

Adapting to Change: Investigating the Awareness of University Supervisors in ELT Field Regarding Their Changing Roles in the New Mentoring System in Turkey

Dr. Mehmet Saraç

Lecturer, Bursa Uludag University

Abstract:

Practicum plays an indispensable role in teacher education. In 2018, a new model called the Clinical Supervision Model (CSM) was put into practice in Turkey; however, there is no nationwide research study related to the evaluation of the practicum process and the model from the perspectives of the university supervisors (US). With this in mind, the current study aims at evaluating the mentoring system and the CSM from the perspectives of the university supervisors (US). The study also tries to reveal how aware are the supervisors of their changing roles in the new mentoring system. The study adopted a qualitative research design and 12 USs from ELT departments participated in the study. The results revealed that the perceptions of the USs involved in the process were positive towards the CSM with varying degrees. The challenges that the stakeholders face in the process and their awareness of the new roles was also identified in the light of the qualitative data.

Keywords: Clinical Supervision Model, University Supervisors, Awareness

** The data utilized in this study was originally collected for the author's Ph.D. dissertation titled **“Evaluation of The Mentoring System from The Perspectives of Cooperating Teacher Trainers, Cooperating Teachers, Student Teachers and University Supervisors in English Language Teaching Department”** This dataset, a subset of the larger dissertation research, is specifically tailored to investigate the awareness of the USs in ELT field.

Introduction

In pre-service teacher education, the practicum has traditionally been a crucial component. Due to their lack of professional expertise and unfamiliarity with school surroundings as "teachers," student teachers face a variety of issues during this time. They require a lot of supervision and assistance during the practicum when they are teaching in schools; thus, it is believed that the practicum processes will instill confidence and courage in teacher trainees. The literature on teacher education includes studies on the practicum process in general, trainer roles, and trainee perspectives; however, the functions of university supervisors (US) (CTs) appear to be understudied.

The growth and advancement of foreign language teacher education curricula rely heavily on pre-service teacher training/education in general and field-based practical studies, including school experience and

teaching, practice experiences in particular. One of the reasons for the growing importance of teaching practice courses is the need to bring together the two sides of teacher education programs, theory and practice, in order to achieve more qualified language educators in the long term. These courses equip student teachers with the required theory and background information to put afore a set of conscious, principle-oriented professional activities rather than randomly chosen acts in the teaching-learning environment throughout the language teacher education program. Experiencing the real conditions of the teaching-learning atmosphere and the opportunity to receive first-hand professional counselling from cooperating teachers (CT) and university supervisors (US) can enrich the teaching capabilities of the prospective teachers. (Lytle, et al., 1999). In that sense, teaching practice is defined as "The student-teacher experience is the traditional transition from university theories to practical realities of public schools", by Darling & Hammond (2006). Thanks to this experience, student teachers have the opportunity to face authentic examples of techniques and approaches of language teaching and witnessing various models of language teaching and language teachers by interacting with CTs, USs and other STs in the same circle. Another impact and enlarging effect of the teaching practice is on the educational society interactions as it includes interrelations among STs, CTs and USs. This interrelation has the potential of supporting the synergy for developments in teacher education.

In Turkey, pre-service teachers spend their final year of schooling gaining classroom experience and taking teaching practice courses at cooperating schools. STs come into cooperating schools after studying content knowledge, subject knowledge, and educational sciences at university, where they have the opportunity to observe and practice teaching in an actual context. They observe, practice, and reflect on their teaching during two terms under the supervision of a CT. In the first term, STs have 4 hours of classroom experience each week, and in the second term, they receive 6 hours of teaching practice per week. Along with classroom observations, STs are provided opportunities to practice teaching during this process. Because these field experiences are so crucial to STs, the Higher Education Council (HEC) has launched a new initiative that allows them to spend more time at cooperating schools. In the academic year 2022-2023, fourth-year education students are required to have 6 hours of teaching practice per week in both terms (Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı [MEB], 2018). As the new initiative requires more cooperation among universities and schools, there is a need to investigate the perceptions regarding the model being applied from the perspectives of USs.

