

Circumstances to Contribution: A Phenomenological Study on School Counseling Site Supervision in the Philippines



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Article history:

Submitted: 25March 2022

Revised: 8June 2022

Accepted: 09 June 2022

Keywords:

School counseling
Guidance and counseling
School counseling site supervision
Counseling supervisors
Practicum site supervisors
Professional standards
Phenomenology
Philippines

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ABSTRACT. Existing literature on school counseling site supervision has implications for its continuous improvement. Most local studies have focused on the perspectives of supervisees and with participants coming from Metro Manila only. In order to provide a clearer understanding of what happens in school counseling site supervision, the present study employed a descriptive phenomenological approach to explore the lived experiences of Filipino guidance counselors as school counseling site supervisors. Twelve (12) Filipino guidance counselors from Luzon, Visayas, and Mindanao, recruited through purposive sampling, were virtually interviewed using an interview guide that was content validated by experts prior to utilization. Results revealed six (6) emerging themes: Assignment as Site Supervisor, Affirming Experiences, Challenges Encountered, Different Supervision Practices, Supervisor Preparation and Development, and Supervision Advocacies. Results may serve as a resource for site supervisors and counselor educators to improve practice.

1.0. Introduction

The practice of school counseling supervision is an essential element in the development and training of school counselors (Bender & Dykeman, 2016). Normally, it involves a site supervisor who guides school counselors as the latter juggles and fulfills a myriad of roles and responsibilities (Bledsoe et al., 2019). Therefore, the role of supervisors is an important one as they become the catalyst for growth and experience. They prepare and assist supervisees in dealing with students (Studer, 2006), improving their basic counseling skills, teaching intermediate strategies to meet learners' needs, and ultimately their personal and professional development (Lambie, 2007). However, existing literature has revealed a critical issue – that site supervisors are often unprepared and ill-equipped to fulfill the duties and roles expected of them (Dollarhide & Miller, 2006; Brown et al., 2017).

Most potential site supervisors do not undergo a standardized training program. They often rely on their own practicum experience, which is insufficient to provide a conducive learning experience for their supervisees. Aside from this, there is also a lack of awareness or orientation on the extent of work the role of a supervisor entails, the pertinent issues that arise from this type of work, and a general lack of opportunity to learn or train for it (Bjornestad et al., 2014; Cigrand et al., 2014; Merlin & Brendel, 2017; Smith & Koltz, 2015; Studer, 2006).

In the Philippines, little is known about the practice of school counseling supervision. In fact, Republic Act 9258, or the Guidance and Counseling Act of 2004, has no clear delineation of requirements to become a counseling site supervisor or a standardized accreditation and evaluation system to practice supervised internships or practicums, although several supervised programs already exist in the country (Garcia, 2012; Official Gazette, 2004). Current Commission on Higher Education (CHED) guidelines (e.g., CMO No. 53, S. 2007) also do not mandate a course on counseling supervision, let alone supervised practical experiences. Only the newly revised Code of Ethics for Registered and Licensed Guidance Counselors in the Philippines, with a chapter on supervision, provides some guidance for practice but does not clearly outline the requirements and criteria for an



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effective site supervisor and supervision experience (Philippine Guidance and Counseling Association [PGCA], 2021).

Although there seems to be a growing body of local literature on school counseling supervision, most of it focuses on the supervisees' experiences (Datu & Mateo, 2016; Mateo & Salanga, 2012; Nicasio & Reyes, 2013). Even when a recent study (Nicasio, 2019) included the supervisors' perspectives, it was analyzed alongside other stakeholders' perspectives and focused on their understanding of and the process of supervision. Therefore, this study aimed to concentrate mainly on supervisors' overall experiences as school counseling site supervisors, with particular attention to their practices, preparations, and standards for practice. By doing so, the researcher hoped to bridge this gap of knowledge and contribute to the local literature by providing a deeper understanding of the site supervision process from the lens of a supervisor and hopefully improve the practice.

