

# Conceptions of Pedagogical Supervision by Continuing Education Trainees in the Secondary Schools of Brazzaville

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DOI: <https://doi.org/10.36348/jaspe.2025.v08i07.004>

| Received: 05.06.2025 | Accepted: 11.08.2025 | Published: 23.08.2025

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## Abstract

The objectives of this cross-sectional study were: To conduct a reflective analysis on the issues surrounding the pedagogical supervision of continuing education trainees; To assess the degree of satisfaction among these trainees regarding the quality of guidance provided by their pedagogical supervisors. The trainees' perceptions of pedagogical supervision were collected through a questionnaire designed specifically for this study. It was developed based on recommendations from the literature and underwent both internal and external validation of its content. The surveyed trainees expressed their opinions in response to the items administered. In total, twenty-eight (28) Physical Education and Sports teachers all continuing education students at the Higher Institute of Physical Education and Sports undertaking internships at three (3) colleges in Brazzaville (CEG 28 Novembre in Moukoundo, CEG Bayonne in Nkombo, and CEG Ibaliko in Massengo), constituted our research field. These were the institutions where the students were assigned for practical training. The results of our study show that 87.50% of the continuing education students surveyed believe that discussions with supervisors are very important. This positive perception is explained by the fact that nearly all the students 95% reported enjoying freedom of expression during these discussions, which fostered a sense of trust. In this regard, our study is of great utility to education policymakers, who may use its findings to take appropriate measures aimed at improving teaching and learning in schools. Acknowledging that this study only scratches the surface of the broader issue of pedagogical supervision for student-teachers, we believe it would be worthwhile to pursue further research exploring this same issue from different perspectives in order to build a more complete picture of the current situation.

**Keywords:** Conception, Physical Education, Pedagogical Supervision, Students, Internship.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

The world of work is in constant transformation, and the social actors it comprises are required to adapt to change. The field of education is no exception (E. Dugas, 2009, p. 135). For several years now, particular attention has been given to the practical aspect of teacher education, as training and education have become essential concerns for any society committed to improving the well-being of its population. The importance of Physical Education and Sports (PE) in the educational landscape is well established. PE enables students to ensure their own safety and that of others, maintain good health, develop self-image and self-esteem, and build healthy relationships with others. Moreover, PE is an activity in which teacher involvement is crucial to shaping integrated citizens who aspire to contribute to the development of their country. This is due to the numerous opportunities offered by PE practice.

Furthermore, physical education and sports are considered means of education and training, as well as tools for improving an individual's physical and mental health. The practice of PE serves as a life school, developing skills such as cooperation, teamwork, and leadership, and fostering values like discipline, effort, and self-improvement (Gadage, 2012).

It is within this context that the authorities responsible for PE in Congo have established pedagogical supervision services to support and assist teachers in their duties. There has been a notable resurgence of activity around supervision, not only in PE but also across all disciplines. Most pedagogical supervisors are appointed from among certified PE teachers and PE advisors, and their roles include enforcing official guidelines, providing advice, offering training, and supporting PE teachers. Specifically, their work involves verifying the maintenance of pedagogical

documents (lesson plans, teaching journals, annual programs), and assessing teaching practices. To this end, supervisors conduct site visits within their respective districts. The overarching mission of pedagogical supervision is to improve teachers' classroom performance and prepare them for possible pedagogical inspections which, unlike supervision, include a formal evaluation component with grades.

This supervision has become a major concern among PE specialists, particularly due to disparities in human, financial, and material resources. Consequently, initial training alone cannot guarantee the ongoing acquisition of essential knowledge and skills throughout a professional career. Continuing education is therefore more important than ever for professional competence and social adaptability.

In Congo, opinions on supervision are mixed. Some perceive it as a critical session where the supervisor focuses solely on mistakes, behaviors, or attitudes of the teacher. Others view it as an opportunity for the supervisor to showcase their own knowledge while disregarding the teacher's contributions. As a result, some teachers find supervision burdensome, and others reject it outright. These perspectives often lead to unexpected and delicate situations during pedagogical supervision sessions.

