

THE ROLE OF THE STATE SUPERVISORY STAFF IN IMPROVING
THE INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAM OF VOCATIONAL
AGRICULTURE DEPARTMENTS

by

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INTRODUCTION

This study resulted from the professional experience gained by the writer of this report during twenty-five years as a teacher of vocational agriculture in Kansas high schools, and two and one-half years as a state supervisor for vocational education in agriculture for the Kansas State Board for Vocational Education. The Smith-Hughes Act of 1917 authorized the establishment of vocational agriculture departments in high schools of the United States. This Act of Congress appropriated three million dollars annually as a cooperative enterprise between the federal government and the states to promote agricultural education in public schools.¹

The controlling purposes of the Smith-Hughes Act were listed by Phipps:²

1. that "such education shall fit for useful employment,
2. that such education shall be less than college grade,

¹United States Department of Health, Education and Welfare, Administration of Vocational Education, Vocational Education Bulletin No. 1 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1966), p. 75.

²Lloyd J. Phipps, Handbook of Agricultural Education in Public Schools (Danville, Illinois: The Interstate Printers, 1965), p. 26.

3. that such education be designed to meet the needs of persons over fourteen years of age who have entered upon or who are preparing to enter the work of a farm or of the farm home. "

It was observed by the writer of this report that this Congressional Act, which authorized the use of state and federal funds for developing vocational education programs in high schools, created a supervisory staff in each state to implement and regulate such programs. Part of the job of this supervisory staff was to inspect the vocational programs to determine whether the school was using the reimbursed money according to the state plan authorizing these funds.

It was further observed that this granted authority allowed a vocational education supervisor to demand changes if the program did not meet the standards established for reimbursement. If such standards were not met, the money, or a portion of it, was withheld from the school. Thus, the supervisor's job became one of policing the vocational program to keep teachers and administrators within the stated limits of the state plan for vocational education.

It was also an observation that specific standards spelled out how vocational money was to be used. Application forms to report class schedules, course names, and enrollment were used to claim reimbursement. It was the job of the supervisor to approve these

reimbursement claims by evaluating the information contained in the application, and thus provide the school money for the vocational program.

At the time of this study it was observed that since the enactment of the Smith-Hughes Act, the number of high school courses financed by "outside" funds had multiplied, and that school officials had become accustomed to operating regulated courses within the school curriculum.

According to Scarborough, in the early years of vocational education closer scrutiny of schools was required to prevent misuse of provided funds. Schools were accepting large sums of federal and state money with no positive commitments as to how it would be spent, except that the money was to be spent for the purposes for which it was appropriated. This change in sources of money for operating schools had changed the job of the supervisor, and also the attitude of administrators toward supervisors. The purpose of vocational education supervisors had become one of assisting schools in improving the instruction and effectiveness of vocational programs, rather than "policing" teachers.³

³Cayce Scarborough, "Supervisor? Consultant? Administrator? Coordinator? Director?" The Agricultural Education Magazine, 39:267, June, 1967.

Finally, it was observed that the justification for conditioned reimbursement of a vocational program had required periodic evaluation to determine its effectiveness in the educational plan for the school. Part of the justification for any vocational program could be determined by such exacting things as enrollment, time spent with the program by the teacher, and the number of students pursuing jobs in the vocationally trained area.

The writer of this report made several other observations concerning the functions of supervision. The state plan for vocational education in Kansas required each high school applying for reimbursement to submit to the state supervisor a claim form stating the daily class schedule, the title of each class, and the class roster of vocational agriculture students. From this notarized claim form the state supervisor determined how near the school met the state plan for reimbursement, and approved payment of state and federal money to the school. It was the opinion of the writer of this report that this function of supervision could be accomplished without making supervisory visits to the local high school. This type of evaluation did not tend to improve the instruction given in vocational agriculture or exert direction to vocational agriculture teachers. The degree of success or failure of a vocational department depended upon the criteria used to judge that success or failure.

Statement of the Problem.

From the previously mentioned experiences and observations of the writer of this report, the central problem of the study was that of determining what vocational education supervisors did in the opinion of the teachers he supervised to regulate the amount of success or prevent the failure of a vocational education department.

This study was also concerned with the ways teachers believed a supervisor could exert leadership in assisting in the improvement of instruction in public school vocational education programs in agriculture.

Improvement of instruction was interpreted to involve evaluation. Evaluation as a supervisory function had made the supervisor unpopular with the supervised. Minnesota teacher educators pointed out that breakdown in relationship between supervisor and teacher could occur because of this evaluation factor. Evaluations, they said, tended to establish patterns of conformity and limit the freedom accorded a teacher being evaluated. The appraisal of a vocational education program must contribute to the outcomes of vocational education.⁴

Milo J. Peterson and Gordon I. Swanson, Functions of State Supervision in Agricultural Education, Central Regional Research Committee, 1953, pp. 29-30.