2.0. Framework of the Study

The present study is anchored on the Institutional Theory, which focuses on efforts that aim to institutionalize specific structural elements and processes that ascertain regulations, policies, and processes (Ogawa, 1992; 1994 cited in Hatch, 2019). Institutional Theory can be defined operationally and socially. Its operational side functions best when it can properly delineate norms and routines in the various procedures, policies, and standards that must be upheld in an organization's structure. When this is achieved, various stakeholders can operate and contribute to the overall culture and policies of the organization, thus reaching a social legitimacy (Hatch, 2019). This framework is especially useful because an in-depth exploration of the lived experiences of site supervisors may contribute to the creation of standards and policies that may prompt the improvement of their practice and profession.

3.0. Methodology

This research study employed a qualitative research design, particularly a descriptive phenomenological approach to meticulously describe lived experiences (Giorgi et al., 2017). The meaning of the phenomenon, in this case, the site supervision experiences of Filipino guidance counselors, can only be discovered entirely with its relationships and elements.

To increase representation, Filipino RLGs (Registered Licensed Guidance Counselors) from Luzon, Visayas, and Mindanao who are currently in practice as full-time guidance counselors in an academic institution in the Philippines and with at least 3 years of experience as site supervisors to counselors-in-training were recruited through purposive sampling. Data reached the theoretical point of saturation (Strauss & Corbin, 1998 cited in Elliot & Timulak, 2005) after twelve (12) interviews.

The study utilized semi-structured interviews as the main instrument to gather data in adherence to Giorgi and Giorgi's (2003) guidelines. An interview guide was also developed to help maintain focus during the interview without imposing too much structure (Elliot & Timulak, 2005). A pre-interview questionnaire was also constructed to supply additional background information about the participants' profiles. These were content validated by experts on qualitative research prior to use.

In adherence to quarantine protocols, for the safety of both the participants and the researchers during the COVID-19 pandemic, data collection was conducted online. Emails containing the details of the study were sent to potential participants. Those who signified interest were then sent informed consent forms. Virtual interviews with the participants were recorded and transcribed verbatim. Copies of transcripts were sent back to participants for verification. Confidentiality standards and data protection were applied. Data gathered were only used for the sole purpose of analysis in the study. Raw data, including identifying information of participants, will be deleted after a year of this study's completion.

In analyzing the data, guidelines on descriptive phenomenological analysis (Giorgi, 2012; Giorgi & Giorgi, 2003) were employed. Adopting an attitude of phenomenological reduction, transcripts were read and re-read to grasp a sense of the whole meaning of the data. Meaning units were established, and free imaginative variation was done to reveal the psychological value of actual words used by participants. The explicit and psychologically sensitive expressions were reviewed to determine a structural understanding of the data, which was then utilized to analyze empirical data more systematically. Emerging themes and subthemes with their corresponding transcripts were validated by experts in qualitative research to check for the appropriateness of reflected meanings.

4.0. Results and Discussion

Data analysis has unearthed themes, and relating sub-themes on the lived experiences of Filipino guidance counselors as school counseling site supervisors. They are: Assignment as Site Supervisor, Affirming Experiences, Challenges Encountered, Different Supervision Practices, Supervisor Preparation and Development, and Supervision Advocacies. An emerging framework is also presented.

Assignment as Site Supervisor. Narratives of site supervisors include how they were assigned to serve as site supervisors. Some mentioned that the years of counseling experience they have gained over the years may have influenced this. As one said,

"I am just taking it on the context of me, being the eldest guidance counselor and probably because we have been in the field for a long time." (Participant 5, personal communication, April 25, 2021)

This is unsurprising since the very definition of supervision provides that supervision be implemented by an experienced practitioner to a counselor-in-training (Bernard & Goodyear, 2019; Studer, 2005). Aside from this, they also mentioned being perceived as competent, as illustrated by this statement,

"They are given to me, uh, maybe partly because, uh, they see me as, I guess, uh, a bit competent." (Participant 8, personal communication, May 1, 2021)

Added to this is the positive feedback they received from previous supervisees that seemed to prove their effectiveness as supervisors. One mentioned this by saying,

"We have a lot of practicumers probably because of the feedback that we let them do a lot of things." (Participant 8, personal communication, May 1, 2021)

These illustrate that in the Philippines, there is a tendency to rely only on assumptions or perceptions. Yet, there is no set standard or specific requirement that a practitioner must meet to become a site supervisor, unlike in the US, for instance, where The Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP) (2016) set a minimum of 2 years of professional counseling experience for site supervisors and to have relevant training and education to provide counseling.

