

Introduction

This assessment required the supervisor to lead and manage their supervisee within a youth work setting by engaging in a minimum of four-hour supervision sessions for the purpose of gaining experience through the supervisory process. This portfolio will consist of two parts. Part one will focus on supervision, the relationship development of the supervisor and supervisee, and the three main functions of supervision. The purpose of supervision as explained by Hill and Peaper (2011, p.12) is that it would include a senior individual who “views performance, examines functioning and passing on instruction/advice” which will empower and enable the supervisee to develop within the workplace professionally and personally. Part two will focus on a critical review with a discussion on how leadership and management theories apply and effect Youth work practice with consideration on how Youth services are affected by the current financial climate. Duggal (2023) suggests that the main difference between leadership and management is that leadership focuses on a vision for change. Organisational growth is what the leader will base their ideas on by examining where their organisation currently stands, where they want to go and how they reach their goal. Management oversees and is responsible for the control and success of an organisation to achieve a particular objective (Duggal, 2023). Therefore, it appears that effective supervision, leadership, and management is imperative to have within a youth work setting as without it, youth workers will not be able to uphold youth work values, be able to progress and will have a negative impact on the success of the organisation.

Log One

Prior to starting the supervision sessions, I ensured that I would have a planned approach. Sapin (2013, p.221) suggests how having a planned approach is effective before, during and after the supervision relationship. Sapin (2013) further explains that this is because both the supervisor and supervisee will have an agreement on the supervision required and what they will both bring to the relationship. For example, this could be in relation to the structure of the sessions, arising issues, supervisee progress and feedback. As a part of having this planned approach, my supervisee and I firstly discussed our supervision contract. Whilst writing up our contract I focused on Morrison's (2023, p.29) three-legged stool analogy to think about the different components of a supervision contract. Morrison (2023) explains how the leg stools represent three elements- administrative, professional and psychological- and neglecting one of these elements will cause the stool to wobble representing how the foundations of a supervisory relationship can be undermined. For our supervision, the administrative element included practical details- the location, frequency, supervision recordings, and rescheduling cancelled sessions (Hewson, 2016; Morrison, 2023). Professional included accountability, confidentiality, boundaries, and what to do if my supervisee has concerns about our supervisory relationship (Hewson, 2016; Morrison, 2023). Finally, psychological included what we both expect regarding contributing to the supervisory relationship, that is, the functioning of the relationship, how feedback is given and received, and warning signs of supervisee stress (Morrison, 2023). However, Chugh (2021, np) argues that the functioning of a relationship can only work if there is trust within that supervisory relationship as there can be the potential for "harm" when giving and receiving feedback. Chugh (2021, np) explains further by stating that feedback is a "two-way process between the giver and receiver as they both contribute to the experience" emphasising the importance of a trustful supervisory relationship. Therefore, Morrison's (2023) analogy and Chugh's (2021) ideas on trust was useful for me to ensure that

I covered everything that my supervisee and I needed to be aware of before signing our contract, starting our supervision sessions and building up a trustful supervisory relationship.

We built up a positive relationship throughout our supervision sessions and I also incorporated ways to ensure it was maintained. For example, the boundaries element from our contract played a part in the development of our relationship. The idea of “boundary management” (Ingram and Harris, 2001, p.58) resulted in me being put in a better position to make decisions and have better control when supporting her. This is because my supervisee was able to understand where my limits are, it was important that she knew this as it prevented our relationship going from a professional level to a personal level. For example, this was useful when we were sharing our own experiences working with young people as this made it easier for her to notice where the barrier was to not cross it. To ensure that this was maintained, I offered to go back through our contract with my supervisee multiple times, especially relation to our boundaries to ensure she knew what was and was not acceptable, preventing any form of misinterpretation. Furthermore, from the start to the end of our sessions I maintained a person-centred approach. Norboe and Enmarker (2017, np) suggest how during this approach, the supervisor enables the supervisee to “achieve emotional release and to think more clearly about themselves and the situation”. Not only did this help my supervisee but this also helped me to support her based on her individual needs, especially in relation to her problem-solving emotions. This approach was also useful when creating an appropriate supervision environment as this ensured my supervisee had “psychological safety” (Dr Edmonton, 2023, np). Having this psychological safety meant that my supervisee knew she had a safe space to express her experiences whether that be good or bad, and in an environment where she knew she was not going to be judged and with confidentiality maintained. However, Wilson (2020) argues that supervisors should work towards an inclusive supervision to enable their supervisee to express themselves and supervisors would develop and grow when reflecting on their practice. With

Wilson's (2020) ideas and keeping in mind that inclusive is one of the five pillars that underpin youth work (Youth Work in Wales Review Group, 2022). Maintaining an inclusive supervision in our session not only benefitted my supervisee by having conversations with her on what her preferred way to be supervised would be. This also enabled me as her supervisor to ensure that I could learn different personality/learning styles, demonstrating to my supervisee that I care whilst building up our relationship.

