Supervisor and Supervisee Perceptions of an Adult Learning Supervision Model

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Abstract

- To enhance supervisory practices and facilitate supervisees’ reflective learning, five university supervisor-supervisee dyads implemented a model of adult experiential learning during weekly supervisory feedback sessions for one semester. Supervisors attained conscious awareness of supervisees’ learning responses and strategies for improving independent learning.
Research Problem

- Adult learning models are seldom applied to clinical supervision
- Adult learners approach learning with a mindset that differs from children’s
- However, much of the research on clinical supervision in CS&D is oriented toward a pedagogic perspective, where supervisees are viewed as having learning tendencies similar to children’s
Background: Andragogy

- Knowles (1970), a pioneer in the field of adult learning, proposed the concept of *andragogy*, the study of how adults learn, which stands in contrast to pedagogy, the study of how children learn.
- Knowles outlined six adult learning proclivities.
Background: Andragogy

(1) Adults are self-directed in their learning
(2) Adults enter a learning situation with vast and varied past experience
(3) Adults require some impetus to trigger a need to know
(4) Adults approach learning with a task-centered point of reference
(5) Adults’ motivation to learn is intrinsic and extrinsic
(6) Adults require an understanding of why they should learn something
Background: Adult Learning Responses

- Jarvis (1987) researched how adults learn from situation and experience
- Jarvis stated that adults produce nine potential responses in a learning situation
- Responses occur on a continuum of reflectivity
Non-Learning Responses

- Presumption
- Non-Consideration
- Rejection

Non-Reflective Learning Responses

- Pre-Conscious Learning
  - Practice
  - Memorization

Reflective Learning Responses

- Contemplation
- Reflective Practice
- Experimental Learning
Background: Adult Learning Responses

- Walden (2011): Supervision during practica may be oriented toward a pedagogic perspective
- Proposed: Application of adult learning theory to practicum supervision
- Proposed: Engage supervisors and supervisees in reflective learning
Purpose of the Study

- This study is the first empirical use of the continuum of adult experiential learning during supervision.
- The purpose of the study is to explore the benefits and difficulties that arise when using this model of supervision.
Objectives of the Study

- Document supervisors’ and supervisees’ self-perceptions before, during, and after implementation of the model
- Clinical supervisors identified supervisees’ learning responses during clinical feedback sessions and facilitated supervisees’ development along the continuum by applying the principles of adult experiential learning
Purpose of the Study

This study documented:

1. Supervisors’ self-perceptions of their application of adult experiential learning principles as part of the supervisory process
2. Supervisors’ self-perceptions of the benefits of this process
3. Supervisors’ self-perceptions of this process compared to their usual way of supervising
4. Supervisors’ commentary on student response to the process
5. Supervisees’ self-perceptions of their supervisor’s use of the process
6. Supervisees’ self-perceptions of the clinical learning outcomes obtained by this process
Methodology

- The duration of this study was one semester
- Five experienced university clinic supervisors (from five states, all females) were recruited via an ASHA listserv posting
- Each supervisor chose one first year graduate student (all females) who agreed to be supervised using the model
- All participants gave written consent, per the IRB requirements of the investigators’ universities
- The researchers mailed the supervisors portable video recorders
Methodology: Settings and Participants

- Five university campus speech and hearing clinics
- Supervisors’ jobs/titles:
  - Clinic Coordinator
  - Speech-Language Pathologist/Clinical Instructor
  - Affiliate Clinical Faculty
  - Clinical Associate Professor
  - Clinical Supervisor/Instructor
- Master’s degree + CCC-SLP
- All had greater than 2 years of supervisory experience
Methodology: Participants

- Supervisees’ ages: 22, 22, 22, 22, 43
- Number of grad credits earned to date: 0, 0, 0, 3, 15
- Number of clinic hours earned to date: 4, 10, 13, 50, 75
Methodology: Interviews

- Pre-study, the investigators interviewed all supervisors and supervisees by phone.
- The investigators recorded all phone conversations throughout the study for transcription.
- Semi-structured interviews documented all participants’ responses to questions about clinical supervision.
- Semi-structured interviews documented supervisors’ responses to questions about their usual supervisory procedures.
Methodology: Supervisor Interviews