Burton wrote that teachers would not accept criticism without constructive measures for improvement. These measures must be accepted as valid ways to correct faults, and be looked upon as a way of strengthening the instructional program. Teachers had not wanted failures pointed out, but wanted required steps leading to a desired goal.⁵

During his twenty-five years of teaching vocational agriculture, the writer of this report formed definite opinions regarding supervision, or the lack of it, in operating a vocational agriculture department. These opinions are the basis for practices he now uses as a supervisor of vocational agriculture teachers. The author's experiences in making 394 supervisory evaluations of vocational agriculture departments in a two and one-half year period had contributed to his knowledge of teacher supervisory practices. It was on the basis of these experiences that the author hoped to establish supervisory methods for improving instruction in vocational agriculture in Kansas.

⁵ William Henry Burton, Supervision and the Improvement of Instruction, Appleton Press, 1922, pp. 23-24.

Objectives of the Study.

This study involved the collecting of information and opinions from teachers concerning the supervisory practices they believed to be important in improving and evaluating their vocational agriculture departments. The survey form, developed to collect the above data, was designed to:

- A. Determine what supervisory practices were acceptable to teachers.
- B. Tell what teachers expected a supervisor to do in evaluating their departments.

Purposes.

It was the purpose of this study to survey the supervisory practices to be used in the evaluation and improvement of a vocational agriculture department. Certain supervisory practices were to be identified by teachers that could be used in improving supervision.

Importance of the Study.

It was anticipated that the results of this study would gather from vocational agriculture teachers opinions concerning what practices and methods should be used by supervisors for improving instruction in vocational agriculture departments.

Procedures Used.

To determine the methods and practices used by supervisors for improving instruction in vocational agriculture departments, a questionnaire containing twenty-four principles was submitted to forty vocational agriculture teachers who were supervised by the writer of this report.

The author reviewed literature to find what had been done on a nation-wide basis to determine functions of a supervisor of vocational agriculture. Much of the literature was related to what vocational agriculture teachers thought supervisors could do to assist them in teaching vocational agriculture. After studying the related literature, a preliminary questionnaire was developed by the author. The questionnaire contained twenty-four principles of supervision and represented five areas of the work of a supervisor:

- (a) Promotion of the vocational agriculture program,
- (b) Inspection of the vocational agriculture program,
- (c) Improvement of instruction in vocational agriculture,
- (d) Maintenance of the vocational agriculture program,
- (e) Processes that implement the supervision of the vocational agriculture department.

The principles were outlined by the author, and were developed with the assistance and counsel of Dr. Raymond J. Agan. The twenty-four principles contained in the questionnaire represented some of the supervisory practices used by the writer of this report. Three of the practices were suggested by Dr. Raymond J. Agan, and others were suggested by vocational agriculture teachers.

The questionnaire was tested by submitting it during a regional conference to a regional specialist in program planning for agriculture for the regional office of the United States Office of Education at Denver; a regional program officer from Kansas City; two vocational agriculture teachers from Colorado, and two area vocational technical school instructors from Kansas.

The questionnaire was mailed to forty vocational agriculture teachers in northeast Kansas, who were being supervised by this writer.

It was the opinion of the researcher in this study that vocational agriculture teachers supervised by him could best give frank answers to the statements listed, and thus would be representative opinions of vocational agriculture teachers in Kansas. The data collected through the use of the questionnaire were grouped into the areas of: (a) promotion, (b) inspection, (c) improvement, (d) maintenance, and (e) processes of supervision of the vocational agriculture department.

The supervisory practices were then rated by the vocational agriculture teachers on an agreement-disagreement scale. The results of the survey were summarized by covering each principle individually in the report.

Definitions of Terms Used.

There were certain terms used in this study for which special definitions were given for the purpose of this study. The definitions may or may not have been those in common usage at the time of the study.

Vocational agriculture. As used in this study, vocational agriculture refers to systematic instruction in agriculture of less than college grade in the public schools for those fourteen years of age, or older, who had entered or were preparing to enter upon the work of the farm or an agriculture-related occupation.

Department. In this study, the word department referred to a branch of the total school system relating to vocational agriculture.

Supervisor. In this study, the term supervisor referred to a person employed by the State Board for Vocational Education, who was responsible for the promotion, maintenance and improvement of instruction in the field of vocational agriculture.

Evaluation. As used in this study, the term evaluation referred

to appraisal or comparison to a standard.

State plan. As pertains to this study, the term state plan referred to the written plan outlining the regulations adopted by the Kansas State Board for Vocational Education for operating vocational education in the State of Kansas.

Vocational agriculture teacher. In this study, the term vocational agriculture teacher referred to the person employed by a high school to head the vocational agriculture department.

Reimbursement. As used in this study, the term reimbursement referred to the state and federal monies used to help support the vocational education program in high schools.

REVIEW OF THE SELECTED LITERATURE

A search of literature related to this study was made by surveying the literature at the Topeka Public Library, the Washburn University Library, Topeka, Kansas, the Library of the State Board for Vocational Education, and the Kansas State University Library. No study was found which was identical to this study. Some of the related studies were selected at the option of the writer to be included in this report.

