

Topical Manuscript

A Content Analysis of Rehabilitation Counseling Supervision Literature

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Keywords: supervision, rehabilitation counseling, content analysis, supervision practices, publication trends

<https://doi.org/10.52017/001c.134083>

Rehabilitation Counselors and Educators Journal

Vol. 14, Issue 1, 2025

Supervision has been well established as an important evidence-based intervention in the profession of rehabilitation counseling and the relevance and importance of supervision to rehabilitation counseling continues to grow. Recognizing documented themes and emerging trends within professional literature could be useful to influence future research on supervision in rehabilitation counseling. Content analysis is an empirically grounded methodological approach of analyzing written content to determine themes and gauge their potential impact. In this content analysis, we analyzed 63 peer-reviewed journal articles meeting pre-established inclusion criteria to determine: (a) how much scholarship has been published on rehabilitation counseling supervision; (b) what types of journal articles have been addressed in the rehabilitation counseling supervision literature; (c) what topics have been addressed in rehabilitation counseling supervision journal articles, and (d) the emerging trends in the rehabilitation counseling supervision literature. We found 63 journal articles devoted to rehabilitation counseling supervision published in 11 different journals between 1973 and 2023. Among the 63 journal articles, 27 (42.85%) were empirical journal articles and 36 (57.14%) were conceptual journal articles. The topic of supervisors (e.g., roles, development, self-efficacy) was the most frequent topic representing 49.21% of the journal articles included in the analysis followed by ethics at 31.75%. The least frequent topics were client (i.e., client presenting issues, supervising specific population of clients; $n = 1$, 1.59%), modality (i.e., supervision modality, individual, peer, group, multiple modalities, $n = 2$; 3.17%) and technology (i.e., use of technology, web-based, $n = 5$, 7.94%). Trends of publications were compared with previous content analysis studies to determine how rehabilitation counseling aligns with other counseling specialties.

Supervision is a critically important evidence-based intervention in the field of counseling because it directly impacts quality assurance of services (Bernard & Goodyear, 2014), professional growth of counselors (Borders & Leddick, 1987), ethical compliance (Knox et al., 2006), support and well-being (Holloway, 1995), and enhanced client outcomes (Carroll et al., 2007). Supervision has been increasingly part of the rehabilitation counseling profession starting in the early 2000s; although supervision was significant to counseling-related fields for decades beforehand (Herbert et al., 2018; Schultz et al., 2002). However, the integration of rehabilitation counseling programs into Council for Accreditation and Related Educational Programs (CACREP) accreditation has solidified the requirements concerning supervision in graduate education and training programs among their Professional Practice standards (CACREP, 2023). Additionally, with an increasing number of rehabilitation counselors venturing into non-traditional career settings (e.g., community rehabilitation providers, private

sector/forensic rehabilitation), the significance of licensing boards, credentialing bodies, and ethical codes prioritizing post-graduate supervision holds particular relevance to rehabilitation counseling professionals (American Counseling Association, 2014; Commission on Rehabilitation Counselor Certification, 2023). In sum, supervision is clearly an extremely important and relevant topic to the entire rehabilitation counseling profession.

Vespa & Ellenbecker (2012) describe supervision in rehabilitation counseling as “a collaborative and structured process wherein a qualified supervisor provides guidance and oversight to rehabilitation counselors, fostering their professional development, clinical competence, and ethical decision-making as they work with individuals with disabilities to achieve independence and societal integration” (p. 307). Similar descriptions of supervision in rehabilitation counseling are provided by Schultz, Landon, and Blout (2022) and DiNitto and Smith (2016). There is general agreement in the profession regarding the definition of su-

Figure 1. Examples of Clinical and Administrative Foci

Clinical	Administrative
• Case conceptualization • Effectiveness of counseling skills • Encouraging empathetic listening • Psychosocial interventions • Use of theory • Reviewing ethical issues	• Compliance with policy and procedure • Ensuring agency needs are met • Outlining the supervision process • Evaluating client service plans • Review of case expenditures • Conducting formal evaluations

pervision in rehabilitation counseling literature and how it should focus on collaboration between supervisor and supervisee, as professional development for supervisees and for ethical decision-making purposes. A recent study that assessed the administrative supervision of rehabilitation counselors—which ensures adherence to efficiency standards, performance expectations and policy practices, as opposed to clinical supervision that promotes counselor professional growth and development within counselor-client contexts—the researchers provided an empirical investigation and an enhanced program evaluation of supervision in rehabilitation field settings (Sabella et al., 2021). Using a comprehensive, valid instrument ascertaining multiple functions that comprise administrative and clinical roles and assessing the frequency of practices under each of the roles, their research findings revealed that exercising clinical supervision roles significantly strengthened relationships and increased satisfaction with supervision participation than practice of the administrative supervision roles. This study highlighted the importance of distinguishing between clinical and administrative supervision. The distinction between clinical and administrative supervision is particularly important in the rehabilitation counseling specialty because, historically, rehabilitation counseling has been done within federal-state public vocational rehabilitation systems (see [Figure 1](#)). As a result, large case-loads, staffing shortages, and bureaucratic challenges can be barriers to implementing clinical supervision.