Affirming Experiences. This theme focuses on the pleasant and affirming experiences that site supervisors had serving the role. Part of this is the ease of practice as they were generally dealing with competent supervisees. As one participant said,

"There are supervisees that are very good. They do not need close supervision." (Participant 4, personal communication, April 24, 2021)

A reason provided for this also would be that they are already practicing. This is unique in the local context because unlicensed counseling practitioners are common in the Philippines, mostly due to the shortage of licensed counselors. Despite RA 9258 regulating the practice for licensed counselors only, institutions usually allow one to practice even as a graduate student.

Another distinct result of the study is reciprocity. Technically, school counseling site supervision is conducted to assist supervisees in enhancing their skills and developing new competencies (Bernard & Goodyear, 2019). Hence, the supervisees are at the receiving end of benefits. However, one affirming experience noted was that site supervisors experienced benefitting from the supervision too. One described it as

"...a mutual process. They would be helping us, we would also be helping you." (Participant 1, personal communication, April 15, 2021)

This denotes reciprocity or exchange of benefits between parties and is currently an aspect of supervision that remains unexplored in current literature.

Some also believed they were contributing to the growth and sustainability of the profession by being a site supervisor. One mentioned that,

"You contribute to the growth of the intern and also, in a way, you contribute to the growth of the profession." (Participant 2, personal communication, April 22, 2021 mentioned)

Literature has long established the importance of supervision in counselor development (Bernard & Goodyear, 2019). More so, Stahl Ladbury (2012) found the same that school counselors involve themselves in school counseling supervision, not only as part of their professional growth and maintenance of school counselor professional identity but also for the continuous development of the counseling profession.

Challenges Encountered. This theme pertains to the different struggles that site supervisors have dealt with in their practice. Some participants mentioned that one of the most difficult aspects in doing supervision is the rigorous assessment of the skills and competencies of supervisees. As one stated,

"You need to check how they asked, how they process, and if they were able to fulfill much of what is asked for in counseling." (Participant 3, personal communication, April 23, 2021)

Indeed, supervision entails having an evaluative relationship with a supervisee to monitor the quality of their rendered services and serve as a gatekeeper for those who would like to enter the profession (Bernard & Goodyear, 2019).

Another layer to this experience is the accountability and liability that befalls the supervisor. One stated that,

"They are still interns, and the liability would be on me." (Participant 2, personal communication, April 22, 2021)

This would refer to unethical behaviors supervisees may perform, as another participant mentioned,

"It will reflect on the counselor or the supervisor, right? ... The one accountable is the counselor" (Participant 4, personal communication, April 24, 2021).

Accountability and liability have always been part of the ethical and legal concerns in school counseling supervision (Herlihy et al., 2002). However, ultimately, competent supervision is argued to be still the best safeguard in minimizing the risk of being named in a civil suit (Bernard & Goodyear, 2019).

Time constraints also presented a challenge for supervisors. Firstly, some believed the allotted practicum hours were insufficient for adequate supervision.

"The time allotted is insufficient for OJT or internship; 120 hours is not enough." (Participant 2, personal communication, April 22, 2021)

Secondly, they believed that the practicum schedule or inclusive dates of deployment to school sites is not appropriate. One said,

"Some programs are really run during the weekdays, and if a student comes in the lean months... there is not much exposure that we can give." (Participant 10, personal communication, May 7, 2021)

While US CACREP's (2016) standards mandate that students render a minimum of 100 clock hours for practicum and a minimum of 600 clock hours for the internship, we do not have such

guidelines in the Philippines, let alone a clear distinction between the two. Institutions freely set this as they deem fit.

Consequently, some supervisors report lacking time to perform supervision due to their bulk of work as counselors or even as administrators. Site supervisors render an important service to counselors-in-training, yet they are expected to perform multiple responsibilities and relationships while training counseling students (Evans et al., 2016). Such was mentioned in this statement,

"You can be too busy to the point that you sometimes shortchange the supervisees when it comes to supervision." (Participant 7, personal communication, April 29, 2021)

According to Dollarhide and Miller (2006), supervision time unsupported by schools interferes with the supervision process. Additionally, appropriate counselor-to-student ratios may also help because the locally mandated 1:1000 ratio for higher education institutions (CHED, 2013) is a far cry from Western standards of 1:250 (American School Counseling Association [ASCA], 2020). A recent local study supports this as Gipalen and Madrigal (2020) found that one of the most fundamental challenges in implementing guidance services is the limited time to render them.