The writer noted that investigations conducted by Schroeder in 1962 revealed that teachers and administrators of local vocational agriculture programs perceived the role of the state supervisor as that of a stimulator in respect to the operation of the local program in vocational education in agriculture. The vocational agriculture teacher, according to Schroeder, looked for leadership and direction from his district or state supervisor.⁶

In 1953 Walker observed that state supervisors in business education in Virginia had dual responsibilities--one of supervision, and the other administrative. A distinction was made by Walker

⁶Wayne E. Schroeder, "Role Expectation of State Supervision in Vocational Agriculture," (Doctor's Thesis, The Ohio State University, Columbus: 1962), p. 162.

between the consultative and advisory concept, and the inspection and authoratative concept of supervision. The most important responsibility of the supervisor was in the area of improvement of instruction for the local program.⁷

In reviewing an article in The National Business Education Quarterly, by Roman F. Warmke, the writer concluded that supervision implies cooperation between the teacher and the supervisor. Warmke stated:⁸

- (1) A supervisor must know his job and he must be a leader.
- (2) A supervisor must have characteristics common to an effective leader.
- (3) A supervisor must have delegated authority and earned authority to work effectively.

Manire listed six suggestions for making supervisory work more effective. These were:⁹

- (1) Suggest instead of demand.
- (2) Develop intimate and informal relations with fellow workers.

⁷Arthur L. Walker, "Some Major Aspects of State Supervision of Business Education," The National Business Education Quarterly, Vol. 21, May, 1953, pp. 8-14.

⁸Roman F. Warmke, "A Concept of Supervision," The National Business Education Quarterly, Vol. 29, May, 1961, pp. 3-7.

⁹Robert A. Manire, "Supervision that Works for Me," The Agricultural Education Magazine, April, 1945, p. 185.

- (3) Remember your words are assumed to be policy.
- (4) Be constructive.
- (5) Maintain self-control.
- (6) Refrain from gossip.

The qualifications of a supervisor were listed by Norman as:¹⁰

The job of a supervisor is not so much one of improving programs as it is to improve teachers.

Peabody states thus:¹¹

Supervisors should assist teachers by keeping them up-to-date and by promoting understanding between the superintendent and the teacher. Supervisors should provide an exchange of ideas among the teachers he supervises.

Several articles were found concerning what a vocational agriculture teacher desires from supervision. One of these articles, by J. W. Williams, a vocational agriculture teacher in Missouri, stated the following:¹²

The teacher desires the supervisor to be well trained and versatile with a sincere belief in vocational education.

¹⁰G. C. Norman, "Qualifications for Supervisors," The Agricultural Education Magazine, April, 1953, p. 232.

¹¹Fred Peabody, "Assistance for the Vocational Agriculture Teacher," The Agricultural Education Magazine, February, 1953, p. 183.

¹²J. W. Williams, "What the Vocational Teacher Expects from a Supervisor," The Agricultural Education Magazine, February, 1953, p. 179.

He wants him to be a thinker and philosopher, a person of action, a friend and a student, courageous, dynamic, energetic, creative, flexible, adaptable and understanding. Having a keen sense of humor, sociable, sincere, responsible, and one who has knowledge of newer concepts in (1) curriculum changes, (2) group dynamics, (3) psychology of learning, (4) teaching aids, (5) evaluation procedures, and (6) demonstrations. Supervisors should serve as coordinators of all vocational workers. Visits should be announced so little time will need to be spent in classroom. Teachers expect supervisors to establish rapport with administration and report to them at conclusion of visit. Teachers want supervisors to discard role as critic and become a counselor.

In summary, the writer of this report observed that the articles reviewed indicated that teachers of vocational agriculture expected supervisors to assist in developing and adapting their program to the educational needs of the students, and that supervisors exerted leadership in improving vocational agriculture programs.

QUESTIONNAIRE RESULTS

The questionnaire was developed by the author, with the advice and counsel of Dr. Raymond J. Agan, Mr. John Lacy and Mr. Byron Rawls. "The Function of the Supervisor in Improving Instruction in Vocational Agriculture Departments in Kansas" was the title of the questionnaire, that consisted of twenty-four items. Two of the items were multiple choice type statements and required specific answers. Twenty-two of the items were aligned to a rating scale consisting of four degrees of agreement. Each was rated by the teacher as to: strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree.

The twenty-four items were grouped into five areas. They were:

- (a) Promotion of the vocational agriculture program,
- (b) Inspection of the vocational agriculture program,
- (c) Improvement of instruction in vocational agriculture,
- (d) Maintenance of the vocational agriculture program,
- (e) Processes that implement the supervision of the vocational agriculture department.