Despite the pattern of agreement in the professional literature regarding the definition of rehabilitation counseling supervision, the current and future trajectory of rehabilitation counseling supervision literature remains unclear. A systematic review of published literature provides much value for contributing to knowledge development and dissemination. Specifically, content analysis can help to understand trends, organize data, offer a way to objectively analyze, identify relationships, inform decision making, and generate new knowledge (Krippendorff, 2018). Therefore, given the importance of the topic and the timing for the profession, a content analysis of the rehabilitation counseling supervision literature was warranted. The study's purpose was to use content analysis methodology to determine the trends of literature published on rehabilitation counseling supervision from 1973 to 2023. The following research questions guided the current study:

1. How much scholarship has been published on rehabilitation counseling supervision? Has the frequency of these relevant publications increased over time?
2. What peer-reviewed journal articles (e.g., empirical, conceptual) have been published on rehabilitation counseling supervision? Do the types of these relevant journal articles published differ significantly by journal outlet?
3. What specific topics have been addressed in the rehabilitation counseling supervision literature? Are these specific topics likely to be addressed in certain peer-reviewed journal articles (e.g., empirical, conceptual)?
4. What are the emerging trends in the rehabilitation counseling supervision literature? Are the emerging trends in the rehabilitation counseling supervision literature mirroring the emerging trends found in the larger counseling profession?

Method

Coding Teams and Methods

The research team consisted of: (a) one principle investigator (PI; first author) and who was responsible for overseeing the content analysis (i.e., developing the coding scheme, training coders, ensuring coding reliability, overseeing data analysis), providing quality assurance, developing research objectives, and ensuring adherence to ethical guidelines; (b) two data collection coordinators who worked with the PI regarding data acquisition from literature databases, websites, and archival records and served as coders; (c) one quality assurance coordinator who worked with the PI to address discrepancies or issues that arose during the analysis; and (d) three coders responsible for coding the data according to the established coding scheme. The seven members of the research team provided input to the PI during the development and at critical points during the current study. All members of the research team have education, training, and experience in rehabilitation counseling and are familiar with the rehabilitation counseling supervision process.

Data Collection Procedures

While the current study is systematic and generalizable, this study did not require Institutional Review Board review or approval because it did not meet the definition of human subject's research on the grounds that the data is archival and publicly available. The authors utilized Krippendorff's (2018) procedures for conducting a content analysis to determine the unit of analysis, sampling, recording, and reducing. The analysis unit was defined as any peer-reviewed journal article addressing rehabilitation counseling supervision. The authors first determined which journal outlets would be searched and decided that the national and international journals included in the Bernard and Luke (2015) content analysis of clinical supervision journal articles in counseling would be included in the current study ($n = 26$). Including the Bernard and Luke list allowed for direct

comparisons between that specific study and comprised a robust list of counseling-related journals. Since the focus on the current study is rehabilitation counseling, 11 additional journal outlets were included because of their specific focus on rehabilitation counseling and could reasonably have journal articles that met the inclusion criteria. In total, 37 journal outlets were included and subsequently searched.

The research team predetermined the keywords/phrases that would be used in the study to ensure consistency throughout the project. The final keywords/phrases used in this study were: “(*rehabilitation counseling OR vocational rehabilitation OR rehabilitation administration OR private rehabilitation OR vocational rehabilitation counseling*) AND supervision”. The use of the Boolean operator ‘and’ was selected because it specifically directed databases and other sources that provided results that contained all keywords. The use of parentheses accounted for the phrases often being used interchangeably in the literature to refer to the counseling specialty targeted in this study. The combined use of parentheses and the Boolean operator (simple words (e.g., “and,” “or,” “not”) used in conjunctions to combine or exclude keywords in a search resulting in more focused and productive results) was thought to yield the most inclusive and relevant results for the current study. The key phrases selected for this study differ from the search term used in the content analysis of school counseling supervision by Bledsoe et al. (2019) to account for unique aspects of the rehabilitation counseling specialty in terms of nomenclature and the multiple ways in which the rehabilitation counseling specialty is commonly referred to in the literature and in the broader field of counseling and beyond.

