



THE HONG KONG
POLYTECHNIC UNIVERSITY

香港理工大學

Pao Yue-kong Library

包玉剛圖書館

Copyright Undertaking

This thesis is protected by copyright, with all rights reserved.

By reading and using the thesis, the reader understands and agrees to the following terms:

1. The reader will abide by the rules and legal ordinances governing copyright regarding the use of the thesis.
2. The reader will use the thesis for the purpose of research or private study only and not for distribution or further reproduction or any other purpose.
3. The reader agrees to indemnify and hold the University harmless from and against any loss, damage, cost, liability or expenses arising from copyright infringement or unauthorized usage.

IMPORTANT

If you have reasons to believe that any materials in this thesis are deemed not suitable to be distributed in this form, or a copyright owner having difficulty with the material being included in our database, please contact lbsys@polyu.edu.hk providing details. The Library will look into your claim and consider taking remedial action upon receipt of the written requests.

Pao Yue-kong Library, The Hong Kong Polytechnic University, Hung Hom, Kowloon, Hong Kong

<http://www.lib.polyu.edu.hk>

EXPLORING THE PROFESSIONAL SUPERVISORY DYAD
WORKING ALLIANCE IN CHILDREN AND FAMILY INTEGRATED SERVICES
IN HONG KONG

NG KWOK TUNG

Ph.D

The Hong Kong Polytechnic University

2016

The Hong Kong Polytechnic University
The Department of Applied Social Sciences

Exploring the Professional Supervisory Dyad Working Alliance in Children and
Family Integrated Services in Hong Kong

NG Kwok Tung

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

May 2016

CERTIFICATE OF ORIGINALITY

I hereby declare that this thesis is my own work and that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, it reproduces no material previously published or written, nor material that has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma, except where due acknowledgement has been made in the text.

NG Kwok Tung

Dedication

This thesis is dedicated to my beloved family.

Abstract

Supervisory relationship has been identified as one of the key components in bringing effective supervision. This study aimed to explore how supervisor-supervisee dyads form their supervisory alliance working relationships and its implications on social work professional supervision practice in Hong Kong. The study was situated within a constructivist paradigm and the sources of information were from focus groups and in-depth interviews specifically with nine supervisor-supervisee dyads. The research framework was grounded in supervision constructs (function-based), supervisory working alliance relationships (relationship-based), and attachment processes (interaction-based) embedded in an ecological system. The antecedents and consequences of positive or negative supervisory alliances in supervision processes determine positive or negative outcomes of supervisory working relationships.

The research results from this study indicated that a positive client outcome is closely related to both affiliation and dominance seen in therapy behaviour and also provides evidence in support of a connection between supervisory relationships and supervision effectiveness. The Chinese cultural orientation of “*Qing* – 情 (primary and intimate relationships)”, “*Yuan* – 緣 (relationships determined by God or by impression)”, “*En* – 恩 (memory of favour)”, “*Bao* - 報 (return of favour)”, “*Mainzin* – 面子 (face/status in the social network)”, plays a significant role in promoting the alliance relationship between the supervisor and the supervisee. For example, when conflict occurs or expectations are different, supervisees most likely consider the importance of “respect and harmony” with their seniors and authority. However, supervisors prefer to maintain professional boundaries with supervisees to

avoid unreasonable expectations incurred from reciprocal relationships. Overall, supervisory relationships in the dyads were well-established and this can be inferred from their reported relational behaviours including reflections, acceptance, listening, modesty, cooperation, and mutual exchanges. These behaviours were captured in different supervisory relationships in different developmental stages.

Participants in general perceived there is a strong need for supervision in social work. However, in practice, supervision appears loose, with no policy, structure and standards, and no evaluation of its effects on supervisees and service users. The deficit in current supervision practice is that supervision is perceived as low priority when supervisors are occupied with other administrative duties. Supervision is not focused on developing supervisees' professional knowledge and skills but instead places too much emphasis on administrative management, especially in risk prevention. Social work supervision is perceived as an on-going challenge in terms of developing contractual and structural support, commonly stipulated by professional bodies in the United Kingdom, United States and Australia. To increase quality and creditability of supervision, future research needs to explore supervision effectiveness for supervisees and their input to clients' outcomes using a triad of participants.

Acknowledgements

First and foremost, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to my main thesis supervisor Prof. Tsui Ming Sum for his unfailing support of my PhD study, especially his patience, motivation, enthusiasm, and immense knowledge. His guidance helped me throughout the research process and writing of this thesis. In guiding me to complete this study, he went beyond his expected duties. I could not have imagined having a better advisor and mentor.

Deepest thanks specially go to my thesis external examiners Associate Professor Liz Beddoe and Professor Tseng Hua Yuan for their constructive comments, guidance, and encouragement. Their suggestions are very valuable in refining my thesis.

My sincere thanks also go to Dr. Ting Wai Fong, Chair of the thesis confirmation and oral examination panel, and Prof. David Ip and Dr. Chu Chi Keung, members of the thesis confirmation panel who gave me meaningful advice on conceptualization and research methodology. Without their support, I would not have had the opportunity to conduct this study.

Special thanks also need to be addressed to Prof. Lesley Cooper, my second thesis supervisor and Prof. Kieran O'Donoghue who gave me ideas to formulate my research proposal. My greatest appreciation also goes to Dr. Vanessa Blyth and my former supervisor, Ms. Nora Yau who helped me with the editing and proofreading of my thesis. Their careful efforts improved my use of language and the presentation of my thesis. Thanks also go to Ms. Diana Yeung, my close friend, who helped me to do some tedious typing work.

I also wish to give special thanks to those participants who took part in the study. Their sharing was very insightful and meaningful and provided a good reference point to improve and/or enhance our social work supervision practice. Moreover, their passion for supervision practice and enthusiasm in helping this research made this research a success.

Furthermore, I must acknowledge colleagues Ms. Fanny Cheng and Ms. Amy Chu from the Department of Applied Social Science for their patience in helping me to complete all the tedious administrative procedures during my study period.

My deepest thanks and appreciation also go to my peers including Ms. Eliza Ip, Mr. Charles Leung, Mr. Joe Liang, Miss. Kitty Mo, Mr. Michael Pak, and Ms. Nancy Wong for taking time out from their busy schedules to serve as my critical readers of this research work. Their valuable comments and advice were the most contributive part in completing my thesis.

Last but not the least; I would like to thank my family. My mother who provided me with unconditional love and support through my entire life, especially since she has taken care of the household chores in my absence during my study, my husband who tolerated my temper when I became frustrated with my study, and my son and daughter-in-law who needed to tolerate the seven years of study in Hong Kong, which meant that I could not be with them in Australia.

Table of Contents

	<u>Page</u>
Abstract	I
Acknowledgements	III
Table of Contents	V
List of Figures	XIII
List of Tables	XIV
List of Abbreviations	XV
Chapter 1 INTRODUCTION	1
1.1 Overview	1
1.2 The Context of Supervision	12
1.3 Professional Supervision Needs	14
1.3.1 Supervisory Interpersonal Relationships	
1.3.2 Resurgence of Professional Practice	
1.3.3 Social Workers are frequently at Risk whilst Handling Domestic Violence Interventions and Mental Illness Treatments	
1.3.4 The Theory Explosion and Highly Specialized Practice Areas	
1.3.5 Complex External Controls of Practice accountability and Professional Standards	
1.3.6 Stress and Burnout	
1.4 The Significance of the Study	20
1.4.1 The Supervisee	
1.4.2 The Supervisor	
1.4.3 The Social Work Professionals	
1.4.4 The Organization	

1.4.5	The Client	
1.5	Research Focus and Methodology	25
1.6	Organization of the Thesis	27
Chapter 2 LITERATURE REVIEW		28
2.1	Introduction	28
2.2	Definition and Development of Supervision	31
2.2.1	Knowledge and Theory Gaps	
2.2.2	Practice Gap	
2.3	Supervision Impact – Good and Poor Accounts	43
2.4	Practicing Supervision in Context	44
2.4.1	Supervisory Relationship Theories	
2.4.2	Development Stages of Supervisory Relationships	
2.4.3	Supervisor’s Competence	
2.4.4	Cultural-Sensitivity in Supervisory Working Alliances	
2.5	Supervisory Alliance Working Relationships Framework	54
2.6	Background Information on the Needs for Conducting the Current Research in Hong Kong	57
2.6.1	Identification of Relationships between Supervisory Alliances and Service Outcomes	
2.6.2	Parallel Process Effect between Supervisor-supervisee Relationships and client-therapist Relationships	
2.6.3	Insufficient Studies on the Supervision Process in the “Supervisory Dyad”	
2.7	The Practice of Professional Supervision	64
2.7.1	Supervision Concepts	

2.7.2	Organizational Context	
2.7.3	The Supervision Practice Context	
2.7.4	Clients' Welfare Context	
2.8	The Dynamic and Cultural Context between Supervisions and Supervisees in Supervision Work	73
2.8.1	Dynamics in individual's developmental stages	
2.9	Culture	76
2.10	Summary of the Chapter	79
Chapter 3 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY		81
3.1	Introduction	81
3.2	Research Questions	81
3.3	Restatement of the purpose and objectives of the study	82
3.4	Theoretical perspective and Research Paradigm	84
3.5	Ethical Considerations	85
3.5.1	Informed Consent	
3.5.2	Privacy and Confidentiality	
3.5.3	Harm	
3.6	Research Methodology	87
3.6.1	Interview Guide	
3.6.2	Participants	
3.6.3	Recruitment	
3.6.4	Service Settings	
3.6.5	Data Collection Procedures	
3.6.6	Focus Group and Individual Interview Procedures	
3.6.7	Phase Two Supervisor-Supervisee Dyad Interview Procedures	

3.7	Quality Measures for Ensuring Trustworthiness of Qualitative Research	109
3.7.1	Member Checking	
3.7.2	Triangulation	
3.7.3	Peer Debriefing	
3.8	Data Management and Method of Analysis	113
3.9	Limitations of the Study and Possible Working Strategies	117
3.9.1	Comprehensiveness of study	
3.9.2	Open Communication between Supervisor and Supervisee	
3.9.3	Securing Adequate Numbers of Participants	
3.9.4	Communication Block	
3.9.5	Unanticipated Issues	
3.9.6	Adequacy of Interpretation	
3.9.7	Comprehensiveness	
3.10	Summary of the Chapter	121
Chapter 4 RESEARCH FINDINGS (I)		122
4.1	Introduction	122
4.2	Presentation of the Findings	123
4.2.1	Informants' Quotes	
4.2.2	Inaction between Focus Group Members	
4.3	Phase One Focus Groups and Individual Interviews	124
4.3.1	Conceptions, Perceptions and Experiences of Social Work Supervision Practice	
4.3.2	Components of Effective Social Work Supervision	
4.3.3	Use of Power, Supervision Types, and Supervisory Relationships	
4.3.4	Personal Social Work Supervision Experiences	

4.3.5	Supervisory Theory	
4.4	Summary of the Chapter	179
Chapter 5 RESEARCH FINDINGS (II)		181
5.1	Introduction	181
5.2	Background Information of Participants	181
5.3	Findings from Phase Two of the Study	184
5.3.1	Crucial issues of Supervisory Working Alliance Experiences that Impact on Supervision	
5.3.2	Perceptions of Participants (supervisor-supervisee dyads) towards their Supervisory Relationship, Particularly in the Chinese Social Context and the Subsequent Influence	
5.3.3	Interaction Processes between Supervisors and Supervisees in Different Developmental Stages	
5.3.4	The Most Important Elements in Building Supervisory Working Alliance Relationships	
5.3.5	Supervisory Relationship's Impacts on Supervisee's Job Performance, Satisfaction and Application of Supervisory Working Alliance Theories on Supervision Practice	
5.4	Story Themes of Supervisor-Supervisee Dyads	199
5.4.1	Dyad One – Master and Apprentice Relationships	
5.4.2	Dyad Two – Buddy and Professional Aspiration	
5.4.3	Dyad Three – Support and Retention	
5.4.4	Dyad Four – Gate Keeper and Articulation of Responsibility	
5.4.5	Dyad Five – Regulator and Devotion Alignment	
5.4.6	Dyad Six – Nurturer and Self-reframing	

5.4.7	Dyad Seven – Supporter and Creator of Togetherness	
5.4.8	Dyad Eight – “ <i>Yin</i> ” and “ <i>Yang</i> ” Partners	
5.4.9	Dyad Nine – Commander and Troops	
5.5	Summary of the Chapter	248
5.5.1	Theme one	
5.5.2	Theme two	
5.5.3	Theme three	
5.5.4	Theme four	
5.5.5	Theme five	
5.5.6	Theme six	

Chapter 6 DISCUSSION ON “FRAMING” THE PICTURE OF		
RELATIONSHIP ALLIANCE PROCESS IN		
SUPERVISOR-SUPERVISEE DYADS IN HONG KONG		251
6.1	Introduction	251
6.2	Overviewing the Research Results	252
6.2.1	Conception, Perception and Practice Experience of Supervision Constructs	
6.2.2	Supervisory Relationship of Supervisor-supervisee Dyads in Chinese Cultural Context	
6.2.3	Supervision Types and Effects of Power and Authority – Chinese Management	
6.2.4	Good and Poor Supervisory Interaction Process in Different Supervisory Developmental Stages	
6.2.5	Supervisory Relationship to Supervisees’ Job Performance and Satisfaction	

6.3 Summary of the Chapter

Chapter 7 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS	302
7.1 Summary of the Study	302
7.1.1 Values and Shortfalls in Social Work Supervision Practice	
7.1.2 Enforcement of Supervision Concepts and Constructs	
7.1.3 Supervisory Working Alliance Relationships in the Chinese Management Context	
7.1.4 Improvement and/or Advancement of Social Work Supervision Practice	
7.1.5 Future Research into Supervision Practice	
7.2 Unique Contribution of this Research	312
7.2.1 Demonstration of Supervisory Theories Interaction	
7.2.2 Development of an Integrated Supervisory Constructs	
7.2.3 Enhancement of Professionals' Awareness in Supervision Practice The Supervisees The Supervisors The Organizations The Clients The Gate-Keepers of Services Quality Assurance The Social Work Researchers	
7.3 Limitations of the Research	315
7.3.1 Lack of Guided Information in the Hong Kong Context	
7.3.2 Narrow Research Coverage	
7.3.3 Imbalanced informant Groups	
7.3.4 The Use of Obtained Information	

7.4	Recommendations	317
7.4.1	For Supervisors	
7.4.2	For Supervisees	
7.4.3	For Organizations	
7.4.4	For Social Work Educators	
7.4.5	For Researchers	
7.5	Supervision – The Way Ahead	323
7.6	Self-reflection	324
7.6.1	Philosophical Reflection	
7.6.2	Professional Reflection	
7.6.3	Personal Reflection	
	References	327

List of Figures

- Figure 1: Conceptual Model of Supervision (Kaiser, 1997)
- Figure 2: Conceptual Model of Supervision (Austin and Hopkins, 2004)
- Figure 3: Styles of Adult Attachment (Bartholomew, 1990)
- Figure 4: Perspectives of the Research Framework for Supervisory Working
Relationship Alliance
- Figure 5: The Ecology of Social Work Supervision (Kadushin & Harkness, 2014)
- Figure 6: The Relationship between Content Clearance and Degree of Supervisory
Relationship
- Figure 7: The Relationship between Level of Trust and Supervisory Style
- Figure 8: The Relationship between Supervision Demand and Supervision
Effectiveness in Different Supervisory Developmental Stages
- Figure 9: Relationship Alliance Process in Supervisor-Supervisee Dyads
- Figure 10: An Integrated Developmental Supervisory Relationship Alliance
Constructs

List of Tables

- Table 1: Antecedents and Consequences of Positive or Negative Supervisory Alliance
- Table 2: Phase One Focus Group and Individual Interviews' Theme & Questions
- Table 3: Profile of Phase One Individuals, Supervisors, and Supervisees
- Table 4: Informants' Background Information of Supervisor Focus Group
- Table 5: Informants' Background Information of Supervisee Focus Group
- Table 6: Background Information of Informants' of Individual Interview
- Table 7: Phase Two Background Information of Supervisor-Supervisee dyads
- Table 8: Supervisor-Supervisee Dyad Groups
- Table 9: Conceptions, Perceptions and Experiences of social Work Supervision Practice
- Table 10: Components of Effective Social Work Supervision
- Table 11: Effects of Power and Supervision Types
- Table 12: Themes of Personal Social Work Supervision Experience – Supervisors, Frontline Social Workers and Individual Participants
- Table 13: Supervisory Alliance and Feelings towards Supervision Practice
- Table 14: Participants' Background Information of Supervisor-Supervisee Dyads

List of Abbreviations

SSS	Supportive Supervision Scheme
SWRA	Social Workers Registration Board
HKSAR	Hong Kong Special Administrative Region
HKCSS	The Hong Kong Council of Social Service
NGOs	Non-Government Organizations
LSG	Lum Sum Grant
IFSC	Integrated Family Service Centre
ICYSC	Integrated Children and Youth Service Centre
SSW	School Social Work
Sfg	Supervisor focus group
Sfg1	Supervisor focus group: first participant
Sfg2	Supervisor focus group: second participant
Sfg3	Supervisor focus group: third participant
Sfg4	Supervisor focus group: fourth participant
Sfg5	Supervisor focus group: fifth participant
Sfg6	Supervisor focus group: sixth participant
Ffg	Frontline social worker focus group
Ffg1	Frontline social worker focus group: first participant
Ffg2	Frontline social worker focus group: second participant
Ffg3	Frontline social worker focus group: third participant
Ffg4	Frontline social worker focus group: fourth participant
Ffg5	Frontline social worker focus group: fifth participant
Ffg6	Frontline social worker focus group: sixth participant

SD	Supervisory Dyad
SD1	Supervisory Dyad: first supervisor
SD2	Supervisory Dyad: second supervisor
SD3	Supervisory Dyad: third supervisor
SD4	Supervisory Dyad: fourth supervisor
SD5	Supervisory Dyad: fifth supervisor
SD6	Supervisory Dyad: sixth supervisor
FD1	First Frontline Social Worker of Supervisory Dyad group
FD2	Second Frontline Social Worker of Supervisory Dyad group
FD3	Third Frontline Social Worker of Supervisory Dyad group
FD4	Fourth Frontline Social Worker of Supervisory Dyad group
FD5	Fifth Frontline Social Worker of Supervisory Dyad group
FD6	Sixth Frontline Social Worker of Supervisory Dyad group
P	Individual Participant
P1	First Individual Participant
P2	Second Individual Participant
P3	Third Individual Participant
P4	Fourth Individual Participant
P5	Fifth Individual Participant
P6	Sixth Individual Participant
P7	Seventh Individual Participant
HRM	Human Resource Management

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Overview

The Social Welfare Department of Hong Kong granted a three-year project named “Supportive Supervision Scheme” (SSS) in 2014 for promoting supervision practice in Social Work Services (Hong Kong’s Information Services Department, 2015). Although this project was granted much later than initially expected, it followed years of requests and advocacy by social work professionals. As such we still value it because supervision is viewed as a promise of service quality, a type of support for the social workers and an indication of recognition of the importance of social work supervision.

Social work has been developed in Hong Kong for over half a century and has reached a new milestone. Supervision is viewed as a promised of service quality, a type of support for the social workers and an indication of recognition of the importance of professionalism in social work. This trend is aligned with professional development of social workers in Western countries. The researcher’s current study begin in 2012 with the hope that it can provide a contextual reference for continued improvement and enhancement of the supportive supervision scheme if the existing practices that evolved naturally could provide meaningful knowledge and practical insights. The results of this study were obtained from high profile social work trainers, experienced social work supervisors and supervisees, with life stories from valuable supervisor-supervisee dyads.

My interest in supervision work started when I was promoted to the role of a supervisor to supervise the Family Life Education, Children and Youth Centres and School Social Work Services. However, becoming a competent supervisor was a challenging, and often frustrating journey as I only had six and a half years front-line practice experience at that time. Similar findings of these feelings are also revealed in Tsui's (2008) research and the social work supervisors in training of the above mentioned supportive supervision scheme. For example, as a new supervisor I have legitimate power, however I experienced considerable stress and self-doubt about my job performance (expert power) as some team members were older and more experienced. Frequently, I felt uneasy about conveying my views, queries, expectations and the situation was made worse if trouble-making staff needed to be handled (coercive and reward power). Apart from this, the other difficult part was how to understand supervisees' needs so as to give them adequate guidance and earn their trust for future collaboration. As I had accepted the organization's delegation of supervisor and had legitimate power to do the work for the purpose of upholding the quality of the service and welfare of our service users, I needed to make it work – stage one mentality (Stoltenberg & Delworth, 1987). Although there were other reasons, such as my supervisees' readiness and cooperation – relationship bonding (Bordin, 1983) and attachment (Bowlby, 1980) that would affect my work performance, I believed, as a supervisor, that I was well-equipped to provide effective supervision to my supervisees. This is why, and how, my interest has been developed in this area. Later in 2006, I was involved in consultation activities, led by the Social Workers Registration Board in Hong Kong, promoting regular supervision for social workers and, in 2009, this inspired my PhD study "Exploring the Professional Supervisory Dyad Working Alliance in Children and Family Integrated Services in Hong Kong".

Consistent with my experiences in the field of Social Work over decades, the literature reveals a consensus that supervisory alliance is a contributing factor in ensuring the effectiveness of service outcomes (Beinart & Clohessy, 2009; Bernared, 2005; Davys and Beddoe, 2010; Ellis, 2010; Falender & Shafranske, 2004; O'Donoghue and Tsui, 2015 ; Watkins, 2011). Although the consensus was based on the research in Western countries, contributions of Chinese contexts are observed. For example, an Asian psychologist has conducted a lot of studies on Chinese interpersonal relationships and relationship dominance (Ho, 1991, 1993, 1995). Theoretical construction, relational orientation and relationship dominance capture the essence of social behavioural patterns in Confucian heritage cultures. The reason for this is that social behaviour invariably takes place in relational contexts, regardless of socioeconomic or cultural variations. The most important relational contexts are significant interpersonal relationships (e.g. parent-child). For example, filial piety underlies the Confucian definition of intergenerational relationships; which should be observed regardless of where or when the parent-child interaction takes place.

Tsui (2004, p. 104) reported that supervisors used different models to describe their role: a film director leading a team of actors with distinct personalities, a coach of a basketball team with strategies for team-building, a steersman of a dragon boat who provides the right direction in a competition, or an emperor who has many body-guards. Obviously, the vertical hierarchy in the organizational context creates a psychosocial distance between the supervisor and the supervisee. In contrast, the social workers used familial relationships to describe their supervisory relationship. They viewed their supervisors as senior family members – a parent or an elder brother or sister. Results further showed that the description of these two groups of

people was affected by their own orientation and characteristics. Therefore, a relational analysis requires researchers to consider how relationships are culturally defined, before attempting to interpret the behaviour of individuals.

Many Chinese people inherit Confucianism from their parents and seniors. Confucianism emphasizes that humans exist in interactive relationships, which are hierarchical (Cheng & Holt, 1994; Ho, 1988). Under the influence of hierarchical relationships, the Chinese are expected to show great generosity to others, especially their seniors. “Giving face” as a kind of respect to superiors or high-ranking people is regarded as necessary and very polite in social interaction. Chinese people attach great importance to “*quanxi* (關係)” (relationships) due to their affective component, durability, and functional value. People in a “*quanxi*” network would maintain their harmonious relationships, which is understood as a warm human feeling between people and strongly emphasizes reciprocity (Chen, 2001; Wei & Li, 2013; Zhu, 2008). Hewson (2002) stated that social workers are professionals who need to earn social powers, which means that perception is from one’s own eyes, that they have adequate competence to practice one’s profession (expert power) in a manner congruent with one’s values (referent power) and with a reasonable “right” to carry out the tasks of one’s profession (legitimate power). Good supervisors ensure their supervisees earn these social powers in the supervisors’ eyes. For example, they need a recognised “right” to have a voice, to experience respect for shared values, to have their experience acknowledged and their developing skills recognised. How these people form an alliance to achieve good supervision practice under the traditional Chinese culture of relational constructs is worthy of investigation. The current study therefore intends to explore social work supervision practice by looking at why and how various interpersonal relationships are formed and developed between

supervisor-supervisee dyads in the Chinese cultural context of Hong Kong. This point is further illustrated in the literature review in chapter two.

In order to be a competent supervisor, I enhanced my supervision competence through self-learning, that is reading literature regarding supervision knowledge and skills, and however, progress was slow. Eventually, I decided to resign from my job and undertake formal study to strengthen my knowledge regarding social work supervision. My first research project explored social workers' supervision practices in hospital settings in Melbourne, Australia. Since then, my interest in social work supervision has intensified.

In the past decade, due to social welfare subsidy reforms, the practice of social work supervision has encountered many constraints that social workers have frequently complained about, such as “lack of time”; “administrative focus”; “incompetent supervisor”. Thus, the need for studying the phenomena of social work supervision has increased significantly. Among these criticisms, the most prominent issue relating to supervision is “competence”. This is because “competence” directly points to supervisor-supervisee dyad’s perception, interpretation and expectations in developing a collaborative supervisory relationship. This collaborative supervisory relationship is often cited in the literature as the primary means in which competence is enhanced and supervisee development is facilitated (Bordin, 1983; Efstation, Patton, & Kardash, 1990; Ladany, Brittan-Powell, & Pannue, 1997; Ladany, Ellis, & Friedlander, 1999). The relationship of working alliance is seen as collaborative and is based on mutual agreement concerning the goals and tasks of supervision, as well as the development of a strong emotional bond (Bordin, 1994). Research has demonstrated the importance of strong supervisory working alliances, which have

been linked to increased supervisory satisfaction (Ladany et al., 1999; Worthington & Roehlke, 1979) as well as increasing the quality of the supervisory relationship and thus strengthening supervisee confidence, refined professional identity, and an increased therapeutic perception (Worthen & McNeill, 1996). These research findings confirm that “competence” is one of the major attributes for securing good supervisory working alliances. However, “competence” can be interpreted as professional work competence that demands supervisors are equipped with professional knowledge and skills to help supervisees deal with their work challenges. Or it can be interpreted as competence in interpersonal relationships determined by personal qualities, attachment styles, rational orientation, use of authority and power, and cultural sensitivity when they are working together. Regardless of the interpretation, this will directly affect the supervisory working alliance outcome and supervisors and supervisees should be aware of this.

The Chinese Confucianist cultural context emphasizes that humans exist in interactive relationships; the ability to achieve interpersonal harmony is the crucial criterion of one’s competence in Chinese social interaction (Chen & Ringo, 2002). When this value is used in interpersonal harmony management in Chinese social interactions, most studies have defined it as conflict control, which intends to reduce the degree of conflict and to avoid confrontations in communicating harmony-threatening messages, such as disagreement, competition, and frustration (Chen & Ringo, 2002; Huang, 2006). Further to this conceptual framework, the researcher found an ideal harmony in the Analects, making “*He*” (和) a criterion for “*Junzi*” (君子) – a good person with moral will of “*Ren*” (仁). “*He*” says, that “The *Junzi* harmonizes but does not seek sameness, whereas the petty person seeks sameness but does not harmonize” (Lau, 1979). “*He*” emphasizes the independence

of individual personality and advocates the coexistence of different individuals. With this deeper clarification, it is valuable to explore how the supervisor-supervisee dyads collaborate in their relationship under the Confucian ideal of “harmony”, that is this not only contains “difference”, but also encourages the coexistence of “difference”.

Supervision in social work has been part of the helping profession in Hong Kong from the beginning of professional education, but it is only in recent years that it has come to be seen as a distinct issue and interest has grown with discussion of the major components of supervision characteristics and practice in the social work sector. For example, the earliest research on supervisory practice was by Ko (1987) and only after a decade was this issue picked up again (Chan, 1998; Fu, 1999; Leung, 2012; Tsui, 2001, 2003, 2005, 2006, 2008; Social Worker Registration Board, 2006). These studies reflect that supervisors tended to adopt task-centred approaches rather than worker-oriented approaches to supervising staff and proportionally had performed more on administrative functions. Moreover, the supervision issue was brought up again after the implementation of the Lump Sum Grant (LSG) that led organization management to focus their time and efforts on costing saving matters. Therefore, supervisors perceive that the administrative function is more important than educational and supportive functions in supervision. Tsui’s research findings (2008) also provide similar results in that our supervisors perceive supervision as a rational and systematic process, whereas supervisees expect emotional support and collaborative teamwork. He concluded that Chinese reciprocal culture: “*qing/renqing*” (情/人情) literally translates as “human feelings” and is defined by one Western scholar as “covering not only sentiment but also social expressions such as the offering of congratulations, or condolences or the making of gifts on

appropriate occasions. The norm of “*Renqing*” in Chinese society is as follows: “if you have received a drop of beneficence from other people, you should return to them a fountain of beneficence”; the Confucian notion of reciprocity “*Yuan*”, 緣 – the concept of “*Yuan*” has various meanings, among which are affinity, predestined relationships, and close relationships are supposed to result from “*Yuan*”. In predestined relationships rooted in the belief of predestination and fatalism, “*Yuan*” provides a cultural explanation for the formation of interpersonal relationships on the basis of predestined affinity or enmity (Yang & Ho, 1988); and “*Face*” (面) – is a self-delineated image in terms of approved social attributes and represents the status of a person in a social network. This is evident in many aspects of Chinese life. The Chinese often avoid the word “No” to save “*Face*” for both parties. An often repeated Chinese proverb states: “A person needs face as a tree needs bark”, which plays an important role in reducing the tension caused by discrepancies in human relationships. The urge from supervisees for humanistic supervision was reported as not realistic as supervision is usually very official and formal. This means that supervisors expect them to follow policies and regulations of the agency (Tsui, 2004, p. 106). However, Tsui’s study was conducted more than a decade ago and the informants were not dyad samples. Whether this situation would also happen in supervisor-supervisee dyads needs further exploration.

In 2006, the Social Workers Registration Board (SWRB) re-visited social work supervision practice by conducting a comprehensive study exploring supervision practice in Hong Kong. Subsequently, the SWRB (2006) devised recommended supervision guidelines, which cover the objectives and functions of social work supervision, supervision structure, required standards, and code of ethics. A number of promotional forums have been conducted to introduce these recommendations.

Unfortunately, no mandate for supervision could be established and supervision practice currently depends on the good will and self-regulation of organizations and therefore the outcome remains unknown. Supervisors with different value orientations are likely to favour different supervision foci. For example, client-centred supervisors tend to manage counselling work and address client's needs, identify goals and methods, and monitor the ongoing process of implementation and termination. They will pay attention to paperwork aspects, including reports, files, notifications, and resources. In supervisee-focused supervision, supervisors tend to be more concerned with supervisees' application of knowledge and skills that have been learnt. There are also regular reviews of the development of the working alliance at different phases to foster engagement and trust. Therefore, it would be interesting to explore the infrequent attention that is given to what, how, and why supervision arose within the social work profession.

