Influence of Gender on the Supervisory Relationship: A Review of the Empirical Research from 1996 to 2010
Influence du genre sur la relation de supervision : Survol de la recherche empirique de 1996 à 2010

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ABSTRACT

Twelve empirical studies published since 1996 regarding the effects of gender on the supervisory relationship are reviewed. Each study was reviewed and critiqued in relation to its methodology, research design, critical findings, and limitations. The results of these studies indicate that (a) gender influences the openness and affiliation one experiences in supervision, (b) care and concern are important to master-level supervisees, (c) female supervisors have a greater relationship focus than do male supervisors, (d) male supervisors rate hypothetical supervisees more negatively when the supervisee is depicted as female than when the supervisee is male, (e) females are more conservative than males on boundary negotiations, and (f) supervisors use different strategies with male and female supervisees. The majority of these studies have research design limitations that limit the generalization of findings. Results are discussed in relation to best practices and future directions for research.

RÉSUMÉ

L'examen a porté sur 12 études empiriques publiées depuis 1996 à propos des effets du genre sur la relation de supervision. Chaque étude fut passée en revue et critiquée quant à sa méthodologie, son modèle de recherche, ses conclusions essentielles, et ses limites. Les résultats de ces études indiquent que (a) le genre influence l'ouverture et l'appartenance ressenties en situation de supervision, (b) les soins et l'attention sont importants pour les subalternes de niveau maîtrise, (c) les superviseures de sexe féminin sont davantage centrées sur la relation que les superviseurs masculins, (d) les superviseurs masculins évaluent plus négativement les subalternes hypothétiques si ces derniers sont décrits comme étant des subalternes féminines, (e) les femmes sont plus conservatrices que les hommes en ce qui concerne la négociation des limites, et (f) les superviseurs utilisent des stratégies différentes selon qu'ils ont affaire à un subalterne masculin ou féminin. Dans la plupart de ces études, le modèle de recherche comporte des limites qui empêchent la généralisation des conclusions. On discute des résultats observés sous l'angle des pratiques exemplaires et d'orientations futures pour la recherche.

Although health professionals may differ on how they define supervision relative to their discipline and training, Bernard and Goodyear (2004) offer a succinct definition of supervision that encompasses the different roles and associated settings:

An intervention provided by a more senior member of a profession to a more junior member of a profession or members of that profession. The relationship is evaluative, extends over time, and has the simultaneous purposes of enhancing the professional functioning of the more junior person(s), monitoring the quality of professional services offered to clients, and serving as a gatekeeper for those who are to enter the particular profession. (p. 8)

A critical factor influencing the process and success of supervision is the quality of the supervisor-supervisee relationship (Alderfer & Lynch, 1986; Bernard & Goodyear, 2009; Kaiser, 1992). Research has shown that a positive and productive working alliance along with effective management of interpersonal conflicts are essential for achieving successful supervision (Heru, Strong, Price, & Recupero, 2006; Nelson, Gray, Friedlander, Ladany, & Walker, 2001; Ronnestad & Skovholt, 1993; Worthen & McNeill, 1996). Importantly, the individual characteristics of both the supervisor and supervisee, including their gender, are key components that influence the nature and quality of the relationship (Bernard & Goodyear, 2004; Brock & Sibbald, 1988; Wetchler, Piercy, & Sprenkle, 1989).

From a review of the literature with respect to the influence of gender within the supervisory relationship, Crespi (1995) concluded that:

Given that clinical supervision is itself conducted within a relational context, it would seem myopic not to pay attention to the influence of gender on the supervisory relationship. At the same time, given the available research involving the effects of gender on supervision, specifically, supervisors should utilize and interpret available findings with a note of caution. (p. 27)

Since this 1995 publication, a follow-up review of the empirical literature relative to the influence of gender on the supervisory relationship has not occurred. Hence, the purpose of this article is (a) to review and evaluate the methodology, research design, critical findings, and limitations in current research involving the effects of gender on various aspects of the supervisory relationship (i.e., style, power, discourse, evaluation, and boundaries); and (b) through these evaluations (focusing on strengths and limitations) of the research, to determine the appropriate level of confidence that supervisors can place in the findings/implications from these studies.

Gender has been thought of as a pervasive organizer within cultures, as well as a process of development that shapes one's beliefs, stereotypes, and behavioural expectations (Gilbert & Rossman, 1992). Hence, the supervisory relationship can be thought of as gender sensitive and guided by a supervisor's and a supervisee's views and biases. On this point, Nelson (1991) recommended that supervisors be vigilant with respect to their own gender biases before engaging in supervision. For example, in the past, women had a less powerful status in society than men, which led to a history of resistance to women in supervisory roles (Munson, 1987). Therefore, some men have been against subordination to women, and because of this, women involved in supervisory relationships with male supervisees have sometimes encountered resistance (Granello, 1996). Moreover, in general, gender differences are expected in terms of the conversational and interpersonal charac-

teristics of supervisors (Nelson & Holloway, 1990), and can likely influence the quality of the supervisory relationship.

Some researchers have shared the viewpoint that some men are less likely to be successful as supervisors because they are sometimes seen as less nurturing and socially oriented, as well as more task-oriented, assertive, and independent than women (Granello, 1996; McHale & Carr, 1998; Nelson, 1991; Pruett, 1989; Putney, Worthington, & McCullough, 1992; Tannen, 1994). However, one should be cautious with respect to such perceptions and characterizations until there is more evidence to substantiate or refute them. In this regard, it appears prudent to review the current research and determine whether or not there is more or less support for these points of view.