The research team determined additional inclusion criteria for the current study and used these criteria during the search process to return relevant results. Specifically, in addition to including the predetermined keywords, the article must have been (a) published between 1973 and 2023, (b) peer-reviewed (i.e., not dissertation, book or book chapter, editorial, conference proceeding or similar), and (c) available in English. Research team members filtered searches by these criteria when possible. Using the predetermined search term and the search filters previously described, two members of the research team began by locating each journal in their respective university library. This process allowed researchers to use the predetermined search term to search for journal articles within each journal and add the filters noted. Two members of the research team completed this process for each journal included in the current study. This intended redundancy allowed researchers to establish interrater reliability between search results and account for varying results due to different levels of access based on institution affiliation and various filter capabilities of the online libraries used. For example, some libraries filtered out reference lists from the keyword search while others could not. Other libraries were able to filter out book chapters while others could not. Any inconsistencies with results between researchers were resolved by the first author in collaboration with the research team until consensus was reached. When appropriate, researchers were inclusive

of journal articles knowing the identified journal articles would be hand screened in the next step. Additional members of the research team utilized multiple sources (e.g., academic search engines such as Google Scholar and reference lists from journal articles) to identify additional journal articles that met the search criteria but were not identified in the university library searches. This was done to check consistency of results and ensure all potential journal articles were included in the current study.

Next, abstracts or full-text copies of each article meeting the inclusion criteria through databases and other means were located. The research team used multiple methods to locate full-text copies of journal articles such as university sources, interlibrary loan, contacting authors or journal editors directly, and utilizing other online sources. Then, two members of the research team began screening journal articles using the predetermined inclusion criteria. To be included in the current study, journal articles needed to: (a) clearly focus on rehabilitation counseling supervision; (a) be available in English; (c) be available in full-text electronically; (d) be a peer-reviewed journal article not a dissertation, book chapter, book review, editorial, or conference proceeding; and (e) be available at no cost. While journal articles were filtered for these criteria during the search process, having two members of the research team screen the journal articles ensured more confidence in the final sample. A third reviewer was utilized in situations where reviews were split. A total of 484 journal articles were screened for the current study. Of these, 421 were determined to not meet one or more inclusion criteria. Most journal articles screened out did not clearly focus on rehabilitation counseling supervision. At this stage, journal articles were retained if focused on supervisory functions such as administration, mentoring, and evaluation, consistent with the current study’s purpose. Therefore, the total number of journal articles in the final sample was 63. A full list of these journal articles can be found in Appendix A.

Data Coding Procedures

A combination of deductive and inductive coding was used to establish the codebook. Deductive coding drew on existing types and topics from Bernard and Luke (2015) and Bledsoe et al. (2019). Concurrently, inductive coding allowed coders to propose new codes during the coding process. This approach facilitated comparisons with previous studies while enabling the inclusion of new codes tailored to the rehabilitation counseling specialty’s needs. To clarify codes and increase interrater reliability, a pilot of the codebook was conducted. In the pilot, three coders independently reviewed 10 randomly selected journal articles. Coders were informed of the deductive and inductive combined approach. After coding was completed, percentage agreement statistics were calculated to determine interrater reliability. Krippendorff (2018) recommends a percent agreement between independent coders of 70% or more. In the pilot, percentage agreement for each type and topic code ranged from 70-100% (see [Table 1](#) and see [Table 2](#)). The team met, discussed, created more operational definitions, and added a topic code for “supervision pedagogy”

Table 1. Interrater Agreement (% Agreement) for Type Codes

Coding Phase	Percent Agreement
Pilot (n = 10)	100% (n = 10 of 10)
Main/Prior to auditing (n = 63)	87.30% (n = 55 of 63)

Percentage agreement ranged from 88.89% to 100% for the 11 topic codes, with all 11 codes meeting the threshold of 70% or higher regarding percent agreement between independent coders (see [Table 2](#)). The interrater reliability demonstrated satisfactory consistency among coders.

that was considered by the team to be important for rehabilitation counseling. With these changes, the team established consensus on codes for the randomly selected journal articles and established a final codebook that would be used for coding all the journal articles. The final code book consisted of 6 type codes and 11 topic codes. Coders were instructed to identify one type code per article (i.e., an article can only have one methodological approach) and indicate all applicable topic codes for each article (i.e., articles can have more than one topic). The codebook also included a category for coders which was labeled “catch all” and invited coders to specify topics they found in the journal articles that did not fit into the 11 defined categories.

Five coders and two auditors were involved in the coding process for the current study. Two coders were randomly assigned to each article so interrater reliability could be established. This results in each coder being assigned to independently code approximately 20 selected journal articles. The coders were instructed to provide auditors with type and topic codes for each article assigned to them and coders did not have access to results from other coders until their coding process was completed. Once all coding was completed, the auditors reviewed the results to calculate the percent agreement between coders. The percentage agreement for type code in the current study was 87.30%, above the 70% threshold (See [Table 1](#)).

Results

Research Question 1: Frequency of Publications

We identified 63 peer-reviewed journal articles devoted to rehabilitation counseling supervision found in 11 professional, academic journals published between 1973 and 2023. Twenty-six of the journals examined contained no published journal articles on this topic (see [Table 3](#)). The three main publication outlets for rehabilitation counseling supervision scholarship, collectively accounting for 66.67% (n = 42) of published journal articles, were: (a) *Rehabilitation Counseling Bulletin* (RCB; n = 21; 33.33%), (b) *Journal of Rehabilitation Administration* (JRA; n = 11; 17.46%), and (c) *Journal of Applied Rehabilitation Counseling* (JARC; n = 10; 15.87%). Three journal articles (4.77%) were published in an international journal with the remaining 60 (95.24%) published in journal outlets based in the United States.

