Construction and Validation of a Supervisor Principle Ethics Scale

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Psychometric properties on a newly developed Supervisor Principle Ethics Scale (SPES) are reported. The SPES was created to measure supervisees' perceptions of supervisors' use of ethical principles (Autonomy, Beneficence/Nonmaleficence, Justice, Veracity, Fidelity). Participants were vocational rehabilitation counsellors with a state agency in the United States (US) (Males = 38, Females = 49). They completed the SPES and the Supervisory Working Alliance-Trainee Form (Efstation, Patton, & Kardash, 1990). The five factors of the SPES were significantly correlated with the Supervisory Working Alliance-Trainee Form (SWAI-T), suggesting evidence of construct validity. Potential uses for the SPES in research and training activities are discussed.

Keywords: Rehabilitation Counselling, Counsellor Supervision, Ethics, Principle Ethics

While the issue of ethical practice for rehabilitation counsellors has a fairly long and established history, the development and discussion of ethical standards for rehabilitation counsellor supervisors is a relatively recent development in the counselling literature (Ladany, Lehrman-Waterman, Molinaro, & Wolgast, 1999). The inclusion of ethical standards in the Certified Rehabilitation Counselor (CRC) Code of Ethics (2010) for supervisors is a strong beginning for this area of investigation. The development of ethical standards for counsellor supervisors and educators has also occurred in other counselling organisations (American Counseling Association, 2005; Cottone & Tarvydas, 2007).

Empirical investigation into the impact of the supervisor's ethical behaviour on the supervisory process has been limited. The majority of articles addressing ethics in counsellor supervision are conceptual in nature, many of which provide case studies as examples (Barnett, Erickson Cornish, Goodyear, & Lichtenberg, 2007; Fisher, 2008; Gottlieb, Robinson, & Younggren, 2007; Harrar, VandeCreek, & Knapp, 1990). A few articles have an empirical basis, but focus on the interpretation or violation of established ethical standards (Copeland, 2002; Ladany et al., 1999; Lee & Cashwell, 2001; Navin, Beamish, & Johanson, 1995). The use of ethical violations as the point of investigation has a limiting effect, both in terms of the range of possible responses by participants (Ladany et al., 1999) and understanding the impact of ethical behaviour on the supervisory process. It is reasonable to assume that ethical violations committed by the supervisor would have a negative impact on the super-
visory process. However, by focusing on the minimal mandatory standard of behav-

iour, the ability to understand the impact of the broad range of ethical behaviour on
the supervisory process is limited. To begin to understand the impact of the
continuum of supervisor ethical behaviour on the supervisory process, it is necessary
to move beyond the violation of ethical standards and examine the impact of ethical
principles. One challenge in the empirical investigation of ethical principles in super-
vision is the lack of validated instruments to measure operant ethical principles
within the supervisory process. It is the purpose of this article to develop and validate
the Supervisor Principle Ethics Scale (SPES) to be utilised in supervision research
and supervisor evaluation.

**Principle Ethics**

A distinction can be drawn between ethical standards for which a professional may be
censured for violating (mandatory ethics), and ethical considerations that address client
welfare but are not enforceable (aspirational ethics; Cottone & Tarvydas, 2007). Ethical
principles provide the basis of the mandatory ethical standards (Commission on
Rehabilitation Counselor Certification, 2009; Cottone & Tarvydas, 2007) and the
framework for engaging in aspirational ethics. The principle ethics framework provides
a paradigm to systematically determine what a professional should do in a given situa-
tion (Blackwell, Case, Barros-Bailey, & Waldmann, 2009). Recently, there has been
extensive discussion of virtue ethics in the counselling literature (Meara, Schmidt, &
Day, 1996; Remley & Herlihy, 2010). Virtue ethics differ from principle ethics in that
principle ethics address the question ‘What should I do?’ while virtue ethics address the
question ‘How should I be?’ (Remley & Herlihy, 2010). While these concepts are
related, they are distinctly different.

Though ethical principles have been recognised as being central to a supervisor's
ability to influence a counsellor (Bernard & Goodyear, 2009; Tarvydas, 1995), the
empirical investigation of the impact of ethical principles on the supervision process has
been non-existent. The critical first steps in the investigation of ethical principles in the
supervision process are the identification, defining, and operationalisation of the ethical
principles for supervisors. The ethical principles utilised to establish counsellor codes of
ethics, and subsequently ethical standards for counsellor supervisors, include autonomy,
beneficence, nonmaleficence, fidelity, justice and veracity (Cottone & Tarvydas, 2007).