In this article, empirical studies published since 1996 on the effects of gender on the supervisory relationship are reviewed. As indicated above, one objective of our review is to determine whether or not supervisors still need to be cautious in their interpretation and use of the empirical findings relative to gender and the supervisory relationship. This objective will be accomplished by summarizing and evaluating the methodology, design, limitations, and critical findings from the research. In this regard, one important aspect to consider relative to the research quality is the method of data collection. Supervisors and supervisees may intentionally or unintentionally diminish or exaggerate their behaviours in self-reports or questionnaires; therefore, researchers may overlook the subtle gender biases and interpret their findings on intended rather than actual behaviours (Granello, 1996). Consequently, what might be investigated by researchers are not actual behavioural differences between the genders, but perceptions of behavioural differences (Osterberg, 1996). It is beneficial if the effects of gender on supervision are evaluated from multiple sources, perspectives, and methods of data collection, in order to gain a more comprehensive and valid view of this complex interaction. Hence, the studies in this review will be examined to determine if actual behaviours were investigated and whether or not their research design incorporated a multi-trait and multi-method data collection approach.

Another key aspect of research that needs to be considered is generalizability of the findings. Research findings have more applicability if they can be generalized across different contexts and situations. Experimental research is often conducted in unnatural settings, which typically do not capture the complexities of the supervisory relationships (Heppner, Kivlighan, & Wampold, 1999; Osterberg, 1996). Although observations within a natural setting do not often enable the researchers to have as much control over confounding variables within the environment as they may have in experimental designs, field studies can better approximate realistic supervisory practices (Heppner et al., 1999). Hence, the following studies will be evaluated with regard to the extent to which the findings can be applied or generalized to real-life settings and supervisory interactions.

Another important component of comparative research is to control for as many variables as possible in order to eliminate extraneous variables, sample bias, and the amount of error in the study. Gender is not the only factor that has an

influence on behaviour, so researchers can benefit from looking at the effect of other confounding or moderating variables or controlling for them (Nelson & Holloway, 1990). Consequently, the selected studies will be examined for the extent to which the influence of factors such as background, age, and clinical experience are considered in the research.

The studies reviewed in this article were obtained through a computerized search of PsycINFO. The following key words were used: supervision, supervisory relationship, gender differences, supervisory style, power within supervision, supervisory discourse, evaluation, and feedback. Reference lists from relevant articles and books were also used for background information and the selection of studies. Those articles or books that were frequently cited in other studies were used for this review. The primary criteria used to select the studies and literature were that they had to focus on the influence of gender on the supervisory relationship in counselling or psychology and be conducted between 1996 and the first few months of 2010. Studies that did not meet these criteria because they were older or focused on other areas of discipline were excluded. The search produced 12 studies that met these criteria. Based on the results of the search, the studies are grouped into five distinct areas: (a) Gender and Supervisory Style, (b) Gender and Supervisory Power, (c) Gender and Supervisory Discourse, (d) Gender and Supervisory Evaluation, and (e) Gender and Supervisory Boundaries.

In the following section, all 12 studies pertaining to the influence of gender on the supervisory relationship are summarized and evaluated. The methodology, results, and conclusions from each of these studies are described individually, highlighting some of their strengths and limitations, with a particular focus on the research design and methods. Moreover, these studies will be compared and analyzed in relation to one another to illustrate some of the overall strengths and weaknesses of the research in this area. The results will be further discussed in relation to gender effects on the supervisory relationship, training of supervisors, best practices in supervision, and future directions for research.

GENDER AND SUPERVISORY STYLE

Miller and Ivey (2006)

Methodology and research design. Miller and Ivey (2006) collected self-report data from 153 master's and doctoral students in accredited marriage and family therapy education programs to determine if gender was associated with variations in perceptions of supervisory style and to investigate how often spiritual issues were addressed in supervision. In this study, spirituality was defined as "an overarching construct that includes a personal journey of transcendent beliefs and a sense of connection with other people, experienced either within or outside formal religious structures" (Miller & Ivey, 2006, p. 325). This study involved the Supervisory Styles Index (SSI) developed by Friedlander and Ward (1984), which focuses on three supervisory styles: (a) affiliative/authoritative, (b) directive/non-directive, and (c) self-disclosing/non-self-disclosing.

Miller and Ivey (2006) also utilized the Spiritual Issues in Supervision Scale (SISS) that was developed by Miller, Korinek, and Ivey (2004). On this scale, participants rated how often various spiritual issues (such as grief and identity) were addressed in supervision using a 5-point Likert rating scale. The SSI has been shown to have internal reliability coefficients around .80 (Long, Lawless, & Dotson, 1996), and the SISS reportedly has an internal consistency greater than .90 (Miller et al., 2004). Limited research on these instruments was available, and no other psychometric properties of these instruments are known, thus they are not reported.

Critical findings. In this study, gender influenced the openness and affiliation experienced in supervision. Supervisors in this study who were perceived as being more open to self-disclosure more frequently discussed spirituality issues than those who were perceived as being less open to communication about difficult issues. Moreover, supervisees reported a greater connection with male supervisors than they did with female supervisors; however, no gender differences existed in terms of the use of directedness or the amount of self-disclosure between supervisors and supervisees.

The findings from this study revealed the importance of discussing gender in supervisory relationships. It is important for both the supervisor and the supervisee to take into consideration the influence of the type of gender dyad on the degree of communication in supervision, the supervisee's perception of supervision, and the openness of the supervisor and supervisee to discuss issues such as spirituality. Both supervisor and supervisee should consider and acknowledge how their gender and spiritual beliefs may influence the supervisory relationship.