- How do you normally go about supervising first-year graduate student clinicians?
- Describe what you feel are the most important aspects of supervisory sessions with first-year graduate student clinicians.
- Describe the benefits of the approaches you just discussed.
- How effective do you feel your overall approach is across a range of student abilities and personality types?
- Describe any alternative approaches you’ve explored over your years of supervisory experience.
- Why do you feel you’ve come to practice supervision of students in this manner over time?
- What types of changes do you feel are necessary in the field of clinical supervision in terms of best practices, and why?
- What types of changes do you feel are necessary in your own practice of clinical supervision in terms of what might work better for you, and why?
Methodology: Supervisee Interviews

- Describe any previous experiences you have had with clinical supervision as part of your education. We’re particularly interested in how you feel about the way your previous supervisor(s) have helped you learn.
- Describe any recommendations for improvement in the clinical supervisory process as you’ve experienced it in the past. What might improve supervisory practice?
- In a perfect world, how do you think supervision should be accomplished with student clinicians?
- What did you learn from the supervision you’ve experience previously?
- Describe what you learned about yourself as a learner from these previous experiences.
- Why do you think you’ve learned these things as a result of your experience as a supervisee?
- Is there anything else you’d like to tell me?
Methodology: Participant Training

- First training task: Supervisors read Walden (2011), which describes the model
- Supervisors completed a written quiz on the article and on how to apply the model to a case example
- Walden provided supervisors with written feedback on their quizzes
Methodology: Participant Training

Please answer the following questions by placing an asterisk (*) next to the correct response. The last question is open-ended and a chance for you to ask Monica and Patrick questions.

1. The process-based approach to clinical supervision described in this chapter focuses on __
   a) seeing the supervisee as a learner who learns in the field as he/she does in the classroom.
   b) seeing the supervisee as a learner who must perform in an authentic (clinical) context.
   c) seeing the supervisee as independent at the very start of the learning process.
   d) seeing the supervisee as a completely dependent learner at the start of the learning process.

2. True/False: According to Knowles’s Andragogy, adult learners are just like child learners.

3. The theoretical basis for the process-based approach to supervision described in this chapter lies in __
   a) Critical Pedagogy
   b) Cognitive Psychology
   c) Adult Learning Theory
   d) Psycholinguistics
Methodology: Participant Training

4. A clinical supervisee encounters a client for the first time. The client is a person who severely stutters and exhibits frequent secondary behaviors such as eye blinks and head turning during blocks. The supervisee has read about these behaviors in her text but never actually seen them in real life. The supervisee looks away uncomfortably and then starts to try to provide the word for the client instead of allowing the client to work through the block. The supervisee has practiced __
   a) Presumption
   b) Non-consideration
   c) Rejection

5. A new clinical supervisee meets with you (the supervisor) for the first time. The supervisee tells you she knew she was going to be assigned a client who has a neurological impairment so she went over all the mnemonics she learned for the cranial nerves. She now knows them by heart. The supervisee has practiced __
   a) Practice
   b) Memorization
   c) Pre-conscious learning
Methodology: Participant Training

6. You are supervising a student clinician who is working with a client who is slow to warm up. The student clinician, from her previous attempts with the client, has looked up some strategies for working with children who are shy. She brings different activities for the session and tries each of the strategies she read about, making notes regarding the client’s responses to each one. After the session, she discusses with you what seemed to work and plans to start each session with the strategies which seemed to be best. The supervisee has practiced __
   a) Reflective practice
   b) Contemplation
   c) Experimental learning

7. True/False: According to the process-based approach to supervision you read about, we want most of our supervisees’ learning responses to be reflective (rather than non-reflective).

8. Here is your chance to ask Monica and Patrick any questions/concerns you may have about the approach detailed in the chapter. What may still be unclear? What would you like to know more about?
Methodology: Participant Training

- Second training task: Process-based approach to clinical supervision
- Contrast two case examples and answer open-ended questions
  1. What learning response did the supervisee exhibit?
  2. What learning response is the supervisor trying to facilitate through the supervisory interaction?
  3. What was the focus of the supervisory interaction?
  4. Do you think it could be better handled in another way?
Methodology: Participant Training


- Less responsibility for the supervisee:
  - Supervisee: I’ve tried everything you suggested, but nothing is helping the client to produce the sound.
  - Supervisor: I noticed that he made several errors. Did you tally correct and incorrect responses?
  - Supervisee: Well, I kept track of the few correct responses.
  - Supervisor: You need to keep track of all the responses, but let me give this further thought. I will develop some ideas and we can meet again before you see the client.
Methodology: Participant Training