The frequency of publications by year was sporadic with the most publications in any year occurring in 2021 (n = 6). The next highest years are as follows: 5 publications in

both 2020 and 2010; 4 publications in the years 2018, 2016, 2012, 2011, 2006, and 1995; and 3 publications in 2002. The first publication on the topic was observed in 1984. Furthermore, 1995 was the first year that more than 1 article was published. A total of 65.08% of the journal articles have been published since 2010 (n = 41). When looking at the frequency by decade, an obvious upward trend is noted (years 1973-1982, n = 0, 0.00%; 1983-1992, n = 2, 3.17%; 1993-2002, n = 11, 17.46%; 2003-2012, n = 22, 34.92%; 2013-2023, n = 28, 44.44%). *Rehabilitation Counseling Bulletin* published journal articles between 1995 and 2023 (n = 21) with an average of 0.75 journal articles published per year during that time frame. The *Journal of Rehabilitation Administration* published supervision articles between 2005 and 2021 (n = 11) with an average of 0.69 supervision articles per year during that time. Additionally, the *Journal of Applied Rehabilitation Counseling* published supervision journal articles between 2001 and 2018 (n = 10) with an average of 0.59 journal articles per year during that period.

Research Question 2: Types of Journal Articles

Among the 63 selected journal articles, 27 (42.85%) were empirical research articles and 36 (57.14%) were conceptual in nature (see [Table 3](#)). Of the 27 empirical articles, 18 (66.67%) utilized quantitative methodology, 6 (22.22%) utilized qualitative methodology, and 3 (11.11%) utilized mixed methodology. Of the 36 conceptual manuscripts, 18 (50%) were review or commentary, 3 (8.33%) were articles that proposed or modified models of supervision, and 15 (41.67%) were articles there were primarily descriptive of the practice of supervision. *Rehabilitation Counseling Bulletin* published the most quantitative articles (n = 12), followed by the *Journal of Applied Rehabilitation Counseling* (n = 4) and the *Journal of Rehabilitation Administration* (n = 3). In addition, *Rehabilitation Counseling Bulletin* also published the most conceptual articles (n = 9), followed by the *Journal of Rehabilitation Administration* (n = 8) and the *Journal of Applied Rehabilitation Counseling* (n = 6).

Research Question 3: Topics of Journal Articles

The 63 selected journal articles underwent coding, allowing coders to assign multiple topics to each article (see [Table 2](#)). Among these, the topic of supervisors emerged prominently, with 31 instances (comprising discussions on roles, characteristics, development, conceptualization, and self-efficacy), accounting for the highest frequency (49.21%) of the articles included in the analysis. Examples of articles coded for this topic discussed the supervisor's role in evaluation, education, and the progression of supervisors in these roles. The topic of ethics was the next most frequent (n = 20). Ethics included ethical, legal, and professional issues and this topic appeared in 31.75% of the articles in the study. An example of a journal article coded for this topic included the ethical responsibilities of supervisors. The least frequent topics were client-related (e.g., client presenting issues, supervising specific population of clients; n = 1, 1.59%), modality (e.g., supervision modality, individual, peer, group, multiple modalities, n =

Table 2. Interrater Agreement (% Agreement) For Topics

	Intervention	Multicultural	Relationship	Client presenting issue	Use of technology	Ethical/ Legal	Supervisee	Supervisors	Modality	Supervision type	Pedagogy*
Pilot (n = 10)	70% (n = 7)	100% (n = 10)	100% (n = 10)	100% (n = 10)	100% (n = 10)	90% (n = 9)	100% (n = 10)	80% (n = 8)	100% (n = 10)	100% (n = 10)	-----
Main study (n = 63)	88.89% (n = 56)	95.24% (n = 60)	90.48% (n = 57)	95.24% (n = 60)	100% (n = 63)	95.24% (n = 60)	95.24% (n = 60)	93.65% (n = 59)	95.24% (n = 60)	96.82% (n = 61)	95.24% (n = 60)

Note. Two raters independently coded each of the journal articles for each of the topics (yes or no). In the pretest there were 10 articles and in the main study there were 63 articles. The percentage agreement represents the percentages of articles where the coders came up with the same code (yes or no). N represents the number of articles on which the coders agreed.