Cultural and religious restrictions of supervisees become a challenge for site supervisors too. According to one supervisor who caters to Muslim supervisees,

"They have some restrictions, like, we hesitate (for) them to conduct interviews with the opposite gender." (Participant 9, personal communication, May 1, 2021)

Previous research has emphasized the important role supervisors play in engaging supervisees in discussions about race, poverty, and cross-cultural counseling, especially for non-minority counseling students (Day-Vines et al., 2018; Sue et al., 2010). Likewise, the Code of Ethics for counseling professionals in the country also indicates that multicultural issues and diversity be addressed by counseling supervisors in the supervisory relationship (PGCA, 2021).

Other issues concerning supervisees' behavior have also been reported, like those concerning their attendance, attitudes, and competence. For instance, one participant said,

"They are always late or absent... there are also those who are stubborn or those who believe they are competent already." (Participant 8, personal communication, May 1, 2021)

Another one commented on their performance by saying,

"There are times their output would be like an undergraduate output." (Participant 6, personal communication, April 27, 2021)

Site supervisors need to identify a distinction between supervisees who are unprepared from those who are unqualified. The former is assumed to benefit from more training, and the latter is more likely to be dismissed from the training program altogether (Michaelson et al., 2003).

Overall, reported challenging experiences of site supervisors are always noteworthy because poor site supervision experiences may discourage school counselors from accepting other interns, being involved in site supervision, or maintaining a relationship with the university training program (Cigrand & Wood, 2011).

Different Supervision Practices. This theme constitutes the different supervision practices site supervisors perform, ranging from activities and methods. Specifically, site supervisors reported performing preliminary activities such as screening, contract signing, orientation, and expectation setting activities. As one mentioned,

"Before they start with their day one of their practicums, we give them an orientation." (Participant 2, personal communication, April 22, 2021)

Several pieces of research back up the importance of these. Screening procedures help identify the needs of supervisees to maximize placement (Bernard & Goodyear, 2019), contracts serve as

informed consent (Thomas, 2007), prove to be useful supervisory interventions (Studer, 2005), and are means to increase accountability between parties (Bernard & Goodyear, 2019).

Relationships were also emphasized, such as the collaboration with the practicum coordinator illustrated through this transcript,

"Close coordination with their teacher is also needed." (Participant 4, personal communication, April 24, 2021)

This is ideal since ample evidence exists on the importance of increased communication between field sites and graduate programs (Maynard et al., 2015; Zuchowski, 2015) and between the site supervisor and practicum coordinator (Cook et al., 2012; Nicasio, 2019; Thompson et al., 2011). Keeping the supervisor-supervisee relationship professional was also mentioned. One said, they,

"have to delineate or draw demarcation lines because it could be the cause of familiarity" (Participant 2, personal communication, April 22, 2021)

Then and now, supervisors have been cautioned about compromising their working supervisor-supervisee relationship (Dye & Borders, 1990; PGCA, 2021). Supervisors should strive to build effective relationships with counselors-in-training to aid their professional development (Butts & Gutierrez, 2018).

The processes of delivering supervision sessions or meetings were also noted. Some mentioned supervising them regularly and as one specifically mentioned,

"--on a weekly basis." (Participant 11, personal communication, May 7, 2021)

This is actually considered an ideal practice (Borders, 2014; CACREP, 2016). Coaching or mentoring as a method were also mentioned. As one explained,

"We talk about things that are challenging... if there are things that are not workable, then we re-assess again and... how we can facilitate the learning process." (Participant 10, personal communication, May 7, 2021)

Local literature has previously found the same; Filipino site supervisors acted more as teachers and consultants to supervisees during supervision (Nicasio & Reyes, 2013). They conceptualize supervision as teaching and mentoring to help them decide on a counseling career (Nicasio, 2019).