Professional social work is set within a constantly changing and challenging environment due to demands on service quality control, knowledge management, and the complexity of clients' needs (Davys & Beddoe, 2010; Maidment & Beddoe, 2012). Within this complexity of demands, there is a strong urge for supervision from experienced professionals that provides guidance and support to newly appointed inexperienced staff (Guerin, Devitt, & Redmond, 2010). This is seen as a vital ingredient for building staff morale and well-being in the workplace, job satisfaction, retention, reduced absenteeism and professional development (Kadushin & Harkness, 2014; Kim & Lee, 2009), and enhance the quality of supervision for the welfare of social service users (Beddoe & Maidment, 2015; Beddoe, Davys & Adamson, 2014; Carpenter, Webb, Bostock, & Coomber, 2012; Kadushin & Harkness, 2014).

Research literature has illustrated that supervision is a tremendous lifelong learning commitment that requires a great deal of time, energy and resources (McMahon, & Patton, 2002). It is not only a matter of providing a regular supervision commitment to supervisees; it is much more in terms of responsibility to both supervisees and the clients for whom they provide a service. As Cogan (1953) stated, supervision was not a side-line for administrators, but rather a full-time responsibility. Whether this goal can be achieved depends on the supervisory relationship in terms of trust, honesty, and mutual respect.

Increasingly more researchers (Allen, Szollos, & Williams, 1986; Goldfarb, 1978; Heppner & Nandley, 1981; Hernandez & McDowell, 2010; Nelson, 1978; and Worthington & Roehlke, 1979), scholars (Cogan, 1953; Garman, 1986, 1990; Goodyear & Bernard, 1998; Mills, Francis & Bonner, 2005; Yogdich & Cushing, 1998) and practitioners (Fall & Sutton, 2004; Fowler & Cherannes, 1998; Ronnestad & Orlinsky, 2005), have investigated the supervisory behaviours and characteristics that contribute to good supervision. Their research findings indicate that the supervisory relationship is one of the aspects that deserve more in-depth exploration as it acts like a channel, which allows the acceptance of information so that the supervisees can learn their profession. Similarly, Tsui (2004) argues that advocacy also needed further exploration. He states that the few research studies that exist are mainly related to the format and functions of social work supervision in Hong Kong. Thus, understanding how supervisor and supervisee alliance themselves in supervision in relation to “*quanxi (relationship)*”, “harmony”, and “*reciprocity*” relationship concept in Chinese culture would be helpful in enhancing our supervision practice.

Supervision is a collaborative and co-constructive journey between supervisor and supervisee. The good or bad “supervisory relationship” is a result of their co-created effort. However, there is little empirical investigation concerning the utility of this perspective that employs a matched supervisee and supervisor dyad to determine its significance for supervision effectiveness. In Tsui’s research (2004), he mentioned that the supervisory relationship in Hong Kong is very much grounded in traditional Chinese culture, which emphasizes harmony and compromise. Our traditional values of Chinese reciprocity will be the guiding principle in this regard. To maintain this, Tsui (2004, p. 114) has indicated that the supervisory relationship of social workers in Hong Kong is a complicated mix of hierarchical, collegial, and familial relationships. The first is “hierarchical relationship” that would be seen as a “rational authority” for determining the behaviour of both the supervisor and the supervisee. The second is the “collegial relationship” between two staff members working in the same or other unit of the organization. In which, the professional culture of social work provides the dominant norms for the behaviour of the supervisor and the supervisee. The third is the “familial relationship”, which reflects a psychological transference arising from interpersonal interaction between the supervisor and supervisee. The two parties may treat each other as members of the same extended family. Thus, we can image how complicated and difficult it would be when the supervisor and their supervisee interacts with each other within the organizational context, professional culture, and Chinese values.

Loganbill, Hardy, and Delworth (1982) in their literature review also support the notion that there has been an “absence of attention to the more complex, relationship-oriented aspect of supervision” (p.12). What effects such as “tension”, “conflicting roles” and “professional autonomy” could evolve from this supervisory

working alliance is worthy of examination; how the dynamics interplay among the three types of interpersonal relationships also deserves further exploration in this complex phenomenon. Other issues related to the supervisory relationship that require investigation are: use of power and authority, shared meaning, and building of trust in supervisor-supervisee dyads. Power and authority are essential elements in the supervisory relationship (Munson, 2002; Tsui, 2004). The power differential arises because the supervisee is administratively accountable to the supervisor. This unequal power balance can make supervisees feel insecure. Shared meaning refers to the mutual understanding and agreement between the supervisor and the supervisee. The use of a supervisory contract is a way to verbalise and visualise this agreement. This contract may protect the supervisee, given the inequality of the supervisory relationship (Bunker & Winjnberg, 1988; Fox, 1983; Holloway & Brager, 1989; Levy, 1973). Trust comprises respect and security (Kaiser, 1992). Respect safeguards the self-esteem of supervisees. With positive self-esteem, supervisees will feel valued and more motivated to do a good job. Thus, one of the major objectives in this study is to fill this gap in knowledge by researching the impact of the three types of supervisory relationships, as well as the three relationship components related to supervisees' professional growth and development during the supervision process.

1.2 The Context of Supervision

Professional supervision aims to monitor and assure supervisees' professional competence in treatment decisions, as well as their professional development. When discussing supervision, we need to define the context to which we are referring. Overall, there are five types of supervisions. First, fieldwork supervision is used to train students to be social work professionals. Second, managerial supervision aims to monitor compliance of supervisees in organizational policy and work procedures.

Third, peer supervision is used for encouraging mutual support and learning. Morrison (2005) added the fourth one, mediation supervision, whereby the supervisor supports the supervisee to mediate organizational difficulties within their employing agency. The fifth is cultural supervision, although this is not internationally recognised as a specialised activity it has, nevertheless been highlighted in the New Zealand model (O'Donoghue, 2002). This model focuses on discussing supervisors from the dominant culture who work with culturally diverse supervisees or supervisors with culturally diverse clients, and/or a supervisor of a different culture from that of their supervisee.

In light of the above, the current study's core focus is on professionally-focused supervision with an emphasis on supervisory working alliance relationships. This relationship needs to run from novice to maturity across four stages of learning, in a multi-dimension context. Tsui (2001) argued that the supervision relationship has, for a long time, been narrowly conceptualised; being perceived as merely a supervisor-supervisee relationship with no attention paid to the social work supervision context. This narrow perception of the supervisory relationship has also led researchers to focus exclusively on debates relating to the dynamics between the supervisor and the supervisee, such as supervisory functions and professional autonomy. In response to the above, the current study aims to fill this research gap and the "supervisory working alliance relationship" will be discussed in four dimensions including agency, supervisor, supervisee, and the client, within our Chinese cultural context. As such, if the context is taken into consideration, both in theory and in practice a more sensitive and effective supervision can be achieved.

The cultural context refers to the norms, values, customs and patterns of society in which the supervision takes place. Here, the study will explore the interplay between professional values (i.e., social work codes of ethics) and Chinese values (i.e., harmonious relationship – *Qing, Yuan* and *Face*). The agency context will explore supervisors’ monitoring roles in the supervisory process and supervisees’ practice in conforming to agency goals through supervision practice. It will look into supervisors’ professional competence in creating the supervision contract, the supervision format, attachment styles covering use of power and authority, transaction and transformation behaviours and cultural sensitivity. For the supervisees, the study will focus on looking at their needs, job performance and satisfaction, attachment styles and behaviours. In terms of the client, this study will not involve them because of the sensitivity clients’ encountered problems, complexity of problem nature and confidential control as the cases might involve too many people’s issues. Apart from this, to keep clients to stay in the study loop might be also difficult and looking for replacement would affect the study progress.

1.3 Professional Supervision Needs

Research studies in the field of health service (Milne, 2010) and human services (Parsons & Reid, 1995) confirm there is a significant positive effect on the practice of clinicians and clients that have been treated by supervised therapists. Moreover, they were significantly more likely to stay in treatment, and were significantly more satisfied with their treatment. The reason that social work supervision is still highly recommended is because required social work knowledge and skills are beyond those that a university educational establishment can effectively teach within their existing curriculum. Supervision is a continuous learning opportunity for both supervisors and supervisees in view of the following

six factors, as set out below. They include: (1) supervisory interpersonal relationships, (2) resurgence of professional practice, (3) social workers are frequently at risk whilst handling domestic violence interventions and mental illness treatments, (4) the theory explosion and highly specialised practice areas, (5) complex external controls on practice accountability and professional standards, and (6) stress and burnout.

1.3.1 Supervisory Interpersonal Relationships

In previous sections of this chapter, I have discussed that both supervisors and supervisees need to deal effectively with three types of interpersonal relationships in the supervision process, tension and conflicts may ensue if they are unsure of how to deal with these relationships. Tsui (2001, p.149) claims that reflective supervision reveals that the dynamic interplay between the hierarchical, collegial, and familial elements makes the development of the supervisory relationship a very subtle, delicate, complicated, and complex phenomenon. Thus, supervision sessions may create a safe space for supervisors and supervisees to handle the three relationships in a balanced manner.

1.3.2 Resurgence of Professional Practice

More specialised classification of psychotherapy and mental health treatment have been adopted in social work practice (Vondracek & Corneal, 1995). Stein and Lambert (1995) examined several sources regarding the relationship between therapists' experience and training, and therapy outcomes. They conclude that a variety of outcomes are associated with modest effect sizes, thus supporting the argument for more trained therapists. Results here also indicate that in many outpatient settings, therapists with more training tend to suffer fewer therapy dropouts, than less trained therapists. It is not surprising then that it is common to see

our social work practitioners seeking supervision and or consultation from private and specialised professionals to guide their clinical practice, as many of these special therapeutic work skills are not taught in the training institutes.

1.3.3 Social Workers are Frequently at Risk whilst Handling Domestic Violence Interventions and Mental Illness Treatments

Social work is, by nature, a demanding profession. Most writers suggest that social work is a highly stressful occupation. The stress came from role conflict between client advocacies and meeting agency needs (Bennett, Evans, & Tattersall, 1993; Collings & Murrery, 1996; Lloyd, King, & Chenoweth, 2002). Increasingly our social workers are responsible for treating family violence (e.g. child abuse, spouse/cohabitant and sexual abuse) and mental illness cases (e.g. schizophrenia, mood disorders and violence behaviours) that involve great stress due to heavy caseloads and the complexities of the cases. For example, the most recent number of cases from January to December 2015 involving child abuse, spouse/cohabitant battering and sexual violence are 874, 3,382, and 871 respectively (Social Welfare Department, 2016) and whenever family tragedies are reported, community leaders, the media and even our own governing bodies, question the competency of our social work practitioners.

Indeed, there is limited empirical research into the nature and effectiveness of supervisory practice in social work that aims at preventing job dissatisfaction and burn-out in Hong Kong. Work stress encountered by social work practitioners is excessive and observable. This situation will increase if they are not trained with the special knowledge and skills to deal with these kinds of cases. Supervision plays a significant role in dealing with these difficulties. In my pilot study, all four

supervisor-supervisee dyads reported that the demands of their jobs are great and they felt under pressure and stressed (Ng, 2011). Fortunately, all reported that good supervision helped.

1.3.4 The Theory Explosion and Highly Specialised Practice Areas

The methods used in social work to produce desired changes in clients have expanded dramatically. For example, the approaches used by our social workers include: psychoanalytic, behaviourist, cognitive, humanistic, family therapy, expressive, relaxation-based, and psychopharmacologic. The theory behind each of these approaches guides frontline social workers' understanding of how people develop and how their course of development may be changed in the desired direction. It is also a way of making explicit the assumptions that govern the conduct of a given intervention. In view of the complexity of human behaviours, knowledge and experiences are rather important in theory application. Thus, supervision acts as a supplement to in-job training to release workers' anxiety and stress.

1.3.5 Complex External Controls on Practice Accountability and Professional Standards

In earlier times, social work relied on the supervision process to monitor competence of practitioners. However, our social work professionals' performance is currently governed by the Social Workers Registration Board (SWRB) of Hong Kong. If social workers commit misconduct and or malpractice, the SWRB can de-register their social work professional status and social service organizations cannot employ them without a valid professional registration certificate. SWRB needs to protect clients by monitoring social workers' performance. According to SWRB's (2016) records in May 2016, the total number of complaints received was

420 and 86 of these were referred to the Board for misconduct inquiries. The major complaints were regarding service quality (128 cases) and professional competence (68 cases). Although not all complaints are established, the large number indicates that our professional service quality is questionable and this cannot be ignored. To meet these parties' stipulated requirements, supervision should be mandated.

1.3.6 Stress and Burnout

It has been repeatedly demonstrated in the workplace that effective supervision is a powerful antidote to stress and burnout. For example, a review study (Leiter & Harvie, 1996) of burnout relating to mental health workers from 1985 to 1995 that specially identified participants as mental health workers. This included psychiatrists, psychologists, counsellors, mental health social workers and nurses, and occupational therapists providing mental health care. It emphasized that the emotional demands of human service provision combined with significant challenges to professionals' capacity to realize their values through their work will have a significant impact on their well-being. Tam & Mong (2005) had done a research regarding job stress, perceived inequity and burnout among school social workers in Hong Kong. The research findings identified school social workers showed both job stress and burnout symptom as they served as an effective buffer or mediator between agency and school in Hong Kong. In fact, similar effects also happened to social workers in other nature of social services such as family service, children and youth service, and rehabilitation service. During that time, a newly implemented Service Performance Monitoring System (SPMS), Service Quality Standards (SQSs) and Essential Service Requirements (ESRs), and Lump-Sum Grant that induced many changes such as restructuring staff manning ratio, employing more contractual staff, and contracting out work where cost-saving was possible. The poor impact of

these changes are gradually occurred on the following years till today as many social workers reported suffering from increased stress, as the system is getting more and more output-oriented. The Hong Kong Council of Social Service (2010) reported that a survey on turnover and wastage of social work personnel from 1st May to 31st October 2009. A total of 746 social work personnel (SWP) leavers were recorded by the responded organizations. Out of 746 SWP leavers, 152 of them completed the exit questionnaires and 102 job leavers were successfully contacted for the telephone interviews. The overall response rate was 13.7%. It found that respondents who left their employing agencies were relatively young. Almost half (47.4%) of them were 29 years old or below. The number of work year of the turnover cases had three years or less of service in the post. Among those turnover cases, majority of respondents' previous fields of practice were "youth services" (25.2%), "family and child welfare services" (19.9%), and "school social work" (9.9%) amounting to 44.3%. One of the turnover extrinsic factors is "workload" and intrinsic factors including "professional development" and "supervisory support and guidance". These figures are quite alarming as the outcome not only affects social workers' morale; it also causes a lot of human resource wastage for service organizations as well as the social work profession. The issue of "supervisory support and guidance" has caused substantial concern. Prior to the implementation of Lump sum grant system, there was a mechanism to work out the target subvention for administrative and supervisory support. The demand of "doing/achieving more with less" has pushed frontline and management in the social work field have to stretch their span of control and hence supervisory support and guidance would be obviously "thinning" out. Though an additional recurrent resource of \$200 million was allocated to strengthen the administrative support for non-government organization starting from the financial year 2008-2009, the extent to which such resources were deployed to strengthen

supervisory support is unknown. Therefore, a more thorough review on the support of supervisory support and guidance might be useful. The Social Workers Registration Board (SWRB) has completed a study on the current state of supervision for social workers in Hong Kong in 2006 also recommended to improve the training for supervisors, the development of peer supervision from experienced workers, and re-focusing supervisory support to new entrants of social work field. However, up to this research moment, little attention has been made to these recommendations. This was found necessary to revisit this issue.

1.4 The Significance of the Study

The previous sections have illustrated the need for a professional supervision service, with the ultimate goal of supervision aiming to improve or enhance the competency of social work professionals, for the eventual benefit of service users. However, the most distinctive parts in this study are: (1) it will, for the first time, use supervisor-supervisee dyads in three of the significant service settings in Hong Kong; and (2) the phase one interview participants will be trainers recruited from main social work training institutes and very experienced social work supervisors and supervisees. The information they can provide through shared experiences are informative and valuable ways to reflect the social work supervision phenomena in Hong Kong. The following will focus on the identification of the reasons for initiating the current study.

1.4.1 The Supervisee

Supervisees call for growth oriented, technically sound and theoretically grounded supervision, as they need to enhance their professional knowledge and skills. The recommendations from this study are expected to cover the domains of

professional practice such as intervention skill competence, assessment techniques, interpersonal assessment, client conceptualization, theoretical orientation, treatment plans and goals, and professional ethics for supervisors' reference in structuring supervision for their supervisees benefit. Adequate supervision will allow supervisees to: learn and improve working practices, values, knowledge and skills by developing skills for reflection, creative thinking, problem solving and learning from their mistakes and successes; become motivated and empowered; feel supported and encouraged; develop self-awareness e.g. strengths, personal style preferences; and confidence (Hawkins and Shohet, 2006; Morrison, 2005; Munson, 2002). The ability to reduce tensions within a trusting relationship with supervisees is an essential competency for supervisors. Overall speaking, job satisfaction is definitely one of the most important benefits of supervision. Therefore, supervision is important to frontline social workers.

1.4.2 The Supervisor

Based on the demonstrated importance of professional supervision, organizations could create policy to enforce regular supervision. As a result, it could bestow authority and power to the supervisor to: gain an overview of their work; know what is expected of them and aid understanding of their accountability; understand their value and contribution to the service; meet the needs of supervisees. In light of this important role and the ensuing responsibilities, adequate training should be given to supervisors. Traditionally, supervisors are appointed according to their posting and work experience. Effective supervision should thus be “growth-oriented, technically-sound and theoretically-grounded”. Once the sense of importance of “supervision functions” has been established, formal and informal training on relevant supervision matters such as “supervision concepts”; “supervision

standards”; “supervision models”; and “characteristics of good supervision practice” become necessary to develop competent supervisors.

1.4.3 The Social Work Professionals

The quality of professional supervision has been shown to increase staff retention through professional skills development and increased competency (Bernard & Goodyear, 2014). This proposed study may increase knowledge about whether our supervisory roles and responsibilities in promoting best supervision practice are encouraging. Professionals would also be benefited through researching components of effective supervision that could, in turn, facilitate positive working relationships, and enhance service outcomes through collaborative work. In addition, findings from the study could be documented and publicised as possible training materials and professional references. In addition, it is vital to learn whether our existing supervision practice is comparable with worldwide practice standards.

1.4.4 The Organization

Results from the proposed study will help social work service sectors have a better understanding of what is expected in professional supervision and learn about areas that need to be improved and enhanced in order to provide administrative support to staff and reduce staff turnover. With such information, hopefully the organization can assure high quality services for clients and safeguard standards; develop mutual understanding and positively influence team relationships as trust and openness are established; practice and develop empowering behaviours positively influencing the organizational culture; and achieve administrative accountability to the stakeholders and community.

1.4.5 The Client

It was Searles (1955) who first observed that, “psychotherapists often behave in supervision in the same way the patient behaves in psychotherapy” (pp. 135-146). This interaction pattern has been named as the “reflective process” and later named as the “parallel process”. The parallel process refers to “the processes at work currently in the relationship between worker and supervisor” (Mattinson, 1975, p. 11). Moreover, it was also named as “mirroring” or “parallel re-enactment” and has its origins in the psychoanalytic concept of transference. It is an unconscious replication of the transference of the supervisee and the countertransference of the supervisor within the supervisory situation and appears to replicate what is happening in the therapy session. Morrissey & Tribe (2001) argue that parallel process interventions in supervision can enhance the supervisory process and the task of teaching and learning for both the supervisee and supervisor. In their case study, they have demonstrated the parallel process in supervision and its potential as a facilitative intervention. Similarly, Doehrman (1976) claimed that her study produced “impressive evidence” that parallel processes passing from the supervisory dyad to the therapeutic dyad is indeed accurate. Indeed, one of the key roles of social workers is also to provide therapeutic intervention to clients like psychologists, family therapists and counsellors. Thus, it is necessary to provide professional supervision to them to ensure quality services for clients.

Kaiser (1992) stated that the person most directly responsible for ensuring the ethical and competent practice of a given worker is that individual’s supervisor. Competence refers to the supervisee’s use of perceptual/conceptual, executive, and personal skills in their practice. Supervision takes place in the context of the relationship between supervisor and supervisee. During the supervision process, how

a supervisor and supervisee exercise their power and authority, create shared meaning, and trust with each other, will determine what kind of supervisory relationship is forged. Indirectly, this supervisory alliance working relationship is potentially a powerful one that can have a great impact on the quality of a practitioner's work with a client. Kaiser (1992) has followed the lead of Noddings (1984) and Boszormenyi-Nagy and Spark (1984) describing a relationship as fair and genuinely caring, characterized by mutual give and take reciprocity. Noddings (1984) termed participants in such a relationship as the "one-caring" and the "cared-for." However, Kaiser (1992) argued that measuring reciprocity in supervisory relationships is complicated as the "one-caring – supervisor" has greater power and no expectation of a particular response from the "cared-for – supervisee". Nevertheless, they are expected to see the world through their own and the eyes of the cared-for. She concluded that there are some general features of good supervisory relationships. They are: (1) supervisors are seen as having an approach to treatment that supervisees consider as effective and about which supervisors are perceived to have greater knowledge; (2) supervisors are willing and able to set limits when necessary; (3) supervisees have a clear sense that supervisors are in charge of the relationship and will use that power fairly; (4) supervisees are clear about what is expected of them and what they can expect from the process; (5) they also know they have the power to ask for what they want and need; (6) they are respectfully acknowledged if they challenge their supervisors on either clinical or relationship issues; and (7) supervisors are experienced and safe. These relationships are characterized by a high degree of trust and shared meaning and an effective use of power and authority. Kiaser's (1992) summary on good supervisory relationships may prove a good reference for the researcher during data analysis.

From the above illustrations, supervision helps professional social workers remain resilient and hopeful in their practice. Thus, supervisors and social workers should take supervision seriously in the hope of ensuring service performance and clinical intervention support. The supervisory working alliance relationship is definitely worthy of exploration to see how it enhances or inhibits the supervision process and outcomes. Since there is little empirical evidence on the parallel processes that affect our supervisory relationships, lack of knowledge on what extent supervised practice contributes to service outcomes, it is therefore desirable to obtain insight from the participants who can improve and or enhance our social work supervision practice.

1.5 Research Focus and Methodology

This study used a qualitative research approach to identify the perspectives of supervisors and supervisees regarding their experiences of the supervision process in children and family integrated services in Hong Kong. The detail research questions will be illustrated in chapter three. These experiences can be gained by encouraging participants to talk about their supervision goals, structure, styles, beliefs, standards, values, dynamics, issues and the impact on the formation of their supervisory working alliance relationships. The collected information will be useful to the investigation that aims to understand supervisor-supervisee dyads co-constructed supervision journeys.

The research is situated within a constructivist paradigm. Constructivism is often associated with pedagogic approaches that promote active learning, or learning by doing. The constructivist paradigm recognizes the complex nature of multiple realities and that there is no single, unique “reality” but only individual perspectives

(Bruner, 1986; Fosnot, 1996; Von Glasersfeld, 1992). Therefore, “Constructivism” builds on knowledge from participants and researchers. It is a theory, a tool, and a lens for examining the development of supervisory working alliance relationships.

Qualitative methods, including two phases of in-depth interviews and focus groups, will be used in this exploratory study to discover communication behaviours and content between supervisors and supervisees that contribute or inhibit positive supervisory relationships and supervisee performance and job satisfaction. Throughout the one to one, face-to-face in-depth interviews, explorations and exchange of ideas process, both the researcher and the participants will concentrate on thinking and understanding supervisory working alliance relationship issues.

1.6 Organization of the Thesis

The research report consists of seven chapters. Chapter One will provide readers with the rationale, background and objectives of this study. Chapter Two will provide a thorough review of the literature, which scrutinises Hong Kong-specific and international research on social work supervision, relevant efficacy supervisory working alliance relationship studies from social work and other disciplines such as psychology, mental health and nursing literature. Chapter Three will outline the theoretical framework and methodology of the study, research approach and design, how the data will be gathered and analysed, ethical considerations, and limitations of the study. Chapters Four and Five report the research findings from the study’s two phases, especially focusing on new discoveries. Chapter Six constitutes the analysis and discussion of the data in light of the research questions. Chapter Seven will draw conclusions, recommendations and reflections with highlighting areas that require

further investigation into the cultural similarity and differences in social work supervisory working alliance relationship practice in Hong Kong.

CHAPTER TWO LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

The purposes of the literature review in this chapter are to (1) establish a theoretical framework for the area of study; (2) define terminology and definitions that will be used throughout the study; and (3) identify knowledge and practice gaps in support of the study.

Supervision is one of the essential activities that contribute to the professional development of social workers, clinical psychologists, medical doctors and nurses. There has been a corresponding growth of interest in researching its development. The most popular research areas are: (1) the infrastructure of supervision practice such as organizational issues, ethical issues and outcome evaluations; (2) the enactment of supervision such as supervision models; (3) the factors that influence the supervision relationship such as professional competence, and (4) interplay of interpersonal relationships among organizations, professional and cultural contexts. This research aims to study supervisory alliance working relationships as the theoretical construct concerning the attachment style of supervisor-supervisee dyads has not yet been sufficiently articulated (O'Donoghue and Tsui, 2015), as well as determining its success relating to the quality of subsequent supervision relationships (Davys and Beddoe, 2010).

What is a relationship? The most widely accepted definition is that a relationship exists to the extent that two persons exert strong, frequent, and diverse effects on one another over an extended period of time (Kelley et al., 1983). When

people are in a relationship, each affects the other's behaviour, which in turn can impact on their well-being. In other words, each person's actions have some bearing on what the other does, as well as on whether the other enjoys good or poor outcomes, feels happy or unhappy, and experiences pleasure or pain. Relationship scientists (Argyle, 1987; Berscheid & Peplau, 1983; Buss & Kenrick, 1998; Kelly, Berscheid, Christensen, Harvey, Huston, Levinger, McClintock, Peplau, & Peterson, 1983) tend to produce a rich and multifaceted understanding of human behaviour.

Three main theoretical orientations including evolutionary orientation, attachment orientation, and interdependence orientation have proven to be particularly popular in social psychological literature. The evolutionary orientation emphasizes the role of inherited biological make-up in shaping contemporary behaviour. From this point of view, if a specific human tendency – an impulse to think, feel, or behave in a particular manner – has a genetic basis (Buss & Kenrick, 1998; Darwin, 1959). Attachment orientation emphasizes not only our genetic inheritance, but also touches upon childhood experiences (Cassidy & Shaver, 2008). Attachment theorists propose that humans are born with genetically based tendencies that regulate attachment and caregiving. This has been used to explain why some people are secure and trusting in close relationships, where others tend to be worried and unsure about their partners (Bowlby, 1969, 1973, 1980). Interdependence orientation emphasizes the nature of the interdependence between people (Kelly, 1979; Kelly & Thibaut, 1978; Rusbult & Van Lange, 2003). In which, the questions for consideration are: does each person affect the other's well-being; how much power does each have over the other; are the two equally dependent on one another; are the things that they seek from their interaction in harmony or in conflict? This orientation has been particularly successful at explaining why people become

committed to their relationships, how they come to trust or distrust one another, why they experience conflict, and how they resolve it, how they coordinate their behaviour to achieve shared goals, and what makes them will to sacrifice for one another. Relationships have been ever present phenomena throughout human history. Bercheid and Reis (1998) stated that satisfying close relationships constitutes the very best thing in life; and many studies (Christensen & Heavey, 1993; Fincham & Beach, 2002; Gottman, 1994) have documented that a troubled relationship is the most common presenting problem of those seeking psychotherapy.

Relationships have unique power in connecting or disconnecting people. Adequately supported relationships with their supervisors can give supervisees a secure feeling and allows them to explore areas which may require further skill development, which in turn, could ultimately improve work with their service users. Positive relationship attributes such as openness to influence, availability, mutual respect and responsiveness could enhance the effectiveness of supervision. On the contrary, the consequences of disconnection might bring about emotional stress, damage trust and hinder supervisee's progression.

In general, there is common agreement that cultivating and maintaining supervisory relationships is critical to the delivery of effective supervision. For example, many research reports (Beinart & Clohessy, 2009; Bernared, 2005; Ellis, 2010; Falender & Shafranske, 2004; Watkins, 2011) conclude that when the supervisory working alliance is strong, the supervisor and supervisee will share a strong emotional bond and are able to organise agreeable work goals and tasks for supervision. Thus, the supervision effect will be positive and the clients will also benefit by receiving a competent service from their workers.

2.2 Definition and Development of Supervision

2.2.1 Knowledge and Theory Gaps

Originally, the term supervision applied to inspection and review programs in institutions rather than to supervision of individual social workers. Richmond (1897) is one of the foremost contributors to the development of social work, yet there was no mention of supervision in her published works. The first social work text that used the word supervision in the title – *Supervision and Education in Charity* by Brackett (1904), was concerned with supervision of welfare agencies and institutions by Public Boards and Commissions. A short course in supervision was offered for the first time in 1911 under the aegis of the Charity Organization Department of the Russell Sage Foundation. Between 1920 and 1945, *Family* and then *Social Casework* published some 35 articles devoted to supervision. Virginia (1936) published her pioneering work “*Supervision in Social Case Work*”, followed by “*The Dynamics of Supervision under Functional Controls*” (Virginia, 1949). Reynolds (1942) wrote “*Learning and Teaching in the Practice of Social Work*”, which is devoted to a large measure of educational supervision. Growing concern with accountability in the 1970s intensified and shed light on the administrative aspects of supervision, which were further accentuated by recurrent agency needs to accommodate budgetary shortages and manage care oversights. Thus, supervision is a wide-ranging, ever-evolving, activity that concerns the world of research.

Moreover, the history of supervision shows that interest and concern in supervision issues are ongoing and one of the most importance reasons for this continued effort is because of its impact on social work. For example, the following contemporary issues have been researched: (1) identification of supervisory behaviours that contribute to successful implementation of evidence-based practices

in adult mental health treatment (Carlson, Rapp, and Eichler, 2012); (2) the role of a strong supervisory working alliance in enhancing supervisee satisfaction with supervision (Cheon, Blumer, Shih, Murphy, & Sato, 2009); (3) supervisee stress levels and coping resources (Gnilka, Chang, & Dew, 2012); (4) the effects of training on supervisor development (Kavanagh et al., 2008); (5) factors that facilitate supervisor training (Milne, 2010), and (6) supervisor competencies (Owen-Pugh & Symons, 2012).