The responses of the teachers were assigned a weighted value to determine the degree of acceptance in relation to importance the teacher thought the item represented in effective supervision. The

response, strongly agree, was given a numerical weight of plus two; agree was given a weight of plus one; disagree was given a weight of minus one, and strongly disagree was given a weight of minus two. This type of weighted rating gave advantages by assigning a numerical score to each of the principles rated by the thirty-five teachers responding to the questionnaire.

Questionnaires were returned by thirty-five of the forty teachers. The results were tabulated, and each of the twenty-two principles assigned a point value. The scores were arranged numerically, and the author determined that a practice receiving a score of thirty-seven or higher represented a supervisory practice of important nature. The two statements on the questionnaire that referred to the mechanical processes of supervision were tabulated, and the results appear in graph form in this report.

The results of the questionnaire were described in the five groups into which the twenty-four practices were placed. The order in which the groups were described represents the order of importance the teachers rated them. The rating of the five groups was as follows:

1. Improvement of instruction,
2. Processes that implement supervision,
3. Promotion of the vocational agriculture department,

4. Maintaining the vocational agriculture program,
5. Inspection of the vocational agriculture program.

Improvement of Instruction in Vocational Agriculture.

Table I is a compilation of the results of the questionnaire for the items relating to things the supervisor did to improve instruction of the vocational agriculture department.

Under the above scoring system, the practices used by a supervisor that related to the improvement of instruction rated the highest average score of all the groups of practices. The one practice that rated highest over all of the practices was in this category. This practice regarded the supervisors working with the local administrator to improve instruction.

A total of fifty-one points was assigned to the practice "suggest to the administrator improvements in facilities, class scheduling, course content and other items." The only practice receiving 100 per cent agreement by the teachers responding was the item that stated "the supervisor shall suggest points for improvement of the vocational agriculture program."

Two other items in the category of improving instruction were disagreed with by one of the teachers responding to the questionnaire. The item stated that "the supervisor shall inquire about problems the

teacher wishes discussed" showed disagreement by one respondent. The item that stated "the supervisor should suggest to the administrator improvements in facilities, class schedules, course content, and other items" received one negative reply from teachers responding to the questionnaire.

Another practice rated important by respondents was in the area of improvement of instruction. It stated that "the supervisor shall provide sources of teaching aids and reference materials." Although one teacher strongly disagreed with this practice, twenty of the thirty-five respondents felt strongly that this was part of a supervisor's job for improving instruction.

Two practices in this group received less than the thirty-seven point value the author deemed important. The first practice stated that "the supervisor should assist in preparing a course outline." The author was of the opinion that vocational agriculture teachers looked to teacher trainers rather than supervisors for this assistance. The other practice that stated "the supervisor shall provide technical agricultural information" left doubt that teachers expected this from supervisors.

TABLE I
SUPERVISORY PRACTICES RELATED TO IMPROVEMENT OF INSTRUCTION

Questionnaire No.	Supervisory Practices	Responses				Value SA=+2 A=+1 D=-1 SD=-2
		Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	
19	Suggest to the administrator improvements in facilities, class scheduling, course content and other items	18	16	1		51
12	Inquire about problems the teacher wishes discussed	17	17	1		50
18	Suggest points for improvement of the vocational agriculture program	14	20			48
10	Provide sources of teaching aids and reference material	20	12	2	1	48
16	Sit down with the teacher and administrator to discuss problems of the vocational agriculture department	12	20	3		41
17	Suggest points for improvement in teaching techniques	11	21	3		40
11	Provide technical agriculture information	14	13	5	3	30
1	Assist in preparing a course outline	5	19	9	2	16
						20

Processes that Implement the Supervision of Vocational Agriculture Departments.

Table II is a compilation of the results of the survey of items on the questionnaire pertaining to practices that implement the processes of supervision. Ninety per cent of the teachers replying to the questionnaire agreed or strongly agreed to these four specific practices that were performed by the supervisor.

Although five teachers disagreed with the practice to "notify the teacher a few days before the supervisor was to visit his department," thirteen of the thirty-five respondents strongly agreed this was a good practice.

The practice of making summer supervisory visits was strongly disagreed with by one teacher. Two teachers disagreed, but the practice received a thirty-seven value.

One teacher strongly disagreed that "the supervisor should return a written report to the school after making a supervisory appraisal." All others agreed or strongly agreed to this practice.

The practice that "the supervisor should inform the teacher of other vocational agriculture teaching jobs available" was strongly agreed with by one-half of the teachers; although one strongly disagreed, and one disagreed.

All of the practices in this group rated a value above that selected by the author as being important. Results of this questionnaire indicated to the researcher that vocational agriculture teachers expected a supervisor to follow these practices in his supervisory capacity.

