those envisioned for master and mentor teachers (Little, 1985). The teacher advisor functions as a peer who models productive professional relations, offering assistance when asked. This allows teachers to learn from and with one another and to reflect on crucial aspects in instruction. "This

exposes how teachers teach, how they think about teaching, and how they plan for teaching to the scrutiny of peers" (p. 34).

Relying heavily on the notion of collegiality, Ellis, Jensen and Smith (1986) developed the notion of *collegial observation* (peer assisted instruction) as another form of peer supervision. In their model, teachers are trained in systematic observation procedures to provide constructive feedback to one another and to learn teaching techniques and strategies from one another.

Ruck (1986) coined the term *collegial support supervision* and indicates that it is a form of peer supervision with teachers observing teachers and working together for instructional improvement. A *collegial support* program was developed in an Ohio school district so that "teachers would learn about effective teaching and clinical supervision . . . these skills would then be used in peer observations" (p. 49).

Peer assistance is yet another term used to describe peer supervision (Chrisco, 1989). The author claims that evolving definitions occurred within a two-year period of time. The founding definition was "professional support: assistance, guidance, and insight from peers . . ." (p. 31).

During the second year of the program new definitions evolved and teachers: (a) taught one another, (b) observed a series of classes, and (c) exchanged classes. "The teachers were assisting each other in teaching; the students, in learning" (p. 32).

Some authors, while exploring the topic in detail, do not address the issue of labeling the process of peer supervision. Smyth and Henry (1983) propose a model for clinical supervision by peers in a workshop setting. This is based

upon cooperation, consultation, observation, and feedback *between* and *among* teachers about each other's teaching.

In a later article, Smyth (1984) uses the term *collaborative learners* when referring to a form of peer supervision. Collaborative learners are encouraged to use a form of clinical supervision as a modus operandi in a process combining collegiality as well as collaboration. The collegial process involves an overt demonstration of reciprocity between partners, with the teaching of each being observed by the other.

Collegial support system is another term used to identify a particular type of peer supervision. In this system Hopfengardner and Walker (1984) describe such a system as one that "is a systematic process whereby administrators and teachers identified for their instructional leadership potential help the teaching staff develop effective teaching behaviors, general professional (attitudes) and attributes, and both short and long-range personal growth goals" (p. 36).

Elliott and Chidley (1985) advocate *peer review* as a form of peer supervision. They claim that peer review is a "process in which teachers help colleagues establish instructional goals and then provide valuable classroom feedback on progress toward those goals" (p. 10).

Their model does not involve evaluation; it is simply a process in which teachers help colleagues improve their instruction by sharing teaching methods.

Cook (1985) defines and describes peer supervision in terms of a mentor-clinical supervision inservice project. In this model teachers use and employ

a clinical supervision process to work with each other in mutual planning, observations and analysis of instruction. The process is reciprocal and based upon the assumptions, concepts, and beliefs inherent in the clinical model.

Reasons For Peer Supervision

The literature contains numerous explanations of why schools should be doing peer supervision. Many have been developed from a purely theoretical perspective while others are based upon research in the schools.

Blumberg and Cusick (1970) reveal that supervisors give their opinion four times as often as they ask for the teachers. They also note that conference time is concerned with procedural matters rather than instructional concerns. They conclude that "supervisor respect for the teacher as a professional has been missing" (p. 130). In a survey conducted by Reavis (1976), classroom teachers indicated that they did not actually expect their instruction to improve as a result of a supervisor's observation.

According to Alfonso (1977) teachers have historically always exerted influence on the behavior of their peers even if the process was not described as peer supervision. This combined with the growth of teacher militancy, has caused teachers to seek greater control over their own world of teaching. One of Alfonso's concerns is that this newly created need views supervision within a very narrow confine. "If supervision is primarily a process of observation, analysis, and feedback, then it can lead to a proposition that teachers might, in fact, be their own best supervisors" (p. 595).

McGee and Eaker (1977) cite four trends that have made the peer

supervision models more realistic and attractive:

1. The increased use of team and partnership teaching.
2. The increased popularity of "clinical supervision."
3. The general upgrading of all teachers.
4. The growing stability in teaching staffs.

Eisner (1979) in developing his educational connoisseurship and educational criticism approach to supervision and evaluation makes the comment that . . . "schools need to develop structures which will make sustained observation and feedback possible" (p. 17). It is Eisner's contention that pre-service programs do not deal with the subtleties of teaching; staff development and inservice programs are a failure as well. His vision is one of teachers working with teachers in an approach that changes instruction and has teachers functioning as professionals.

Thompson (1979) expands upon the militancy thesis by suggesting that teacher organizations have recently sought to establish self-goverance procedures that include the rights and responsibilities of teachers to monitor and supervise their own profession. This leads Thompson to conclude that "it appears essential that a new model of supervision be explicated . . ." (p. 3).

Smyth (1981) theorizes that the recent interest in peer clinical supervision is due to the research on teacher improvement, which indicates that "changes most likely to succeed [in the classroom] acknowledge the practicality and immediacy of classroom issues . . ." (p. 26). Smyth claims that we must start at our own histories and work context and this can best be accomplished through peer supervision.

Ruck (1986) suggests that clinical supervision and particularly peer clinical supervision have been accepted due to : (a) the passage of Public Law 94-142, (b) the abundance of public criticism of education and schools, in particular, and the Carnegie Forum's Task Force on Teaching as a Profession (1986) which calls for changes in the supervisory system through increased collegiality and peer supervision.

Perhaps another explanation for the interest in peer supervision is the lack of professional supervision available to teachers (Alfonso & Goldsberry, 1982). Faced with this lack teachers will turn to colleagues who "have the value of proximity, immediacy, and firsthand understanding of the other's work place" (p. 91). In addition, Alfonso and Goldsberry contend that it is time for the teaching profession, like many other professions to become involved in colleagueship and collaboration. They stress the importance for teacher to break down the barriers preventing collaboration so that they will improve their instruction and assist colleagues in their own self improvement.

A third reason they cite for the increased interest in peer supervision is the lack of formal authority and competence displayed by practicing supervisors. Under these conditions teachers will "turn to others for help in improving their instruction" (p. 92).

In a similar vein Warren and Goldsberry (1982) suggest that formal supervision is not often available to teachers due to a high teacher-to-supervisor ratio. This, combined with other administrative and instructional functions, does not allow the principals and supervisors to devote sufficient time to supervision. The authors claim that teachers require more than

cursory inspections of their classroom performance; they need detailed and relevant feedback and time with their peers to examine and reflect upon this feedback.

In a special task force report, Lowell and Phelps (1977) studied the status of instructional supervision. From the study the following conclusions were drawn:

1. Teachers were receiving inadequate instructional support through the process of classroom observations and conferences.

2. Observations could be an important source of support for teachers if implemented effectively.

3. The potential use of teachers as instructional resources to each other was not being utilized. Group conferences and observations were not being used to involve teachers in assisting each other.

4. Instructional personnel needed to become more involved in instructional support at the school and classroom level.

5. Principals were less inclined to provide services in instructional areas as compared to administrative areas. In other words, principals placed greater priority on their administrative role than on their role as an instructional leader (Lovell & Phelps, 1977, p. 228).

It is obvious principals are not meeting teachers' expectations in their role of instructional leaders in the area of supervision. "If the potential of classroom observations for improving instruction is to be realized, the bottleneck of supervision at the principal's office must be solved" (Ellis, Jensen, Piele & Smith, 1986, p. 16). They suggest that perhaps teachers could be mobilized to assist with these tasks. In such cases the "principal must still be regarded as the key actor in calling these new forms of instructional leadership into being" (p. 11).

Research on adult learning suggests that adults learn in situations where

they are provided with an opportunity for continuous guided reflection based on "lived experiences" (Sprinthall & Sprinthall, 1980). Their research and practice led the authors to suggest the following elements as being important in adult learning:

1. Role taking experience--teachers acting as observers and counsellors for each other, and demonstrating to a colleague new teaching methods.
2. Qualitative aspects of role taking--matching of background with new role expectations.
3. Guided reflection--the need to be assisted in making sense out of new experiences.
4. Continuity--longer periods of inservice are required to provide continuity.
5. Personal support and challenge--continuous support is necessary if change is to occur.

Willie and Howey (1981) present some convincing arguments related to adult learning principles. They contend that the cornerstone for effective staff development projects (e.g., peer supervision) should be the knowledge and understanding of adult development. They stress that adults: (a) search for intimacy in their work, (b) place great importance on self esteem in the work place, and (c) in varying degrees seek purpose in what they are doing.

The significance of Willie and Howey's work is that small groups of teachers, who work together and trust each other can and will provide each other with accurate, precise, and beneficial feedback concerning their behaviors in the classroom.

Not only do adults wish to collaborate but Elliott and Chidley (1985) claim the teachers have a "responsibility to their colleagues and their profession to help one another grow" (p. 103).

Acheson and Smith (1986) make the claim that teachers benefit from team teaching and other collaborative efforts but they suggest that teachers need to be trained in systematic observation procedures. "They would be ideal persons to provide feedback one to another" (p. 14). Due to the movement from an inspector's model to an employee model and teachers' preference for more democratic forms of supervision the authors suggest that the "most valuable source of manpower and expertise is the teachers themselves" (p. 14).

A landmark study regarding teacher supervision and evaluation was the Medicine Hat Model for Teacher Supervision and Evaluation (Greene, 1989). Through a peer supervision and evaluation model an attempt was made to enhance teachers' professional development. The central focus of the model was the supervisory process and, in particular, a form of supervision developed by Townsend (1987) which provided a vehicle for professional growth.

Possible strategies for celebrating and furthering the success of the model are presented in chapter seven of the report. The authors make specific suggestions as a means to further the peer supervision process and its impact upon the teacher and the classroom. From the list of those provided, the following suggestions refer directly to the need for peer supervision:

1. That peer supervision be maintained as a high priority; this seems to be where the most immediate and beneficial rewards are felt by the teachers.

2. That teachers choose partners with whom they have common interests and with whom they would like to work, and that together they develop a plan for their participation.

3. That a series of workshops be provided on teaching strategies dealing with areas identified by teachers . . . .

4. That pairs or groups be rotated through 'peer supervision semesters in which concentrated work with the model can be carried out (Butt et al. 1989, p. 208).

Lastly, there is a movement among teachers in the literature, to return to the original concepts of what Goldhammer (1969) and his associates were espousing thirty years ago. That is, a way in which teachers can work collaboratively with each other and with outsiders that also acknowledges the human worth and dignity of teachers (Smyth, 1986). Goldhammer (1969) proposed a method of supervision that advocated investing control of pedagogical matters in the hands of teachers. He emphasized the necessity for teachers to determine whether they became involved, with whom, where, and how often, as well as what would be observed in their teaching and what would be considered feasible and practicable to change.

Smyth makes the claim that Goldhammer stressed *teacher autonomy* and, therefore, this means "teachers having the unrestrained opportunity of selecting the partner (peer) they wish to work with, as well as the issues explored" (p. 4). This implies that for teachers collegiality in action is a preparedness to have done to them what they would do to others.

In summary, reasons for the practice of peer supervision are varied and numerous. Even though these reasons are diverse and each author specifies different reasons for peer supervision, a major theme threads its way through the literature. That is, collegiality, appears to be the main construct in the literature that gives strength to the need for peer supervision.

Barriers to Peer Supervision

Peer supervision has the potential to become a valuable and effective mode of supervision as well as an effective supplement to traditional forms of supervision. Yet, there are some organizational barriers to be hurdled before the potential of peer supervision can be achieved.

The physical lay out of most schools, that is their *cellularity*, does not provide the structure required for peer supervision (Alfonso, 1977). As well the "typical school organization . . ." (p. 597), defined as the hierarchical structure, full teaching loads, the competitiveness and the demand for accountability will continue to create an environment that is not conducive to peer supervision.

Alfonso and Goldsberry (1982) have expanded upon their assessment of the barriers that prevent effective colleague consultation. These include (a) the expectations that a school system has for its teachers (a more professional model must emerge); (b) the prevailing milieu (lack of colleagueship); and the existing leadership patterns and its effect upon faculty.

Smyth (1983) supports this point when he states that of the "contextual factors that strike us as most significant, the involvement of the principals stands out as vitally important" (p. 15). Smyth claims that the way principals are involved determines the type of climate that exists for the innovation. The author identifies three types or styles of principal involvement: (a) implicit support; (b) active support; and (c) negative support. Each one creates a different environment that can add to or detract from a peer supervision program.

Alfonso and Goldsberry (1982) suggest that collective bargaining contracts can be a barrier as well. The kind of rigidity and prescription that characterizes most negotiated contracts works against the climate of openess necessary to develop colleagueship.

Anxiety is a key factor in the supervisory process as well as in peer observations (McGee & Eaker, 1977). The authors claim that teaching is a personal endeavor and even having one's colleague observe causes anxiety. They recommend that early visitations be simple and informal and then progress to more sophisticated education goals.

Training is a key factor in peer supervision projects and second only to sound administrative support (Cook, 1985). The author suggests that peer supervision must be learned over *time* through sound theory-based training programs incorporating practice and feedback on an ongoing basis.

Warren and Goldsberry (1982) concur with Cook but make note of the additional barriers of time and money. Additional time is required for observations and conferencing as well as money to cover the cost of substitute teachers.

The foregoing research findings suggest that peer supervision is not a panacea for the supervision needs of a school district. There are many difficulties and problems associated with the process, and the two major factors that may act as barriers to the process are the existing norms of collegiality and the type of administrative support the process receives.

Limitations of Peer Supervision

Many authors raise questions about the limitations of peer supervision from a theoretical perspective as well as a research base. Alfonso (1977) is one of the first researchers to question the value of peer supervison. He claims that "it runs the risk of being a random activity" (p. 597). His concern is whether or not the process will operate in a manner that supports the educational goals of the organization.

A further limitation according to Alfonso is that teachers as peers in a supervisory process cannot be implementators of good decisions as well as transmitters who ensure that organizational goals and priorities are understood and carried out.

A third limitation is the probable inability of peer supervision to deal effectively with tenured, aging staff. According to Alfonso, supervisors have not been able to effect changes in such persons and, as a result, he questions how successful peers will be.

It is purported that peer supervision will not eliminate anxiety during the supervisory process on the part of the observer and the observee (Clarke, 1986; Heller, 1988; McGee & Eaker, 1977). The authors claim that if the data is used by only the "team" for instructional purposes then anxiety is minimal. However, McGee and Eaker (1977) suggest that if the observations are part of some evaluation system, then anxiety will be high and probably remain so.

Another limitation which causes anxiety is the nature of past relationships and experiences that peers have had with each other (McGee & Eaker, 1977). The authors contend that peers who have successfully interacted

with each other will probably experience less stress in the peer process then peers who have not interacted with each other in a collegial manner. Lastly, McGee and Eaker claim that peer supervision will not eliminate the beliefs, attitudes and biases about teaching that we bring to the peer process.

Smyth's research in 1983 has shown that a collegial model such as peer clinical supervision does not guarantee that trust, collegiality, or collaboration will take place effectively or even if it will take place at all. He further notes that peer supervision is not for *all* teachers in a school system, and it does not have equal appeal to all teachers.

According to Smyth another limitation of the peer supervisory process is that it may expose "cosmetic changes that may prove to be uncomfortable in circumstances where changes are misunderstood, adopted symbolically, or rejected prematurely" (p. 19). For Smyth the way to overcome this limitation is to have the active cooperation of all parties involved.

McFaul and Cooper (1983) report on an ethnographic study in an urban school which was involved in a 'peer clinical' supervision project. The authors claim that there were numerous limitations to the peer supervision process. The research findings suggest that:

1. Not all sessions were successful, only those in which teachers felt comfortable with their peer.
2. Peer clinical supervision may not be the model to use in a peer supervision setting.
3. Teachers tend to spend little time and effort in the pre-conference.
4. Peer supervision appears to be limited to core subjects.
5. Eighty percent of the time spent in post-conference sessions is geared to simple solutions of complex problem or behaviors.