Limitations. The results of this study were based on self-reports and from the perspectives of the supervisees only. Hence, the research was based on perceptive and speculative behaviours rather than on actual behaviours in relation to supervision. Additionally, the responses from the surveys may have been slanted or artificial. There may have been a tendency for the respondents to agree with positive statements or questions, or a tendency to give consistently high or low ratings. In addition, most participants rated more than one supervisor and, thus, a lack of independence of data may have affected the results (Tabachnick & Fidell, 1996).

Miller and Ivey (2006) also noted that the group sizes in the ANOVA were unequal, which may have reduced the assumption of homogeneity. Violation of the assumption of homogeneity can potentially result in inaccurate conclusions and inferences being made based on the results (Tabachnick & Fidell, 1996). Therefore, these results need to be interpreted with that caution in mind.

Lastly, this study included spirituality as a variable of interest, but it did not include other variables, such as background, age, culture, or socioeconomic status.

Long et al. (1996)

Methodology and research design. Long et al. (1996) examined the relationship between supervisory style and gender. Although Colapinto (1988) and Pirrota and Cecchin (1988) classified supervisory style as either egalitarian or hierarchi-

cal, Long et al. believed that it existed more on a continuum. In this study, the researchers gathered information from 52 supervisees in doctoral-level marriage and family therapy programs on the amount of therapy experience, as well as the number of supervision hours (182 supervisors were evaluated). The study utilized the revised version of the Bem Sex Role Inventory (Bem, 1974), where participants used a Likert rating scale to rate themselves on various masculine and feminine qualities (e.g., aggressive, tender, sensitive).

Reliability and validity coefficients for the Bem Sex Role Inventory were not provided. Previous research has indicated that the Bem Sex Role Inventory has acceptable internal consistency and test-retest reliability (Bem, 1974; Matsui, 1994). Its validity and factor structure have been debated (Gill, Stockard, Johnson, & Williams, 1987; Spence, 1983, 1991). As with Miller and Ivey (2006), Long et al. (1996) used the SSI to gain ratings of the supervisor's behaviours in relation to affiliation, directness, and self-disclosure.

Critical findings. The findings of the study indicated gender differences only in female supervisees' perceptions of supervisory style. Female supervisees tended to perceive their supervisors (both male and female) as being more self-disclosing than did male supervisees. Long et al. (1996) suggested that this finding may be associated with the notion that males may be more task-oriented and that females may be more relationally oriented (Caldwell & Peplau, 1982). However, it may also be the case that female supervisees approached and/or experienced their interpersonal relationship with their supervisors differently than males did. The results from this study pointed out the need to further explore moderating and mediating variables (e.g., socialization, emotionality, self-efficacy) that might influence supervisory style on supervisee's experiences.

Limitations. Some limitations of the study were that it did not examine other sources of information, such as supervisors' perceptions of their own style, nor did it conduct any observations of behaviour. Therefore, Long and colleagues (1996) recommended that future studies examine both supervisees' and supervisors' reports of style and supervision, noting that observational data may be beneficial to this area of research. Follow-up interviews with the participants of this study to further investigate how they specifically approached and experienced their supervision experience would have been informative. Based on our review of the Bem Sex Role Inventory, it is also recommended that further work on this instrument be conducted in order to gather evidence of its content and construct validity. In addition, data were gathered on the amount of therapy experience and the number of supervision hours, but the authors did not gather information on demographic variables, such as age, ethnicity, and socioeconomic status, that may also have influenced the style of supervision.

The above two studies suggested that few gender differences may exist in the style of supervision. Both studies used the SSI, which has limited support for its psychometric properties. Moreover, neither study utilized a multi-trait/multi-method approach, nor included observations of the actual supervisory style and relationship. The use of only self-report measures impeded the generalizability of

the results to behaviours that are observed in real supervisory relationships. Both studies would have benefited from the investigation of supervisor perceptions and the collection of observational data of real-life supervision sessions in order to validate the responses from the self-report measures.

Wester, Vogel, and Archer (2004)

Methodology and research design. Wester et al. (2004) investigated the impact of restricted emotionality (inability to express one's emotions in certain situations) on counsellor supervision in 103 doctoral-level counselling internships. This study utilized (a) the Gender Role Conflict Scale (GRCS; O'Neil, Helms, Gable, David, & Wrightsman, 1986) as a measure of men's reactions to the inconsistent and unrealistic gender role expectations they face in society; (b) the Supervisory Working Alliance Inventory-Trainee version (SWAI-T; Efstation, Patton, & Kardash, 1990) as a measure of the supervisee's perceptions of factors essential to an effective supervisory relationship; and (c) the Supervisory Working Alliance Inventory and Counselling Self-Estimate Inventory (COSE; Larson et al., 1992) as a measure of supervisees' judgements of their counselling abilities and their expectations for success in counselling situations. All of these instruments had some, but limited, evidence of reliability and validity.

Critical findings. The results of this study indicated that male supervisees who did not often express their emotions were more likely to have a negative perception about their own counselling abilities than their supervisors have about them or to have a negative perception of the supervisory relationship. These results further suggest that males who do express their emotions tend to be more expressive/ socially oriented (Granello, 1996; McHale & Carr, 1998; Nelson, 1991; Pruett, 1989; Putney et al., 1992; Tannen, 1994).