- More responsibility for the supervisee
  - Supervisee: I've tried everything you suggested and nothing is helping the client to produce the sound.
  - Supervisor: I noticed that he made several errors. Did you tally correct and incorrect responses?
  - Supervisee: I kept track of the few correct responses.
  - Supervisor: Would it help if you kept track of all responses so accuracy can be computed?
  - Supervisee: That would help. I do need to know how accurate he is.
  - Supervisor: What techniques are you using to elicit correct productions?
  - Supervisee: I have tried everything you suggested, and it's not working.
  - Supervisor: Describe what you have tried.
Methodology: Participant Training

- Can you contrast the two cases using the Jarvis model? (See next slide)
Methodology: Interventions and Data Collection

- The supervisors carried out their usual supervisory duties, but they supplemented their student feedback sessions by implementing the model.
- Each supervisor applied the principles of adult experiential learning in ways that she believed were appropriate.
- The supervisors video recorded their (approximately) weekly supervisory sessions and submitted the recordings to the researchers electronically.
- The investigators watched the videos and then interviewed the supervisors by phone approximately every other week throughout the semester, using a semi-structured interview guide.
Methodology: Interventions and Data Collection

1. Describe how you have applied the theoretical underpinning of Jarvis’s (1987) theory of adult experiential learning this week. How has your supervisee been involved in experiential learning this week?
2. Is there anything you learned during the learning module (readings and case study) that you applied this week?
3. Do you think you are applying the adult learning model correctly/adequately? If so, how, and if not, what questions do you have?
4. How was your comfort this week relative to applying the adult learning model?
5. How do you see your supervisee responding to the adult learning model this week?
6. Do you have any other questions, comments, or concerns regarding your work this past week?
7. How do you think you will apply the adult learning model next week? Do you have any questions as you prepare for next week?
Methodology: Interventions and Data Collection

- During each phone call, the supervisors answered questions about their perceptions of their use of the model.
- Because implementation of the model is a collegial process, the investigators gave feedback to assist the supervisors as needed.
- Feedback included, for example, explanations of the model and the theory behind it, clarification of the meaning of the points along the continuum, and discussion of the students’ preparedness to move along the continuum.
Methodology: Interventions and Data Collection

- The amount and degree of participation varied
- Number of interviews during the treatment phase was:
  - Supervisor 1 = 5
  - Supervisor 2 = 5
  - Supervisor 3 = 3
  - Supervisor 4 = 2
  - Supervisor 5 = 1

- Number of videos of supervision conferences was:
  - Supervisor 1 = 6
  - Supervisor 2 = 2
  - Supervisor 3 = 11
  - Supervisor 4 = 7
  - Supervisor 5 = 3
Methodology: Interventions and Data Collection

- At the end of the semester, the investigators conducted post-study phone interviews with all supervisors and supervisees
- Same questions as pre-study interviews
Data Analysis

- Analysis of transcripts of pre-study to post-study phone interviews (for supervisors and supervisees)
- Analysis of transcripts of weekly interviews with supervisors
- Analysis of video recorded interactions during (weekly/periodic) supervisory sessions
Data Analysis

• In the interest of time, this session will report only the analysis of transcripts of post-study phone interviews (for supervisors and supervisees)

• Based on our impressions of the interviews and the videos, we proposed *a priori* categories to organize the content of the post-study phone interviews
Data Analysis: Categories for Coding Data

- Benefit for Student Learning
- Benefit for Supervisor's Professional Development
- Benefit for Client's Experience with Services
- Practical Benefits
- Limitation to Student Learning
- Imposition of Unnatural Supervision Practices
- Limitation to Client's Experience with Services
- Impracticality
- Shows Lesser Success of Participant Training
Data Analysis: Two Main Themes

- Two main themes emerged from the coded data:

  1. Use of the supervision model yielded benefits for clients, students, and supervisors (in terms of professional development and workplace learning)

  2. Use of the supervision model is somewhat of a departure from the supervisors’ usual ways of supervising: Some of the processes were perceived to be unnatural, while others were impractical
    - Relatedly, the supervisees said that the model brought about a departure from the way they previously had been supervised
Data Analysis: Theme 1

Use of the supervision model yielded **benefits** for clients, students, and supervisors

**Reported Benefit for Client, Student, and Supervisor**

- **Benefits for Client**
- **Benefit for Student Learning**
- **Supervisor Workplace Learning**

- **Number of Student Clinicians**
- **Number of Supervisors**
Use of the supervision model yielded benefits for clients, students, and supervisors

Supervisee 3, in describing her use of **reflection and contemplation** during her supervisory sessions, mentioned she was extending the process to other clients she had on her caseload. She stated, “I think she really incorporated it in a way that I really didn’t think I was doing it and now I just do it for all of my other clients and all my other supervisors, so I really like having the reflection process. And I didn’t know I was doing it.”
Data Analysis: Theme 1 (Clients)

Use of the supervision model yielded benefits for clients, students, and supervisors.