Discussions of ethical considerations were also reported. One shared that,

"I also remind them about the code of ethics." (Participant 4, personal communication, April 24, 2021)

This was fortunate since it has been found that expert site supervisors attend to ethical and legal considerations, including their supervisee's ethical concerns (Kemer et al., 2017).

Stress debriefing was also mentioned –

"We also do debriefing because most likely, (they) would be experiencing difficulties." (Participant 1, personal communication, April 15, 2021)

This is likely due to the nature of the work of counselors, which may be difficult for a counselor trainee to manage. Evidence exists that perceived stress and burnout among school counselors are negatively related to their age and experience (Mullen et al., 2017).

Participants also shared their evaluation and feedback methods. Some used guidelines provided by the graduate program. They also differed across schools.

"There are different grading sheets from different schools." (Participant 8, personal communication, May 1, 2021)

Bernard and Goodyear (2019) agree that the university supervisors are responsible for crafting an evaluation plan and delivering all summative evaluations for course grades. Some also shared that they evaluated based on performance by checking on-

“-the efficiency as well as the effectiveness when it comes to delivering the services that we expected from them.” (Participant 6, personal communication, April 27, 2021)

Immediate feedback was also provided. A participant said,

“I will... usually give immediate feedback.” (Participant 2, personal communication, April 22, 2021)

Best practices guidelines indicate that a supervisor must provide not only summative but also formative evaluations regularly (Borders, 2014). Findings such as these also illustrate the lack of a uniform method or tool in assessing supervisees' competence. Proper evaluation of competencies is a requisite to promote non-maleficence and beneficence for counselor trainees and support the ethical responsibility of supervisors (Flynn & Hays, 2015; Swank et al., 2012).

Another distinct finding from the study was that site supervisors set areas and limits to the exposure of supervisees. Some exposures were varied –

“We expose them to program development, assessment, and research. They go through all those. There are different layers to their experiences.” (Participant 8, personal communication, May 1, 2021)

Some did this gradually –

“I let them do initial interviews first. I do not right away ask them to conduct counseling.” (Participant 4, personal communication, April 24, 2021)

Some also limited their supervisee's exposure to non-counseling duties –

“We do not let the non-registered handle counseling. That is our policy.” (Participant 8, personal communication, May 1, 2021)

To date, there are no clear guidelines on the supervised practicum experiences of counseling students in the country. This is probably why it befalls under the discretion and agreement of the graduate program and school sites as to what constitutes an adequate supervision experience. It can also be noted that specific supervisory interventions to address counseling competencies – indicative of clinical supervision – were not mentioned. Instead, there was increased attention on service delivery, professional skills, knowledge, and attitude development, compliance with standards, and interprofessional relationships – aspects addressed in administrative supervision (Bernard & Goodyear, 2019; Henderson & Gysbers, 2006). This suggests that much of the practice remains administrative rather than clinical, which has always been prevalent in school counseling supervision literature (Bultsma, 2012; Nicasio, 2019; Perera-Diltz & Mason, 2012).

Supervision practices have also been affected by the pandemic situation. Some postponed it altogether. As one stated,

“There's a CHED Memo... that there will be no more OJT or internship, especially face to face.” (Participant 1, personal communication, April 15, 2021)

Unfortunately, during the onset of the coronavirus pandemic, internship programs were suspended in compliance with quarantine protocols (CHED 2020). Some also shifted online. As one mentioned,

“We now all meet our practicumers online.” (Participant 8, personal communication, May 1, 2021)

Online supervision has emerged as a commonly used platform for numerous counseling programs (Villarreal-Davis et al., 2021). Identified benefits include convenience, flexibility, accessibility, cost-effectiveness, and more opportunities for diverse experiences and collaboration (Clark & Haddock, 2015).

Another layer to this theme is the use of standards by site supervisors to guide their practice. They mentioned following institutional standards, those set by their schools or universities. As one shared,

"We also value the core values of the university." (Participant 8, personal communication, May 1, 2021)

This might be the case since counseling programs usually have a vision-mission statement anchored on their institution's goals, similar to what ASCA (2020) prescribes. Apart from this, professional-ethical standards have also reportedly guided their practice. One shared that she follows standards that are-

"-professional and ethical. That should be observed. You cannot separate that." (Participant 12, personal communication, May 12, 2021)

This suggests that with the current state of counseling supervision practice in the country, site supervisors recognize the importance of these standards. It also indicates the fulfillment of their professional responsibility to follow these (Borders, 2014).