6. Teachers appeared to be unwilling to engage in *substantive analysis* of classroom behaviors.
7. The teachers who seemed to be helped the most were the ones who needed supervision the least.
8. The peer supervision process cannot control the environment in which it occurs.

Finally, most of the literature suggests that peer supervision is not a substitute for traditional and effective supervision but an adjunct. It can help teachers to develop collegiality and generally increase their effectiveness in the classroom (Clarke & Richardson, 1986).

"The key to effective peer supervision is to view (it as) one part of a multi-level supervision program, recognizing the unique contributions that can be made by teachers but also recognizing a need for formal endorsement and support" (p. 20).

Cook (1985) suggests that in most, if not all peer supervision projects, participation is voluntary. This can be a disadvantage "in that most teachers who may contribute the most to peer supervision or benefit the most may not be those who volunteer" (p. 13). She recommends that if the process is desired, peer supervision projects should be required throughout a school or a school district.

In conclusion, it is apparent that peer supervision, like any other educational process, has its limitations. The difficulty of the process in supporting the educational goals of the organization, the conflict between implementing and transmitting goal decisions, the difficulty in dealing with aging staff, the inability to eliminate anxiety, past and present relationships, the mobility of the process to guarantee collegiality, the limits inherent in the

process itself, and finally the fact that the people that participate are usually those in need of it the least are all limitations of the peer process. Cook (1985) stresses that most if not all the limitations can be overcome when peers develop a trusting relationship and collaboratively strive to overcome the limitations.

Benefits of Peer Supervision

Amidon et al. (1966) make the claim that group peer supervision appears to influence positively faculty, personal relationships, communications, goal-setting, and behavioral norms. "The process appears to merit consideration" (p. 158).

Alfonso (1977) notes "that the greatest promise of peer supervision is not what can be done *alone*, but what it can do as part of a larger formal format" (p. 600). It must supplement, not replace or displace, formal supervision.

There are three promising aspects of peer team supervision situations (McGee & Eaker, 1977). These are:

1. Trust relationships are enhanced by working with peers.
2. The threat of inspection by superiors is reduced.
3. Supervisory assistance from peers is immediate.

Thompson (1979) proposes a peer clinical supervision process that will benefit *all* concerned. Teachers share problems with peers that they would not share with a supervisor. The other benefit noted by Thompson is the opportunity to improve one's teaching which will ultimately move the profession one step closer to an autonomous state.

In a similar vein, Withall and Wood (1979) claim that peer supervision

can create an environment that results in teachers having a positive approach to supervision and it creates an environment that is open to change. The changing group norms enable teachers to behave differently and experiment with new ideas.

Skoog (1980) suggests that in a team (peer) approach the potential of the peer observations is to bring colleagues together in a collaborative effort to improve instruction. Both the observer and observee, by observing each other, acquire knowledge, insights and strategies for self supervision and improvement.

Goldsberry (1981) supports the contention of *mutual help*. In fact, he suggests that "the experiences of systematically observing one's colleagues, analyzing collected data, and structuring and conducting conferences may well contribute as much or more to the professional development of the observer as to the refined practices of the teacher being observed" (p. 11).

Alfonso (1982) cites three advantages in developing colleagueship in supervision. These are:

1. Human resources are mobilized in a joint effort to ameliorate instruction.
2. Intrinsic rewards accrue to the teachers as well as to the school.
3. Colleagueship promotes instructional innovations.

In addition to the above benefits, Warren and Goldsberry (1982) suggest that the classroom can become a professional resource room and colleagues can provide in-class follow-up that is deemed necessary for successful professional development.

Mattaliano (1982) emphasizes the collegial and collaborative aspects of

peer supervision by noting that:

1. Teachers see each other teach.
2. Teachers are assisted in self-supervision.
3. Teachers receive gratification for strength gained from colleagues.
4. There is potential for the development of trusting, non-threatening relationships which positively affect staff morale.
5. Teachers can experience individual growth through individualized help.

In an article dealing with the benefits of peer clinical supervison, Collins (1983) suggests that as well as the instructional benefits, there is a compensative factor for budget cuts and reduced funds for curriculum and instructional supervisors.

Smyth (1983) alludes to the mutual benefits incurred when teachers share their concerns and experiences with each other at the same stage of implementation and experimentation. For Smyth, peer supervision provides the stage for trial and error experimentation while allowing for feedback as to its effectiveness and appropriateness.

The concepts of collegiality and collaboration can also affect students in the classroom (Cook, 1985). They affect students in direct as well as indirect ways. For example, according to the author peer supervision encourages students to help one another, in the same manner that teachers are collaborating with teachers. Secondly, it helps students to feel more worthwhile and to take their learning seriously as a result of the modeling that is occurring in the classroom.

Thomas et al. (1986) point to still another benefit of peer supervision, that is the professionalization of the teaching establishment. This is based upon

the premise that true professions are characterized by extensive peer review practices that evolve through collective experiences and collaboration action. They also address a critical issue of supervision/evaluation. The authors propose the "separation of classroom observation for professional development from evaluation for personnel decisions" (IV-11). The benefits of this approach are many including the fundamental one; it allows administration to deal with evaluation more effectively and *peers* to deal with the area of instructional improvement.

Smyth (1986) in research on peer clinical supervision, claims that teachers will raise larger questions about the means and ends of teaching and instructional frameworks as a result of being involved in peer supervision. The process allows teachers to become actively involved in their own professional development and to work towards positive change.

Lesnik (1987) implemented peer supervision in three rural schools in British Columbia. Lesnik included two other benefits which have not been previously mentioned. These are (a) various formal and informal organizational infrastructures have developed as offshots of peer supervision; and (b) 70% of the school parents have spent *full days* in various classrooms as a result of the peer supervision programs.

A secondary benefit and one that occurs after peer supervision has taken place is that teachers who have not participated in the program of peer supervision are making inquiries as to how they can become involved in a peer supervision program (Heller, 1988; Hopfengardner & Leahy, 1988).

Lastly, Chrisco (1989) suggests that as a result of peer supervision

teachers have become consciously aware of teaching and its varied facets. "We have been able to bring what we do instinctively to the conscious level . . . and work it through with others, we don't feel alone, and we arrive at a better understanding" [of our teaching] (p. 32).

Although a number of benefits of peer supervision have been listed and described the list is by no means exhaustive or complete. Research has only begun to tap the benefits that can be derived as a result of collaborating with a peer in a supervisory process.

The literature suggests that the benefits of peer supervision affect the observer, observee, students and the school in general, in many varied and positive ways. "By engaging in systematic observation, teachers explore central issues in student learning and consider teaching practices and their improvement" (Bird & Little, 1985, p. 26).

Research

Ellis et al. (1979) describes a peer supervision project at one school that used clinical supervision techniques in a peer observation setting. A committee of three teachers and the principal was formed to determine the needs of the teachers and design the peer supervision program. It was decided that low-inference instruments would be used during the observation cycles. In the next step the team determined the needs of individual teachers and teams were formed for peer observations. Pre and post-tests were used to determine the attitudes of teachers on the peer teams towards peer supervision.

The analysis of the data revealed that teachers' attitudes toward supervision had significantly improved. Several items showed gains. These were:

1. Teachers no longer felt that they had to put on a show during observations.
2. Fear of being observed was substantially reduced.
3. Teachers realized the value of peer support and peer assistance.

The Teacher Growth Process as proposed by Sullivan (1979) allows teachers to set yearly goals and then select a peer so that the goals can be effectively accomplished. Facilitators are to be trusting and willing to participate in the collaborative effort. The time involved in accomplishing the goals is determined by the requesting teacher. The results from Sullivan's research suggests the following:

1. The Teacher Growth Plan separates supervision from evaluation--teachers can be supervised without fear of being evaluated.
2. Teachers can set goals for the coming year then have support in obtaining these goals.
3. It allows teachers to work with one another on a one-to-one basis.
4. The relationship between teachers and administrators is changing for the better--a new level of trust is developing.

Another team concept was used at the College of Education, Texas Tech University (Skoog, 1980). The teams included two or more faculty, a graduate student, and a team leader. The process used the peer clinical supervision model as developed by Cogan (1973). During the course of the year multiple observations occurred with each team member acting as a peer observer as well as a team leader.

The authors stress the importance of not doing peer supervision as an

isolated activity. They believe that trust was certainly an important element in the peer process. They argue that teaching must be considered as a worthwhile activity if faculty are to devote time and effort to peer observation cycles. They believe this will happen if *all* teachers know that peer observations are not to be used for evaluative purposes. The authors conclude that peer supervision is of benefit to faculty in that the peer observation activities "have the potential to bring colleagues together in a collaborative [sense] to improve instruction . . ." (p. 25).

A program of collegial supervision was established in Leahy Elementary to assist teachers in dealing with the changing urban population (Mattaliano, 1982). Teams of six teachers conducted twenty-six two-hour sessions over a five-month period, each supervising a willing client. The principal of the school acted as supervision leader/instructional leader/inservice director.

Mattaliano contends that according to the study the most beneficial aspects of the collegial support system were the elements of colleagueship, and the fact that the principal could again assume the role of instructional leader.

Smyth (1983) reports upon a peer clinical supervision project based upon consultation, observation, and feedback between and among the participating teachers. The author cautions us that the absence of oppressive supervision forms does not necessarily equate to the process of enlightenment, growth and development of teachers. The elements of *trust*, *collegiality*, and *collaboration* cannot be violated. A second major finding for Smyth, is that not all participants are equally involved in the program of peer supervision. Lastly, response programs such as peer supervision are not universally understood

for what they are, and occasionally they are misconstrued as a means of *pushing, people, around.*

McFaul and Cooper (1984) document a research study in peer clinical supervision. Full documented cycles were analyzed to describe the process of peer clinical supervision. The data were obtained from many sources which included interviews, field notes and other self-reported data all of which were examined to discover patterns of interaction between the model and the context. The outcomes were then examined to determine the appropriateness of the clinical model in an urban setting. The following points summarize the findings from McFaul and Cooper's research:

1. The most successful cycles were those in which teachers gained new insight and information about themselves, trusted their colleagues, and often shared grade levels.

2. The peer clinical supervision model was incongruent with this particular urban elementary school.

3. Pre-observation conferences were not deemed as being necessary.

4. Teachers generally created their own data collecting instruments and then requested that the supervising peer use the instrument.

5. Seating charts and videotape recordings were the most commonly used instruments, and the teachers' concerns were mainly pupil directed behaviors.

6. Most post-conferences (eighty percent) did not involve in-depth problem solving analysis. There seemed to be an unwritten rule that no one would be made to feel uncomfortable in the supervison process.

7. The results of the study seem to indicate that peer clinical supervision might be most workable with teachers who have strong analytical abilities and a high commitment to their tasks.

8. Four major patterns emerged from the ethnographic field notes. These were identified as isolation and fragmentation, stratification, standardization, and reactionism. These factors seemed to be innately incongruent with the peer clinical supervision model which emphasizes

trust, collegiality and collaboration.

9. In general, the goals, assumptions and procedures of peer supervision appeared to be incongruent with this particular elementary urban school.

10. If teachers avoid analyzing their behavior and the environment is hostile, peer clinical supervison becomes impotent. The reality of some schools may be such that they are impervious to change strategies such as peer clinical supervision.

An inservice peer supervision model was developed by Saphier (1985). The purpose of the year-long project was to increase both the quality and the frequency of adult contact in the workplace, as well as provide teachers with a vehicle for changing their teaching strategies and problem solving capabilities. The purpose then was to "provide an opportunity to strengthen collegiality and experimentation as norms of our professional climate" (p. 4).

At the end of the project each supervised peer reported to the author: (a) what experiment they had tried, (b) what feedback they had received from their peer, (c) what changes in teaching had occurred, and (d) what was gained from the experiment.

The following findings were derived from the study:

1. Expectations for peer supervision must be created in the school.

2. For peer supervision to be successful there must be commitment to the process as well as to administration.

3. Substitute teachers are mandatory.

4. Teachers involved in the process must be cognizant of the purpose and goals of the process.

5. For peer observations to be successful, the peer observer needs a focus. Feedback must be specific and the purpose must always be to cultivate collegiality and experimentation.

Elliott and Chidley (1985) established a peer review model designed to create a collegial atmosphere so that classroom instruction could be improved.

The primary goal was that "teachers would help their colleagues improve instruction by sharing teaching models" (p. 103). Four people were involved--two colleagues, one outside peer and the department head. The peer review process was supported by substitute time and each teacher was observed eight times. The study showed that:

1. The collegial atmosphere allowed teachers to experiment in new ideas.
2. The peer supervision model necessitates the use of a common language.
3. Workshops prior to the process are necessary in the areas of observation and conferencing.
4. Teachers used their prep periods for observations and conferences.
5. Training in observing and instructional supervision is a necessity.
6. Administrative support is vital.
7. Peer review is for the improvement of instruction, not for evaluation.
8. Teachers must have time during the peer review process to share their experiences.
9. The success of the project was due to the collegial and collaborative atmosphere established prior to the peer process.

The Teacher Advisor Project presented an opportunity for Little (1985) to examine peer relationships in which an advisor and teachers joined forces to examine classroom performance.

The sessions revealed the following six ways in which teachers and a peer advisor looked at teaching together:

1. Skillful pairs work on, and use a common language.
2. Skillful pairs focus on one or two concepts during a session.
3. Skillful pairs work at generating data during the observations.
4. Skillful pairs collaborate during the conference and use it as an opportunity

to learn from one another.

5. Skillful pairs trust one another.
6. Skillful pairs build trust by delving into the teaching process in a collegial manner.

Cook (1985) was involved in a peer supervision project in an elementary school setting. The purposes of the program were to: (a) train teachers in the area of clinical supervision; (b) for those teachers to train others; and (c) to improve classroom instruction. The teachers were involved in numerous seminars in the area of clinical supervision. In addition, each teacher was involved in eight cycles of supervision, four as a supervisor and four as a supervisee. The project produced the following findings:

1. The peer supervision program provided an opportunity for colleagues to work and grow together.
2. It enabled teachers to grow in an area in which they lack confidence.
3. The peer supervision program affected students both directly and indirectly.
4. Anxiety was prevalent during the beginning and middle of the school year.
5. Participants needed personally to feel the support of administration for the program.
6. A mandatory prerequisite for the program is adequate training for all the participants.

Clarke and Richardson (1986) analyzed the potential of a peer supervision model. Eleven teachers participated in three training sessions in clinical supervision and then were involved in three cycles of peer supervision. The authors found:

1. Teachers were not engaged in problem solving activities during the course of the study.
2. Training sessions need to be provided for teachers to explore alternatives in

observations and provide exercises in problem solving.

3. Peer supervision, to be effective, must be an integral part of the supervision and instructional component of the organization.
4. Peer supervision can act as an adjunct to the regular supervision program.

Lesnik (1987) developed a peer supervision model for three rural schools in northern British Columbia. The model included inservice workshops and training sessions in collaborative efforts as well as peer supervision skills. The teachers were paired off according to rankings on a preference test. The teams designed their own supervisory targets and strategies as well as observation and feedback tactics. The following results were reported:

1. Consistency in management and curriculum increased.
2. Decision making became a shared endeavor.
3. School-wide strategies were more easily implemented and ensured due to the formal and informal infrastructures.
4. Changes to the curriculum and introduction of new strategies were facilitated.
5. Participation in the project generated mutual respect and responsibility for colleagues.
6. Administration benefited in numerous ways as well as the teachers involved in the project.

