

Supervision: Is it effective? If so, what makes it effective?

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Original Title: Best Practices in Sup

- Before we can talk about Best Practices, we need to determine what we know
 - With regard to sup, we actually don't know that much . . .
- Thus, shift in title/focus

Context

- Supervision required as part of degree training and post-degree/pre-credential process
- Supervision also wise even post-credential
- Assumptions
 - Supervision is necessary
 - Supervision is effective



Your Supervision Experiences

- Type of supervision you've had
- What helped?
- What didn't help?
- What do you wish had been different?

What is Supervision?

Falender and Shafranske (2004):

- Relationship between SR and SE that promotes prof development of SE via interpersonal processes (e.g., mutual problem-solving, instruction, evaluation, mentoring, role modeling of ethical practice)
- Goals
 - Build on SE strengths
 - Ameliorate SE weaknesses
 - Create environment that fosters clinical skill development, self-efficacy, ethical decision-making
 - Maintain C welfare

Bernard and Goodyear (2009):

- “An intervention provided by a more senior member of the profession to a more junior member . . . the relationship is evaluative and hierarchical, extends over time, and has the simultaneous purposes of enhancing the professional functioning of the more junior [person], monitoring the quality of the professional services offered to the Cs that s/he sees, and serving as a gatekeeper of those who are to enter the particular profession” (p. 7).

Thus . . .

- Sup: A relationship whose purpose and related activities support not only professional development of SE, but also protect her/his Cs welfare

What Do We Know?

Review of Research

Hill, C. E., & Knox, S. (2013). Training and supervision in psychotherapy. In Lambert, M. J. (Ed.), *Bergin and Garfield's Handbook of psychotherapy and behavior change, 6th ed* (pp. 775-811). Hoboken, NJ: Wiley and Sons, Inc.

- Individual supervision of English-speaking Ts at all levels (novice to experienced)
- Examined empirical research over last ~25 years
 - In journals most likely to publish on sup
 - *TCP, JCP, JCCP, PP, PT, PR, TEPP*
 - Consulted researchers in Training and Supervision sections of SPR, SCP
- Effects (outcomes) of sup in MH field
 - Did not examine studies of sup process
- Most studies involved grad STs

Guiding Qs

- Is sup effective?
- If so, what makes sup effective?

- Quant and qual empirical research
- Effects on SE
- Effects on C
 - Holloway (1992) vs. Ellis and Ladany (1997), Goodyear and Guzzardo (2000)
 - H: Ultimate goal of sup is T competence (effects on SE)
 - E & L, G & G: Most important criterion for sup is C change (effects on C)

Is Supervision Effective?

Quantitative Findings

- Only 1 study a true/direct test of causal effects of sup (Bambling, King, Raue, Schweitzer, & Lambert, 2006)
 - Experimental manipulation
 - Randomly assigned SEs to sup or no-sup
 - Assessed effects on C outcome
 - Post-degree experienced Ts working with depressed Cs
 - Cs received 8 sessions of problem-solving PT
 - Sup'd Ts randomly assigned to 8 sessions of alliance skill- or alliance process-focused sup
 - Found
 - Sig effects for all 3 conditions (2 alliance, 1 no-sup) on alliance and sx reduction
 - Means by which sup enhances alliance and tx outcome thus unclear
 - Cs treated by sup'd Ts more satisfied than those treated by non-sup'd Ts and also had lower attrition rates

Is Supervision Effective?

Quantitative Findings

- Tryon (1996)
 - Advanced clinical/coun psych doc STs in prac at UCC
 - Received 2 hours sup/week
 - Found
 - Increase in SE self- and other-awareness, autonomy, motivation
 - Limitations
 - SEs from 1 training program
 - No way to link effects to sup itself

Is Supervision Effective?

Quantitative Findings

- Ladany, Ellis, and Friedlander (1999)
 - Novice to post-doc SEs
 - Weekly individual sup
 - Found
 - Minimal effects for sup on self-efficacy
 - No effects for sup on working alliance
 - Limitations
 - Lack of random assignment
 - Inability to make causal links

Is Supervision Effective?

Quantitative Findings

- Cashwell and Dooley (2001)
 - Those SEs who received sup reported higher counseling self-efficacy at post-test than those who did not receive sup

So . . .

- Effects on SEs
 - Improved awareness of self/others, autonomy, motivation, self-efficacy (sometimes)
 - No effect on sup working alliance

- Effects on Cs
 - Skill- and process-oriented sup had moderate effects on C-reported PT alliance
 - Unsup'd Ts yielded similar effects, so results likely not due to sup
 - PT outcome (reduction in depression) strongly affected by Ts whose sup attended to process issues
 - Unsup'd Ts produced similar effects, so again, results may not be due to sup

- Thus
 - Sup may have some beneficial effects on SEs, but effects on Cs less clear
 - Few studies actually address Q of sup effectiveness, whether focusing on SE or C
 - Those studies that did focus on sup effectiveness often do not permit causal inferences

Is Supervision Effective?

Qualitative Findings

- Studies examined different phenomena (counterproductive events in sup, SR SD, CREs in sup, good sup events)
 - So, hard to draw conclusions across studies

Is Supervision Effective?

Qualitative Findings

- Hill, Sullivan, Knox, and Schlosser (2007)
 - SEs suggested that sup helped them cope with anxieties of learning to be T, and of working with Cs
- Worthen and McNeill (1996)
 - Sup seemed to build SE self-confidence, fostered deeper understanding of PT endeavor, enhanced SE ability to conceptualize Cs in more sophisticated manner, helped SEs intervene with Cs

Is Supervision Effective?

