School Counselors' Use of Solution-Focused Tenets and Techniques in School-based Site Supervision

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Abstract

The tenets and techniques of solution-focused (SF) theory have potential for application to school counseling site supervision; however, research on the use of these practices in site supervision is needed. This study examined the extent to which school counseling site supervisors integrated SF tenets and techniques into their supervisory practices. Researchers surveyed 74 school counselors across the United States to identify which SF techniques were used by school counselors in supervision, and to determine if the tenets of SF were evident in their supervision work. Results indicate that school counselors do agree with basic SF tenets and are already using SF techniques in site supervision of interns. Implications for research, training and practice are discussed.

*Keywords: s*chool counseling, supervision, solution-focused theory

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One of the most important components in the training of future school counselors is the practicum and internship experience. Through the clinical experience the intern learns to navigate a school's culture, to build relationships with students and staff, to integrate the knowledge and skills they have learned through university program training with practice, to begin implanting the responsibilities inherent with a American School Counselor Association's (ASCA) National Model (2012), and to solidify their identity as a future school counselor (Dollarhide & Miller, 2006; Peterson & Deuschle, 2006; Studer & Oberman, 2006). The practicum and internship experience can be an anxiety-provoking experience for school counselors-in-training. Providing the optimum experience and quality supervision can be equally anxiety-provoking to the school counselor acting as the intern's site supervisor.

In their 2012 study of 1557 school counselors, Perera-Diltz and Mason found that 640 school counselors (over one third) had at some point provided supervision. The study did not specify how or why the services were being provided; however, authors suggested that the supervision was being given for the benefit of school counselors-in-training. While the school counseling literature is replete with examples of different types of supervision paradigms (Wood & Rayle, 2006), practicing school counselors may not feel equipped to provide site supervision if they have not been trained in supervision techniques or exposed to those paradigms (Kahn, 1999; Page, Pietrzak, & Sutton, 2001). In lieu of training then, site supervisors may feel they must rely on a

patchwork of styles and techniques adapted from university requirements, ASCA school counselor competencies (ASCA, 2012), and their own counseling orientation and skills.

One orientation school counselors may be familiar with is the solution-focused (SF) orientation. According to Littrell and Carlson (2009), the majority (87%) of school counselors they surveyed (*n* =175) had some knowledge of solution-focused/brief orientation, and 85% indicated they used SF skills at "least occasionally" (p. 13). Site supervisors could potentially make the most of their knowledge and skill (developed in SF counseling) by applying it to the supervision of interns. In 2011 the present authors suggested that one easily understood approach to supervision could be solution-focused; that is, school counselors who already have some knowledge of the SF orientation could apply tenets and techniques from SF counseling to supervision. They could provide a clear, strengths-based approach that would serve to facilitate a positive supervisory relationship (Kahn, 2000; O'Connell & Jones, 1997; Murphy, 1996). Not only would the integration of SF tenets support a positive supervision experience, but interns could also learn from supervisors' modeling of SF techniques in the supervision process. This suggestion fits with Wood and Rayle's recommendations (2006) that interns would benefit from a style of supervision that provided them with specific and practical preparation for the roles they will be entering as professional school counselors.

As suggested earlier, school counseling site supervisors, who typically do not have comprehensive training in supervision, may "use what they know" to conduct supervision with interns. If they have knowledge of solution-focused counseling (SFC), it is important to determine if they use the tenets and techniques of SF theory in

supervision. Having this knowledge may help university supervisors in their work with site supervisors, and it may determine next steps in professional development for school counseling site supervisors. Therefore, the purpose of this research study was to investigate school counseling site supervisors' perceptions of SF tenets as applied to supervision, and which, if any, solution-focused techniques were utilized in their supervision of school counselors-in-training.

Qualifications of School Counseling Site Supervisors

Site supervisor qualifications for school counseling practicum and internship students are ambiguous at best. At the national level, the American School Counselor Association does not identify specific qualifications for site supervisors of school counseling practicum and internship students (ASCA, 2012). The ASCA Ethical Standards for School Counselors (2010) does list recommendations to school counselors who are providing practicum and internship experiences. These include hosting a site visit by counselor education faculty, and providing practical experiences related to various components of the ASCA National Model.