A peer supervision model for a school district in collaboration with university consultants was conceived by Hopfengardner and Leahy (1988). The model provided for voluntary participation, formative evaluation, analysis of instructional behaviors, collegial support, and a safe environment for the project. The focus of the training in the project was on teaching practices and clinical supervision. Trained peers in turn provided training for new participants. Inservice workshops were held periodically to rejuvenate the

teachers as well as provide a venue to vent concerns and difficulties with the program. The project produced the following findings:

1. The time spent in preparing for the project was beneficial in terms of assuring ownership to teachers and administrators.
2. Initial workshops were too content based.
3. Teachers preferred to participate as equals--mentorship was opposed.
4. Teachers were adamant about leaving their classrooms on a regular basis.
5. Collegial support systems clearly reduced teacher isolation.
6. Teachers reported positive results from participation in the project.
7. Teachers desired systematic assistance to help improve their teaching.

Chrisco (1989) details a peer assistance program that has been in operation for two years in the English department at a Vermont high school. This was a slowly-evolving process in which teachers developed a three-step supervision approach (pre-conference, observation, post-conference) for the purpose of professional growth in a non-threatening environment.

During the second year the process changed and teachers become involved in various projects with one another, rather than just observations.

According to the author the program worked because the participants volunteered their involvement; they received explicit support from administration; and the program was allowed to evolve slowly and naturally. The study indicated the following:

1. The project helped the staff within the department to re-establish communication with each other.
2. The pre-conference provided an opportunity to rehearse the lesson. An opportunity to express what is intended and why it is important.
3. The project allowed the teachers to become consciously aware of what they

do instructively in the classroom.

Through this peer assistance process the teachers at Brattleboro are "becoming helping professionals for each other" . . . (p. 32). They recognize the responsibility they have for helping each other to grow and to improve.

As one teacher (cited in Chrisco, 1989) acknowledged:

> Peer observation and assistance have made me a better teacher because they have made me a more conscious teacher, more aware of what I'm actually doing, more aware of what others are doing, more aware of alternatives . . . . I believe the effect is cumulative. The more you observe and the more you are observed, the more conscious you become of your technique, and the better you get at it (p. 32).

CHAPTER THREE

PEER EVALUATIONS: A REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Introduction

Peer rating or evaluations are ratings of one teacher by a peer, who may or may not be part of the school system, even those outside the school district in which the teacher is employed who are not supervisors, heads of departments, or administrators in a school (Hatry & Greiner, 1985). This kind of evaluation as distinguished from evaluation by students, test score or administrators involves *teachers evaluating teachers.*

There is a paucity of information on peer evaluation. The information that does exist is very recent and somewhat confusing due to the interchangeable use of the terms *peer evaluation* and *peer supervison.*

Wood and Lease (1987) discuss an integrated approach to staff development, supervision, and evaluation. They claim that the main purpose of supervision is to "assist teachers as they try to improve their understanding and use of effective teaching practices" (p. 52). The purpose of teacher evaluation is "to make judgements about the teacher's ability to use effective teaching practices in the classroom" (p. 52). It stresses rating, ranking, and quantifying in order to develop a plan that will address improvement issues and provide a basis for hiring, firing, promotion and retention of teachers. Both supervision and evaluation use some form of systematic procedures to prepare for, conduct, and provide feedback, after an observation. The major differences according to Wood and Lease involve the intention for which the observation is conducted and the nature of the feedback.

McGreal (1983) suggests that peer evaluation seems undesirable and unrealistic. However, he notes that when peer evaluation is defined in terms of a formative function, a more practical and usable additional source of data emerges.

Darling-Hammond, Wise, and Pease (1983) report mixed reviews for peer ratings. They note that while peers are in a position to assess competence, the use of peers is not generally recommended for personnel decisions (summative evaluation).

Kauchak, Peterson and Driscoll (1984) are far more sanguine about peer evaluations. They believe it brings the 'expertise' and experience of the teaching profession to the forefront. However, they caution that it is one of the most undeveloped and unresearched areas of teacher evaluation. They recognize the practical problems that exist when peers are used in the evaluation procedures, such as reliability, credibility with outside sources, and the need for extensive training. However, they feel that the advantages far outweigh the disadvantages.

From a technical viewpoint, peer evaluations share many of the characteristics of administration ratings "including the problems of instrument validity, inter-rater reliability and the focus on process rather than product" (Hatry & Greiner, 1985, p. 43). They claim that school divisions proposing to use peer evaluators will have to make decisions on a number of questions due to the lack of research in the area of peer evaluation.

Much of the recent interest in peer evaluation and peer review stems from the position espoused by the National Commission on Excellence in Education

(1983). They suggest that "salary, promotion, tenure and retention decisions should be based on an effective evaluation system that includes peer review" . . . (p. 30). President Reagan's remarks and support for the commission's recommendations thrust the need for careful examination of teacher evaluation practices into the limelight.

The literature on 'effective schools' is clear; participatory school management by teachers, based on collaborative planning, collegial problem solving, and constant intellectual sharing can produce improvement in student learning, as well as increased teacher satisfaction and retention (Pratzner, 1984). It can be argued that teachers in these situations are not involved in formal peer evaluations. But, what is clear is that when teachers are observing one another, sharing ideas and collaboratively identifying problems, they are practicing a form of peer evaluation. According to Pratzner, the collaborative efforts that permeate these schools improve the standards of practice by decreasing the isolation of the teacher and providing relevant growth for professional development.

Purpose of Evaluation

The purpose of teacher evaluation has been discussed by many writers since the 1920's. More recently, the Alberta School Trustees' Association (1982) states that "the major objective of the program or performance appraisal is *desired* and *specified* improvement in teaching performance" (p. 14).

The Alberta Teachers' Association (1980) identified two primary purposes of teacher evaluation: (a) the improvement of teacher instructional

performance, and (b) judgements related to decision making on teacher competency. These two primary purposes may be categorized as formative and summative (Wittrock & Wiley, 1920). The authors coined the two terms and the concepts refer to the types of evaluations that are used in evaluating educational courses and educational programs.

Summative evaluations provide a basis for administrative decisions related to hiring, firing, retention and promotion of teachers. Summative evaluations attempt to ensure that highly qualified people enter and continue to teach in the profession. These evaluations, by nature, have a very negative connotation. They are usually very restrictive in nature and deal primarily with the decisions related to a teacher's employment status.

On the other hand, formative evaluations are composed of all data and relevant information gathered for the sole purpose of improving the teacher's instructional skills. The main purpose is to identify a teacher's strengths and weaknesses and then develop a *plan* that will address those issues. Formative evaluations assist and support those teachers in a system and provide a basis for the development and refinement of effective teaching skills.

Most teacher evaluation systems have attempted simultaneously to accomplish the two conflicting concepts in evaluation: improvement of instruction and facilitation of professional development and judgement of teacher effectiveness or ineffectiveness. In most cases, neither process has been done well.

Formative evaluations are time consuming and more demanding. Thus, teacher improvement has not been dealt with effectively. Furthermore, the

dual system of evaluation has caused tensions to increase and has undermined the feelings of trust, openness, and honesty that are prerequisites for experimentation with new teaching approaches. If formative evaluation is to be effective, it needs to be designated as the primary purpose in evaluation and conditions conducive for effective evaluation must be evident (Stiggins & Bridgeford, 1985).

A group of teachers in a research project arrived at the following definition of formative evaluation (cited in Lewis, 1982).

> The best evaluation instrument would be a competent evaluator, one who is competent in the discipline area to be evaluated and who is armed with a blank piece of paper and enough time and objectivity to ascertain . . . what is going on in the classroom (p. 9).

Reasons for Peer Evaluation

Drummond (1973) made an appeal to building principals to involve teachers in the evaluative process. It is his contention that system wide evaluations should be replaced by a school-by-school evaluation systems . . . "and the evaluation of individual . . . teachers should be done by colleagues in the building with records kept *only* in the building". . . (p. 32).

Gitlin and Goldstein (1987) in a philosophical paper on 'horizontal evaluation' (peer evaluation) state that prevalent practices view the principal as an expert in evaluating teachers. They claim that the exercise is generally monologic, a process of one-way-communiques, and is generally hierarchical. The expert (principal) imposes his/her standards on the teachers being evaluated, and any change will be based upon the standards imposed by the

expert.

Gitlin and Goldstein suggest that a system based upon understanding through dialogic interaction is advantageous to the systems currently in use. "Horizontal evaluation structures dialogue so that a communication process is established in which *teaching peers* critically examine goals and means" (p. 18).

Of integral concern is not so much the possibility that changes will occur but rather the *opportunity* to be in dialogue with other teachers. That is, *understanding*, not just improved performance, is the proper aim of teacher evaluation.

Gitlin and Goldstein further suggest that there are certain advantages to peer evaluation, the most fundamental being the changed role of the teacher. Teachers involved in horizontal evaluation have a much greater part in determining what is taught, how it is taught, and when it is taught. It also means "that those who do the teaching also significantly participate in determining the value, meaning, and character of what and how they teach" (p. 26).

Ashbaugh and Kasten (1987) discussed the classical administrative theories as espoused by Barnard (1968) and Bridges (1967). Barnard developed the concept of "zone of acceptance." This concept refers to certain zones in which employees feel comfortable and therefore are willing to participate in decision making, and to take orders from overseers. Bridges, on the other hand, developed two tests to determine whether a particular issue falls within or outside of an employee's "zone of acceptance." These are the 'test of

relevance' and the 'test of expertise.'

According to Ashbaugh and Kasten (1987), the concept of peer evaluation falls within the zone of acceptance for all teachers. The authors suggest that the test of relevance is met as well as the test of expertise. They further suggest that if the test of expertise is not met then the institution so uninvolved has the obligation to develop the expertise so that employees may be involved in peer evaluations.

Theory is then helpful in thinking about the very practical questions concerning the appropriate involvement of teachers in the process of evaluation. The concept of "zone of acceptance" suggests that teachers should be involved in the area of peer evaluations. At least in the case of peer evaluations, institutions as well as teacher organizations have the obligation to develop expertise where it is lacking and to ensure the involvement of teachers in every step of the process.

In a major study on inservice programs, Holly (1977) interviewed 102 professional teachers. Her findings indicated that: (a) teachers preferred to work with a colleague rather than alone; (b) teachers described their colleagues as a valuable source of practical ideas and information; and (c) teachers found their colleagues to be the most useful evaluators of teaching skills.

Natriello (1983) in a review of six studies on teacher evaluation, found overwhelming evidence to support the thesis that the more influence teachers have over evaluation the more likely they will be to accept or internalize the process. His recommendation is that teachers should be involved in the

determination of performance standards, evaluation, planning, and data collection procedures.

Other studies, such as the research carried out by Jensen (1981), have shown that teachers were willing to be observed and evaluated by someone other than administrative personnel.

Goodlad (1984) theoretically proposed a system in which 'head teachers' would occupy the position of instructional teachers in the school. These teachers would serve in various capacities, such as, role models for fellow teachers, provide inservice and staff development and serve as clinical members of a team involved in peer evaluations. Goodlad cited three reasons why his proposal should be considered and accepted: (a) principals cannot do justice to both the role of instructional leader and evaluator; (b) principals cannot acquire and maintain a higher level of teaching expertise than teachers engaged in full-time teaching; and (c) a trusting relationship cannot be established and maintained with teachers if the principal is both an evaluator and a judge of teachers.

Darling-Hammond et al. (1983) identified four basic purposes of evaluations: (a) individual staff development; (b) individual personnel decisions; (c) school improvement; and (d) school status (e.g., certification) decisions. They contend that most school evaluation policies intend to accomplish all four objectives, but different processes and methods are better suited for one or the other of the objectives. In an earlier study, Peterson and Kauchak (1982) determined that peer evaluations were suited to all but one of the four purposes. They recommended that peer evaluations *not* be used for

the sole purpose of personnel decisions.

Current State of Teacher Evaluations

The current state of teacher evaluations is one in which the teacher anticipates a brief visit from the principal or supervisor who stands at the back of the room and checks off behaviors on a standardized check list form. Post conferences are usually hurried and rarely is an instructional plan formulated. Pre-conferences are non-existent in most cases.

Darling-Hammond (1986) outlines the difficulties and limits to the present bureaucratic system of evaluation. In a plea for schools to establish peer review she addresses the limitations of the present system as follows:

1. Present evaluation systems do not and cannot provide meaningful insight into teacher competencies.
2. Many important goals in teaching are not reachable through traditional evaluation.
3. There are many inherent problems in assigning principals as sole evaluators.
4. Present evaluation systems attend to the form of teaching rather than substance.
5. Classroom observations are the sole source of data on teaching.
6. Current objective rating scales view teaching as an unvarying didactic exercise.
7. Low inference instruments have little or no generalizability and are based upon 'direct teaching' research.
8. The objective instruments used exclude human teacher relations, teacher planning and preparation, and the integrity of the curriculum.
9. The effect on overall instruction quality is limited due to the design of traditional evaluation process.

10. The outcomes of evaluation in the traditional bureaucratic system (private and secret) do not contribute to the professional standards of practice.

Darling-Hammond claims there are legislative and managerial reasons why the bureaucratic system of evaluation exists, but the basic reason for top-down and highly prescriptive approaches is that policy makers do not trust teachers.

Bailey (1978) contends that the most commonly used form of evaluation is by the *building principal.* He/she is responsible for: (a) organizing the evaluation program, (b) collecting data, (c) doing the observations, (d) making value judgements about the degree of instructional effectiveness, and (e) reporting the results to superiors. This enormous task together with the other instructional and managerial functions is causing principals to look for ways to improve the present evaluative system (Lewis, 1982).

Lewis conducted a national survey and solicited responses from school administrators to determine the present state of evaluation systems. According to this survey principals desired:

1. A better definition of effective teaching behaviors and outcomes.
2. Trust within and in the evaluative process.
3. A link between evaluation in the evaluative process.
4. More specifics on evaluation techniques.
5. More sensitivity and concern for the needs of the evaluator.

Barber (1984) in a task force report suggested that the present traditional approach to evaluation is limited in its scope. The author contends that these limitations are a result of problems that exist within the system. Briefly, these are:

1. Aversive control - any form of control over the teachers is aversive.

2. Difficulty level of task - no one does it voluntarily, everyone is forced to participate.

3. Administrative turn over - because of turn over new systems are constantly being instituted.

4. Nepotism - most smaller urban as well as most rural school districts have relatives working in various positions. Relatives are rarely evaluated, therefore the system falls apart.

5. Professional nepotism - basically the good ol' boys club concept. Teachers and administrators do not get evaluated because of past or present friendships.

6. Low teacher morale - old evaluation systems as well as new systems create problems, grievances, confrontations, unrest and coalitions. This causes low morale and therefore change, which in turn, results in a new system.

7. Sabotage - if an evaluation system is effective, administrators will sabotage it. Thus teacher evaluation systems become ineffective in three to four years.

8. Lack of objectivity - no satisfactory measure of teacher competence, confusion between summative and formative approaches, and problem of congruence among all parties.

Although these needs are a result of responses to a national survey, they denote the limits of the present day traditional evaluation systems.

Present day research does not support current practices of teacher evaluation (Levin, 1979). According to the Levin, existing and prevailing evaluative systems do not provide for objective data. As well, present instruments do not relate to the instructional and professional role of the teacher (Wood & Pohland, 1979).

McLaughlin (1982) in a major national study found that seventy-four percent (74%) of the school districts surveyed named school improvement or staff development as the primary goal of evaluation. She also determined that very few school districts had any type of integration between teacher evaluation

and staff development.

Collective bargaining has had a tremendous impact upon teacher evaluation procedures (Strike & Bull, 1981). The authors suggest that the collective bargaining has effected every aspect of the evaluative process but has done little if anything at all to promote links between teacher evaluation and professional/individual development.