**Autonomy**

Autonomy, as an ethical principle, is defined as the ‘right to self-determination of choice
and freedom from the control of others’ (Cottone & Tarvydas, 2007, p. 26) and respect
for the ‘dignity of each person’ (Welfel, 2006, p. 32) and is essential for the empowerment
of the counsellor receiving supervision (Henderson, 2009). The principle of autonomy for
supervisees is one of the more salient ethical principles, given the power differential that
exists within the supervisory relationship. Supervisors need to be aware of how autonomy
is impacted by their use of legitimate, reward, referent, expert and coercive power
(Bernard & Goodyear, 2009; French & Raven, 1959; Henderson, 2009; Schultz, Ososkie,
Fried, Nelson, & Bardos, 2002). One unique aspect of autonomy within the supervisory
relationship is the fact that supervisors do actually possess legitimate power within the
context of the organisation within which they work. Therefore, autonomy may be
realised, but only within the context of the organisational structure.
Beneficence/Nonmaleficence

Beneficence is recognised as the ‘responsibility to do good’ (Welfel, 2006, p. 34) and nonmaleficence is the duty to do no harm. These are related concepts and can be conceptualised as opposite ends of the same construct (Cottone & Tarvydas, 2007). Within the context of the complexity of the supervisory working relationship (Schultz, 2008), the application of this concept may be challenging. Supervisors are in a position to evaluate counsellors, provide feedback and actually serve as gatekeepers to the profession (Bernard & Goodyear, 2009; Watkins, 1997). It is possible for a supervisor to be called upon to evaluate a counsellor and make a judgment regarding the appropriateness for that individual to continue in the profession. It is conceivable that the ethical obligation to the counsellor of nonmaleficence comes into direct conflict with the supervisor’s ethical obligation to the client to provide beneficence (Tarvydas, 1995).

Fidelity

Fidelity is defined as being loyal to the other individual and keeping promises (Cottone & Tarvydas, 2007; Meara, Schmidt, & Day, 1996). This principle is especially important within the supervision process due to the power differential inherent within the supervisory relationship (Meara, Schmidt, & Day, 1996) and the supervisor’s ethical requirement to attend to other individuals and entities, such as the client and/or the organisation for which the supervisor has responsibility. When competing demands arise for the supervisor, fidelity to the counsellor will play a critical role in the quality of the supervisory relationship.

Justice

Justice is defined as being fair and egalitarian in working with others (Cottone & Tarvydas, 2007; Meara et al., 1996). This construct can be a challenge as the definitions of what is ‘fair and egalitarian’ are often idiosyncratic to those involved in a specific scenario. When considering the interaction between the supervisor and counsellor, each has a unique context from which he or she views the situation. The supervisor must consider the interests of the counsellor, the client, the organisation and the profession as a whole (Tarvydas, 1995). This creates the possibility of competing interests influencing the decision of the supervisor and therefore the possibility that the counsellor may view the final outcome as being unfair.

Veracity

Veracity has received less attention than the other ethical principles. It is defined for counselling practice as being truthful (Meara et al., 1996) within the context of the counselling relationship. Additionally, it ‘implies candour in the client–counsellor relationship and assumes that the client’s trust in the counsellor is well placed’ (Blackwell et al., 2009, p. 20). Extending this definition to the supervisory relationship, veracity can be seen as the active adherence to truthfulness and candour between the supervisor and supervisee. The obligation of veracity is grounded in the respect due to others (Beauchamp & Childress, 2001) and is requisite for the development of a productive working relationship.

The supervisor’s attention to, and use of, each of these ethical principles will impact the supervisory process. Indeed, the ethical principles provide the very foundation of how one individual is in relationship with another. They are particularly
critical as they impact the manner in which power is wielded within the supervisory relationship, which directly influences the quality of the supervisory working alliance (Bernard & Goodyear, 2009; Schultz et al., 2002).

**Supervisory Working Alliance**

The supervisory working alliance (SWA) is the construct around which effective supervision develops (Bernard & Goodyear, 2009; Efstation, Patton, & Kardash, 1990; Schultz, 2008). A common definition of the SWA was originally proposed by Bordin (1983) and includes agreement on supervision goals and objectives, engaging in work and the quality of the relational bond. Bernard and Goodyear (2009) expand the concept of the supervisory working alliance. Their summary of the literature shows that the SWA is impacted by supervisor factors, supervisee factors and supervision processes. Supervisor factors include the supervisor style, use of referent and expert power bases, self-disclosure, ability to form healthy adult attachments, effective evaluation practices and the impact of unethical behaviour. They have identified supervisee factors that impact the SWA as including attachment style and if the supervisee has a negative experience. Related to supervisor and supervisee factors, Bernard and Goodyear (2009) identified three interaction variables that impact the quality of the SWA. These include racial identity matching, directly discussing issues of race/ethnicity and supervisor/supervisee complementarity. The model outlined by Bernard and Goodyear (2009) is based on a comprehensive review of empirical studies examining the SWA. In some cases, the corpus of empirical evidence is incomplete and further research is required to complete a comprehensive understanding of the SWA, which is the central component of the supervisory process (Bernard & Goodyear, 2009; Schultz, 2008; Schultz et al., 2002).