Table 3. Rehabilitation Counseling Supervision Publication by Type, 1973-2023

Journal	Quan	Qual	MM	RC	CM	CT	<i>n</i>	%
<i>Rehabilitation Counseling Bulletin</i>	10	1	1	5	1	3	21	33.33
<i>Journal of Rehabilitation Administration</i>	3	0	0	6	0	2	11	17.46
<i>Journal of Applied Rehabilitation Counseling</i>	3	1	0	3	1	2	10	15.87
<i>Journal of Rehabilitation</i>	0	2	0	1	0	2	5	7.93
<i>The Clinical Supervisor</i>	1	1	0	1	1	0	4	6.35
<i>Australian Journal of Rehabilitation Counseling</i>	1	0	1	0	0	1	3	4.76
<i>Rehabilitation Research, Policy, and Education</i>	0	0	1	1	0	1	3	4.76
<i>The Rehabilitation Professional</i>	0	1	0	0	0	1	2	3.17
<i>Rehabilitation Education</i>	0	0	0	1	0	1	2	3.17
<i>Journal of Vocational Rehabilitation</i>	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	1.59
<i>Rehabilitation Counselors and Educators</i>	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	1.59
<i>n</i>	18	6	3	18	3	15	63	
<i>%</i>	28.57	9.52	4.76	28.57	4.76	23.80		

Note. Quan = quantitative; Qual = Qualitative; MM = Mixed Methods; RC = Conceptual: Review or commentary (literature reviews and commentary articles); CM = Conceptual: Model (articles that proposed or modified models of supervision); CT = Conceptual: Training or practice (articles that were primarily descriptive of the practice of supervision by proposing training recommendations or techniques/strategies for supervisors to use).

No journal articles meeting inclusion criteria were located in: *Asia Pacific Journal of Counseling and Psychotherapy*; *British Journal of Guidance & Counselling*; *Canadian Journal of Counselling and Psychotherapy*; *Counseling Outcome Research and Evaluation*; *Counselor Education and Supervision*; *The Family Journal*; *International Journal for the Advancement of Counseling*; *The Journal for Specialists in Group Work*; *Journal of Addictions & Offender Counseling*; *Journal of College Counseling*; *Journal of Counseling & Development*; *Journal of Creativity in Mental Health*; *Journal of Employment Counseling*; *The Journal of Humanistic Counseling*; *Journal of Mental Health Counseling*; *Journal of Multicultural Counseling and Development*; *Journal of Technology in Counseling*; *Measurement and Evaluation in Counseling and Development*; *The Professional Counselor*; *Professional School Counseling*; *Adultspan Journal*; *The Career Development Quarterly*; *Journal of LGBT Issues in Counseling*; *Journal of Social Action in Counseling and Psychology*; *Journal of Counselor Leadership & Advocacy*; or *Clinical Rehabilitation*.

2; 3.17%) and technology (e.g., use of technology, web-based, *n* = 5, 7.94%). Empirical journal articles were more likely to discuss topics related to relationships, supervisees, supervisors, and type of supervision (see Table 5). Conceptual articles were more likely to include topics related to interventions, multicultural, technology, ethics, and pedagogy.

Research Question 4: Trends of Publications

To see how rehabilitation counseling supervision literature compares to other counseling specialties, the results from the current study were compared to previous content analysis published projects investigating clinical supervision publications in counseling 2005-2014 (Bernard & Luke, 2015) and a content analysis of school counseling supervision 1968-2017 (Bledsoe et al., 2019). A similar number of journal articles were found on the topic of rehabilitation counseling supervision (*n* = 63) compared to school counseling supervision (*n* = 69) during the same number of years, though less compared to 184 journal articles in the Bernard and Luke (2015) study. The 184 journal articles came from 22 journals in the Bernard and Luke (2015) study, 11 journals in the Bledsoe et al. (2019) study, and 11 journals in the current study. Approximately 44% of the journal articles in the Bledsoe et al. (2019) study were empirical, compared to approximately 43% in the current study and 45% in Bernard & Luke (2005).

Discussion

Research Question 1

Research Question 1 focused on the frequency of supervision publications specific to rehabilitation counseling from 1973 to 2023. Supervision has been a long-standing practice and recommendation (English et al., 1979; Ross, 1979; Spears & Vialle, 1970) in rehabilitation counseling. Given the early recognition that supervision requires training, is about developing counselors, and aims at improving outcomes for persons with disabilities (Emener, 1978), it is perhaps somewhat surprising to find that only 63 articles fit the search parameters for the 50-year period covered in this literature review. This equates to a little over one article per year dedicated to supervision between 1973 to 2023. However, with the more recent focus on supervision in the literature (*n* = 41, 65.08%) being published in the last 14 years, a growing commitment to supervision scholarship and a better understanding of supervision practices in rehabilitation counseling is apparent.

