COGNITIVE SCIENCES AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

Influence of Supervisory Relationship and Satisfaction among Trainee Counselors in Practicum Process

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this research is to investigate the influence of supervisory relationship on supervision satisfaction among trainee counselors. The Supervisory Relationship Questionnaire (SRQ) is to measure the supervisory relationship and Supervisory Satisfaction Questionnaire (SSQ) is used to measure supervision satisfaction. The finding shows that supervisory relationship and its subscales (Safe Base, Structure, Commitment, Reflective Education, Role Model and Formative Feedback) have a positively significant relationship with supervision satisfaction among trainee counselors (safe base: $r = 0.73$, $p < 0.05$, structure: $r = 0.65$, $p < 0.05$, commitment: $r = 0.69$, $p < .05$, reflective education: $r = 0.70$, $p < 0.05$, role model: $r = 0.51$, $p < 0.05$, formative feedback: $r = 0.71$, $p < 0.05$ and supervisory relationship: $r = 0.79$, $p < 0.05$). The findings of this research also found that supervisory relationship, safe base and role model variables have significant influence on supervision satisfaction among trainee counselors with $F(1, 98) = 169.59$, $p < 0.05$, Adjusted $R^2 = 0.63$ for supervisory relationship variable, $F(3, 96) = 68.68$, $p < 0.05$, Adjusted $R^2 = 67$ for safe base variable and $F(2, 97) = 96.47$, $p < 0.05$, Adjusted $R^2 = 0.65$ for role model variable. Supervisory relationship variable has the greatest influence ($\beta = .79$) while role model variable has the least influence ($\beta = -0.28$) on supervision satisfaction. As for the theoretical implication, the finding of this research has proven Marina Palomo's theoretical framework in 'Bi-directional Model of the Supervisory Relationship'. Meanwhile in practical implication, this research has raised awareness on the importance of supervisory relationship on supervision satisfaction in counseling supervision.

Keyword: Supervisory Relationship, Supervision Satisfaction, Trainee Counselors

INTRODUCTION

Practicum is an important aspect in counseling course, because it is one of the requirements for every trainee counselor in which they have to conduct counseling session within the hours that have been assigned to them by the university (Zhang & Parsons, 2015). In practicum, it is compulsory for trainee

counselors to practice their skills within individual and group sessions. Along the process, they need a supervisor to supervise their counseling sessions. Supervision in counseling is a meeting where trainee counselor will review and reflect on their development in counseling to gain improvement (Carroll, 2007). According to Zhang and Parsons (2015), the supervision that takes place can be one-to-one or group supervision and it depends on the university. The supervision process enables trainee counselors towards development.

The supervision that takes place is different for every trainee counselor because different supervisors have different kinds of approach in counseling supervision. Not only that, how the supervision takes place and how often the supervision takes place will also influence the development of the supervision among supervisor and trainee counselor. The relationship that is formed in counseling supervision between supervisor and trainee counselor is called as 'supervisory relationship' and this is important for the development of the supervision and the development of trainee counselor to become a competent counselor (Wainwright, 2010).

Engaging in the counseling practicum is an opportunity for the trainees to learn more about their role as counselor (Ruhani Mat Min, 2008). Learning by doing is an effective way to ensure the professional development of trainee counselors as well as that of their personal. Hence, the effective learning has to receive guidance from professional supervisor such as the university lecturer or registered counselor in an organization. This clearly shows the importance of supervision process while grooming trainee counselors towards becoming professional counselors.

Supervisory Relationship

According to Bernard and Goodyear (1998), supervisory relationship can be defined as a product of uniqueness by two different individuals who paired together with a purpose of meeting for supervision. The relationship is continuously modified according to the demands of various contexts such as the content or subject of the experience.

Wainwright (2010) also stated that the supervisory relationship is the foundation in supervision as it is crucial to increase the competency level of trainee counselors. However, it was not always considered to be the most important part for having a successful supervision.