Counselor education preparation programs must meet state requirements developed by their respective state's department of education for school counseling site supervision. These requirements vary by state, but often mirror those qualifications recommended by the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Programs (CACREP). According to 2009 standards, CACREP requires the following qualifications of all site supervisors:

1. A minimum of a master's degree in counseling or a related profession with equivalent qualifications, including appropriate certifications and/or licenses;

2. A minimum of two years of pertinent professional experience in the program area in which the student is enrolled;
3. Knowledge of the [university] program's expectations, requirements, and evaluation procedures for students; and
4. Relevant training in counseling supervision. (p. 14)

CACREP does not delineate the means through which knowledge of the program is delivered, nor does it designate what constitutes "relevant training" in site supervision of counseling interns. Program faculty or administrators are required to document evidence that site supervisors meet these qualifications in some way.

Supervision Training

Since the qualifications to be a school counseling site supervisor are not clearly delineated, it is not surprising that the need for improvements in the supervision of school counselors and school counseling interns is well-documented (Page, Pietzrak, & Sutton, 2001; Protnivak & Davis, 2008). Several factors continue to stagnate the process of addressing concerns such as the training of supervisors. One of the primary factors that hold back school counselors from getting supervision training for their work with school counseling interns is the time factor (DeKruyf & Pehrsson, 2011). Because of their high caseload and diverse roles and responsibilities, school counselors have difficulty leaving their buildings for professional development, and when they do, they are selective in their choice of professional development options (Gewertz, 2011). Given their responsibilities to students, school counselors may opt for professional development opportunities that can help them fulfill those responsibilities rather than those that would increase their ability to supervise. However, counselor educators and

preparation programs may be in the position to increase both counseling and supervision skills in school counselors through offering professional development on solution-focused theory and skill application. Because of the time factor, counselor educators may consider building on already identified knowledge and skills from counseling theory that site supervisors have; subsequently, developing this knowledge and practical use of techniques of an orientation into a theory-based model of supervision.

Solution-focused Theory and Practice

As mentioned previously, 85% of school counselors have used solution-focused skills in their counseling practice (Littrell & Carlson, 2009). If school counselors know and use solution-focused tenets and techniques in counseling, there is potential for their use in supervision. Applying the tenets and techniques of solution-focused (SF) theory in supervision has been recommended previously by other helping professionals (Cigrand & Wood, 2011; Juhnke, 1996; Selekman & Todd, 1995); however, because the theory is relatively new, there has been only a small amount of empirical research to support its application to supervision.

The research available indicates that the use of solution-focused supervision (SFS) can increase supervisees' views of their self-efficacy (Koob, 2002), facilitate supervisee insight in goal setting (Hsu, 2007), and enhance relationships through respect, curiosity, and collaboration (O'Connell & Jones, 1997). However, a major limitation of these studies is the fact that they were not conducted in schools with school counselors or their interns. In his review of the solution-focused literature, Gillen (2005) wrote that "even with the lack of experimental efficacy, solution-focused theory has

been accepted as a useful individual and group counseling modalities in schools" (p.4). Hence, the present authors suggest that the same "accepted" and "useful" paradigm can be applied with equal usefulness to the supervision of interns by school counselors. By building on theory-based skills school counselors already have (Littrell & Carlson), training can focus on applications of the tenets of the theory to supervision, thereby limiting the amount of time necessary for training.

Process. If the site supervisor does choose to apply SF counseling theory to their supervisory practices, they will demonstrate several of the core tenets and techniques of the theory in three primary areas: enhancing the relationship, working with interns' self-identified problems and concerns, and evaluation of the intern's progress. A SF supervisory relationship is collaborative in nature; that is, the role of the site supervisor is the expert in the process of supervision, while the role of the intern is the expert of his or her life, experience, and goals (de Shazer, 1985; Murphy, 2008; Thomas, 1996). Site supervisors choose to believe that their interns inherently have what it takes to solve their own problems (de Shazer; Murphy; Sklare, 2005). Working with interns' concerns entails the identification of past solution attempts, intern strengths and resources, exceptions to the problem (what happens when the problem does not occur), and frequent reframing of the problem (Murphy, Sklare). Specific techniques site supervisors can use are video talk, the miracle question, use of presuppositional language, and scaling (Murphy, Sklare). The most important process that occurs in each of the three areas is that of goal setting. Goal setting is the means by which the evaluation of the intern's progress occurs and the goal itself is used to determine how

close the intern's attempts at problem-solving have come, leading to the supervisor's "positive blaming" of those attempts (de Shazer, Murphy).