Supervisor 2 described the benefits of the adult learning model for clinical supervision in that her supervisee was using reflection and active problem-solving with clients other than the one for which they used the adult learning model. She stated, “it carried over for her with the other clients that she had, so even though I was reporting to you relating to one client… really I saw some carry over across clients.”
Data Analysis: Theme 1 (Students)

Use of the supervision model yielded benefits for clients, students, and supervisors

Supervisee 4 explained the benefit of the supervision approach for her learning. She stated, “… the model is based on the student learning as much as they can and I think… that a student learns because they’ll go out and find ways to improve themselves by themselves and mainly taking on the responsibility to try to… better your therapy. And I think I did learn a lot because I had to read through so many articles, a lot that did not apply to find the ones I could use and try ideas on what to do.”
Data Analysis: Theme 1 (Students)

Use of the supervision model yielded benefits for clients, students, and supervisors.

Supervisor 5 described how she observed her supervisee developing clinical problem-solving during a therapy session as a result of the supervisory focus on the supervisee’s learning responses. “… I was watching her in a session, watching and seeing how she moved herself to maybe doing something memorized and then self-evaluated on the spot in the session and then moving into some experiential learning by experimenting with the client and adjusting and adapting in a session… I was able to see her personally moving herself into that stage in a session and in our conferences.”
Data Analysis: Theme 1 (Supervisors)

Use of the supervision model yielded benefits for clients, students, and supervisors.

Supervisor 4 described how her supervision style has somewhat changed due to use of the adult learning model. “… [the model] made me think about what I was doing. I don’t think I ever really thought about what my normal style was until I started participating in the study as far as interaction… This made me more aware that there are different ways to interact with a student rather than just sharing information.”
Use of the supervision model yielded benefits for clients, students, and supervisors

Supervisor 3 said, “… so I think it’s helped me basically take a look at how much support I was giving in what ways and umm... how well I’m balancing the clinician’s own learning umm... and my input and allowing exploration and flexibility in those kinds of things. So it really made me examine what my role is and umm... am I doing too much or too little or just about right…”
Data Analysis: Theme 2

Use of the supervision model is somewhat of a departure from the supervisors’ usual ways of supervising: Some of the processes were perceived to be unnatural, while others were impractical.

Challenges caused by the Process

- Imposition of Unnatural Process
- Impracticality of the Model
Data Analysis: Theme 2 (Imposition of Unnatural Supervision Processes)

Supervisor 1 described the unrealistic assumption that all supervisees will be self-directed in their learning, have vast and varied past experience, will approach learning with a task-centered point of reference, have intrinsic motivation to learn, and want to why they should learn something.

She stated, “… the assumption that they are adults in terms of their learning… styles... this generation... has a very different view of the world than even the generation Xers… they don’t see things; they have a very narrow focus or view… but it just seems to be they are very driven by memorization. They are very driven by ‘there must be a correct way to do something’…”
Data Analysis: Theme 2 (Imposition of Unnatural Supervision Processes)

Supervisee 5 explained her frustration with self-directed learning.

“...I wasn’t always sure if I was always doing the right thing, and while she was building my confidence and building my independence, I still kind of felt, you know, like I was, I didn’t know why exactly I was doing some of the things that I was doing. She probably thought it was a good idea, but I wasn’t always sure how it was helping me.”
Data Analysis: Theme 2 (Imposition of Unnatural Supervision Processes)

Supervisor 4 described how it would be unrealistic to expect the model to be workable under all circumstances.

“Well, um, I wonder sometimes, um, if the model is right for everybody and I just had to reflect, again, on my experiences. I tend to be very driven by what I’ve experienced. I’ve worked with students for quite a long time and it seems every semester I have a student or two that um, they’re very difficult to reach… or they can’t get past the level of very concrete learning. …There has to be some steps for a couple of these students who always seem to really struggle to even get them to this point. … It’s a real challenge.”
Student learning may, of necessity, be at a concrete level. A supervisee reported that her learning was, in fact, limited by her supervisor’s use of the adult learning model in supervisory sessions.

Supervisee 5 commented, “The one weakness that I have was that it was an unfamiliar case and I needed a little more guidance.”
Data Analysis: Theme 2
(Impracticality of the Model)

Impracticality for the supervisors centered around time constraints.