Tsui (1997b) found that the developmental process of social work supervision has been much influenced by both the external demands of the environment of social welfare and the internal demands of the professionalization of social work. Supervision occurring within these environments may encounter great tension as supervisors and supervisees struggle with the balance between clinical, professional, and managerial accountabilities as a result of social, economic and political changes. Tsui (1997a) identified five distinctive developmental stages with different themes for our social work supervision and these supervision themes are argued to be recurring in relation to the changes and demands of their interacting systems. These developmental stages are: (1) administratively dominant (1878-1910), where supervisors focus on directing and assigning work to the novice social worker, monitoring their behaviour related to assessing client's need and coordinating services, and protecting clients is the responsibility of both the worker and supervisor; (2) training and education (1911-1945) became the core concern in order to equip supervisees with the required values, knowledge, and skills for social work practice; (3) therapeutic support (1930-1950s), where supervisors view the supervisory process as a worker's ability to understand and support the client, is seen as similar to the supervisor's ability to understand and support the worker; (4)

practice-professional independence (1956-1970s) is advocated as experienced practitioners began to question the need for on-going supervision, which appeared to restrict their professional independence and inhibit their professional growth, development, or creativity; and (5) back to administrative function in the age of accountability (1980-1994). From the above, it can be seen that the supervision focus shifted from time to time to allow for adjustment of the supervision needs of stakeholders. Recently, the supervision focus shifted back to the administrative function, this was mainly to meet the accountability and quality assurance demands of the government, funding bodies and community leaders.

It has clearly been illustrated that supervision does not happen in a vacuum. Supervisors and supervisees have to magnify their understanding of the competing tensions that it contains and be flexible to adapt and interpret supervision to meet their specific needs and contexts. Thus, supervision can be summarized as a quintessential interpersonal interaction with the general goal that one person, the supervisor, meets with another, the supervisee, in an effort to make the latter more effective by equipping them with adequate knowledge, skills and attitudes in mastering their work to the best interest of clients. The following are examples of this:

- Holloway and Wolleat (1994) define supervision as a “learning alliance” that empowers the trainee to acquire skills and knowledge relevant to the profession and to experience interpersonal competence in the supervisory relationship (p. 26). This definition has tried to play down the authority image and use “alliance and empowerment” for better supervision outcomes.

- Bernard & Goodyear (2014) define supervision as an “intervention” provided by a seasoned member of the field to less-experienced counsellors in the

course of an ongoing, evaluative relationship. This definition has added a new perspective and is more explicit in outcomes and attention has been focused on the contributing factors. Significantly, the working alliance concept has been shown to be a valuable concept in effective supervision and has gradually become one of the most popular topics for investigation (Martin, Garske, & Davis, 2000; Robertson, 1996).

To address this demand and encourage future research, I would like to use the conceptual model of supervision that Kaiser (1997) has formulated in Figure 1 (Kaiser, 1997, p.10) to identify the important research areas for this study. This model indicates the major supervision components and its operation processes. Overall speaking, supervision could be positive or negative and very much depends on relationship-based domains, which cover trust, respect and mutual obligation between supervisor and supervisee. However, the most salient element in the supervisory relationship is the dynamics of power and authority. Ineffective supervision is caused by using power and authority inappropriately (Kadushin & Harkness, 2014; Tsui, 2005). Bachman et al. (1966), with regard to the use of power by supervisors, noted that there is a negative relationship between the use of reward and power, as it may be seen as the ego-enhancing practices of management or it may be perceived as bribes, pay-offs, and favouritism.

Researchers (Magnuson et al., 2000) have identified six “Overarching Principles of Lousy Supervision” in the working alliance context including: (1) unbalanced (over-focused on certain details or concepts); (2) developmentally inappropriate (not sensitive to a supervisee’s vulnerability and competence); (3) intolerant of differences (mirror effect or argument); (4) poor model of

professional/personal attributes (ethical issues); (5) untrained (lack of professional maturity); and (6) professionally pathetic (lack of passion and commitment).

Most likely, supervisees look for responsible and competent supervisors. “Lousy” supervision occurs when supervisors engage in emotionally unsafe interactions with their supervisees. Generally, these six principles are found within three spheres of “lousy” supervision. First is the organizational or administrative sphere, where the supervisor did not prepare a proper structure for supervision. As such, the supervisees may be uncertain of how to act, how to prepare, and how to engage in the process adequately due to having no clear guidelines, standards, definitions, and expectations. The second relates to technical or cognitive issues. Here this means that supervisors cannot skilfully assist their supervisees in the supervision process and thus lose their respect and confidence. Good supervision nurtures ongoing professional development to meet challenges in a prepared and positive way. The third is relational or affective, which means that supervisors cannot create a safe and trustworthy environment in which to encourage supervisees to communicate with them; this can make their supervisory relationship turn sour.

In light of the above, questions remain about whether or not our supervisees have experienced any of the principles of “lousy” supervision. If they have, these principles and how they affect job performance and satisfaction should be investigated in terms of how they affect the supervisory relationship in the supervision process. To address these points, I will also use Kaiser’s (1997) conceptual model of professional supervision to illustrate the interpersonal interaction and the complicated relational dynamics underpinning the work goal. Figure 1 (Kaiser, 1997, p. 10) below shows the basic structure of the model, while

Figure 2 (Austin & Hopkins, 2004, p. 23), with additional solid and thin lines, demonstrates the interaction in supervision. Each of these figures will be interpreted in turn below.

Reading across Figure 1 from right to left, reveals how supervisors use their power and authority to work with their supervisees. This affects supervisees' willingness to provide information regarding their work, whether or not they accept or refuse guidance, as well as building trust with their supervisors. Similarly, supervisors feel their supervisees behave in a negative manner, and will use their power and authority for personal gain and to give them a poor evaluation of their services. Superficially, supervisors seem to have more power in the relationship. However, in this type of relationship the supervisor cannot have much of a positive impact on the quality of supervisees' work. To be effectively supervised, both parties need to be rationally sensitive to the needs and rights of others and to treating others in a genuinely equitable manner (Boszormenyi-Nagy and Krasner, 1986). Regarding accountability, both parties are responsible for the consequences of the work and the ultimate goal is for the benefit of their clients.

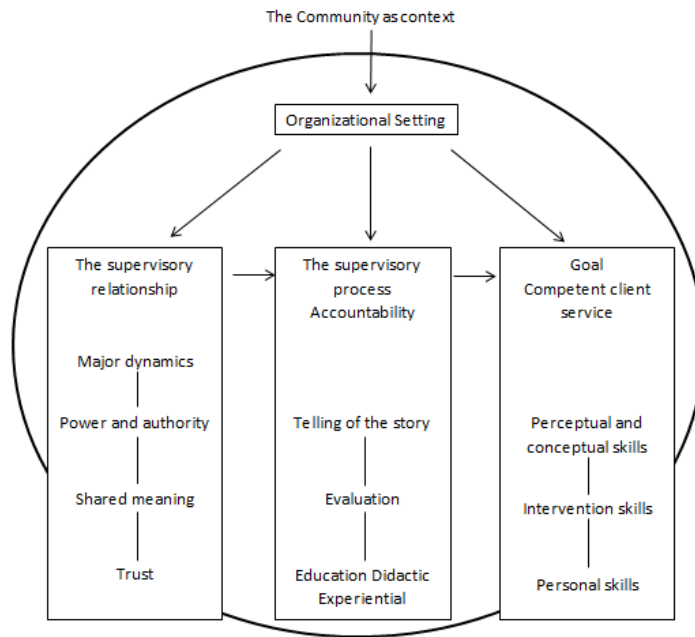


Figure 1: Conceptual Model of Supervision (Kaiser, 1997, p. 10)

Kiaser (1997) views the circle around the outside of the model in “The Larger Context,” in Figure 1 below as public agency. Reading from left to right, supervision occurs in the immediate context of the supervisory relationship. The important elements of the relationship are power and authority, shared meaning, and trust. The process includes the telling of the story, evaluation, and education is placed at the centre. The final part covers three competencies namely conceptual, executive and personal skills of the supervisee for achieving service goals.

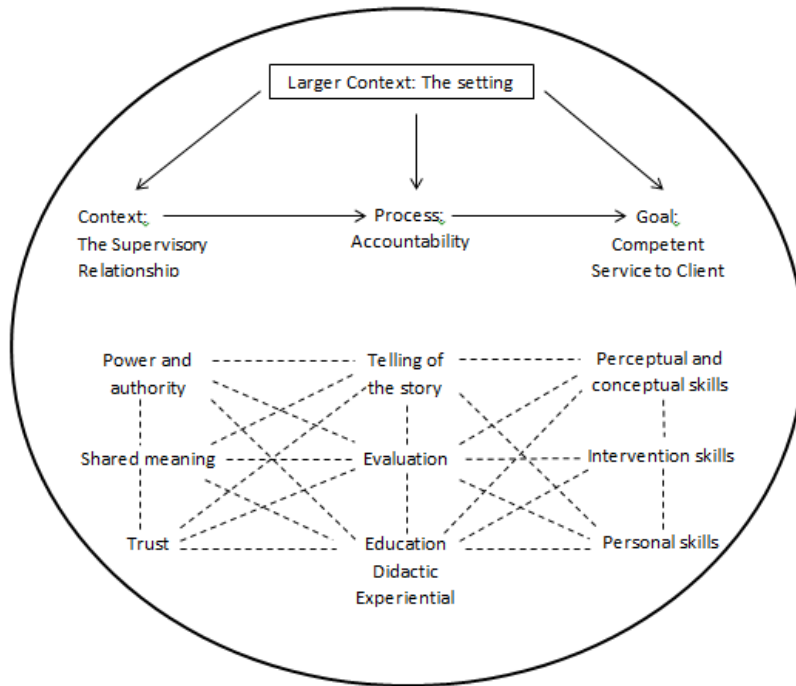


Figure 2: Conceptual Model of Supervision (Austin & Hopkins, 2004, p. 23)

When we read across Figure 2 above from left to right, it can be seen that supervisors are required to evaluate supervisees' perceptual skills (the ability to observe what is happening with the client), conceptual skills (the ability to interpret those observations), executive skills (the ability to intervene effectively in the treatment) and personal skills (the ability to develop increased self-awareness, which includes a commitment to personal growth) to provide adequate intervention to clients to deal with their difficulties. Education and support are needed to help supervisees arrive at, and maintain, satisfactory levels of competence and integrity to handle their casework (Austin & Hopkins, 2004, p. 23).

From the above descriptions, we can see the development of professional supervision – from simple to complex, and from implicit to explicit. Today, social work supervision in Hong Kong adopts a more comprehensive approach and is

defined as an act of overseeing the work or tasks of another who may lack knowledge of the concept at hand in the social service sectors. Thus, it is management activity in which to monitor the productivity and progress of front-line workers. The supervisor is delegated to direct, coordinate, enhance, and evaluate the on-the-job performance of the supervisee for whose work he/she is held accountable. Kaiser's (1997) supervision context is a good reference point for our professional sector because it encourages prior thought about the social work supervision focus, such as whether it needs to shift back from the administrative focus to humanistic–education and supportive emphases.

The humanistic education and supportive emphases are usually focused more on the supervisor-supervisee relationship because the outcome of work is very much dependent on the performance between supervisor and supervisee during the interaction process. For example, it is the supervisor's responsibility to develop an atmosphere conducive to communication and learning. It is also the supervisor's responsibility to identify the orientation of each supervisee and assist them to become more flexible and to perceive the world from another angle. Efstation, Patton, & Kardash (1990) indicate that the supervisory working alliance figures prominently in the learning process of supervision and impacts the positivity of the supervisee's therapeutic working alliance (Patton & Kivlighan, 1997).

This current study endeavours to enhance our knowledge on the dynamics of the supervisory relationship in terms of how it provides fertile ground for examining the conscious and unconscious dynamics of supervisees' learning processes and outcomes.

Supervision involves two or more interactions between professionals. According to Aron (1996), Aron and Harris (2005), DeYoung (2003), and Hadley (2008), all behaviours are determined in an inter-subjective way in which self and others are connected and exerted a mutual impact on each other. The outcome of supervision is the co-creation of supervisor and supervisee dyads with diverse perspectives. For example; meaning is co-constructed from the interplay between the perspectives of supervisors and supervisees. As such, supervisory working alliance relationships in this study will be framed in the context of attachment and relational theories as these two theories have been widely-studied in terms of understanding the following: human development, close relationships, and interpersonal behaviour (Bennett, 2008; Fonagy, 2001). Humans' inborn biological needs for proximity to attachment figures in order to feel protected in times of stress (Ainsworth et al., 1978; Bowlby, 1969, 1973, 1980, 1988). Attachment needs continue throughout the lifespan, and patterns of relating in childhood shape one's sense of self and influence one's quality of relating in adulthood (Ainsworth, 1989; Bowlby, 1988). Early attachment experiences, such as being attached to a figure who is dismissing, unpredictable, or frightening, shapes infants' brain development, influencing future affect regulation (Applegate and Shapiro, 2006; Bretherton and Munholland, 1999), attachment behaviours, such as general attachment and relationship-specific attachment (Cozzarelli et al., 2000; Klohnen et al., 2005; Schore, 2000) and attachment styles in psychotherapy supervision (Pistole and Watkins, 1995; Watkins, 1997).

Attachment theory and research were born out of John Bowlby's wish to understand the nature of the infant-mother attachment bond. Bowlby states that almost all attachment behaviours continue throughout the life cycle, though they are

less intense than in infancy (Bowlby, 1980, p. 39). Bowlby further illustrates that the child moves into adulthood with a general interpersonal model or style of relating that may shift, based on the specific relational dynamics of the attachment figure and the moment. For example, if an adult feels secure and has a secure attachment style, they are able to cope with stress and confidently explore the world through solving problems, taking risks, and gaining assistance when needed. The secure adult is able to self-soothe and feel comfortable, when there is no literal proximity of an attachment figure. However, if that secure adult moves into a relationship with another adult who is, perhaps, abusive, the secure person may begin to feel insecure, more mistrustful and avoidant.

To conclude, research findings suggest that general attachment and relationship-specific attachment styles are influential in supervision, but attachment that is specific to the supervisory relationship is a much stronger predictor of a positive supervisory working alliance (Bennett, 2008). For example, a generally insecure supervisor may be confusing and difficult for the supervisee, because of the power imbalance inherent in the supervisory relationship. Yet, if the supervisee is secure, the attachment style may enable the supervisee to tolerate any supervisory relationship deficits. On the contrary, if the supervisor recognized the supervisee's avoidant attachment style and gives them the message that "imperfection is expected and provides encouragement to the supervisee", this could better develop a secure attachment for the supervisee and they could, in turn, feel more at ease to stay in the supervisory relationship.

In response to the above literature review, I found there are benefits in using attachment and relational theories as this research study's theoretical framework

because it offers opportunities for exploring how these two theories function within the supervision processes of supervisor-supervisee dyads.

2.2.2 Practice Gap

Kadushin and Harkness (2014) state supervision has three main positions. First, it is defined as an indirect service as the supervisor is in indirect contact with the client through the worker. The supervisor helps the direct service worker helps the client. Second it is defined as an interactional process where the supervisor engages in a number of sequential activities with their supervisee. Their interaction is a significant aspect between supervisor and supervisee where they need to establish cooperative, democratic, participatory, mutual, respectful and open relationships. The supervisory process is generally described in terms of beginnings – entering the role; middles – overcoming trained incapacity; and endings – accepting one’s authority (Dolgoff, 2005). The third is defined as a means to an end, as the supervisor helps the supervisee internalize the service aspirations of social work practice. The efforts that the supervisor made are targeted to improve client outcomes in accordance with the standards for direct-practice supervision.

Taking regular time off from work to talk about professional practice should be considered as purposeful, formalized, and legitimized behaviour. Both supervisor and supervisee must ensure the time is well spent. To achieve this goal, supervision is recommended to be structured with specific agenda. The objectives of professional supervision have two directions – short-term and long-term. The short-term objective is to provide the worker with a work context in which it is clear about their job responsibilities and expected performance are. The long-term objective is to improve the worker’s capacity to do their job more effectively and independently (Kadushin

& Harkness, 2014). To this point, supervisors help supervisees to grow and develop professionally, to maximize their clinical knowledge and skills in order to perform autonomously and independently. However, it does not mean control them rather it means guidance and support in the interaction process.

To make supervision effective, it does not only rely on a list of agreed rules, but on developing trust, respect and goodwill between both parties. The ultimate goal is for the protection of clients' welfare and supervisors work towards that end (Kadushin & Harkness, 2014). How supervisors and supervisees follow these principles is an essential component in social work practice because it is questionable whether supervision can be effective in the absence of a positive and productive supervisory-supervisee relationship. Clearly, essential elements of supervisor-supervisee interaction processes in professional contexts deserve further exploration.

2.3 Supervision Impact - Good and Poor Accounts

Kaiser's (1997) account of her early supervision experience demonstrates both good and bad supervision practice. Kaiser recalled that she was reluctant to discuss any doubts she had about her work, or to ask for guidance, as her supervisor's primary focus was on investigating her work in a vigorous way, leaving her with a feeling of vulnerability and self-doubt. During discussions about clients, her supervisor would inevitably turn the discussion towards her deficiencies. The impact of this supervision experience was unpleasant, which left her wondering whether she should make a career change. Fortunately, she was able to work through these difficult times after being allocated a more understanding supervisor who was willing to discuss her differences in a respectful manner, and to acknowledge her part in the

difficulty, as well as expecting acknowledging their own. Thus, Kaiser's story has demonstrated the importance of the quality of the relationship between supervisor and supervisee.

2.4 Practicing Supervision in Context

Following Kaiser's good and poor account of her supervision experiences, Bordin's (1983) study has found that improvements in the emotional bond between trainees and supervisors were associated with greater satisfaction. Similarly, Patton and Kivlighan (1997) also reported that the quality of the supervisory working alliance is related to the quality of the counselling working alliance. This is further supported by a study conducted by Chen & Bernstein (2000), which examines the effects of complementary communications and supervisory issues on the formation of working alliances. These results indicate (1) a higher degree of complementary interaction in the high-alliance dyad than in the low-alliance dyad, and (2) a positive relationship between complementarity and supervision satisfaction levels. These results provide preliminary information to illustrate some factors leading to positive supervisory relationships; however, there are many other aspects, such as supervisory behaviours and characteristics that contribute to good relationships. For example, the two most common concerns in the supervision interaction process are "imbalanced power" between supervisor and supervisee and the use of "authority" (Foucault, 1980a, 1980b, 1982; Kadushin & Harkness, 2014; O'Donoghue, 2002; Tsui, 2005).

French & Raven (1959) have proposed five sources of power designated to the supervisor. These are: legitimate or position power, coercive power, reward power, expert (knowledge/skills) power and referent (personality) power. Foucault (1980b) also emphasizes the essence of power in industrialized society as lying in a

hierarchical position, where each individual is watched by others. Social work practitioners, transiting from front-line positions to supervisors, have very strong self-expectations and do not look ahead when strategically guiding an organization to a position of market leadership; instead they are more concerned with making sure everything flows smoothly on a day-to-day basis. Their transactional supervision styles are concerned with maintaining the normal flow of operations. Transactional supervisors use disciplinary power and an array of incentives to motivate their supervisees to perform at their best. The term “transactional” refers to this type of leader essentially motivating subordinates by exchanging rewards for performance (Bass, 1990).

Supervisors will develop their transformation leadership once they broaden and elevate the interests of their supervisees; when they have mastered their roles and responsibilities. This is what researchers call the “competent/mature stage” (Stoltenberg & Delworth, 1987). In this stage, the supervision style goes beyond managing day-to-day operations. Their work styles focus on team-building, motivation and collaboration with supervisees at different levels of an organization to accomplish change for the better. Transformational supervisors set goals and incentives to push their supervisees to higher performance levels, while providing opportunities for personal and professional growth. Zvi’s (2001, p. 23) evidence suggests that transformational leadership does have significant and substantial additional effects on transactional leadership, as predicted, concerning perceived effectiveness and satisfaction with the leader.

O’Donoghue (2002), reviewed our traditional social work supervision literature, and argued that power is held by the supervisor, and driven by their role as experts

who hold professional knowledge. Kadushin and Harkness (2014) and Munson (2002) reported that supervisors and supervisees both thought professional competence (expert power) was the main source of supervisor power. Thus, in order to develop effective supervision, power issues must be addressed. These findings provide the rationale for undertaking the current research project that explores the relationship-oriented, and power imbalanced, aspect of supervision. This exploration was thus three fold. Firstly, it explores how supervisors and supervisees perceive the value and function of supervisory working alliance relationships. Secondly, it explores the interactions within supervisor-supervisee dyads and outcomes of their relationship development. Thirdly, it explores the determining factors such as personal values, similarity in behavioural style and theoretical orientation of supervisors and supervisees, learning climate in the supervision process that could affect the quality of supervision relationships, as well as the work performance and job satisfaction of supervisees.

Relational-based theories (Bernard, 2005b; Bordin, 1983; Shulman, 1993; White & Queener, 2003) and leadership theories (Bass, 1990; Burns, 1978; Leithwood, 1992) are the more recent approaches for research on supervision practice, especially focusing on the relationship between supervisors and supervisees. This trend seems to move away from traits, behaviours, and situational characteristics that determine supervision effectiveness to study how supervisors and supervisees commit to working together (i.e. the supervisee is willing to be led and the supervisor is willing to provide direction and support), as long as they find the relationship mutually satisfying.

Although, some studies regarding social work supervision issues have been conducted in Hong Kong (Chan, 1998; Fu, 1999; Ko, 1987; Leung, 2012; Social Workers Registration Board, 2006; Tsui, 2001, 2003, 2005, 2006, 2008), their research interests do not focus on the above two areas of concern. Therefore, this current study intends to fill the knowledge, theory and practice gaps concerning how relationship factors are manifest in social work supervision in Hong Kong. I aim to explore and construct this meaningful task in cooperation with participants in supervisor-supervisee dyads. Doing this, may allow the identification of additional knowledge in this area and help to create alternatives for dealing with supervision constraints, thus producing constructive solutions whilst paying particular attention to linking findings with theory on effective supervision practice. This current study therefore aims to explore significant and important components/contributing factors such as supervisory relationship theories (Bernard & Goodyear, 2014; Harkness, 1997; Kadushin, 1976; Shulman, 1982, 1991, 2016), developmental stages of the supervisory relationship (Morrison, 2005; Lizzio et al., 2009; Stoltenberg & Delworth, 1987); supervisor's competence in developing a trustful and empathetic supervisory relationship (Abernathy and Cook, 2011; Jordan, 2001, 2004; Lenz, 2014), and culturally sensitive supervisory working alliances (Jahoda, 2012; Sue & Sue, 2012; Tsui, 2001; Tsui, O'Donoghue, & Ng, 2014) leading to effective social work supervision. Details are further illustrated as follows.

2.4.1 Supervisory Relationship Theories

Research findings about social work supervision suggest that a supportive relationship, within a noncritical context, is integral to effective supervision (Bennett and Deal, 2008; Bennett and Saks, 2006; Bordin, 1983; Bowlby, 1973; Fortune & Abramson, 1993; Kadushin, 1992a; Rholes & Simpson, 2004). Arguably, the

complexity of “supportive relationships” has been thoroughly covered by “Attachment Theory” (Bowlby, 1988). Bowlby defined attachment behaviour as any action that seeks to attain proximity to a preferred individual, who is considered stronger and more capable of coping with the world. In this illustration, the word “attach” is commonly used to mean that an individual has positive regard and feelings for another. However, according to the research findings of Bartholomew (1990) and Bartholomew & Horowitz (1991) on individuals’ typical experiences across several types of relationships, they found that people could be classified into four categories, as defined by a 2 x 2 matrix of positive vs negative self-regard and positive vs negative other-regard. Based on these findings, four adult attachment styles were illustrated: (1) secure adults have a positive model of self and others, here the self is seen as worthy of love and others are seen as trustworthy and available; (2) dismissing-avoiding adults have a positive model of self but have a negative model of others, they view others as unavailable or rejecting; (3) preoccupied adults have a negative model of self and view themselves as unlovable and unworthy, but have a positive model of others; and (4) fearful-avoidant adults have a negative model of both self and others (Bartholomew, 1990, pp. 147-178). Conceptualization of adult attachment styles should be explained as an interaction between positive or negative internal working models of self and other. This concept can be viewed in Figure 3 below.

		Model of Self Dependence	
		Positive (Low)	Negative (High)
MODEL OF OTHER (Avoidance)	Positive (Low)	<p>SECURE</p> <p>Comfortable with intimacy and autonomy</p>	<p>PREOCCUPIED</p> <p>Preoccupied (Main)</p> <p>Ambivalent (Hazan)</p> <p>Overly dependent</p>
	Negative (High)	<p>DISMISSING</p> <p>Denial of Attachment</p> <p>Dismissing (Main)</p> <p>Counter-dependent</p>	<p>FEARFUL</p> <p>Fear of Attachment</p> <p>Avoidant (Hazan)</p> <p>Socially avoidant</p>

Figure 3: Styles of Adult Attachment (Bartholomew, 1990, p. 163)

Bartholomew (1990) illustrated that if an individual does not correspond at all to the preoccupied or fearful prototypes, but show aspects of both the secure and dismissing styles would be positive with respect to the dimension (positive self-image), but neutral with respect to the other dimension. This model allows for complexity in demonstrating the attachment styles expected to characterize adults. Bowlby (1973, 1980) further suggests four distinct forms of pathological attachment

behaviour: (1) *compulsive self-reliance* is an extreme form of avoidance attachment consisting of excessive self-sufficiency and distancing, a tendency to inhibit attachment feelings and behaviours, and a deep mistrust and fear of depending on others; (2) compulsive caregiving is reflected in a pattern of exclusively taking on caregiving roles and prioritizing others' needs while simultaneously being unable or unwilling to receive care; (3) *compulsive care seeking* involves a pattern of overactive seeking and undue reliance on attachment figures for care and assistance; and (4) *angry withdrawal* is perceived as unavailable or unresponsive. White and Queener (2003) reported that supervisors' ability to foster healthy adult attachments was more predictive of the quality of the supervisory alliance and similar associations for supervisee pathological attachment behaviour. Often, the supervisors' current supervision style might be somewhat grounded in their positive or negative experiences. Their attachment style and behaviour towards their supervisees would make them either connect or disconnect with their supervisees. Similarly, supervisees also develop their own attachment styles and behaviours. As such, the current study would provide insight into how the supervisor-supervisee dyads relate to each other and what the outcomes would be.

2.4.2 Developmental Stages of Supervisory Relationships

Milne (2007) and Watkins (2012) defined supervision as a relationship-based education and training that is work focused and which manages, supports, develops, and evaluates the work of supervisees; the evaluative component is obligatory. As supervision is an educative process, the supervisee is learning specific knowledge and skills for optimum learning results, thus a solid working relationship between supervisor and supervisee is essential. Barnett, Cornish, Goodyear, and Lichtenberg (2007) reported that many studies have found that the quality of the supervisory

relationship is one of the key components determining outcomes. Holloway (1999, p. 17) conceptualized the supervisory relationship by looking at it from a contextual perspective. She stated that the relationship between supervisor and supervisee covered three phases: (1) the developing phase is where both parties work collaboratively and effectively on a work supervision contract and professional competencies and treatment plan; (2) the mature phase places emphasis on increasing the individual nature of the relationship and promoting social bonding to allow supervisees to build confidence and explore personal issues as they relate to professional performance; and (3) the termination phase reflects a greater collaborative working structure. Supervisees understand the linkage between theory and practice in greater depth and have more time for discussion of future professional development and goals. However, the supervisory relationship places them in an unequal position as the supervisors have power over their supervisees primarily because they need to evaluate the quality of their work. The degree of power can be threatening for supervisees when the evaluation is performed in a disrespectful manner or the shared meaning between supervisor and supervisee is not present. Therefore, an important part of the supervisory process is to continually address this theme.

Developing a strong and positive working relationship takes time and conflicts can easily occur due to differences in personal values and beliefs. Therefore, both supervisor and supervisee need to make a concentrated effort to establish trust in order to create a safe environment that encourages self-disclosure, identification of transference and countertransference, the examining of diversity issues, and defining appropriate boundaries. This research endeavors to trace the effect of attributional processes on actual interaction in supervisory alliance working relationships.

2.4.3 Supervisor's Competence

Supervision is a distinct professional practice that includes knowledge, skills, and attitudes (Bernard & Goodyear, 2014; Falender, Burnes, & Ellis, 2013; Reiser & Milne, 2012). The ultimate goal of providing a competent service to clients is achieved through proficient social workers and their supervisors who have the ability to observe what is happening with the client, the ability to interpret those observations, the ability to intervene effectively in the treatment, and the ability to develop increased self-awareness and personal growth. Indeed, supervisors are very important role models for supervisees, because they act as gatekeepers for the profession ensuring that supervisees meet competency standards, as well as fulfilling service quality assurance requirements. Diversity competence in supervision is imperative ethically and respecting the human dignity of their supervisees is another inseparable and essential component of supervision. This competence refers to working with others from backgrounds different to their own. Bond (2014, p. 80) indicates that the supervisory working alliance serves as a significant positive mediator between supervisor's multicultural competence and supervision satisfaction. Generally, helping professionals such as counsellors, therapists, and social workers are familiar with the phrase, "know oneself" and are very much aware of the importance of not allowing their own biases, values, or hang-ups to interfere with their ability to work with clients. Unfortunately, this warning remains primarily on an intellectual level, as very little training has been provided on the implementation of knowledge and skills. What this means is they are only dealing with their cognitive understanding of their own cultural heritage, the values they hold about human behaviour, their standards for judging normality and abnormality, and the culture-bound goals toward which they strive. However, becoming effective and culturally-competent supervisors and supervisees needs more development,

particularly in light of the following: (1) awareness of one's own assumptions, values and biases for creating a safe environment of mutual empathy to disclose concerns, sensitivity to the power differentials and vulnerabilities of both parties, and an environment of mutual learning (Bond, 2014; Shulman, 2005; Sue & Sue, 2012); (2) understanding the world view of culturally diverse supervisees for identifying appropriate supervision strategies and preventing undesirable impacts (Barnett, et al., 2007; Wheeler & Richards, 2007) and (3) using communication skills accurately and appropriately when stress and unwarranted self-disclosure are encountered (Abernathy & Cook, 2011; Carney & Kahn, 1984; Jordan, 2001).

