Book Review: Supervision that improves teaching and learning / strategies and techniques

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Abstract

This study reviews the book *Supervision that improves teaching and learning / strategies and techniques* by Sullivan and Glanz, translated into Turkish by Ali Ünal. The review evaluates the book's content and structure, emphasizing its practical contributions to educational supervision. Highlighting reflective practices, collaborative techniques, and alternative supervision models, the study presents the book as a valuable guide for teachers, school leaders, and educational researchers. It also underscores how the translation retains the original's clarity and instructional tone, making it accessible for Turkish educators. By integrating theory with practical tools, this book contributes significantly to modern educational leadership and instructional improvement efforts.

Keywords: supervision, supervision strategies, supervision at school

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Introduction

The book, originally titled "Supervision That Improves Teaching and Learning / Strategies & Learning", was published by Corwin, a Sage publishing company. The original 256-page book was translated from the 4th edition. The book translated into Turkish as "Okullarda Eğitim ve Öğretimi Geliştiren Denetim/Strateji ve Teknikler" was published by Anı Publishing. The size of the book, which has 306 pages in Turkish translation, is 16 x 24 cm.

Susan Sullivan and Jeffrey Glanz's Supervision that Improves Teaching and Learning in Schools was translated and edited by Ali Ünal in 2015. The book consists of seven chapters and 306 pages, beginning with a short note for educators. The book presents supervision strategies and techniques that aim to improve education and training, with teachers and students at the center. Each strategy and technique is illustrated with research-based scenarios and case studies, and includes summarized descriptions. What distinguishes this book from other books is that it provides the reader with classroom application forms, additional web-based resources, and collaborative thinking activities related to supervision strategies and techniques.

Sullivan and Glanz describe the necessary supervisory strategies and techniques for educational leaders that enable teaching and learning and improve teaching and learning in seven chapters. Before beginning the chapters, the authors provide a brief note for educators, in which they describe seven techniques for monitoring, evaluating and improving the progress of students and teachers: journal writing, thinking together, fishbowl, video recording, reciprocal visits, e-mail, internet and social networks, distance learning and virtual classroom. In the first chapter, supervision is explained with its changing meaning and the emergence of supervision in the historical process, bureaucratic and democratic methods in supervision, scientific supervision, supervision as leadership, clinical supervision and standards-based supervision are explained. In the second chapter, three interpersonal approaches to supervision, namely the directive informational approach, the collaborative approach and the self-managed approach, are explained. In the third chapter, a total of forty-two observation tools and techniques, both qualitative and quantitative, for teacher and student behaviors are presented. In the fourth chapter, reflective clinical supervision is explained and in the fifth chapter, under the heading of alternative approaches, seven approaches are presented: teaching circles, book review groups, lesson review groups, peer coaching, and peer coaching to critical friends, differentiated supervision portfolios and action research. In the sixth chapter, focusing on instructional supervision in the process of creating transformational change, transformational leaders' struggle with change is explained with a case study and two questions. Finally, in the seventh chapter, there is a guide to create a supervision approach under the title of supervision to improve teaching in the classroom and a guide for classroom practice and for readers to implement their own supervision designs and principles.

As the authors state, the book is characterized by the development of important supervisory skills. They also explain the importance of the book as follows: *"More than ever, supervision, with its constant emphasis on student outcomes and state and district standards, is an indispensable link that inspires good teaching and ensures student learning. We believe that encouraging teachers to reflect on their own teaching practices and engaging those with supervisory responsibility in conversations with teachers about their teaching in the classroom is the foundation for improving instruction."*

Chapter 1: The Changing Meaning of Supervision

Before starting the chapter, the authors refer readers to a questionnaire to assess their beliefs about supervision. This chapter first provides a brief definition of supervision and then explains how supervision has evolved so far, the impact of history on supervision, the emergence of supervisors in a different position, and supervision as leadership. Under the heading of the development of supervision, a case study on how a supervisor changes his/her perspective and develops over time is explained to the readers and reflective questions are asked to the readers about this case study. Under the heading of the effects of history in supervision, it was aimed to reveal how readers' thoughts and beliefs about supervision affect their work with others, and the readers were asked to identify their own beliefs and

thoughts with the questions in the let's think together boxes. Afterwards, the historical process of supervision is explained and it is tried to explain how our own belief patterns are related to the understanding of supervision in the past. After the historical process, suggestions for supervision practice are presented to the reader. For this purpose, the titles of determining the current situation and needs and evaluating belief systems are presented to the reader and reflective practice appears here for the first time in the book.

Chapter 2: Three Interpersonal Approaches to Supervision

This chapter presents three interpersonal approaches to supervision. It briefly describes various communication techniques such as listening, non-verbal cues, reflection and clarification of statements, all of which are important for effective interpersonal relationships. The reader is also provided with exercises that develop the ability to use these techniques. By presenting these communication techniques before the three interpersonal approaches, the aim is to lay the groundwork for developing interpersonal skills as a prerequisite for supervision practices. Before presenting the three interpersonal approaches: the directive information approach, the collaborative approach and the self-directed approach, the reader is given scenarios and reflective practices related to these approaches. Guidelines for reflective practice are then provided to develop the skills used. The chapter concludes with two exercises where readers can practice these approaches on the spot.