Qualitative Findings

- Gray, Ladany, Walker, and Ancis (2001); Nelson and Friedlander (2001)
 - Counterproductive events in sup; Conflictual sup relationships
 - Troubling sup events reduced SE self-efficacy, made SEs more guarded and less likely to SD to SRs, increased SEs fear of negative evaluation, weakened sup rx, led to difficult interactions between SE and SR, impaired SEs interactions with Cs
 - Such events also sometimes increased SEs stress (negative effects on SE health), self-doubt, feelings of powerlessness, and engendered Qs regarding professional decisions/plans

So . . .

- Sup had both salutary and deleterious effects, whether on SEs or (indirectly) Cs
- Limitations
 - P self-selection
 - Non-diverse samples
 - Reliance on single event from single POV
 - Inability to assert that effects caused by sup



What Makes Supervision Effective?

- Have some tentative evidence that supervision is effective (above)
- Now need to examine what makes it effective

Quantitative Evidence

- Several studies examined possible correlates of sup outcome, but no 2 included same predictor or outcome variables
- Thus, can't draw conclusions about predictors of sup outcome
- Best can do is present preliminary review of possible predictors

Quantitative Evidence

- Basic mechanics of sup
 - *Frequency of meetings, time spent in sup/week* positively related to SE-rated satisfaction, SE ratings of SR helpfulness, amount SEs thought they learned, and how well prepared for practice SEs felt (Knight, 1996)
- *Sup rx* positively related to sup effectiveness, whether measured globally as sup WA or as tripartite structure (goals, tasks, bond)
 - Rx as reported by SEs linked to SE satisfaction and self-efficacy (Ladany, Ellis, & Friedlander, 1999)

Quantitative Evidence

- *SR multicultural competence* positively linked with SE satisfaction and SE-rated sup alliance (Inman, 2006)
- Specific SR behaviors:
 - *SR openness* (explaining SR/SE roles, sharing thoughts, encouraging FB from SEs, nurturing open discussions with SEs) linked to SE satisfaction, helpfulness, amount SEs reported learning, how well prepared SEs felt for practice (Knight, 1996)
 - *SR nonadherence to ethical guidelines* linked to lower SE satisfaction and weaker alliance (Ladany, Lehrman-Waterman, Molinaro, & Wolgast, 1999)

So . . .

- Many factors related to effectiveness of sup, some with helpful, some with harmful, influence
- Frequent and appropriately long sup sessions may contribute to sup effectiveness, as may SR openness, empathy, nurturance of SE development
- Sup alliance may have central role, but mechanism through which it works not yet clear (used as both predictor and outcome variable in this research)
- Bxs would anticipate having negative effects (SR nonadherence to ethical guidelines) did so
- Limitations
 - Correlational, not causal
 - Other intervening variables?

Qualitative Evidence

- SR providing instruction, support, FB, facilitating exploration, occasionally challenging SEs linked with positive effects (Hill, Sullivan, et al., 2007)
- SR normalizing SE difficult reactions to Cs linked with positive effects (Ladany et al., 1997)
- Per SR report
 - Use of SRSD strengthened sup alliance, elicited SESD (Knox, Burkard, Edwards, Smith, & Schlosser, 2008)
 - Facilitation of CREs in sup via openness and immediacy strengthened sup relationship, increased SE self-efficacy and comfort with SD, improved SE work with Cs (Knox, Edwards, Hess, & Hill, 2011)
- Per SE report
 - SR being unempathic, dismissing SE thoughts/feelings made sup less effective (Gray et al., 2001), as did SR seeming lack of investment in sup and unwillingness to acknowledge own role in sup conflict (Nelson & Friedlander, 2001)

So . . .

- Range of possible contributors to sup effects
 - Positive effects
 - SR efforts to support and connect with SEs, nurture SEs in difficult process of learning to become T, provide safe place for SEs to discuss struggles
 - Less beneficial effects
 - SR insensitivity, disengagement
- Limitations
 - Homogenous samples, single/discrete events from 1 POV

Conclusions

- Sup linked with positive effects for SEs (e.g., greater self-/other-awareness and autonomy)
- Effects on Cs less clear
- Many factors likely linked to sup impact (e.g., frequency/length of meetings, SR provision [or lack thereof] of facilitating conditions for SE development), some with positive, some with negative, effects
- Limitations
 - Few studies directly address effects of sup
 - Idiosyncratic and nondiverse samples
 - Qual studies relied on single events from 1 POV
 - Often can't assert causality (correlational or qual designs)

The Big So . . .

- A hesitant yes, sup is effective
 - Enhances SE awareness of self and others
 - Increases SE autonomy
- However
 - Nonsup'd Ts did not differ from sup'd Ts on alliance and C outcome
 - Sup sometimes has deleterious effects on SEs
- SEs noted that SR openness, empathy, supportive nurturance of SE growth, in context of safe sup alliance, aided SE development and clinical work

Best Practices?

- Sup sessions of appropriate frequency and length
- Facilitating conditions for SE development
 - SR openness, empathy, supportive nurturance of SE growth
 - Safe sup alliance

OK, so now what?

- So, based on this research
 - How will you approach supervision differently?
 - As SE
 - As SR

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