2.4.4 Cultural-Sensitivity in Supervisory Working Alliances

Developing a culturally competent attitude is an ongoing process. In social work services, we serve people who are unique individuals and realize that their experiences, beliefs, values and language affects their ways of interacting with others and the larger community. In addition, cultural differences among the helping professionals are also significant. There is a clear need for supervisors and supervisees to know how to manage these differences as contributors to viable supervisory alliances (Chen and Bernstein, 2000; Landany et al., 1997). Cultural sensitivity begins with the understanding that there are differences among cultures. Hair & O'Donoghue (2009) urge social work supervisors to seek understanding about differences rather than strive to achieve some preconceived notion of cultural competence. Tsui's study (2008) revealed that social work supervision is not only a professional practice in an organizational setting but also a personal relationship embedded in culture. The form of supervisory practice in Hong Kong represents a combination of North American concepts of supervision, the British philosophy of governance, and Chinese cultural values. One example can be illustrated by using

Tsui's (2008) study on our supervisors' insensitivity in their supervision practice. He stated that our supervisors perceive supervision as a rational and systematic process, whereas supervisees expect emotional support and teamwork. He concluded that Chinese reciprocal cultural practices: *qing* [情], *yuan* [緣], and "face" [面子] reduced the tension caused by this discrepancy. Chinese people cultivate and practice *qing*, *yuan*, and "face" in their daily life, and also reciprocity through give-and-take behaviours. This can be seen in the following Chinese proverb, "Friendship come, gifts must return [禮尚往來]". This is also applied to "face" culture, where youth and juniors are expected to allow the old and seniors to save "face" as a kind of respect. Thus, both supervisor and supervisee need to learn more about the cultural issues in the supervision process (Leong & Wagner, 1994).

Researchers, such as Cooper (2002), Munson (2002) and Shulman (1993), claim that social work supervisors and supervisees need to be open and non-defensive about their own cultural identity and possible bias and be aware of contemporary research on cultural differences. Whereas, Hair & O'Donoghue (2009, p. 84) conclude that while there are no quick and easy solutions to the challenges posed by implementing culturally respectful and sensitive social work supervision, a social constructionist perspective can create conversational space to question the accepted knowledge and power relations between supervisors and supervisees, as well as social workers and clients.

2.5 Supervisory Alliance Working Relationships Framework

Following the overview of the study concerning knowledge, theory and practice gaps within supervisory alliance working relationships; it is now possible to formulate a research framework for exploration of issues in relation to these

supervisory alliance working relationships in supervisor-supervisee dyads. The exploratory dimensions are: (1) conceptualization of supervision and its impact; (2) process of supervisory relationships; (3) supervisory competence that influences supervisory relationships and effectiveness of supervision. This framework was illustrated below in table 1 and figure 4:

Table 1: Antecedents and Consequences of Positive or Negative Supervisory Alliance

<p>Conceptualization of supervision and its impact – The positive or negative supervisory working alliance relationship was depended on the understanding and agreement of the supervisor-supervisee dyad on supervision model, supervision goals and tasks, supervision contract, and organization policy.</p>	<p>Process of supervisory relationships – The corner stone for building positive supervisory relationship in supervisor-supervisee dyad covered three important elements: personal quality; attachment style and behaviour; and involved experiences and dynamics in the supervision process.</p>	<p>Supervisory Competence – The positive or negative supervisory working alliance relationship was determined by supervisor’s professional knowledge; supervisory attitudes; perceptual, conceptual and Inter-personal skills, and cultural sensitivity in delivering guidance to supervisee.</p>
<p>—————> Positive/Negative Outcomes of Supervisory Working Relationship <————</p>		

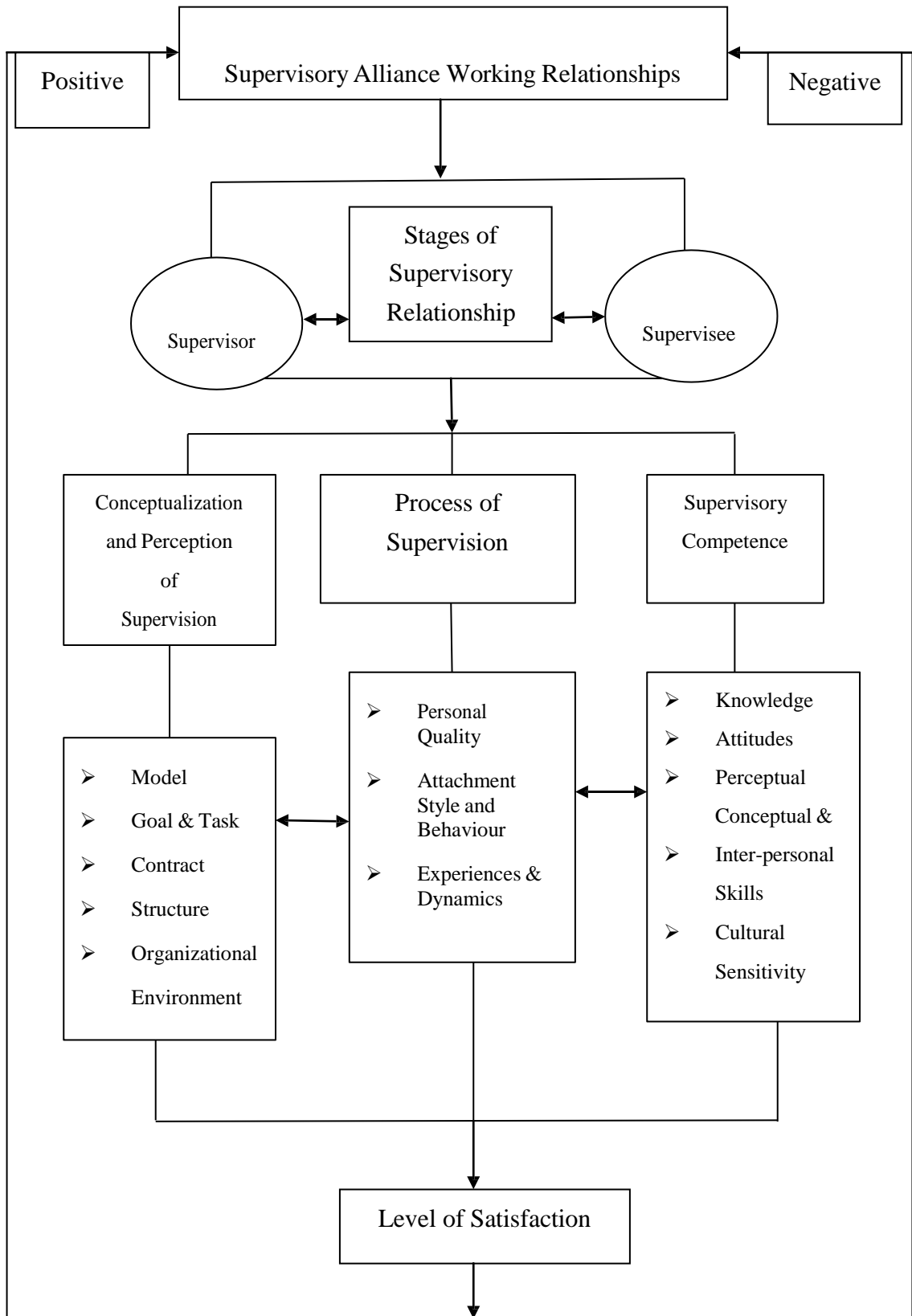


Figure 4: Perspectives of the Research Framework for Supervisory Working Relationship Alliance

2.6 Background Information on the Needs for Conducting the Current Research in Hong Kong

2.6.1 Identification of relationships between supervisory alliances and service outcomes

There is increasing attention from social work human resources, government sectors, and community leaders about the effectiveness of our social work services. As such, much time and energy have been directed towards organizational management and learning cultures and, in doing so, neglects the core issue regarding relationships between supervisory communication behaviours and service outcomes. Though there is evidence supporting strong supervisory alliance, supervisees tend to have a higher satisfaction rate with the supervision process (Ladany, Ellis, and Friedlander, 1999), only one research study (Tsui, 2008), which was conducted over 10 years ago and specifically related to the supervisory relationships of Chinese Social Workers in Hong Kong could be found. This study aimed to explore: (1) distinct features of the supervisory relationships of Chinese social workers in Hong Kong and how those features were formed and function; and (2) how Chinese cultural characteristics of Hong Kong Society influence the supervisory relationship, how supervisors and supervisees interact in this cultural context, and what distinguishes their behaviour. However, information obtained from this study was not directly related to supervisory relationship alliance issues and also feedback from informants was not directly related to their experiences with their supervisors or supervisees. To study supervision effectiveness, we need to explore the direct interaction between supervisor and supervisee to see how they set out their expectations, map boundaries, identify and negotiate differences and establish supervision goals. The following demonstrates the need and importance of studying supervisory relationships.

Tsui (2005) stated that supervision is the medium by which knowledge, skills, and attitudes of a profession are passed on to new practitioners. Their performance is monitored and supported during the supervision process. Thus, the quality of services can be secured and worker's professional growth and development can be achieved. Kadushin and Harkness (2014) reported that when supervision fails to be supportive, results can include low morale, job dissatisfaction, and high turnover. In turn, it affects the quality of service provision to clients. The study conducted by The Hong Kong Council of Social Service (2010) has drawn the attention on social work personnel turnover and recommended to pay special attention to supervisory support and guidance to social workers, especially the new entrants of social work field.

Similarly, researchers have found a connection between the supervisory relationship and worker satisfaction with clients (Newsome & Pillari, 1991) and the supervisory relationship and worker job satisfaction (Raukitis & Koeske, 1994). A meta-analysis of 25 studies by Mor Barak, Nissly, and Levin (2001) demonstrates that job satisfaction and burnout are the strongest predictors of both intention to leave and actual turnover. Himle, Jayaratne and Thyness (1989) concluded that supervision support effectively buffered effects of role conflict on turnover, anxiety, somatic complaints, depression, and irritations. Supervisory support helps to reduce workers' psychological stress and subsequent burnout and job dissatisfaction. However, the interpretation and analysis of each individual regarding "support" may vary.

To conclude, the characteristics that lead to the "meaning of support" or "sense of satisfactory supervisory alliance" in the supervision process have not been clearly clarified. Further research evidence is needed to support this claim.

2.6.2 Parallel process effect between Supervisor-supervisee relationships and client-therapist relationships

The concept of the parallel process was introduced by Eckstein and Wallerstein (1958) who state that a supervisee's behaviour frequently parallels that which the client manifests during treatment. They also emphasize personal development aspects as being vital components of the supervisory process. Given this phenomenon, these behaviours can be addressed in the supervisory relationship, thus freeing up the practitioner and providing the practitioner with a model for addressing the same issues with the client. Literature (Eckstein & Wallerstein, 1972) further confirms that during the supervision process, some supervisees would be encouraged by their supervisors to role play what happened in their encounters with clients, using actions rather than words. As a result, supervisees can learn how to deal with similar future situations and apply these knowledge and skills to actual cases. Grey and Fiscalini (1987) view the parallel process as a "chain reaction" that may appear in any interconnected series of interpersonal situations that are structurally and dynamically similar in significant respects (p. 131). However, under what circumstances this parallel process would happen is not explained. Further research is recommended to gather more evidence to explore how the parallel process works in effective supervision.

2.6.3 Insufficient studies on the supervision process in the "supervisory dyad"

Supervision and the supervisory relationship are reported as the cornerstones of the social work profession. Harkness (1995) calls supervised practice "social work's most durable export in the commerce of knowledge among helping disciplines" (p. 72). However, very few studies have been conducted on the supervision process in

“supervisory dyads” and none have been carried out in Hong Kong. The following reviews are the best evidence to support this claim.

Munson (1981, 1983) is one of the few researchers using supervisor/supervisee dyads to look at interactions in the relationship. He focused on models of supervision in three areas: (1) structure (traditional–individual, group, and independent); (2) authority (sanction versus competence); and (3) teaching (Socratic, growth, and integrative). However, he only examined the impact of the use of different models on social worker satisfaction with supervision and integration and did not focus on the process of relationships within supervision.

Wonnacott (2003) identified three types of processes at play in supervision relationships including active intrusive, passive avoidant and active reflective. These three relationships will induce different supervision outcomes. Indeed, the active reflective relationship was seen as the most positive by supervisees as it provides opportunities for supervisors and supervisees to actively reflect on the work being undertaken within a sound working professional relationship. These three types of relationship have not been studied in our social work service sector. Moreover, our Chinese culture encourages “harmony” in human relationships. It would be interesting to see whether the above mentioned process relationships exist in our supervisor-supervisee working alliance relationships.

Ko (1987) conducted a study on casework supervision in voluntary family service agencies in Hong Kong. Although one of her study areas concerned supervisor and supervisee relationships and might be worthy of a mention, this was two decades ago and many of the situations and demands in current family services

are now very different. In addition, her study did not use dyad samples to investigate supervisor-supervisee interactions. This remains a gap in our supervision work.

In 2008, Tsui researched the features of social work supervision in Hong Kong once again. He concludes that being aware of supervisory practices in various cultures will improve supervision in multi-ethnic societies. Tsui's findings were subsequently confirmed and advocated by O'Donoghue (2002) who states that supervision should be implemented in a cultural, respectful and sensitive way. Again, this ideal needs to be co-created through positive supervisory dyad alliance relationships.

O'Donoghue (1998) advocates the emphasis and use of psychodynamic concepts such as the parallel process, transference, and counter-transference, arguing that these models of supervision further cement the hold of the psycho-bureaucratic discourse. Face-to-face sessions with a predominant focus on worker's function rather their practice, are much like casework. However, the text did not review the supervision processes between supervisors and supervisees.

Hair and O'Donoghue (2009) invited supervisors to create supervisory relationships that encourage transparency, collaboration, and an exchange of ideas. To pursue this ideal, more research should focus on investigating the interactive supervisory dyad alliance relationships, as effective supervision outcomes are grounded in trust, respect and mutual obligation. More recently, O'Donoghue (2012) has replicated Tsui's (1997b) work through a review of the literature on supervision processes over the last 40 years. Interestingly, only 79 articles were found to have researched supervisory practice in the social work field and there was only one

conducted by Tsui (2003) regarding supervisory relationships of Chinese social workers in Hong Kong.

Nevertheless, O'Donoghue and Tsui (2013) undertook a comprehensive review of the supervision research articles spanning these forty-years from 1970 to 2010. They found that the number of research articles on supervision has almost doubled and the mean average of articles published each year also increased, from 0.5 in the 1970s to 4.4 in the last decade. In these articles, there was a notable absence of studies that paired the supervisor and supervisee as a dyad. Mok Barak et al. (2009) has also reported that there is a knowledge gap in the research area of social and emotional supervisory support, with poor interpersonal interaction contributing to detrimental outcomes. As such, they recommend that future research should identify the connections between supervisory factors, work and client outcomes.

Shulman (2005, 2016) studied the core dynamics and skills of supervisor-practitioner working alliance relationships. The model of interactional supervision that he proposes encourages supervisors to use certain communication, relationship and problem-solving skills in which to influence the fostering of positive working relationships with supervisees. He stresses that the word "influence" demonstrates how both supervisor and supervisee play a part in the supervision process, which is interactional in nature. The outcome of supervision is the result of how well each contributes to the process. However, we should bear in mind that there is an "imbalance of power", to a certain extent, between supervisors and supervisees and thus, it depends on how supervisors use their authority in the process to avoid "hierarchical, competitive, power-based relationships". Social workers in Hong Kong have been reported practicing Chinese Cultural orientation and would not challenge

the seniors during supervision in order to show respect and or give face to them (Tsui, 2001). It was worth to re-examine this phenomena after more than ten years later.

Kadushin (1992b) conducted a survey on social work supervision and one of his concerns was about “source of power” perceived by supervisors and supervisees. Evidence here supports the notion that “expertise power” and “position power” are the principal sources of power, as they are a basis for compliance. Another interesting finding here is that social workers saw referent power – the power of the relationship – as an important reason for why supervisees might be willing to comply with their supervisor’s direction and/or suggestions. Similarly, Leung (2012) also conducted a study regarding the use of power in social work supervisory relationships in Hong Kong. This case study reveals the micro-processes concerning the interplay of power in supervisor-supervisee dyads. Results here recommend that redistributing power in current hierarchical supervisor-supervisee relationships could lead to fewer instances of “game playing” in these dyads and facilitate disclosure. Thus, Leung’s recommendation for the re-distribution of power to reduce people “playing games” needs to be further explored with regard to the current Hong Kong setting, in pursuit of enhancing supervisory alliance working relationships.

2.7 The Practice of Professional Supervision

The following will illustrate current social work supervision practice concerns and establish reasons why further study is necessary in the Hong Kong social work setting.

2.7.1 Supervision Concepts

Kaiser (1997) states that supervision takes place in the context of the relationship between supervisor and supervisee. The relationship has three important

components such as “power and authority”, “shared meaning” and “trust”. There is general acknowledgement in the literature of the greater power and authority of the supervisor but there is disagreement too, which depends both on philosophy and approaches to treatment. As discussed above, Leung (2012) recommends that to reduce the “games people play” in supervision the use of power should not be under-estimated. Nonetheless, although supervisors have more power in the relationship, supervisees are not completely powerless. They can avoid supervision both by sharing a minimum of information about their work and by refusing to accept the guidance of their supervisor. If they behave in this manner, their supervisors, with the legitimate power, can penalise them which cannot have much of a positive impact on the quality of their work. Thus, to make our frontline social workers more accepting of the role of learner, supervisors’ use of authority in supervision should be balanced, in which they are not using that power in an arbitrary or destructive way.

Van Ooijen (2003) states that in professional supervision it can help to become aware of our thoughts and feelings and then, through reflection, “clean” them so that we can see what is outside of the “windows”. He emphasizes that supervision is not just about unpacking what happens in our interactions; it is also about examining the lens through which we view the interactions themselves. He believes if supervision works well, we are helped to develop awareness of our “map” or the “lens” through which we see things, so that we develop a “super” vision.

Van Ooijen’s statements provide some insight into which research studies lack understanding of the operation of the supervision cycle in the context of social work

supervision. This is elaborated by Kadushin and Harkness (2014, p. 15) below in Figure 5.

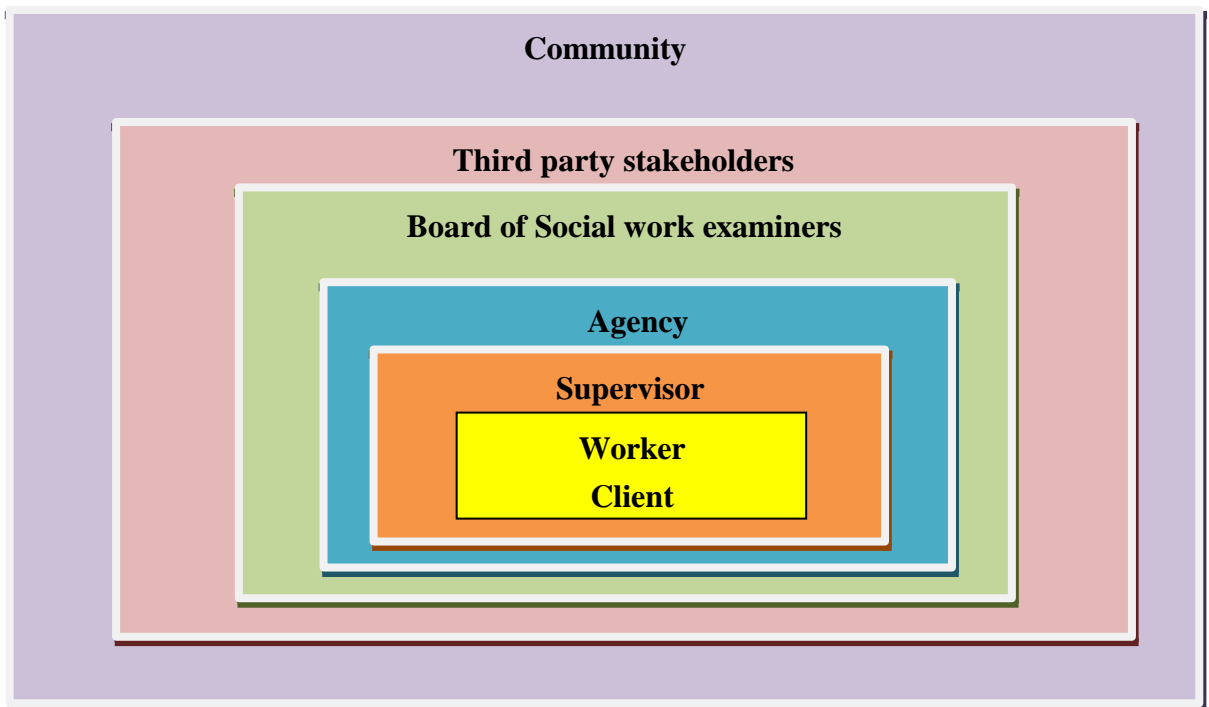


Figure 5: The Ecology of Social Work Supervision (Kadushin & Harkness, 2014, p. 15)

As can be seen in Figure 5 above, supervision is embedded in an ecological system. There is some research on the context of professional community. Firstly, supervision effectiveness should start with individual responsibility. This mean supervisees should have develop self-reflective habits that increase their awareness, thoughts (i.e., desires) and feelings (i.e., trust) of their need for help (i.e., action learning) within the supervision process. Secondly, how well our supervisors know what supervision is about: concepts of supervision and function (shared meaning); and know how to do supervision: contract, structure and process that must be viewed as useful, safe and appropriate for supervisees' professional practice and development.

Boszormenyi-Nagy and Krasner (1986) state that “personal accountability as a guideline for caring and relational integrity constitutes the foundation of trustworthiness and individual health” (p. 62). However, apart from self-disciplinary practice, we need to put more effort into studying the neglected area of the supervisor and supervisee working alliance system. Some research has been conducted in the context of professional community (Tsui, 2001, 2005, 2006, 2008); and one on agency context (Working Group on Supervised Practice, Social Work Registration Board, 2006). However, there is a significant lack of studies regarding the working alliance system.

Noddings (1984), as mentioned above, describes participants in such a relationship as the “one-caring” and the “cared for”. However, we need to be careful in promoting such a concept as it might place too much weight on caring for the needs of the professionals rather than the clients. How much the supervisor should take charge in decision-making processes and inviting participation and input from supervisees very much depends on their philosophy and approaches to treatment; this is concerned with whether the hierarchical nature of the supervisory relationship should be emphasized or minimized. These are areas that require further study. Studies can focus on acquiring insight from supervisor-supervisee dyads about how supervisor-supervisee working alliance relationship are constructed, how the issue of power is addressed, and its impact on supervisee work performance and job satisfaction.

Other than the working alliance system of supervisors and supervisees, additional systems such as departmental units, agencies, social work professions and the community around them, will each impact on the construction of their working

alliance relationships. When the organizational environment is stable, the impact of the community on social work supervision may go unnoticed. Where funding is inadequate, supervisors work with considerable constraints and limited resources. For example, following the implementation of the Lump Sum Grant and inviting bids for human-service contracts to encourage cost-effective measures in Hong Kong, the landscape of social work supervision has undergone enormous change. Lump Sum Grants (LSG) have been around in the social service sector since the year 2000. This new funding mode was introduced by the Government to replace the previous funding method - standard cost or model cost system. This change aimed to give more flexibility and control to social service organizations to establish their own staffing structures and personnel remuneration. However, there has significantly effect on staff resources allocation in social services that is deploying existing staff resources more efficiently from tasks of lower values to tasks of higher values for more achievement with less or no additional resources (HKCSS, 2010).

2.7.2 Organizational Context

“Supervision” is an essential managerial and professional activity for everyone in a social care organization. Many managers in human service organizations, including Hong Kong (for example the implementation of the Service Quality Standards in 2000 in all social work organizations) (Social Welfare Department of Hong Kong, 2001), place great expectation and faith in following traditional supervision principles and guidelines, as well as centralized control systems, that impose work-process standards in the hope of ensuring service performance and support from professional social work. In response to this expectation, the Social Workers Registration Board (SWRB, 2009) in Hong Kong has formally stipulated guidelines, with expected organizational standards, for social work supervision. For

example, the SWRB recommends that supervisors should possess at least five years of practice experience, preferably in a relevant field (but not necessary in the particular sub-field); supervisors are encouraged to successfully complete a course in social work supervision and undergo further training in a field of practice, or a method of intervention, relevant to the service. This current study can further explore whether or not these recommendations have been implemented, the degree of satisfaction and any encountered difficulties.

As mentioned above, the concept of supervision, which has three important processes (1) administrative supervision – the monitoring process (normative aspect); (2) supportive supervision – the emotional comforting process (restorative aspect) and (3) educational supervision – the learning process (formative aspect), can now be revisited. In order to achieve the best outcomes from this concept, Proctor (2001) recommends a firm grounding in the supervision alliance model using the following four assumptions: (1) supervision is a co-operative enterprise between supervisor and supervisee; (2) practitioners (i.e., supervisors and supervisees) are keen to work well, and to be self-regulating; (3) value is placed on professionals' ability to reflect on their experience and practice as a major source for professional growth and development; and (4) reflective practice can be learned. Unfortunately, the quality of our social work practice is questioned because a mandate for supervision is yet to be established in Hong Kong.

2.7.3 The Supervision Practice Context

Tsui (2006) conducted research with the title “Hopes and Dreams: Ideal supervision for Social Workers in Hong Kong”. He states that social workers preferred regular, practice-based, action-oriented supervision sessions, which should

aim to solve practice problems, recognize staff efforts, and encourage future professional development. Similarly, Munson (2002) notes that supervisees require “growth-oriented, technically-sound and theoretically-ground supervision” (p.43). These expectations have been set as the required standards for social work practice of the Social Workers Registration Board (2006) of Hong Kong and the American Board of Examiners in Clinical Social Work (2004).

No doubt, professional supervision is an essential means to develop our workers and guarantee quality service to users (Milne, 2010; Parsons & Reid, 1995). To supervisees, supervision is a support mechanism from practicing professionals within which they can share organizational, developmental and emotional experiences with another professional in a secure, confidential environment in order to enhance knowledge and skills. These expectations echoed one of the findings reported by the Working Group on Supervised Practice, Social Workers Registration Board (2006) as both supervisors and supervisees rate skills acquisition and practice teaching as the most effective and important functions. However, one result in this study supports the view that social workers in Family and Children Service settings give supervisory effectiveness the lowest rating.

This contradictory phenomenon can be explained by Leung’s (2012) recent study. She reported that although studies present the supervisory relationship in Hong Kong’s social work practice as harmonious and supportive, this relationship is not without its problems. She illustrates tactics that her interviewees used in dealing with power issues in their supervisory relationships. First, the dual roles of formal and informal, collegial and familial relationships have given the dyad a subtle unbalanced power structure. Second, supervisees place cultural traits (e.g. harmony and

compromise are rooted in conflict avoidance behaviour) above professional practice. However, this conflict avoidance behaviour might induce deeper dissatisfaction and or unresolved conflicts among supervisees that may eventually bring in negative consequences. Third, supervisees are conscious that their professional future (e.g. job security and promotion) depend on their supervisors' comments, they would use deference and resistance to control their supervisors by trying their best to impress them and tend to evidence their competence and hide their weaknesses and internal struggles so as to win positive notice. These tactics are definitely harmful to their service. Thus, it has highlighted the need to conduct a follow-up study to learn more about contemporary professional supervision practices, such as operational processes, concern issues and outcomes in family and children services. As such, the efficacy of supervision should be emphasized, knowing not only "what and how to do" supervision but also, more importantly, what are the characteristics of the supervision process that result in effective teaching of frontline social workers and effective treatment of their client, should be our supervision research area.

2.7.4 Clients' Welfare Context

We, as professionals, assume responsibility for not only promoting the welfare of the people who seek our services, but also protecting them from harm. Thus, we have the responsibility to ensure our service quality by continually updating and extending our knowledge about human nature, as our work affects the daily existence of thousands of people. Thus, if our services are to be credible, reliable, and effective, the profession must be built on a dependable knowledge base, rather than on tenacity, decrees from authority figures, or subjective opinions. We believe that "supervision" is a major source for ensuring service quality and effectiveness, as well as client's positive outcomes (Cogan, 1953; Dolgoff, 2005; Goodyear & Bernard, 1998;

Harkness, 1995; Kadushin & Harkness, 2014). The supervisor's role is to help supervisees achieve their goals by acting as a professional clinician.

Professionals, under effective supervision, are expected to build effective professional relationships with clients, develop best practice attitudes, knowledge and skills, and make adequate judgment using discretion in decision-making to achieve high quality provision and consistent outcomes for service users. In view of the importance of supervision, researchers have investigated the components of effective supervision, and one of the major components is the nature of the interaction between the supervisor and the trainee that improves the trainee and enhances their development (Holloway, 1999; Ladany, Ellis, & Friedlander, 1999; Shulman, 2016). Kadushin & Harkness, (2014) in their study have generated 2,746 comments on supervisor "strengths and shortcomings". In their conclusions, they used 4As including "available", "accessible", "able" and "affable" to validate a good supervisor.

Although there is little empirical evidence on the parallel processes that effect client-worker relationships, this concept is widely used in family therapy work. For example, Doehrman (1976) claims that her study produced "impressive evidence" that parallel processes pass from supervisory dyads to therapeutic dyads. Her findings support Kaiser's (1992) view that the interaction between supervisor and supervisee directly affects the relationship between the social worker and the client. Therefore, individuals and families who use our social services would benefit if this study could produce similar results on the parallel process effect in supervision practice. Regarding this point, we can refer to Searles' (1955) parallel process concept. For Searles, the supervisor's emotional experiences sometimes could be

seen as reflecting something occurring in the therapy, and more specifically, in the patient. The parallel process is an unconscious replication in the supervisory session of therapeutic difficulties which a supervisee has with a client. This replication may originate with the supervisor unwittingly modeling behavior that is then taken by the social worker into the therapeutic interaction with the client. Thus, clients will benefit indirectly from an effective supervision if the process originated outside the therapy and is subsequently displayed onto the treatment relationship.

In contemporary society, social workers play a significant role in counselling and psychotherapy. “Professional Supervision” is now becoming “less of an option”, although it is not mandatory in social work practice in Hong Kong. Many studies (Bishop, 2007; Harkness, 1995; Kadushin & Harkness, 2014; Morrison, 2005; Munson, 2002; Tsui, 2006; Tsui, Ho, & Lam, 2005) and training curricula (Driscoll, 2000; Fall & Sutton, 2004) have documented essential features and facilitating factors that will lead to effective professional supervision. Thus it is timely for us to re-visit the expectations of supervisors and supervisees to discover the ways in which they think commitment to regular professional supervision in practice offers benefits for them and any additional learning supports that can enhance their professional development. It is more desirable for supervisors and supervisees to collectively shape what they themselves consider as professional supervision instead of being shaped by others on their behalf. The importance of this is explained in an empirical study conducted by Cook and Helms (1988) regarding minority supervisees’ perceptions of cross-cultural counselling supervision. Their findings identified five factors, such as (1) perceived supervisor liking, (2) perceived emotional discomfort, (3) perceived conditional interest, (4) perceived conditional liking, and (4) perceived

unconditional liking that significantly affect supervisees' satisfaction with regard to their supervision.