Supervisor 1 stated, “It is extremely time-consuming.”

Supervisor 3 commented, “…sometimes we get moving so quickly, supervisors are very quick to say ‘Do this, this, [and] this.’ …I tend sometimes to just give the information because I’ve got three more students waiting behind that student…”
Data Analysis: Theme 2 (Impracticality of the Model)

Supervisee 3 pointed out, that despite her learning through the process, it could be impractical due to stress and time constraints.

She stated, “At times, I really didn’t like it. I was like, ‘I’m really stressed out. I wish she would just tell me.’ But in the long run, it really helped me self-analyze how it was going to work.”
Interpretations: Reflections on the Process

- Supervisor and supervisee dyads varied as to the extent to which they overtly discussed using the model
  - *Overt discussion tended to make the model more usable and meaningful*
- Supervisors were *conscious of how the model required them to identify the supervisee’s level of learning response*
Interpretations: Reflections on the Process

- Supervisors used various means to encourage supervisees to advance learning responses to a higher level (e.g., questions, examples, comparisons).

- Supervisors and supervisees were conscious of the video recording of their sessions, which spurred them to use the model (Hawthorne Effect?)

Interpretations: Reflections on the Process

- The study suffered from inadequate training of the supervisors by the investigators
- More time and training are required for supervisors to become familiar with the model and with processes for enacting the model, especially with less mature supervisees
- **Guidance from the investigators was necessary for supervisors to use the model** (support was given during the phone conversations)
Interpretations: Reflections on the Process

- Supervisors sometimes mistook reflective learning to mean that the supervisee had to be responsible for her own learning and that the supervisor could not offer suggestions and advice, for fear of bringing the student “down” to a level of practice or memorization.
- This is a fundamental misinterpretation of the model.
- Recall that Knowles said that adults are task-centered and want to know why.
  - *Some supervisor input would facilitate managing clinical tasks*
Interpretations: Reflections on the Process

- The investigators have augmented the model to include a *decision tree* for supervisors.
- The decision tree describes how supervisors can employ guidance, direction, and suggestions to move supervisees along the learning response continuum.
Non-Learning Responses

Challenge:
Presumptions on Various Grounds
The Effects of Non-Consideration
The Effects of Rejection

Teach Knowledge to:
To Move Past Presumptions
Fill the Void of Non-Consideration
Fill the Void Left by Rejection

Demonstrate Skills that Cannot Occur:
If Presumptions are Maintained
Under Conditions of Non-Consideration
Under Conditions of Rejection

Non-Reflective Learning Responses

Challenge:
Preconscious Learning to Become Conscious Learning
Practice to Become Meaningful Participation
Memorization to Lead to a Broad and Deep Knowledge Base

Teach:
Conscious Analysis, Evaluation, and Synthesis of Knowledge
Knowledge Through Meaningful Practice
Professionals Memorize Knowledge and Still Look Up Info

Demonstrate Skills that Cannot Occur:
If Preconscious Learning is Maintained
Under Conditions Where Learning is Unauthentic
Under Conditions of Memorization Without Analysis and Synthesis

Reflective Learning Responses

Challenge:
Contemplation to Become Expression and Action
Reflection In Action, Reflection on Action, and Reflection on Practice
Experiential Learning to Broaden and Deepen Reflection, Expression, and Action

Teach Knowledge that:
Follows from Students’ Shared Contemplations
Follows from Students’ Shared Reflective Practice
Brings Additional Meaning to Experiential Learning

Demonstrate Skills that:
Students are Curiously Contemplating
Follow from Students’ Reflective Practice
Students Can Apply in Future Experiential Learning
Conclusions

- Overall, supervisors and supervisees perceived the model as benefitting student learning
- Benefits included:
  - Enhanced independence in clinical problem-solving
  - Greater student responsibility for learning
Conclusions

- Supervisees noted that they generalized learning strategies and reflective practices to their work with other clients and supervisors.
- Use of the model improved the therapy they provided in their first semester of graduate school.
Future Directions

- To promote supervisors’ independence, future study of implementation of the model will include requiring supervisors to:
  - Compare their current supervision practices to the model
  - Train for a longer time using multiple case examples before implementing the model
  - Discuss the model with supervisees – train supervisees how to ask for help
  - Use the decision tree to guide their implementation of the model
Future Directions

- Complete all transcript analyses
- Improve the design and training
- Replicate the study
Questions and Discussion
Citation

References


References