Benefits. The SF approach to supervision benefits both the intern and the site supervisor in the following ways: (a) providing both parties with a common language from theoretical tenets and techniques that are familiar to them; (b) assisting site supervisors, who may not know what is expected of them in the supervision process by the university program, in knowing what is required of them (Roberts; 2001); (c) supporting supervises' appearance of competency and feelings of adequacy – both of which are a contributing factors to effective supervision (Rabinowitz, Heppner, & Roehlke, 1986); (d) facilitating a relationship marked by collaboration and respect for the experience of the intern (instead of characterized power, judgment, and expertise), while demonstrating traits of strong supervisory relationships (Gazzola & Theriault, 2007; Worthen & McNeill, 1996); (e) establishing flexibility in evaluation procedures which can include both intern-derived goals, ASCA model skill sets or competencies (Studer & Oberman, 2006).

While both the research and the process of SFS would appear to indicate that SFS benefits the supervision of school counselors-in-training, it would be prudent to determine if site supervisors utilize SF tenets and techniques in their work with their school counseling interns before developing professional development programs that build on these tenets. Thus, the purpose of this research study was to investigate school counseling site supervisors' perceptions of SF tenets as applied to supervision, and which, if any, solution-focused techniques were utilized in their supervision of school counselors-in-training. Specifically, researchers posed the following questions:

1. To what extent do site supervisors agree with the basic tenets and philosophical underpinnings of SF supervision?
2. Which, if any, SF techniques do site supervisors use in their supervision?
3. If site supervisors agree with tenets of SF supervision, is there a difference what techniques are used with interns?

Method

Participants

In other studies of site supervision, site supervisors are often contacted through convenience sampling methods (DeKruyf & Pehrsson, 2011; Blakely, Underwood, & Rehfuss, 2009). Inherently, these samples may be biased based on selection. To enlist a broader random sample, authors chose to seek out participants via national electronic networks. No listserv currently exists for school counseling site supervisors; therefore, school counselors participating in this study were recruited through school counseling networking sites: the American School Counselor Association (ASCA) Scene. Later, the solicitation was also distributed through regional networks, including the Iowa School Counselor Online Resource (ISCOR), and the Minnesota School Counselor Association (MSCA) listserv to increase sample size. While an approximate number of ASCA members (approximately 32,000) and participants are registered on the ASCA Scene (approximately 24,779), it is unknown how many of the members or participants have been or are currently site supervisors. Current membership of ISCOR and MSCA listservs is unknown.

Seventy-four school counselors who self-identified as current or past practicing site supervisors participated in the study. Sixty-four participants were female, and ten

were male. Participants came from a variety of states including Iowa (35; 47.3%), Minnesota (10, 13.5%), Ohio (6, 8.1%), and Rhode Island (3, 4.1%). The majority of participants reported working in public schools (70, 94.6%). Elementary school (29, 39.2%) and high school placements (28, 37.8%) were most frequently reported. Thirteen participants (17.6%) indicated that they had caseloads of 300-350 students. Higher caseloads were also indicated with eleven participants (14.9%) indicating they worked with 350-400 students or 400-450 students (11, 14.9%). Ten participants (13.5) reported they worked with over 600 students. Participants reported having various years of experience, with 27 (36.5%) reporting they had 6-10 years of experience followed by 14 (18.9%) who reported having 1-5 years of experience. The majority of participants 47 (63.5%) reported having supervised 1-3 interns. Table A1 illustrates participant demographics.

Demographic proportions of male and female counselors (14% male, 86% female) as well as the average number of years of school counseling experience (7) were similar to those found by Perera-Diltz and Mason in their 2012 study of school counselor supervisors (n = 1,557), although the proportion of school counselors working at the three different building levels was different. The proportion of school counselors working in public schools (86%) versus private school (12%) was similar to the demographic findings in the National Office of School Counselor Advocacy study in 2011 (n = 5308).