Chapter 3: Observation Tools and Techniques

This chapter presents forty-two observation tools and techniques, both qualitative and quantitative, to observe both teacher and student behavior. As in the other chapters, this chapter presents the reader with a supervision scenario before the observation tools and techniques and after the scenario the reader is asked to analyze and the authors also present their own analysis. Each observation tool is then presented in pairs to ensure a focus on both teacher and student behaviors.

"An important assumption of this chapter is that the judicious use of reliable and easy-to-use observation techniques can increase a teacher's awareness of classroom behavior. Another assumption is that dialog is the best way to stimulate the development of teaching. An additional assumption is that teaching improvement will be most effective when the observation process includes observation that focuses on both the teacher's practice and the student's reaction to the teaching approach. We have therefore developed a tool that can be used anywhere to observe teachers and, with the same focus, students together."

Chapter 4: Reflective Clinical Supervision

In this chapter, clinical supervision and reflective supervision are briefly explained and the stages of reflective clinical supervision, namely planning interview, observation, feedback interview and collaborative reflection, are presented with scenarios. In addition, at each stage, the reader is presented with the basic steps to be taken within the framework of the three interpersonal approaches: the directive information approach, the collaborative approach and the self-regulated approach. At the end of the chapter, a classroom application that can be done with the volunteer teacher and how it should be done is given with steps. The authors' statement at the beginning of the chapter that "by the end of the chapter you will be ready to complete the main task of implementing the whole cycle in your schools" is justified by the end of the chapter.

Chapter 5: Alternative Approaches

In the previous chapters, authors Sullivan and Glanz discuss interpersonal approaches, examine observation tools and provide a framework for reflective clinical supervision. The chapter includes 1. Teaching Circles, 2. Book Review Groups, 3. Lesson Review Groups, 4. Peer Coaching, 5. Critical Friends Groups (CPGs), 6. Portfolio Assessment and 7. Action Research as alternative approaches. The introduction of each approach begins with a case study, followed by a description of the approach, its implementation stages and reflective practice. It is possible to find detailed descriptions of these alternative approaches in this section. It is explained that these approaches can

increase communication and cooperation between teachers in schools and provide diversity in supervision practices through different approaches in different groups. At the end of the chapter, it is understood that the common aims of all these alternative approaches are 1. to ensure cooperative learning, 2. to ensure communication between teachers, 3. to specialize teachers in their fields and 4. to improve learning.

Chapter 6: Focusing on Instructional Supervision in the Process of Creating Transformational Change

At the beginning of this chapter, it is stated that many people, including educators, have a wrong and negative perception of the word 'supervision' and the real purpose of supervision is emphasized. In this chapter, where supervision is defined as "*a continuous, unprejudiced, collaborative process that brings teachers together in a dialogue that encourages deep reflective practice with the aim of improving teaching and learning*", a case study of a school trying to implement some new supervision approaches to improve teaching and learning is included. The case study focuses on the problems faced by a newly appointed principal, Janet Ironside, who aims to improve a group of teachers who resist change in a school with an established culture and what she does to overcome these problems. In this chapter, before moving on to the case study, the authors provide readers with a theoretical framework that they believe should be taken into account when evaluating the quality of teaching. This framework consists of 'instructional leadership', 'professional learning communities' and the 'essence of teaching', which consists of teacher-student-content components. After the case study, in the conclusion part of the chapter, it is stated that instructional leadership should constitute the main job of school leaders, why schools need change, that development is not possible without change, that changes that do not include beliefs and values are superficial and short-lived changes, and the most important emphasis is on the importance of transforming development into a culture in the school.

Chapter 7: Supervision to Improve Classroom Teaching

In the last part of the book, the authors aim to enable the development of a personal plan for the improvement of teaching in a professional setting, centered on supervision. Readers are encouraged to bring out their own creativity with the help of the suggestions given by the authors. To this end, readers are encouraged to form their own beliefs about the supervision of classroom teaching and to integrate these beliefs into personal vision statements. The authors state that it is not possible to separate the supervision of classroom teaching from other aspects of instructional supervision such as staff, curriculum and group development. Nevertheless, for the purposes of this book, they place the supervision of classroom teaching at the center of professional development and provide readers with a "guide to constructing an approach to supervision". This guide includes 12 questions to be answered in order to help readers form their own beliefs about the supervision of classroom teaching. After these questions, the supervision approaches adopted by three different teachers are mentioned. In this chapter, as in almost every chapter, the authors provide guidelines for classroom practice. The most striking part of this chapter is the ideas and suggestions presented under the title "My Supervision Approach". In this chapter, for the readers who have completed their personal supervision designs, the sub-headings 1. For My Own Environment, 2. For My School and 3. For the Education Region in the Future are given. Under the sub-heading "For My Own Environment", it is stated that the change should start from the immediate environment. Under the sub-heading "For My School", it is stated that teachers who succeed in influencing small groups in their own environment should spread their ideas to other colleagues in the school in order to expand their sphere of influence. In the sub-heading "For the Education Region in the Future", it is emphasized that effective schools are schools that are connected to their environment and it is suggested that the philosophical and financial support of the region should be obtained in order to ensure the success of alternative supervision methods.