In recent years, the importance of the teacher education practicum has begun to receive increasing emphasis in the existing literature (Borko & Mayfield, 1995; McNamara, 1995; Orland-Barak, 2014; Okan & Yildirim, 2004; İlin, İnözü & Yildirim, 2007; Farrell, 2012; Yemez. Çoban). This may be due mainly to the fact that practicum is considered the most critical aspect of student-teaching career development as it celebrates the first step of becoming a teacher (McIntyre, Byrd & Foxx, 1996; Rand & Shelton-Colangelo, 1999; Turley, 1999; Soyoung Lee, 2011; Wheeler & Williams, 2012; Walkington, 2005). According to Johnson (1996), most student teachers agree that practicum is the most valuable learning experience in teaching, as it offers the ability to articulate with their teachers about their practices. In addition, such a learning experience promotes the teaching skills of the student-teachers and enhances the depth of knowledge on effective teaching practices (Collinson et al., 2009).

The study primarily aims at investigating how aware are the USs of their changing roles within the new mentoring system, as they have a key role as the organizer and supervisor of the whole practicum process. 12 USs from 6 universities were interviewed to reveal their level of awareness for the changing roles required by CSM and their general perceptions and opinions about the mentoring system pursued.

Clinical Supervision Model

The notion of “clinical supervision” was originally articulated by Goldhammer (1969). The major purpose of clinical supervision was to focus on the data collection approach during observations. Cogan (1973) established and promoted clinical supervision and provided emphasis to the importance of professional contacts between parties to help STs’ professional progress. Originally, Cogan (1973) advocated eight stages of clinical supervision, which focussed on planning, observation, and feedback. The purpose of clinical supervision is “to help STs learn and improve via joint planning, observation, and feedback” (Acheson & Gall 2003, p. 85). However, Hopkins and Moore (1993) point out that most STs have adverse expectations regarding monitoring. They perceive it as hostile and aimed to just bring out problematic parts in their teaching technique. The clinical supervision paradigm is meant to include the student and make them a part of the assessing process.

Clinical supervision is a word that originated in the medical profession and characterised a process through which trainees' abilities and knowledge are developed in the actual world. In other words, the CSM alters the connection between the US and the CT into a more collegial one, where the ST may employ the US and CT for both reflections and as a resource for improvement, rather than the usual adversary one (Pajek 2003). The CSM cycle is composed of five components. Each is a crucial element of the cycle's entire structure. The US, although the fact that each of the stakeholders is crucial, has main responsibility for the organisation and successful integration of the CSM. As a result, the supervisor does the following:

1. Organizes a meeting with the ST and CT prior to practice teaching for planning future observations,
2. Conducts systematic and non-judgmental observation and data collection.
3. Spends time analysing the data collected prior to the post-teaching 3-way conference.
4. Organises a meeting after the teaching to analyse the ST's teaching performance, provide supportive feedback and make plans for improvement for future teaching.
5. Reflects on their performance as a US and may ask a colleague to reflect on their performance throughout the previous stages of the CSM. This provides the US with data to help them understand how their role in the CSM can be improved.

Studies with University Supervisors in Turkish Context

Yördem and Akyol (2014) conducted a study on USs to gather their perspectives on problems in the mentoring process during practicum. Using semi-structured interviews, they collected qualitative data from seven USs working at ELT departments at four different universities. According to the survey, virtually all difficulties cited made identical points with slight variance. CTs' poor understanding of mentoring and mentoring role-responsibilities, choosing more cash over mentoring, a lack of being educated or trained, and randomized mentoring procedures were all complaints from supervisors. As a result, CT training opportunities and well-developed CT selection criteria were identified as essential for a better practicum.

Yaman (2013) investigated supervisory responsibilities in an English language teaching practicum at a state university through qualitative research with STs and USs. A semi-structured written interview focused on supervision and supervisors' duties to collect data prior to content analysis. The findings revealed that STs and USs agreed on the roles of "leader, guide, and collaborator." On the other hand, USs did not see themselves as "motivators, counsellors, and informants," but STs did. It was shown that STs require far more effective assistance from their supervisors than just cognitive help.