Instrument

Participants gave responses to an online survey. The survey was comprised of thirty-five items. Seven items were demographic questions including the gender, type of

school (public, private etc.), years of experience, number of students served, state in which the participant was practicing and number of interns supervised. Seven items asked about participants' training for supervision including how participants were trained, what type of supervision they received in their site supervision while interns, and what their style currently was. Five items examined participants' perceptions about supervision and the supervisory relationship, and three items pertaining to site supervisor's concerns and perceived intern concerns. Six items required participants to rank the degree to which they believed the tenets of SF theory were important in supervision (ex: empowering the intern, utilizing intern strengths etc.) by indicating if they strongly agreed, agreed, disagreed or strongly disagreed. Ten items required participants to indicate the degree to which they used SF techniques such as scaling and miracle question by replying "frequently," "sometimes," "not at all," or "I don't know." Tables A2 and A3 illustrate participant responses to items.

Procedure

Investigators received permission for the study via the second and third authors' Human Subjects Institutional Review Board. As mentioned, participants were solicited by the investigators through emails sent through school counseling listservs as well as advertisements on the ASCA Scene. Both email and advertisements included a URL link to an online survey. Once a participant followed the link, he or she was presented with a consent form. By clicking "I agree" school counselors gave their consent to participate. Data were collected for two months with reminders sent about every two weeks. A total of 78 school counselors responded to the survey; however, there were 4

incomplete data sets (i.e., surveys missing 5 or more item responses). Hence, there were 74 complete participant responses.

Results

Training

About half of the participants (36, 48.6%) reported that they had not received training to be a site supervisor, while 32 (43.6%) responded that they had received training. Six participants (8.1) responded that they did not know. Most participants (36, 48.6%) indicated that they had been trained on the job by supervising an intern. Fifty-four (73% M = 2.91, SD = .909) participants indicated that they believed that training improved the relationship between supervisor and intern. The majority of the participants (72, 97.3%) believed interns benefit from trained supervisors.

General Supervision

Thirty (40.5%) participants indicated they received a mix of both developmental and skills-based supervision when they were interns; while 15 (20.3%) indicated they had received supervision that was mostly developmental in nature or skills based (19, 25.7%). The majority of participants (41, 55.5%) indicated that they provided supervision that incorporated both developmental and skills-based aspects. Most participants (34, 45.9%) of the participants described their relationships with interns as one of “collaborative partners.”

Participants indicated multiple types of concerns they had experienced with their intern. Predominant concerns supervisors perceived their interns as having were: anxiety and uncertainty (42, 56.8%), skill deficits (26, 35.1%), and dependence (21, 28.4%). Participants could also choose multiple times of concerns they had experienced

in their role as a site supervisor. The main concerns participants had about supervising in general were their own lack of time (31, 41.9%) to provide adequate supervision to their interns, uncertainty about expectations of the intern (18, 24.3%), the intern's level of preparation (15, 20.3%), and how to evaluate the intern (15, 20.3%).

Solution-Focused Tenets

Six items included four-point Likert scales by which participants could indicate if they strongly agree, agree, disagree or strongly disagree with a statement regarding a basic tenet of solution-focused supervision. Of seventy-four participants, 100% indicated that empowerment and discovering and utilizing intern strengths were tenets with which they agreed. The majority of the participants agreed with the following statements (a) "supervision should include helping interns discover times when they have been successful in overcoming problems similar to the one they may be working on currently" (73, 98.7%, *M* = 1.70, *SD* .489); (b) "no matter where the intern is with a certain problem or challenge, positive change is possible and inevitable given time" (52, 70.3%, *M* = 2.20, *SD* = .641); and (c) "supervision should include helping interns identify when they have been successful or have met their goal" (73, 98.7%, *M* = 1.65; *SD* = .560). Thirty-seven (50%) participants indicated they disagreed with the concept that the interns "inherently have what it takes to work out and solve problems," while 37 (50%) agreed with the statement.

Solution-focused Techniques

Participants were given a list of techniques commonly used in solution-focused supervision (e.g., scaling) and were asked to indicate the degree (i.e., frequently, sometimes, not at all, don't know) to which they used them in their site supervision.

Participants indicated that they did, in fact, utilize several of the SF techniques in their supervision of interns including the following: scaling (57, 77.1%, *M* = 20.3, *SD* = .702), visualization of behavior (64, 86.5%, *M* = 2.16, *SD* = .642), miracle question (49, 66.2%, *M* = 1.85, *SD* = .715), focusing on past successes (71, 95.9%, *M* = 2.49, *SD* = .579), emphasizing small change (67, 90.5%, *M* = 2.39, *SD* = .658), identifying exceptions to the problem (64, 86.5%, *M* = 2.14, *SD* = .626), positive blaming (49, 66.3%, *M* = 1.81, *SD* = .676 and reframing the problem (63, 85.2%, *M* = 2.19, *SD* = .676). All of the participants (100%) indicated they utilized goal setting in supervision. However, the majority of participants (54, 73%, *M* = 1.31, *SD* = .547) indicated that they did not use video talk. The majority of participants (60, 81.1%) indicated that they were interested in learning more about how SF techniques could be used in supervision.