In summary, supervision is a vital part of providing effective services to clients in the social work profession (Dolgoff, 2005). The quality of the supervisory relationship will affect the successful attainment of the provision of effective services. Therefore another essential question for my study is if these reported characteristics are crucial to supervisory working alliance relationships as constructed in the minds of our supervisors and supervisees.

2.8 The Dynamic and Cultural Context between Supervisors and Supervisees in Supervision Work

2.8.1 Dynamics in individual's developmental stages

Researchers in the area of supervision have devised a number of stages that supervisors must go through, although their descriptions of these stages vary. The most common characteristics can be formed into four typical developmental stages (Hess, 1986; Kadushin, 1992a; Stoltenberg & Delworth, 1987) and the details are described as the follows.

The first stage is marked by the transition from the role of supervisee as practitioner, into the role of supervisor. Supervisors have been described as either overly anxious or ignorant about the complexities inherent in their new supervisory roles. This is understandable as they tend to be overly concerned with their performance as new supervisors. They question themselves about how good they are and whether their supervisees are benefiting from their support. Supervisors in this stage often see themselves as therapy "experts" and tend to transmit their knowledge

to supervisees in ways that can be theoretically dogmatic (Stoltenberg, and Delworth, 1987).

After supervisors have gone through a period of role confusion and conflict, they begin to move into the second stage, where they realize the complexity of the supervisory experience and begin to face therapeutic dilemmas, which challenge previously held assumptions about supervision and psychotherapy; they are more aware of their power and the impact they exercise on their supervisees. They are also more confident in themselves although they sometimes might still be a little unsure and tense. In this stage, they are more willing to take risks and able to tolerate unclear situations in supervision work. However, their motivation to do a good job and efforts made in supervision fluctuate as they need to manage their own confusion and uncertainty.

The third stage is characterized as the proficient stage. Supervisors become comfortable balancing clients' clinical needs with supervisees' training needs. Their knowledge and skills in supervision are much more seasoned. They exhibit an increased congruence in their way of thinking and functioning in supervision, are more aware of their strong and weak points, and are able to acknowledge what they want from their supervisees. Their roles and responsibilities in supervision work are well established.

As this growth and development continues, supervisors have reached the mastery stage where they are able to self-monitor their own supervisory process, realistically evaluating their strengths and weaknesses. They work equally well with a variety of supervisees who have various levels of psychotherapy training.

Supervisors relish the challenge of working with supervisees with different personalities, theoretical orientations, and approaches to supervision.

Clearly, many supervisors might have gone through the above mentioned developmental stages. However, apart from the stage model of supervisors' development that can explain the energy supervisors give to supervisees; supervisees also experience similar stages, of development (Stoltenberg & Delworth, 1987). These developmental stages are set out below.

Here, the first stage is characterized as the self-centred stage where frontline social workers are entering the social work field and may feel insecure in mastering their work as they lack seasoned skills and knowledge and are very much dependent on their supervisors. Nevertheless, their motivation levels are high. Subsequently, frontline social workers increase their knowledge and skills and become more client-centred. In this second stage, social workers are still dependent, but seek autonomy and look for supervisors' support and empathy, but not control. Through consolidation of their working experience, their work focus will be more process oriented as they become more confident and the supervisory relationship becomes congenial. At last, supervisees have reached their maturity stage and their work is more process-in-context-centred and they are fully functioning as professionals and further individualize and personalize their conceptual system.

As such, Henson's (1997) concept of mutuality is utilised here to illustrate supervisors and supervisees reciprocal relationships that can lead to productive supervision effects and secure clients' care outcome. In Henson's view, mutuality is defined as a connection with, or understanding of, another that facilitates a dynamic

process of joint exchange between people. The process of being mutual is characterized by a sense of unfolding action that is shared in common, a sense of moving toward a common goal, and a sense of satisfaction for all involved. Thus, the proposed study aims to explore how supervisors and supervisees interact with and/or react to each other in different developmental stages to achieve effective supervision. There are several possible combinations of supervisor and supervisee dyads that need to be studied for their years of working experience and years of supervisory working relationships, as they can lead to different outcomes.

2.9. Culture

In the Chinese Culture, even when relationships are on the same hierarchical level, for example between spouses, siblings, or friends, a person's sense of equality is based on subtle factors that cannot be objectively determined. For example, in the traditional Chinese family "man is the bread-winner and responsible for external and important things, while the woman is expected to take care of internal family affairs, such as home-management and child-care work" (Leong & Wagner, 1994: pp. 117-131). This is also applied in the work setting. Tsui (2004) reported that although supervisees hope that their relationship with their supervisors has elements of "*qing – be humanistic*" and so do their supervisors. However, the hierarchical value – respect the senior, still has some impact on supervisees. For example, almost all supervisees in Tsui's study said that they would not openly disagree with their supervisors in front of others in order to preserve their supervisor's "*Face*". They would refrain from doing so whether or not they liked their supervisor and whether or not there was a third party present. The findings of this study corroborate earlier research: "*qing*" can release the tension between the supervisor and the supervisee that may arise due to the formal requirements of the relationship (Hwang, 1988; King, 1990; 1994; Ng,

1975; Yang, 1992). To conclude, “*qing*”, “*yuan*”, and “*Face*” are crucial to good relationships in our Chinese culture. Thus, both supervisor and supervisee need to learn more about cultural issues in the supervision process.

Wong (2002) has conducted a study regarding the impact of lump sum grant (LSG) funding policy on the human resources management of Non-Government Organizations (NGOs) in Hong Kong. His finding indicate that although the impact of this change are very difficult to identify in a short period of time, there are some potential risks in this new funding environment. He argues that the impact of the LSG basically shapes a brand new environment and working culture for social services. With the change in the subvention mode, NGOs are forced to take up adaptive strategies to deal with Human Resource Management (HRM) problems, such as changing the staffing structure, reward structure, chasing funding sources and setting up program priorities. These strategies place demands on NGOs to learn to become staffing activists and HRM experts. Since they do not possess this prior experience, training programs for senior management for NGOs, such as dealing with staff conflicts, how to make staffing planning, are in great demand.

To attain flexible and effective rewards for competent staff, senior managers are assigned greater power in assessing the performance of staff and review their salary rewards accordingly. In addition, under this new environment, (1) NGOs have to adopt more customer-oriented practices to improve service quality, but, on the contrary, they have to apply for more stable funding sources to reduce deficits from non-profit programs and staffing burdens; (2) multi-skilled workers or service experts are in great demand, as more output measures and performance evaluations have been inserted by the organization on individual workers; (3) a kind of

de-professionalization may happen in the field of social work in that there will be no more hierarchy when classifying work assignments in relation to differences in professional training; and (4) the government being the sole funders under the LSG may hamper the development of services through long-term investment and the whole of society may become short-sighted due to dealing only with existing tangible problems. Furthermore, Wong (2002) claims that the governing philosophy of the Human Resources Management of NGOs would become more money oriented, increasing the importance of ideas of prioritization in service development, with consideration to the principle of effectiveness, and efficiency. Thus, NGOs need to have an increased focus on active resources and financial analysis, long-term budget planning, risk identification and capture extra investment and strategies to guarantee revenue.

With more than ten years implementation of the Lump Sum Grant in social services as a senior administrator, I have witnessed administrators and supervisors encountering value and operational conflicts in the “new” social services environment, as Wong predicted. NGOs have somewhat different priorities in the decision-making process. They focus more on maintenance of the organization as a whole and its achievements, and view specific service user needs in the context of the larger system. Services for the individual become subsumed under the most workable solution, given large clientele and limited resources. Thus, from an administrative point of view, it may be necessary to restrict desirable aspect of individual intervention in order to provide a broader range of services to the community. Supervisors are accountable to administrative directors and responsible for the performance of direct service workers. However, acute resource problems

have made it hard for even the most committed supervisors to sustain supervision to reasonable standards.

2.10 Summary of the Chapter

Many researchers in the area of supervision claim that being a supervisor is both a complex and enriching experience. One of the major issues identified in the research literature that affects supervisory working alliance relationships is related to supervisors' having both administrative and clinical supervision responsibilities, which are not easily managed and prioritized in this dual role. Kaiser's account of her experience with two supervision situations was also being raised in Tromski's study (2007). The questions were: (1) should clinical supervisors also be administrative supervisor? (2) Under what circumstances does the dual supervisor role work? (3) Why dual supervisor role works? All these deserve further research.

In reality, our social work supervisors cannot escape the dual supervisor role. Therefore, it requires supervisor-supervisee dyads to devise best supervision practice. Thus, both supervisor and supervisee must be clear about how supervision is different with regard to context, process and results in their supervisory alliance relationships. Therefore, this will be the major aim of this proposed study to discover what we do not know in our professional supervision practice, including the dynamics of power and authority, the development of shared meaning, and the creation of a sense of trust within the supervisor-supervisee dyads. Basically, it is important to recognize that the process of building any relationship takes place over time. Connections and disconnections within the supervisory working alliance relationship are dependent on supervisor and supervisee knowledge, skills and practice for addressing differences and difficulties. This is achievable by having a

clear understanding of the three components that include conceptualization and perception of supervision; processes of supervisory relationships; and supervisory competence, as listed in Figure 2 and 3 in this chapter in a way that would serve to build, rather than destroy, their supervisory working alliance relationships.

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter builds on the introduction and outlines: (1) the research questions; (2) re-states the research purposes and objectives; (3) the theoretical perspective, (4) ethical considerations for protecting participants' privacy and confidentiality, (5) research methodology, including recruitment of participants and sampling method, data collection and procedures (6) Quality measures of qualitative research; and (7) data management and analytical technique.

3.2 Research Questions

Quality improvement and lifelong learning in social work practice can only be achieved by providing staff with support, resources, opportunities and time to reflect on their experiences and practices. In addition, investing in the development of a professional supervision framework as part of work quality governance will ensure that individuals, teams and organization's staff can develop and reflect, and improve their practice individually and collectively. In order to understand the aforementioned phenomenon of interest, this proposed study covers the key question "How do supervisor-supervisee dyads form their supervisory alliance working relationships, and what are its effects and implications on social work professional supervision practice?" It is hoped that the findings can provide social work practitioners with knowledge and that it can reflect their values, attitudes, stories, and ideas in the supervisory process; their happiness and sorrow or whatever they feel free to talk about, thus arriving at an understanding of the essential structures of supervisory working alliance relationships. Six sub-questions were derived from the broader key question to explore more specific and precise issues that relate to

strategies for growth and development in supervisory practice. The details are as follows:

1. What do supervisor-supervisee dyads tell us about the issues they are most concerned about in their supervisory working alliance experiences that we need to address to achieve effective supervision outcomes?
2. How participants (supervisor-supervisee dyads) perceive their supervisory relationships, especially how do Chinese cultural characteristics influence their supervisory relationships?
3. What are their encountered experiences (both good and bad) in the interaction process of different developmental stages and strategies are required to overcome any differences?
4. What are the most important personal qualities for enhancing their supervisory working alliance relationships?
5. What attachment styles and behaviours can be identified in the supervision process of the supervisor-supervisee dyads?
6. What is the impact of supervisory relationship to supervisees' job performance and what kind of satisfaction do they obtain from supervision?

The purpose and objectives of the study are now revisited.

3.3 Restatement of the purpose and objectives of the study

Supervision practice has been challenged by social work practitioners and managerial authority regarding professional autonomy and managerial accountability (Evetts, 2009). This creates much tension between supervisors and supervisees as it is not easy to strike a balance between these two parties' needs. The major phenomenon - working alliance relationship is related to what and how these people conceptualize as the issues; and how they do to tackle the issues jointly during the

supervision process; and what works or does not work in practice as a practical function of the solution that is linked to prior or new theoretical knowledge needs. With regard to “Relational-cultural Theory”, emphasis has been shifted from perceiving supervisors and supervisees as individuals, to the joint or co-constructed action between them, as shown through relational patterns. This not only makes supervision less hierarchical and more professional with the purposes of educating, monitoring, and developing supervisees in social work supervision practice, it also prevents them from becoming “puppets” of the supervisor, as well as reducing the “Robotization” effect as described by Schwartz et al. (1988, p.183).

Following the review of studies into the developmental changes and impact on supervision, the research gaps were identified as the core focus for this current study. The knowledge gap, which refers to whether there is a need for supervision to shift from an administrative focus to humanistic-education and supportive emphasis that can enhance supervisees’ learning; and how attachment and relational theories work within supervisory working alliance relationships. The practice gap, which refers to the applicability to include essential components in supervision practices that help supervisees to grow and develop professionally in order to perform autonomously and independently by including the three important components, goals, tasks and bonds, in the supervision processes that Bordin (1983) suggests.

With reference to the above identified gaps, the research objectives of this study focus on understanding: (1) the phenomenon such as the usual structure and content of social work professional supervision practice within supervisor and supervisee dyads, especially with regard to how they make sense of supervisory working alliance relationships within the Chinese cultural context; (2) how do supervisees

benefit from supervision sessions as well as its impact on supervisees' work performance and job satisfaction; and (3) any difficulties within social work supervision practice under the current ecology systems and whether the dyads can work out alternative solutions, if necessary. In doing so, this proposed study provides a platform for social work practitioners to express their views and experiences through reflection of our supervision practice. Situating the study within an overarching theoretical perspective now follows.

3.4 Theoretical Perspective and Research Paradigm

This study is situated within a constructivist paradigm because constructivism is a theory of learning and often associated with pedagogic approaches that promote active learning, or learning by doing. The constructivist emphasizes that learning is not a stimulus-response process, people construct knowledge and meaning from their experiences, self-reflection from authentic tasks with specific objectives (Jonassen, 1994; Olusegun, 2015; Taber, 2011). Social work supervisors and supervisees are professionals and their learning style in the supervisory process is different from classroom learning. Their learning, in the context of supervision, is about self-organization during moments of criticality. Furthermore, their learning is the result of interaction, reflecting on their actions, and construction of explanations. The constructivist paradigm recognizes the complex nature of multiple realities and that there is no single, unique "reality" but only individual perspectives (Bruner, 1986; Fosnot, 1996; Von Glasersfeld, 1992). Piaget (1970, 1977) a pioneer of constructivist thought, viewed knowledge as actively constructed by the learner, not passively received from the environment.

Using the constructivist approach will provide researcher with different views of learning. This framework does not position me as a passive recipient and reproducer of information. Through the research process, I am an active constructor of my own conceptual understanding, and an active meaning maker, interacting with my participants. Similarly, the participants are urged to be actively involved in their own reflection process during the interview. Throughout the research process, the questions, explorations and exchanging of ideas, both participants and researcher have focused on their thinking, as well as the construction of genuine understanding and meaning of the issues in question. Ethical considerations are also an essential part of the research process; these are set out below, as applied to this current study.

3.5 Ethical Considerations

3.5.1 Informed Consent

An application was made to The Hong Kong Polytechnic University Human Ethics Committee for approval. Participants were invited to take part in this study by formal letter. The letter explained the purposes and particulars of the study and their involvement. Participants were also informed that they had the right to withdraw from the study at any time without penalty. The participants were requested to complete a consent form and a simple personal demographic questionnaire and return them to the researcher. The documents were delivered to potential participants either by hand or by mail. For prevention of loss, all the consent forms and personal demographic questionnaires were collected by researcher. There is another important issue regarding ethical concerns, which is related to the protection of participants' identities. Thus, all email communication was password protected. Furthermore, before commencement of the interviews, the researcher re-checked with participants that they understood the research objectives, privacy and confidentiality "rules" and

their rights. Informed consent is particularly important in this research as it relates to two persons' personal views of each other and they would have to continue working with each other after the interview. They also needed to have an understanding of the sensitive issues to be discussed in the interview. This consideration was carefully handled and full cooperation was obtained. Overall, the processes were very smooth. All participants showed strong motivation to take part in the interviews and no resistance was observed.

3.5.2 Privacy and Confidentiality

The researcher is very aware of the potential for unanticipated issues during the proposed in-depth interviews (see Section 3.6). For example, human conflicts or sensitive personal issues related to significant others. This study aimed to explore supervisory issues that might touch on the personal feelings of supervisors and supervisees. Thus, confidentiality can be threatened when interviews reveal details between supervisor-supervisee dyads that were previously concealed. As the researcher knows many administrators, this might pose a threat. Therefore, the researcher had re-stated to the participants that confidentiality would be strictly observed to gain their trust before commencement of data collection. To remind participants of the importance of telling the "truth" in the interviewing process they had been ensured that all the collected information would be kept confidential and how the collected information would be handled had also made clear. For example, the questionnaires and recording tapes would be kept in a locked drawer or stored in a password protected computer. Furthermore, there might be a danger of unearthing unforeseen issues and a temptation to focus on the most sensational elements of a study. As such, the researcher would endeavour to concentrate on what was necessary and related information only. In case of any potential risks involved,

participants had been told that they could terminate the interview at any time and replacements were planned, if necessary.

Participants had been assured that the potential for “loss-of-face” could occur in any conversation. However, the researcher would create an atmosphere of “face-safety” to allow participants to follow their own leads. To avoid participant’s refusal for further involvement, the researcher would pay attention to many sensitive issues, including impression management, topic avoidance, deliberate distortion, and minor misunderstandings.

3.5.3 Harm

As the study would touch on sensitive issues, such as unhappy supervision experiences, several emotional outbursts were expected during the interviews. Fortunately, the interviewer is competent in handling such situations and thus no major problems were encountered. Before the end of the interviews, the researcher had a debriefing with participants. The research methodology is now set out below.

3.6 Research Methodology

Qualitative research method was employed in this study. Rubin & Babbie (2013) suggest that when research requires depth of understanding; attempts to tap into the deeper meaning of human experience and intends to generate theoretically rich data; and when observations are not easily reduced to numbers, we then commonly use qualitative methods. Qualitative measures describe the experiences of people in depth. This method of enquiry is open-ended in order to discover what people’s lives, experiences, and interactions mean to them, in their own terms and in their natural settings (Patton, 1980, 2002). Qualitative data collection and analytical

techniques can be used to provide description, build or test theory (Van Mannen, 1983a, 1983b). Thus, qualitative research emphasizes the fine grained, the process oriented, and the experiential, and provides a means for developing an understanding of complex phenomena from the perspectives of those who are living it (Bernard, 2006; Miles & Huberman, 1994, Miles, Huberman, & Saldana, 2014).

To summarize, the benefits of qualitative method are that they allow the researcher to discover new perspectives and relationships, to reveal and understand complex processes, and to illustrate the influence of the social context. It emphasizes the why and how of behaviours and therefore addresses these two questions, gathering information from subjective experiences. This research paradigm reports human behaviour and its meaning in view of the uniqueness of every participant. It is aimed to provide representation of interpretations of the phenomena as experienced by those who are experiencing them. In this interpretative paradigm, the ultimate goal is not for replication or theory testing. The collected information is assessed on its ability to provide reasonable insight into a phenomenon so that a deeper understanding of the phenomenon can be gained.

As such, this study consisted of two phases. Phase one involved conducting two, two-hour focus group sessions with six supervisors and six supervisees respectively and seven two-hour in-depth individual interviews comprising four scholars and three experienced social work supervisors. This phase aimed to collect general views and concerned with issues regarding social work supervision from the perspective of social work practitioners and social worker trainers from the universities. This arrangement not only helps the researcher to have a more comprehensive perspective

on the research issues but the collected information can also be used for triangulation with the findings from the supervisor-supervisee dyads.

Focus groups were well established as a legitimate data collection method within the qualitative research tradition. The method was originally developed in the field of market research, but has become frequently used in social science, health, and related disciplines. Focus group participants provide an audience for each other, which encourages a greater variety of communication, and therefore different contents, than other qualitative methods of data collection (Kitzinger, 1995). The reasons that focus group had been employed in this research because it is: (1) an idea-generation tool and pinpointing problems through the discussion among the invited participants with similar background can often put people at ease, and encourage them to express their views freely and frankly. It enables participants to elaborate on ideas, and the group interaction can stimulate memories and feelings; (2) a platform for researcher to clarify questions, doubts etc, and also allows the researcher to pursue unexpected avenues which are relevant to the topic at hand, but could not have been foreseen beforehand; and (3) a preliminary step, providing background information, and to generate questions for formulation of the semi-structured interview guide of phase two research work and ensured that the words and concepts correspond to those commonly used by the targeted informants.

The in-depth interview is a common method used in qualitative research. This method allows interviews to share what they feel meaningful and/or important about the interviewed issues in their own words and interpretation. Interviews can allow the researcher to clarify and/or verify directly with interviewees the meaning on areas of their answers. Furthermore, interviews also allow the researcher to asked extended

questions within their scope of knowledge and expertise. To interviewees, they can do the same thing that the researcher does during the interview such as clarify and/or verify doubts directly with researcher, give ideas on areas that researcher does not think about, and express their concern or discomfort in answering certain questions. A debriefing was also conducted at the end of the interview to release participants' tension or anxiety because the interview might touch interviewees' personal and emotional experience that they might worry about the research purpose and how their information would be used.

3.6.1 Interview Guide

The interview had used a semi-structured guide. The guide served as an outline of topics or issues for facilitating the communication between the interviewer and participants, but the interviewer was free to vary the wording and order of the questions to some extent. The advantage of having an interview guide is that the collected information is somewhat more systematic and comprehensive than in the informal conversational interview, while the tone of the interview still remains fairly conversational and informal. As the interviews were conducted by the researcher, she knew when to probe for more in-depth responses or guide the conversation to ensure that all topics were covered. The key issues of the interview were concerned with gathering information on the subject matter; why such phenomena existed; and how participants felt about it. Therefore, a semi-structured guide for the focus groups and individual interviews was prepared to facilitate the discussion.

Moreover, the interview guide was based on Patton (2002) suggestions that there are six types of interview questions usually covered in qualitative research which include: experience and behaviour questions; opinion and values questions;

feeling questions; knowledge questions; sensory questions; and demographic questions. Therefore, questions asked were used this format as it widely covers information sought in this study (see Table 2 below).

Table 2: Phase One Focus Group and Individual Interviews' Theme & Questions

Theme	Question
1. Perception of Social Work Supervision – Feeling Questions	a. What comes into your mind when hearing the word “social work supervision?” b. What is your perception of today’s social work supervision in Integrated Family Service Centres/School Social Work? c. Where do you get such impressions/information on your views?
2. Components of Effective Social Work Supervision – Knowledge Questions	a. What components do you see associated with effective supervision practice in Integrated Family Service Centres/School Social Work? b. What characteristics do you think are most important for a competent social work supervisor?

<p>3. Use of Power, Supervision Types and Supervisory Relationship – Opinion and Values Questions</p>	<p>a. Which type of power/supervision do you perceive as the most positive with opportunities for supervisors and supervisees to actively reflect on the work being undertaken within a sound working professional relationship?</p> <p>b. How do any changes in the relationship happen in any one of the five kinds of supervision powers and three types of supervision between supervisor and supervisee?</p> <p>c. From research findings, it indicates that “parallel process interventions” within supervisory relationships can be extremely potent and impactful. What are your views on this?</p>
	<p>Remarks:</p> <p>The five types of powers are: legitimate power, expertise power, reward power, punishment power, and referent power (French & Raven, 1959)</p> <p>Three types of supervision. The first is called active intrusive where supervisors will give direct information to ensure key tasks are carried out and little attention will be paid to feelings of supervisees. The second is the active reflective type where supervisors will engage supervisees in reflective processes and attention will be on the dynamics of supervisees and their clients. The third is passive avoidant type where supervisees decide if supervision is needed. It is a very important area to be explored (Wonnacott, 2003).</p>

<p>4. Personal Social Work Supervision Experiences – Experience and Behaviour Questions</p>	<p>a. Can you share your experience as a supervisee/supervisor? Is there any impact on your current supervisory style?</p> <p>b. How do you develop your supervisory working alliance relationship with your supervisee/supervisor?</p> <p>c. Can you share one of your best/worst experience with your social work supervisee/supervisor?</p> <p>d. What is the most difficult issue in your supervision work?</p> <p>e. From your experience what brings effective supervision?</p>
<p>5. Supervisory Theory - Opinion and Values questions</p>	<p>a. If alliance is proposed to be essential to supervisee’s learning, what roles do attachment, rational-cultural and pedagogy theories play?</p> <p>b. What aspects of working alliance theory can be translated?</p> <p>c. Would you say you are satisfied with the current situation, with the way things are going on?</p> <p>d. (If so) “What are you satisfied about? Why is that?” (Or, “What's going well...?”)</p>
<p>6. Closing Up Questions – Sensory Questions</p>	<p>a. “Are there things you are dissatisfied about, that would like to see changed?” (Or, “What's not going well...?”)</p> <p>b. Please share your views about this particular research topic?</p> <p>c. “Are there other things you would like to say before we wind up?”</p>

3.6.2 Participants

Sampling procedures in qualitative research are not so rigidly prescribed as in quantitative studies (Pattern, 2014). However, they can have a profound effect on the ultimate quality of the research. Researchers have been criticized for not describing

their sampling strategies in sufficient detail, which makes interpretation of findings difficult and affects replication of the study (Kitson et al., 1982). Therefore, the sampling method in this study had paid special attention to this matter.

“Purposeful Sampling” was used in both the focus groups and individual interviews. The principles of “Purposeful Sampling” involves identifying and selecting individuals or groups of individuals that are especially knowledgeable about or experienced with a phenomenon of interest (Cresswell and Clark, 2011); knowledge, experience, willingness to participate, and the ability to communicate experiences and opinions in an articulate, expressive, and reflective manner are also noted to be importance criteria (Bernard, 2006; Spradley, 1979). For example, each pair of sample participants in this study should be a social work supervisor-supervisee dyad and had at least one year supervisory working relationship and work in a children and youth centre, school or integrated family service centre; and willingness to be interviewed simultaneously on a voluntary bases and be committed throughout the study, were also a must.

The number of participants is a frequently argued issue in qualitative research. When talking about this, people have an idea of using numbers to quantify the power of generalization. However, in qualitative research, we are not aiming to generalize to the wider population. McCracken (1988) states the qualitative interview is not for discovering how many, and what kinds of people share a certain characteristic. The first principle is “less is more”. Quality is more important than quantity. He stresses that eight participants is perfectly sufficient and manageable, on the condition that they offer enough information for the generation of patterns and themes; it also reaches theoretical saturation, when ideas, concepts, and themes begin to repeat

themselves. Therefore, this study was also not aimed at using numbers to quantify results. Instead, this provided an opportunity to glimpse the undiscovered information of social work supervision. Miles and Huberman (1994) also state that qualitative research studies usually choose small samples to allow for in-depth study.

This study used the above principles as a reference point to select a small number of participants for carrying out the in-depth interviews. Sampling aimed to ensure that key constituencies were represented and diversity was included, so that the construct of professional supervision satisfaction could be explored in detail in the specific context. According to the developmental stage theory coined by Stoltenberg & Delworth (1987), years of experience is the most determining factor that affects the supervisory developmental process. Therefore, combinations of supervisor-supervisee dyads needed to include various lengths of experience in the provision, and receiving of, supervision. Stoltenberg and Delworth's (1987) argue that supervisors usually go through three stages. In stage one (Beginner): supervisors are described as either overly anxious or ignorant about the complexities inherent in their new roles as supervisors. It is understandable as they tend to be overly concerned with their performance as new supervisors. Supervisors in this stage often see themselves as therapy "experts" and tend to transmit their knowledge to supervisees in ways that can be theoretically dogmatic. In stage two (Competent): Supervisors go through a period of role confusion and conflict as they begin to realize the complexities of the supervisory experience and begin to face therapeutic dilemmas, which challenge previously held assumptions about supervision and psychotherapy. Indeed, supervisors' efforts in supervision fluctuate as they need to manage their own confusion and uncertainty. In stage three (Proficient): it is characterized by a renewed interest and excitement in the supervisory process. Supervisors begin to become comfortable balancing clients' clinical needs with

supervisees' training needs. They are also able to self-monitor their own supervisory process, realistically evaluating their strengths and weaknesses. They work equally well with a variety of supervisees who have various levels of psychotherapy training. Supervisors relish the challenge of working with supervisees with different personalities, theoretical orientations, and approaches to supervision.

The supervision process is seen as a dialectic meeting where supervisors and supervisees talk about more than “I” and “you” issues. There should also be discussion about the differences between them as well as surrendering to “the between” in consideration, i.e., to what develops and emerges out of the interaction (Buber, 2010). As such, to avoid inducing resistance and uncomfortable feelings that might hinder genuine communication throughout the interview, a brief discussion on whether they had any worries on the recalling of feelings concerning unsatisfactory expectations, conflicts and or arguments were ascertained before the interviews were conducted. Fortunately, all the supervisor-supervisee dyads expressed that they were ready and had open-minds to talk about their supervision experiences when enquired. Overall, participants appeared friendly, frank and cooperative. The groupings were as follows.

Participant dyads in phase two were divided into three groups according to their supervision experience in accordance with Stoltenberg and Delworth's model of classification. The supervisor-supervisee dyads with one to two years supervisory experience were categorised as “Beginner” supervisor-supervisee dyads; the supervisor-supervisee dyads with two to four years supervisory experience were categorised as “Competent” supervisor-supervisee dyads; and the third supervisor-supervisee dyads with more than four years supervision experience were categorised as “Proficient” (See below Table 8).

The first phase aimed to collect general information about social work supervision practice from social work trainers, social work supervisors and supervisees. The gathered information was used as a reference point to inform the second phase's interviewing guide, as well as for triangulation with findings from the second phase supervisor-supervisee dyads. Informants' background information is listed as follows in Tables 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 & 8).

