Multicultural Supervision Research Proposal

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Abstract

Demographics in the USA have changed over the past ten years not only in terms of the number of individuals and families who seek counseling from diverse cultural backgrounds but also in the number of students who register in school under various mental health training programs. Such change results in a significant increase in counselors, supervisees, and supervisors from diverse cultural backgrounds which leads to an increased need to promote multicultural competency through the integration of multicultural discussions in the supervision process. The literature discusses that the inclusion of multicultural discussions is not always present, this leading to dissatisfaction and frustration on the supervisee which directly impacts their work with clients. Empirical evidence indicates that multicultural interactions between supervisors and supervisees impact supervisee’s work with clients. However, there is no evidence that indicates the clinical outcome resulting from the integration of multicultural competencies in the supervision process. The proposed study attempts to discover the direct impact of multicultural supervision competence in clinical outcome from studying the integration of multicultural discussions in two cultural supervisory dyads: one of the same-ethnic culture (such as Latino culture), the second of diverse international culture/background. The proposed research has the potential to inform the field of counseling education and supervision about the impact of multicultural competent supervision in clinical outcome. Results from this study may assist counselor educators, supervisors, and academia in developing programs and curriculums that emphasize the critical value of integrating multicultural competence supervision not only in general cultural terms but culture specific as well.

**Multicultural Supervision Research Proposal**

Multicultural Supervision

Demographics in the USA have face a significant change over the past decades as well as the number of individuals and families from diverse cultural backgrounds that seek counseling and psychotherapy (Inman & Ladany, 2014). Consequently, this has resulted in a significant increase of counselors/supervisees and supervisors from diverse cultural backgrounds which leads to a greater need for multicultural competency in the supervision process (Tohidian & Quek, 2017). Ancis & Marshall (2010) define multicultural supervision as the process where the supervisor has the ability to engage the supervisee in paying attention to specific cultural conversations, recommend the use of culturally sensitive interventions, engage in client conceptualization, and evaluate the supervisees’ multicultural awareness and sensitivity (Soheilian, Inman, Klinger, Isenberg, & Kulp, 2014).

**Purpose of the Study & Research Questions**

The purpose of this study is to investigate the direct effects of multicultural competent supervision on clinical outcome in two different multicultural supervisory dyads: same-ethnic culture specific dyad (Latino Culture) and internationally diverse dyad. The research question asks, How does addressing multicultural discussions within supervision directly impacts clinical outcome in two different cultural supervisory dyads? The hypothesis for this research is that there is an expected difference in clinical outcome resulting from the supervisory relationship where the supervisee is of the same-ethnic culture group (Latino) supervisor versus international supervisees and supervisors. It is expected that integration of multicultural issues in same-ethnic minority supervision dyads result in positive clinical outcome significantly higher than international supervisory dyads.

**Study Design**

The nature of this study is quantitative with a quasi-experimental method to compare the impact of multicultural competence supervision in two culturally diverse supervisory dyads. One group of dyads will be with supervisors of same-ethnic and cultural background of supervisees (Latino). The second group will be with international supervisors and/or supervisees. The study will be conducted with nonequivalent control group post-test only design in order to observe any changes in client clinical outcome.

**Literature Review**

Literature indicates an increase number of international students and students from diverse cultural backgrounds who are accepted in schools under a range of mental health training programs (Lee, 2018). It is expected that students will find themselves in supervisory experiences in which the supervisor is from a different culture of their own. (Eklund, Aros-O’Malley, & Murrieta, 2014). Considering that supervision is an integral element by which counselors learn and develop, it is essential that supervisors initiate discussions and practices that address multicultural competence for the benefit of the therapist and client (Inman & Ladany, 2014; Soheilian et al., 2014). However; this is not always the case as it is reported that supervisors who feel inadequate or uncomfortable to address multicultural issues tend to either not address or ignore discussing such issues in supervision which results in a negative supervision experience for the supervisee (Constantine & Sue, 2007;Soheilian et al., 2014). Research indicates that supervisee’s perception of the supervision experience influences their clinical work with clients (Soheilian et al., 2014). There is a need for incorporating multicultural competence in supervision, as increasing cultural competence translate in competence in clinical work (Wong, Wong, & Ishiyama, 2013; Soheilian et al., 2014).