Log Two

Inskipp and Proctor (1993) presented three main functions of supervision- formative, normative and restorative-. Bolton (2020) further explains how Inskipp and Proctor's ideas of these functions when put together ensures that the supervisor considers all aspects of supervision including the supervisor themselves, the supervision profession and the supervisee. Gaining this knowledge enabled me to identify these functions when they appeared in our supervision sessions, not just from listening and identifying them through my supervisee's reflections but also identifying them in myself and how I supported her in those sessions.

The formative function is based on the development of the supervisee such as their skills, knowledge and practice (Inskipp and Proctor, 1993; Bolton 2020). This was present during a scenario where my supervisee explained how a few young people were shouting over each other during an activity resulting in an argument between them. As this was her first time dealing with an outburst, she explained she felt nervous and was unsure if she responded in the best way. To reassure her, I explained to her about "group dynamics" and Tuckman's 1965 (Rioch *et al.*, 1976 cited in Hawkins and Shohet, 2000, p.144) group theory of forming, storming, norming and performing. This new knowledge she gained of how this is a normal process of how groups interact with each other gave her reassurance and more confidence to be able to identify what is happening if another outburst was to occur within a group during

future activities. Moreover, I spoke to her about the importance of being able to reflect on her practice. Jeffs and Smith (2010, p.148) suggests the importance of maintaining our emotional and intellectual development by being “engaged, reflective and effective practitioners”. I wanted to ensure she had opportunities to reflect on her practice to ensure she reaches her development goal that she wants to achieve within her placement. One opportunity I suggested was to base her reflections on either the Gibbs or Kolb’s (Fletcher, 2023) reflective models. This was a positive aspect on her learning because we spoke about the importance of the different stages of both models and how she could apply those stages to her own reflections. To ensure that she understood how to write an effective reflective account, I supplied her with examples of both models to give her an idea on the layout and for her to choose which model she would prefer to use depending on the scenario.

The normative function is based on maintaining professional standards and ethics within supervision (Inskipp and Proctor, 1993; Bolton 2020). For example, I used this when my supervisee explained how she would like to do a course on health and safety training. In my role as her supervisor, I needed to ensure that my supervisee met her standards at her placement and therefore I did my own online research, informing her on what courses are available. Additionally, I suggested for her to ask a member of management at her placement if they had any risk assessments or provide any health and safety training that she could benefit from. Keeping in mind that if her placement provided her with either of these, their risk assessments and training would be specifically related to that organisation. This would benefit her during her current placement, but for future placements general health and safety training would be ideal. Another example, during a scenario where a few young people turned up late for a trip, resulting them being behind schedule all day. I noticed how she explained elements of code of conduct to them by explaining the importance of having good time management and having respect for others. I supported her with this as they had a rule of not being late for this trip. I

informed my supervisee that she was using elements of “educative” (Youth Work in Wales Review Group, 2022) within her practice as this benefitted the young people with new knowledge about what is acceptable and what is not. I also explained to her that this conversation was particularly useful for their future when they are employed as by getting them into a routine of having good time management, they will prevent themselves being late for work.

The restorative function is based on how the supervisee responds emotionally especially during stressful situations (Inskipp and Proctor, 1993; Bolton 2020). For example, my supervisee explained on one of their trips, a few young people forgot their lunch. This situation was stressful for my supervisee as the young people were made aware of bringing their own packed lunch. However, she also felt empathetic towards them as she did not want them being without food. Her strong emotions on empathy gave her the idea for staff to share their lunch, successfully resolving this situation. My supervisee learned from this experience as I explained to her about the importance of being prepared for every situation. For example, The National Youth Agency (2021, p.3) explains how youth workers should always have a “Critical Incident Plan”. By always having a backup plan, my supervisee would be able to react quicker, minimising the effects any incident whether that be minor or critical would have on the young people. Lastly, during an activity my supervisee focused on Article 12 of the UNCRC (UNICEF, 2023, np) which states that “every child has a voice” by asking them what activities they would like to do. She has strong beliefs about how every young person should have their say and be heard which was also influenced by her understanding on youth work values such as the National Occupational Standards (CLD Council Scotland, 2019) (NOS, CLDSCS) and the Five Pillars of Youth work (Youth Work in Wales Review Group, 2022). Her beliefs and her current knowledge enabled her to understand the emotions of the young people on a deeper level, ensuring that everyone had an equal opportunity to have their say. I supported her through

this as I identified her use of emotional empathy. Using her ability to “feel what others are feeling” (Reid, 2023, np) on a deeper level gave her the knowledge to feel what those young people were really feeling. Allowing them to have their say on what activities they would like to do empowered them as they knew their voices were being heard.