Coşkun (2013) evaluated USs and their stress variables in English language teaching practicum as part of his complete research project. Seven Americans participated in the study, and it was discovered that they were stressed as a result of conflict in CT-ST interactions and CT unwillingness to cooperate when collaboration was required. When all of these stressors are addressed from all of the players' perspectives, it reveals the requirement for immediate briefing and training of CTs who remain in the center.

Ünver (2003) also explored USs' attitudes on educational collaboration with CTs. USs submitted some important proposals to enhance collaboration and eliminate communication gaps, such as organizing a group including CTs and USs from each institution to collaborate on successful research to improve practicum. USs also advised organizing at least two meetings with CTs each year to share experiences and inviting CTs to Practice Teaching courses to aid them in class planning and keep them updated about the university's studies. These initiatives attempt to establish a more suitable atmosphere for collaborative practice.

Ilin (2003) analysed USs' understandings and issues of an efficient practicum process in qualitative research done at a state university. Six supervisors took part in the study, and their feedback sessions were videotaped. The results revealed that student-teacher traits were significant, particularly when demotivated for practicum. In addition, USs observed conflicts between their intentions and CTs' expectations from STs due to a lack of supervisor-mentor teamwork and communication. As a result, USs' limited time allotted for practicum and excessive course loads created roadblocks to a successful practicum and, indirectly, mentoring process. Reduced supervisory course loads and the number of STs supervised are needed as measures to avoid repeating poor ST observations.

Setting and Methodology

The participants were 12 USs from ELT departments at six state universities in Turkey. The participant group included nine female and three male USs. All of the participating USs had experience as a US more than three years. Only one of the US received training on the CSM prior to the implementation. They were all academicians at education faculties in ELT departments and all of them were actively taking roles in the practicum process as USs. Structured interview questions were asked to the USs working at these universities. The academicians at these universities were asked to evaluate the process in general, the new roles of the parties in the process, and their roles as supervisors.

Data Collection

The participants were academicians working at six state universities, and they had supervisory roles at their faculties during the data collection process. In the beginning, USs from 6 universities were informed about the research, and they were invited to participate in the study on a voluntary basis. In the first circle, the researcher contacted the coordinators of the practicum process at seven universities, and they were informed about the scope and purposes of the study. Later, the participants were reached via e-mails, and they were asked whether they preferred to participate in the survey via an online meeting or e-mails. Two of them agreed to participate in online meetings, while ten USs chose to answer the structured interview questions via e-mail. After collecting the data via online meetings, the structured interview questions were sent to the participants who volunteered to answer the questions via e-mails. Both types of data were recorded and saved for content analysis purposes.

Qualitative Data Analysis

Inductive, iterative, and eclectic methods are used in qualitative data analysis. The qualitative researcher begins with a specific set of data to obtain a broad conclusion, conducts continuous analysis before and after data collection, and employs various methods to examine the data (Tashakkori & Creswell, 2009). In general, qualitative data, according to Patton (2002), necessitate inductive and deductive analysis. Findings emerge from data via inductive analysis as the researcher discovers patterns, themes, and categories. In deductive analysis, on the other hand, the researcher uses an established framework to analyse the data. Open coding is used in the early stages of the analysis, and the analysis becomes more deductive as the appropriateness of the inductive content analysis is tested.

For the qualitative data, content analysis procedures were employed. The current study employed the emerging design (Glaser, 1992). Rather than using pre-determined categories or themes, a data-driven technique was used to allow new categories or themes to develop from the qualitative data, resulting in a novel theory based on the participants' views and experiences.

Throughout the qualitative data analysis phase, the study used continual comparison processes. Constant comparison was employed as an inductive strategy to deduce general categories from specific samples of qualitative data by making comparisons between incidents and data categories (Creswell, 2012). The qualitative data was first organised and categorised. Meanwhile, the data were thoroughly studied, examined, appraised in-depth, and reviewed numerous times to gain a broad overview of the data. The qualitative data was then broken down into codes, the smallest unit of data. The codes were mainly identified using in vivo and descriptive coding techniques (Miles, Huberman and Saldana, 2014).

