Influence Of Supervisors’ Attributes On The Supervision Outcomes Among Counselling Interns

Nor Mazlina Ghazali¹, *Wan Marzuki Wan Jaafar², Rohani Ahmad Tarmizi², Sidek Mohd Noah², Salleh Amat³, Azzahrah Anuar³, Edris Aden¹ dan Fatahyah Yahya¹

¹Faculty of Cognitive Sciences and Human Development, Universiti Malaysia Sarawak
²Faculty of Educational Studies, Universiti Putra Malaysia
³Faculty of Education, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia

*wanmarzuki@upm.edu.my

Abstract

Attributes consist of three subscales which include attractiveness, expertise, and trustworthiness. The supervisors’ attributes are measured using the Counsellor Rating Form Short (CRF-S), developed by Corrigan and Schmidt (1983). The study involved 120 students of the Bachelor of Education (Guidance and Counselling) with Honour from a public university in Malaysia who undergo the internship program at various organizations. Validity of the instrument for this study is .97 whereas its reliability is α = .85. Based on the findings of the study, there was a moderately strong relationship between the supervisors’ attributes and it has uniquely influenced the supervision outcomes. Implications of the findings for counsellor, supervisor, counselling interns and areas for future research were discussed.

Keywords: Supervisors’ attributes, Supervision outcomes, Counsellor Rating Form Short (CRF-S), Counselling interns

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of study

The Internship programme provides either positive or negatives outcomes to the counselling interns. Positive outcomes often lead to the positive development of interns. On the other hand, the negative outcomes lead to the negative development or experiences of interns. These positive or negatives outcomes are influenced by the supervision process. The outcomes of supervision are referred to as the level of satisfaction and performance of interns during supervision process. Some of the previous researches have related the experiences of supervision with the behavioural intentions. According to Chen and Chen (2011), a positive internship program should encourage the interns to make friends, increase their interpersonal skills, and expand their vision because it will develop both professional and personal skills of the counselling interns.

One of the factors that contribute to a positive supervision outcome is the supervision attributes. Supervision attributes include characteristics such as sense of humor, empathy, respect, genuineness, personal warmth, supportive attitudes, ability to confront, immediacy, concern for supervisees’ growth, and client’s well-being (Resources from power point slide issues of supervision). Attributes among supervisor is also related to the supervisors’ commitment towards counselling interns during supervision. The alertness on the intern development and growth is also considered as a supervisor attribute. A supportive supervisor possesses attributes such as flexible, and sensitive to employees’ family responsibilities (Centre for Work & Family, 2000). Supervisor’s positive attributes are related with good supervision outcomes. Therefore, the development and growth of counselling interns influence the establishment of positive attributes among supervisors.
1.2 Supervisors’ Attributes

Supervisors’ attributes are referred to as the characteristics of the supervisor towards supervisee during supervision. The qualities of a good supervisor include openness to discussion, availability, ability to offer support, ability to understand, ability to provide meaningful feedback, expertise, flexibility, empathy and an ethical practice (Hayness, Corey & Moulton, 2003). Good supervisors are often the people who are able to create the differences between meeting production targets, presenting the dominant impact on the workplace culture, influencing the retention of staff, and providing incentive for people to join the organization (Government of South Australia, 2007). Although these characteristics were only discussed in the organizational perspective, the concept is similar to the supervisors’ attributes in counselling education context. Supervisors work as gatekeepers and play a critical role in ensuring the efficaciousness of supervision process. Thus, the good attributes of supervisors may encourage the supervisee to feel satisfy with the supervisors and supervision process. According to Corrigan and Schmidt (1983), the components of attributes include trustworthiness, expertise, and attractiveness. These characteristics should be instilled in supervisors to meet a good achievement during supervision process.

The supervisors’ behaviour influences the perceptions of subordinates towards them (Mathisen, et al., 2011). Supervisors with aggressive, hostile and violent behaviour might harm the relationship and alliance with the subordinates.

According to Anderson et al. (2000), supervisees acknowledge the supervisors as “sociable, likeable, friendly, warm, trustworthy, and expert” (p.297) when they provide good supervision experiences. Good supervisors assist supervisees to grow. Goodyear et al. (as cited in Schiavone & Jessel, 1988) stated that the supervisors’ expertness, attractiveness, and trustworthiness were significantly correlated with the supervisees’ level of satisfaction toward supervision. This is supported by Moldovan and David (2013) study in which they reported those experienced supervisors had better supervision outcomes.

3.0 METHODOLOGY

This research draws on the quantitative design to measure the supervisors’ attributes on the supervision outcomes. The Counsellor Rating Form Short (CRF-S) used in the study has three subscales which include attractiveness, trustworthiness, and expertness. The Likert scale of the CRF – S range from 1 = “not very” to 7 = “very”. Scores from these three sub-scales were used to determine the supervisor’s attributes. Higher score signifies that the supervisor has the attributes of a good supervisor.

