Reviewer’s report

Title: Empirical research in clinical supervision: A systematic review and suggestions for future studies

Version: 0 Date: 29 May 2019

Reviewer: Tobias Lundgren

Reviewer's report:

Regarding submission: PSYO-D-19-00054

Thank you for a well-written and interesting paper concerning empirical studies on clinical supervision in psychotherapy. It is obvious that the authors have put time and effort into this study and the result is a valuable contribution to the research area. However, there are some issues that need further clarification.

Major issues

1. My one major issue with this manuscript is that the aim and purpose of the study is unclear and is described somewhat differently at different points in the text. More importantly, the aims do not correspond fully to the content and execution of the study. For example, in the abstract the aims are described as "review the current empirical literature on clinical supervision, specifically regarding supervision aspects, study design issues and the effects of clinical supervision.". These goals are ambitious but are unfortunately not fully met in the manuscript. For example, it is unclear what is meant by supervision aspects and there is no comprehensive description of the supervision aspects of all included studies. After having read the manuscript I perceive that the study aims were to review the status and quality of the empirical literature on supervision and to provide suggestions for future research, which are indeed very important research goals. I would strongly suggest scrutinizing the wordings of the aims and be very careful in aligning the aims with the study methods and results.

2. Also, the title of the paper should correspond better to the aims and the term "evidence-based" in the title is misleading since assessing the evidence base is not a purpose of this study and none of the included studies can claim to be evidence-based. I would suggest something along the lines of "Empirical research in clinical supervision: A systematic review and suggestions for future studies".
Minor issues

1. The study includes results from a survey among other researchers but this part is not clearly stated in the aims of the study. Since it constitutes a major part of the results it should be highlighted in the aims.

2. While well-written, there are some cumbersome or awkward phrasings in the text that would benefit from further proof reading.

3. The authors decide to include all forms of psychotherapy but should then discuss if and how supervision is different between theoretical schools. The recommendation to conduct more studies on clinical supervision of psychodynamic therapy is only relevant if there are important differences. And if there are important differences, then perhaps we need to investigate supervision within each theoretical framework separately? At least it is a worthwhile topic for discussion.

4. In the results section, the effects of clinical supervision are presented very vaguely due to the variety of designs used in different studies and no firm conclusions can be drawn. The decision to include all forms of study designs clearly limits the possibility to draw firm conclusions in this regard and needs to be discussed.

5. In recommendation 1, the authors suggest constructing adherence and competence scales for supervision but it is unclear exactly what is meant and how these would be different from existing instruments such as the SAGE and the SCS?

6. Overall, the recommendations for future studies are sound but also obvious from a methodological point of view since they all refer to conducting more rigorous and scientifically robust research. The authors may consider stating more concise recommendations for future research in this area and provide examples.

7. The authors mention that some studies included in other contemporary reviews were not included in the present one but it is unclear why and what effects this may have on the conclusions.

Are the methods appropriate and well described?
If not, please specify what is required in your comments to the authors.

Yes
**Does the work include the necessary controls?**  
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