TABLE II

PRACTICES OF A SUPERVISOR RELATING TO THE PROCESSES IMPLEMENTING
THE SUPERVISION OF A VOCATIONAL AGRICULTURE DEPARTMENT

Question- naire No.	Supervisory Practices	Responses				Value
		Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	
20	Inform teacher of other vocational agri- culture teaching jobs that may be open	18	15	1	1	SA=+2 A=+1 D=-1 SD=-2
15	Return a written supervisory report to the school	8	26		1	40
13	Notify the teacher a few days before the supervisory visit	13	17	5		38
14	Make at least one summer supervisory visit	9	23	2	1	37

Promotion of the Vocational Agriculture Department.

The group of practices receiving the third highest ratings was that of items that referred to promoting the vocational agriculture department. There were four items in the questionnaire directed at the problem of promoting or developing a better vocational agriculture program. These items were interpreted to mean those practices used by the supervisor to directly promote a better vocational agriculture department.

Table III is a compilation of the four items in the questionnaire relating to the promotion of vocational agriculture.

The item in this category receiving the lowest value referred to the requirement of an outline of the objectives and philosophies of the vocational agriculture program to be used for public relations work in the community. Twelve of the thirty-five teachers surveyed disagreed with this practice, including two who strongly disagreed.

The practice stating that "the supervisor assist the teacher to develop a stronger FFA" received a value of thirty-one, and thus rated below the value to indicate it as an important supervisory practice. It was the opinion of the writer of this report that teachers did not think of the FFA as an area where supervisors should give them assistance.

The item on the questionnaire relating to the promotion of vocational agriculture by having "the supervisor assist in the development of adult and young farmer classes" was disagreed with by three teachers. A contributing factor in answering this item was that twenty-four of the thirty-five teachers replying had conducted adult or young farmer classes.

Two respondents disagreed with the practice that "the supervisor shall visit the guidance department to discuss opportunities available for students taking vocational agriculture." This practice rated a value of forty-three, and was considered important as a supervisory practice.

Two practices in this group were rated below the value established as important by the researcher. The practice that "the supervisor assist in developing a stronger FFA chapter," and the practice to "require an outline of the objectives and philosophies of the vocational agriculture program to be used in public relations work in the community" were not rated as important by the respondents. As a supervisor, the researcher felt that teachers do not want practices required of them, although the teacher may feel that the practice is important.

TABLE III

PROMOTION OF THE VOCATIONAL AGRICULTURE PROGRAM

Question- naire No.	Supervisory Practices	Responses					Value
		Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree		
22	Visit guidance department to discuss opportunities available for students taking vocational agriculture	12	21	2			SA=+2 A=+1 D=-1 SD=-2
2	Assist in developing adult and young farmer programs	10	22	3			39
3	Assist in developing a stronger FFA chapter	6	24	5			31
8	Require an outline of the objectives and philosophies of the vocational agriculture program to be used in public relations work in the community	4	19	10	2		13

Maintenance of the Vocational Agriculture Program.

Three practices rated by the thirty-five teachers dealt with maintenance of the vocational agriculture program. Table IV gives the results of the survey regarding items of maintenance of the vocational agriculture program.

Three items appeared on the questionnaire that the author felt should be placed in this category. The writer felt that a supervisor should be a part of evaluation when this process attempted to maintain or justify the well-being of the vocational agriculture department. The item relating to the supervisor being asked to assist in the formal evaluation of the vocational agriculture department received a value of forty-three, which indicated the high regard vocational agriculture teachers had for supervisory assistance in this area. The opinion of the researcher was that teachers felt evaluations or appraisals of vocational agriculture programs required someone with wider experiences in vocational agriculture to give assistance when departments were being evaluated.

The lowest value (3) in this section of the questionnaire was given to the practice referring to the establishment of an advisory council. This item rated disagreement by twelve of the thirty-five teachers. Three respondents strongly disagreed with this practice. The practice was placed on the questionnaire by the writer because of the State policy

requiring all vocational education programs in Kansas to have advisory councils after July 1, 1968. Teachers, in rating this practice, gave disapproval to the practice that "the supervisor should assist in establishing an advisory council." Of the thirty-five departments returning the questionnaire, four had organized advisory councils. It was the opinion of the researcher that there was a lack of knowledge and interest in advisory councils among the teachers. It was also the opinion of the writer that supervisors have a big job to do in educating the teachers in the value and use of advisory councils. The average value of these three practices was twenty-four. One of the practices in this group rated above the important value level set by the researcher.

TABLE IV

PRACTICES OF SUPERVISION REFERRING TO MAINTENANCE OF THE
VOCATIONAL AGRICULTURE DEPARTMENTS

Question- naire No.	Supervisory Practices	Responses				Value
		Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	
5	Be asked to assist in the formal evaluation of the vocational agri- culture department	14	18	3		SA=+2 A=+1 D=-1 SD=-2
7	Evaluate the program of study used in teaching	9	18	8		28
4	Assist in establishing advisory council	1	19	12	3	3

Inspection of the Vocational Agriculture Program.

Three practices of the supervisor were selected by the author as representative of inspection processes. These three items received the lowest average value of the five groups. Table V is a compilation of the practices a supervisor may use to inspect a vocational agriculture department.