As has been mentioned, one factor that has a significant impact on the quality of the SWA is the utilisation of power within the supervisory process (Bernard & Goodyear, 2009; Schultz, 2008). Social power is an inherent part of the supervisory process (Bass 1981; Schultz et al., 2002) and is the core issue that requires ethical standards to be established for supervisors. The violation of ethical behaviour has been shown to have a negative impact on the quality of the SWA (Ladany et al., 1999). The use of power within the supervision process can be a challenge. While there is evidence that a more egalitarian approach to supervision will facilitate the quality of the SWA, there remains an expectation that there is a power differential between the supervisor and supervisee. There is a legitimate power differential. At times the supervisor may need to be very directive in ensuring certain events or activities take place. It is these conflicting messages and seemingly conflicting roles that make the ethical use of power in supervision a primary concern. The manner in which the supervisor engages in the relationship and uses power impacts all aspects of the service provision process.

It is for this reason that the creation of an instrument to measure the use of ethical principles in the supervisory process is a critical step in increasing our understanding of the SWA. It is the purpose of this study to create the SPES to measure a rehabilitation counsellor supervisor's use of ethical principles within the supervisory relationship, and assess the construct validity and reliability.
Methods
Instrument Development
Following an extensive review of the literature, items were developed to measure the supervisees’ perceptions of the supervisors’ adherence to autonomy, beneficence/nonmaleficence, fidelity, justice, and veracity. Based upon the argument provided by Cottone and Tarvydas (2007), beneficence and nonmaleficence were operationalised as opposite ends of a single construct. Four to five items were written to measure each ethical principle. Each item was written to represent the supervisee’s perception of the supervisors’ use of that principle in the supervisory process. The ethical principles were operationalised into items representing behaviours that would be indicative of the principle being operant within the supervisory relationship. The final list of items consisted of 22 items measuring the five ethical principles.

TABLE 1
Supervisor Ethics Scale Items

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Item</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>My supervisor keeps promises made to supervisees. (Fidelity)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>My supervisor works for the development and improvement of supervisees. (Beneficence/Nonmaleficence)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>My supervisor does not provide accurate information to supervisees. (Veracity)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>My supervisor respects cultural differences of supervisees. (Justice)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>My supervisor respects the supervisee’s professional development choices. (Autonomy)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>My supervisor does his or her best on behalf of supervisees. (Beneficence/Nonmaleficence)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>My supervisor is loyal to supervisees. (Fidelity)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>My supervisor does not actively seek out ways to help supervisees. (Beneficence/Nonmaleficence)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>My supervisor respects the privacy and confidentiality of supervisees. (Fidelity)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>My supervisor assures that all aspects of the agency are accessible to supervisees. (Justice)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>My supervisor is not aware of cultural differences of supervisees. (Justice)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.</td>
<td>My supervisor avoids deception with supervisees. (Veracity)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.</td>
<td>My supervisor works to ensure the wellbeing of supervisees. (Beneficence/Nonmaleficence)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14.</td>
<td>My supervisor respects the supervisee’s professional role with the consumer. (Autonomy)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15.</td>
<td>My supervisor does not involve supervisees in the establishment of supervision goals. (Autonomy)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16.</td>
<td>My supervisor avoids harmful roles and relationships with supervisees. (Beneficence/Nonmaleficence)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17.</td>
<td>My supervisor advocates against practices or rules that discriminate. (Justice)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18.</td>
<td>My supervisor strives to be fair in all decisions involving supervisees. (Justice)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19.</td>
<td>My supervisor delivers consistent messages to supervisees. (Veracity)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20.</td>
<td>My supervisor involves supervisees in the design of supervision tasks/activities. (Autonomy)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21.</td>
<td>My supervisor is truthful and honest with supervisees. (Veracity)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22.</td>
<td>My supervisor does not advocate for supervisees. (Fidelity)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Participants also received the Supervisory Working Alliance Inventory-Trainee Form (Efstation, Patton, & Kardash, 1990). This instrument was developed to measure the trainee’s perception of the quality of the SWA. It consists of 19 total items that measure two constructs, including Client Focus and Rapport. This two-factor model for trainee perceptions was validated using factor analysis (Efstation, Patton, & Kardash). Items also demonstrated strong interitem reliability with coefficients of $r = .90$ and $r = .77$ for Rapport and Client Focus subscales respectively.

