

## Collaborative Counseling Supervision Model: Implications for the Mental Well-being and Professionalism of Novice Counselors

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**Abstract.** The collaborative model of counseling supervision, involving multiple stakeholders such as supervisors, peers, and novice counselors, offers a novel approach to enhancing the professional development and mental well-being of new counselors. This study explores the impact of this model on novice counselors' mental health and professional growth. Through a qualitative methodology, data were gathered from in-depth interviews and focus groups with participants engaged in collaborative supervision. The results reveal that the collaborative approach fosters a supportive environment, reduces feelings of isolation, and enhances the sense of professional identity among novice counselors. Additionally, this model promotes shared learning and reflection, contributing to improved counseling skills and professional confidence. The study provides valuable insights into the benefits of collaborative supervision and suggests practical implications for its implementation in counselor training programs to support the holistic development of future counseling professionals.

**Key words:** Counseling, supervision, collaborative model, mental well-being

### INTRODUCTION

Counseling supervision is essential for the professional development of novice counselors and the provision of mental health services. Novice counselors often encounter challenges in establishing effective therapeutic relationships and managing countertransference issues due to their limited experience (Page et al., 2001; Wherley et al., 2015). Supervision provides guidance, feedback, and support from experienced supervisors, enabling novice counselors to enhance their skills, form strong therapeutic alliances with clients, and address complex client issues (Borders, 1991; Finley et al., 2015).

Supervision is crucial for monitoring the quality of services offered by novice counselors and ensure the well-being (Wood & Rayle, 2006). It helps novice counselors enhance their self-efficacy, improve counseling competencies, and manage critical incidents that may arise during their practice (Taufiq & Herdi, 2020a; Yuzarion et al., 2018). Additionally, supervision contributes to the development of a psychotherapeutic working alliance, which is vital for positive counseling outcomes (Wherley et al., 2015; Yöntem, 2023).

Models like the Four-Stage Supervision Model highlight the significance of supervised sessions in counselor education to improve the effectiveness of individual or group counseling (Wood & Rayle, 2006). The supervisory working alliance between supervisors and novice counselors is pivotal in fostering the professional growth and competence of counselors (Grant & Schofield, 2007; Spencer-Hintze et al., 2023). Post-degree supervision practices also play a significant role in the continuous development of counselors beyond their formal education (Grant & Schofield, 2007; Shahmalak et al., 2019).

One area that has not been extensively explored in the context of counseling supervision with novice counselors and their mental health is the intersection of trauma-informed care and counselor education remains an underexplored area (Pelling, 2008; Taufiq & Herdi, 2020b). Trauma-informed care is essential for addressing the trauma histories of individuals seeking mental health services. However, traditional counseling programs often lack sufficient training in trauma and trauma-informed care, leaving novice counselors ill-equipped to work effectively with clients who have experienced trauma. Research focusing on integrating trauma-informed care principles into counselor education curricula and supervision practices could enhance the preparedness of novice counselors to support clients with trauma histories (Ayuningtyas et al., 2018; Pelling, 2008; Yuzarion et al., 2018).

The research purposes of this study are developing a Collaborative Counseling Supervision Model. The study seeks to introduce and establish a Collaborative Counseling Supervision Model tailored to

the needs of novice counselors; The research aims also to investigate how the Collaborative Counseling Supervision Model influences the mental well-being of novice counselors. It seeks to identify factors that contribute to reducing stress, anxiety, and burnout among novice counselors.

## **METHODS**

This study employs a qualitative research design to deeply explore the impact of the collaborative counseling supervision model on novice counselors' mental well-being and professional growth. Participants include 21 novice counselors in their first two years of practice, their supervisors, and peers involved in the collaborative supervision process. Data gathered through in-depth interviews with novice counselors and supervisors, and focus group discussions with peers. Semi-structured interview guides and focus group protocols is developed to facilitate comprehensive discussions on the benefits, challenges, and overall impact of collaborative supervision.