The lowest value recorded on the twenty-two items of the questionnaire was the practice that "the supervisor seek information about the vocational agriculture department from interested people of the community." A value of two was assigned this practice. The opinion of the writer of this report was that this practice had been used by supervisors, and was considered a valuable tool in making an inspection for an appraisal of the vocational agriculture department. According to the results of this survey, teachers did not agree that supervisors use this method.

Another inspection practice that found disagreement with fourteen of the thirty-five respondents was that "the supervisor accompany the teacher to the home of the student." Two teachers strongly agreed this was a good practice, but two strongly disagreed.

The practice that stated "the supervisor shall inspect student record and notebooks" was not accepted as a good practice, although twenty-five of the thirty-five respondents agreed with this practice.

The practice received a value of sixteen on the scale. None of these practices could be considered important according to the researcher's scale.

TABLE V

PRACTICES THAT RELATE TO INSPECTION OF THE VOCATIONAL
AGRICULTURE DEPARTMENT

Question- naire No.	Supervisory Practices	Responses					Value
		Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	SA=+2 A=+1 D=-1 SD=-2	
6	Inspect student record and notebooks	3	22	8	2	16	
21	Accompany teacher to home of student	2	19	12	2	5	
9	Seek information about the vocational agriculture department from interested people of the community	2	17	13	3	2	

Regarding Number and Length of Supervisory Visits.

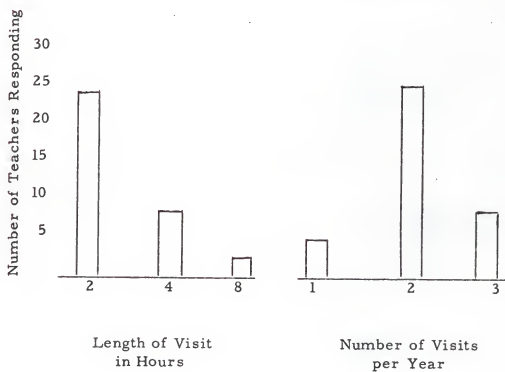
Two of the items on the questionnaire referred to the mechanical problems connected with implementation of supervision. The forty vocational agriculture teachers were given an opportunity to express their opinions regarding the amount of time they felt a supervisor should spend in supervising their departments. Although supervisory practices, or the need for them, vary from department to department, the author felt that vocational agriculture teachers had definite reasons for accepting or rejecting the assistance given by a supervisor. The researcher was of the opinion that the teachers used their experiences with supervisors as a basis for answering these two questions.

Concerning the length of time a supervisor should spend at the school during a supervisory visit, twenty-four of the thirty-five respondents felt that two hours was an optimum time to spend with the teacher. The supervisor's time spent with administrators and other school persons would be added to the time spent with the vocational agriculture teacher. Twenty-four of the thirty-five teachers felt that two hours was the optimum length of the visit. The writer felt that the length of each visit by the supervisor and the number of visits made per year were correlated actions.

The questionnaire allowed a choice of one, two, or three supervisory visits per year to be made by the supervisor. Of the four teachers who felt that one supervisory visit per year was sufficient, three of them felt the visit should be for one day. Twenty-four of the thirty-five teachers stated that they preferred two supervisory visits per year, and that these should be for two hours each.

Table VI is a compilation, in graph form, of the results of the statements referring to the number of supervisory visits and the length of time spent during each visit.

TABLE VI
THE NUMBER AND LENGTH OF SUPERVISORY VISITS



SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

This study developed from the author's concern for the role of the state supervisory staff in exerting leadership in the improvement of instruction of vocational agriculture departments in Kansas. It was further based on an observation of the writer that state supervisors, through certain supervisory practices, should assist in directing the changing objectives of vocational agriculture to meet the educational needs of more high school students.

The purpose of this study was to survey selected vocational agriculture teachers to get their opinions concerning practices used by supervisors in performing supervisory duties. The practices used in supervision were grouped into five categories and referred to the duties of a supervisor (1) to promote the vocational agriculture program; (2) to inspect the vocational agriculture program; (3) improvement of instruction; (4) maintenance of the vocational agriculture program; and (5) processes that implement supervision of vocational agriculture departments.

A questionnaire was developed by the author, with the advice and counsel of Dr. Raymond J. Agan. Twenty-four items, which dealt with practices used by supervisors in performing supervision of vocational agriculture departments, were included in the questionnaire.

Twenty-two of the items were rated by the teachers as practices they strongly agreed with, agreed with, disagreed with, or strongly disagreed with as being beneficial to them in improving instruction in their vocational agriculture department. Two of the items on the questionnaire referred to the length of time a supervisor should spend at the school while making his evaluation, and the number of supervisory visits he should make each year.

The questionnaire was mailed to forty vocational agriculture teachers supervised by the author. Each teacher was asked to complete the questionnaire, and thus express his opinion regarding the degree of agreement or disagreement with each of the supervisory practices listed. Thirty-five teachers returned completed questionnaires.