Findings

The qualitative findings of the research revealed a grand total of codes with regard to the perceptions of USs about the CSM. The codes were classified into two main themes. The main themes are the overall evaluation of the process and awareness. In addition to these main themes, there were sub-themes in each category. There were three sub-themes for “overall evaluation of the process and the model”. The sub-themes were detected as “strengths, efficiency, and problems in the process”. On the other hand, there were two sub-themes for the “awareness” theme. These three sub-themes were “awareness of the CSM circle, awareness of the USs role and awareness of the roles of other parties”.

Main theme 1: Overall evaluation. There were three sub-themes for “overall evaluation of the process and the model”. The sub-themes were detected as “strengths, efficiency, and problems in the process”. The following table presents the distribution of codes within this central theme.

The Distribution of the codes in Main Theme 1

Main Theme	Sub-themes	Codes
Overall Evaluation	Strengths	Motivative Well-organized Reflection Evidence-based feedback Objective More practical Action plan

Efficiency

Effective for STs

Provides clear guidelines

Creates opportunities for professional development

Requires reflective skills

In the light of the qualitative data, it was found that the USs expressed their positive perceptions regarding the overall evaluation of the practicum process and the model. 10 USs out of 12 stated that CSM led them to plan, perform and monitor the practicum process more effectively. The codes related to the overall evaluation of the model addressed the *strengths* of the model. Four USs defined the process as motivative, while eight of them defined the model as effective. For example, US2 articulated her perceptions with the following statements:

“Before CSM, the duties and responsibilities were listed, but there was not a framework or clear definition on how to perform them. Thanks to the new model, many of those questions are answered.”

Strengths

In the qualitative data obtained from the USs, there were two recurrent themes in the statements of the participants. Those themes appeared as “reflection and action plan”. There was almost a consensus among the participants that reflection and action plan were the two major strengths of the CSM. According to the USs, creating opportunities for self-reflection for the STs makes valuable contributions to their professional development of them. When the post-conference is conducted in that sense, STs become aware of their strengths and weaknesses, and when this is the result of reflection, rather than direct and explicit comments of US or CT, the process ends up in a more permanent effect on the STs. Similarly, 10 out of 12 USs expressed in their interviews that preparing an action plan in coordination with the CT and ST clarifies the processes and makes it possible for the STs to get prepared for the upcoming practice teaching sessions in a more organized way. Some participants attributed the success of the model to the action plan by stating that in the action plan process, STs identify their developmental needs and those needs are taken into consideration while determining the focal point of the upcoming sessions. As an example, US4 articulated her perceptions towards the overall evaluation of the model with the following statement:

“I can count many advantages, but I think that reflection is the first strength of the model. STs become aware of their developmental needs, and when this process is continued with the action plan, it creates valuable developmental opportunities for the STs.”

Another US emphasized the benefits of the action plan from the CT and US perspective with the following statements:

“The action plan is critical for the STs, but it is also facilitative for the US and CT. When we create an action plan, planning the following session, evaluating the lesson plan of the STs and the whole process becomes easier to monitor.”

As it is defined in the related chapters, the CSM requires the US and CT to provide objective, non-judgmental and evidence-based feedback. During the observation, US and CT use observation forms, and they take notes and minutes. In the post-conference following the practice teaching, the session starts with reflection and then the ST is provided with objective and evidence-based feedback without judgmental statements. The qualitative data revealed that most of the USs were aware of the importance and contributions of these implementations for the STs. The USs stated that they were satisfied with this practice as keeping the records of the lesson and providing evidence-based feedback is more beneficial for the STs, and when the process is conducted in the required manner, the STs feel valued, and the CT and US feel more secure and effective. Regarding this aspect, US4 from a medium-size state university favored the model and articulated the following in her interview:

“Previously, we were taking notes and using observation forms; however, they were mostly random notes, and the US and CT were focusing on varying issues during the observation. In this model, as the focus of the observation is pre-planned, we can keep more to-the-point notes, and this evidence provides us with the opportunity of giving evidence-based feedback to the STs”.