In many states and provinces teacher evaluation is mandated and direct observation plays a central role in the evaluations (Stodolsky, 1984). The mandates that prevail vary from district to district. In some states and provinces legislation has mandated that competency-based teacher evaluation be used as a model for evaluation. In this model specific instruments measure teacher competencies and minimum standards must be met.

Stiggins and Bridgeford (1985) suggest that case studies and summaries from natural surveys indicate that evaluations are an important method for improving teacher skills, although, actual practices indicate otherwise. Despite the importance placed upon evaluations, the survey findings indicate that most improvements seem to be directed at systematizing procedures. It was also noted that some evaluation programs have increased teacher participation (peer evaluation). But Stiggins and Bridgeford conclude that "educators generally concur that even highly developed evaluation systems are not helping teachers individually or collectively to improve their skills" (p. 94). They further note that the present state of teacher evaluation systems suggests that substantial changes are needed if instructional improvement is to occur as a result of evaluations.

Finally, recent surveys and some of the research do not support the need for peer evaluation: In fact the most recent surveys support the traditional evaluation form. The Educational Research Services statistics reported in the *ERS Spectrum* (1988) indicates that during the 1984-85 school year formal peer evaluation was extremely rare. More than ninety-three percent (93%) of the teachers reported that peers played no formal role in their evaluations.

Teachers were generally not supportive of peer evaluation. In fact, seventy point four percent (70.4%) of the teachers surveyed said they preferred that their fellow teachers *not* be formally involved in the evaluations. During the 1986-1987 school years, teachers were asked for their opinion concerning evaluation by lead teachers. Fifty-two percent (52%) approved of lead teachers evaluating *new* teachers while only thirty percent (30%) approved of using lead teachers to evaluate *experienced* teachers.

The 1985 data suggests that peer involvement increases with the teaching level. Only eighteen percent (18%) of the elementary teachers preferred peer evaluation compared to thirty-five percent (35%) of the high school teachers. Teachers who were undecided about their careers were significantly more positive about peer evaluation than were teachers who were definite about teaching as their career.

Problems and Limitations of Peer Evaluation

Peer evaluation is not without its problems. There are some severe practical and psychometric problems in making, collecting, and interpreting judgements made by colleagues of each other's teaching (Roper & Hoffman,

1986).

The first aspect that the authors question is one of time. Will staff find sufficient time to evaluate and examine sufficiently to arrive at reliable judgements? They suggest that time and effort can be invested, but only if teachers are convinced that it is worth more to themselves and their institution than something else that would have to be cut back. Roper and Hoffman provide a word of caution regarding time as a problem. The real issue is: Can administration be convinced that teachers are professionals who learn best from one another? Roper and Hoffman contend that school districts are more apt to pay for expensive materials, tapes and programs than qualified teachers involved in their own professional development. "Lack of time is a symptom, not a cause, for the more basic problem of lack of support for collegiality" (p. 18).

In a major study conducted by Benzley, Kauchak, and Peterson (1985), the authors found that the majority (59%) of the teachers were concerned about leaving their classrooms for extended periods of time to observe peers. Related to this was the concern for the quality of substitute teachers. The quality of substitutes was seen as a definite variable that influenced the quality of the peer evaluation experience.

Another time related problem is the time and energy that goes into the peer evaluation process. Here the authors claim that the problem is not so much the time spent away from the classroom but rather the amount of time and energy required by the process.

Lastly, the author's question whether collegiality can be maintained in a

classroom when colleagues are looking over each other's shoulders as closely as a peer system would seem to require.

McIntyre (1978) cited evidence that suggests colleagues rate one another's teaching more leniently than students do. He makes the claim that when faculty are involved in peer observations, they solve the collegial problem by being nice to one another.

Roper and Hoffman (1986) report that in the Stanford Collegial Evaluation Project teachers required praise and positive feedback from their colleagues. Their research suggests that more than praise is required to have a successful collegial evaluation program. They stress the importance of teachers being candid in their observations, and constructive in their criticism.

The words and wisdom of Tom Bird and Judith Warren-Little are appropriate in this situation.

> If a powerful analysis of teaching is to be shared, persons' teaching practices cannot be regarded as private or personal, but must be regarded as tools of a profession which are open to evaluation. Such a situation poses risks which require that the participants meet as equal professionals sharing both their confusion and their success (Bird & Little, 1983, p. 35).

One of the greatest criticisms of peer evaluation is the concern over validity and reliability. As McIntyre (1978) indicates, there are no measurable, independent, generally agreed upon outside criteria of teaching effectiveness. Darling-Hammond et al. (1983) list observer bias, insufficient sampling of performance and poor measurement instruments as additional problems to both reliability and validity. McIntrye (1978) notes that peer observers generally are not trained, the criteria used are not standard, and this further adds to the difficulty of peer evaluations being valid and reliable. Therefore, he

recommends that peer evaluations not be used in summative evaluations. Roper and Hoffman (1986) suggest that teachers in their study were not concerned about the subjectivity of the peer evaluation method. They claim that this is partly due to teachers being very skeptical about objective measures of competence concerning the active task of teaching.

Another criticism of peer evaluation is that the teachers' attitudes, habits and past experiences are brought to bear in the evaluation situation. Roper and Hoffman claim that teachers have to dispel the belief that "teachers are born, not made." Also, teachers' fears need to be discussed along with the role that anxiety plays in any form of supervision or evaluation process. The authors claim that teachers need to be made aware of the fact that most participants in the peer evaluation programs were very positive about their experiences. "Attitudes change quickly and teachers discover that it is much easier to open the classroom door again, after it has been opened the first time" (p. 14).

A further criticism of peer evaluation is that teachers lack the training required to be effective evaluators. Roper and Hoffman argue that teachers are well skilled in the area of pedagogy and curriculum development. And further more, teachers are trained and as skilled in the supervision/evaluation field as administrators. They argue that the "goal of a collegial evaluation program is not to provide a scientifically objective picture of a teacher's performance, but to give the teacher . . . some direction in improving their performance" (p. 14).

"Disclosure can be a barrier to the success of a peer evaluation system" (p.

16). Roper and Hoffman suggest that one way to over come this problem is for teachers to be involved in formative evaluations rather than summative evaluations.

A final criticism that is logged against peer evaluation programs is the difficulty of being candid, sincere and critical (Roper & Hoffman, 1986). The authors suggest that teachers generally do not wish to be critical of their peers, but they become increasingly candid the more often they are in the peer process. "It takes time to break the norm of never criticizing one's colleagues" (p. 17).

Conditions Necessary for Successful Peer Evaluations

The primary task of teachers is teaching. In most school districts this task takes place in isolation from one's peers and administrators. An effective teacher evaluation system must respond to the conditions of the teacher's work. Evaluation, especially formative evaluation assumes the opening of classrooms to frequent and ongoing evaluation. There are certain conditions that must be prevalent if successful evaluations are to take place.

Darling-Hammond et al. (1983) suggest that there are five minimal conditions necessary for the successful operation of a teacher evaluation system.

1. All individuals in the system must understand the criteria for evaluation and the process involved.
2. The criteria must be consonant with the educational goals and conceptions of the teachers work.
3. Teachers must perceive the evaluation process as an improvement of instructional skills.

4. Administrators must perceive that the evaluation procedures enable them to be involved in instructional leadership.

5. The process must allow for a balance between autonomy and control for all participants.

In a study conducted by Stiggins and Bridgeford (1985), the authors suggest that the respondents indicated that evaluation is effective when certain conditions are met:

1. Evaluation is not mandated--but evaluated as a process.

2. Evaluation is to occur frequently enough so that the outcomes reflect the classroom processes and activities.

3. Evaluation involves peers and incorporates methods that provide relevant information.

4. Evaluators are trained.

Natriello and Dornbusch (1980-1981) in a major study determined that the characteristics of an effective evaluation system relate to the satisfaction teachers find with the system, as well as the likelihood that the system will improve their teaching. They found that teacher satisfaction is highly related to the following conditions: (a) greater frequency of classroom observations; (b) common criteria; (c) teacher involvement in the formulation of the criteria; and (d) greater frequency of feedback from the observers. The authors further suggest that if teachers are to be satisfied with the evaluative system then they need to feel that they have some *control*. Barber (1984) further supports this contention. According to the author the best systems are those in which the intent of the process is to provide information to an individual teacher in such a manner that only they can use that information to improve their own teaching.

Wise et al. (1984) identified four elements that are necessary for peer evaluation to succeed. According to the authors it is imperative that peer evaluation systems: (a) suit the goals of the school system; (b) suit the management style of the building administrators; (c) suit the conceptions of teaching within the district; and (d) suit the community values of the school district. Pfeifer (1987) in a study on peer evaluations determined that not only must the peer evaluation practice match the management styles and philosophies of the school district, but the *existing collegial* relations as well.

The administrators play an important role in the peer evaluation process (Roper & Hoffman, 1986). In fact, they claim that it is of the utmost importance that school principals clearly define and articulate the purpose and structure of the evaluative process of their staff.

Roper and Hoffman further suggest that school context is a variable in the success of peer evaluation programs. They stress that the school climate must be collegial, open to experimentation and staff development projects.

In summary, schools cannot be hostile to the values of professionalism, individualization, and collegiality. The teachers and their peers must determine the evaluation process to be followed. These values are central to the success or failure of an effective peer evaluation system.

Benefits of Peer Evaluation

The greatest advantage of peer evaluation is the potential to improve teacher performance (Ban & Soudah, 1979). Through the exposure to both successful as well as unsuccessful teaching, teachers have the professional

opportunity to make recommendations for instructional improvement as well as receive recommendations that will stimulate their own teaching. This in turn promotes staff development and improves the quality of public education .

Schonberger (1986) contends that teachers can learn from each other by observing each other and exchanging pedagogical techniques and ideas. For Schonberger, the need to control and change is replaced by the desire to improve and evolve. In addition to the above benefits, he suggests that peer evaluations encourage collaborative planning and cooperative teaching.

Lewis (1982) notes two benefits or advantages in using a peer evaluation system: (a) it encourages professional behavior; and (b) peers can be chosen from the teacher's subject area and thus the teacher may be able to give specific suggestions for improvement.

Gitlin and Goldstein (1987) suggest that even in the narrowest sense peer evaluation "means that teachers so involved will have a much greater part in determining what is taught, how it is taught, and when it is taught" (p. 37). That is, teachers will play a significant role in determining the curriculum.

Ownership as well as autonomy is an important aspect of peer evaluation (Edwards, 1986). Peer evaluation provides the observee with ownership of the evaluation. This, according to Edwards, allows for quality and accuracy in recording and reporting data and in turn, eliminates the tension and anxiety that occurs in most traditional bureaucratic evaluation processes.

Christen and Murphy (1987) contend that freedom is an important aspect of peer evaluations. They claim that peer evaluations lead to: (a) open dialogue between teachers; (b) experimentation in teaching techniques; and (c)

more freedom in instruction. They also suggest that as professionals, teachers view peer evaluations as a responsibility that they have for their profession. Teachers *desire* to exercise control and be professionally involved in their careers.

Wise et al. (1986), in their analysis of teacher evaluation programs in thirty-two school districts, conclude that "teacher involvement and responsibility [in the evaluation process] improves the quality of teacher evaluation" (p. 11). It is their contention that peer evaluation/peer assistance greatly strengthens a school district's capacity to evaluate and supervise teachers effectively. Teachers provide additional time and expertise to the supervisory function.

Teachers involved in peer evaluation are more likely to accept the peer process and be willing to participate again (Benzley et al., 1985). Those teachers who are not involved in a peer program are more reluctant to participate on any terms (Kauchak, Peterson & Driscoll, 1983).

Benzley et al. (1985) suggest that the reason teachers are willing to participate again in peer evaluations is due to the *organizational context* of the schools in which they teach. In schools where shared governance is a norm, an environment is created for shared responsibilities.

There are benefits to administrators as well as teachers when teachers are involved in peer evaluation. Administrators have additional time to devote to problem areas, incompetent teachers and general administrative duties (Manning, 1986). The author notes that principals will have more time to devote to these functions as peer assessment replaces traditional evaluations.

Thus, the principal's role is enhanced.

Darling-Hammond (1986) states that peer review in practice can improve the accuracy, fairness, and relevance of evaluation and staff development activities with improvement gains for administrators, teachers and most importantly, the students.

Major Studies

Pfeifer (1987) examined the effectiveness of three school districts that were involved in peer evaluation programs. Through the review of all relevant documents as well as on site interviews, the effectiveness of the three district programs was determined.

Pfeifer contends that three major themes emerged as critically important in all three districts: (a) professional involvement; (b) collegial relationships; and (c) blending of bureaucratic and professional authority.

Pfeifer suggests that teacher involvement was crucial in the planning and implementation of the peer process in all three districts. The three districts "provide strong evidence supporting the importance of extensive teacher involvement in both the planning of a peer process, and of course, its implementation" (p. 27).

Pfeifer further suggests that research demonstrates that successful peer evaluation systems match and adapt to the existing collegial relationships within the district.

Lastly, in this study it was determined that each school found a way to blend professional and bureaucratic conceptions of authority in order to

initiate and maintain an effective peer evaluation process.

In summarizing the research from the project Pfeifer contends that:

1. Teacher involvement in the design and implementation of the peer evaluation program is critical. It symbolizes commitment, addresses the issue of control and maximizes expertise within the district.

2. Collegial relations represent the starting point for peer involvement in evaluations.

3. Peer involvement in evaluation must be mixed with bureaucratic controls if valid summative judgments are to result.

Pfeifer (1987) suggests that there are several implications for research, and also for school districts wanting to explore peer evaluation strategies.

1. Peers can become professionally involved in evaluations and maintain teacher support and commitment to the process.

2. The local level in the school district represents the proper unit of analysis for both research and experimentation.

3. Strong administrative leadership is required if peer evaluation is to be effective.

In an extensive study Wise et al. (1985) selected four school districts out of a possible thirty-two as representing diverse teacher evaluation processes. According to the authors the Toledo school district had the most exemplary plan out of the thirty-two studied.

In the Toledo School District the evaluation process is targeted on first-year teachers and teachers assigned to an intervention program. The consulting teachers (peers) confer with the interns and the assigned teachers once every two weeks for the length of the internship or intervention period. Four different administrators are involved in making the decision concerning an intervention program for a teacher.

The program's main goals are to promote individual professional growth

as well as provide a basis for making personnel decisions. The expert consulting teachers (selected by the Intern Review Board) both evaluate and assist first-year teachers. They also provide assistance upon request to teachers as well as act as consultants on a mandatory basis when a teacher is assigned to the intervention program. The Toledo program provides that teacher evaluators will both judge the quality of teaching proficiency as well as help the interns and assigned teachers in an effective manner.

Wise et al. (1985) claim that the role conflict theory received limited empirical support in their investigations and research in the Toledo system. The role conflict theory purports that an evaluator cannot act as both judge and helper. The judgmental relationships of evaluation inhibits trust and rapport that a helper needs to motivate a teacher to improve his/her performance. According to the authors the conflict outlined in this theory was minimized in the Toledo School District as a result of the assignment of various people to particular roles; that is, the principal and the consulting teachers acted as evaluator and helpers. The assistance function was assigned mainly to the consulting teachers who already had demonstrated competence in the area of teaching expertise.

Wise et al. (1985) suggests that the Toledo system takes the most comprehensive approach to ensuring reliability and validity. Reliability is insured by the: (a) use of a small group of evaluators in many schools, (b) frequent observations over a long period of time, and (c) limiting of the number of teachers to be evaluated and allowing the consulting teachers ample release time. Validity is insured by having the consulting teachers chosen by

administration and other teachers. They are then matched to the interns by teaching speciality. Furthermore they are required to document all teaching events, suggestions made, and reasons for outstanding or unsatisfactory ratings.