Moreover, in relation to the research findings previously reported with respect to same-gender and cross-gender pairs in supervision, it appears that male-male dyads may result in a poorer supervisory working alliance. Male supervisees displayed negative perceptions about the working alliance, which Wester et al. attributed to responses relating to a lack of power within the supervisory relationships. However, this possibility is tenuous and requires future researchers to employ more comprehensive descriptive analyses of the participants within their studies to better address the particular characteristics of the sample and their impact on interaction orientations and styles.

Limitations. Some of the problems with survey techniques (particularly mailed questionnaires) are that low response rates can occur (as happened in this study) and can result in over-rater or under-rater bias, limiting the generalizability of the findings. In addition, surveys elicit a reaction from respondents rather than a conversation (which can be had through the use of interviews) and can generate misleading information. Hence, return rates might have been improved if there had been more personalized follow-up and if the researchers had counterbalanced their data collection with some interviews. This study also did not include other variables that may influence the supervisory relationship.

Granello, Beamish, and Davis (1997)

Methodology and research design. Granello et al. (1997) investigated the relationship between a supervisee's gender and the influence of strategies used in supervision in counselling practicums and internships. The 20 supervisory relationships included male supervisee-male supervisor, male supervisee-female supervisor, female supervisee-male supervisor, and female supervisee-female supervisor dyads. The study used audiotaped supervision sessions of at least 30 minutes' duration. Granello et al. hypothesized that female supervisees would receive more supportive comments, opinions, and suggestions, as well as ask more questions and seek out more information, than male supervisees, while male supervisees would be asked for their opinions and suggestions more often than female supervisees.

Critical findings. The findings revealed that on average, male supervisees were asked for their opinions more than twice as often as female supervisees. The researchers also found that in supervisory relationships of long duration, male supervisees received less direction and were able to express their ideas more often, whereas female supervisees received more guidance and support and were less likely to provide their own responses. Overall, Granello et al. concluded that male and female supervisees may receive different supervision experiences, which may limit the opportunities for female supervisees to develop into independent counsellors. The findings from this study reinforced the need for supervisors to be aware of the effect of gender on supervisory relationships and the need for supervisors to address gender biases and issues with their supervisees. Although the sample size was small, this study's results clearly show that the supervision strategies vary with gender and length of supervisory relationship.

Limitations. This study utilized a small sample, which the authors attributed to a low return rate of audiotapes. In addition, gender alone is not sufficient to explain or predict behaviours in supervisory relationships. Therefore, the study should have also included other variables including sex orientation, age, and culture (Granello et al., 1997).

Granello (2003)

Methodology and research design. Granello (2003) conducted a follow-up study to explore the effects of both supervisor and supervisee gender on the supervisory dyad and the strategies used in sessions. Participants were 42 master's-level practicum and intern students in the field of counselling. Additionally, Granello examined the interactional effects of gender and age on supervisory dyads. The data consisted of audiotaped individual supervision sessions that were at least 30 minutes long and occurred after a minimum of three previous sessions to ensure that a minimal supervisory relationship had been established. Through this approach, Granello attempted to examine the actual behaviours in supervisory relationships, as opposed to the intended and speculative behaviours that can occur in self-report measures. Therefore, the inclusion of audiotaped data allowed

researchers in this study to reflect on supervisory relationships in a more natural setting and in more real supervisory situations (e.g., a session between a counselling intern and the supervisor in which they discuss how the supervision is going or what the supervisee likes/dislikes about the process of supervision).

The sessions were rated and coded using a revised version of the Blumberg Interactional Analysis System (BIA; Blumberg, 1970), which is one of the rating scales most frequently used by observers to record patterns of interaction in the supervisory dyad. The BIA evaluates the reciprocal influences of the supervisor and supervisee, and classifies the behaviour/responses into categories. The revised BIA used in this study had an interrater reliability greater than .70. No other psychometric properties were indicated.

Critical findings. The results of the study indicated that supervisors use different strategies with their male and female supervisees, leading to different experiences. For example, supervisors of both genders were significantly more likely to accept the ideas of female supervisees, but asked for more opinions from male supervisees. Additionally, male supervisees gave significantly more suggestions or answers to supervisors' questions, while female supervisees gave more praise toward their supervisors. The results also showed that age interacted with gender. In this regard, male supervisees who were older than their supervisors were treated differently (e.g., were asked their opinions more often) and responded differently (e.g., gave more suggestions) than male and female supervisees who were younger than their supervisor.

Gender and age differences in the strategies employed in supervision were portrayed in this study. Consequently, supervisors should monitor their supervisory relationships for any possible gender and age effects and be aware of how these factors can affect their supervisees and vice versa. This study highlighted the importance of including supervisory training for supervisors that encompasses all ages and both genders in order to increase supervisors' awareness of how male and female supervisees of different ages can behave, interact, and respond differently within supervisory relationships.

Limitations. Some limitations of the study included a low student return rate of audiotapes and uneven number of participants in gender dyads. In particular, there were few dyads with male supervisees. Moreover, although gender differences were analyzed, within gender differences were not explored. In addition, although this study included age as a variable of interest, it would have been important to look at the impact of other extraneous variables (i.e., background, culture, and socioeconomic status) on supervisory relationships.