Table3: Profile of Phase One Individuals, Supervisors, & Supervisees

	Individual Interview Participants	Focus group of Supervisors	Focus group of Supervisees
Qualification	MSW (3); PhD (4)	BSW (2); MSW (4)	BSW (5); MSW (1)
Post Title	Assistant Professor (4) Chief Social Work officer (1) Regional Manager (1) Social Work Officer (1)	Social Work Officer (6)	Social Worker (6)
Nature of Organization	University (4) Non-Government Social Service Organization (3)	Non-Government Social Service Organization (6)	Non-Government Social Service Organization (6)
Sex Ratio	M (2); F (5)	M (4); F (2)	M (0); F (6)
Years of Working Experience	6 – 10 years (2) 21 or above (5)	1-10 years (1) 11 -20 years (1) 21 or above (4)	1- 5 years (4) 6 -10 years (2)
Service Type	Social Work Training Institute (4) Family Service & School Social Work Service (3)	Integrated Family Service (3) Social Work Service (3)	Integrated Family Service (3) School Social Work Service (3)
Total number of participants	7	6	6

Table 4: Informants' Background Information of Supervisor Focus Group

No.	Sex	Qualification Master of Social Work (MSW) / Bachelor of Social Work (BSW)	Nature of Service Integrated Family Service Centre (IFSC) / School Social Work (SSW)	No. of year(s) in professional supervision work
Sfg1	M	MSW	SSW	17 yrs
Sfg2	M	MSW	IFSC	27 yrs
Sfg3	M	BSW	IFSC	22 yrs
Sfg4	M	MSW	SSW	1 yr
Sfg5	F	MSW	SSW	24 yrs
Sfg6	F	BSW	IFSC	20 yrs

Table 5: Informants' Background Information of Supervisee Focus Group

No.	Sex	Qualification Master of Social Work (MSW) / Bachelor of social Work (BSW)	Nature of Service Integrated Family Service Centre (IFSC) / School Social Work (SSW)	No. of year(s) in professional supervision work
Ffg1	F	MSW	IFSC	8 yrs
Ffg2	F	BSW	SSW	5 yrs
Ffg3	F	BSW	IFSC	10 yrs
Ffg4	F	BSW	IFSC	4 yrs
Ffg5	F	BSW	IFSC	3 yrs
Ffg6	F	BSW	SSW	1 yr

Table 6: Background Information of Informants' of Individual Interview

No.	Sex	Qualification Master of Social Work (MSW)/ Bachelor of Social Work (BSW) /PhD	Nature of Service/Post-Title Integrated Family Service Centre (IFSC)/ School Social Work (SSW)/ Academy Institutes (AI)	No. of year(s) in professional supervision work/teaching social work
P1	M	PhD	AI/Associate Professor	23 yrs
P2	M	BSW	IFSC/Chief Social Work Officer	25 yrs
P3	F	PhD	AI/Associate Professor	23 yrs
P4	F	PhD	AI/Associate Professor	25 yrs
P5	F	PhD	AI/Associate Professor	8 yrs
P6	F	MSW	IFSC/Social Work Officer	8 yrs
P7	F	B. Soc. Sc.	IFSC/Regional Manager	22 yrs

Table 7: Phase Two Background Information of Supervisor-Supervisee dyads

	Supervisor	Supervisee
Qualification	BSW (2); MSW(3); MA/MSc(4)	BSW (8); MSW (1)
Post Title	Social Work officer (9)	Social Worker (9)
Nature of Organization	Non-Government Social Service Organization (9)	Non-Government Social Service Organization (9)
Sex Ratio	M (2); F (7)	M (1); F (8)
Years of Working Experience	1- 5 years (7) 6- 10 years (2)	1- 5 years (8) 6 -10 years (1)
Service Type	Integrated Family Service (4) School Social Work Service (3) Children & Youth Service (2)	Integrated Family Service (4) School Social Work Service (3) Children & Youth Service (2)
Total number of participants	9	9

Table 8: Supervisor-Supervisee Dyad Groups

Participant Categories	Supervision Experience in Years	Number of Supervisor-Supervisee Dyads
Beginner Supervisor-supervisee Dyads	Below two years	3
Competent Supervisor-Supervisee Dyads	Two to four years	3
Proficient Supervisor-Supervisee Dyads	Above four years	3

Dyadic informant samples are not entirely new but they are seldom been used in supervisory relationship research. This study has filled the gap, by providing empirical examples of how the supervisor and supervisee were brought together to talk about their experiences in supervision practice with each other. This type of informant group offers opportunities when the researcher wants both social interaction and depth narrative. The current involved informant dyads had shared knowledge, values, experiences, opinions, and feelings towards supervision practice. Altogether nine supervisor-supervisee dyads were involved in this study. Again, the sex ratio distribution of the dyads was not balanced and was female dominated. However, the success of recruiting these supervisor-supervisee dyads is considered a good start as the informants' open and sincere attitudes in the interview process gave us some new insights and hopes in our supervision practice.

Regarding the background of phase one individual interview participants, as can be seen in Table 3 above two were males and five were females; four hold PhD qualification and worked in social work training institutes and three were professional practitioners worked in integrated family services, school social work and integrated

children and youth Services. Their working experience ranged from six to twenty-one year or above. Participants in the supervisor focus group (Table 4) were dominantly males. Majority of participants hold Master degree. Their working experience ranged from one to twenty seven years. Participants in the supervisee focus group (Table 6) were all females. Majority of them hold Bachelor degree. Their working experience ranged from one to ten years.

By observation, gender was an issue of concern. The reason was imbalanced sex ratio of the participants could lead to one part of the information was missing like the supervisee's focus group or insufficient liked the supervisor's group. Further exploration of this matter would be recommended as this matter had not been covered in this study.

In order to understand the supervisory relationship development between supervisor and supervisee, the nine supervisor-supervisee dyads were recruited with different years of supervision experiences as illustrated in table 8. This arrangement was able to meet the developmental stages of supervisor documented in previous research (Stoltenberg and Delworth, 1987).

3.6.3 Recruitment

An invitation letter, the research proposal, consent form containing a questionnaire regarding their demographic data, were sent through email to the participants who then needed to return them by fax or by email in a month time to the researcher for confirmation of participation.

3.6.4 Service Settings

The settings for this research were confined to Integrated Children and Youth Service Centres (ICYSC), Integrated Family Service Centres (IFSC) and School Social Work Services (SSW). The reasons for choosing these settings included: (1) all the targeted participants working in these services settings would receive supervision because the nature of their work is complex and sometimes have high risk and thus requires guidance and support in conceptualization and formulation of casework strategies; and (2) the researcher is very familiar with these service structures, which will ensure the completion of the study; and (3) the findings can be a good reference for improving and or enhancing the effectiveness of supervision in the sectors that have high demand for supervision.

3.6.5 Data Collection Procedures

In phase one, two focus groups and seven individual interviews were conducted to gather a general viewpoint from professionals in the social work sector. All participants took part voluntarily; especially the supervisees who were invited by their supervisors. The interviews basically addressed the fundamental question what was happening in social work supervision and crucial issues were brought to the fore regarding the unfolding of events in the natural flow of social work supervision practice.

3.6.6 Focus Group and Individual Interview Procedures

From what we have learned, qualitative researchers are often instruments for receiving information in natural contexts and uncovering its meaning through descriptive, exploratory or explanatory procedures. As such, the interviews were conducted in an empathic, non-judgmental and consistence manner. The following

techniques were used as a warming up feature that could provide context for how participants might possibly engage with the interviewer's inquiries. Each focus group or individual interview started with the following steps:

1. Welcome informant(s) and thank them for attending.
2. Review purpose of the session and describe how the results will be used.
3. Provide a brief overview of the focus group/individual interview process.
4. Establish any ground rules to encourage positive participation.
5. Have participant(s) briefly introduce themselves.
6. Participants were also encouraged to introduce any topics that they considered relevant to the research area.

Ways to communicate with participants(s) can affect their motivation and openness to sharing. The following are suggested by Krueger (1998) which found appropriate to encourage participants' active participation during the focus groups/individual interviews:

1. Use only open-ended questions. For example:
 - a. "What do you think about"?"
 - b. "Where do you get such impressions/information on"?"
 - c. "What problems do you see associated with"?"
2. Avoid dichotomous questions, since they yield minimal responses:
 - a. "Should the orbe responsible for the"?"
3. "Why" is seldom asked. As an alternative, consider asking about specific components that directly relate to the studies.
4. Use "think back" questions to provide contextual information. Highlight
 - a. past event or a past experience common to all participants. Avoid questions that put the focus on the future.

5. Use a variety of questions that will encourage participant involvement.
6. Questions may include perceptions, preferences, rating scales, and case examples.
7. Order questions in a sequence that goes from the general to highly specific.
8. Budget time for unanticipated questions.
9. Use probes, or follow-ups, designed to get more information on a given question:
 - a. “Can you say more about that?”
 - b. “Can you give an example?”

Specifically, eight types of questions were used throughout each interview that could encourage information exchange and construction of ideas. The questions types were: *introducing questions* such as “Can you tell me about....?”, “Do you remember an occasion when....?”; *follow up questions* by repeating significant words of an answer can lead to further elaborations; *probing questions* like “Can you give a more detailed description of what happened?”, “Do you have further examples of this?”; *specifying questions* such as “What did you actually do when you felt a mounting anxiety?”, “How did you respond to his/her criticism?”; *direct questions* for example “Have you ever received appreciation and encouragement for good work done?”, “Have you had any unhappy experiences with your supervisor/supervisee?”; *indirect questions* such as “How do you believe your supervisee would follow your advice?”; *structuring questions* for example “I would like to talk about another issue...”; and *rephrasing questions* for example “Is it correct that your main anxiety about work performance concerns your continuation of employment?”.

The importance of listening during the interviewing process was taken into consideration. For example I listened without prejudice and judgment. This allowed participants to describe their experiences freely without interruption from the interviewer. Moreover, the interviewer did not attempt to manipulate the phenomenon of interest (e.g. a group, event, relationship, or interaction). The phenomenon of interest unfolded naturally in that it has no predetermined course established by and for the interviewer such as would occur in a laboratory or other control setting. Thus, qualitative research in recent years has moved toward preferring such language as trustworthiness and authenticity.

In order to simplify the reporting and for ease of reading, participant quotes are identified as P1 to P7 for phase one individual interviewees; Sfg1 to Sfg6 for supervisor focus group members, and Ffg1 to Ffg6 for frontline social worker (supervisee) focus group members. The outcome effects of these purposefully selected participants will be discussed in more depth in Chapter five. These findings will be triangulated with the findings from phase two.

All the collected information was transcribed verbatim by a third party and verified by the researcher before using it to construct the interview guide for phase two supervisor-supervisee dyad interviews. Two interview guides were finalized and used as guides for discussion between the researcher and participants in the in-depth interviews.

3.6.7 Phase Two Supervisor-Supervisee Dyad Interview Procedures

In phase two, semi-structured in-depth interviews were conducted with nine supervisor-supervisee dyads by the researcher. Although there was a pre-set

interview guide, the flow of the interviews followed participants' interests and concerns. The guide was merely used as a reference for when there were related issues that the researcher wanted to explore further, obtain more in-depth information and or clarification.

These interviews ranged from two to two and a half hours in duration, and were conducted from April 2013 to May 2014 and no drop-out occurred. With the consent of participants, all interviews were audio-recorded; no uncomfortable feelings and/or resistance were observed; participants freely asked for clarification of any issues they did not understand. Each interview was fully transcribed by a third party and re-examined by the researcher. As the collected information of phase two was the major part of the study, all transcripts were made available to participants, who had the chance to provide corrections, additions, and omissions. Only minor amendments was made as FD4 requested to add extra information regarding her expectation on future supervision as she learned more about supervision function which demonstrated high accuracy.

Specifically, this second phase involved nine pairs of supervisor-supervisee dyads from three groups of social workers and a schedule for the interviews was arranged with the participants. Each supervisor and supervisee in each dyad was interviewed separately on the same day or in the same week, wherever possible. This not only saved the interviewer's travelling time but they were able to avoid unexpected influential factors that could potentially affected participants' moods, attitudes and values concerning their supervisory relationships. The interview venue, date and time were arranged in advance according to participants' preferences and availability.

Most of these interviews were conducted in participants' offices because they have a private interviewing room for confidential counselling work and it saved their time for travelling to the researcher's office. The consent form was provided to all participants before the interview started to ensure that they understood their rights before participating. The interviews were conducted in Cantonese but included some English terms. This mixed language is unique to social workers and other professionals trained in Hong Kong, since they learned the theory of social work in English but practise it in Cantonese. Two two-hour interviewing sessions were prepared for each participant. The first two-hour interview was for collecting information. The second interview was for participant verification of the transcripts to ensure their views had been adequately reported. Subsequently, the second interview was cancelled as it was unnecessary because participants chose to amend the transcripts independently and return them to researcher via email. In addition, there was some flexibility in the length of each interview to allow participants had sufficient time to complete the interview without feeling rushed. However, the interview time was confined to not more than two and half hours as it would be too tiring for both participant and researcher.

Apart from the themes that had been collected from the first phase interviews with social work scholars, supervisors and supervisees, the semi-structure interview guide contained three more important themes that were mentioned in the literature as having a strong impact on supervision effectiveness between two people within interpersonal interactions. The first one was about "*supervision standard*" as developed by Jenkin et al. (2003). The second was regarding the "*five types of communication*" mentioned by Katz and Kahn (1978) and Huseman, Hatfield, Boulton, & Gatewood (1980), and the third concerned

“supervisory working relationship alliances ” through different developmental stages between supervisor and supervisee. In doing so, this could help the exploration of whether our supervisor-supervisee dyads also share similarities and/or differences in the supervision process as evidenced in the literature.

As the interview content was related to participants’ supervisors or supervisees, during the interview some participants shared sensitive issues or painful experiences that made them become very emotional or angry. This was dealt with by allowing them to release their emotions by showing unconditional acceptance and patiently listening to their stories. As such, this empathetic approach was useful in dealing with such situations. When they had calmed down, the interviewer would ask whether they were ready to continue, and then return to the interview with a question that acknowledged their emotion. At the same time, the interviewer reassured the participants that all the shared information from the interviews would be kept confidential. For example, all the questionnaires that were stored in the computer would have a password to prevent being opened by others when they were forwarded to the participants through email. Overall, all participants were very sincere whilst sharing their supervisory experiences. Before the end of the interviews, the researcher debriefed participants. The quality of this qualitative research is reported below.

3.7 Quality Measures for Ensuring Trustworthiness of Qualitative Research

Ensuring this research’s credibility during data analysis and reporting of the findings are important issues. There is debate as to whether qualitative researchers

should have their analyses verified or validated by a third party as this process can make the analysis more rigorous and reduce the element bias (Barbour, 2001; Mays & Pope, 1995). As such, a number of actions such as member checking, triangulation, peer debriefing that researchers are usually taken had been adopted and the details were as follows.

3.7.1 Member Checking

Before the interviews and focus groups were conducted, the researcher approached former colleagues who have rich social work supervision experiences to be my interviewees. Through the trial run process, some of the content and language used were found not easy to be understood or answered. The semi-interviewing guide was therefore revised. After this, the semi-structure interview guide was trialled again with social workers and the progress was satisfactory as the level of language proficiency was fluent, especially the professional terminologies used and the content was relevant to be discussed. The other form was transcript proofreading by participants themselves for counterchecking the accuracy and interpretation of their meanings. Overall, participants did not show any communication problems and only minor amendments were requested.

3.7.2 Triangulation

Triangulation is a method for verifying research findings by different means such as reviewing information from literature, and using several ways to collect information. It means if the information is only from one person's view in one interview, the credibility will be less than those from more people, from different times, and different sources. Denzin's (2009) illustration can explain the idea of triangulation more clearly. He identified four forms of triangulation: *data triangulation*, that means gathering

information through several sampling methods, so that the information are collected from different times and situations, and a variety of people; *investigator triangulation*, means use more than one researcher in the field to gather and interpret information; *theoretical triangulation*, refers to using more than one theoretical position in interpreting information; and *methodological triangulation*, that is using more than one method to collect information.

The current study adopted the method of triangulation by collecting views on supervisory alliance working relationships from social work trainers, experts in “doing” supervision work, frontline supervisors and supervisees. The information they provided had given more insight into the researched topic. Multiple methods used in this study include the literature review, focus group sessions, and in-depth interviews.

Regarding the literature review, the researcher read through many sources regarding past research on supervision to identify the research topic that seemed to be valuable and important (Beinart & Clohessy, 2009; Bernard, 2005b; Davys & Beddoe, 2010; Ellis, 2010; Falender & Shafranske, 2004; Kaiser, 1997; Kadusin & Harkness, 2014; O’Donoghue & Tsui, 2013; Watkins, 2011); supervision developmental history and practice (Bordin, 1983; French & Raven, 1959; Foucault, 1980b; Stoltenberg & Delworth, 1987; Zvi, 2001); supervisory relationship theories (Bernard, 2005b; Bernard & Goodyear, 2014; Bowlby, 1973; 1982; Bartholomew & Horowitz, 1991; Jahoda, 2012; Lizzio et al., 2009; Milne, 2007; Tsui, O’Donoghue, & Ng, 2013; Watkins, 2012b); supervisor competence (Bernard & Goodyear, 2014; Bond, 2014; Falender, Burnes, & Ellis, 2013; Owen-Pugh & Symons, 2012; Reiser & Milne, 2012); and research gaps in supervision practice such as supervisees’ satisfaction towards

supervision (Cheon, Blumer, Shih, Murphy, & Sato, 2009; Gnilka, Chang, & Dew, 2012). The insight for the current research was induced by these readings.

Conducting focus group and in-depth interviews appeared to be a very common method to gain information and insight into the research topic. The information that the researcher collected using these methods was very rich and informative. During the interviews, the researcher could see the enthusiasm of the participants when urging for the quality of supervision to be mandated, could hear the difficulties the social work practitioners encountered in supervision practice, and could collect wisdom and suggestions for improvement for our social work supervision practice. Although these works increased the research work time, the researcher has no regrets as the information they provided was very valuable and exposed a significant and urgent need for action to be taken to improve our social work supervision practice. They openly shared their knowledge, skills, and supervision practice experiences with the researcher. Their feedbacks were not only helpful in outlining the current supervision phenomena; it also conveyed a very positive energy to our supervision practice. The details are reported in chapters five and six.

3.7.3 Peer Debriefing

Peer debriefing involves meetings by the inquirer with a peer that has no vested interest in the study (someone who is willing to ask probing questions but who is not involved in the setting where the study is conducted) in which the peer can question the methods, emerging conclusions, biases and so on of the inquirer. This technique is meant to keep the researcher honest by having someone else independently point out the implications of what the researcher is doing. If a researcher can provide evidence of having done this and show the reader how the report is modified through

the influence of the peer, the conclusions will be more believable. A professional peer group with social work supervision experience and holding high academic qualifications such as PhD, Doctor of Social Work, and PhD candidate were formed for the peer debriefing work. They were briefed about the research background and design, data collection methods and procedures, and accuracy of transcripts. Regulated scheduled meetings were conducted to discuss my research work. The peer group gave critical and useful comments that improved the research work. Clearly, this validation process could help to guard against the potential for lone researcher bias and help to provide additional insight into theme and theory development. However, there is no definitive answer to the issue of validity in qualitative analysis. Data management and chosen analytical technique are now set out below.

3.8 Data Management and Method of Analysis

Data collection aims to capture discursive and interactional meaning-making processes. The analysis of content from participants' responses should not only focus on what has been said but the narrative connections, orientations, and dynamics through which participants' substantive meanings are gathered. Symptoms of confusion, contradiction, ambiguity, and reluctance should also be addressed, because problematic conversation often signals occasions where meanings are being examined, reconstituted, or resisted. It is very important to keep this mind as these are records of interpretive practice; they capture how things were said as much as what were said.

After collecting the information, the most important work was to organize it. According to Tutty, Rothevy and Grinnell Jr. (1996), the predominant steps of data

analysis include transcript preparation, establishing a preliminary plan for data analysis, first-level coding, second-level coding, data interpretation, theory building and assessing the trust worthiness of the results. The interviews were in dyads format. After interviewing the first participant dyad, the researcher listened to the tape to capture potential important pieces from the recording and begin to analyse the data, especially in light of neglected parts, which could be focused on in the next interview. This action was repeated until completion of all interviews. Field notes were made straight after each interview to prevent missing important information.

After conducting the focus groups and interviews, the taped information in this study was handled as follows:

Step one: Interview Transcription

Verbatim transcription of interviews was adopted to allow the integrity of research results to be scrutinized. The interviewer firstly listened to the recordings of the interviews, and the recordings were sent to a third party for transcription to bolster this study's credibility, and the transcriptions were finally proofread for verification of accuracy. The transcriptions were returned to the participants for them to read the dialogues in which they had participated. The purpose of this action was to ensure the accuracy of the interviews. Only minor adjustments were requested by participants, which shows that the quality of transcription was good as they considered that their words matched what they actually intended.

Step two: Coding of Information

Qualitative data analysts use many different types of coding categories including those connected to context, situation, and ways of thinking, perspective

processes, activities, events, strategies, and relationships (Begdan & Biklen, 2003). After participant verification of the collected information, the coding exercise for this study began by reviewing the research questions and interview guide to group similar kinds of information together in categories. Then to ensure sufficient contextual information, notes were made and words/statements/stories were selected that could reflect ideas, values, attitudes, behaviours, feelings, and meanings for categorizing ideas and concepts that this research aimed to explore. The last part of data handling was to identify unexpected issues that were outside of this research's remit but worthy of reporting nonetheless. The following provides illustrations from the coding process.

Researcher question (open ended): Your participant in this study is very much appreciated. What comes to your mind from being invited to participate in this research study?

Supervisor-supervisee dyad 4:

Supervisor SD4: "The first thought was why not? I felt if I could help...The only thing that came up was who should I be invited as I have 10 supervisees. ...To me, I had no hesitation to be involved."

Coding: Willingness to be involved, How to identify a suitable partner?

Supervisor SD4: "I feel comfortable to do it as I take supervision seriously. ...I want to do good supervision with my supervisee after I took up the supervisory role as I believe it is important."

Coding: Personal supervision experience, supervision is important

Supervisor SD4: "I felt your initiation of doing this research is very good ...I hope to get some insight and reflection on my supervision effectiveness from this interview".

Coding: Meaningful research, supervision competence

Supervisee FD4: "May be because I am new and she feels I am suitable."

Coding: Suitability

Supervisee FD4: "I also requested people's help when I did my research. I feel obliged ...Why not give a helping hand?"

Coding: Obligation, helping

Supervisee FD4: "I think this is a good learning opportunity."

Coding: Learning

Supervisor-supervisee dyad 2:

Supervisor SD5: "I feel this is also a good topic and OK to help since I have time."

Coding: Time availability, good research topic

Supervisor SD5: "I know you and feel obliged to help."

Coding: Obligation to friendship

Supervisee FD5: "I think I am a person likely to help my supervisor. Our relationship is very good."

Coding: Comply, relationship

Step three: Information Analysis

Thematic analysis

Thematic analysis was used as the major analytical technique for the collected information. It involved identifying themes and categories that “emerge from the information”. In order to do this, once the interviews had been transcribed verbatim, the researcher read each transcript and made notes in the margins of words, theories or short phrases that summed up what was being said in the text. This is usually known as open coding. The aim, however, was to offer a summary statement or word for each element that was discussed in the transcript. The exception to this was when the participant had clearly gone off track and begun to move away from the topic under discussion. Such deviations (as long as they really are deviations) would simply be un-coded. Such as “off the topic” material is sometimes known as “dross”. Examples of the initial open-coding framework used in the data generated from actual interviews with participants are illustrated in the previous paragraph Step 2: Coding of information.

Braun & Clarke (2006) illustrated that thematic analysis is used for identifying, analyzing, and generating an initial list of items from the data set that have reoccurring patterns and it can be conducted within a constructionist paradigms. They are different from codes as they describe an outcome of coding for analytic reflection. In this study thematic analysis focused on the informant experience subjectively. This approach emphasizes the informants’ perception, conception, values, feelings and experiences as the paramount object of study. Determining what can be considered a theme can be used with deciding prevalence. However, a higher frequency does not necessarily mean that the theme is selected as the consideration should emphasize on whether they can provide accurate understanding of the

explored research phenomena are more important. Semantic (explicit level) and latent (interpretative level) are also different levels at which themes can be identified (Boyatzis, 1998). This study's thematic analysis had adopted both ways as the semantic can give the reader an explicit and surface meanings of the information, while latent can allow the analysis making sense of the data that often in relation to previous literature's examination on the underlying ideas, assumptions, and conceptualizations that are theorized as shaping or informing the semantic content of the data.

The process of informant analysis occurs in two primary ways, i.e. inductive (Frith and Gleeson, 2004) or deductive (Boyatzis, 1998; Hayes, 1997). In an inductive approach, the coding themes are identified without trying to fit the information into a pre-existing model or frame. However, the researcher is well aware that throughout this inductive process, it is not possible for her to free herself from her theoretical epistemological responsibilities. The deductive approaches are theory-driven. This form of analysis tends to be less descriptive overall because analysis is limited to the preconceived frames. The identified themes should be able to make meaningful contributions to answering research questions. To increase credibility with this method, researcher had planned and monitoring themes and codes tables throughout the process carefully.

The thematic analysis procedures covered six phases that are introduced by Braun & Victoria (2006). They are: (1) familiarizing oneself with the verbatim transcripts and looking for patterns; (2) generating initial codes and collating data into labels in order to create categories for further analysis; (3) searching for themes by collating codes into potential themes that seems "fit" to answer research questions;

(4) reviewing themes and generating a thematic “map” that could explain how they support the data and the overarching theoretical perspective; (5) defining and naming themes that can illustrate what each theme is, which aspect of data are being captured, and what is interesting about the themes.; and (6) producing the report where researcher needs to decide which themes make meaningful contributions to understanding what is going on within the data and relating back of the analysis to the research question and literature.

However, to ensure that the analytical process is systematic and rigorous, the whole corpus of collected information was thoroughly analysed. Therefore, where appropriate, the researcher searched for and identified relevant “deviant or contrary cases” – that is, findings that were different or contrary to the main findings, or were simply unique to some or even just one informant. Indeed, some findings from the two phases’ were difference such as perceptions and experiences in supervision structures, supervisory working alliance relationships and supervision effectiveness. These findings are reported in chapter four and five.

3.9 Limitations of the Study and Possible Working Strategies

3.9.1 Comprehensiveness of study

This study only covered supervisor-supervisee dyads and not supervisor-supervisee-client triads. Firstly, it could not demonstrate supervision effectiveness to service outcomes. This issue is frequently criticized by researchers and other professionals. Secondly, the complexity of involving a triad sample would be much greater and might not be manageable within the research timeframe. In addition, it would be too ambitious to study triad relationships when supervisory working alliance relationships within supervisor-supervisee dyads have not

thoroughly been researched. Thirdly, it would be too risky to undertake this as most clients would not be attached for very long to counselling services and the possibility of drop out from the research was high. As such, it could greatly affect the research process.

3.9.2 Open Communication between Supervisor and Supervisee

Supervision involves an imbalance of power between supervisors and supervisees, especially in our Chinese culture that strongly emphasizes “hierarchy”, “harmony” and gives “*Face*” to seniors. In other words, the supervisees might not feel comfortable to voice their needs and/or to challenge the supervisor but instead give them “*Face*”. In addition, Tsui (2001) reported that the top management in some human service organizations may not allow staff to participate in in-depth interviews conducted by an external researcher on supervision, because such interviews are perceived as violations of the confidentiality of internal agency matters. It was very fortunate that all participants were very enthusiastic and open in sharing their views and experiences concerning their supervision work.

3.9.3 Securing Adequate Numbers of Participants

Getting a sufficient sample was not easy as many social workers feel uncomfortable in revealing their personal information regarding their work performance. As such, the researcher tried to do the recruitment work as early as possible to allow for sufficient time to engage the expected number of participants. Secondly, apart from early recruitment, additional participants were recruited to prevent insufficient participants due to potential drop-out such as participant felt discomfort to continue or resigned from work. Thirdly, the researcher paid direct visits to organizations and explained to them the values and significance of the study.

Fourthly, the researcher used a snowball effect by asking those who participated to recommend their friends or colleagues to take part in this study. Eventually, the expected number of participants was recruited with no drop out.

3.9.4 Communication Block

According to communication theories including “*Message Model*” (Akmajian, Demers, Farmer, & Harnish, 1990), “*Conduit Metaphor*” (Reddy, 1979) and “*Meaning-in-Words assumption*” (Schober, 1998), the “message” floats somewhere between the “interviewer” and the “interviewee”. Interviewees might not understand the questions the way the interviewer intends and may answer them inaccurately; this could jeopardize the validity of the research. One of the most important things that the interviewer needed to ensure was that the interviewees understood the questions as intended and therefore she used a conversational style interviewing technique to prevent such problems. In addition, participants provided plenty of room to talk in “intuition” form. The investigator needed to avoid playing the “university professor” role as this would discourage the participants to open up.

3.9.5 Unanticipated Issues

Some unanticipated problems in conducting the interviews and focus groups might be encountered. For example, how far an interview guide is really met in an actual interview depends on the actual interview situation and how it flows. Thus the interviewer needed to prepare herself well to enhance her situational competence. Competence could be increased through the practical experience of making necessary decisions in interview situations and through rehearsal interviews.

3.9.6 Adequacy of Interpretation

Handling textual material is never perfect. Learning about the specific features such as memos and diagrams are important as they are crucial instruments in assisting researchers to keep records of the various development aspects of their theory. Thus, memos and diagrams were kept in good order in this current study and sorting materials earlier helped prevent loss of information through inadequate memory re-call.

3.9.7 Comprehensiveness

There are many untouched areas in this study. For example, alternative supervision such as case conferences, peer and group supervision, and consultations have not been investigated as this involved many complications, such as workers' concepts and definitions of these methods might vary. Many of our professional social workers seek clinical consultation services in the private sector because of its privacy and voluntary nature. This leaves professionals free to utilize or disregard the consultants' ideas and recommendations. It would be difficult to research their practice effectiveness and the impact on supervisees' work performance as it is difficult, if not impossible, to review their documents. Observing their interactions in consultations is a type of supplementary assistance to formal clinical supervision and worthy of exploration in the near future, as these services' demand specialized knowledge and skills. However, this study did not include supervisors from private sectors as it is difficult to control factors such as the environment, freedom, and nature of cases.

3.10 Summary of the Chapter

This study explored the cultivation of supervisory alliance working relationships and its impact on supervision effectiveness in family, children and youth service settings in Hong Kong. A qualitative research method was adopted within the constructivist paradigm. Purposeful sampling was used to recruit supervisor-supervisee dyads to participate in the study. The study covered two phases of work that included two focus groups of supervisors and supervisees, individual interviews with social work trainers and experienced social work supervisors. The second phase involved in-depth interviews with nine supervisor-supervisee dyads. Thematic analysis was used to analysis the data through three stages of coding exercises. Ensuring trustworthiness of the research and ethical considerations of the study were also discussed.

CHAPTER FOUR: RESEARCH FINDINGS (I)

4.1 Introduction

The content and organization of this chapter will report two focus groups and seven individuals' backgrounds; thematic findings in order to address the research questions including: (1) conceptions, perceptions and experiences of social work supervision practice; (2) components of effective social work supervision; (3) use of power, supervision types and supervisory relationships, (4) personal social work supervision experience; and (5) supervisory theory; likes and dislikes of the professional supervision practice. The data from phase one had been used for preparing the phase two semi-structured interview guide as well as triangulating with data of phase two from supervisor-supervisee dyads in Chapter 5.

4.2 Presentation of the Findings

4.2.1 Informants' quotes

In phase one of this study, data was collected from participants via two focus groups that included group one (six supervisors) and group two (six supervisees), in addition to seven individual interviews. In order to simplify the reporting and for easy of reading, participants' quotes were as follows: the first supervisor in the supervisor focus group was named as Sfg1, and the rest were named as Sfg2, Sfg3, Sfg4, Sfg5 and Sfg6 (See Chapter 3, Table 4). Then, the first frontline social worker in the supervisee focus group was listed as Ffg1, and the rest were listed as Ffg2, Ffg3, Ffg4, Ffg5 and Ffg6 (See Chapter 3, Table 5). Regarding the individual interviews, the first participant is addressed as P1, and the rest were addressed as P2, P3, P4, P5, P6 and P7 (See Chapter 3, Table 6). The outcome effects of this purposefully selected sample would be discussed in chapter six.