**Participants and Procedure**

Data collection was conducted in partnership with a state-designated vocational rehabilitation agency in the western United States. The state vocational rehabilitation agencies possess unique features that contribute to the examination of supervisory processes. First, counsellors employed by this type of agency represent diverse levels of experience and training (Bernard & Goodyear, 2004). Second, every counsellor has a direct supervisor, regardless of developmental level and professional qualifications.

The instrument was sent to every counsellor in the agency ($N = 121$) with an invitation to participate. Of the original 121 invitations to participate, 87 (72%) instruments were completed and returned. Within this group, 49 (56%) were female and 38 (44%) were male. The group had a mean of 9.96 ($SD = 8.53$) years working in the field, and 6.91 ($SD = 6.61$) years working for the agency.

The instrument was disseminated via electronic means. Participants were sent an e-mail inviting them to participate and were direct to a web page containing the informed consent form and link to the online instrument. A reminder e-mail was sent out to participants after two weeks. Once participants had completed the online instrument, they selected the submit button and the data was collected via a database on a secure server housed at the author’s university.

**Data Analysis**

Construct validity was utilised to examine the validity of the newly created SPES. Construct validity exists when two measures believed to reflect the same underlying phenomenon are highly correlated (Portney & Watkins, 2000). The appropriateness of using construct validity in this case is grounded in the assumption that the supervisor’s use of ethical principles is reflective of the same underlying process operant within the SWA. While they are not exactly the same construct, the argument is viable that a violation of any of the ethical principles (autonomy, beneficence, nonmaleficence, fidelity, justice and veracity) would do significant damage to the quality of the SWA. Therefore, while it is not assumed that the ethical principles of the supervisor and the SWA are the same construct, they are highly related to the underlying construct of relationship between the supervisor and supervisee. Pearson product correlations between the subscales of the SPES and the SWA-T were utilised to evaluate the validity of the newly created instrument. Reliability was measured utilising Cronbach’s alpha.

**Results**

To address construct validity, respondent scores from the Supervisor Principle Ethics Scale (SPES) were correlated with scores from the Supervisory Working Alliance Inventory-Trainee Form (SWAI-T). All correlations between the subscales of the
SPES and SWAI-T were between .749 and .862, and are significant at the $p < .001$ level. Cronbach's alpha for the SPES was .97, and was calculated for each subscale (Autonomy = .84, Beneficence/Nonmaleficence = .91, Justice = .87, Veracity = .83, Fidelity = .88).

**Discussion**

Since the establishment of ethical standards for counsellor supervisors (ACES, 1995), the ethical behaviour of supervisors has been recognised as an important part of the supervisory process and an essential contributing factor in the establishment of a quality supervisory working relationship (Bernard & Goodyear, 2009). The challenge that has limited the empirical exploration of ethical behaviour within supervision has been the difficulty of operationalising and measuring ethical behaviour. To date, the large portion of literature addressing supervision ethics has focused on conceptual and philosophically based articles. Empirical investigations have primarily addressed interpretations of the ethical code and the violations thereof. This approach limits the potential responses of participants (Ladany et al., 1999) and therefore the application of findings beyond the ethical code. If the concept of ethical behaviour extends beyond violations of the code of ethics, commonly recognised as the mandatory or minimal level of behaviour for professionals (Cottone & Tarvydas, 2007), then the examination of supervisors' ethical behaviour must extend into questions of ethical principles. By studying the impact of principle ethics on the supervisory

### TABLE 2

**SPES Correlation with the Supervisory Working Alliance**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>SWAI-T Rapport</th>
<th>SWAI-T Client Focus</th>
<th>SWAI-T Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Autonomy</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pearson correlation</td>
<td>.841**</td>
<td>.780**</td>
<td>.830**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Significance</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Beneficence/nonmaleficence</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pearson correlation</td>
<td>.862**</td>
<td>.833**</td>
<td>.862**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Significance</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Veracity</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pearson correlation</td>
<td>.833**</td>
<td>.801**</td>
<td>.831**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Significance</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Justice</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pearson correlation</td>
<td>.785**</td>
<td>.749**</td>
<td>.782**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Significance</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Fidelity</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pearson correlation</td>
<td>.835**</td>
<td>.767**</td>
<td>.822**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Significance</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

** Correlation is significant at the .001 level.
process the discussion of aspirational ethics may be grounded in empirically explored cause and effect, rather than simply something to which ‘we aspire’.