Moorhouse and Carr (2002)

Methodology and research design. In a study of marriage and family therapy supervisors ($n = 4$) and supervisees ($n = 19$), Moorhouse and Carr (2002) investigated the relationship between supervisor and supervisee gender, the behaviour of supervisors toward supervisees, the behaviour of supervisees toward clients, and client resistance or cooperation. A series of complete therapy sessions were

videotaped, and the phone-in events within these sessions were audiotaped. The focus of the investigation was the phone-in supervisor-supervisee conversation along with 3 minutes of client-supervisee interaction that came before and after the phone-in event. The Modified Therapy Process Coding System (Moorhouse & Carr, 1999) was used to rate the supervisor, supervisee, and client behaviour in terms of degree of support, teaching, and collaboration. A high level of inter-rater reliability (ranging from .70 to .90), as assessed by Pearson correlations, was obtained for all ratings. However, there was no presentation of information with respect to the validity of this coding system.

Critical findings. The results from this study found that the quality of supervisors' collaborative behaviour (consultative rather than directive) was highest for events in systems where male supervisors were supervising male supervisees and lowest for events in systems where male supervisors were supervising female supervisees. In systems containing female supervisors and male supervisees, supervisees engaged in frequent collaborative and supportive behaviour and less frequent teaching behaviour with their clients. There was no relationship between the genders of supervisors and supervisees and the clients' resistance or cooperation. The researchers concluded that the findings might be due to supervisor-specific or supervisee-specific factors that need to be further investigated with a larger number of supervisors and supervisees (as noted above, relative to research comparing same-gender and cross-gender pairs in supervision).

Overall, as noted by Bernard and Goodyear (2009), a power dynamic is embedded within the supervisory relationship and appears to be managed differently by men and women. Supervisors and supervisees need to be aware of these differences and the possibility of gender biases in their interactions and the supervisory relationship.

Limitations. The above research suggests some variations in the interactions of supervisors and supervisees that are associated with age, gender, and influence; however, more empirical research is needed to better understand their interrelationship. Moreover, the study focused only on those few variables and did not include other variables that may influence the supervisory relationship, such as the culture and background of the supervisors. It would have been useful to look at the main effects and interactions between multiple variables.

GENDER AND SUPERVISORY DISCOURSE

McHale and Carr (1998)

Methodology and research design. McHale and Carr's (1998) study built upon a previous study by Worthington and Stern (1985) that demonstrated that gender influences supervision. Specifically, McHale and Carr examined (a) the impact of gender on supervisor and supervisee discourse style, (b) the impact of gender on supervisory style and supervisor-supervisee discussion, and (c) the relationships between supervisor and supervisee discourse variables. It was hypothesized that male supervisors would be more directive, female supervisors would be more

collaborative, male supervisees would be more resistant and speak more often, and same-gender dyads would be more collaborative and cooperative. The study involved video recordings of family therapist supervisor-supervisee discourse and a discourse coding system, but did not utilize any other measures. The coding system was based on the Therapeutic Behaviour Code (Forgatch & Chamberlain, 1992) and the Therapeutic Interaction Coding System (Shields, 1987), which were previously used for therapist-client relationships. Codes from these systems that the researchers believed were related to collaborative, directive, cooperative, and resistant supervisory style types were included in this study. For example, codes focusing on declaring opinions, agreement, facilitation, responding, personal disclosure, and appreciation were utilized. Interrater reliability for the coding of relationships in this study was greater than .80.

Critical findings. The results showed that a directive supervision style and a resistant supervisee style were more frequently observed among dyads with a female supervisor. This finding is in contrast to the researchers' hypotheses as well as previous research that postulates that males often use a more directive style than females (Pruett, 1989; Tannen, 1994). McHale and Carr (1998) suggested that this difference in findings may be associated with selection factors (family therapists may not display the same stereotypic supervisory styles as other counsellors or therapists, and female and male family therapists may be impacted differently by family therapy training). Additionally, the environment in which the studies occurred may have also impacted the results, as the previous study by Pruett (1989) was in an experimental setting and the study by McHale and Carr was in a more natural context.

Additionally, same-gender dyads were more consistently associated with a collaborative style, which was shown to be related to the supervisee's level of co-operation and resistance. This result is consistent with previous studies that have shown that matched gender pairs in supervision resulted in the greatest satisfaction with supervision (Behling, Curtis, & Foster, 1988; Worthington & Stern, 1985). However, Putney et al. (1992) found that cross-gender pairs resulted in increased autonomy for the supervisee. Hence, the ways in which gender pairings in supervisory relationships affect supervision (e.g., better cooperation for same-gender dyads, better autonomy for cross-gender) appear to be complex and variant, which further supports the need for additional research and supervision practices that attend to gender effects in supervision. Overall, as with the previous studies, McHale and Carr (1998) also recommend that supervisors' and supervisees' training encompass the influence of gender on supervision.

Limitations. This study's design had some limitations including small sample size (19 trainees and 8 supervisors), the absence of randomization, and the lack of exploration of confounding factors/characteristics, such as socioeconomic status. No attempt was made to randomize or match the four different gender supervisory dyads on characteristics such as age, experience, or socioeconomic status. Consequently, the effects of age and socioeconomic status were not controlled or investigated. The observational technique used in this study allowed researchers

to examine more "real-life" interactions between the supervisor and supervisee because they were observed while engaging in supervisory sessions. However, because the observations occurred in a laboratory setting that utilized experimentally set-up dyads, the generalization to natural settings is still limited.