**The Correlation of the Relationship**

The relationship between the supervisor and the supervisee is a parallel of the therapeutic relationship between the client and the supervisee (Bernard & Goodyear, 2014). In terms, of multicultural supervision; the supervisor’s multicultural competence is correlated to the supervisory working alliance and in turn that alliance, is correlated to supervisee’s satisfaction with supervision (Crockett & Hays, 2015; Inman, 2006) Literature also indicates that cultural interactions affect significantly the dynamics of the supervisory relationship as supervisors who do not include culture as part of the supervision process lead to the supervisee’s frustration and resistance (Hird, Cavalieri, Dulko, Felice, & Ho, 2001).

**International Students**

Literature on international counseling students and their experiences in counseling training indicates their frustration with educators when supervisors did not address cultural issues in their therapeutic work (Lee, 2018). They also reported supervisors did not provide opportunities for cultural exploration of their own cultural identify and its impact on their work with clients (Lee, 2018). Research found that counselor educators perceived that non-western international students often experience cultural conflicts integrating treatment approaches from the western culture when compared to other groups (Ng, 2006).

**Culture Specific Supervision**

Literature indicates that further research is needed to investigate the supervisee’s experience in supervision relationships with supervisors who are culturally different and similar and how supervisor’s and supervisee’s racial identity affect working alliance and multicultural competence (Hird et al., 2001). In researching culture specific supervision only two articles were found from the Latino context. An article based on the reflections of a Latina supervisor indicates that it is impossible to know the client outcome resulting from multicultural supervision (Reynaga-Abiko, 2010). The second, indicates the value and importance of same-ethnic minority supervision such as Latino in order to increase counselor identity and development (Field, Chavez-Korell, & Rodríguez, 2010).

Literature Review Conclusion

Research has demonstrated that when supervisors attend to multicultural issues it leads to higher levels of supervisee satisfaction (Ober, Granello, & Henfield, 2009); however no data is found to discuss how supervisory discussions about multicultural issues directly affect client outcomes. Research in this area recommends further study regarding the impact of multicultural supervision on clinical outcome (Ancis & Marshall, 2010). The proposed research attempts to understand how multicultural supervisory discussions translate into effective client/clinical outcome whether in culture-specific or international supervisory dyads.

**Methods**

To conduct this study, two variables are identified: the independent/predictive variable is multicultural competent supervisory dyad of the same-ethnic culture, in this case Latino and an international supervisory dyad where the supervisor and/or supervisee may be of different ethnic-culture. The dependent/outcome variable is clinical outcome.

**Participants**

Participants for this study will be recruited from six mental health clinics in the Dallas/Fort Worth area in Texas. Supervisors-participants are males and females who are Licensed Professional Counselor Approved Supervisors. An average of six to seven counselors per agency will be recruited. The total of supervisees-participants is between 30 and 35, six to eight supervisors, and an average of 150 clients will be surveyed.

**Procedure**

The researcher will obtain authorization from the director of the clinical services in each organization to conduct the research with their supervisors, supervisees, and clients. Two groups will be formed: one where supervisors and supervisees are of the same-ethnic culture group (Latino); the second where supervisees and supervisors are of different international culture. After 12 supervisory sessions where multicultural issues are integrated into each supervision session, at least five clients from each supervisee will be surveyed to report outcomes from receiving counseling services from a multicultural competent counselor.

**Ethical Considerations**

This study is conducted under close supervision to safeguard ethical considerations. Participation is strictly voluntary and confidential, responses to surveys will be anonymous, and all considerations are taken to protect participants from harm. Measures will be considered to protect the privacy of all participants.

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