Group Differences

Findings from the SF tenets section indicated that half of the participants (*n* = 37) agreed that interns have the inherent ability to solve problems, while half (*n* = 37) did not agree. Because this was the only item in which there was variability in responses, authors wanted to determine if this was a factor in what site supervisors believed about other tenets and if it had any bearing on what techniques they used with their interns. Participant responses were split into two groups: site supervisors that agreed that interns had the inherent ability to solve problems and those that did not. The items of positive change, scaling, visualization, miracle question, focusing on past successes, small change, video talk, times when problems did not occur, positive blaming and reframing were also dichotomized into two groups (if the technique was used or not or if the participant agreed with the tenet or not). A multivariate analysis of variance was

conducted with "belief in the inherent ability of the counselor" as the independent variable and the above items (i.e., positive change, scaling) as dependent variables; however, there were no significant differences between participants who agreed with the tenet of the intern's inherent ability and those that did not on the other tenets or techniques.

Discussion

While these authors are hesitant to generalize these findings to all school counselors based on the small number of participants, results from this study indicate these participating school counselors who are engaging in site supervision are already implementing SF tenets and techniques. These findings closely parallel those of Littrell and Carlson (2009), who found that the school counselors they surveyed had a working SFC knowledge and skill set. While there is no known linkage between SFC and SFS, the results of this study indicate that site supervisors with a SFC background could use the same tenets and techniques in site supervision with a minimal amount of invested training time.

Prior research on SFS parallels some of the findings in this study, and may be used to address some of the other concerns school counseling supervisors have with interns. First, close to half of the participants characterized their interns as collaborative partners in the supervisory relationship, a unique conceptualization of the supervisory relationship that decreases use of supervisor expert power. These findings support prior research that a collaborative approach such as SFS can facilitate strong relationships necessary for a positive and effective supervision experience (O'Connell & Jones; Gazzola & Theriault, 2007; Protivnak & Davis, 2008; Worthen & McNeill, 1996).

Second, participants reported that their main concerns were intern anxiety and uncertainty, skill deficit and dependence on the site supervisor. In these cases, use of solution-focused techniques such as positive blaming, focusing on small changes and past successes may decrease intern anxiety. The use of scaling, the miracle question and goal setting may be preferable techniques for site supervisors to use when working with specific skill deficits. The video talk technique entails the intern describing what he or she is “doing” in the situation identified as a concern or problem, allowing both the site supervisor and intern to "see" the intern’s specific behavior, as if it were observable behavior caught on film, from the intern’s perspective. If the technique of video talk was used, it would allow site supervisors to gain an understanding of how the intern perceives his or her behavior around the problem situation. However, this technique as not used by site supervisors. It is possible that site supervisors have not been exposed to this technique.

Third, prior studies have documented how SFS can be used by interns to improve setting goals (Hsu, 2007). Intern-driven goals may help the intern to set goals that are developmentally appropriate, produce lower levels of anxiety, while increasing commitment to their goals (Minnesota Department of Human Services, 2010). Findings from this study also indicate that intern initiated goal-setting and identification of times when interns accomplished those goals were important to participants, as they were already implementing these techniques.

Fourth, supervisory practices by school counselors in this study concur with prior findings regarding the importance of empowering interns and helping them discover and apply their unique strengths and talents to problems they are encountering in the

internship process (Koob, 2002). Since empowerment has been shown to lead to decreased dependence in supervision (Rebmann, 2006), empowering interns through SFS to use their strengths and talents may have a positive effect on the concern that supervisors in this study had with intern dependence on them. Hence, with a rebalancing of power and an increase in collaboration, SFS may also be a supervisory style that decreases the anxiety that school counseling supervisors in this study indicated as the most prevalent concern they see in their interns.

