

ABSTRACT

This study attempted to identify the perceived preferences of student/beginning teachers and experienced teachers for a directive of non-directive supervisory approach. Ninety-five student/beginning teachers and sixty-three experienced teachers from the University of Technology, Jamaica rated two tape recordings of a supervisory conference, one in which the supervisor was directive, the other non-directive. Using a semantic differential questionnaire, each subject rated the supervisor on eight attributes: Expertise, Comprehension of the Problem, Sensitivity, Trustworthiness, Ability to Help, Sincerity, Knowledge of Teaching and Utility. By responding to an open-ended question subjects recorded their reasons for feeling encouraged or inhibited by the supervisor they rated. ~~The data were submitted to two-tailed t-tests to determine any differences between~~ subjects' ratings of the two approaches.

This study found a tendency for student/beginning teachers to prefer the directive approach and for experienced teachers to prefer the non-directive approach, although there was no significant statistical difference between the groups. However, among the former, the difference between the subjects' ratings was strong and significant for two attributes: Ability to Help and Would Go See and among the latter for one attribute: Would Go See ($p < 0.05$). The higher mean ratings assigned to some attributes (Ability to Help, Knowledge of Teaching, Sincerity, and Sensitivity) suggest that these are important to all supervisees regardless of level of experience or preference for supervisory approach. The findings suggest that supervisors use a variety of supervisory strategies, especially person-centred, facilitative techniques and that future studies explore preferences for supervisory approach to determine their stability over time and any possible relationship between preferences and other variables.