#### **This study stems from several research questions:**

- How do continuing education trainees perceive the guidance provided by their pedagogical supervisors?
- What is the degree of satisfaction among trainees regarding the quality of supervision provided?

To answer these questions, the following main hypotheses were proposed: PE trainees in continuing education have a positive perception of the supervision provided by their pedagogical supervisors.

The feedback discussions that follow lesson observations contribute to trainees' satisfaction.

Better understanding trainees' perceptions will enable supervisors to more effectively identify and address the challenges encountered during training. It will also help explain certain behaviors exhibited by trainees and inform possible adjustments in supervision approaches. Ultimately, this study seeks to promote mutual understanding among PE education stakeholders and highlight the importance of effective pedagogical supervision, thereby facilitating its successful implementation.

Finally, it lays the foundation for better performance among PE teachers in educational institutions.

## **2. METHODOLOGY**

To verify our hypotheses, the following methodological approach was adopted:

### **2.1 Sampling**

The target population consisted of Physical Education and Sports (PE) trainees ( $n = 28$ ), all of whom were continuing education students at the Higher Institute of Physical Education and Sports (ISEPS), undergoing internships at three secondary schools in Brazzaville: College 28 Novembre in Moukoundo, College Bayonne in Nkombo, and College Ibaliko in Massengo.

To be included in the study, participants had to meet the following criteria: Be a PE trainee and a continuing education student at ISEPS. Be undertaking an internship at one of the selected schools during the current academic year. Have given their informed consent and completed all items in the survey questionnaire. The following were excluded from the study sample:

- Trainees from other academic disciplines.
- Trainees who did not provide consent.
- Trainees who did not fully complete the questionnaire.

As a result, 25 continuing education students at ISEPS were selected to form the sample group. Among the respondents, 72.50% were male and 27.50% were female (see Figure 1).

### **2.2 Survey Procedure**

This cross-sectional study was conducted at CEG 28 Novembre (Moukoundo), CEG Bayonne (Nkombo), and CEG Ibaliko (Massengo) in Brazzaville during May 2023. Approval for the study was obtained from the Directorate General of Sports and Physical Education, which oversees scientific research in Physical Education and Sports, as well as from the Brazzaville Departmental Directorate of PE.

The study was conducted in two phases.

The first phase was a pilot survey, conducted during the first week of May. Initial questionnaires were distributed to eight (8) second-year Master's students at ISEPS to test the reliability, consistency, and internal validity of the questionnaire.

The second phase was the main survey, which took place during the second half of May. Questionnaires were distributed to the trainees selected for the study sample.

### **2.3 Data Collection Instrument**

The data collection instrument was a questionnaire form, used as the main technique for data gathering. It included both closed-ended and open-ended questions, designed to collect diverse information for conducting a reflective analysis on the challenges of

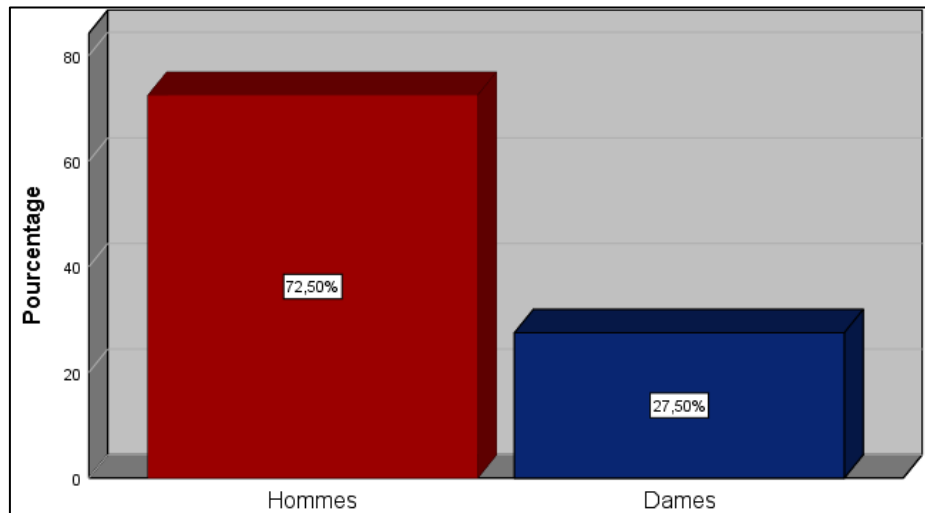
pedagogical supervision of continuing education trainees.

