Graduate Clinicians’ Preferences for On Campus Supervisory Methods

Melissa Carter, M.S., CCC-SLP
Crystal Randolph, PhD, CCC-SLP
Lora Backes, M.Ed., CCC-SLP
Lorena Cole, M.Ed., CCC-SLP
Karen Noll, M.A., CCC-SLP

Disclosure Statement

• No authors had any financial or non-financial conflicts of interest associated with the content of this presentation.

Background

• Supervision is a critical component of the graduate level education of future speech-language pathologists.

• Many graduate programs require graduate students to complete the initial stages of their clinical work in settings that are housed on-campus.

• These settings aid in the provision of both the initial and the foundational educational elements of the clinical intervention process.

• Providing effective supervision to graduate students requires collaboration with the student in order to:
  • Establish expectations regarding clinical competencies
  • Implement self-evaluative practices
  • Emphasize the critical thinking process
  • Enhance problem solving skills
  • Become independent clinicians

• Providing effective supervision also requires that decisions be made in regards to the methods utilized for:
  • Observing clinical sessions
  • Teaching documentation
  • Assessing student clinician performance
  • Teaching treatment delivery methods

• Supervision methods can vary greatly in terms of:
  • Location
    • Within clinical rooms, remotely, telepractice, etc...
  • Documentation
    • SOAP notes, lesson-plans, etc. and the frequency of which they are expected
  • Feedback
    • When and how feedback should occur
  • Clinician assessment
    • Formative and/or summative methods and the frequency by which they are completed
  • Teaching new treatment methods
    • Modeling, utilization of handbooks/literature, videos, etc..

Purposes

• Although previous research has indicated that the ability of students to learn clinical skills can be affected by a number of variables (Austin, 2013; Daly, 2010; Smith, 2015), no research exists which investigates students’ opinions regarding the means by which these crucial skills are taught.

• The purpose of this study was to investigate the opinions of graduate speech-language pathology clinicians regarding the supervision that they receive.

• If as suggested by Smith (2015) supervision is to be a collaborative process, students’ opinions should be considered when developing best practices for the supervision of graduate clinician’s clinical experiences.
Methods

• An online survey was created which allowed graduate clinicians to rate their opinions regarding five different aspects of supervision.
• A 5-point Likert scale was used to assess student opinions regarding the five aspects of supervision
  • 1 = strongly preferred; 2 = preferred; 3 = neutral, 4 = less preferred; 5 = not preferred
• Clinicians were required to rate their opinion on each methodology independently of their opinions regarding all other methodologies.
• All on-campus graduate clinicians were solicited to participate via email.

Methods: Materials

• Students were required to rate their opinion regarding:
  • How they are supervised:
    • In person, from an observation room, via one-way mirrors, video-recordings, from faculty offices
  • Documentation:
    • Daily treatment plans, weekly treatment plans, daily SOAP notes, weekly SOAP notes, session reflections
  • Feedback:
    • Verbal feedback during sessions, verbal feedback after sessions, written feedback, email, video assessment
  • Grading:
    • Daily grading, weekly grading, periodic grading, formal midterm grading, formal final grading
  • New technique instruction:
    • Supervisor model during session, instruction during planning session, being supplied instructional materials such as the manual, observation of similar case, instructional video

Methods

• 81 graduate clinicians completed the online survey
  • 35 1st semester graduate students
  • 27 2nd semester graduate students
  • 16 3rd semester graduate students
  • 3 “Other” semester graduate students

These 81 student clinicians provided survey responses related to 140 clients.

Methods: Statistical Methods

• In order to address the experimental question regarding student supervisory opinions, a series of chi-square goodness of fit analyses were performed on the Likert-scale survey data.
  • A separate analysis was completed for each of the five supervisory areas that were addressed in the current study.
  • To simplify the visual depictions of student opinions, the responses were categorized as either preferred (response of 1-2), neutral (response of 3) or not preferred (responses of 4-5). All five responses were considered independently for statistical analyses.

Results: How students are supervised

• Students showed a significant dislike of supervision occurring in a face to face fashion
  • χ²(4, N = 134) = 31.00, p = .000
• Students showed a significant preference toward hallway supervision
  • χ²(4, N = 140) = 64.57, p = .000
• Students showed a significant preference toward observation room supervision
  • χ²(4, N = 137) = 58.95, p = .000
• Students showed a significant neutrality toward faculty office supervision
  • χ²(4, N = 137) = 36.98, p = .000
• Students showed a significant dislike of video-recorded supervision
  • χ²(4, N = 134) = 98.02, p = .000

Results: Documentation

• Students showed a significant dislike of daily treatment plans
  • χ²(4, N = 133) = 99.82, p = .000
• Students showed a significant preference toward weekly treatment plans
  • χ²(4, N = 135) = 65.56, p = .000
• Students showed a significant dislike toward daily SOAP notes
  • χ²(4, N = 134) = 45.61, p = .000
• Students showed a significant preference toward weekly SOAP notes
  • χ²(4, N = 134) = 88.03, p = .000
• Students showed a significant neutrality toward session reflections
  • χ²(4, N = 132) = 62.62, p = .000
Results: Feedback

- Students showed a significant dislike of verbal feedback during sessions
  \[ \chi^2(4, N = 132) = 39.26, p = .000 \]
- Students showed a significant preference toward verbal feedback after sessions
  \[ \chi^2(4, N = 134) = 77.79, p = .000 \]
- Students showed a significant preference toward written feedback
  \[ \chi^2(4, N = 134) = 111.11, p = .000 \]
- Students showed no consistent response pattern regarding email feedback
  \[ \chi^2(4, N = 131) = 4.08, p = .396 \]
- Students showed a significant dislike toward audio/video recorded feedback
  \[ \chi^2(4, N = 131) = 88.12, p = .000 \]

Results: Grading/Assessment

- Students showed a significant dislike of daily assessment
  \[ \chi^2(4, N = 133) = 27.49, p = .000 \]
- Students showed a slightly significant preference toward weekly assessment
  \[ \chi^2(4, N = 130) = 16.00, p = .003 \]
- Students showed a significant preference toward periodic assessment
  \[ \chi^2(4, N = 130) = 39.85, p = .000 \]
- Students showed a significant preference toward formal midterm assessment
  \[ \chi^2(4, N = 132) = 121.49, p = .000 \]
- Students showed a significant preference toward formal final assessment
  \[ \chi^2(4, N = 132) = 139.06, p = .000 \]

Discussion

- How students are supervised:
  - Students tend to prefer their supervisors to remain in close proximity although they did not prefer supervisors to remain within the treatment room.
  - Students desire high levels of independence while acknowledging their need for occasional assistance.
  - Students preferred all methods that occur prior to treatment sessions including feedback in the supervision of SLP student clinicians, suggesting that students are more comfortable with previously established methods of assessment.
  - Students preferred planning sessions and instruction occurring prior to treatment sessions.
  - Students preferred periodic assessment and instruction occurring prior to treatment sessions.

References