In considering the responses of the teachers, the four possible answers for each item on the questionnaire were assigned a point value. Each item rated strongly agree was assigned a value of plus two. Items rated agree were assigned a value of plus one. The items rated disagree were given a value of minus one, and those rated strongly disagree were assigned a value of minus two. Thus, with thirty-five teachers returning questionnaires, the highest value assigned any one item would be seventy if all teachers strongly agreed to that practice.

In summarizing the questionnaires, the twenty-two items were placed into five groupings representing similar areas of supervision. Each questionnaire item was given a numerical value, and each group was given an average value. From the teachers surveyed, it was indicated that two of the groups of supervisory practices rated higher than the others.

It was concluded from this that vocational agriculture teachers believed supervisors should follow practices that lead to improvement of instruction, and follow certain processes that implement better supervision. In general, it was concluded that practices related to improvement of instruction rated high among the duties of a supervisor.

It was also concluded that the following supervisory practices should be adopted by supervisors: (a) suggest to the local administrator improvements in the vocational agriculture program, (b) inquire regarding problems the teacher wished discussed, (c) suggest points for improvement in the vocational agriculture program, (d) provide the teacher with sources of teaching aids, (e) sit down with the teacher and administrator to discuss problems of the vocational agriculture department, and (f) suggest points for improving teaching techniques.

There were two practices in this group that the teachers rated a lower value. These were: (a) supervisors should provide technical

agriculture information, and (b) supervisors should assist in preparing a course outline for the vocational agriculture department. The author concluded from the results of this part of the survey that teachers welcomed constructive criticism and wanted assistance in becoming more effective instructors.

The teachers surveyed responded favorably to certain practices relating to the way supervisors implement their supervisory function. It can be concluded from the results of this survey that teachers preferred to be notified before a supervisory visit is made to their departments. Teachers also preferred one summer supervisory visit, and they favored a written supervisory report being returned to the school after each visit. The vocational agriculture teachers surveyed felt a teacher should be informed of other vocational agriculture teaching jobs that were available.

The third group of practices surveyed referred to practices of a supervisor to promote the vocational agriculture program. Two of the four items in this group rated high with the teachers surveyed. Respondents rated as important the practice of a supervisor visiting the high school guidance department to discuss opportunities for students enrolled in vocational agriculture. Assisting teachers to develop a stronger FFA, and requiring an outline of objectives and philosophies of the vocational agriculture department were not practices

the respondents felt were important parts of supervision.

Supervisory practices of maintaining the vocational agriculture department included one that seemed to be important. This was pertaining to the assistance given by a supervisor to the formal evaluation of the vocational agriculture department. The assistance in establishing an advisory council, and evaluating the program of study were not found to be important practices according to the survey of these teachers.

It was concluded that the teachers surveyed did not accept practices used by supervisors to inspect their vocational agriculture departments. None of the three practices in this group were rated high by the teachers surveyed.

From the results of the survey, the author concluded that teachers preferred two supervisory visits, of two hours each, per year.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The results of this survey indicated to the writer of this report that there were certain supervisory practices beneficial in improving instruction in vocational agriculture departments. It was observed by the author that vocational agriculture teachers accepted direction and leadership from supervisors when such actions led to the improvement of the vocational agriculture program, or tended to make their job of teaching easier.

This study revealed that supervisors could not assume that every vocational agriculture teacher agreed with the same supervisory methods. Supervision required skill in detecting and correcting weaknesses of vocational agriculture teachers. Teachers replied favorably to those practices that did not tend to uncover their weaknesses. The author believed that teachers accepted help from supervisors who visited their departments often enough to give a fair evaluation of their program.

It was the opinion of the writer that the following supervisory practices were important ones and should be followed by vocational agriculture supervisors. Supervisors should:

1. Suggest points for improvement of the vocational agriculture program.

2. Suggest to the administrator improvements in facilities, class scheduling, course content and other items.
3. Inquire about problems the teacher wished discussed.
4. Return a written supervisory report to the school.
5. Provide sources of teaching aids and reference materials.
6. Sit down with the teacher and administrator to talk over problems of the vocational agriculture department.

The following supervisory practices were not accepted by teachers as being important in helping them improve their programs:

1. Seek information about the vocational agriculture program from interested people in the community.
2. Accompany the teacher to the home of student.
3. Evaluate the program of study.
4. Inspect notebooks and record books.

This study indicated that supervisors should make two supervisory visits per year to the vocational agriculture department, and spend two hours with the teacher.

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APPENDIX

3301 W. 30th Terrace
Topeka, Kansas
February 28, 1968

Dear Vocational Agriculture Teacher:

An effort is being made to determine the practices and methods used by the supervisory staff for improving instruction and effectiveness of vocational agriculture departments in the State of Kansas.

The enclosed statements refer to items that might be discussed by the supervisor while evaluating, observing or inspecting your department.

Please rate your degree of agreement or disagreement with each item and return to me.