Herbert et al. (2018) pointed out concerns related to the empirical basis informing evidence-based practice related to supervision and rehabilitation counseling. Herbert suggested empirically supported training and interventions are needed to move from the art of supervision to the science of supervision. Supervision has received emphasis at points in time over the last 50 years (e.g., 1995 *Rehabilitation Counseling Bulletin* special issue on supervision; CRCC sponsoring the CRC-CS credential in 1999), but the emphasis did

Table 4. Rehabilitation Counseling Supervision Publications by Topic, 1973-2023

Journal	Interv	MC	Relat	Client	Tech	Ethics	S'visee	S'visors	Modality	Type	Pedagogy
<i>Rehabilitation Counseling Bulletin</i>	4	2	5	1	2	9	4	13	1	6	4
<i>Journal of Rehabilitation Administration</i>	3	2	1	0	0	0	1	5	0	4	0
<i>Journal of Applied Rehabilitation Counseling</i>	1	0	3	0	1	2	3	5	0	0	1
<i>Journal of Rehabilitation</i>	0	0	1	0	1	1	2	3	0	2	2
<i>The Clinical Supervisor</i>	2	0	1	0	0	0	2	3	1	2	1
<i>Australian Journal of Rehabilitation Counseling</i>	0	1	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	1	2
<i>Rehabilitation Research, Policy, and Education</i>	2	0	0	0	1	1	1	1	0	0	1
<i>The Rehabilitation Professional</i>	1	0	1	0	0	2	1	1	0	0	0
<i>Rehabilitation Education</i>	0	1	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	1	1
<i>Journal of Vocational Rehabilitation</i>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
<i>Rehabilitation Counselors and Educators</i>	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
n = 63	13	7	12	1	5	20	14	31	2	16	13

Note: Interv = Supervision interventions (theory based, systemic, observation, experiential, expressive/narrative, wellness based); MC = Multicultural supervision/advocacy (process of MS, rural/urban CS, LGBTQ+, religion/spirituality); Relat. = Supervision Relationship (general discussion, supervisor, characteristics, working alliance); Client = Client Presenting Issues (supervising specific population of clients); Tech. = Use of Technology/Web-based; Ethics = Ethical/legal/professional (Professional, legal, ethical); S'visee = Supervisee (development, perceptions, characteristics, self-efficacy); S'visor = Supervisors (roles, characteristics, development, conceptualization, self-efficacy); Modality = Supervision Modality (individual, peer, group, multiple modalities); Type = Supervision Type (clinical, administrative, multiple types); Pedagogy = Supervision Pedagogy (how to teach supervision at any level).

Table 5. Topic of Article by Methodology (Frequency and Percentage of Journal Articles in the Study)

	Interv	MC	Relat	Client	Tech	Ethics	S'visee	S'visors	Modality	Type	Pedagogy
Articles empirical (n = 27)	5	2	9	2	2	6	8	17	1	9	5
Articles conceptual (n = 36)	7	6	3	0	3	15	6	14	1	6	6

not seem to last for any extended period. The turning point may have been when the Commission for Rehabilitation Counselor Certification added a specific section on supervision to the Code of Professional Ethics for Certified Rehabilitation Counselors as an aspect of ethical service delivery in 2010. Since that time, the emphasis on supervision research and the potential impact of supervision on the professional development of rehabilitation counselors and outcomes for people with disabilities has proliferated, as evidenced by most studies included in this literature review coming after 2010.

Research Question 2

The study's second research question examined types of journal articles (e.g., empirical, conceptual) published on rehabilitation counseling supervision, and whether a difference between journal outlets existed. Supervision has been an important topic for the field, but little research has examined publication outlet and type over the last 50 years. In addition to highlighting an increase in supervision-related topics among publications, we found the highest type of publication to be quantitative and conceptual (commentary and training). Conversely, conceptual models of supervision and mixed-method publication types were the least common over the last 50 years. Among specific journals,

Table 6. Comparing Topic Code Frequencies (and the percentage of journal articles in the study coded for that topic).

	Interv	MC	Relat	Client	Tech	Ethics	S'visee	S'visors	Modality	Type	Pedagogy
Current study (n = 63)	13 (20.63%)	7 (11.11%)	12 (19.05%)	1 (1.59%)	5 (7.94%)	20 (31.75%)	14 (22.22%)	31 (49.20%)	2 (3.17%)	16 (25.40%)	13 (20.63%)
Bledsoe et al. (n = 69)	29 (42.02%)	10 (14.49%)	19 (27.54%)	2 (2.90%)	6 (8.70%)	33 (47.82%)	50 (72.46%)	44 (63.77%)	32 (46.38%)	61 (88.41%)	No comparison
Bernard & Luke (n = 184)	29 (15.76%)	26 (14.13%)	13 (7.07%)	13 (7.07%)	12 (6.52%)	5 (2.72%)	20 (10.87%)	15 (8.15%)	83 (45.11%)	No comparison	No comparison

Note. Journal articles can have more than one topic code; therefore percentages may not add to 100.

RCB published supervision-related pieces the most compared to any other journal, by more than double. This could be because of the journal's prestige within the field, the number of issues published per year, and/or their awareness of supervision significance. Further, a journal's scope, focus, and desired manuscripts (e.g., number of individual articles and full and/or special issues published by a journal per year and over time) could impact publication types and patterns.