Previously, the relationship between counselors and clients has taken all the attention in counseling, while supervisory relationship has been neglected (Bussey, 2015). According to Bussey (2015 as cited in Altrucher), that highlighted

the importance of supervisory relationship in regards to the difficulties faced by most of the beginning counselors. He stressed the importance of supervisor roles on supervisory relationship which is to help trainee counselors to prepare for counseling experience as well as the importance of supervisor's awareness of what is happening in the supervision. Despite the differences in perspectives of supervision, it is important to acknowledge the contribution of supervisory relationship to the success of supervision.

Objective of this research is to analyze the influence of supervisory relationship on supervision satisfaction among trainee counselors.

SUPERVISION SATISFACTION

According to Breaux III (2005), supervision satisfaction is the approval of trainee counselors with the overall guidance and management they received from supervisor in professional relationship of supervision.

Shuss (2012) has defined 'satisfaction' as the desired outcomes of job or task with the purpose to enhance self-esteem. Shuss (2012) also reported that satisfaction plays an important role in students' development for educational purposes as it can increase the motivational level of students through environment that facilitates learning and growth. Therefore, having a higher level of satisfaction in education will lead to placing more effort to become successful.

According to Wainwright (2010), supervision satisfaction is the level where trainee counselors meets the expectation in supervision. Supervision satisfaction is important as it reflects the level of willingness and openness for trainee counselors to learn from their supervisors (Breaux, 2004; Breaux III, 2005). Shuss (2012) also supported the definition by stating that supervision satisfaction is the perception on the overall quality of supervision and whether the level of supervision meets the expectation and facilitates the growth of trainee counselors. Similarly, Bernard and Goodyear (2014) stated that satisfaction in supervision is one of the alternative ways for trainee counselors to rate the quality of their supervision and to rate the extent of those supervision meeting their expectations and needs.

Ting (2009) has listed five important factors in determining the level of supervision satisfaction, which are (1) perception of trainee counselors' therapeutic competency, (2) verbal interactions in supervision, (3) experience of role difficulties by trainee counselors, (4) perception on the level of attractiveness and trustworthiness of supervisor and (5) perception on supervisory style. Breaux III (2005) stated that the perceptions on the supervisors' liking and showing positive feelings towards the trainee counselors are the significant predictors in supervision satisfaction. He also stated that the level of supervisor's support, communication, guidance and encouragement also influences the level of satisfaction of trainee counselors in supervision (Breaux III, 2005).

INFLUENCE OF SUPERVISORY RELATIONSHIP ON SUPERVISION SATISFACTION

In counseling supervision, the supervisory relationship has been proven to have significant impact on the development of the trainee counselors. Fostering the personal and professional development of trainee counselors and protecting client welfare are among the roles of supervisor in supervision. To successfully act out the role of a supervisor, the professional counselors have to maintain a strong relationship with trainee counselors in order to have a high transfer of learning in supervisory relationship. According to Blount and Mullen (2015), in order for supervisor to provide psycho-education, make evaluation and model good behavior, a strong supervisory relationship must be formed between supervisors and trainee counselors in order to support the positive outcomes in supervision.

Previous studies have frequently focused on the importance of the supervisory relationship between supervisors and trainee counselors (Ladany, Ellis, & Friedlander, 1999; Nelson & Friedlander, 2001; Gray, Ladany, Walker, & Ancis, 2001). In particular,, the study shows that the perception of the quality of the supervisory relationship has been linked to supervision outcomes in which the higher supervision satisfaction has significant relationship with increased self-disclosure and improvement in counseling behaviors (Colburn, Neale-McFall, Michel, & Bayne, 2012). According to Colburn, Neale-McFall, Michel and

Bayne (2012), regardless the approach or models used in the supervision, the quality of supervisory relationship has shown to have the most significant impact on the outcomes of the supervision and relatively clients' outcomes.

Moreover, a study in Malaysia found that there is a significant relationship between supervisory relationship and supervision outcomes (supervision satisfaction and performance) (Nor Mazlina Ghazali, Wan Marzuki Wan Jaafar, Rohani Ahmad Tarmizi, & Sidek Mohd Noah, 2016). Based on previous studies by Ting (2009) on the supervisory working alliance, self-efficacy and satisfaction with supervision among Taiwanese master-level counseling internship students have found that working alliance is positively correlated with supervision satisfaction; in which the working alliance is a component of supervisory relationship. However, even though the importance of supervisory relationship to therapy outcomes has been highlighted in previous studies, the number of research that focuses on supervisory relationship and supervision outcomes such as supervision effectiveness and supervision satisfaction is still insufficient (Cheon, Blumer, Shih, Murphy, & Sato, 2009).