The utility of teacher evaluations is defined as how consistently and accurately the process measures minimal competence and degrees of competence (Wise et al., 1985). The authors contend that in this respect the Toledo program rates very highly. The evaluation process accomplishes two things. It ensures that only competent people enter the profession and, secondly, incompetent teachers are removed from the system if, after a designated period of time, they show no improvement.

The intervention program is unique in that marginal teachers may be involved in inservice training, employee assistance programs, and a school consultation program prior to being assigned to a consulting teacher. These programs and services received the full support of union officials who felt that staff morale has been raised (McCormick, 1985). The author claims that this is mainly due to the involvement of teachers in decision making, that is, decisions to help incompetent staff and decisions to get rid of staff members who show no improvement during the intervention program.

There are many benefits resulting from the Toledo Plan (McCormick, 1985). The author notes that one of the spin-off benefits is the revitalization of the consulting teachers. But, the true value of the program . . . "is seen in the attitudes of the teachers" (p. 23). Lawrence (1985a) contends that for the first time in the Toledo School District teachers have been able to assume the kind of

responsibility for their own evaluation and regulation, a task that is usually reserved for members of the medical or legal profession. "The awareness of what excellent teaching is (or is not) is the most significant change our program has made" (McCormick, 1985, p. 23),

The Toledo Plan has not been without fault or controversy (Lawrence, 1985b). Principals were very skeptical of the evaluation program. This, the author notes, was a result of the principals not immediately grasping the significance of the reforms. Secondly, the principals viewed the whole program as a threat to their power and influence. During the second and third year of the program the attitudes of the principals changed drastically. They realized they could exert leadership without the inevitable employer--employee clash or evaluations.

Wise et al. (1985) suggest that the Toledo teachers have gained in other ways as well. Besides evaluating interns and providing intervention measures for experienced teachers, Toledo teachers make decisions concerning inservice programs, textbooks and curriculum to be used, professional leave budget, and sabbatical applications.

Gitlin (1989) conducted an extensive research project involving twenty volunteer teachers who participated in a peer evaluation project. Following workshops and trial run situations the teachers participated in eight evaluations as observers and eight evaluations as an observees. The post-conferences were videotaped and transcribed and along with other pertinent documents, were analyzed. Gitlin notes that from the analysis of the data three major themes emerged: (a) teachers altered their views about

evaluation; (b) they challenged school practices; and (c) they took steps to change school relations.

Altered Views

1. Teachers began to see evaluations as an enabling process.
2. Teachers were willing to allow evaluators to observe common place teaching practices.
3. Teachers began to develop a more reciprocal arrangement in their evaluations rather than fault finding.
4. Post-conferences became a time of sharing and advising (reciprocally).
5. Teachers began to rethink the meaning of evaluation and its role in school life.

Challenging School Practices

Gitlin (1989) suggested that teachers in this study moved from a technocratic framework (where value issues are reduced to technical questions) to a realm in which they began to pursue and pose questions that examined political, ethical and moral questions of schooling. Several conclusions were drawn from the study:

1. Teachers began to deal with issues that went beyond control over students.
2. Conferences began with technocratic-minded questions but generally ended with questions dealing with the political, moral and ethical values of school.
3. The evaluations allowed teachers to examine the traditional student-teacher roles and question the boundaries that define them.
4. The evaluations allowed teachers to question the *desirability* of various teaching techniques and skills.
5. In the post conferences various classroom structures were seriously questioned (e.g., textbooks, rationalized curriculum and school-based discipline systems).

Changing School Relations

Gitlin (1989) discovered that horizontal evaluations allowed teachers to:

1. Confront various ideological barriers that reinforce common place school relations.
2. Allowed teachers to develop a reciprocal relationship with parents as well as with their teachers.
3. Encouraged teachers to 'carry on' peer evaluations into the following year.

Models for Peer Evaluations

A new model for teacher evaluation was proposed by Ban and Soudah (1978). Their model hinges on the concept of peer evaluation and its incorporation within the context of staff development. They claim that successful application of the peer evaluation model depends upon the professional staff orientation to and support for all facets of the model.

Ban and Soudah suggest that the chief beneficiary of peer evaluation is the teacher. In this model, teachers have the additional responsibilities of assuming an evaluative function relative to their colleagues. All teachers are expected to serve as change agents, evaluators, and as a source of ideas for assisting teachers with specific instructional deficiencies. "Teachers, too, will assume the role of learners" (p. 27). Teachers will be involved in observing competent as well as incompetent teachers. This process "should result in a healthy exchange of perspective on the part of the peer evaluator" (p. 27).

Darling-Hammond (1986) proposes a peer review model for evaluation. The function of the peer review is to provide an "ongoing review of the practice by professionals who also play a major role in establishing the policies which, in large measure, determine practice" (p. 549). According to Darling-

Hammond the peer review system will provide for monitoring of organizational activities as well as for establishing continuous dialogue among the teachers themselves. The basic elements proposed by Darling-Hammond (1986) are based upon the following general principles:

1. Selection and induction into teaching should be peer dominated.
2. Periodic review of teachers should be conducted by expert peers. The results of the reviews and self-evaluation should guide future professional development.
3. Special forms and support systems should exist for referral of apparent cases of incompetence, or unprofessional performance.
4. Peer review should be ongoing and include all teachers.
5. Teachers should collectively control technical decisions about their work (p. 544).

In Darling-Hammond's model, new teachers are evaluated and monitored by master teachers. This system allows new entrants to be monitored and screened so that the need for ongoing supervision is minimized. The consulting teachers provide the time, subject matter expertise and sound documentation for professional evaluation of beginning teachers to take place.

Darling-Hammond (1986) proposes the periodic review of all teachers by a panel of expert teachers. This activity, according to the author, should be explicitly aimed at the continuous promoting of professional development rather than identifying the incompetent teacher. Nonetheless, peer review of the incompetent teacher is also an important component of the Darling-Hammond model. She suggests that this component provides a mechanism that will ensure that procedures are fair, supports are adequate, and

assistance is offered to the teacher in trouble. Teachers in this process do not make summative decisions concerning the welfare of their peers but rather collaborate with administrators to ensure that professional assistance is provided.

Darling-Hammond (1986) suggests that the peer review format outlined in this model will allow teachers to discuss concrete problems concerning teaching, reduce teacher isolation, produce student learning gains, increase teacher satisfaction and improve teacher retention.

In the self-appraisal component, teachers would use data from an array of sources in order to make judgments about their own teaching and thus be able to set goals for the future.

The Stanford Collegial Evaluation Program was developed by Dornbusch and his colleagues after a decade of extensive research. Prior to their research, Dornbusch and Scott (1975) determined that an effective evaluation program within an organization is determined by the evaluation of the tasks performed by the people within the organization. They also determined that in order to evaluate a teacher's creative teaching, curriculum design and its appropriateness to students, first hand observations and evaluations of the practice were required. Like no other program the Stanford Collegial Evaluation Program involves only teachers evaluating each other. This role is reciprocal and the goal is one of mutual assistance.

What the team proposed was a system of formative evaluations that would open up the doors of the classroom to frequent and ongoing observations. This they felt would help create an ongoing dialogue among teachers about

instructional and curricular aspects of their work.

The Stanford Evaluation System is unique in that it is flexible and the process is reciprocal. That is, teachers decide the criteria to use in evaluating each other and the program can be used at all levels. It is also flexible in terms of the number of peers that can participate.

Roper and Hoffman (1986) outline the seven interdependent steps in the Stanford Program: (a) choosing a partner; (b) selecting criteria; (c) self assessment; (d) evaluation by students; (e) observations; (f) conferences and planning a program for improvement. Each of these is described very briefly.

Choosing a Partner

The authors recommend that choosing a partner can be done on a voluntary basis, be assigned, or involve some other convenient method. The key is that the partners have mutual respect for each other.

Selecting Criteria

Selecting criteria is a five-step process:

1. Identify a pool of possible criteria.
2. Select the criteria independently.
3. Agree upon criteria (agreement must involve all participants).
4. Check criteria for specificity and observability.
5. Note criteria on an observation and self-assessment form.

Self and Student Assesment

Participants in the Stanford Collegial Evaluation Program complete two forms. One parallels with the evaluation done by a colleague. The other parallels evaluation by the students. Teachers compare their own perceptions

with those of a colleague and with those of their students.

Observing a Colleague

The critical component in the program comprises the observations. Each participant is required to be involved in a minimum of two reciprocal observations.

Conferences

There are three conferences. The first one occurs shortly after the first observation. The purpose is to mutually report what was observed and to deal with any discrepancies. The second conference occurs shortly after the second observation and deals with the area of improvement. This is to give the teacher some concrete ideas on how to improve.

Plan for Improvement

It is recommended that all teachers review pertinent documents and also note their strengths and weaknesses.

The final conference between the collegial pairs is for the purpose of helping each other develop an improvement plan or a plan for professional development. During this session partners review and analyze their major strengths and weaknesses and then develop a contingency plan that will help eliminate the weak areas of teaching. It is also a time to develop a method for evaluating progress according to the new plan.

Roper and Hoffman note that during the field tests major restructuring as well as minor restructuring of the classroom and teaching occurred in *all* cases.

Roper and Hoffman (1986) contend that the Stanford Collegial Evaluation

Program can be of benefit to all teachers because it is based upon the guiding principals of legitimacy, clarity, and visibility. In their concluding remarks, Roper and Hoffman (1986) emphasize the importance of collegiality.

> . . . our broader goal is the establishment of collegial relationships between teachers as an essential and abiding characteristic of the profession. We believe this characteristic holds the most promise as a means of obtaining effective and self generating professional renewal (p. 32).

Conclusion

The literature on peer evaluation suggests that if evaluation, especially formative evaluation, is to improve teacher performance then peer evaluation is one method that may be employed. While it can lead to peer pressure which can and usually serves as a positive force in improving teaching, peer evaluation can and does expose teachers to successful teaching. It is also suggested that both the observer as well as the observee in a peer evaluation process can learn from the peer process.

The literature also clearly indicates that there are two types of peer classroom evaluations--formative (designed to provide teachers with feedback about their teaching) and summative (a formal procedure for hiring, retention/promotion or firing). By far the majority of writers and the research stresses the importance of teachers and their peers being involved in formative evaluations rather than summative evaluations. Christen and Murphy (1987) summarize the literature as follows:

> . . . it is necessary to include both systems as part of the professional growth plan of faculty members. Our recommendation is to have teachers provide formative evaluations for one another and to have administrators conduct summative evaluations as directed by the

schoolboard (p. 13).

The entire framework of the literature review on peer evaluation rests on one basic overriding assumption. School managers and teachers alike function best in an environment characterized by mutual support, by respect and concern for personal growth and for the well being of staff and students. Where such an environment exists, peer evaluation offers a great deal of potential for helping teachers learn to teach better.

Further, the research has shown that teachers can and will help each other perform better on their jobs. Related to this is the fact that teachers cannot participate in a peer evaluation program half heartedly. The literature emphasizes the importance of the commitment teachers must make if they are to use peer evaluation as a means for improving teaching. They must commit themselves to doing a thorough and careful job at every step in the process.

The literature and studies included in this review indicate that for a peer evaluation system to be effective, extensive involvement by teachers in the planning and implementation of the evaluation process is necessary. The literature also suggests that without the implicit support of administration it is unlikely that the program will succeed.

While teacher involvement and administrative support are necessary, it is paramount that school districts arrive at a unique approach based upon the existing collegial relationships within the school district. From the literature on collegiality and peer supervision as well as from the body of literature on peer evaluations, it is clear that peer involvement cannot be forced upon the teaching profession; it must evolve and grow out of a desire to participate.

The important issues of validity and reliability are not dealt with in the

literature on peer observations. For example, Darling-Hammond (1986) in her classic article on a proposal for teacher evaluation dealt solely with the purposes and methods of peer evaluation. Like Darling-Hammond, most authors do not address the validity/reliability issue.

In conclusion, several encouraging concepts emerge from the research studies on peer evaluations that should guide future research. First, research indicates that peers *can* become involved in peer evaluations while maintaining teacher support and commitment to the process. Second, research also suggests that peer evaluation will meet with resistance if the process is not adapted, modified and matched to local norms. Existing conditions must serve as a starting point for reform. Thus, peer evaluations may not be for all districts. Other processes may need to precede such an initiative. Third, the research and literature would seem to suggest that in districts where teachers are involved in peer evaluations individually and collectively, teachers in these districts play a more professional role than they do in districts where supervision of teachers occurs through more traditional channels.

CHAPTER FOUR

A CASE STUDY ON PEER SUPERVISION

Introduction

This chapter contains an analysis and commentary of a case study involving two teachers who participated in a peer supervision project. The analysis of the peer supervision project is based partly on the Horizontal Evaluation Model (Gitlin & Goldstein, 1987) and partly on the related literature on peer supervision. The journal that I analyzed was written by Mr. S (fictitious name), a graduate student at the University of Lethbridge. Mr. M (fictitious name), the other member of the dyad was a full time teacher at a high school in southern Alberta.

Horizontal Evaluation Model

The Horizontal Evaluation Model was developed and refined by Gitlin and Bullough (1987). This model is based upon a five step clinical supervision model (Acheson & Gall, 1980) while building upon its strengths and correcting its major weaknesses. "This model links the concern for behavior to what teachers think and feel and to the institutional constraints under which they work" (p. 42).

The aim of horizontal evaluation is to have teachers become students of their own practice. In other words, it aims to enable teachers to recognize areas in need of improvement and to make appropriate changes. This, Gitlin and Bullough claim is only possible when teachers gain an understanding of their practice. The objective, therefore, "is to have teachers see practice as reflecting choices about educational values over which they have a measure of

control" (p. 43). Gitlin and Bullough further suggest that in the schools this implies that teachers work with their peers to determine why particular decisions are made, as well as the desirability of these decisions in relation to a normative and fluid framework.

In order that the teacher may accomplish these aims, intentions must be *shared* and *clarified*, and then analyzed in relation to practice. Emphasis is to be placed on understanding the aims as evolving in relationship to practice.

Gitlin and Bullough (1987) outline several tools that guide the discussion of the relation between the intentions and particular outcomes. These include: a) communication analysis; b) historical practice; c) alternative methods; and d) challenge statements.

Communication Analysis

In the horizontal model communication analysis refers specifically to a process that uncovers the prejudgments embedded in speech. Gitlin and Bullough uses Habermas' (1976) model, which identified four validity claims that are present in every speech act. These are described very briefly.

Comprehensibility

This claim simply questions whether or not a teacher's statement is understandable.

Truth

This claim allows the peer to raise a series of questions about the accuracy of a statement and then come to some agreement on the facts of the situation.

Sincerity

This leads to questions about whether or not what is stated reflects the teacher's actual feelings and perceptions.

Appropriateness

This claim allows the peer to separate 'what is' from 'what ought to be', determining if the labeling is justifiable or right?

Gitlin and Bullough (1987) suggest that it is not necessary to ask questions which reflect every claim. What is important is that one claim be dealt with while being aware of the others.

Historical Perspective

The aim of the historical perspective is to allow the teacher to see current practices in relation to past events. Historical perspectives may include the histories of teachers as well as the histories of students. The purpose is not to find better solutions to problems but rather to expose general themes that help to mold classroom life.

Alternative Methods

The purpose of considering alternative methods in the Horizontal Evaluation Model is not to identify other practices that work but rather "to illuminate the educational implications to taking a different approach" (Gitlin & Bullough, 1987, p. 45). This allows both the observer as well as the observee to consider the educational possibilities inherent in a given situation and to help them make decisions based upon an understanding of the values reflected

in the choices.

Challenge Statements

The final horizontal technique is the challenge statement. Gitlin and Bullough (1987) contend that the purpose of the statement is to have teachers consider issues related to the appropriateness claim. This can be a counter-claim which allows the teachers involved to gain a deeper understanding of the structure that underlines classroom decisions.