All distributed questionnaires ( $n = 25$ ) were returned. Data collection and tabulation were carried out during the last week of May.

## 2.4 Statistical Analysis

Data entry was performed using Microsoft Excel. The resulting database was cleaned and prepared in Excel (GLI-2012 software) and analyzed using SPSS software, version 23.0.

## 3. RESULTS



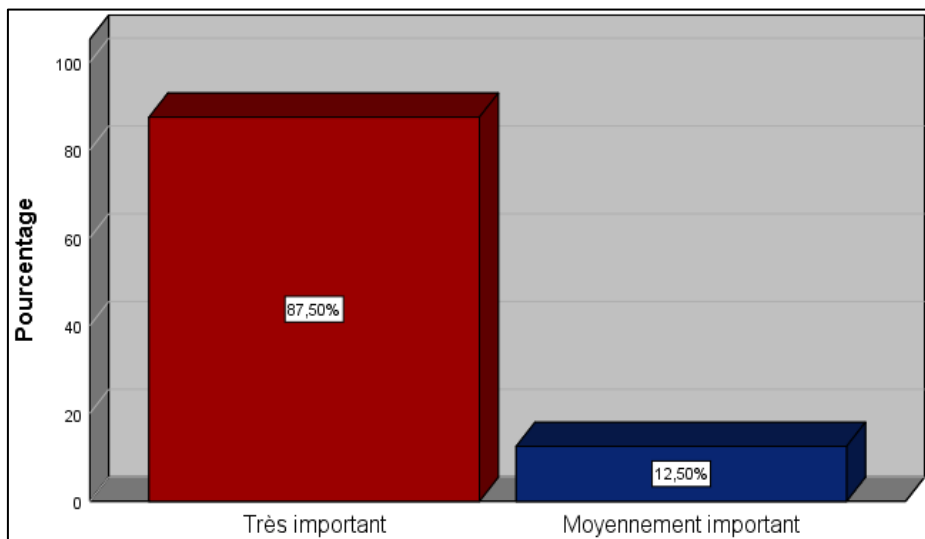
**Figure 1: Gender Distribution of the Sample**

Source: TIRA, Survey 2023

Figure 1 shows that 72.50% of the respondents were male, while 27.50% were female.

Sports perceive the importance of interactions with their pedagogical supervisors during internships.

This figure presents how continuing education students at the Higher Institute of Physical Education and

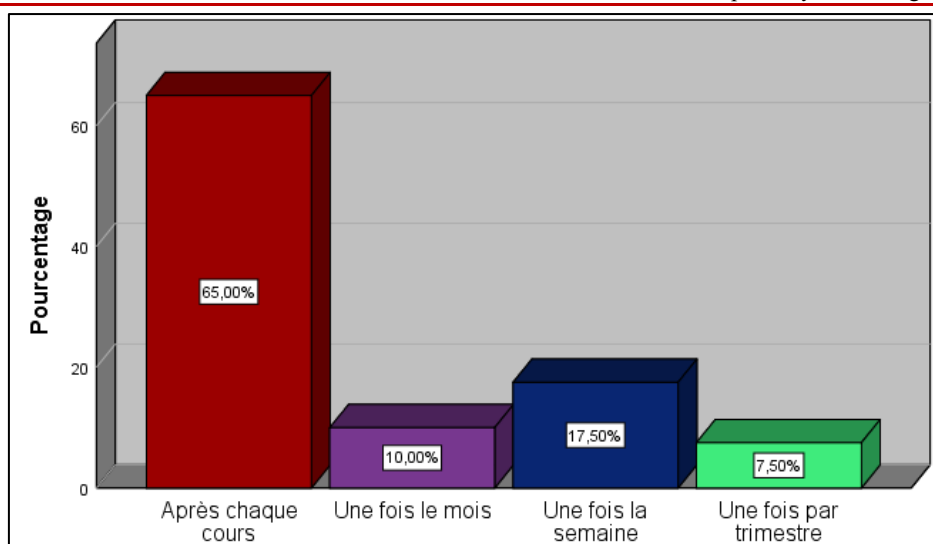


**Figure 2: Importance of Interaction with the Supervisor**

Source: TIRA, Survey 2023

According to this figure, 87.50% of the surveyed trainees consider interactions with their supervisors to be very important. In contrast, 12.50% regard these exchanges as moderately important.