Log Three

Throughout our sessions I worked alongside the function map from the NOS values of Youth work (CLDSCS, 2019, p.6) with my focus on “managing and leading others”. This enabled me to use my professional judgement when deciding the best way to support my supervisee and gain an understanding of my responsibility of those actions. Hill and Peaper’s (2011, p.13) ideas on professional judgement also gave me a better idea on why I am using it. For example, they explain how a professional judgement is “more than an assumption or opinion but more based on evidence”. The more evidence I had on my supervisee’s emotions, the more of a secured judgement I was able to make to be able to support her in the best way that met her needs. Furthermore, my role as a supervisor was beneficial for my development with the skills that I have developed, particularly my non-verbal communication skills such as eye contact, gestures and facial expressions. Using these techniques made my supervisee aware that she had my full attention, enabling a safe environment for her. Morgan (2023, np) suggests that these techniques when used appropriately can create a “connection”. This connection was evident with how she engaged thoroughly in our supervisions, knowing she had my full attention without me needing to speak resulted in a positive dynamic between us. In addition to this, creating that positive supervision environment not only benefitted my supervisee but it also benefitted me as it was empowering. Noticing how my supervisee felt comfortable and supported throughout our supervision sessions allowed me to reflect on my practice in relation to how I was performing. According to Sapin (Sapin, 2013, p.224) “Location of self” is useful for supervisors when reflecting as they will be transparent and open about what they can offer

and give them an understanding on what they could work on. Applying this to myself, when reflecting on how I was during our supervisions, I was able to locate and identify my strengths and the areas that I would like to improve on. The only aspect I found difficult when supervising was in relation to sharing my own examples. This is because I wanted to avoid saying that how she dealt with a scenario was right or wrong. However, I am aware that every situation is different, and I was not there observing her at placement but equally, sharing my own examples would have been a way for her to have a different perspective on her approach. To improve my confidence on this, I've gained a better understanding on "the power of feedback" (Ingram and Harris, 2001, p.100). Ingram and Harris's (2001) ideas on when feedback is given, whether that be positive, negative or constructive. It gets absorbed immediately by the brain, resulting in its powerful effects on our self-image and esteem. This new knowledge that I attained, I have learnt that constructive criticism feedback is not considered negative as it is a way of offering feedback for my supervisee to grow in develop. This has given me more confidence for when I supervise in the future as I am aware that I can avoid negative feedback, depending on the way that I explain it. I have also learnt the importance of ensuring my supervisee looks after her well-being. Making links to when I was being supervised, I was frequently asked how my well-being was. Reversing the roles, myself as supervisor I understand the importance of ensuring that my supervisee prioritises her well-being to ensure she is performing at her best. Also, my current knowledge on Maslow's (1943) Hierarchy of Needs gave me a different perspective as I identified that I was a part of her safety needs which is one of the levels of Maslow's hierarchy. Myself as her supervisor, I am responsible for her safety needs during our supervision, for example, ensuring that our supervisions are in a room that has been health and safety approved to provide her with a safe, secured environment.

Overall, my experience being a supervisor has made me think differently about the way that I am as a supervisee with the impact it has had for my future engagement. This is because I am

now aware on what to look for in a supervisor when I am being supervised. Also, if I was to be a supervisor in the future, I know what type of supervisor I would like to be and the type of supervisor my supervisee would benefit from.

Critical Review

This critical review will be based on Carlyle's (c.1800s) Trait theory, House's (1971) Path goal theory and McGregor's (1960) X and Y theories within youth work with consideration to the increasing financial climate that youth services face. The purpose of youth work as explained by Jeffs and Smith (2010, pp.3-4) is that it is "wrapped up with associational life, community groups and voluntary organisations" making youth services a key element for society, enabling young people to express their freedom.

Carlyle's Trait theory (c.1800s cited in Cherry, 2022, np), also known as the great man theory, is based on the idea that a person who leads is born a leader with leadership traits. Mahesh (2023) suggests that a positive aspect of this theory is that it is easily identified who the leader is. In comparison to the path goal theory (House, 1971; Channel, 2023) where leaders provide support for their team to achieve their goals. Channel (2023, np) explains how one out of the four leadership styles that this theory includes is "Participative leadership" where the supervisor includes their team in the decision-making process. Taking Mahesh's (2023) ideas into consideration, there may be a leader present, but all members of the team are equal when making decisions making it difficult to establish who the decision maker is, resulting in potential miscommunication between staff. In this case, the trait theory would be more effective within Youth work practice as it would help make it obvious to the young people the key role the youth worker plays in supporting the decision-making process.