If supervisors do not view their relationship with supervisees as collaborative, or do not view their interns as having the ability to problem-solve, then the use of SFS in its entirety with these supervisors may not be feasible. Participants in this study split in their responses concerning whether or not they believed their interns had the inherent ability to solve the problems they encountered in supervision. Unfortunately, there was nothing to which authors could attribute this split in response.

In addition, site supervisors indicated they agreed with the majority of the SF tenets, and indeed reported that they used the majority of SF techniques. One would hypothesize that if site supervisors believed in one philosophical underpinning of SF, that of their intern's inherent ability to solve problems, then they would be more likely to also agree with other tenets and be more likely to use SF tenets. However, there was no relationship between those site supervisors who believe their interns had the inherent ability to solve their own problems and site supervisors' beliefs in other tenets or use of techniques.

Suggestions for Research and Practice

Given that half of the participants indicated they did not receive any training to be site supervisors, and that the majority reported wanting to know more about SF, there is a need for the training of site supervisors as well as training in the specific to the use of SF tenets and techniques that can be applied to supervision. Discussing the potential application of SF theory to supervision in counselor preparation programs as counseling students learn the SF theory may be a way to offer future supervisors suggestions in using this theory with supervisees. These authors suggest that school counselors who have not had the application of SF tenets to supervision in university training programs could begin their own training by reading books or articles on SF theory and practice.

Furthermore, because school counseling supervisors are reporting in this study that they do use the tenets and techniques associated with SFS, counselor educators may consider building on this knowledge to advance participants' use of SF applications to supervision in their training of site supervisors using a condensed format. Other methods to train school counseling supervisors on SFS might include online training modules, including video examples of the use of SF tenets and techniques in supervision.

In response to the finding that supervisors believe in empowerment and the potential for positive change, but may not believe that interns have the ability to solve problems effectively, the authors consider these questions for further study:

1) Would supervisors benefit from training in SFS to be more able to identify abilities in their interns that lead to problem-solving?

2) Is the belief that interns do not possess the ability to problem-solve significant to the success of the supervisor-intern relationship?
3) If and when site supervisors are teaching specific skill sets or content, what are they teaching, and how can preparation programs ensure they provide these skills and knowledge prior to the internship experience?
4) How effective is the delivery of SFS when the tenets and techniques are integrated with another theory, as compared to purely using SFS in supervision?

Findings from this study lead to additional questions about the use of SF in supervision and its possible benefits to interns and supervisors. Most importantly is the need for a replication of this study or a study with similar research questions. There remains a need to know how supervision of school counselors-in-training is occurring and the extent to which site supervisors are utilizing SF principles and techniques. The small number of participants in this investigation and the lack of gender and national diversity are problematic. Also, participants were limited by those school counselors who had access to state listservs or those who were ASCA members and hence had access to the ASCA Scene. Since it is unclear how many school counselors saw the invitation on the ASCA Scene or other listservs, an accurate return rate cannot be calculated.

While findings indicate that site supervisors are already implementing SF techniques, what is unknown is the degree to which these techniques are effective for the intern. Future research studies could investigate how interns perceive the degree to which these techniques helped them resolve problems and concerns encountered in the internship experience. Quasi-experimental studies could investigate how interns

perform on student outcome assessments such as the ASCA school counselor competencies based on the type or orientation of supervision provided (e.g., developmental, behavioral, SF, etc.). Qualitative studies could examine the influence that SF counseling theory might have on site supervisors who were exposed to or practice from SF as school counselors-in-training themselves.

In summary, practicing school counselors are indeed providing supervision (Perera-Diltz & Mason, 2012); however, they may not be receiving the training in supervision styles or techniques currently in the literature (Dollarhide & Miller, 2006; Page et al., 2001). With the promising research being done to investigate its effectiveness, the solution-focused approach to counseling may be able to provide the method and skill that school counselors require to supervise interns. Findings from this study suggest that school counselors who are also site supervisors have knowledge of solution-focused tenets and techniques (Littrell & Carlson, 2009), and are using them in supervision. Counselor education programs should consider using SFS in training to build on an existing skill set most school counselors in the field already have. In addition, supervisory concerns with intern anxiety and dependence are noted. Authors suggest that SF approaches to supervision have the ability to foster strong supervisory relationships, to recommend methods of goal setting and evaluation, to facilitate intern self-awareness and efficacy in practice, and to provide a quality supervisory experience for both the school counseling intern as well as the site supervisor. Using tenets and techniques associated with SF theory may help to reduce this anxiety and dependence that has been seen as problematic. Clearly, though, more research is needed to verify that SFS does reduce anxiety and dependence, and to examine the degree of

effectiveness SF has in the supervision of interns as a stand-alone or integrated theory of supervision. Finally, this study establishes the need to determine if SFS training has an effect on supervisors' beliefs about the ability of interns to problem-solve, and the quality of the supervisor-intern relationship.