Some other USs stressed the importance of providing non-judgmental feedback on the motivation of STs with the following statement:

“When the STs are given non-judgmental feedback, they become motivated, and they can discover their weaknesses at ease. Being non-judgmental during the post conference is a critical aspect.”

Efficiency

The qualitative research findings revealed in an important number of codes with regard to “efficiency”. Most of the participating USs stated that the model was effective in that it defined the procedures in detail, and all of the agents were provided with guidelines on how to perform the steps described in the cycle of the model. The participating USs perceived the definition of the cycle as facilitative and labor-saving. Additionally, most of the participating USs credited the model in that it positions each stakeholder to a critical point. As defined by the model, each agent in the process has critical roles, and this distribution of duties and responsibilities require ongoing collaboration between the US and CT. The USs articulated that when the parties in the process perform their duties and responsibilities in the required manner, the model has the potential of being more effective and creating opportunities for a better teacher education process. With reference to these aspects, US11 expressed her perceptions as follows:

“The CSM was a breakthrough action in the history of teacher education in Turkey. Unlike the previous models, there is not much space for individual initiations. The model guides us in detail and results in effective implementations.”

One US similarly attached much importance to CT’s having reflective skills. In accordance with this comment, some USs emphasized that in order for the model to be effective throughout the practicum process, CTs need to have reflective skills. They have training on the model; however, being reflective requires more. As academicians, the US are expected to have a repertoire of reflective skills, and when the

statements of the USs are examined in detail, they highlight the importance of having reflective skills for the CTs rather than the USs. With this regard, US3 articulated the following in her interview:

“I think that the model is feasible and effective, but this efficiency depends too much on the reflective skills of the CTs, and we are not sure whether they have these critical skills or not.”

Main Theme 2: Awareness

In the structured interview, following the questions related to the overall evaluations of the USs, there were three questions, one referring to cycle defined in the model, one referring to the roles and responsibilities of USs, and the other referring to the roles and responsibilities of the other parties in the practicum process. The content analysis for the interviews revealed three sub-themes for the awareness of the USs about the process, in parallel with the questions addressed. Those sub-themes were “*awareness of the CSM cycle, awareness of the USs role and awareness of the roles of other parties*”. The findings related to each sub-theme is presented in the following parts. The following table presents the distribution of codes in this central theme.

The Distribution of the codes in Main Theme 2

Main Theme	Sub-themes	Codes
Awareness	Awareness of the CSM cycle	Pre-conference Observation and data collection Data analysis Post-conference Reflection
	Awareness of the US role	US Has common duties with the CT Informs ST about the practicum program and practice school Monitors the whole process Observes the practice teaching *The authority *An outsider expert
	Awareness of the roles of other parties	Clearly defined Well organised Fair distribution of duties Gives critical roles to each agent *Needs clarification

Awareness of the CSM cycle

In the first part, the participating USs were asked to describe and evaluate the cycles of the model. In the view of the qualitative data, codes emerged in relation to each element in the CSM cycle; pre-conference, observation and data analysis, post-conference, and reflection. The content analysis revealed that most of the participating USs were aware of the importance and contributions of the pre-conference in the model. On the other hand, two USs participating to the study from medium-sized state universities considered the pre-conference as a step to be conducted between the CT and ST, and they considered themselves outside

the cycle at this process. While 10 USs defined the pre-conference as a step, including themselves, the other two USs thought that they did not have any responsibility in the pre-conference step. One of the USs in this group articulated the following in his interview:

“In the pre-conference, STs present their lesson plans to the CTs. CTs are the ones who know the school and students better, so I think in this step, the primary responsibility belongs to the CTs.”

Regarding the observation and data collection process, almost all of the USs stated similar expressions, and they declared that they believe in the valuable contributions that the CSM made to this process. In the model, both the CT and the US observe the practice teaching together, and they conduct the observation and data collection process independently; following the observation, these data provide the evidence of observation for the USs and CTs to refer in the post-conference. The participating USs shared positive perceptions regarding the CSM cycle for observation and data collection. Eight USs stressed the importance of observation and data collection practices and highlighted the guidance of the CSM for these practices. For example, US11 stated in her interview that:

“Observation and data collection is probably the most valuable facet of the model in that it enables the US and CT to conduct an effective and focused observation and data collection. The data facilitates the following steps in the cycle.”