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The prominent model that underlies this study is the Bi-directional Model of Supervisory Relationship proposed by Marina Palomo (2010). Palomo, Beinart and Cooper (2010) used findings from Beinart's research as a theoretical base to
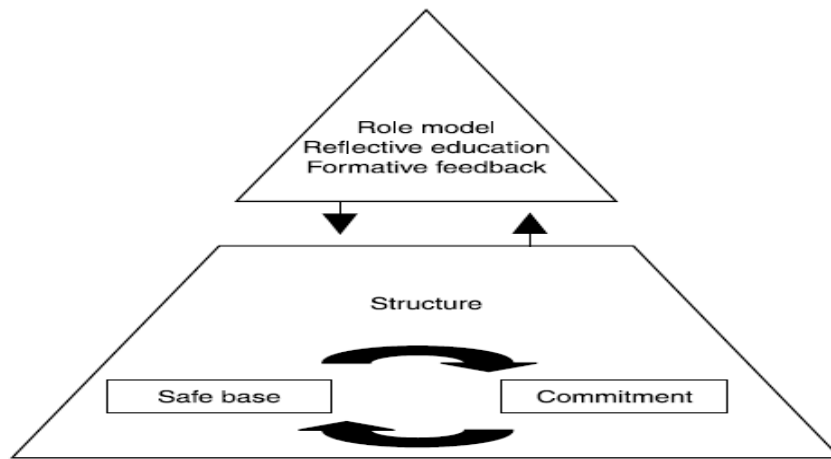
Figure 1: Bi-directional model of the supervisory relationship

construct their own measure for supervisory relationship which is the Supervisory Relationship Questionnaire (SRQ). This model emphasized on six components in supervisory relationship which are safe base, structure, commitment, reflective education, role model and formative feedback.

Safe base is accounted for having the highest variance in supervisory relationship and acts as a significant precondition for other aspects. Wainwright (2010) describes safe base as a representative of facilitative condition in supervisory relationship in which trainee counselors feel supported, valued and respected within open and safe environment of supervision.

The second component discussed by Palomo is structure. According to Wainwright (2010), the function of structure is to describe the boundaries between supervisors and trainee counselors. Boundaries and trust are two important factors to be developed in super-

visory relationship before other processes become effective (Beinart, 2004). Establishing appropriate boundaries is among important aspects (which includes building safe and trustworthy environment, promoting self-disclosures and examining cultural issues) that is needed to form relationships between supervisors and trainee counselors (Corey, Haynes, Moulton, & Muratori, 2010). They also proposed that having a clear understanding on the purpose and the limits of relationship between supervisors and trainee counselors is important to build a healthy and productive relationship with trainee counselors.

The third component is commitment. Commitment is referred to as the perception of supervision towards providing supervision (Wainwright, 2010). Corey, Haynes, Moulton and Muratori (2010) highlighted that negative characteristics such as judgmental, not committed, unethical and having poor boundaries can demote the development of trainee counselors. This clearly shows the importance

of having commitment in supervision. Commitment is not only expected from trainee counselors, but also from the supervisor.

Reflective education can be defined as the perception on the supervisor's ability to implement theory in practical by using various theoretical models (Wainwright, 2010). Supervisor is known to be someone who is knowledgeable in terms of theory and skills in counseling. Hence, the supervisor is required to be an expert in their own field. However, transferring the counseling knowledge is not an easy task (Smith, 2009). Supervisor needs to be competence in delivering the knowledge and skills to the trainee counselors and needs to ensure that the trainee counselors are well understood.

The other component in supervisory relationship is the role model. The purpose of role model is assessing the credibility of supervisors as individuals that trainee counselor can learn from (Wainwright, 2010). According to Corey, Haynes, Moulton and Muratori (2009), some tips for supervisor to play as a role model include treating the trainee counselors with respect, being open and honest with the trainee counselors in order to form good relationships with trainee counselors. Palomo, Beinart and Cooper (2010) emphasized on respectfulness in their measure of SRQ as there are items that ask the level of respect that trainee counselors have for their supervisors.