Supervisor Preparation and Development. This theme pertains to the site supervisors' efforts to prepare for their roles. Most mentioned engaging in formal classes, earning advanced degrees, taking certification courses, and seminars and training for their continuing professional education (CPE). As one stated,

"There are opportunities for continuing education, and sometimes, there are sessions on supervision, so I attend those sessions to help me become a better practicum supervisor." (Participant 10, personal communication, May 7, 2021)

Apart from this, some also mentioned collaborating with outside institutions too. This is fortunate since evidence supports that when pre-service training programs, community partners, and practitioners collaborate, benefits can be reaped for students and educators alike (Geesa et al., 2020).

Another layer to this theme is the commitment to learning displayed by participants. One mentioned,

"I really invest on my career and I really never stop learning." (Participant 8, personal communication, May 1, 2021)

This may indicate being self-aware and reflective of their own work, characteristics found to be displayed by exceptional school counseling supervisors (Stahl Ladbury, 2012).

Additionally, means of access to these activities have also been shared. Most mentioned professional organizations, as one said their CPE experiences were availed...

"...by being engaged with the professional organizations." (Participant 7, personal communication, April 29, 2021)

Others also mentioned the importance of institutional support and funding. One shared,

"The institution is not hesitant to send us (to training) because again, they know how important our office is." (Participant 10, personal communication, May 7, 2021)

Professional organizations indeed have a role to play in promoting the awareness and significance of and access to supervision training and credentialing (Bernard & Goodyear, 2019). To date, although CPE experiences are already provided by professional organizations, no local certifications in school counseling site supervision exist. Furthermore, an increase in support for the

supervisors leads to more accomplishments that also improve the quality of supervision (Ögren & Boalt Boëthius, 2014).

Supervision Advocacies. This theme pertains to the reported interests and needs that site supervisors expressed. They advocated for more training as supervisors, for one.

"Maybe it is needed to conduct training for supervisors also." (Participant 4, personal communication, April 24, 2021)

Previous studies have found the same that adequate training for effective and ethical delivery of supervision has not been received by supervisors (Bjornestad et al., 2014; Cigrand et al., 2014; Merlin & Brendel, 2017; Smith & Koltz, 2015) despite its established helpfulness (Thompson & Moffett, 2010) and recognition in preparation standards and professional credentials like CACREP (2016). This has also been echoed in previous studies (Nicasio, 2019; Wambu & Myers, 2019).

Site supervisors mentioned pushing for continuing supervision for counseling practitioners too. As one shared,

"I think one of the things that we really advocate for is to have counseling supervision in the Philippines that is not just for the practitioners but for the counselors." (Participant 8, personal communication, May 1, 2021)

A lot of school counselors fail to receive counseling supervision after graduation unless they purposely try to seek it out (Perera-Diltz & Mason, 2012), and even if they do receive it, again, it is likely administrative (Herlihy et al., 2002; Perera-Diltz & Mason, 2012) or programmatic (Dollarhide & Miller, 2006) rather than clinical.

"I just hope that even for other institutions, the role of a counselor as a site supervisor be given value and attention because it is very important in molding and developing our profession." (Participant 2, personal communication, April 22, 2021)

Site supervisors also advocated for the overall improvement of supervision. Along with leadership, advocacy is also fundamental to the charge and continued growth of the counseling profession and the training of counseling students (ACA, 2014; CACREP, 2016; Ramirez Stege et al., 2017). Counselor education programs and site supervisors should not stop prioritizing leadership and advocacy in their supervision work not only for counselor trainees but also for the counseling profession (Storlie et al., 2019).

Eidetic Insight. The accounts of the participants in the study reflect the current state of school counseling site supervision in the Philippines. Guidance Counselors become site supervisors mainly through assignment. It comes as an outgrowth of their administrative position or educational background, not as a result of training or a set of explicitly stated qualifications. Naturally, fulfilling the role comes with difficulties as no specific practice guidelines are locally available. As a resolve, they turn to international professional-ethical standards and integrate these into their work. More structure, organization, and further improvement in the practice are also being advocated.