Sincerely,

Wilbur Rawson

Enc.

Please indicate your opinion by checking the proper column.

A supervisor should:

1. Assist in preparing a course outline.....
2. Assist in developing adult and young farmer programs
3. Assist in developing a stronger FFA chapter.....
4. Assist in establishing an advisory council.....
5. Be asked to assist in the formal evaluation of the vocational ag department.....
6. Inspect student record and notebooks.....
7. Evaluate the program of study used in teaching.....
8. Require an outline of the objectives and philosophy of the vocational ag program to be used in public relations work in the community.....
9. Seek information about the vocational ag department from interested people of the community.....
10. Provide sources of teaching aids and reference materials.....
11. Provide technical agricultural information.....
12. Inquire about problems the teacher wishes discussed.....
13. Notify the teacher a few days before the supervisory visit.....
14. Make at least one summer supervisory visit.....

Strongly Disagree

Disagree

Agree

Strongly Agree

15. Return a written supervisory visit report to the school.
16. Sit down with the teacher and administrator to discuss problems of the vocational ag department.
17. Suggest points for improvement in teaching techniques.
18. Suggest points for improvement of the vocational ag program.
19. Suggest to the administrator improvements in facilities, class scheduling, course content and other items.
20. Inform teacher of other vocational ag teaching jobs that may be open.
21. Accompany teacher to home of student.
22. Visit guidance department to discuss opportunities available for students taking vocational ag.
23. A supervisor should make: one, two, or three visits per school year to his assigned school. (circle one)
24. A supervisor should spend: 2 hours, 4 hours, or 1 full day on each supervisory visit. (circle one)

Strongly Disagree

Disagree

Agree

Strongly Agree

THE ROLE OF THE STATE SUPERVISORY STAFF IN IMPROVING
THE INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAM OF VOCATIONAL
AGRICULTURE DEPARTMENTS

by

WILBUR RAWSON

B. S. , Kansas State University, 1940

AN ABSTRACT OF A MASTER'S REPORT

submitted in partial fulfillment of the

requirements for the degree

MASTER OF SCIENCE

College of Education

KANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY
Manhattan, Kansas

1968

The purpose of this study was to survey the opinions of selected vocational agriculture teachers concerning practices used by the State of Kansas supervisory staff in improving instruction and evaluating vocational agriculture departments in Kansas.

A questionnaire of twenty-four items, which surveyed opinions relative to practices used by supervisors in performing their supervisory functions, was developed. The questions concerning supervisory practices were grouped into five areas. The five areas were: promotion of the vocational agriculture program; improvement of the vocational agriculture program; maintenance of the vocational agriculture program, and processes that implement the supervision of vocational agriculture departments.

The questionnaire was sent to forty vocational agriculture teachers, who were being supervised by the writer of this report. Each teacher was asked to complete the questionnaire and express his degree of agreement or disagreement regarding the practices used by supervisors in improving instruction in their vocational agriculture department.

In analyzing the responses of the teachers to the supervisory practices, a weighted value was assigned each degree of agreement or disagreement. A response of strongly agree was given a value of

plus two; agree was given a value of plus one; disagree had a value of minus one, and strongly disagree was given a value of minus two.

Thirty-five of the forty teachers returned completed questionnaires.

Those supervisory practices related to improvement in instruction of the vocational agriculture program received the highest average numerical value. It was found that teachers expected supervisors to use practices that assisted them in developing effective vocational agriculture programs. Vocational agriculture teachers expected supervisors to discuss problems of their program with local school administrators, as well as suggesting improvements in teaching techniques used in instructing the vocational agriculture classes.

In the group of practices related to improvement of instruction, the teachers surveyed did not approve of the supervisor assisting in preparing a course outline, or that the supervisor should provide technical information on agriculture.

According to the responses of the teachers surveyed, it was indicated that teachers wanted a written supervisory report returned to the school after a supervisory visit had been made. The following practices were also rated above the value established as important by the researcher: notify the teacher before making a supervisory visit; make one summer supervisory visit, and inform the teacher of other teaching jobs that were available.

The practices of visiting the guidance department in the high school to discuss opportunities available for students taking vocational agriculture, and the practice of assisting the vocational agriculture teacher develop adult and young farmer classes were rated as important in promoting the vocational agriculture program in the high school. The practices of assisting in developing a stronger FFA chapter, and requiring an outline of the objectives and philosophies of the vocational agriculture program were not accepted by the teachers as important functions of supervision.

Teachers felt supervisors should be asked to assist in the formal evaluation of the vocational agriculture department. The practices of the supervisor evaluating the program of study and assisting the teacher in establishing an advisory council were not judged important by the teachers.

It was also the opinion of the teachers that practices of supervision relating to inspection were not important in improving instruction of the vocational agriculture department.

In response to the question concerning the number and length of supervisory visits, the teachers surveyed selected two visits, of two hours each, per year as desirable for effective supervision.