Research Question 3

The current study's third research question revealed several key trends in the literature regarding topics of rehabilitation counseling supervision journal articles. The most frequently occurring topic was supervisors, including their roles, characteristics, development, and self-efficacy. This finding underscores the vast and important roles of supervision in evaluation, education, and professional development, with the role and function of the supervisor themselves as a primary focus.

The topic of ethics also emerged as a frequent topic. This indicates a significant concern with ethical, legal, and professional issues in supervision. The frequency of ethics in the literature also suggests a strong attempt at maintaining high ethical standards in supervision and addressing the complex situations supervisors may encounter. In particular, the ethical responsibilities of the supervisor frequently appeared, which should not be surprising considering the aforementioned most frequently occurring topic of supervisors themselves. This, combined with supervisors' ethical and legal mandates with their professional credentials highlights the importance of ethical and legal issues in rehabilitation counseling supervision, education, and training (Landon et al., 2023). On the flip side, topics related to clients, supervision modalities, and technology were less frequently discussed. This suggests a potential gap in the literature and may indicate that more research is needed to understand the specific needs of different client populations, application of technology in supervision, and the implementation of supervision modalities. The topic of technology in supervision is especially important for future research to be conducted, post-COVID-19 pandemic and considering the explosive growth and recent innovations with technology-assisted supervision and service delivery and within the broader field of counseling and beyond (Bernacchio et al., 2022).

Research Question 4

The fourth research question focused on the emerging trends in the rehabilitation counseling supervision literature and whether these were themes consistent with the other counseling supervision studies from other specialties. A review of counseling supervision publications over a ten-year period that identified 184 journal articles across 22 journals was conducted roughly 20 years ago by Bernard & Luke (2005). In contrast, our study found nearly a third of this number on rehabilitation counseling supervision ($n = 63$), but a similar number of journal articles when com-

pared to content analysis of school counseling supervision ($n = 69$) from 1968-2017 (Bledsoe et al., 2019). Consequently, the previous, larger supervision study completed by Bernard and Luke with three times as many published articles was sourced from 22 professional journals, as opposed to recent studies on school counseling and this content analysis on rehabilitation counseling supervision being sourced from 11 professional journals, respectively. It appears all three studies yielded similar numbers of empirical journal articles (between 43-45%). Our review of rehabilitation counseling supervision articles was unique in identifying 13 articles (20%) focused on pedagogy of preparing supervisors where none have been identified in the other two studies. It is also striking that the smaller, recent school counseling (Bledsoe et al.) and this rehabilitation counseling supervision content analysis review found an ethical focus in nearly half (school) and a third (rehabilitation) of the articles reviewed, yet the larger study (Bernard & Luke) had less than 3% of its articles with an ethical focus.

Implications and Future Directions

From a pure frequency standpoint, the interest in researching and publishing on clinical supervision appears to have gained traction and a substantiated long-term commitment. English and colleagues (1979) conducted the first known comprehensive study examining supervisory practices in the state vocational rehabilitation system. Since that time, rehabilitation counselors have expanded into myriad work settings. The numerous work settings and required tasks of those settings may equate to a lack of understanding of the need for clinical supervision beyond academic requirements for practicum and internship. Despite the potential lack of understanding or emphasis, there are specific knowledge bases and skills rehabilitation counselors must possess prior to providing effective field-based supervision (Rodgers, 2015; Thielsen & Leahy, 2001). New evidence suggests clinical supervision is a key component in addressing the on-going turnover issue in the state vocational rehabilitation system (Landon et al., 2023; Sabella et al., 2024) and helping increase outcomes for people with disabilities in the state vocational rehabilitation setting (McCarthy, 2013). Given this evidence of the potential impact of effective supervision, future studies should revisit the training needs of field-based supervisors and the development of training models to substantiate the evidence base of supervision to enhance the provision of supervision across rehabilitation settings. Some training needs have been identified (Landon et al., 2020), and Herbert and colleagues (2018) began the work of building and evaluating clinical supervision training but noted the existence of a "professional culture that seemingly ignores the importance of clinical supervision" (p. 15). Continued research and understanding of the overall impact of clinical supervision on the development of counselors' skill level and professional identity, as well as establishing effective training models, will continue to enhance supervision practices in rehabilitation counseling settings.

The analysis of journal articles on rehabilitation counseling supervision published over the past 50 years reveals a notable increase in the publication of both empirical and conceptual types of articles. Conceptual models of supervision and mixed-method studies have been less frequently published. *RCB* stands out as the leading journal in this area with one of the highest impact factors among rehabilitation counseling-related journals, suggesting its influential role on supervision-related research and in the professional literature. Future research should explore the impact factors of the various rehabilitation counseling and related journals to better understand their influence on publication patterns and researcher preferences. A comparative analysis of publication trends across different types of journals could further enhance understanding of the factors driving publication patterns and impact factor in rehabilitation counseling supervision and related research.