As school counseling site supervision remains to be loosely implemented and site supervisors try their best to adapt and maximize resources, in the process, they, too, became the primary resources that led to the development of professional standards and practice guidelines suited to the unique Filipino context, grounded from their own lived experiences.

Emerging Framework. The framework below builds upon the lived experiences of school counseling site supervisors according to their timeline. It contains five components: (1) the site supervisor, their (2) circumstances, (3) resolve, and (4) intentions, from which stemmed a (5) contribution.

The figure of a person in the center symbolizes the *site supervisor*. The left side indicates their past experiences – from their assignment for the role to the affirming and challenging experiences that went with fulfilling this. These are matters of *circumstances* that they found themselves in

as a school counselor and, eventually, a site supervisor. The center arrow connotes their current experiences that primarily concern their different supervision practices. This reflects site supervisors' *resolve* in trying to manage their work and fulfill their role. The arrow on the right implies the future. This includes the supervisor's preparation and development and their advocacies for supervision. As such, they are the site supervisor's *intentions* or goals forward.

As a product of these cumulative experiences – professional standards and practice guidelines were developed as a *contribution* to the literature and practice of school counseling site supervision.

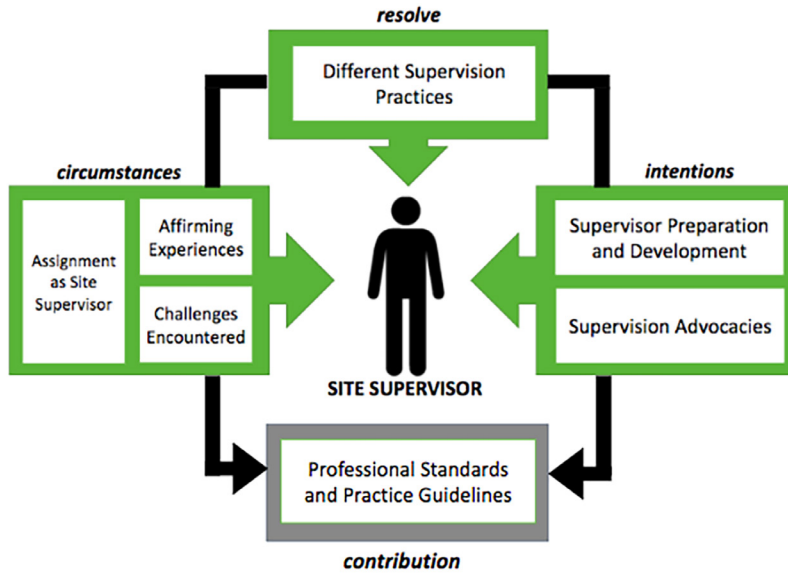


Figure 1. Emerging Framework on the Lived Experiences of School Counseling Site Supervisors

5.0. Conclusion

Findings generated in this phenomenological inquiry support the existing literature that much of the supervision practices remain administrative rather than clinical. Despite the limited locally available standards, site supervisors adhered to a standards-based approach and engaged in continuing professional development experiences to continuously prepare for the role. Their firsthand experience has enabled them to identify challenges in the practice of supervision and opportunities for improvement, as evidenced by their advocacies. Finally, when explored in-depth, site supervisors' experiences may be used as a resource to add structure and organization to the professional practice of supervision.

Further attempts to investigate the lived experiences of school counseling site supervisors are suggested. Due to the study's qualitative approach, only a small number of participants were included. Results offer a glimpse of their experiences. While the study employed participants with representation from across the country, not all provinces or cities were represented. Quantitative data with a larger sample size may supplement existing local literature on the topic. Comparing different contexts, such as those in public against private academic institutions or those in rural against urban places, may also be worth exploring.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic at the time of data collection, quarantine measures had to be followed. Therefore, interviews were all conducted virtually only. Investigating this phenomenon in the context of the pandemic may also provide additional insights.

5.0. Declaration of Conflicting Interests

The authors declared no potential conflict of interest with respect to the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

6.0. Funding

The authors received no financial support for the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

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