In the Horizontal Evaluation Model all statements can be issued by the observed teacher as well as the observing teacher. It is imperative that both parties involved share the task of constructing a dialogue that will enhance their understanding of teaching and learning.

Analysis

In a peer supervision project some interesting data emerges from journal entries that directly relates to issues raised in the Horizontal Evaluation Model. During the first day of a two day workshop, Mr. M and Mr. S discussed the peer supervision project and it was decided that Mr. M was interested in 'teaching styles'. According to Mr. S, Mr. M "seemed reluctant to identify any aspect of his teaching that he felt could be worked on" (p. 2).

Mr. M was not concerned about areas that needed improvement but rather his concern was centered on the technical issues of teaching. (This concern appears throughout the whole journal). Mr. S's concern was for Mr. M to "pick something that he thought would help him improve his teaching"

(p. 2). This concept is in line with the major purposes of peer supervision and with the primary aim expressed by Gitlin and Bullough (1987). They suggest that the primary aim of horizontal evaluation is to have "individuals capable of recognizing areas in need of improvement and of making appropriate changes" (p. 43).

Upon completion of the two day workshop Mr. S had time to reflect and thus realized that the peer supervision project was not starting off on the 'right foot'. He notes in his journal:

> My understanding of supervision, or a least proper supervision, is that the teacher should determine and identify areas of concern or interest. Then the supervisor was to help and facilitate the teacher by gathering raw data so the teacher could use this information for self analysis and self evaluation to determine what steps need to be taken to improve their own teaching performance. (p. 3).

Mr. S's greatest concern was for Mr. M to determine what was going to transpire during the project. Mr. M was to determine what was to be changed and worked on. This never occurred during the entire peer supervision project.

On the first visit to the school Mr. S was able to spend some time with administration. The vice-principal of the junior high spent an hour or so talking about various concerns but never mentioned the peer supervision project. This encounter, as well as the many other occasions in which Mr. S and the other graduate students had the opportunity to deal with the administration clearly indicates that they were in what Smyth (1983) calls a *negative support position.*

The first meeting and observation that Mr. S had with Mr. M was really no different than the workshop. Mr. M didn't really want to focus on the

specifics of his teaching. His only stated concern was 'teaching styles'.

It is very typical for teachers involved in supervision to avoid the real issues in teaching. Technical issues such as teaching styles are safer to discuss and explore because teachers can talk about them easily and endlessly without having to question any educational assumptions and premises that they hold. This is exactly what Mr. M did. He immediately involved Mr. S in a technical issue and thus avoided any discussion of his educational philosophies or intentions or actual practices.

Mr. S's concern was to build a trusting relationship as early as possible so that Mr. M could improve upon his teaching. This is supported by the research of Wylie and Howey (1981) who suggest that teachers who work together, and *trust* each other, can and will provide each other with accurate, precise, and beneficial feedback concerning their behaviors in the classroom. Mr. S not only wanted to collaborate with Mr. M but sincerely felt that he had a responsibility to help Mr. M grow as a professional teacher (Elliot & Chidley, 1985).

In the May 3rd entry of the journal the key to the subsequent failure of the project is broached. In the post conference session at the end of the day Mr. S questions Mr. M as to what they should be doing. Mr. M's response is, "you're the academic, you make the decision" (p. 42).

This, according to Gitlin and Bullough's model, is a key to failure in a peer supervision process. The concern was about what could be called a process -- product form of supervision. One person is the expert and the other follows. Coupled with this was the difficulty that both peers had in this and

conferences; neither teacher was able to break away from the belief that supervision/evaluation is fault-finding and expert driven.

It is possible that Mr. S was trying to be non-directive with a peer who probably required direction and in a sense was looking for direction. Did Mr. S ever question what type of teacher he was supervising? According to Glickman (1986), research evidence suggests that the effectiveness of different supervisory behaviors and approaches is dependent on the characteristics of individual teachers. That applies to the observer as well as the observee.

Mr. M, as it turned out was a reluctant participant from the initial day of the training workshop. He was not willing to share or expose his inner self as a person or teacher. The successful dyads according to Gitlin and Bullough (1987) were openly self-critical, thus allowing themselves and each other to reflect upon practice. Mr. S and Mr. M as a peer supervision dyad may have been doomed to failure.

The issue of trust must be questioned in this dyad. Most writers and researchers in the field of supervision and especially clinical supervision stress the fact that trust must be developed and nurtured over time. In a peer supervision process this must, to some extent, be in place prior to the peer process taking place.

In the May 8th entry -- Mr. S again stresses the fact that he didn't want to be directive, but notes:

> I was fighting the urge to be directive because I had already identified in my mind that he needed a lot of work in the planning and organizational end of teaching (p. 44).

Mr. S was attempting to use a form of clinical supervision in his project. The

model itself might be partially to blame for the difficulties that Mr. S and Mr. M were having. Gitlin and Bullough (1987) contend that the clinical supervision model, specifically, with its emphasis on objective observation, and the failure of the model to provide an explicit means for analyzing the relationship between what a teacher intends to do and what actually transpires is inadequate. The authors claim that the clinical supervision model does not provide enough safeguards and this elevates the importance of technical questions and issues. Mr. S didn't want this to be the case. "I didn't want to be the expert and him the novice, I wanted a horizontal relationship" (p. 44).

Mr. S took a new approach for the next session of lessons (May 9th). "I thought that if I could demonstrate some hot lessons I could earn the respect of [Mr. M] as a teacher and model some good lessons" (p. 45).

Mr. S's rationale was to provide a good model for Mr. M and thus raise larger questions about teaching. Skoog (1980), in a peer supervision research project, contends that both the observer and the observee by observing each other gain insight, acquire knowledge and strategies for self supervision and improvement. Goldsberry (1981) suggests that in the peer supervision process the benefits that occur are as much for the professional development of the observer as for the one being observed.

It is likely, Mr. S was reasoning that through modeling Mr. M would become involved in the peer process and the project would be under way. As Smyth (1986) suggests, teachers involved in the peer process will eventually raise larger questions about the means and ends of teaching and instructional

frameworks.

On May 10th Mr. M indicated that they had a successful post conference. Mr. M was impressed with Mr. S's teaching, but at the same time would not talk about his own teaching. Mr. S was being openly self-critical and thus allowing himself and his partner to reflect upon practice. This is the first instance of any type of communication analysis.

In analyzing the previous week of peer supervision Mr. S was determined to sort out where the project was heading. Mr. S indicated that Mr. M was probably concerned about losing power and control over his class. This concern, he speculated, had caused Mr. M to retract and become distant.

This is typical of an unsuccessful peer relationship. Gitlin and Bullough (1987) suggest that in the unsuccessful dyads the "teachers' relationship actually deteriorated as they continued to meet. If they ever respected one another, by study's end all respect was lost . . ." (p. 50).

Secondly, Gitlin and Bullough suggest that in unsuccessful dyads one of the partners usually does not view the other as a legitimate source of feedback and thus they are not interested in a discussion as a source of increasing understanding. If a discussion occurs it is usually on technical issues. "Unfortunately, because these are safe issues, neither habit nor common sense were challenged" (p. 51).

On May 15th Mr. S asked Mr. M to observe his lessons, he refused. Mr. M was not interested in a mutual peer relationship in which observation, analysis, discussion, and reflection were part of the process. Perhaps Mr. M felt that the situation was good for providing a model of professional relations

but highly demanding (Lipsitz, 1983). In fact, Lipsitz's research clearly shows that beginning first year teachers like Mr. M feel great pressure when working collaboratively with experienced personnel.

During the post conference session Mr. M suggested that Mr. S should 'evaluate him'. Mr. M was unable to break away from the belief that supervision or evaluation is fault-finding and expert driven. Tell me what I'm doing wrong -- you're the expert!" was the message Mr. M was sending.

The next positive aspect in this whole project occurred in the May 15th post conference. Mr. S noted in his journal "we talked about each of the students in all his classes. I was impressed with how well he knew each one" (p. 51).

Gitlin and Bullough (1987) stress the importance of the historical perspective in a horizontal evaluation relationship. Included in this perspective is the analysis of the histories of the teachers as well as the students. This they claim allows teachers to consider their proper role in the school program.

The post conference on May 18th between Mr. M and Mr. S centered mainly on Mr. S's teaching. Again the "conversation centered around my teaching, the school climate, and student attitudes" (p. 55). One other positive aspect in the project according to Mr. S was that collegiality was improving. "It seemed that we were getting to be better friends all the time and I could feel that we were becoming colleagues" (p. 55-56). Colleagueship is a benefit of peer supervision as purported by Alfonso (1977). What Mr. S realized, as well, is that by working together to understand and improve life in the classroom,

teachers reduce the "endemic uncertainties" (Lortie, 1975, p. 134) that ordinarily make a teacher's hold on success so tenuous. Mr. S was able to detect and celebrate accomplishments due to the collaborative efforts with Mr. M. However, these success were short lived.

Mr. S, in doing some reflecting and analysis of the second week of peer supervision realized that Mr. M was not interested in the process . . . [Mr. M] "wasn't even reading my scripts. How could he give a self-appraisal of his teaching? I thought to myself that all along he has wanted me to evaluate him and now I think we have enough rapport that I can do it" (p. 56).

The third week of the peer supervision project for Mr. S and Mr. M was virtually the same as the previous two weeks. The only difference that can be noted is that the relationship deteriorated to the extent where Mr. M was no longer interested in being part of the process. Mr. S states that "he [Mr. M] said he felt that there was a lack on continuity in his classes, especially Science 11 and that he wanted to be alone with his classes the last three weeks to prepare them for final exams" (p. 59). Mr. M had finally found a legitimate reason for discontinuing the process.

Mr. M was not interested in establishing trust or collegiality, or in working collaboratively with Mr. S. These are the main components of any peer supervision model and they were not evident in this project. Another contributing factor could have been the school environment, (i.e., lack of administrative support and the negative reactions from peers). One of the findings from McFaul and Cooper's (1984) research suggests that if teachers avoid analyzing their behavior and the environment is hostile, peer clinical

supervision is impotent.

One of the comments that Mr. S made after every post conference is that Mr. M talked about everything except his teaching. In earlier examples Mr. S notes that Mr. M often commented on the administration. In light of the Horizontal Evaluation Model these concerns are relevant. Gitlin and Bullough (1987) suggest that "this model links the concern for behavior to what teachers *think* and *feel* and to the institutional constraints under which they work" (p. 43). Mr. M obviously had a number of concerns linked to the local authorities, the administration, the school, and the students. Mr. M was attempting to justify his teaching behavior in light of the educational constraints under which he was functioning.

In the final post conference Mr. S and Mr. M discussed the project and some final recommendations which Mr. S wanted to include in his project. Mr. S suggests that finally Mr. M began to open up:

> It wasn't until this meeting that Mr. M opened up at all and expressed how much he had not wanted to be in this project. He said that he felt that he had to become involved. He was resentful that there wasn't anything tangible in it for the teacher (p. 64).

Saphier (1985) in a year long research project on peer supervision reports that for peer supervision to be successful there must be a commitment to the process as well as to the administration. The difficulty that Mr. M had was that he was committed to the administration but it appears administration was not committed to the project. Mr. M never resolved this conflict. Gitlin and Bullough (1987) note a similar problem in their study concerning the unsuccessful dyad:

. . . because they had committed themselves to complete the study,

> they kept meeting and talking. When problems were identified and explanations required, common sense and excuses ruled the day. When they occasionally did describe a personal concern, they focused on issues which were of a technical nature (p. 51).

Both participants in the dyad (Mr. S and Mr. M) reacted in a similar manner. Mr. M felt pressured in to becoming a part of the project and because of that commitment he decided to stay. On the other hand, Mr. S was committed to finishing the project because it was the final course for his degree.

The opening paragraph in the *Summary and Recommendations* section discloses the importance that Mr. S placed upon the values, prejudices, ideas and preconceptions that he brought into the project concerning teaching. The 'historical perspective' was of great importance to Mr. S. He realized that because of the enriched understanding Mr. M had of his students, he taught them the way he did. The methods were justified in this particular instance.

Mr. S was concerned from the beginning that he was going to "make a commitment to trust and be open and honest with [Mr. M]" (p. 65). A primary difficulty and the one major stumbling block in the project was that Mr. M never felt the same or reciprocated in any manner. Mr. S noted "I think that both the teacher and supervisor should be involved on a voluntary basis because they are ready for change and that they are interested in personal development" (p. 65). This thesis is supported by Cook (1985). She supports the concept of voluntary participation even though the "teachers [that] may contribute the most to supervision or benefit the most may not be those who volunteer" (p. 13). The one recommendation she makes is that "if the process if desired, then it should be required throughout the school or district" (p. 14).

Another concern that Mr. S had was that Mr. M was not willing to talk about his teaching, and he felt that Mr. M's greatest concerns were to determine what his 'teaching style' was and to be *evaluated*. Darling-Hammond (1986) in outlining the difficulties of present bureaucratic systems of evaluation claims that these systems attend to the form of teaching rather than the substance. Mr. M was interested only in the form as evidenced by comments such as, "What is my teaching style?", and "You're the academic you decide what the project should be about".

Mr. S claims that Mr. M wanted him to take control and establish a vertical relationship. As Project Coordinator, I agreed with Mr. M at the time. I thought Mr. S should have been more directive in his approach. Viewing it from Glickman's (1985) perspective in terms of a continum from a non-directive approach to a directive approach, I agreed Mr. M might have benefitted from a more directive approach.

I also disagree with the notion that this conflict between Mr. M and Mr. S was the main cause for the demise of the peer supervision project. I think there are several other reasons why the project between Mr. M and Ms. S failed, briefly stated, these are:

1. The inability of Mr. M to be open, honest and sincere in a peer relationship.
2. Mr. M's reluctance to participate right from the beginning.
3. Mr. S's consuming and relentless determination to be non-directive.
4. The inability on Mr. S's part to be flexible and eclectic in his peer-supervisory approach.

Mr. S's concern over the fact that "teaching and doing demonstration

lessons can backfire" (p. 68) is not supported by the literature on peer supervision or peer evaluation. Skoog (1980) suggests that *both* the observed and the observee, in observing each other, acquire knowledge, insights and strategies for self-improvement. Alfonso (1982) contends that colleagueship and collaborative instruction promotes instructional innovating. Mattaliano (1982) espoused that peers receive gratification and strength from teaching colleagues. Ban and Soudah (1979) suggested that in their research, it was determined that through the exposure to both successful and unsuccessful teaching, teachers were invigorated in their own teaching. Schonberger (1986) contends that teachers can learn from each other by observing each other and exchanging pedagogical techniques and ideas.

Another problem and concern that Mr. S had was one of time:

> One of the main problems with the project was that it was so compressed and so intense. We were given a two day workshop to go over our autobiographies, get to know each other, and plan our project. Then we ran the project for every day for three weeks straight (p. 68).

This was probably a realistic problem in this project due to the time restraints placed upon the course during a summer session. But in a traditional setting Roper and Hoffman (1986) suggested that time and effort can be invested only if the peers involved think that it is of value to themselves and to their institution. They also claim that "lack of time is a symptom, not a cause, for the more basic problem of lack of support for colleagiality" (p. 18).

In a research study on peer evalulation, Benzley et al (1985) found that the amount of time and energy required for a peer evaluation process was far more than the teachers had ever anticipated.

Mr. S in reassessing and reflecting upon his experience in the peer supervision project addressed some very valid points:

1. The main fault I can see in myself in retrospect was that I wasn't assertive enough.

2. I believe that my fear of being judgemental and dominating the project may have limited my effectiveness as a supervisor.

3. I needed to take more control of the project and assume a greater leadership role and do what was best for the project . . .