Sells, Goodyear, Polkinghorne, and Lichtenberg (1997)

Methodology and research design. Sells et al. (1997) investigated the effects of supervisor and trainee gender on the verbal interactions of participants and on supervisor perceptions of trainee skill levels. The majority of the 44 participants were in counselling or clinical psychology fields. Specifically, the researchers were interested in finding out whether supervisor and trainee gender would influence the relative proportions of task-oriented versus relational verbal behaviours used during a supervision session. Of particular interest to the researchers were the relative contributions of trainees and supervisors to the structure, rather than to the character, of their interaction and the effect of the supervisor and trainee gender on those contributions. Sells et al. were also interested in finding out the degree to which gender affected control or influence in the interactions and whether or not supervisor or trainee gender would affect ratings of the trainees' skills. The measures they used to address these questions included a Likert-type item rating scale, and verbalization and behaviour coding procedures, respectively.

Supervisors and trainees evaluated the trainee's competence with a 3-item scale that was based on Bernard's (1979) conception of supervision. The three items were ratings of the trainee's use of therapeutic skills and strategies, the trainee's openness to and awareness of personal issues that interfere with treatment, and the trainee's ability to conceptualize the client's problems and dynamics. The reliability (alpha) for the scale was reported to be .82 for the supervisors' ratings of the trainees and .83 for trainees' ratings of themselves. There was no information reported on the validity of the scale. Relationship versus task-oriented speech was measured using Bales' (1970) Interactional Process Analysis (IPA) coding procedures and Carli's (1989) modification of IPA speech categories. Carli (1984) reported the interrater reliability of her categories to be between .70 and .99. Expression of status and affiliation was measured using the Interpersonal Communication Rating Scale (ICRS; Strong, Hills, & Nelson, 1988), which allows for the coding of verbal responses with respect to interpersonal behaviour. Reliability and validity information was not reported for this coding system.

Critical findings. Similar to the Granello (2003) study reviewed previously, Sells et al. focused on the actual behaviours in supervisory relationships, as opposed to the intended and speculative behaviours that can occur in self-report measures. They found that the verbal behaviours of supervisors in male-male pairings were more task-oriented (less relationship-oriented) than that of female supervisors who were paired with male trainees. However, gender configurations of the supervisory dyads did not affect the extent to which trainees' behaviour was task- versus relationship-oriented. The results also indicated that there was little difference in the degree of influence the supervisor and the trainee (regardless of

gender) had on the structure of their interaction. Moreover, they also found no effects with respect to supervisors' and trainees' gender on their perceptions of trainees' overall skill levels.

Limitations. Although the sample size in this study was small and the reliability and validity of their measures questionable, the results of this study do suggest that, while there can be behavioural differences between male and female supervisors within a supervisory relationship (e.g., task orientation vs. relationship orientation), these differences do not necessarily impact the behavioural orientations of the trainees. Overall, the above studies suggest that the verbal interactions between the supervisor and supervisee can be affected by gender pairings; however, like the studies concerning gender and supervisory style listed above, much more research is needed to better understand the nature and scope of gender-related effects. In addition, the effect and interaction between other variables should also be researched.

GENDER AND SUPERVISORY EVALUATION

Chung, Marshall, and Gordon (2001)

Methodology and research design. Chung et al. (2001) investigated racial and gender biases in counselling supervisory evaluation and feedback. Participants received by mail a description of an anonymous supervisee and a two-page case presentation protocol written by the supervisee. After reviewing this material, the 77 participant respondents completed a Supervisee Evaluation Scale, which involved using a 5-point Likert scale to rate the supervisee on 12 items (e.g., coverage of information, understanding of client's current functioning, case conceptualization, treatment plan, overall evaluation). The scale was created by the researchers for the study, with the content validity assessed by a six-person research team. The internal consistency (alpha coefficient) of the scale was .92 for the current sample.

Critical findings. Results indicated gender bias in male respondents; however, no racial bias was substantiated. Male respondents rated the supervisee more negatively when the supervisee was depicted as female rather than male. Gender bias was not found in the female respondents. The implication of this result is that there is a need to ensure sensitivity and fair evaluation of female supervisees by male supervisors.

Limitations. As noted by the researchers, this study was limited by a small sample size. In addition, the experimental conditions in this study were artificial. In the future, similar research should include face-to-face interactions as well as oral or written feedback. As also noted by the researchers, there is a need for more descriptive-field or experimental-field studies to approximate realistic supervisory practices.

Jordan (2007)

Methodology and research design. Jordan (2007) investigated which supervisor variables were most important for supervisees in their early developmental phase

of becoming a therapist. Participants completed a 6-item, 3-point Likert scale (*helpful*, *unsure*, *not important*) survey developed for this study. The survey items were considered to contribute to creating a maximum learning environment for beginning supervisees. Although the face validity of the instrument was accounted for, the content and construct validity as well as reliability of the instrument is questionable.

Critical findings. The results showed that the majority of supervisees (83%) generally indicated that the need to work with a same-gender supervisor was not important. However, supervisees did rate the gender match as important when dealing with potential supervisee gender issues (i.e., ability to relate to clients of opposite gender) and client gender issues (i.e., gender identity issues). Moreover, more males than females felt that a gender match was important. Overall, the results suggest that the most important supervisor variables for beginning supervisee practicum students are the care, concern, and experience of their supervisors. In conclusion, and in comparison to the previous studies reviewed, the results from this study suggested that although there might be some male gender bias in some supervisory relationships, the impact of matching supervisor and supervisee by gender requires further research.

Limitations. This study utilized a small and restricted range of participants (98, all from one university). In addition, other variables need to be further explored within the context of studying gender within the supervisory relationship (e.g., age, culture).