The order of each participant's response from the two focus groups was listed according to their responses. For example, the first supervisor who gave the first response is addressed as Sfg1 and so on. Readers might question why all participants in the supervisee focus group were females. The reason for this was because these participants were recommended by their supervisors and this result was expected as there are very few male frontline social workers in this work sector. Similarly, the order of the individual participants was listed according to their interview date; the first was placed first. The number of years in professional supervision work was rounded up (6 months or above) or down (5 months or below) to one year for ease of reporting. Altogether, there were nineteen informants involved in phase one study.

4.2.2 Interaction between focus group members

The value of participant interaction in focus group involved four interaction events: negotiating and constructing normality in interaction, disagreement and/or consensus, homogeneity and the impact on interaction and content, and coming to and making sense of a dead-end. The interactional events are followed by considerations on the impact they may have on the role of the moderator (Gronkjaer, Curtis, de Crespigny, & Delmar, 2011). This study was not focus on in-depth descriptions of conversation analysis, but rather paying attention in getting access to the construction of meaning given by the participants.

Successful group interactions between group members rely to a large extent on the moderator (Curtis & Redmond, 2007; Redmond & Curtis, 2009). In order to make the informants feel comfortable to express their views and experiences about social work supervision practice, the researcher had given a welcoming remarks and re-introducing the purpose of conducting the focus group meeting. Researcher also

re-emphasised that she would play a moderator role during the discussion and informants were free to talk about their experiences, thoughts, perceptions, attitudes, and behaviors about supervision practice about professional supervision practice. Then, the informants had been invited to introduce themselves such as how they would like to be addressed, their work title and nature of work, years of supervision experiences. Some ground rules had also been set for participation comfortability with informants' consent. The important messages were as follows:

1. Only one person speaks at a time.
2. Avoid side conversations.
3. Everyone doesn't have to answer every single question.
4. This is a confidential discussion in that researcher will not report informants' names or who said what. Names of informants will not even be included in the final report about this meeting. When informants walk out the meeting room, what they remember the most is what they should not be talking about.
5. Researcher encourages free communication on each other's views without fear that their comments will be repeated later and possible taken out of context.
6. There are no "right or wrong answers," just different opinions. Say what is true for informants, even if they're the only one who feels that way.
7. A break will be made in between.

The informants turned in the sharing mood quickly. No resistance and quiet time had been observed. The informants were very polite and good in respecting others and would wait others to finish their conversation before they came in. Overall, all the participants had the chance to express their views. The conversation

was usually initiated by those with more working experiences and the others would automatically follow with their thoughts, experiences and suggestions. The participants' interaction during the discussion could reveal and highlight their perceptions, attitudes, thinking, and framework of understanding, as well as identifying group norms and values upon social work supervision practice in Hong Kong after the lump sum grant implementation. Though the findings were usually used quotations from one individual, however, it could not be seen as an isolated response as each individual's viewpoint had invited interaction between the group participants. This interaction was helpful in analyzing outcome for the contents of the data. For example, when one participant talking about the lump sum grant effects to supervision practice, all the participants had illustrated many complaints about the poor impacts caused by lump sum grant to supervision practice. The sharing aroused much negative emotions especially in the supervisees' group. Though disagreements but not arguments/conflicts between participants occurred during the process, this worked as a catalyst to keep the focus group discussion going, while also moving perceptions from uncertainty to certainty such as supervision is necessary but it is not good enough. Another example is the homogeneity effect in the group resulted in general agreement and acceptance of immediate action should be taken to improve the social work supervision effectiveness. It is very fortunate to obtain a greater understanding of the different participants' views and opinions about social work supervision practice through these two focus groups. Many of these interaction effects would be reported in later session of chapter four.

4.3 Phase One Focus Groups and Individual Interviews

Data from the two focus groups and seven interviews were typed in verbatim format. However, those non-verbal communications such as pauses, laughter, or interruptions were not recorded in view of the anticipated complexity and difficulty in transcribing and interpreting them. The data from phase one was reported with regard to participant conceptions, perceptions and experiences in response to the research questions. Therefore, major themes and sub-themes in relation to each question are illustrated as follows:

4.3.1 Conceptions, Perceptions and Experiences of Social Work Supervision Practice

Under this category, three “feelings” questions were discussed: (1) what came to participants’ mind when hearing the words “social work supervision”; (2) what was their perception of today’s social work supervision in integrated family services, school social work services, and integrated children and youth services; and (3) where did they get such impression and information.

Participants reported that their impressions were formed from personal experiences, colleagues, services stakeholders, and friends, during casual chats, meetings, and social gatherings. Two major themes and seven sub-themes were identified among supervisors, supervisees, and individuals. The details are listed in Table 9 below.

Table 9: Conceptions, Perceptions and Experiences of Social Work Supervision

Practice

Major theme	Subtheme
1. Supervision is important	a. Frontline social workers have strong supervision need
2. Critical issue of social work supervision	a. Focus b. Accessibility c. Benefits d. Utility e. Core function f. Relationship

As can be seen in the above table, in order to bring effective social work supervision outcomes, six areas of work need to be tackled in social work supervision including its focus, accessibility, benefits, utility, function and relationships between supervisors and supervisees. The following constitutes participants’ shared meaning and experiences.

4.3.1a Focus Group – Supervisors’ Feedbacks

The Need and Importance of Supervision

From a macro point of view, the supervisors reported that they took part in this research because they felt that this issue should have been studied a long time ago, especially the quality of professional supervision, implementation standards, and its development and advancement. Their participation was a gesture of support and contribution to this matter. For individual interest, participants wanted to know others’ views of social work supervision; hoped to have more ideas of its practice phenomenon; and they also believed that this would be a good platform to review

their own practice with others' and identify areas for improvement and/or advancement. Their feedbacks in this regard were very self-reflective, encouraging and worthy of sharing:

Sfg1: "Immediately, I think about my interaction with my colleagues"

Sfg2: "Supervision assists our professional development and succession"

Sfg3: "I am thinking whether I am doing a good job or not in supervision"

To these participants, supervision was a safety net or support mechanism for social workers, especially in this research context. Many social workers had to deal with complicated cases and especially needed emotional support. For example, school social workers worked alone in a secondary setting and had to meet demands from school personnel and teaching staff. This was especially demanding for junior social workers who felt unable or powerless to control this. Supervisor Sfg6 reported that there was also an inaccurate perception that experienced school social workers did not need or disliked supervision. Indeed, they did not want to waste their time on "lousy supervision". Supervisor Sfg1 supplemented this in that experienced social workers also had "blind spots" and required second opinions and support. Supervisor Sfg5 shared that social workers of integrated family services were task-oriented, such as risk assessment and handling ad hoc drop-ins. Therefore, this induced much emotional stress for them, especially those experienced workers who were expected to deal with the most complicated and difficult cases. Their emotional stress needed to be relieved through supervision. These views were greatly supported by other participants. The following is one example:

Sfg6: "I always remind myself that experienced workers also need support to deal with their problems. Don't neglect them as I have a role to walk with them".

Critical Issues of Social Work Supervision

Supervision Quality

Participants commented that the most concerning issue regarding supervision was that many supervisors did not have time to prepare or did not know how to prepare their supervision work. Supervisor Sfg1 expressed that staff supervision should pay special attention to the supervisee working environment, culture, dynamics and power issues. Therefore, supervisor Sfg1 had cultivated a culture of mutual help and support among school social workers to reduce the sense of working alone. For example, when one school social worker encountered a crisis such as when a student committed suicide, the team would be called upon by the supervisor to go to the concerned social worker's school to assist with the debriefing work. Participants also shared that some supervisors were very administrative or task-oriented and thus neglected social workers' professional needs due to wanting to secure business contracts. Supervisor Sfg5 echoed this in that many primary schools would buy social work services from social welfare organizations. The organization might lose a service contract if the school personnel or teachers found that the worker could not meet their expectations. To avoid this from happening, the supervisors would give priority to the schools' needs rather than protection of school social workers' professional standards. Similarly, Supervisor Sfg6 shared that supervision for school social workers demands new knowledge and skills as more and more Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) and mental health cases need to be handled. Furthermore, Supervisor Sfg5 stated that promotional opportunities for senior social workers in integrated family services were very

limited. Thus, supervisors should pay more attention to their professional growth and development.

Access to and Benefits from Supervision

Irregular and frequently postponed supervision were major concern for participants. The reasons given by supervisors for these postponements were that they were stressed, busy, and had heavy workloads. It was very rare that supervisors solved these issues and thus the above situation continued:

Sfg1: "The supervisor should have many things to organize in supervision work such as developing crisis intervention mechanisms, to make supervisees have a feeling of support to do their work and the ultimate benefit for the clients".

Participants expressed that supervision had mutual benefits for supervisors and frontline workers and it was an important avenue for professional growth. However, this is not an one sided issue; frontline workers also need to make their supervisors feel comfortable to learn about their needs. Supervisors and frontline workers are co-workers and therefore, only with good preparation, can the expected benefits be secured.

4.3.1b Focus Group – Frontline Social Workers' Feedbacks

The Need and Importance of Supervision

Participants reported that they attended the focus group because they were interested in the supervision topic and wanted to help this research as requested by their supervisors. The impressions formed regarding supervision practice that they discussed were their personal experiences, from colleagues and friends. Overall, all

participants expressed that supervision was important to them and necessary as casework was the core business for both integrated family services and school social work services. Many of the cases they handled were complicated because they involved family violence, child abuse, and mental illness. With supervisors' advice and guidance, mistakes could be avoided and stress could be reduced. Informant Ffg2 recommended that supervision should be compulsory if the supervision is informative, supportive and effective. Ffg2's suggestion was fully supported by other participants. The following is one participant's expression:

Ffg1: "Because I feelsupervision's qualityis very important. We have heavy caseloads in IFSC work settings. All of us know that there are many hard core cases. You will expect to get opinions or emotional support, from supervisors. I think continued improvement in our professional supervision quality is necessary. That is why I think it is valuable to come, though I am off today".

Areas of Concern in Social Work Supervision

Access to and Benefits from Supervision

Frontline workers' most common views regarding supervision were supervisors are very busy; they need to supervise many service units or even regionally-based services. Thus, their planned supervision would be re-scheduled and then further re-scheduled, from two weeks to one month or even longer, sometimes both parties forgot about it during this time. The situation might be made worse if supervisors did not share the same office with their supervised workers as they might be stationed in the headquarters and come to each supervised unit one or two days a week. The worst would be that they would only visit the units for meetings. Thus, frontline workers had difficulties in accessing their supervisors when they encountered

problems or needed help. They could only seek help from experienced colleagues or external supervisors. Nevertheless, participant frontline workers still felt that this was not acceptable as they worried about issues of accountability and confidentiality and this caused frustration. They felt that irregular or insufficient supervision not only induced stress for the workers, but also had a poor impact on them, such as they might not have a clear mind in which to provide diagnoses and/or interventions for the service users. Frontline worker Ffg2 recalled one of her work experiences to illustrate why emotional support was very important to her. Another frontline worker Ffg6 echoed that it would be very frustrating in Ffg2's situation. Most junior participants showed strong determination to have good supervision. The following are some of their personal experiences:

Ffg1: "It is really true that supervision would be delayed, rescheduled and rescheduled. Why it is like that? What should an inexperienced worker do to help the client?"

Ffg2: "I really don't know how to handle some cases. I was anxious when I could not connect my client and wonder whether she had jumped down. I think it would have calmed me down if my supervisor could give me support at that moment. Compulsory supervision is good".

Ffg3: "Yes, it is too late! Sometimes, supervisor's schedules are very tight".

Ffg4: "I think professional supervision is more important, especially for new graduates".

For frontline workers, immediate access to supervision was more useful than the scheduled ones. For example, Ffg2 encountered much frustration as she could not get access to her supervisor's advice regarding making a decision to obtain a child protection order from the Social Welfare Department of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region and this somehow affected the case outcome.

Motivation in Seeking Help from Supervisors – Benefits and Relationship

Another concern was about supervisors' roles and powers. Participant frontline social workers stated that supervisors were above them. They had a "license to kill" (生殺之權) on their staff. For example, they decided their annual salary increment and whether their employment contract would be renewed. Therefore, it was natural that frontline workers felt uncomfortable in exposing their supervisor's limitations. If they knew their supervisors were fond of some ideas, they would not propose ideas that would go against these. They would avoid power struggles with their supervisors as they were very much aware that the latter were their bosses. Their weaknesses included feeling uneasy in refusing clients' demands; and vulnerabilities such as finding it difficult to defend themselves because they were not able to get support. However, participant frontline workers stated that they knew that they could learn better if they could disclose these weaknesses to supervisors. Yet, this kind of openness would be at risk if their supervisors were not trustworthy. Here are some examples:

Ffg1: "Based on trust, the frontline worker would expose their weaknesses to the supervisor. This trust means that his/her supervisor would not release the information to other people in the first place and it would not affect his appraisal in the second place".

Ffg5: “Yes! My experience at that time was scary. It was lack of confidence. I did not want to disclose too much of my vulnerabilities and weaknesses to my first supervisor. This was because as a new social worker, my employment was not stable and I needed to be very careful”.

4.3.1c Individuals’ Feedbacks

The Need and Importance of Supervision

All the individual participants expressed that supervision for social workers was very important and it was a long neglected issue that deserved urgent attention. They were interested in helping because they hoped the current study would provide significant and reflective information to draw our social work professionals’ attention to their supervision practices in order to provide quality supervision for their supervisees. The following are some of their expressions:

P3: “Very important! Should have! High quality and regular professional supervision is needed”

P5: “My second thought is very good as there is someone picking up this issue. At least more people think about this area again after years of advocacy”.

P7: “In fact, I feel supervision is very important. I believe in supervision. Good supervision can definitely inspire a social worker. That is professional development”.

Areas of Concern in Social Work Supervision

Supervisory Practice and Professional Support – Benefits & Utility

Participant P3 said she got the impression that supervision quality was taking a “down turn”. This impression was echoed by other participants as they heard lots of negative comments about our social work supervision practice. The junior frontline social workers complained of insufficient supervision, while the senior ones felt it was wasting their time. The other concern was a lack of competent social work supervisors as some of the supervisors were inexperienced. They were appointed to be a team or project leader/supervisor due to having higher qualifications, usually a degree, or having more working experience. Thus, participant P4 said it was common for social work graduates to seek help from their university teachers and some were even willing to pay for supervision and request referrals. She could feel her students’ disappointment regarding supervision as they did not earn much a month but were willing to spend HK\$1,600 for external supervision once a week. Another important factor that affected supervision quality was supervisors’ outdated knowledge and clinical skills because many did not pursue continual professional training after being promoted to supervisors. Although many supervisors acknowledged that supervision was important, however when entering into practice, they had a hundred and one excuses for not providing regular supervision for staff, such as a lack of resources. Participant P4 also stated that some of their graduates returned to attend the Master of Social Work course on clinical supervision because they wanted to strengthen their clinical skills. During the training process, students used risk assessment for setting work priorities. Work priorities would be lower than those cases which had less risk and this approach was considered inappropriate and unfair to clients:

P1: "Supervisees wanted their supervisors to share some responsibilities as the case involved risk. Their thinking was: why am I so stupid making decision by myself?"

This situation also made some participants recall their own experiences with their supervisors, that are they also had a lack of supervision. They said peer supervision and mutual support were their alternatives if supervision was unavailable or inadequate. Because of one's unsatisfactory supervision experience, some participants paid special attention to supervision work, such as helping the agency to set up supervision policy with clear guidelines on supervision standards to ensure staff with different years of working experience had different supervision frequencies, that is the more junior the more supervision. The following are some of their personal supervision experiences:

P1: "Some supervisors would give you very evasive instructions to avoid responsibilities. However, his/ her answer was equal to nothing".

P2: "Do we have sufficient competent social work supervisors if supervision is mandated".

P6: "I am a cooperative staff member. I would submit all the case files before supervision. She is useless and does not teach me anything. She would not make supervision arrangements for me if I did not ask for it".

Overall feedbacks regarding supervision practice and support were undesirable. However, participants shared quite a number of ideas regarding how they coped with

their work without proper supervision. Suggestions were also collected for reference as follows.

Supervisory Relationship

Participant P1 stated that both supervisors and frontline social workers had their complaints. Supervisors complained about that the “new” generation of frontline social workers was very calculative in gaining better benefits or advantages such as allocation of work, training opportunities, and leave arrangements. Participant P3 said that her social work graduates reported that the “fire in their hearts” was much stronger than that of their supervisors. Thus, the supervisors would not earn respect and trust from them. However, P1’s students were very smart and knew how to play the supervisory game to avoid having direct conflict with their supervisors. For example, they would only ask what their supervisors could offer instead of fulfilling their expectations. For experienced frontline social workers, they were not as willing to take supervisors’ advice as they had their own beliefs and did not see supervisors’ points of view as they had disconnected with the direct service since being promoted to the supervisory role.

Participant P5 shared that her students holding supervisory post told her that they were always challenged by the more experienced frontline social workers. In reality, they knew and readily admitted that they were not competent to do the supervisory role. They did not know how to position themselves. For conflict prevention, they would give in or did not intervene. The following is an example statement:

P5: "The staff that I supervised had much more working experience than me. They always challenged me. I don't feel competent to supervise them. However, by position, I have to supervise them. I don't feel good being challenged, but I have to admit I am not capable to be a supervisor".

4.3.2 Components of Effective Social Work Supervision

Two questions relating to the knowledge gap were posed with participants under this theme. They were: (1) What components did participants see as associated with effective supervision practice in Integrated Family Services, School Social Work Services, and Integrated Children and Youth Services? (2) What characteristics did participants think were most important for a competent social work supervisor? Two major themes that participants were concerned with were components of effective social work supervision and characteristics of a competent professional supervisor, which also comprised eleven and five sub-themes respectively. These are set out below.

Table 10: Components of Effective Social Work Supervision

Major themes	Subthemes
1. Components of effective Supervision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Supervision goal b. Knowledgeable and accessible to meet needs c. Supervision's positioning and quality assurance d. Autonomy and acknowledgement (2As) e. Change of mind set and attitudes f. Co-work and co-construction of ideas g. Communication and communication block h. Supervision method – demonstration i. Balance between administrative and clinical supervision j. Professional competence k. Frontline social workers' characteristics

<p>2. Characteristics of Competent Professional Supervisors</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Personal attributes b. Qualities of job performance c. Interpersonal skills d. Continued professional practice and training e. Supervision style
--	---

4.3.2a Focus Group – Supervisors’ Feedbacks

Components of effective supervision practice

Participants stated that effective supervision should be well-prepared by both supervisors and frontline social workers. Otherwise it would waste their time. This means both supervisor and frontline social worker need to share their expectations with each other and come up with a mutually agreed supervision goal to work on. Supervisor Sfg1 shared that different settings had different work goals. For example, social work values were different from educational values. The former would place emphasis on students’ personal growth and development, while the latter placed emphasis on students’ academic achievement. Supervisors needed to help frontline social workers acquire skills in appreciation of the similarities and differences with their service stakeholders. If supervision allowed frontline social workers to release their frustration, receive guidance and share responsibilities, it would be valuable and effective.

Knowledgeable and accessible to meet needs

Supervisor Sfg3 said that the nature of Integrated Family Services and School Social Work Services was serious and the service coverage was very wide: this included mentality, health, family, youth, and rehabilitation cases. Social workers needed to be very knowledgeable, and supervisors were expected to be more knowledgeable than their supervisees. For example, they needed to remember all the

working guidelines as the frontline social workers could ask about them at any time. When social workers had different views from their clients or arguments with service stakeholders, supervisors needed to provide an immediate response and emotional support. Participants emphasized that supervisors should make themselves available to their frontline social workers and the latter should be informed clearly that supervisors were there to support them. Here is one participant's statement that reflected this point:

Sfg1: "I leave my phone turned on 24 hours even though I am sleeping in case anything happens. They call me if they need to".

Supervision's Positioning and Quality Assurance

Supervisor Sfg2 commented that effective supervision very much depended on how supervision was emphasised. In reality, three important factors affected supervision effectiveness. Firstly, supervisors spent much time in dealing with tasks and urgent matters in supervision and were not able to decide what else was required. Secondly, supervisors' abilities in understanding and analysing the issues would usually place emphasis on social work intervention and neglect the "push and pull" of political factors in the work setting. Thirdly, supervisors sometimes did not want to do something that could make frontline social workers feel uncomfortable. Under such circumstances, frontline social workers could only learn from their mistakes.

Autonomy and Acknowledgement (2As)

How to encourage experienced social workers, especially those who worked alone in schools, to make the best use of supervision was an unresolved issue. Supervisor Sfg4 stated that some experienced social workers seemed to work

routinely and, as such, had lost their social work mission and ideals as there were not many challenges or developments in their career. To improve this situation, participants suggested that supervisors on the one hand, needed to acknowledge frontline social workers' abilities and contributions to enhance their positive selves in the supervision session within and outside of the organization; on the other hand they needed to provide them with more autonomy and space to re-examine their career goals for advancement and contribution. However, participants expressed that this would not work on those who were not ambitious, not interested in advancement and were very satisfied with what they had in hand. The following reflects supervisor Sfg4's feelings towards school social workers' working life:

Sfg4: "Confirming colleagues' roles, especially school social workers who work in a secondary setting always tackle issues alone and lack of support and recognition from the school. When they return to the office and meet supervisors for a scheduled-supervision once or twice a month, I would take the opportunity to acknowledge their performance".

Change of Mind Set and Attitude

Supervisor Sfg2 felt that frontline social workers always talked about problems such as tasks becoming more difficult, crises, heavy work-loads, and stress during supervision sessions. Indeed, this would induce lots of worry and an inability to identify their work direction. Supervisor Sfg2 also pointed out that he was very concerned about this type of practice as he hardly received any messages with regard to how social workers positioned themselves in today's working environment, apart from passive ways of coping with these challenges. Participants agreed that supervisors needed to re-construct their frontline social workers' mind sets to

increase their awareness that society had changed and so had their scope of work. Moreover, the issues that they usually handled had changed and people's expectations had changed too. Stakeholders' interests had also changed and the whole world's working environment with it. Thus, social workers needed to see things from a different perspective. For example, differences did not imply difficulties if they could analyse the situation from another angle. However, participants felt that this was not an easy task because it needed to be done skillfully. The suggestions were: firstly, to build trust with supervisees by listening to their stories. Secondly, to show supervisors' trust to frontline social workers' competence and encourage them to use their knowledge, skills and experience to work out alternative solutions. Thirdly, to prepare back-up plans to support supervisees when outcomes were not as ideal as initially thought. Supervisor Sfg4 added that supervisors needed to think how to develop supervisees' confidence. Supervisor Sfg6 explained that many experienced social workers refused to be promoted as they did not want to do more administrative work. Whereas, Supervisor Sfg3 emphasized that when frontline social workers had built confidence, they would have passion to do their work. Similar points are as follows:

Sfg2: "I think effective supervision elements are: having a quality relationship, trust, conformity, respect, and taking responsibility.... professional power and professional responsibility need to be respected".

Sfg3: "On the one hand, you need to monitor and ensure quality; on the other hand, you need to trust your supervisees and give them an opportunity to demonstrate their ability, this is important".

Co-work and Co-construction of Ideas

Supervisor Sfg1 indicated that supervision was a process and a long lasting relationship. Supervisors could not work in a completely detached way, although they wanted to give frontline social workers more autonomy to do their work. They needed to work with their frontline social workers and developed a sense of co-working atmosphere. They should feel that work success and achievement were a result of their co-constructed effort. The following describes supervisor Sfg1's experience of this:

Sfg1: "If you only stay in the office, you don't know what have happened to them; by only reading paperwork you cannot sense their feelings and work pressure. Your supervisees would not give respect to you if you only make use of abstract information to do supervision".

Characteristics of Competent Professional Supervisors

Personal Attributes

Participants shared that the personal qualities of a competent professional supervisor were quite similar to those of a counsellors. The qualities were: sensitivity, openness, empathy, sympathy, integrity, acceptance, emotional balance, and upholding professional ethics and values. The following examples provide evidence of this point:

Sfg5: "In fact, a good supervisor basically must be a good counsellor, but needs to know he/she is not doing counselling. A good supervisor is not a counsellor; he/she is a good collector because he/she needed to find supervisee's "treasure". Every colleague must have some treasure".

Sfg1: “In fact, a supervisor is liked a ham in the sandwich, i.e., liable to top management and also liable to the staff under him/her at the same time. If he/she could channel staff ’s messages to the top level, staff was not only willing to cooperate but would sacrifice their life for you. He/she would be great if he/she reaches this situation. These were things supervisors should know to make the right decision”.

Qualities of Job Performance

Regarding job performance quality, supervisors should: (1) have a clear understanding of their job and roles, missions and vision of the organization they serve, and work objectives; (2) have good mental agility to grasp details of matters, problems, and devise new responses to situations; (3) know how to channel messages to frontline social workers and also to organizational staff; (4) be able to balance both wishes and wants of organizations and frontline social workers; (5) be able to take responsibility in a committed manner; and (6) together have adequate management and professional knowledge and skills. The following is an illustration statement:

Sfg6: “Supervisors have three roles: one of them is model effect. It is very important for competent supervisors to communicate with his/her staff”.

Interpersonal Skills

Participants expressed that competent supervisors should have good interpersonal skills to gain frontline social workers’ cooperation and collaboration. Firstly, supervisors should promote a good work-life balance to ensure frontline social workers having decent mental and physical health. Secondly, supervisors should identify supervisees’ strengths and provide them with a platform in which to

perform and contribute. Thirdly, supervisors should use adequate supervision methods to facilitate frontline social workers' learning. Finally, supervisors need to possess give and take attitudes towards frontline social workers, trust them, and be open-minded. The followings are their views :

Sfg1: "As a manager, if you want your staff to do more items of work, you first need to do something extra. In fact, you can see if there are any other things you can release to do more, you can not only let the organization get everything and colleagues lose everything. It should not be like this".

Sfg5: "I agree to do more observations, as we can be more sensitive to their emotional responses such as whether any cases are bothering them. This means things need to be discussed more. However, the most necessary thing is that supervisees are more willing to open up first".

Overall, participants felt that competent supervisors should master three roles including (1) effective administrator – concerned with operation of organizational policies, coordination of finances, service provision, and setting the direction of the organization; (2) competent clinical profession – involving diagnosis, assessment-based treatment planning, intervention and outcome evaluation; and (3) humanistic leader – possessing knowledge and skills in creating a desirable work environment for supervisees, motivating them to work to their full potential, as well as empowering them for professional actualization. Supervisors should convey appreciation to supervisees especially when they had spent much time in helping the organization, and also look for opportunities to create more manageable workloads instead of taking advantage through inaction.

4.3.2b Focus Group – Frontline Social Workers’ Feedbacks

Components of Effective Supervision Practice

Knowledgeable and Accessible to Meet the Needs of Supervisees

Participants stated that supervision was related to work and professionalism rather than only being focused on administrative work. The most effective supervision provided emotional support; professional advice such as widening knowledge and understanding about new developments regarding both theoretical and human issues of working practice; teaching on how to obtain resources to complete the task or to help clients, and development of workers’ professional competence by telling them what they needed to improve and how to strengthen their required knowledge and skills. Supervisees needed to deal with many dynamic issues and supervisors should pay particular attention to these relationships and show relevant support. In addition, Frontline social worker Ffg4 suggested that supervision should include more reviews on supervisees’ case handling methods. Ffg1 stated that she would rather look for external supervision if she found her supervisor was not up to her expectations instead of telling the supervisor about her dissatisfaction as it might affect their relationship. Moreover, participants felt that it was desirable to have formal supervision once a month and time should not be spent on reporting what work had been done and/or service output standards. More time should be spent on what they had proposed to do to improve their case progression from the last supervision and future direction. However, participants felt they did not have high expectations, especially the school social workers, as they usually needed to make immediate decisions when students, teachers or school personnel approached them for help. They said when they returned to the office for regular supervision, all the urgent needs no longer existed and they just reported to their supervisors what had been done. It became “reflection on practice” and not “reflection in practice”.

Needless to say, supervision was seen as a kind of accountability. It could at least force social workers to retain updated work records and fulfil their administrative requirements. The following reflect participants' wishes and desires:

Ffg1: "Boss has not carried out direct service for a long time. Therefore, he did not know many things".

Ffg3: "Because...I don't know whether my agency is really good or not, my supervisor also needs to take cases, centre-in-charge and the manager should also do so. Apart from providing professional opinion such as how to deal with the case, I would expect my supervisor to tell me where I can get resources to handle this case. It is because I am a new graduate and would feel confused on where to get resources to help the client".

Ffg4: "Especially after having worked for a period of time, how should a supervisor see oneself? For example: fit or not fit to do, wants or not wants to do, or still have a heart to do...sometimes they just feel they have no energy to continue, when I get stuck, can someone tell me what direction I should head on..., what else can be developed in my profession?"

Communication and Communication Block

Apart from core service issues that needed to be discussed during supervision sessions, participants also hoped to have a free flow of sharing such as matters outside of the work boundaries, issues that other colleagues had experienced as more worthy of learning; and/or just emotional relief. This kind of sharing atmosphere could convey a more humanistic message that would encourage open communication.

Sometimes, supervisors would recall things to remind frontline social workers to pay attention in a casual dialog:

Ff3: "Hey! You need to be careful, such as.....! Is this teacher a good one? This really depends on whether the supervisor wants to spend more time getting to know what matters their colleagues' are facing".

Participants explained that sometimes they would encounter difficult clients who made complaints. This could place social workers at a disadvantage particularly when supervisors wanted to lessen the impact without making a thorough investigation. Usually, supervisors would pursue frontline social workers for information, but not in an acceptable manner. Indeed, this would leave social workers feeling very anxious and in need of assurance in resolving the complaints. Yet, this communication between the supervisor and frontline social worker could be blocked. What they hoped from supervisors was trust. Without this kind of support, frontline social workers would resist taking advice even though they had actually made errors. They would shut down the communication. Sometimes, they would feel angry and return the case to the supervisors and watched how they would handle it. Or they would settle the matter in their own way and then report what had occurred to the supervisors to avoid experiencing unnecessary hindrance. Indeed, the "informed message" process is for letting supervisors know in case anything went wrong. Most participants (as two informants had different experiences) felt that supervisors, due to their senior administrative posts, placed great distance between themselves and frontline social workers. Their statements reflect this:

Ffg1: "It was only a report. I only wanted him to know in case anything happened. He really did not know what had happened. Accountability! I didn't want to be blocked by him".