The results of the study reveal some gaps in the literature. Future research should aim to address the underrepresented topics particularly related to client issues, supervision modalities, and technology. Further, the results of the study indicate a further need for empirical studies to validate and expand on the conceptual frameworks. Additionally, due to the proliferation of emerging supervision modalities and technology-assisted supervision (and all other aspects of counseling service delivery in the last few years), as a result of trends such as the technological innovations (e.g., video conferencing platforms such as Zoom), the COVID-19 pandemic, and changes to counselor education, supervision and broader licensure legislation (e.g., what is considered billable, direct face-to-face contact, traditional vs virtual modalities, variation between states and nationally), technology in supervision is very likely to be a more frequent topic of discussion in the rehabilitation counseling supervision literature and field going forward.

Another gap in the rehabilitation counseling supervision research is on the topic of modalities. In addition to the overall limited articles to date that focused on modality (i.e., individual, peer, group, multiple modalities), one of the most recent conceptual article is now over ten years old and examined triadic supervision for counselors-in-training that conserves time and costs (Goldberg et al., 2012). Another article was an empirical study intended to address the void in investigations into clinical supervision of rehabilitation counseling in post-educational settings (Schultz et al., 2002). It involved research conducted over 20 years ago assessing a systems approach to supervision models within the public state rehabilitation system that generally found that clinical supervision was underutilized in this type of postsecondary setting. Due to the significantly low frequency of dated articles on modality, a considerable dearth of empirical supervision research persists in this area for the profession. Research on modality could help rehabilitation counseling supervisors better understand outcomes for the supervisee in the context of rehabilitation counseling settings. For example, investigating the peer group supervision modality on counselors in state federal vocational rehabilitation could inform better practices. In sum, the limited number of recent publications on the topic

of modality identified in this study justifies additional research on this topic.

More than half of supervision research literature in the present study focusing on supervisee factors and type of supervision provided and over one-third of the articles addressing supervision interventions were empirical studies. Comparatively, in the Bledsoe et al. (2019) study, empirical approaches to these three topics totaled less than one-third of their respective totals. The increase in prevalence for the rehabilitation counseling specialty indicates the need for further empirical studies to establish evidence-based practice in these areas. Considering the few empirical studies among the intervention articles focused exclusively on public state systems, future research on rehabilitation interventions from a more systemic representation of rehabilitation counseling is needed. More investigative research could ascertain the effectiveness of supervision plans in the development of rehabilitation counselors in post-education settings, including behavioral health settings. Another topic to empirically study could be the effect of supervisor role functioning during corrections re-entry services on the competency development in rehabilitation counseling practice. Certain articles our study identified that have focused on both supervisees and type of supervision have addressed issues regarding anxiety (Kuo et al., 2016), predictors of satisfaction (Hebert & Trusty, 2006), and turnover expectations among leaders (Sabella et al., 2024) in supervision. Further investigative research to assess differences in access and time allocation for clinical supervision, as opposed to consultation, and its impact on rehabilitation counselor effectiveness is needed. It is equally important that empirical studies be conducted on how variables in the supervisory relationship could impact rehabilitation counseling supervisees' self-efficacy and client outcomes.

Limitations

Like all studies, it is essential to interpret the findings of this research within the context of several limitations. Despite meticulous efforts, our research team encountered several challenges in comprehensively searching relevant literature. While we conducted thorough searches across numerous journals, some published articles within these journals may have been inadvertently overlooked. This was partly due to certain journals not being available digitally, necessitating manual screening. Moreover, some journals may not be indexed or lack digital object identifier (DOIs), potentially leading to the exclusion of relevant articles that were not discoverable during our study. Additionally state or regional journals unknown to our research team might exist, which were therefore not included. Furthermore, relevant articles related to rehabilitation counseling supervision could reside in psychology or educational journals not covered in our study, such as educational psychology publications. Notably, our study did not encompass "gray literature" sources, including dissertations, theses, and similar publications, which may contain relevant information that was not incorporated into this study.

Conclusions

The topic of rehabilitation counseling supervision has seen a significant increase in research interest and publications in recent years. Despite this growth, there are still notable gaps in the literature, especially regarding client-related issues, supervision modalities, and technology integration. Effective clinical supervision is critical for the quality assurance of rehabilitation counseling services, reducing turnover, and improving outcomes for people with disabilities, yet a professional culture undervaluing super-

vision persists. Future studies should focus on creating and assessing comprehensive training models for supervisors, exploring the impact of journal influence on publication patterns, and addressing the underrepresented topics to enhance supervision practices and the overall development of rehabilitation counselors.

Submitted: July 30, 2024 EDT. Accepted: September 17, 2024

EDT. Published: April 22, 2025 EDT.

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Appendix A

List of All Peer-Reviewed Journal Articles Analyzed in the Current Study

- Allen, H. A., & Stebnicki, M. A. (1995). Training clinical supervisors in rehabilitation: A conceptual model for training doctoral-level supervisors. *Rehabilitation Counseling Bulletin*, 38(4), 307-17.
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