GENDER AND SUPERVISORY BOUNDARIES

Heru, Strong, Price, and Recupero (2004)

Methodology and research design. Heru and colleagues (2004) investigated the perceptions of 52 psychotherapy trainees and 43 supervisors on the boundaries of the supervisory relationship. Participants completed a 19-item, 2-factor questionnaire designed to evaluate the perceptions of supervisors and trainees with respect to their willingness to discuss sexual topics, supervisor issues, and the supervisory relationship in depth. Although the scales had alphas of .74 and .61, there was limited evidence of the questionnaire's validity and reliability.

Critical findings. Results indicated that overall, trainees and supervisors agreed about the boundaries of supervision. A set of items related to sexual topics indicated that more supervisors consider it appropriate to discuss sexual items compared to trainees. Another set of items related to self-disclosure indicated that male respondents favour looser boundaries and more self-disclosure than do female respondents, who favoured more rigid boundaries and less self-evaluation. Further research should be conducted to explore differences in the perceptions of boundaries relative to gender, age, clinical experience, and culture.

Limitations. As noted by the researcher, the sample size for this study was small and consisted of predominantly Caucasian individuals from a small town. Moreover, the questionnaire drew upon general impressions rather than actual facts and

practices of the participants. Further research should be conducted to develop valid and reliable instruments for the investigation of supervisory boundary areas and levels of comfort. Lastly, the study did not include other variables of interest such as culture and background.

Heru et al. (2006)

Methodology and research design. In a follow-up study, Heru et al. (2006) explored the possible reasons for gender differences found in self-disclosure of the psychotherapy supervisors who participated in their 2004 study. Forty-three supervisors from a range of psychotherapy disciplines completed the same 19-item questionnaire used in their 2004 study. The same methodology and research design that they used in the 2004 study was utilized in this follow-up study.

Critical findings. It was found that female and male supervisors differed on three items: interacting with the supervisee alone outside of supervision, disclosing the supervisor's prior struggles with substance abuse, and publishing identifiable content of supervision discussions with supervisee's consent. Female supervisors answered "never" to these items in greater numbers than male supervisors, who more often answered "occasionally." In terms of these results, the researchers surmised that traditional gender role behaviours and differential gender socialization patterns could be reasons for the gender differences in perception of boundaries by supervisors.

Limitations. Overall, the above study addresses some important ethical issues relative to supervision and possible gender differences with respect to supervisory boundaries. However, the findings are limited due to narrow investigation (male and female perceptions of appropriate boundaries across three items) and small and restricted sample size. The above studies also indicate that there is a paucity of empirical work in this area and that more research is clearly warranted.

<div align="center">CONCLUSION</div>

Critical Findings

The results from the reviewed studies indicate that gender influences the openness and affiliation one experiences in supervision, care and concern are of central importance to master's-level supervisees, female supervisors have a greater relationship focus than do male supervisors, male supervisors rate hypothetical supervisees more negatively when the supervisee is depicted as female, females are more conservative than males on boundary negotiations, and supervisors use different strategies with male and female supervisees. Moreover, this review clearly indicates that there is a paucity of current research related generally to the influence of gender on the supervisory relationship (12 studies found and reviewed) as well as a paucity of research related specifically to gender and supervisory style (3 published studies found and reviewed), gender and supervisory power (3 studies found and reviewed), gender and discourse (2 studies found and reviewed), gender and supervisory evaluation (2 studies found and reviewed), and gender and supervisory boundaries (2 studies found and reviewed).

Design

The studies included in this review were mostly correlational (investigating the extent to which variations in one factor correspond with variations in one or more other factors) or quasi-experimental (approximating the conditions of a true experiment in a setting that does not allow for the control and/or manipulation of all other relevant variables). The investigation of the impact of gender on the supervisory relationship requires more experimental research to investigate possible cause-and-effect relationships.

In addition, given the lack of psychometrically sound and standardized measures of the supervisory relationship utilized in these studies, qualitative approaches may provide valuable support and additional information to this area of research (Borders, 2005). Qualitative studies are beginning to emerge within this area of research (Goodyear & Guzzard, 2000). The use of qualitative studies may be of benefit to the field of supervision because researchers conducting qualitative studies are likely to spend a significant amount of time interacting with supervisors and supervisees, especially within their natural settings. Therefore, researchers may obtain better insights into the supervisory relationship, the subjective experiences of both the supervisor and the supervisee, and the meanings they attach to it (Bernard & Goodyear, 2004; Hoyt & Bhati, 2007; Morrow & Smith, 1995).

Multi-Methods

The majority of these studies did not attend to the three facets of research design examined in this review (i.e., method of data collection, generalizability of the findings, and control of extraneous variables). Of the 12 studies reviewed, six focused on both supervisors and supervisees (Granello, 2003; Granello et al., 1997; Heru et al., 2004; McHale & Carr, 1998; Moorhouse & Carr, 2002; Sells et al., 1997). However, none of these studies included multi-methods or multiple measures to evaluate the influence of gender on supervisory relationships.

Generalization

The findings from four of the studies demonstrated better generalizability to real supervisor-supervisee interactions/situations because they utilized real supervisory dyads (Granello, 2003; Granello et al., 1997; Moorhouse & Carr, 2002; Sells et al., 1997). The study by McHale and Carr (1998) involved experimentally set-up supervision interactions that were not real dyads, and the other two studies (Long et al., 1996; Miller & Ivey, 2006) were based on perceptions, which limited any conclusions that could be made regarding supervisory style in more natural contexts. Observed gender differences may vary depending on whether the observations occur in an experimental context or within real-life situations (Osterberg, 1996). Therefore, future research using real supervisory dyads and observation of actual supervisor-supervisee interactions will allow researchers to evaluate the differences in style while interactions are naturally occurring.