The last component in supervisory relationship in this model is formative feedback in which Wainwright (2010) re-

ferred it as the perception of trainee counselors towards the performance feedback given to them. Providing feedback and support and also facilitating progress by supervisors in supervisory relationship is important for trainee counselors' learning process (Smith, 2009).

Palomo, Beinart and Cooper (2010) have separated these six components into two groups in which the first group is to facilitate relationship and another group is for reflection on education and evaluation. Safe base, structure and commitment are the components relevant in facilitating relationship because according to this model, these three components complement each other in forming a good relationship in supervision. Role model, reflective education and formative feedback are categorized under the second group which is important for reflection in term of education and evaluation for trainee counselors.

Based on this model, both groups implement and support each other in forming a good supervisory relationship as well as to be a good supervisor. According to this model, if a supervisor is able to fulfill all the components which are to provide a facilitative condition for trainee counselors, forming clear boundaries within supervision, being committed, giving reflection in education, being a good role model and giving productive feedback to trainee counselors, they will have a positive supervisory relationship. Fulfilling the components in this model will increase the transfer of learning from supervisors to trainee counselors

Table 1: Example of 7-point Likert scale of the SRQ, from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 7 (Strongly Agree)

1	7
Strongly Disagree	Strongly Agree

Table 2: Example of 7-point Likert scale of the SSQ, from 1 (Low) to 4 (High)

1	4
Low	High

and it will also form a positive relationship with trainee counselors. Then, this will lead to higher supervision satisfaction of trainee counselors and finally can improve towards the development of trainee counselors as competent counselors. This model is important in this research as it is the theoretical base of one of the instruments used in this research which is Supervisory Relationship Questionnaire (SRQ).

METHOD

The study utilized the quantitative research design and involved the trainee counselors from public universities. It examined the relationship between two variables and measured them from a large number of cases. The Supervisory Relationship Questionnaire (SRQ) (Table 1) was used to measure the supervisory relationship and the Supervision Satisfaction Questionnaire (SSQ) (Table 2) was used to measure the supervision satisfaction of trainee counselors and supervisor.

Section A: Demography

100 trainee counselors out of 100 respondents participated in the study. 82% of the respondents were females whereas 18% were males. Details are in Table 4.

Section B: Supervisory Relationship Questionnaire (SRQ)

The Supervisory Relationship Questionnaire (SRQ) has 67 items which requires respondents to respond to each item on a seven-point scale ranging from 1 = Strongly Disagree and 7 = Strongly Agree (Palomo, 2010). The SRQ consists of six (6) subscales which include Safe Base Subscale, Structure Subscale, Commitment Subscale, Reflective Education Subscale, Role Model Subscale, and Formative Feedback Subscale.

Section C: Supervision Satisfaction Questionnaire (SSQ)

The second instrument for this research is the Supervision Satisfaction Questionnaire (SSQ) which was adopted by Ladany et al. (1996) from the Client Satisfaction Questionnaire. The SSQ

Table 3: Cronbach's coefficient alphas

Instruments	Cronbach's coefficient alphas (In instruments)	Cronbach's coefficient alphas (In this research)
SRQ	.98	.93
SSQ	.96	.91

Table 4: Distribution of respondents by gender

Gender	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
Male	18	18.0
Female	82	82.0

Table 5: Distribution of respondents by age

Age	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
21-22	44	44.0
23-24	16	16.0
25 and above	15	15.0
Missing	25	25.0

Table 6: Distribution of respondents by ethnicity

Ethnicity	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
Malay	62	62.0
Chinese	8	8.0
Indian	1	1.0
Ibanese	9	9.0
Other	20	20.0

instrument measures the level of satisfaction of the trainee counselors during practicum session. There are eight (8) items in the SSQ with the total scores ranging from 8 to 32 with Likert scale of 1 to 4 (1= Low to 4= High).

Reliability

The reliability analysis of the Supervisory Relationship Questionnaire (SRQ) is Cronbach's alpha (α) of 0.98. In addition, the reliability analysis of the Supervision Satisfaction Questionnaire (SSQ) is Cronbach's alpha (α) of 0.96. Both instruments have high reliability.