Table 1. Example of 7-point Likert scale of the Counsellor Rating Form – Short for supervisor (CRF-S), from 1 (Not Very) to 7 (Very)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Not</td>
<td>Very</td>
<td>Very</td>
<td></td>
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Section A: Demographic Information

In this section, respondents were required to answer the demographic information including gender, races, level of education, year of study, and setting of internship or practicum.

Section B: Counsellor Rating Form _ Short for supervisor (CRF-S)

According to Corrigan and Schmidt (1983), the purpose of the Counsellor Rating Form – Short is to measure the characteristics or attributes of counsellor in the counselling session. The CRF-S has also been used in a study to measure the supervisors’ social influences during supervision process (Wan Marzuki Wan Jaafar, 2007). The research has found no significant relationship between the supervisors’ social influence and counsellor performance (supervision outcome).

3.1 Pilot Study

According to Dell et al. (2002), a pilot test is designed to determine the variables that are measureable with different tests and conditions. In this study, the number of participants for the sample was determined based on the Hertzog’s (2008) formula. The size of a sample for the pilot study should be within 20 to 25 and the effect size is set at moderate or large level. The accuracy of the reliability of the instrument was determined by the researcher.
3.2 Validity and Reliability

The expert content validation was utilized in the study. The experts were chosen based on their specialisation and length of experience in the counselling field. The evaluation and rating by the experts were useful to ensure the accuracy of the content of each instrument. To measure reliability, 25 counselling interns and 25 supervisors at a higher education institution in Malaysia were recruited as sample. 7 male and 18 female counselling interns as well as 19 male and 6 female supervisors participated in the pilot study. They were identified based on the list gathered from the internship coordinator. During the pilot test, they were in the midst of the internship process. The respondents answered all the questions within one month. The Cronbach alpha of $\alpha = 0.85$ were reported in the study.

3.3 Participants

120 counselling interns participated in the study. They were asked to respond to the questionnaire after their supervisor’s internship visit. Respondents were required to rate the scale from “1 = Not very to 7 = Very” and articulate their perceptions on the supervisors’ attributes during supervision process. 19.2 percent were males (N = 23) whereas 80.8 percent were females (N = 97). Meanwhile, there were 75.8 percent Malays (N = 91), 8.3 percent Chinese (N = 10), followed by 2.5 percent Indians (N = 3) and 13.3 percent were from other ethnic groups (i.e.; Dusun, Bajau, Iban, Bidayuh, Melanau). The supervisor’s level of education ranges from Master degree to Doctoral degree (Phd).

3.4 Data Collection and analysis

The questionnaires were distributed to the final year undergraduate counselling students who undergo their Internship at schools and other organization settings. The researcher has used the IBM SPSS version 20 for the data analysis. First, the descriptive analysis of each subscale were provided. Second, the relationship between supervisors’ attributes and supervision outcomes were analysed. Third, the influence of the supervisors’ attributes on the supervision outcomes were derived for the study.

4.0 RESULTS

The analysis showed that the supervisors’ attributes subscale of trustworthiness ($M = 24.11$ and $SD = 3.88$) has a higher score than the expertness ($M = 24.03$, $SD = 3.48$) and attractiveness ($M = 23.08$, $SD = 5.18$). There was a positive correlation between the supervisors’ attributes and supervision outcomes, $r = .50$, which was also significant at $p < .05$. There was a moderately strong relationship between the supervisors’ attributes and supervision outcome. Hence, the supervision outcome was mostly influenced by the high level of supervisors’ attributes. Supervisors’ attributes uniquely accounted for approximately 18% of the variance of the supervision outcomes.

Table 2: Description on means and standard deviations of independent variables

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scales</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Standard Deviation (SD)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SA</td>
<td>118</td>
<td>74.56</td>
<td>10.89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attractiveness</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>23.08</td>
<td>5.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expertness</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>24.03</td>
<td>3.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trustworthiness</td>
<td>118</td>
<td>24.11</td>
<td>3.88</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3: Pearson product moment correlation coefficient of supervisors’ attributes and supervision outcomes.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scales</th>
<th>1</th>
<th></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. SA</td>
<td>.30</td>
<td>.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. SPS</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>.00</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Table 4: Influence of supervisors’ attributes on supervision outcomes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Predictor</th>
<th>b</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Beta</th>
<th>Pearson r</th>
<th>R2</th>
<th>Structure Coefficient</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BO</td>
<td>15.81</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPS</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>.21</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>.03</td>
<td>.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5.0 DISCUSSION, IMPLICATION AND RECOMMENDATION

Findings from the study represent factors that might influence the supervision outcomes during the supervision process. There was a strong positive relationship between the supervisors’ attributes and supervision outcomes in the study. Supervisor’s
attributes has played a major role in influencing the supervision outcome of the counselling interns. The Internship curriculum must be designed and take into account the aspect of supervisors’ attributes to increase the quality of supervision process. For future research, it is recommended to examine the length of time supervisors spent with the supervisees in developing the supervisory relationship as it may lead to a discovery of new body of knowledge in counselling supervision.

REFERENCES


Centre for Work & Family (2000). *Putting people first.* Boston College: USA.