Figure 3: Frequency of Interviews between Supervisor and Trainee This figure shows the frequency of interviews between the supervisor and the trainee, based on the information provided by the continuing education students during their internships.

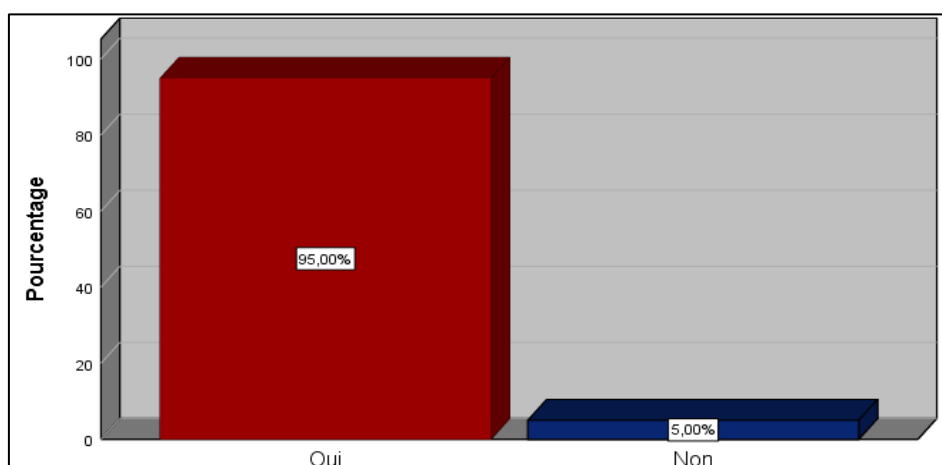


**Figure 3: Timeline of interviews**

Source: TIRA, Survey 2023

The figure indicates that: 65% of the respondents met with their supervisor after each lesson, 17.50% reported having weekly meetings, 10% had monthly meetings, and 7.50% reported only quarterly meetings.

During Supervisor-Trainee Discussions This figure illustrates how trainees perceive their freedom of expression during exchanges with their supervisors.



**Figure 4: Perceived Freedom of Expression**

Source: TIRA, Survey 2023

Almost all respondents (95%) indicated that they felt free to express themselves during the interviews. Only a very small number of respondents felt they lacked this freedom.

#### 4. DISCUSSION

Our research enabled us to identify key features of pedagogical supervision practices and to highlight recurring patterns emerging from the supervision of trainees at ISEPS, as reflected in the literature.

Our findings reveal that 87.50% of continuing education students at the Higher Institute of Physical Education and Sports (ISEPS) consider interactions with their supervisors to be highly important. However,

12.50% regard these interactions as moderately important.

These findings are consistent with those of Saillot (2022), who clearly stated in his study that pedagogical supervision is a powerful platform for mutual exchange, placing all actors in an active learning context through various debates between supervisors and their trainees. Supervisors bring with them life experiences, prior knowledge, and specific expectations that influence how trainees learn.

In this respect, practical internships are essential because they connect theory to practice and provide concrete exposure to the professional world.

They help students develop competencies, refine their career plans, and build professional networks. Internships are also a recruitment opportunity for organizations seeking future talent.

Currently, in most educational programs, supervisors play a central role in determining the success or failure of future teachers. Their decisions significantly influence how teachers deliver their lessons. It should be noted, however, that some education professionals doubt the effectiveness of supervision (Turney, 1982, cited in MacNaughton and Clyde, 1990), highlighting the difficulty of balancing two seemingly contradictory roles: guidance and evaluation (Acheson & Gall, 1993).