Conclusion

In this book, Sullivan and Glanz define ideal schools as places where expert educators work in collaboration and contribute to the learning process of students by constantly sharing their experiences with each other. Based on this idea, the authors suggest that supervision is at the center of teaching and learning in the classroom and present techniques in which supervision supports professional learning with the strategies they put forward in the book. The authors present these techniques in a framework based on the principles of constructivism and accompanied by reflective practices that facilitate implementation.

The aim of the book is to show the readers how contemporary supervision approaches can be applied effectively in the education system. In line with this aim, firstly the history of supervision and then how it has changed over time are explained, while on the other hand, it is mentioned that the main purpose of supervision is still not clearly perceived in some education systems due to negative experiences from the past.

The fact that the problem of losing the originality of the book, which is generally experienced in translated books, is not encountered in this book can be shown among the strengths of the book. It can be stated that the sincere and respectful style of the authors has been preserved due to the quality of the translation. Some advantages of the book being translated into Turkish can also be mentioned. By translating the book into Turkish and introducing it to the local literature, the book has become more affordable in terms of price and has expanded its readership by appealing to those who do not speak English. Providing opportunities for readers to be involved in the supervision process with various applications in each chapter of the book is seen as another strong aspect of the book.

Although the translation of the book is very good, the fact that some of the case studies are difficult to understand due to cultural differences stands out among the weaknesses of the book. Another weak point about the case studies is that it is thought that the practices in the case studies cannot be carried out with the same efficiency and ease in our culture due to both the negative perceptions of educators in our country about supervision and the lack of an established supervision culture in our education system. While Sullivan and Glanz share the responsibility of learning with their readers on the assumption that they are experts and qualified individuals in their fields, they present a collaborative, dialogue-based and supportive supervision process in order to change the perspectives of educators who have negative perceptions of supervision and see supervision as an error-finding practice.

Considering that effective supervision is an indispensable subsystem of the education system, it is thought that everyone in the education community can easily benefit from this book, from managers at all levels of educational organizations to teachers in different branches, from academics who may approach supervision negatively due to the autonomous structure of universities to graduate students continuing their education in the relevant field. The forms in the book can be used by the administrators as they are or adapted accordingly. Thanks to the alternative supervision approaches in the book, an environment of solidarity based on cooperation and dialogue among teachers can be provided. In addition, educators responsible for supervision can benefit from this book in terms of how to give effective feedback, how to provide reflective dialogues, and how to avoid critical and commanding approaches that may cause deterioration of their relationships with the people they supervise in this process. It is recommended that everyone involved in education and especially teaching services read this book.

This study presents a significant contribution to the field of educational sciences by offering a contemporary and holistic perspective on school-based supervision processes. Through its analysis of the internationally recognized work of Sullivan and Glanz, it sheds light on how universal supervision approaches can be understood and implemented within a local context. The study not only elaborates on the theoretical foundations of supervision but also provides research-based strategies and tools that educational leaders can directly utilize, thereby bridging the gap between theory and practice. In this regard, it serves as a unique and functional resource for all educational stakeholders seeking to restructure supervision practices in line with the needs of modern education systems.

The review highlights the book's focus on reflective thinking and collaboration-based professional development models. In educational environments where supervision is often perceived as punitive and associated with negative connotations, the authors' portrayal of supervision as a supportive, developmental, and instructional quality-enhancing process represents a significant paradigm shift. Furthermore, the successful preservation of the original authors' tone in the Turkish translation facilitates broader access and effective use among Turkish educators. Thanks to this translation, the strategies and practices presented in the book become not only academically valuable but also practically applicable in the field.

For these reasons, the study deserves close attention from readers. The book challenges traditional understandings of instructional supervision and promotes a more inclusive, constructive, and transformation-oriented approach. The insights derived from the systematic analysis of the book appeal to a wide audience, including teachers, school administrators, academic staff in faculties of education, and graduate-level students. The inclusion of reflective practices, case study analyses, and alternative supervision models allows readers to both deepen their theoretical knowledge and apply it effectively within their own educational settings.

References

Sullivan, S., & Glanz, J. (2015). *Okullarda eğitim ve öğretimi geliştiren denetim* (A. Ünal, Çev. Ed.). Ankara: Anı yayıncılık.

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Ethical Declaration and Committee Approval

In this research, the principles of scientific research and publication ethics were followed.

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Proportion of the Author Contribution

Researchers contributed equally to this study.