4. I think I made a mistake by teaching a complete unit and teaching every day.

5. I should have realized that [Mr. M] was a first year teacher and probably needed a vertical relationship . . . he needed a mentor, not a peer.

6. My first mistake in the project was that I didn't get matched up to the proper partner for me.

7. The only alternative strategies I can visualize that would have improved [Mr. M's] teaching would have changed the project from peer supervision to supervision in a vertical relationship.

8. I don't think a peer supervision project can work unless you have compatible pairs.

9. I think it is important for the supervisor to remain flexible and if necessary change their supervisory style to suit the needs of the teacher they are supervising (pp. 72-75).

In light of the concepts in the Horizontal Evaluation Model the dyad which I have written about was a failure. Not only from this perspective but from the various constructs presented in the literature, and Mr. M's admission of failure and Mr. S's own admission of failure, the peer process failed.

We can never be certain as to why the partners in the failed dyad struggled the way they did or why the relationship in the dyad was the way it

was. Perhaps Mr. S is correct in stating that a different pairing under different conditions may have produced better results. Had I, an administrator, or the professors in charge, provided more feedback to Mr. M and Mr. S about the quality of their relationship, they might have altered it.

And too, it may have been that the training period and the *warming up stage* were inadequate.

In summary, I conclude with Mr. S's final words:

> To make peer supervision work you need two people who want to be involved, who want to improve instruction, are willing to co-operate, and who are willing to change. Without these elements peer supervision simply will not be successful (p. 75).

CHAPTER FIVE

THE CONRICH PEER SUPERVISION PROJECT

The Project

The Conrich Peer Supervision Model was developed as a result of the "teachers' desire to improve the evaluation process" (Noseworthy, 1989, p. 3).

In the Rocky View School Division evaluation of a teacher's performance occurs in the traditional bureaucratic form. An administrator observes a teacher a sufficient number of times so that a written report can be submitted to Central Office for appraisal and review. The administrator's recommendations may or not be acted upon by the evaluated teacher and, thus, growth rarely occurs.

A new approach was sought by the staff at Conrich School. The teachers and administrators wanted a model that would "serve to enhance peer supervision, enrich and come at a minimal cost to [the] school board" (p. 3).

A 'Peer Supervision Triad' model was established. In this model a team approach is used. Instead of the administrator being the sole evaluator, fellow professionals, central office personnel, and other school based administrators help form the triad.

According to Noseworthy (1989) the development of the model was based upon the following needs:

1. The teachers desired a growth model that included input from fellow teachers as well as administrators.
2. The teachers desired to reduce the stress factor associated with traditional evaluation.
3. The teachers desired to change the negative connotations associated with evaluation.

4. The teachers desired a model that would give them ownership in the evaluation process and input into professional development activities.

5. The teachers desired to reduce the cellularity and isolation that is associated with traditional schooling.

It appeared that the Conrich Peer Supervision Model would and could satisfy the above mentioned needs. Noseworthy (1989) defined peer supervision "as a process through which small groups of educators provide one another with modeling, feedback, support and assistance for the purpose of fine-tuning existing teaching skills and acquiring new skills" (p. 3).

The principal initially observes every teacher in the school. Observations are made and a preliminary report of the teacher's performance is drafted. Growth goals are included in the original draft. Teachers are then given the option of being further supervised and evaluated by the principal or by a peer supervision team. If the 'Peer Supervision Triad' is chosen the observed teacher together with the principal choose the members of the triad.

The mandate of the Triad is to help the teacher attain the goals suggested by the principal in the preliminary observation report. The Triad also schedules the observations (minimum of three) and meetings for consultation.

The principal and/or area Superintendent meet periodically with the Triad. All final reports from the Triad and a self report from the evaluated teacher are submitted to the principal and area Superintendent. As well, the principal makes a final confirmation observation and a report is filed. All reports are submitted to the area Superintendent for review and filing.

In the peer supervision component of the Conrich Model, the supervisory process involved the use of a model proposed by Dr. David Townsend of the

University of Lethbridge. The model consists of three basic stages:

1. Pre conference -- the observee familiarizes the observer with the students, the objectives of the lesson and any other special circumstances. The teacher and the observer decide upon the purposes of the observation and the method of collecting data.

2. Observation -- the observer observes the lesson, using the data collection method previously chosen.

3. Post conference -- the observer and observee collaboratively discuss and analyze the collected data. Strategies are decided upon both for maintaining as well as enhancing instruction. Strategies vary according to the teacher's experience, level of confidence, level of trust and so on. Arrangements for future observations may be made.

Background to the Proposal

As a teacher and concerned educator, I chose to conduct and be involved in a mini-research project at the Conrich Elementary School. The task required that I interview the area Superintendent and the building principal as well as address the teachers who had been involved in the peer supervision/ evaluation project. The interviews were to elicit personal perceptions and general information about the project as well as set the stage for the administering of the survey to the teachers. It was hoped that the teachers who volunteered to participate would be open, honest and sincere about their experiences in the project so that a broad spectrum of responses could be obtained.

Statement of the Problem

There is a paucity of literature on peer supervision and peer evaluation. Thus, the numbers of schools, far less the numbers of school districts involved

in both peer supervision and peer evaluation, are limited. The Conrich Elementary School is one such school. They have devised, implemented and operationalized a peer supervision process within the framework of a peer evaluation structure.

Because change is slow to occur in the educational system, and innovative ideas have an limited currency, relevant questions about change need to be asked and responded to at critical times. The questions to be addressed in this study concern the perceptions that the teachers have of the peer supervision/evaluation process and its impact on their professional lives. This study sought to ascertain how teachers view the process after having participated for three years, two years or one year in a Peer Supervision Triad.

Significance of the Study

It is important to determine how peer supervision/evaluation is perceived by teachers after they have been involved in the process for the whole three year period. Also, it is of value to determine how the process is perceived by teachers who were relatively newcomers to the process and had not been involved since the inception of the peer supervision/evaluation program.

Procedure

Arrangements were made with the school principal and contact was made with the teachers who had been involved in the peer supervision/evaluation project at Conrich Elementary School. Preliminary observations and interviews were conducted.

The Selection

A request was made for all the teachers in Conrich Elementary School who had been involved in the peer supervision/evaluation project as well as those who chose peer evaluation for their formal evaluation to be present at a meeting in the latter part of March, 1990.

The method of sampling chosen was 'purposive sampling'. That is, the particular group of teachers was chosen because they were known to be of the type that was wanted (those involved in peer supervision/evaluation).

At the meeting my creative project was described and discussed as well as the research project and the questionnaire (Appendix A) related to it. Of the six questionnaires distributed, six positive responses were received by the due date.

The Instrument

The questionnaire was created by the author (Appendix A). An attempt was made to operationalize the major concepts from the literature on peer supervision and peer evaluation. The constructs were extrapolated and open-ended questions were developed. Generally, the questions attempted to assess the perceived effects of the peer supervision/evaluation process on the participating teachers. It was hoped that the open questions would make it possible for the respondents to say what they really felt. An attempt was made to make the questions clear, precise and unambiguous. The questions did not presume that the participants had more knowledge than in fact they actually had.

Participants were asked basic demographic information such as years of

teaching experience, grades taught, number of times evaluated/supervised and the number of peer supervision/evaluation observations. The respondents were asked to define the terms peer supervision and peer evaluation and perceptions were elicited about a peer that they supervised. As well as comments about the reasons for involvement in the process, barriers and limitations of the peer process, and the benefits of being involved in the supervisory process were explored. An open-ended request for additional comments and concerns gave the teachers an opportunity to express any thoughts that the questionnaire had not *identified.*

Pilot Survey

The questionnaire was field tested using two teachers who had been involved in a peer supervision project during the 1988-1989 school year. Corrections to the original draft of the questionnaire were made and the final draft (Appendix A) was composed.

Responses to the Questionnaire

Initial Training

When peer observers were asked to comment on what training if any they had prior to being involved in peer observations all but one respondent indicated specific training related to peer observations.

Most of the teachers attended workshops presented by Dr. David Townsend, the previous principal Dr. N. Minor, and the present principal of Conrich Elementary School, David Noseworthy. Typical comments included:

> Excellent inservice sessions were conducted by David Townsend, which I attended, and participated in . . . .

> I attended a workshop presented by our principal, David Noseworthy. Some of those sessions involved role-playing in the particular techniques necessary for effective peer support, observation and data gather . . . . I feel it is definitely required, if one is to become involved in the process.
>
> A workshop was also presented to the division by Dr. David Townsend providing us with further valuable information and tools for the implementation of this process.

One teacher had specific university training in clinical supervision and knowledge gained from attending a conference on evaluation:

> All those things [course, workshops and conference] went over conferencing, observation techniques, data collections, ...

Even though the training sessions and workshops were provided, these sessions only provided a foundation upon which the teachers could build:

> With these basic ideas as a foundation and with our own modifications, we derived our own form of pre-observation conferences and format for post-observation conferences and made the process workable for us.

This last comment stresses the importance of training when implementing new processes such a peer supervision in a school or school division. Townsend (1987) suggested that training is of utmost importance and one of the main components which must be in place for a model of peer supervision and evaluation to be effective.

Gitlin and Bullough (1987) suggested that the one failed dyad in their peer evaluation project was partly due to the lack of proper training. "And too, it may have been that the training was inadequate" (p. 51).

Defining Peer Supervision/Evaluation

The literature on peer supervision provides numerous examples and definitions of peer supervision. Each author has a different view of the concept

and operationalizes in a different manner. On the other hand, in the peer evaluation literature there are no apparent discrepancies; the term seems to connote the same meaning for all writers.

For most of the respondents, peer supervision is a non-judgemental process involving a peer for the purpose of enhancing teaching:

> Peer supervision enables a teacher to analyze his/he own performance with the help of a colleague.
>
> [Peer supervision] is working together with a colleague on honing our teaching skills.
>
> Is the process you go through with peers to enhance overall teaching ability.
>
> A peer collects data and observes [a] class and [a teacher's] teaching, focusing on whatever the teacher has requested information and feedback on.
>
> Peer supervision is a process in which one actually engages in pre observation and post observation conferences and observes a colleague (or is observed) in order to provide feedback from the data collected. Focus of the data is chosen by the one observed. Support and encouragement is offered and fostered. Self evaluation is promoted by perusal of data.

This last quote probably best describes peer supervision as envisaged by the Conrich Elementary School "It is a process whereby teachers determine their own goals and through a colleagial relationship work toward those goals" (Greene, Paul & Redlich, 1989). This teacher has clearly identified the major components of a peer supervision model: a) intervisitations, b) conferencing, and c) critical reflection.

What most of the respondents emphasized was the non-judgemental aspect of peer supervision. This position is clearly espoused by one teacher:

> The peer is a non judgemental observer who merely presents feedback in the form of concrete data.

Defining peer evaluation presented some difficulties. The following responses indicate some of the perceptions:

> I find it difficult to define [the] peer evaluation process when I did not participate in one.

> We don't do peer evaluations [of each other].

One teacher viewed the term from the traditional bureaucratic approach:

> In this process there would be an [administrator] involved and one's teaching would be evaluated and a formal report written.

Not surprisingly, one of the respondents viewed peer supervision and peer evaluation as being similar:

> To me these terms have always referred to the same thing.

Another teacher crossed out the word 'peer' and substituted 'self' and then proceeded with the following definition:

> The teacher analyzes the data and uses the information for future planning, introspection, and change.

For one of the respondents, semantics were critically important:

> This is a much more judgemental approach, as is defined by the term evaluation. The observer must make subjective judgements on performance, techniques and teaching strategies.

One teacher expressed no personal reaction to the term peer evaluation.

Reasons for Involvement

To clarify reasons for participation in a peer supervision evaluation process with fellow teachers, teachers were asked to list at least three reasons for getting involved . . . . Some were evidently interested in the colleagial aspect of the peer process:

> [The] ideas interested me, working closely with respected colleagues.

I wanted to develop a better rapport with colleagues.

[I saw it as a] chance to see other teachers working.

Another common reason was the desirability of having ownership of the evaluation process:

> I wanted to become involved and claim ownership of my particular evaluation process.
>
> To develop a sense of ownership of your own evaluation.
>
> [The reason for involvement in peer supervision is] ownership of [your] own evaluation.

These teachers were concerned about their professional growth and the impact this would have on their students:

> [I thought I would see] improved teacher techniques and awareness with a result in long term benefits for students' overall education.
>
> I wanted to use the data to benefit my students and expand my professional growth.

The theme that is most prevalent in the responses to the 'involvement question' is that of instructional improvement:

> Improved teacher techniques and awareness . . . .
>
> I wanted to become more aware of my <u>strengths</u> and/or weaknesses as a teacher and thus improve.
>
> To hopefully improve teaching techniques, teaching skills, classroom climate . . . .

One teacher was also concerned about the intentions and assumptions that underly her practice:

> A desire to focus of <u>what</u>, <u>why</u> and how you are teaching and using
>
> data [so one] can become more effective in the classroom.

The same teacher showed a concern for what Fitzgerald (1989) called

metacognition. According to the author "clinical supervision is a powerful device for metacognition. . . [and] applied to teaching it is frequently called reflective teaching" (p. 13). This teacher stated that she had:

> A desire to gather data about . . . [my] classroom interaction to see if . . . [my] perceptions are accurate. To think about what . . . [I am] doing.

The central focus of the Medicine Hat Model for Teacher Supervision and Evaluation (Greene, 1989) was the supervisory process. The main emphasis was the desire to provide a vehicle for professional growth. Several teachers seemed to echo the same sentiments when they indicated that the reason for involvement was professional growth. The same teacher's comment stresses that fact:

> I wanted to use the data to benefit my students and expand my professional growth.

Barriers

Teacher respondents were asked to list at least three factors that acted as barriers to the effectiveness of the peer process. Comments generally varied but time was one factor that was mentioned by every teacher:

> There were scheduling difficulties particularly during the year when no subs were provided. Also, a great deal of personal time is required to effectively benefit from the peer support process.
>
> Finding time to meet for pre and post conferences.
>
> Lack of time to observe each other and to meet for post and pre conferences.
>
> Time -- the whole process is time consuming.
>
> Time!

It is interesting to note that the majority of teachers viewed the lack of

commitment as a barrier to the success of a peer supervision/evaluation process:

> [Lack of] commitment of participants needs to be very strong.
>
> Lack of "buying-in" by some teachers.
>
> Not everyone [is] committed to the process.

This teacher noted that a barrier to the peer process was:

> [The] level of commitment of individuals to the process.

These teachers related the importance of commitment to the process by administration:

> Commitment of administration and central office could act as a barrier to the process.
>
> Many administrators (not mine) do not understand or initiate peer supervision and as they are the educational leaders, this often prevents teachers from participating or even understanding the process.

This teacher was concerned about how peers in other school districts perceived the process:

> It is not known how [peer supervision and] self-evaluation will be accepted by people outside of the school division.

This teacher noted a barrier that in time can be overcome:

> It takes a while for students to become accustomed to the presence of other adults.

Limitations

To investigate the limitation of the peer supervision/evaluation process teachers were asked to list at least three limitations of the peer process. While most teachers addressed this issue from the perspective of what limits might be placed upon the model, two teachers perceived the "limitations" as being

identical to the question on "barriers".

Several of the teachers showed great concern as to the model's ability to deal with teachers having "difficulties" or those who are considered to be "incompetent":

> A teacher having difficulties would be harder to deal with.
>
> [Peer supervision] doesn't solve the problem of "incompetent" teachers.
>
> It does not solve the problem of dealing with inferior teachers.

Other respondents were concerned about professional growth. They noted that being involved in peer supervision/evaluation does not guarantee that personal or even professional growth will occur:

> [Regarding the peer supervision/evaluation Model, it] doesn't always have the positive effects that was intended (i.e., self growth).
>
> A person [teacher] can still go through the process and resist "change" or growth.