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Appendix

Table 1

Participant Demographics

		n	**%**
Sex	Female	64	86
	Male	10	14
States Represented	Iowa	35	47.3
	Minnesota	10	13.5
	Ohio	6	8.1
	Rhode Island	3	4.1
	Florida, Louisiana, Michigan, Texas	2 participants per state (8)	10.8
	Arizona, California, Colorado, Idaho, Illinois, Mississippi, New York, Virginia, Wisconsin	1 participant per state (9)	12.1
	State Not Given	3	4
Years of Experience as a School Counselor	0-5 years	15	20.3
	6-10 years	27	36.5
	11-15 years	11	14.9
	16-20 years	10	13.5
	21-25 years	4	5.4
	25-30 years	4	5.4
	Over 30 years of experience	3	1.4
Number of Interns Supervised	1-3 interns	47	63.5
	4-6 interns	14	19.8
	7-10 interns	4	5.4
	10-15 interns	8	10.8
	Number not given	1	1.4
Type of School	Public	70	94.6
	Private	3	4.1
	Charter	1	1.4
Building Level	Elementary (K-5 or K-6 grades)	29	39.2
	Middle (6-8 grades)	13	17.6
	Junior High (7-9 grades)	2	2.7
	High School (9-12 or 10-12 grades)	28	37.8
	Community College	1	1.4
	Other	1	1.4

		n	%
Caseload	Less than 100 students	3	4.1
	100-150 students	2	2.7
	200-250 students	4	5.4
	250-300 students	10	13.5
	300-350 students	13	17.6
	350-400 students	11	14.9
	400-450 students	11	14.9
	450-500 students	4	5.4
	500-550 students	4	5.4
	550-600 students	2	2.7
	Over 600 students	10	13.5

Table 2

Item Responses Regarding Overall Training and Supervision Experiences

Item	***n***	**%**
I have been trained as a site supervisor.		
Yes	32	43.2
No	36	48.6
I'm not sure	6	8.1
The knowledge I received regarding supervision came mostly from:		
Formal training (a college or university class)	13	17.6
Professional development (a workshop provided by the district)	6	8.1
Via conference (state regional or national conference)	3	4.1
Informal (helped by a fellow counselor)	4	5.4
On the job (I learned by supervising an intern)	36	48.6
None of these	2	2.7
Other	8	10.8
If I were to describe the supervision that I received when I was a counselor-in-training it would best be described as:		
Skill-based focusing on intervention, personalization, and conceptualization	19	25.7
A gradual development from supervisor as teacher, then counselor and finally consultant.	15	20.3
A bit of both	30	40.5
I don't know	9	12.2
If I were to describe the supervision that I give to interns, it would best be described as.		
Skill-based focusing on intervention, personalization, and conceptualization	16	21.6

Item	*n*	%
A gradual development from supervisor as teacher, then counselor and finally consultant	12	16.2
A bit of both	42	56.8
I don't know	4	5.4
In general, my relationships with interns would best be described as:		
Teacher/student	11	14.9
Counselor/client	1	1.4
Expert/novice	8	10.8
Consultant/client	5	6.8
Collaborative partners	34	45.9
Supervisor/supervisee	14	18.9
None of these	1	1.4
Please indicate if you have seen any of the following supervision concerns in your interns:		
Issues with professionalism (appropriate dress, punctuality etc.)	19	25.7
Dependence on you as the site supervisor	20	27
Anxiety and uncertainty	42	56.8
Skill deficit (the intern does not know how to do a certain task)	26	35.1
Appropriate communication with parents, staff and students	15	20.3
Boundary and role confusion between the student, university supervisor and you as the site supervisor	11	14.9
Difficulty in receiving feedback or constructive criticism	18	24.3
Other	4	5.4
Please indicate if you have experienced any of the following concerns in your role as a site supervisor:		
Not having enough time to supervise	31	41.9
Uncertainty about expectations or roles of the intern (what should they do or be able to do?)	18	24.3
Major concerns about intern's learning (need for remediation)	13	17.6
Lack of support (from building or district staff) to have a an intern	8	10.8
Intern's level of preparation	15	20.3
How to share concerns or give feedback to the intern	12	16.2
Adequate training/preparation for you to provide supervision	12	16.2
How to evaluate the intern at the mid or end points of their time at your site	15	20.3
Lack of support or communicate from the university supervisor	14	18.9
How to inspire realistic passion for the school counseling profession	9	12.2
Other	4	5.4