Theory X (McGregor, 1960; MindTools, 2023) has a more controlled and authoritarian approach with the assumption that people are "unmotivated and dislike work", with some staff potentially finding the approach too strict. However, theory Y (McGregor, 1960; MindTools,

2023) has the risk of giving people too much freedom as it is a more collaborative approach with their employees, resulting in staff potentially losing focus. According to Nasrudin (2022) managers who use the Theory Y approach provide less supervision compared to theory X. This may result in employees not being on the correct path that management would like them to be, making it difficult to achieve targets. Additionally, according to Miller (2022) employees who have no fear may take advantage of management who use the theory Y approach. This implies that employees could take advantage by wasting hours at work and would benefit from having more supervision from management. Although there may be this risk with theory Y, theory X might not be as effective within Youth work practice as the negative assumption of a dislike for work could be demotivating, resulting in giving young people less empowerment.

Channel also (2023, np) explains how one principle of the path goal theory is for the leader to “clarify their goals and expectations”. The support provided to employees could enable them to become motivated with a clear path for them to reach that goal. In comparison to the Trait theory, Miles (2022) suggests that this theory has an impact on employee's development as it does not empower them to reach their full potential. This assumption assumes that leaders are born with certain traits, and this could stop an employee wanting to progress into a leadership role as they may not receive any leadership coaching. Additionally, Miles (2022) further explains that leadership qualities within the Trait theory are fixed and this would not be useful as the context of situations can change. For example, Quinn's (2007 cited in Tyler, 2009) competing values framework provides knowledge on management development of eight roles and tasks within four key quadrants. These roles would be used at different times depending on the scenario, in this case, this framework would not work for this theory being that they are born with these traits and therefore management would not be able to develop. This comparison would show that the Path goal theory would be more effective for youth workers as this would give them the chance to develop their skills and approaches within their practice.

With consideration to the current financial climate, Okezie (2023) explains that “young people are struggling in the face of the cost of living crises”. One example of this is the lack of funding, increasing the difficulty for young people accessing youth services and resulting in stress on management within these services. Having a financial budgeting plan and control (Armstrong, 2012, pp. 330-331) is one example which management could use as this would enable them to ensure that their budget guidelines are met, decreasing financial stress. Additionally, theory Y (1960) would be a beneficial approach for this scenario as Miller (2022, np) suggests that it is more applicable in the current business world being that organisations are becoming “employee-centric”. Having team members involved would give them clarification on what the budget is and suggest ideas on how to increase that budget being that the budget planning and controlling would keep the organisation on track.

Lastly, Management could consider the Mckinsey’s 7-S framework (Tyler, 2009; Malik 2023) which is based on organisation structure for the future success of the company. However, this framework suggests that the organisation’s aspects are all interlinked. Emphasising how any changes in one aspect will affect another, illustrating the domino effect. For example, Nasrudin (2022, np) suggests how “managers have full control over their employee’s work” through the theory X approach. Implying that there is an over reliance on the leader which could result in this framework to collapse. These elements are beneficial to understand how the organisation works together, one element being “staff” (Malik, 2023) which is based on how employees are trained and motivated. Not only could an over reliance on the leader lack teamwork planning for solutions for more funding but could also cause employee distress of redundancies if they are aware of the financial strain but not reassured that their jobs are safe.

To summaries this critical review, the Path Goal theory (House, 1971) and the theory Y (McGregor, 1960) approaches would be more beneficial when applied to a youth work setting as youth workers use similar approaches when working with young people. They would also

be more useful when searching for solutions for the increase in rising costs and facing those issues affecting youth services.

Conclusion

To conclude this portfolio, the supervisor had successfully completed the minimum requirement of engaging in four hour-long supervision sessions. Practice log one focused on the importance of the supervisory relationship and its development, the three functions of supervision, and an analysis of the supervisor reflecting on their practice. This new knowledge of a supervision contract enabled the supervisor to understand its role in building up a positive, professional relationship with their supervisee. Also, the supervisor is now able to identify the three functions in their supervisee's practice as well as their own practice, whilst using different supervision approaches depending on the supervision required. Whilst reflecting on this experience, the supervisor has developed new supervisory skills and an understanding on what to take away from this experience to further develop their practice. The critical review also benefitted the supervisor to identify what good leaders and management employees could benefit from by comparing different theories and implementing those new approaches within their practice. Lastly, the awareness that the supervisor now has on how rising costs could have an impact on the youth services that they may work has also given them an idea on how to cope with those challenges when faced with them in the future. Therefore, it is evident that supervisors who carefully apply their knowledge and experience of management and leadership techniques and approaches to their practice can effectively support their supervisees in their learning journey.

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