Extraneous Variables

Only 5 of the 12 studies attempted to control for, or examine the effects of, possible moderating variables (Granello, 2003; Granello et al., 1997; Jordan, 2007; Miller & Ivey, 2006; Wester et al., 2004). These studies indicated that age, length of supervision, developmental phase of supervisee, restricted emotionality, and spirituality have an effect on the supervisory relationship. Future studies need to replicate the examination of these variables and to further support their effects on the supervisory relationship. Gender is not the sole predictive or influential factor in supervisory relationships. Many other variables such as socioeconomic status, clinical experience, and culture also play a role (Brown & Landrum-Brown, 1995; Duan & Roehlke, 2001; Fassinger & Richie, 1997; Ladany, Brittan-Powell, & Pannu, 1997) and are therefore important variables to study further.

Research has revealed that race does play a role in supervision and the development of the supervisory relationship (Duan & Roehlke, 2001; Ladany et al., 1997; VanderKolk, 1974). Therefore, it is essential to keep in mind the way other variables (such as race) may magnify or reinforce gender differences. In the future, researchers may want to examine within-group differences to determine the factors (e.g., culture, supervisee experience, socioeconomic status, years as a supervisor) that can influence gender differences and the supervisory relationship. Knowing which factors influence supervision may allow supervisors and supervisees to begin to consider ways to enhance depth and integration of these variables in their training and supervisory relationships (Gatmon et al., 2001).

Limitations

The present review has some limitations. Only 12 studies were examined in this review. Our research focus and search method likely excluded some other published studies in the area of gender and supervision. However, even with this likely omission, the review process indicated a relative paucity of recent research in the general area, as well as in the specific areas of gender and the supervisory relationship. Therefore, our review is limited by the nature and scope of the studies we evaluated as well as by the availability of research in the area(s).

Another shortcoming of this review is that only three specific methodological facets were considered. Many more questions and relevant factors could have been further explored and discussed with respect to the studies used in this review—for example, gender influences relative to multicultural supervision, gender role conflict, and socialization. In addition, the majority of the studies did not include information on the background, training, or experience of the supervisor. Gender may have some impact, but it would be interesting to know how gender works in accordance with the above factors. Moreover, the supervisee's previous experience with a supervisor may be impacted by gender as well as influence the supervisory relationship.

Future Research

The supervisory relationship will grow and develop over time as the supervisor and supervisee work toward achieving their goals (Bernard & Goodyear, 2004; Falender & Shafranske, 2004). Therefore, the stage of the supervisory relationship may impact the style utilized by both the supervisee and the supervisor as indicated in Jordan's (2007) study. No researchers have investigated how supervisory style, discourse, power, evaluation, and/or boundary issues change over time as the relationship develops. Future research comparing the supervisory style of both males and females at the beginning and end of supervision will enable researchers to determine if aspects of supervision do change with time and if gender differences are associated with these possible changes over time. In this regard, longitudinal studies are needed to examine the long-term gender effects and changes on the supervisory relationship.

Future studies should also compare how supervision in psychology, counselling, and therapy is similar or dissimilar to supervision in other fields of study. As the majority of the studies were completed in North America, research should also examine the supervisory relationship and gender in different cultural groups from different parts of the world. Other areas for consideration in future research should include the specific training of the supervisors, the type/pairing of educational backgrounds in the dyads, and the past supervisory experiences of the supervisee.

Lastly, other variables of interest such as socioeconomic status, sexual orientation, culture, and background of the supervisor need to be researched to determine their main effects and their interactional impact on supervision. In order to address these areas in future research, a multi-variable approach, beyond self-report surveys, is required to further our understanding of the supervisor/supervisee relationship. Overall, the results need to be replicated in more stringent research conditions before it can be acknowledged that gender has an influence on the supervisory relationship.

Future Directions for Practice

Lastly, the findings from this review shed light on the importance of increasing the awareness of the effects of gender differences in supervision. A study by Gatmon and colleagues (2001) highlighted the low frequency of discussion of variables such as gender differences during supervision, despite past literature stressing the importance of such discussions (Brown & Landrum-Brown, 1995; Constantine, 1997). When such variables are discussed, supervisees report significantly higher levels of satisfaction with supervision, which is likely to enhance the supervisory relationship (Gatmon et al., 2001). Additionally, it is beneficial for supervisors to monitor the style of their interactions with supervisees for any possible gender biases (Granello, 2003). Similar issues surrounding the lack of discussion of multicultural differences in supervision and the associated consequences have been reported (Estrada, Frame, & Williams, 2004; Hird, Cavalieri, Dulko, Felice, & Ho, 2001). Further training is needed to increase competence

in addressing issues pertaining to gender as well as cultural differences (Gatmon et al., 2001; Granello, 2003).

Given that supervision is fundamental to the health professions, research in this area needs to continue. From this review, it appears that supervisors need to continue to be considerate but not conclusive about the findings from research relative to the impact of gender on supervisory relationships. In the end, gender is a complex and multidimensional construct that requires the use of multi-trait and multi-method research approaches to determine within- and cross-gender differences within supervisory relationships. More conclusive answers about the impact of gender in supervision will come not from individual studies, but from a body of research over time that utilizes both qualitative and quantitative measures as well as true experimental research designs that can better determine cause-and-effect relationships.

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