Villeneuve (1994) suggests that the goals of supervision are twofold: first, the development of professional competence within an organizational context; and second, the establishment of connections between theory and practice. Morissette *et al.*, (1992) also point out that many studies (e.g., Acheson & Gall, 1980; Alfonso *et al.*, 1981; Barnabe *et al.*, 1988; Cogan, 1973; Glickman, 1981; Goldhammer *et al.*, 1980; Paquette, 1986; Sergiovanni, 1982; Squires *et al.*, 1984) emphasize that the primary objective of pedagogical supervision is to improve and enrich teaching in order to ensure the best possible learning outcomes.

We also agree with Daele *et al.*, (2022), who assert that practical internships are crucial for validating career choices and gaining real-world work experience. They offer immersion in a specific profession, allowing trainees to apply theoretical knowledge in practice. Internships serve as stepping stones for acquiring new skills, adapting to the job market, and learning through hands-on experience.

Regarding the frequency of meetings, our data show that: 65% of ISEPS trainees met with their supervisors after each lesson, 17.50% had weekly meetings, 10% met monthly, and 7.50% reported quarterly discussions.

These results challenge the skepticism of some school professionals who question the efficiency of supervision (Turney, 1982), and underscore the difficulty of balancing the dual functions of support and assessment (Acheson & Gall, 1993). These challenges often lead to feelings of isolation among supervisors (Anderson, Major & Mitchell, 1992). As for freedom of expression, almost all respondents (95%) reported feeling free to speak during discussions with supervisors. Only a small number said they did not feel this freedom. Such freedom is essential to effective supervision. Duchesne (2010), cited by Colognesi (2019, p. 16), explains that any support relationship is defined by “a supportive connection between two people walking side by side.” For the relationship to function, it must be built on trust and respect, and it must be interactive—taking into account the trainee’s expectations, needs, and

responses in the work environment. The support relationship is a form of voluntary aid that promotes learning and development, based on interpersonal exchange, in which an experienced person invests their wisdom and expertise to help another person acquire new skills and achieve professional goals. However, our observations must be considered in light of certain limitations. In this study, a questionnaire was used to assess PE teachers’ perceptions of pedagogical supervision. It included both closed- and open-ended questions. Yet, Festinger *et al.*, (1959) have shown that field observation, supported by a reliable evaluation grid, is more appropriate. Nonetheless, the differences in objectivity between the two methods (questionnaire and field observation) are minimal. In conclusion, Galand & Delisse (2020) state that pedagogical supervision lies at the heart of a trainer’s role. It is the art of facilitating learning in an engaging and interactive way. This technique aims to make training sessions more attractive and memorable by using diverse tools and methods to enhance engagement and participation. The stakes are high, as effective pedagogical supervision can transform a standard training session into a vibrant learning experience, fostering better information retention and practical application of acquired skills.

## 5. CONCLUSION

There are numerous research opportunities aimed at analyzing and understanding the mechanisms and processes that constitute experience particularly those that enable the transition from a formative experience to a learning experience. The findings of this study reassure us that experience refers to the primacy of lived action. If experience is defined as life itself, it draws upon past experiences and alters the quality of those to come. For future professionals in training, experience could serve as an educational value to be integrated and institutionalized within a trajectory focused not solely on the professionalization of training, but on the professionalization of actual work activities.

When made explicit in practical situations for training purposes, experience must be accompanied in such a way that it can be verbalized and made meaningful, helping individuals to understand the significance of both their actions and intentions. Without this process of articulating experiences, it is difficult to transform formative experiences into true learning opportunities.

In the current context, internships represent a potential response to the social and economic imperative of employability, skills development, and professionalization. They often constitute a trainee’s first real professional experience offering hands-on work exposure and introducing various aspects of the professional world.

At ISEPS, the aim is to train qualified pedagogical advisors, not only in teaching and



supervision, but also in research. This goal explains why the definition of output variables is left to the discretion of each advisor.

The knowledge transmitted by supervisors and acquired by trainees during post-teaching discussions is both practical-technical and technological in nature.

In general, the training internship is an ideal space where theoretical knowledge can be put into practice. It takes place in a fraternal and collaborative atmosphere characterized by meaningful interaction between participants.

In conclusion, we can state with confidence that our hypotheses have been confirmed.

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