One teacher questioned whether the present model as distinguished from the initial model was able to effectively deal with growth or change:

> Several observations based throughout the years are a more valid form of peer supervision so that growth or change can be initiated or advanced.

Another respondent echoed a similar sentiment but addressed another issue as well:

> Availability of sub time provided for the project -- it should be an on-going process throughout the year.

The following comment addresses the issue of formative versus summative evaluations and supports the consensus that peers be involved in formative evaluation while summative reporting remains in the jurisdiction of

the administrators:

> An administrator must still write a "formal" teacher evaluation report.

One teacher speculates that personalities could have a bearing upon the outcome:

> If there was a personality conflict between peers or even opposite educational philosophies, the level of comfort and benefit would be reduced.

This team leader and organizer of two triads questions the effectiveness of the peer process:

> [I] feel at times that we're just scraping the surface of our teaching, not enough depth or meat.

Smyth (1986) suggests that if teachers have full control and ownership of the peer supervision process then ultimately they will "begin to use it to raise larger questions about the 'ends' of teaching and the instructional frameworks and structures within which it occurs" (p. 18).

Benefits

When peer supervisors were asked to comment on the benefits, personal and otherwise of being involved in the peer process, the greatest response was in the area of teaching techniques, classroom management, and experimentation:

> I became aware of my questioning techniques. I also became aware of my pathways in the classroom. When dealing with a particular student who had behavior problems I realized the different techniques that I was using and figured out a more effective way of dealing with this child.

> Exposure to teaching styles, new ideas and techniques, empathy for other grade levels [and] teachers.

> Opportunities to experience new ideas and teaching techniques.

> I developed more awareness of my own teaching methods and rapport with students.
>
> I gained knowledge by observing other teachers and grade levels in action.
>
> [I] received an objective observation and data of my class interaction - - helped to discern whether my perceptions and analysis of my class and teaching was accurate.
>
> I reevaluated some of the things I was doing, incorporated [new] ideas and changed my focus on some areas.

Another theme that is clear throughout the responses from the teachers is that of ownership. Edwards (1986) suggests that peer evaluation provides the observee with ownership of the evaluation. He further suggests that this allows for quality and accuracy in recording and reporting data and in turn eliminates the anxiety that is associated with bureaucratic evaluation processes. The following statements echo that position:

> I was delighted with the feeling of ownership that I had over the entire process.
>
> You feel ownership in your own evaluation.
>
> Teachers are committed and motivated to engage in their <u>own</u> evaluation process.
>
> I feel good about having a significant part in my own <u>evaluation</u>.
>
> I had control of, and involvement in, my own evaluation process.

Professionalism was another benefit perceived by some of the teachers:

> [Peer supervision] allows for professional growth in a comfortable setting [that the] teacher has directed.
>
> Teachers are engaged in their own professional growth process. [As well] colleagues develop respect for and appreciation of each other as professional fellow teachers.
>
> Discussions with area superintendent and school administrators in an informal manner reinforces the feeling of professionalism and

contributes to high morale.

> Professionalism [is] increased between staff members and within the school.

Some of the respondents commented on the reduction of anxiety as a positive aspect of peer observations:

> I feel less threatened and more comfortable with outsiders coming into my room.
>
> [I am] more at ease having someone in my classroom.
>
> [There is] reduced anxiety once the process was put into action. I soon became very comfortable with having other members of the triad in my classroom.

Some of the teachers benefitted in terms of self-analysis and reflection:

> [It gives one the opportunity to] reflect upon what is occurring in your classroom.
>
> Conferences stimulated conversation between members which led to self analysis and general evaluation of the system.
>
> [I am] able to be more critical of my own teaching as well as analytical.

Some teachers addressed the critical issue of colleagueship:

> [The peer observations allowed for the] development of a [positive] rapport with peers.
>
> I got to know colleagues better which had spin-off effects on the total school setting.
>
> My appreciation for my fellow colleagues increased.
>
> Rapport between colleagues was enhanced.

The opportunity to observe another teacher's classroom and to work with another teacher was important to other participants:

> [It gave me a] great opportunity to observe a grade level I was not familiar with.
>
> [It gave me the] opportunity to observe a class other than [my] own.

It gave me the opportunity to work with other staff members.

Gitlin and Goldstein (1987) claim that a dialogical approach to supervision and evaluation allows the good teachers to "engage in a dilogical process of trying to understand the web of implications that link choices among various means, purposes and aims in teaching" (p. 27). This sentiment is echoed by one of the teachers:

> It gave me the opportunity to discuss the factors of my classroom that I would not otherwise discuss with peers. This led to even broader discussions on other educational issues.

Changes and Modifications

The issue of time appeared to be an important factor when participants were asked to comment on what changes or modifications they would make to the peer supervision/evaluation program. Providing additional substitutes and time for meetings was a concern:

> Provision should be made for adequate substitute time.
>
> Provide more substitute time so that conferences can be held during class time.
>
> The use of substitutes to provide time for peers to observe is very helpful, not to mention necessary.
>
> Also extra time for meetings and the writing of group reports are necessary to the process.
>
> More time [has to be] provided to release teachers for meetings and conferences.

The time provided for observations is of concern to these teachers:

> Three observation days are not necessarily sufficient to obtain enough helpful data. Growth and change occur over time.
>
> I think it should be an on-going process throughout the school year so that [one] has time to evolve through the process and people gradually become comfortable. Condensing it into a short period of

> time detracts from the idea behind it. I feel people begin to feel pressured and view it as a chore . . . It becomes an exercise to be expected, instead of an on-going growth process.

The same teacher questioned whether trust could be established over such a short period of time:

> It takes time to build trust with each other and to relax and feel comfortable with a new concept.

Another teacher was concerned about the process occurring over an extended period of time:

> Two years in a row should be a maximum. One needs time to reflect upon, perfect and refine what [has been] learned.

Another recommended change was in terms of providing information. One teacher unequivocally stated:

> Lots of information is necessary.

The following comment appears to justify an earlier recommendation:

> Provide more information especially concrete examples of the process at work so that the educational leaders can begin to utilize this form of positive growth.

Providing information to uninvolved staff members supports the research of Benzley et al. (1985). Their findings suggest that 67% of the peer evaluators suggested that the peer process could be broadened to include all teachers in the district. This teacher supports Benzley and associates' finding when she suggests that:

> More information [should be] provided -- educate the remaining staff about the program, to foster better understanding about what the [active and involved] participants are trying to achieve.

This teacher stressed the fact that central office should play a key role:

> The school board needs to publicize its support for the program and back this with providing subs for release time on a regular basis.

Continued Use of the Model

When asked about continued use of the model in the coming year, every teacher except one spoke in the affirmative. Two of the respondents qualified their answers in the following manner:

> Yes, I will be teaching a new grade level (at my choice) and I would appreciate feedback on various aspects involved in the new situation.

> Most definitely! I feel this is the best method to encourage introspection and growth on a school staff.

This teacher replied in the negative, but, at the time recommended the model to her peers:

> No! I have been involved for three years and find that it's losing its effectiveness. I don't think this is something one could maintain enthusiasm for every year. It takes too much time and commitment [and] I would like to focus on other educational endeavors. I would, however, recommend that this model be used by others.

Summary Comments by Respondents

All of the teachers were asked to provide any additional and relevant information, comments or concerns which may be useful to the project. Not all teachers chose to do either. However, three of the comments provided rich and luminous data for the project:

> Before participating in this project I had never been officially evaluation other than when I received my permanent teaching certificate. When Dave Noseworthy first mentioned that it was my turn to be evaluated, I became anxious about having someone come into my classroom for the purpose of evaluation. As the process of peer evaluation was explained the amount of anxiety became less, but was still there to a large extent. Once the process was put into action I soon became very comfortable with having other members in the triad observing in the classroom. I was also delighted with the feeling of ownership that I had over the entire process. Because of this shift in ownership the anxiety feelings were eased. Now having gone through this process I feel less threatened and more comfortable with outsiders coming into my room.

> I feel that the peer support process is much superior to the traditional method of evaluation used in years past [we did not have any] pre or post conferences and not enough time was given to make a valid assessment. Teachers had no input, ownership or involvement in the process. Professional growth was not fostered.
>
> This process is a positive approach to encourage teachers to think about what is, or is not happening in their classroom, what works and what does not, to create a more effective learning environment for students. This type of self evaluation is necessary to promote professional teacher growth. Because this is a teacher-controlled, on-going process, results of any action can be analyzed and [its] effectiveness on the class noted for further reference. While this process has beneficial effects for most teachers, it should be noted that for some, it would be necessary for evaluation to be conducted by the traditional methods.

Some Observations

In concluding the analysis of the perceptions of the teachers concerning peer supervision and peer evaluation, I would like to focus more on what was not said rather than on what was said.

When teachers were asked to comment on the training they received, they all mentioned the workshops that they had attended and how valuable there were. What they did not comment on was the need for further training sessions as a means of modifying or making the process more effective. Not one teacher mentioned further training as a means of increasing the validity or reliability of peer observations. In fact, the basic concepts of validity and reliability were never mentioned. Perhaps this was partly due to the issues not being addressed in the questionnaire. A more likely explanation, I feel, is that the teachers have never been asked to think about the topic in a professionally sophisticated manner.

What the teachers requested, however, was more 'information'. Information is satisfactory in terms of awareness, but at a professional level

what is required are professional training programs and seminars.

Ellis et al. (1986) suggest that:

> Teacher supervision is a complex, sensitive, and time-consuming task. It requires a considerable range of knowledge and skills: knowledge of subject matter being taught; understanding of the instructional strategy being used; access to a range of collection devices, along with training in how to use and interpret them; and recognition of suitable goals or outcomes for teachers (p. IV-9).

In an extensive peer supervision training program in eight elementary schools, Cook (1985) stipulates that there are three critical element in a peer supervision program, the second of the three prerequisites, being adequate training for participants. " Clinical supervision can not be 'acquired' in a one -day workshop. It must be learned over time through sound theory based programs, incorporating practice and feedback on an on-going basis" (p. 11).

When teachers were asked why they got involved in a peer supervision program, not one participant mentioned the desire to reduce isolation and cellularity. Lortie (1975) suggested that one of the barriers to staff interaction was the "cellular structure" of the schools. Warren and Goldsberry (1982) suggest that a peer supervision program provides the opportunity for intervisitations and professional interactions among teachers. "As previously closed doors are opened, a supportive environment, in which professional concerns and interests are shared, seems more likely to prevail . . . the classroom is no longer the teacher's lonely and untrespassed domain" (p. 105).

One can only speculate as to why the respondents did not mention the desire 'to leave' the closed doors of the classroom. Perhaps some, or even all, the 'critical practices of adaptability' (Little, 1982) have been met. That is, the Conrich Elementary School prior to and during the peer supervision project

has given specific support for discussions of classroom practices, mutual observations and critiquing, shared efforts in designing and preparing curriculum and shared participation in the realm of instructional improvement. These interactions were obviously encouraged by the previous principal, Dr. Minor, and the present principal Dave Noseworthy.

The respondents, at no point, suggest that lack of administrative involvement acted as a barrier or limited the involvement of peers in the supervisory process. This speaks highly for the 'implicit support' that administration has given the process in order to create an environment conducive to peer supervision.

Anxiety was not an issue for the vast majority of the teachers at Conrich Elementary School. The literature on peer supervision dedicates a great deal of writing and research to the area of anxiety in the peer process. McGee and Eaker (1977) suggest that if observations are part of some evaluation system, then anxiety will be high and remain so. This is not supported by the comments in this research endeavor. McGee and Eaker's research has shown that peers who have successfully interacted with each other will, in all likelihood, experience less stress in the evaluation process than peers who have not interacted with each other in a colleagial manner. The teachers supported this position in their comments about a peer they had successfully collaborated with.

"The relation that teachers establish with fellow teachers or with other adults will-and-must be judged by their ability to make teachers' relations with students more productive and more satisfying" (Little, 1987, p. 493). What

about classroom and student payoffs that occur when teachers collaborate, as for example, in a peer supervision process?

In all the comments by the teachers at Conrich Elementary School, only two comments were made in addressing the issue of the impact of peer supervision upon students. One teacher noted that:

> This process is a positive approach ... to create a more effective learning environment for students.

Another teacher included her comment in the "reasons for involvement in the project":

> Improved teacher techniques and awareness with a result in long term benefits for students' overall education.

Not one teacher indicated that students' learning, attitudes or actions were affected in any manner as a result of their teachers being in a peer supervision Triad. This is not surprising. The literature on the benefits to students when teachers collaborate is conflicting (Little, 1987). There are studies which "offer vivid accounts of the classroom payoffs that follow teachers' joint efforts . . . By other accounts, however, the classroom benefits of shared work are not so readily apparent" (p. 493).

Little contends that as of yet we know very little about the specific mechanisms by which collegial relations among teachers function in order to benefit students. The many possibilities and interpretations as to the reasons why students learning may improve are threaded throughout the literature. She concludes by providing a word of caution: the varied interpretations "read as plausible explanations for the way colleagial influences might operate, but they have not yet been subject to systematic inquiry" (p. 494).

Summary Statement

It is clear that what the teachers have experienced and what the teachers are doing in the realm of peer supervision and peer evaluation is a vital, immediate and integral part of their professional lives as well as their day-to-day practical teaching lives.

The benefits that the teachers perceive as being relevant and important far out weigh the limitations and barriers that they perceive as hindering the peer process. The changes that the teachers recommend are consistent with the research and action research reported in the literature reviews.

It is interesting to note that the teachers perceive their collaborative involvement in light of peer supervision rather than in the light of peer evaluation. This dichotomy is not so clear in the literature, nor is it evident to the author. This is an area that requires further study and research.

The study clearly suggests that peer supervision as perceived by the participating teachers at Conrich Elementary School is viable and workable as a peer process. What is also evident is that when ownership and some degree of control in the evaluation process is invested in certain teachers, they do have the capacity to change their professional lives.

Some educators have suggested that peer supervision and peer evaluation won't work. The Conrich Elementary School project may be an example of some limited successes in joining the two processes. In the minds of several Conrich Elementary School teachers the two processes are not imcompatable in their particular context.

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PEER SUPERVISION/EVALUATION SURVEY

Instructions

Please take time to respond to each of the following questions. You have the right to extend, clarify, or expand upon any of the responses. Feel free to add any additional and relevant information, comments or concerns which might be useful to the project. The survey should be completed anonymously. The information is strictly confidential. Thank you for your valuable time and cooperation.

Demographic Information

Age _____

Male _____ Female _____

Years of teaching experience _____

Grade levels taught _____

Number of times evaluated/supervised in the past year _____

Number of times evaluated/supervised in the last three years _____

Number of times supervised/evaluated by a peer _____

Questions

1. Briefly describe your involvement in the peer supervision/evaluation project.

2. What specific training, if any, did you receive prior to being involved in peer supervision/evaluation in conferencing, observation techniques, data collecting and general supervision/evaluation skills?

3. Briefly describe a partner that you supervised and evaluated. Describe your relationship.

4. Define in your own words peer supervision.

5. Define in your own words peer evaluation.

6. List at least three reasons for getting involved in a peer supervision/evaluation process.

7. If you had the opportunity to continue using this model next year, would you?

8. List at least three factors that acted as difficulties or barriers to the peer supervision/evaluation process.

9. In what ways could these barriers be minimized and the process inproved upon?

10. List at least three limitations of the peer supervision/evaluation process.

11. List at least three benefits of being involved in a peer supervision/evaluation process.

12. Has the peer supervision/evaluation process changed over the past year or years? In what ways?

13. In what ways did your participation in the supervision/evaluation process benefit you?

14. In what ways could the program be modified to be more effective in the future?

15. Additional comments or concerns.