Participants

This study focused on examining the influence of the supervisory relationship on the supervision outcomes. Respondents of the study were second and third year undergraduate counseling students undergoing counseling practical training and their supervisors.

Data Collection and analysis

The questionnaires were distributed to trainee counselors and their supervisors. There were two steps used by the researcher. First, the analysis of

relationship between supervision contextual factors and supervision outcomes, and followed by the analysis on the influence of supervision contextual factors on the supervision outcomes.

FINDING & DISCUSSION

Description on Demography

In this study, the respondents consisted of 18.0 percent males (N = 18) and 82.0 percent females (N = 82). Details on gender distribution are in Table 4. Hence, the distribution on respondents age were 21 – 22 years at 44.0%, 23 – 24 years at 16%, 25 and above was at 15% and another 25% was not provide the information (Table 5). Ethnically, there were 62.0 percent Malays (N = 62), 8.0 percent Chinese (N = 8), followed by 1.0 percent Indian (N = 1), 9.0 percent

Ibanese (N= 9) and others 20.0 percent (i.e: Dusun, Bajau, Bidayuh, Melanau).

Description on Relationship of Supervisory Relationship and Supervision Satisfaction

Based upon the Pearson product moment correlation coefficient test results, all subscales in supervisory relationship were significantly correlated with the supervision satisfaction. The supervisory relationship (safe base) was significantly correlated with the supervision satisfaction, $r = 0.73$ at $p < 0.05$. This shows strong relationship between supervisory relationship (safe base) and supervision satisfaction. The second subscale which is supervisory relationship (structure), showed a significant correlation on supervision satisfaction, $r = 0.66$, $p < 0.05$. The third subscale which is commitment

Table 7: The relationship between supervisory relationship and supervision satisfaction

Scale	N	Sig. (2 tailed)	Pearson Correlation, r
Safe base	100	0.0	0.733
Structure	100	0.0	0.658
Commitment	100	0.0	0.690
Reflective Education	100	0.0	0.706
Role Model	100	0.0	0.517
Formative Feedback	100	0.0	0.710
SRQ	100	0.0	0.796

Table 8: Influence of supervisory relationship on supervision satisfaction

Variables	Adjusted R^2	R^2	B	SE	β	t
SRQ	0.63	0.63	0.67	0.051	0.79	13.02
Role Model	0.65	0.66	0.00 - 0.23	0.078	0.00 - 0.28	-3.03
Safe Base	0.67	0.68	0.18	0.08	0 .24	2.24

also showed significant correlation on supervision satisfaction, $r = 0.69$, $p < 0.05$. The fourth and fifth subscales of supervisory relationship (reflective and role model) were significantly correlated, $r = 0.71$, $p < 0.05$ and $r = 0.52$, $p < 0.05$. In conclusion, supervisory relationship is correlated to supervision satisfaction.

From the six subscales in supervisory relationship, role model and safe base showed influence on supervision satisfaction. Supervisory relationship was significantly influential to the supervision satisfaction, $F (1, 98) = 169.59$, $p < 0.05$, at about 63% of the variance contribution. Safe base subscales were statistically significant with $F (3, 96) = 68.68$, $p < 0.05$, and about 67% of the variance on supervision satisfaction and became the unique contributor on supervision satisfaction. Supervision satisfaction was also influenced by role model with $F (2, 97) = 96.47$, $p < 0.05$, and about 65% of the variance on supervision satisfaction was explained by role model.

CONCLUSION

Findings from this research can be used to investigate factors that influence supervision satisfaction during practicum process. Supervisory relationship has been shown to have the relationship with and influence on supervision satisfaction, in which the supervisory relationship is based on the six (6) subscales which are safe base, structure, commitment, reflective education, role model and formative feedback while practicum.

IMPLICATIONS OF RESEARCH

While in practical implication, this research has raised an awareness on the importance of supervisory relationship on supervision satisfaction in counseling supervision. Therefore, for future study, researcher can improvise this research by (i) increasing the sample size, (ii) widening the context for sample such as for internship students, (iii) adding more variables for supervisory relationship and supervision outcome and (iv) including the perspective of supervisors.

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