The creation of the SPES and the evidence provided here of the strong correlation it has with the SWA provides a method and instrument to begin the study of ethical principles in a very applied manner. Once behaviours are operationalised, and assessment is achievable, then it is possible to understand the extent and manner in which ethical behaviour influences the SWA and activities of supervision. Such a tool will assist researchers and educators to operationalise, assess and potentially change supervisor ethical behaviour in a purposeful manner. The development of an assessment tool based on principle ethics facilitates the examination of the impact of supervisor behaviour, across the continuum of ethics, on the supervision process. It allows rehabilitation counsellor supervisors to begin to address the very question that forms the foundation of principle ethics, ‘What should I do?’ (Remley & Herlihy, 2010).

The SPES has significant potential for use in the assessment and development of supervisory relationships in practice settings. There is potential for its use as a diagnostic tool when the supervisory process stalls between a supervisor and supervisee, or for a general assessment tool to be used across an entire service provision agency. The operationalisation of the ethical principles into specific items may be helpful in training new supervisors in the process of developing a quality supervisory relationship. As the SPES measures supervisee perceptions, it may also be useful in training new supervisors to consider their communication patterns and use of power from the perspective of the supervisee. Further research documenting supervisee perceptions of the supervisor's use of ethical principles, when engaging in specific behaviours, will be beneficial in the development of such training materials.

Limitations of the Study

The primary limitation of the study is the sampling methodology. In this study, a sample of convenience was utilised and all respondents were employed within the same public agency. As a result, generalisability of results to other populations and groups of counselling professionals cannot be assumed. Related to this, the validation study was conducted using working counsellors as the sample. It is possible that results would differ if the SPES were used to study supervisor ethical principles in counsellor education programs.

Another limitation of the current study is the exclusive focus on the supervisee’s perspective. To have a comprehensive assessment of the dynamics of the supervisory relationship, particularly related to a supervisor's use of ethical principles, it is helpful to also collect data from the supervisors. While the exploration of the supervisor's perspective in the use of ethical principles is an area for future study, it was not within the scope of the current study.

Directions for Future Research

As ethical behaviour on the part of supervisors revolves around the use of power, a primary focus of future research needs to be the relationship between the use of power and ethical behaviour within the context of the supervisory relationship. Specifically, using the French and Raven (1959) taxonomy of supervisory power — which includes legitimate, expert, reward, referent and coercive power — would be beneficial as referent and expert power have already been shown to be related to the quality of the SWA (Schultz et al., 2002). Within the current study, the SPES has demonstrated a strong correlation with
the overall supervisor working alliance (SWAI-T). It will be beneficial to explore the use of ethical principles by the supervisor within the context of the various components of the SWA as outlined by Bernard and Goodyear (2009).

As was mentioned earlier, the scope of investigation in the current study was limited to the perceptions of supervisees regarding the ethical behaviour of their supervisors. To obtain a comprehensive view of the role of ethical behaviour within the supervisory relationship, it will be helpful to examine this process from the supervisor's perspective. Specifically, it would be helpful to understand the extent to which supervisors and supervisees converge and/or diverge in their perspectives of the ethical nature of behaviour and to what extent that potential discrepancy impacts the SWA.

Finally, it is recommended that the supervisor's use of ethical principles be explored within the context of counsellor education programs. Specifically, do perceptions of the ethical behaviour of university supervisors impact the clinical training process? Do student perceptions of the use of ethical principles by site supervisors impact the clinical training process? While there is a power differential in both educational and employment settings, it is quite possible that the use of power by supervisors differs from setting to setting. It is possible that the variables of counsellor experience, competence and length of time being supervised by a single supervisor may have an impact on perceptions of ethical behaviour and the quality of the supervisory relationship.

**Conclusion**

There is an inherent power differential within every supervisory relationship. The onus of responsibility to manage the use of power within the supervisory process falls on the supervisor. Ethical principles are a central part of that self-regulatory process. When ethical principles are operant within the relationship, the potential for developing a productive and mutually engaging supervisory process is increased. When supervisors are perceived as being unethical, damage can be done to the supervisory process. The logic of this argument requires the examination of a supervisor's ethical behaviour to extend beyond the violation of an established code of ethics, and look at the entire scope of ethical behaviour. By operationalising and measuring the use of ethical principles by supervisors, it is now possible to conduct empirical investigation into the impact of ethical behaviour on the supervision process. Additionally, it is possible to assess the ethical behaviour of supervisors and therefore develop strategies for improving practice. These objectives will lead to a higher quality supervisory working alliance between supervisors and counsellors, resulting in an improved work environment for professionals and improved services for clients.

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