As for the data analysis phase in the CSM cycle, a limited number of USs expressed their ideas. In the participating group, only 3 USs mentioned the data analysis practices, while other USs skipped to the post-conference and reflection phase after the observation practices. The USs who stated their opinions regarding the data analysis phase underlined that the data which was collected during the observation becomes more meaningful when it is analyzed by the USs and/or CTs. Regarding this aspect, US7, for example, expressed her opinions with the following statements:

“Analysis for the data collected during the observation is important because it makes studying data a lot simpler and more accurate. It helps the US and CT straightforwardly interpret the data so that they don't leave anything out that could help them derive insights from it.”

In the light of the qualitative data, post-conference and reflection were undoubtedly the most highlighted and credited aspects of the model. There was almost a consensus among the participating USs that introducing these practices and perspectives to the practicum process was the most critical contribution of the CSM. All the USs in the participating group described the reflection as described in the cycle of the model. In addition, some participants approached this aspect from a wider perspective, and they added that the reflection practices would be beneficial for the STs not only throughout the practicum process but also for their overall professional development. Regarding this aspect, US3 stated the following in her interview:

“Providing opportunities for STs to reflect in the context of supportive and solution-focused environments leads them to make strides toward professional goals, builds self-efficacy, establishes long-term growth, and ultimately can result in higher student achievement.”

Awareness of the US Role

The following category in the central theme of awareness was related to the awareness of the US roles. As defined in detail in the related chapter, USs have certain roles in the process, and their roles are redefined and explained in the model. In the model, on the one hand, the USs has the leading role for monitoring the practicum process, and on the other hand, they share certain responsibilities that they need to complete in collaboration with the CTs at cooperating schools. With this regard, the majority of the USs (9 USs) defined their roles according to the model. They stated that although there were leading the process, they had common tasks and responsibilities to be pursued in collaboration.

Similarly, 10 USs stated that they were responsible for informing the STs about the practicum program and the practice school. 8 USs stated that they were in charge of monitoring the process in that they conducted close communication and collaboration with the CTs and STs. 2 participants stated that they had the chance to gather data from the field about the practices of the CTs thanks to their students at practice schools. Additionally, all of the participating USs were aware that they were required to take part in the observation of planned practice teaching sessions. As an example of the awareness of the US roles, US12 stated that:

“Once a student commences his/her practicum, the supervisor coordinates and supervises the student's work and takes responsibility for seeing that the specific objectives and activities agreed upon are being carried out according to schedule.”

Unlike the other participating USs, one of the USs described his/her role as the authority in the process and attributed all monitoring and performance evaluation issues to himself/herself. Similarly, another participant described the US as an outsider expert and stated that the US was the expert in the field and had the authority to manage the process, rather than to share the roles and responsibilities with the other parties in the process.

In terms of the final evaluation in the practicum process, all the USs were aware of their roles and responsibilities, and they were aware that in the post-conference following the last practice teaching session, they were required to finalize the evaluation and grading of the STs in coordination with the CTs.

Awareness of the Roles of Other Parties

The content analysis of the interview data generated the final category as “awareness of the roles of other parties” for the final central theme “awareness” Most of the participating USs reported perceptions of the roles of the other parties in accordance with the role definitions in the process. Not surprisingly, the roles and responsibilities of the CTs in the process were highlighted by the participating USs. Seven USs stated that the roles and responsibilities of the agents in the process are clearly defined, and they were able to conduct the process in harmony and a well-organized manner. Regarding the definition of roles and responsibilities, US1 stated the following in her interview:

“The individual roles that make up the team in the practicum process are clearly defined, and each agent is informed about these responsibilities. In addition, CTs are trained on how to conduct the steps in the CSM cycle. Both the USs and CTs are aware of their roles.”