Table 3

Item Responses Regarding Solution-focused Tenets and Techniques

Item	*n*	%	*M(SD)*
Part of the supervision process includes empowering the intern.			1.3(.460)
Strongly Agree	52	70.3	
Agree	22	29.7	
Disagree	0	0	
Strongly Disagree	0	0	
Interns inherently have what it takes to work out and solve a problem.			2.45(1.49)
Strongly Agree	5	6.8	
Agree	32	43.2	
Disagree	36	48.6	
Strongly Disagree	1	1.4	
Part of supervision should include discovering and utilizing an intern's natural strengths, abilities, and resources in order to facilitate problem-solving.			1.49(.50)
Strongly Agree	38	51.4	
Agree	36	48.6	
Disagree	0	0	
Strongly Disagree	0	0	
No matter where the intern is with a certain problem or challenge, positive change is possible and inevitable given time.			2.20(.641)
Strongly Agree	8	10.8	
Agree	44	59.5	
Disagree	21	28.4	
Strongly Disagree	1	1.4	
Supervision should include helping interns discover times when they have been successful in overcoming problems similar to the one they may be working on currently.			1.70(.489)
Strongly Agree	23	31.1	
Agree	50	67.6	
Disagree	1	1.4	
Strongly Disagree	0	0	
Supervision should include helping interns identify when they have been successful, or have met their goal.			1.65(.560)
Strongly Agree	28	37.8	
Agree	45		
Disagree	0		
Strongly Disagree	1		

Item	*n*	%	*M(SD)*
Currently, I would say that I use the following techniques in my supervision:			
Scaling (ex: on a scale of 1 to 10, how big is this problem for you?)			2.03(.702)
Not at all	17	23.0	
Sometimes	38	51.4	
Frequently	19	25.7	
Visualization (ex: if you were to describe a perfect classroom guidance session, what would that look like?)			2.16(.642)
Not at all	10	13.5	
Sometimes	42	56.8	
Frequently	22	29.7	
The miracle question (ex: if overnight, a miracle occurred and you had no difficulties with classroom management, what would that look like?)			1.85(.715X)
Not at all	25	33.8	
Sometimes	35	47.3	
Frequently	14	18.9	
Goal setting			2.64(.512)
Not at all	1	1.4	
Sometimes	25	33.8	
Frequently	48	64.9	
Focusing on past successes (ex: last week with the 4th graders you did a great job with transition; how can we take what you did then and apply it to the 5th grade class you are having difficulties with?)			2.49(.579)
Not at all	3	4.1	
Sometimes	32	43.2	
Frequently	39	52.7	
Emphasis on one small change at a time			2.39(.658)
Not at all	7	9.5	
Sometimes	31	41.9	
Frequently	36	48.6	
Video talk (ex: if I followed you around with a video camera during your classroom guidance session with the 5th graders, what would I see you do?)			1.31(.547)
Not at all	54	73.0	
Sometimes	17	23.0	
Frequently	3	4.1	
Identifying times when the intern's problem does not occur (ex: last week your 5th grade classroom guidance lesson was fantastic. What did you do differently there?)			2.14(.626)
Not at all	10	13.5	
Sometimes	44	59.5	
Frequently	20	27.0	

Item	*n*	%	*M(SD)*
Positive blaming (ex: I know that 5th grade class has been a challenge for you. I'm impressed with how you didn't let your anxiety show!)			1.81(.676)
Not at all	25	33.8	
Sometimes	38	51.4	
Frequently	11	14.9	
Reframing the problem (ex: You're telling me that this classroom is overwhelming to you. How can we look at this differently? May be you're so popular with the 5th graders they are all excited and want your attention!			2.19(.676)
Not at all	11	14.9	
Sometimes	38	51.4	
Frequently	25	33.8	