

Education Paper

Collegial supervision in schools is the anti-thesis of personal government that characterizes the management style of quite a number of schools at present where the principal or headmaster is the supreme leader in his or her little kingdom. There is certainly nothing wrong in personal forms of supervision that hinge on the basic premise of human relations supervision like the congenial and the conventional (Glickman, C., Gordon, S. and Ross-Gordon, J.) for like other style these have plus and minus points and require a certain breed of executives for its effective governance of schools. However, this paper simply submits that in the field of education, the most profound of human enterprise, collegial supervision gives a better guarantee of the attainment of aims.

In collegial supervision of schools the legislative, executive and judicial functions or powers are primarily vested in the stakeholders, that is, the members of the academic community: the parents, the teachers, the administrators, the auxiliary personnel, the community, and (in an ultimate and indirect way) the students. Each academic community elements has an interest in the efficient and effective governance of the school. The needs, duties, and rights of each have to be considered in the task of government. Collegial supervision, however, does not imply democratic mode of government. The education enterprise, to begin with, is nor democratic in form but hierarchical. The elements of a school have their respective professional and positional capabilities; decisions cannot be based on what the majority say but on what the persons in supervision believe to be true education. And within the hierarchy of the school government, collegial management can be the underlying criterion of conduct. Immediately, the task of supervision is vested in the hands of a competent body of educators and other experts who have imbibed matured in and penetrated deeply into the corporate spirit of the

school. Collegial supervision is not reducible to a government of numbers. Underlying collegial supervision is the principle of subsidiarity which states that what can be done by the lower body should not be done by the higher one. Collaboration in supervision is founded on one's competence and unity with the ideals of school. Without either of these two elements, participatory management, delegation of authority, and other "buzz words" of present-day modes of supervision become mere slogans. Subsidiarity is the complement of solidarity: one cannot exist without the other. One cannot be a co-captain without being firmly united with the captain and his goals. This spirit of collegian approach to supervision is described by Jo Blasé as follows: "Leadership is shared with teachers, and it is cast in coaching, reflection, collegial investigation, study teams, explorations into the uncertain, and problem solving. It is position – free supervision wherein the underlying spirit is one of expansion, not traditional supervision. Alternatives, not directives or criticism; are the focus and the community of learners perform professional – indeed, moral – service to students." (cited in Glickman, C., Gordon, S. and Ross-Gordon, J.) There is no prescribed organizational structure for collegial supervision to work. More than structures, what collegial government requires is a perspective, an attitude, a praxis, and most important, a culture of excellence. The principal remains mainly responsible to the School Board, and ultimately to the parents, for the attainment of the school's educational goal. But he promotes initiative and foments initiative and decision framework that should be set up at the start of operations, something that can be enriched infinitely through the notes of experience over the years. Trust and confidence is the touchstone of collegial supervision: absent this and collegial supervision becomes a nuisance, a farce, and even a damaging tool. The ideal would be to strike a consensus, not a majority vote within the body. After all, the members of the body are supposed to be governed by the same philosophy and goals.

In the final analysis supervision is a profoundly human affair. The subject of supervision is MAN; its objective, ultimately, is also MAN. Education, too, is profoundly human affair. Its subject is MAN, and its object is MAN. It is the opinion of this paper that the collegial style of supervision in school, perhaps more than or at least as much as other supervision styles, meets the basics and nuances of human dignity.

References:

Scheerens, J. (2000). "Improving school effectiveness" *International Institute for Educational Planning*. United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, Fundamentals of educational planning series no. 68.

Glickman, C., Gordon, S. and Ross-Gordon, J. 6th Ed. *Supervision and Instructional Leadership: A Developmental Approach*