Regarding the same issue, 4 participants used the term “*fair*” for the distribution of tasks and responsibilities among the parties in practicum. According to these participants, the model defined fair responsibilities for the USs and CTs. Many participants were also aware of the critical role that the CTs have in the process. 10 USs defined the CTs as critical stakeholders for the professional development of the STs. One of the USs who were highly experienced as a US compared the CSM with the previous practices and expressed her opinion with the following statements:

“Before the CSM, we were facing many challenges in terms of the responsibilities of the USs and CTs. As the CTs were not trained in their roles, they expected the USs to perform many of the tasks. The training opportunity that the new model created for the CTs seems to be one of the most outstanding contributions to the whole process.”

In terms of the roles of other parties in the process, only one US reported negative perceptions in that the process needed clarification on the grounds that the collaboration and communication between the USs and CTs needed clarification to prevent confusion and problems throughout the process.

Conclusion

The findings of this study provide valuable insights into the perceptions of University Supervisors (USs) regarding the Clinical Supervision Model (CSM) in the context of teacher education. The analysis of the qualitative data revealed two main themes: "Overall Evaluation" and "Awareness," each comprising sub-themes that shed light on the USs' perspectives on the CSM.

The "Overall Evaluation" theme encompassed sub-themes related to the strengths and efficiency. The findings indicate that the USs generally expressed positive perceptions of the CSM, highlighting its strengths and efficiency. The USs identified reflection and action planning as two major strengths of the CSM. The model's emphasis on self-reflection for student teachers (STs) was acknowledged as a valuable contribution to their professional development. The post-conference, where STs could reflect on their strengths and weaknesses, was seen as an effective way to foster growth. Action planning in collaboration with cooperating teachers (CTs) was also praised for providing clear guidance and better preparation for practice teaching sessions. USs noted that this helped STs identify their developmental needs and resulted in more effective teaching sessions.

The CSM was deemed efficient by most USs. They appreciated the model's detailed definition of procedures and the clear distribution of responsibilities among stakeholders. Effective observation and data collection processes were particularly valued. The model encouraged objective, non-judgmental, and evidence-based feedback, which contributed to STs' motivation and overall development. In particular, it was highlighted that the CSM enabled USs and CTs to maintain more focused and meaningful records of observations, making evidence-based feedback more beneficial for STs.

The "Awareness" theme revolved around sub-themes related to the USs' understanding of the CSM cycle, their roles, and the roles of other parties in the practicum process. Most USs demonstrated a good understanding of the CSM cycle, which includes pre-conference, observation and data analysis, post-conference, and reflection. The pre-conference was recognized as an essential step, although two USs perceived it as primarily involving CTs and STs. Observation and data collection were acknowledged as

valuable contributions, facilitating an effective and focused process. The post-conference and reflection phases received substantial praise for their potential to support STs' self-efficacy and professional development. The majority of USs were aware of their roles as supervisors in the CSM. They acknowledged their leading role in monitoring the practicum process and reported common tasks and responsibilities shared with CTs. USs also recognized their responsibility for informing STs about the practicum program and the practice school, monitoring the process, and participating in practice teaching session observations. Final evaluations and grading of STs were seen as an essential part of their role. USs highlighted the importance of clearly defined roles and responsibilities within the CSM. Roles for CTs, in particular, were praised for being well-organized and fairly distributed. The critical role of CTs in ST professional development was emphasized by most USs. The training opportunities provided by the CSM for CTs were viewed as a significant contribution to the teacher education process. Only one US expressed the need for better clarification of roles to prevent confusion and problems in the collaborative process.

In conclusion, the qualitative findings reveal that University Supervisors generally hold positive perceptions of the model (CSM). They appreciate its strengths in promoting reflection and action planning, as well as its efficiency in facilitating observation and feedback processes. Moreover, they have a good understanding of their roles within the model and recognize the critical roles of cooperating teachers. The CSM is viewed as a valuable framework for enhancing the professional development of student teachers. However, for optimal implementation, further clarification and communication regarding roles and responsibilities may be necessary to ensure the smooth operation of the model in the teacher education process.

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