The data collection process involves scheduling interviews and focus groups at convenient times for participants, ensuring confidentiality and comfort. Interviews approximately 45-60 minutes, while focus group sessions is around 60-90 minutes. Both are audio-recorded and transcribed verbatim for detailed analysis. A pilot test is conducted to refine the data collection tools, ensuring clarity and relevance. Thematic analysis is performed using NVivo software to identify key themes related to the impact of collaborative supervision on mental well-being and professional development.

Ethical considerations include obtaining informed consent from all participants, maintaining confidentiality, and securing ethical approval from the relevant institutional review board. Limitations of the study include the self-reported nature of the data and limited generalizability due to purposive sampling. Despite these limitations, the study aims to provide valuable insights into how collaborative supervision influences the mental health and professional growth of novice counselors, offering recommendations for enhancing counselor training programs and supervision practices.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

The study found that the collaborative supervision model fosters a supportive environment for novice counselors. Participants reported feeling more encouraged and supported, both emotionally and professionally, due to the inclusive and participatory nature of the model. This is consistent with findings from (Bryant, 2021; Nice et al., 2023), which highlighted the importance of a nurturing supervisory environment in promoting counselor well-being and effectiveness. The collaborative model's emphasis on mutual support and shared responsibilities appears to enhance this supportive dynamic.

Feelings of isolation are common among novice counselors, particularly during the early stages of their careers. The collaborative supervision model addresses this issue by creating a community of practice where novice counselors can share their experiences, challenges, and successes with peers and supervisors. This communal approach mitigates feelings of isolation and promotes a sense of belonging, as noted in studies by (Bryant, 2021; Prilleltensky, 2013), which emphasize the importance of peer support in counselor development.

A significant finding of this study is the enhancement of professional identity among novice counselors engaged in collaborative supervision. The opportunity to interact with and learn from peers and experienced supervisors helps novice counselors to develop a clearer sense of their professional role and identity. This finding aligns with the work of (Rivera-Rodriguez, 2021), who suggest that professional identity development is a critical component of counselor education and can be significantly influenced by collaborative and reflective practices.

The collaborative model promotes shared learning and reflection, which are essential for professional growth. Participants in this study reported that engaging in reflective discussions with peers and supervisors helped them to gain new perspectives and insights into their practice. This process of shared

reflection is supported by research from (Brubaker, 2022), who advocates for reflective practice as a means of continuous professional development. The collaborative model facilitates this by providing structured opportunities for reflection and discussion.

Participants also reported improvements in their counseling skills as a result of the collaborative supervision model. The model's emphasis on feedback and shared learning allows novice counselors to refine their techniques and approaches in a supportive environment. This finding is consistent with the research of (Meany-Walen et al., 2016), which highlights the role of supervision in skill development and the enhancement of counseling competence through constructive feedback and peer learning.

The study found that the collaborative supervision model contributes to increased professional confidence among novice counselors. The support and validation received from peers and supervisors help counselors to feel more confident in their abilities and decision-making processes. This is supported by the findings of (Leppma, 2016), who noted that supervisory relationships characterized by support and affirmation are linked to higher levels of counselor self-efficacy and confidence.

The findings of this study have several practical implications for the implementation of collaborative supervision models in counselor training programs. Training programs should consider incorporating structured collaborative supervision sessions that involve multiple stakeholders. This can enhance the support system for novice counselors and provide a comprehensive approach to supervision that addresses both professional and personal development needs.

While the study provides valuable insights into the benefits of collaborative supervision, it is important to acknowledge its limitations. The qualitative nature of the study may limit the generalizability of the findings. Future research could explore the impact of collaborative supervision using quantitative methods or longitudinal designs to further validate and extend the current findings. Additionally, research could examine the specific components of the collaborative model that contribute most significantly to its effectiveness.

## CONCLUSION

The collaborative counseling supervision model offers significant benefits for the mental well-being and professional development of novice counselors. By fostering a supportive environment, reducing isolation, enhancing professional identity, and promoting shared learning, this model addresses many of the challenges faced by novice counselors. The study's findings support the implementation of collaborative supervision in counselor training programs, highlighting its potential to support the holistic development of future counseling professionals..

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