Ffg3: "I also got complaints from a school. My supervisor was very good and comforted me. Then, he would explain to the principal to settle the case. Then, you would feel much supported".

Supervision Method – Live Demonstration

For better learning opportunities, participants felt that observation was much better than discussion. Therefore, live demonstrations or working together with supervisors could afford frontline social workers better insight into what, why, and how the difficulty could be handled. This experience could only happen in a trustful relationship. Participant Ffg1 felt this was a positive step from both parties. Frontline social workers could express their expectations openly while supervisors were interested and involved. However, participants felt that this would rarely occur.

Characteristics of Competent Professional Supervisors

Overall, participants illustrated many areas of what they expected supervisors to do when talking about effective supervision. Under this theme, they only stressed two areas. These are as follows:

Continued Clinical Practice and Training

Ffg1: "I think supervisors need to shorten their distance with supervisees or have better understanding of their situation. In fact, they would not understand if they do not handle cases. I expected my boss would have continued training. It

means they were not only doing management, admin..., but they needed to supervise ten to twenty social workers, if you did not go for training, you would not know what was happening in the world”.

Ffg2: “My supervisor has training. I would stay with my current organization after listening to so much of the comments”.

Frontline social worker Ffg1’s views of urging supervisors to have continued professional development had been repeatedly voiced by different participants throughout the focus group interview. Ffg1 said that she would accept supervisors’ incompetence in certain knowledge and skills as long as they were willing to explore solutions with their supervisees.

Interpersonal Relationships

Frontline social worker Ffg4 hoped that supervisors and frontline social workers could remain on an equal footing. This was because supervisors used what supervisees reported to them to analyse the cases and identify intervention approaches. The information that frontline social workers gave could be very subjective such as emphasizing something they felt comfortable to report and minimizing things that would affect their work performance. It would be good if supervisors could build a sense of companionship with them. For example, supervisors could share responsibilities and search out solutions with frontline social workers when anything went wrong or placing blame to the supervisees by clients. Indeed, supervision is an opportunity for supervisors to conduct self-reflection for their professional competence. Supervisors could take this as a kind of revision

approach for themselves and/or for supporting frontline social workers. Good supervisory relationship is a type of support for supervisees.

4.3.2c Individual Informants' Feedbacks

Components of Effective Supervision

Balance between administrative & clinical supervision

Participants, especially social work trainers who had lots of experience in cooperative work, such as research, professional knowledge exchange, and students' feedback, with social welfare organizations reflected that many supervisors were preoccupied with administrative duties and seeking new resources through the writing of project proposals to secure funding for new projects. They had little time and energy for supervision. Frontline social workers queued for supervision just like they queued for medical treatment in a hospital. However, supervisors appeared not to have a choice in the matter and would therefore surrender to the demands of the related organization in terms of – managerial accountability – users' rights, cost savings – do more with less, and quality control – risk prevention. If this situation is not improved, supervisors cannot provide effective supervision for their frontline social workers. The following supports this view:

P1: "... they were too careful with ordinances, rules and regulations, systems, etc... very anxious about managerial accountability rather than the conditions of the case or the client. Many supervisors knew that once they had been promoted to supervisor, it would be impossible to provide timely and adequate professional supervision to supervisees as they were required to look after many different aspects of services in one region".

P4: "Would miss the professional view when there were too many guidelines, and too many manuals. The most important part of professional was professional judgement. However, manual could not replace professional supervision".

Professional Competence

Acquiring suitable qualifications before taking up supervision work was seen as an important component in delivering effective supervision by participants. However, in Hong Kong, most supervisors are not trained. As such, many supervisors draw on their own supervision experience or use trial and error methods when supervising others. Previous experience is likely to influence the quality of supervision delivered to their frontline social workers. Participant P6 shared that there were big differences between being supervised by a non-qualified supervisor in Hong Kong and a licensed supervisor in the United States. With theoretical knowledge and skills, supervisors know how to develop frontline social workers' professional competence instead of making them dependent. Here are some of their feedbacks:

P3: "Expecting the supervisor to demonstrate a social work professional model, dealing with issues calmly and wisely, talking about theory fluently, and answering each question clearly, and using words adequately".

P5: "In our professional sector, there appeared to be some incompetent supervisors, they would avoid supervision responsibilities. However, some supervisors are very demanding, good or bad depending on supervisors' competence and sense of commitment".

Frontline Social Workers' characteristics

Participants stated that frontline social workers' professional competence, personalities, and attitudes towards supervision also had great influence on the supervision effect. First of all, frontline social workers' diagnosis and conceptualization abilities of the cases would determine their supervision need; secondly, it depended on whether the frontline social workers' motivation and confidence to invite help from supervisors; thirdly, frontline social workers' perceptions of supervision functions and relationships with supervisors. Again, participants felt that frontline social workers preferred to seek help from colleagues rather than supervisors as on the one hand they knew that supervisors were very busy and did not want to bother them; on the other hand, they felt colleagues' knowledge and experience were more relevant. Here are some of their views on this:

P2: "Usually, what the supervisees told you was a past process. This process very much depended on supervisees' awareness. They might feel that they could handle the cases; they would even think they were not their problems if their clients had not worked through the problem".

P7: "I would give a formal supervision timetable to supervisees. However, it could be skipped once if both were busy and no urgent things needed to be talked about. However, if my colleagues wanted to leave to do other things when we had a supervision appointment, it was their choice whether they respected our supervisory relationship".

Characteristics of Competent Professional Supervisors

Personal Attributes

Good supervisors should be people with rich experiences and wisdom in the professional field; have commitment and professional competence such as equipped with theoretical and implementation abilities; have confidence and be able to make sound decisions to tackle problems in a logical way; and be approachable for frontline social workers. The followings are their experiences:

P1: "... as supervisors, they should have rich experiences or wisdom to allow supervisees to feel that they were inclusive and open-minded".

P2: "Supervisors should have several characteristics: firstly, they were ready and willing to take up tasks; secondly, need to be confident after taking up the task; thirdly, accept the consequences even though they failed".

Professional Competence with Continuation of Clinical Practice

Participants reported that there were two types of supervisors involved here. One group was those who would continue their direct clinical practice and be able to demonstrate intervention skills. The other group had years of working experience but had stopped practicing their clinical skills and thus had a lack of continued professional training for self-development. They could not earn their frontline social workers' trust and respect in clinical supervision if they had no continued direct practice. Indeed, frontline social workers had more complaints than praises to their supervisors. The following examples illustrate these situations:

P2: "In fact, current supervisors can be not as competent as their frontline social workers as they were frequently deployed from one post to another or never practise clinical work".

P3: "I support supervisors requiring continued education for self-development"

Supervision Styles

Participants felt that supervisors should have the ability to cultivate the supervision culture, set the supervision structure to encourage frontline social workers to make best use of the supervision. Frontline social workers would value the supervision if they were aware of their professional growth - from not knowing to knowing. Supervisors could use their passionate "self" to be frontline social workers' learning model. To use their past working experiences as positive examples of wisdom to encourage frontline social workers to work through hurdles without fear of failure. For example, acting as their big brother or sister with a friendly attitude could encourage them to ask for help. Participant P3 used parenting problems as a metaphor to illustrate the supervisory relationship. Children did not like to ask for help from parents because they could not solve their problems effectively. Here are some examples:

P1: "One colleague from a non-government organization told me that she would not call her supervisor when encountering high risk cases in critical moments as she was not helpful at all. Instead, she would ask many questions that would delay my work. I would seek advice from those friends who had similar work experience".

P3: “If we could set the culture in the department that everybody knew that they would have soup (supervision) to take. The soup had certain specifications and norms such as being an appetizer, main course, dessert and they could leave after taking all of these. The supervision structure has the beginning and end gesture. For example, they would ask personal issues, would criticise the supervisees, and definitely appraise them. Then, the supervision ended”.

4.3.3 Use of Power, Supervision Types, and Supervisory Relationships

Table 11: Effects of Power and Supervision Types

Major theme	Subtheme
1. Use of Power	a. Referent power is the most lasting power b. Supervisors do not feel comfortable to use coercive and reward power
2. Supervision Types	a. Active Reflective is the most effective supervision type b. Passive Avoidant is the worst supervision type

There are five types of powers including (1) legitimate power, (2) expertise power, (3) reward power, (4) punishment power, and (5) referent power and three supervision types including active intrusive, active reflective and passive avoidant. The questions covered in this part are: (1) Which kinds of powers/types of supervision do informants perceive as the most positive with opportunities for supervisors and frontline social workers to actively reflect on the work being undertaken within a sound working professional relationship? (2) How do changes in relationships between supervisors and frontline social workers happen in any one kind of the powers and types of supervision? (3) What are informants’ views towards

the research findings' and the impact on the parallel process interventions of clients?

The following are representative of participants' feedback:

4.3.3a Focus Group – Supervisors' Feedbacks

Use of Power

In general, participants shared that different power had its effectiveness in different contexts. Clearly, frontline social workers seldom questioned supervisors' legitimate power. New staff relied more on supervisors' instruction and seldom argued with them. Supervisor Sfg2 indicated that experienced frontline social workers would demand more of supervisors' expert power. This power usually manifested in wisdom, knowledge and information, good decision making, sound judgments and accurate perceptions of reality. With regard to gate-keeping of service quality and staff performance, supervisors had to use coercive power. Supervisor Sfg4 expressed that it was easy to use reward power as staff perceived you as a good guy, but it was not easy to use coercive power as it would provoke anger and rebellious behaviour. Supervisors' dilemma in using coercive power was because they understood that social workers would rather spend their time in direct service instead of doing administrative work. However, administrative work demanded strict discipline to foster service accountability and as such could not be neglected. In this situation, supervisors needed to use reward and coercive powers more effectively. Supervisor Sfg1 commented that supervisors should have a good system to record frontline social workers' poor performance for asserting coercive power. However, supervisor Sfg2 felt that referent power showed the most lasting and respectable effect as it was related to supervisors' achieved professional status. Evidences for this are as follows:

Sfg5: “However, I felt it was not difficult to use coercive power if the staff had made significant mistakes. The most difficult situation was those who just do things right and their mistakes were hardly found. When everyone rushed to do something, there was always one person staying one step behind. This really affected the team work”.

Sfg6: “I also had such feelings. These colleagues would somehow affect service development and the team development”.

From the above, it is evident that supervisors did not fully utilize their powers to maintain frontline social workers’ work performances to expected standards. “Personal” factors could be one of the major contributing factors that hindered supervisors’ decisions to use their powers. For example, supervisors’ kind personalities, avoiding conflict attitudes, wishing to be seen as a “good guy” and lacking of credibility in professional knowledge and skills.

Supervision Types

Supervisor Sfg5 expressed that the active reflective supervision type would bring better supervision results. However, supervisor Sfg2 said that the three supervision types were useful in different contexts and with different personalities. Active reflective supervision might be more frequently used. However, passive avoidant supervision was also useful when supervisors decided to let frontline social workers get on with their work as they were confident that they knew what they should do. This supervision type might encourage frontline social workers’ commitment. Supervisor Sfg1 explained that the active intrusive supervisor would take a directive approach to supervision. He gave an example to illustrate how the

active intrusive style worked in which supervisors resembled line managers in a factory, and they would give directive instruction to the workers who would do whatever they were requested to. The frontline social workers might achieve one desired outcome: task completion. This did not necessarily enable a worker to develop their own skills and reflect upon how that outcome was achieved. Supervisors maintained control and frontline social workers lacked autonomy. Regarding active reflective supervision, supervisor Sfg1 used the master-apprenticeship concept to explain its practice. For example, the master did not only teach his fellows work skills, he also taught them how to be a good person. Supervisors who used active reflective supervision should have an understanding of what frontline social workers were doing and what was happening to those with whom they were working. Here, the supervision process was more collaborative and allowed time for frontline social workers to present their opinions and feelings about the work undertaken. Participants shared that regardless of the type of supervision, it should aim to develop a long lasting and collaborative supervisory relationship.

Supervisor Sfg1 added that supervisory relationships gave people either an upper hand or a lower hand. Indeed, if we viewed this from a different angle, the situation would be very different, particularly, if supervisors and supervisees played different roles and responsibilities. Supervisor Sfg5 stressed that the ultimate goal of supervision was intended to widen supervisees' perspectives. Supervisor Sfg4 echoed that the supervision process was for sharing, reflecting, and growing. Both parties needed to possess a give and take attitude. Supervisor Sfg6 felt that supervision was a teaching and learning process.

4.3.3b Focus Group – Frontline Social Workers’ Feedbacks

Use of Power

Participants felt that there was an unequal power balance between supervisors and frontline social workers. Their supervisors commonly used legitimate power, especially when bidding for new projects or meeting funding and service agreement demands. They reported that they did not dare refuse supervisors’ requests as they were their performance appraisers and uncooperative behaviour might affect their employment and/or salary increments. Therefore, participants felt that the organization should have clear work assessment guidelines and standards on governing staff performance. Supervisors needed to ensure a balance between reward and coercive power. Their feedbacks on this matter are clear as the followings:

Ffg1: “This issue cannot be changed. He/she is the boss. He/she is your superior ... though we feel they are not justified or qualified to be a supervisor. We cannot speak up”.

Ffg6: “Reward and punishment are implemented together. It means he/she understands your feeling, gives you empathy; at the same time alerts you that you cannot cross the boundary. He/she would seriously remind you there are rules and regulations that you need to follow and no more mistakes should be made”.

Supervision Types

Participants reported that supervision effectiveness was not solely determined by supervision types. It should look at whether the organizations took supervision as a voluntary or compulsory task. Ffg4 felt that the level of importance concerning

supervision in her organization was low. Participants expressed that their supervision was mainly directed by their supervisors.

4.3.3c Individual Participants' Feedbacks

Use of Power

Participant P1 suggested supervisors using power to get supervisees to comply with their requests would not have lasting effect. He thought the amount of power supervisors commanded was dependent on supervisors' professional image, style and charisma. These were supervisors' intangible assets. The more rewards and punishment they used, the more difficult to build the trust between supervisors and frontline social workers. Young and inexperienced frontline social workers required coaching, guidance and input. Participant P3 also agreed that supervision would affect frontline social workers' job satisfaction and performance. Supervisors needed to be firm and kind. Supervisors' expert power was important as it helped frontline social workers to understand how to do things. It was a kind of motivating power. Indeed, power was built in the appraisal system. Supervisors did not need to explicitly use reward and punishment power.

Supervision Types

Participant P2 felt that active reflective supervision would be a more desirable supervision type as it would allow frontline social workers to make their own decisions and develop their own work styles. Participant P4 also agreed to use active reflective supervision as frontline social workers were not solely recipients, they were also contributors. With this reflective process, supervisors would gradually strengthen their confidence and professional competence. However, participant P5 reported that from her students' complaints, many supervisors used passive avoidant

supervision. As such, workers might be resentful that they have had little guidance and might be resistant to supervision. Participant P3 had indicated that she believed supervisors should have something to guide frontline social workers, as they had received basic social work training and had at least five years of direct working experience before becoming supervisors; they had exposure with other supervisors in sharing social work knowledge and skills, and also life experience. The following is one of the examples:

P2: "I found most of our frontline social workers had not watched how the experts did their work. And I found those who had studied clinical psychologists were required to follow a teacher, follow a supervisor, and follow the practitioner to see how they do the work. Next were the doctors, they all watched how the consultant did the surgery work. Only our social workers depended on themselves to develop their own knowledge and skills to be their work foundation".

4.3.4 Personal Social Work Supervision Experiences

Within this theme, seven questions were shared including: (1) Can informants share their supervision experience as a supervisee/supervisor? (2) Is there any impact on their supervisory attachment style? (3) How do they develop their supervisory working alliance relationships with supervisee/supervisor? (4) Can they share one of their best/worst experiences with their social work supervisee/supervisor? (5) What is the most difficult issue in their supervision work? (6) According to their experience, what brings effective supervision? The major themes concerned participants' own experiences and general perceptions of supervision practice can be referred in Table 12 below.

Table 12: Themes of Personal Social Work Supervision Experience –

Supervisors, Frontline Social Workers and Individual Participants

Participants	Themes
1. Supervisors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Dos and don'ts in supervision practice b. Use of self to earn respect – referent and expert power
2. Frontline Social Workers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. No formal supervision in current social work practice b. Out of control – I don't choose my supervisor c. Be my motivator
3. Individual Participants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Supervisory styles have good and bad impacts b. Effective Supervision is the collaboration and co-construction effort c. Both good and bad supervision experiences ever exist d. Belief in supervision functions is the core factor to sustain one's devotion in supervision practice

4.3.4a Focus Group – Supervisors' Feedbacks

Dos and Don'ts

Participants shared that in the early 1970s, supervisors were not necessary from the social work field. However, most who were involved in social services were devoted and innovative leaders. Social workers' work nature not only focused on one or two areas, everything was a concern for social workers, from individuals to family and communities. Supervisor Sfg5 shared that her first supervisor gave her a very good lasting memory as she had learned a lot of clinical skills through psychoanalysis exercises with her. Today, this kind of practice is seldom seen. She

would use reflective exercises with frontline social workers. On the one hand, it would help them identify their potential and develop to the fullest. On the other hand, she would push them to take risks for personal growth. Supervisor Sfg3 reflected that his supervisor was a good person. Therefore, he would draw on this good experience to supervise his frontline social workers. Supervisor Sfg1 recalled that his early supervision experience was not good. Therefore, he told himself not to repeat the same incidents for his frontline social workers. Supervisor Sfg6 said that she only had a very short period of time as a supervisee and could not remember what she had learned from her supervisor. As a case worker, the most important thing that she expected to get from her supervisor was professional guidance. However, she was very disappointed. Thus, like Sfg1, she also always reminds herself to give proper supervision to her supervisees. However, from a positive point of view, she had free hands to do what she considered right.

Use of Self

Regarding supervisory relationship building, although there are differences in values, beliefs, and work styles, participants felt that the most important components to work out differences were communication and trust. Supervisor Sfg3 felt that giving more space to frontline social workers to actualize themselves and create happy working moods was also helpful. Supervisor Sfg2 added that to let frontline social workers know about supervisors' limitations was also necessary. Another point was self-discipline, especially temper control. When communicating with frontline social workers, supervisors needed to be clear of what was expected. When undesirable outcomes occurred, supervisors should focus on solutions but not fault finding. Indeed, failure was a good reminder for mistake prevention. It could make frontline social workers develop a safer feeling towards the supervisory relationship.

Supervisor Sfg4 shared that to make allies with frontline social workers, one should ensure they were understood, accepted and be given shared responsibilities. He would start the supervision by listening to frontline social workers' worries, underlying messages and coping strategies before giving feedback and judgement. Frontline social workers would thus take more initiation in supervision.

Earning Respect

Participants said that the most memorable supervision experiences were care and comfort from supervisees. For example, supervisor Sfg2 had handled a schizophrenic case on behalf of the supervisee. The supervisee showed her concern and said, "Mr. X, do you want any back up?" After handling the case, all the staff told him that, "We were very worried about you!" They all respected him as he would take up responsibility instead of pushing everything onto staff. Regarding the bad supervision experiences, as reported earlier, supervisor Sfg2 shared one of his cases that he had found difficult to handle. The frontline social workers who had personality problems were reported as bad supervision experiences by supervisor Sfg2. He said various types of methods, such as soft method, use of guidance, and peer review had been tried to help the supervisee, but failed. Eventually, the supervisee needed to be referred to their responsible personnel. Below are their reflections regarding both good and bad supervision experiences:

Sfg1 "The most disliked supervisor, he/she was not knowledgeable, but wanted to control. This kind of supervisor would hinder work. I reminded myself repeatedly not to make the same mistake when I became a supervisor".

Sfg3: "My former supervisor was a good model for me. I had experienced

several supervisors, I just drew on what I thought was good for my current practice”.

Sfg6: “My role as a supervisee only lasted for a short time. Too short that I could not remember what my supervisor had taught me. As my nature of work was case oriented. To me, I expected my supervisor to give me professional guidance. However, it was insufficient. It affected my later practice as a supervisor. I felt, it is necessary to help my supervisees learn how to handle situations”.

4.3.4b Focus Group – Frontline Social Workers’ Feedbacks

Out of Control

Frontline social worker Ffg2 said her organization had a standardized supervision policy under the service quality standards (SQS). Project staff was under the centre-in-charge’s supervision and case workers would be supervised by case managers. Staff with different years of working experience would be treated differently in terms of supervision frequency. She said the supervision practice in her organization was satisfactory. However, her initial supervision experience was not satisfactory as she worked under two supervisors. One was the project staff member in-charge and the other was a casework manager. Her project supervisor was too busy and thus her supervision schedule was frequently postponed. She was frustrated as a new graduate and really had difficulty in handling some difficult cases such as those involving child protection orders. Fortunately, this situation had been improved after she changed her role to case worker under a different supervisor. She could get guidance whenever she needed. Ffg5 said she had four years of working experience. In the first two years, she felt that supervision was very important to her especially when the family cases were complex. What she really wanted was some advice on direction. However, it was not as easy as she thought. Later, her supervisor resigned

and she got another one. However, the situation was not good. For example, she would say “let us discuss this later” after she had listened to the report of the case. However, he did not follow up and she got frustrated. Therefore, she had no expectation from her supervisor. Ffg4 echoed this in that her experience was quite similar to Ffg2. Ffg5 had once considered resignation.

Be My Motivator

Regarding participants’ supervisory working alliance relationships, Ffg5 said that she sometimes did not want to handle the cases assigned by her supervisor as she did not have the confidence to handle them. However, when considering this reaction she doubted her supervisor would have been aware of her frustration. Ffg3 shared Ffg5’s feeling here. She had worked in two organizations. The first supervisor made her feel very frustrated and after talking to her supervisor she felt more disappointed. She said in the school she needed to face many hurdles and the referred cases frequently triggered crisis. She felt very tired and really, really, wanted to retire. Fortunately, she got support from her supervisor and was able to overcome her frustration. She then felt comfortable to approach the supervisor for help. Here are some of their shared experiences:

Ffg3: “When I felt very, very, stressful, she would talk to me, “you are not facing that alone”. She would understand and gave me some concrete opinions. It was an immediate help, I felt. “Yes, I am not alone!” The feeling was good and I would move forward again. The feeling that I got was she welcomed me to seek help from her anytime, such as to telephone her. She would guide me and support me. This feeling was very important”.

Ffg6: "I have also experienced my supervisor's support. He would say, 'is it necessary to accompany you. Or give some support to you?' In fact, I felt sometimes what we needed was social work knowledge and ability development. Then, we could have confidence to continue to stay on".

4.3.4c Individual Informants' Feedbacks

Referring to table 12, participant P1 did not say much about his own experience with his supervisor. He had shared his experience about his students who were also supervisors or frontline social workers in the social work organizations. Supervisors' priorities in supervision were management issues. They would alert frontline social workers to what they should pay more attention to; which procedures were missed; and how to set work priorities according to the risk levels of cases. He had seen some good and devoted social workers who refused to be supervisors as they did not want to be drawn into this "trap". They preferred to concentrate on clinical work. He recommended the use of the pool of resources in a proper way. For example, instead of naming them as supervisors, we can use other terms such as professional consultants or mentors. He continued that frontline social workers told him the most important thing was to present a good image to the supervisor as this would directly affect their decisions for selecting them as priority candidates for nurturing and or promotion. Indeed, his social work fieldwork colleagues shared that the most successful supervision took place when students did not care about grading for their studies. They had full confidence in themselves as they strongly believed that they had done their best. As such, they would accept criticism easier. When frontline social workers were too concerned about their performance ratings, they tended to follow supervisors' instructions, intentions, and work direction to impress

them. However, they would miss the opportunity to develop their true selves and uniqueness.

Participant P2 felt that there was a good supervision system in the Probation Service. Before he became a gazette probation officer, his supervisor would assign an experienced worker to be his mentor. He would follow the master and the master would show him the work process. He would also bring him along wherever he performed his work. He had direct observation on how he conducted social enquiry; how to deal with resistant clients; how to investigate the case; how to build rapport with clients; and how to intervene. Later, his supervisor would work together with him. He believed that as an adult learner, I learned from observation and it was much faster than learning by reading. Therefore, he would also do demonstrations for his supervisees. He would communicate with the supervisees to have a mutual interpretation and understanding of each other's theoretical beliefs of the case and avoid imposing his belief and/or the labelling effect. According to his working experience, he preferred to use peer supervision and the process was a sharing and it was not necessary to adopt the work approach. For formal supervision, frontline social workers needed to report their work progress and the results. Participant P2 stated that his former supervisor had some impacts on his current supervision practice no matter whether it was good or bad.

Participant P3 explained that when she was a social worker she had formal supervision. She felt that she had autonomy for personal growth and development. Every Friday, she would have "happy hour" with her social work colleagues. Therefore, they did not need team-building. They did not gather for gossip, they would share what they did, what difficulties they had encountered, and how they dealt with them. Simple

issues could be solved within this peer group. When encountering more serious cases, she would ask for assistance during supervision sessions. She could freely ask for help from her supervisor and would not feel scared to be labelled as incompetent. However, the above handling procedure might be different today. Social workers are too busy to have such peer gatherings. More recently, social workers are scared to be seen as incapable by asking more questions; which hinders their courage to disclose their incompetence. During P3's time, she would share working experiences casually with peers and they would give her ideas. Indeed, supervisors would assess their ability before allocating cases to them. Peer sharing could not replace formal supervision as it involved responsibility and liability. Supervisors would be alert to what they needed to be careful of. To participant P3, she did not have much direct supervision with frontline social workers. However, her graduates would return once a month to share their work with each other, which would enrich and update her knowledge regarding the supervision practice. Although the sharing among graduates was informal, she said her students' exposure was much more than one supervisor's supervision and it would be a good supplement to their learning.

Participant P4 was a school social worker before taking up her current job. She reflected that today many social workers complained of being pressured to take up duties without social work elements. Indeed, this was not new practice. P4 had also been requested to teach by the school. She thought both supervisors and frontline social workers needed to know how to transform these opportunities into social work elements. First, the supervisor should convey messages to school personnel regarding social workers' core roles and responsibilities. At the same time, they needed to support frontline social workers to do the work differently from the school expectation. For example, she used the class session to promote social work services

or self-understanding issues through games. Or when she was asked to lead school outings, she would take that opportunity to do networking with students. She agreed that today's supervisors have too many roles and responsibilities. When requesting them to be competent professional supervisors, they need to have more time to equip themselves with professional knowledge and skills through direct practice and training. Many of them did not have proper training in supervision work. Reflecting on her practice period, her supervisors had more space for professional supervision as there was less demand on service quality controls and cost saving issues. To make supervision effective, she thought that both supervisors and supervisees have to work collaboratively. It is wrong to expect supervisors to do everything as the supervisory relationship is built on cooperation and collaboration from both parties. She said supervision is not about directing frontline social workers in what to do; supervision is concerned with helping them to learn how to diagnose cases through reflection. Similarly, other participants felt supervision knowledge and skills do not come from a manual. Supervisors could not be competent supervisors if they did not practice. With more working life experience, comes the ability to react quickly and more accurately to frontline social workers' requests. Supervision needs to be conducted in a sympathetic manner instead of using authority or power. She said she could not force her students to submit assignments on time by using threats. This would only create resistant behaviour and this also applied to social work supervision. According to her understanding, social workers do not have much time for in-depth counselling work and this greatly affects service users. Supervisors and frontline social workers have a functional relationship to uphold within social work values and practice. She was quite pessimistic that the social work professional sector could not sustain quality supervision practice in the near future if we did not invest effort in training competent social work supervisors.

Participant P5 have been in social work practice for nearly 20 years felt supervision issues was seldom discussed. She did not know how supervision was practiced such as regularity and effectiveness. However, she knew that administrative supervision was taken quite seriously after the introduction of the lump sum grant. Whereas, participant P4 paid serious attention to professional supervision and professionalism, which they felt was very demanding. Indeed, there was an inaccurate conception about what a competent supervisor entailed. Many supervisors were promoted because they had many years of work experience. She felt that having rich working experience did not mean they knew how to provide adequate supervision. Supervision knowledge and skills are complexed. The best way to conduct professional supervision is through tape or video recording as one could have first-hand information instead of having to use memory recall. However, this format is very time consuming and may not be supported by the sector. Her emphasis here is that professional supervision values should be acknowledged. The most common issue that she heard from social workers was regarding their arguments with their supervisors about insufficient and inadequate supervision because they would suffer poor appraisal. Poor appraisal not only affected the supervisory relationship but also directly affected their job security.

Participant P6 said the most memorable supervision experience was that her supervisor admitted that she did not read her case reports. She recalled that there was a stipulated policy on supervision in her organization. New social workers would have one supervision session per month. However, she had very little supervision and not much support from her supervisor. She had to make requests for supervision with her supervisor. Prior to supervision sessions, she had prepared her case reports well for the supervisor to read. When she asked her supervisor whether she had read her

cases she frankly admitted that she had not. This type of response greatly disappointed participant P6. Indeed, her supervisor was not a lazy person. She worked very hard until 7:00 p.m. or even later. However, she did not know what occupied her time. She recalled one time in particular, where, for the first time, she needed to carry out a domestic violence case report independently. The most horrifying thing about this experience was the abuser watching her in the office and once in a while screaming and shouting at her. Following this, participant P6 had nightmares that the abuser chased her with a knife and nobody helped her and her supervisor was still working on her paperwork in her office. The nightmare reflected how scared and helpless she felt. This was participant P6's first experience in her first job. In addition, participant P6 later went overseas and her supervision experience was very different from that in Hong Kong. She was supervised by a licensed clinical supervisor and learned a lot from the supervision system.

However, returning to Hong Kong after two years overseas, she discovered that supervision conditions remained unchanged. According to her memories, she only had two supervision sessions in two years. Because of her own experience, she reminded herself not to repeat the same mistakes and would try her best to instigate supervision with her staff. Although she could not provide regular supervision to her staff, she would ensure staff who had one to three years' working experience with one to two supervisions a month; and those with three to five years working experience received supervision once every three months. Apart from direct supervision, she provided opinions to her supervisees through case recordings. In view of the increasing administrative workload, she had to readjust her attitude and be flexible. She also worked out a training system, held case conferences, and group supervisions to ensure all the social workers were clear about the administrative

requirements, work expectations and procedures, risk assessments, as well as learning from others' experiences to prevent making unnecessary mistakes.

Apart from her effort, organizational support was deemed important. Her organization also invested a lot in professional training for the social workers. Her supervisees were encouraged to read and discuss related professional knowledge and skills. The learning atmosphere was really good. She said supervision to staff was very important as many of the necessary knowledge and skills were not taught in the training institutes, but came from on-the-job training. She concluded that without these working strategies, she would have burnout.

Participant P7 had a very long story about her supervision experiences. Again, like other participants, she did not have adequate supervision when she was a social worker. However, a free hand had given her plenty of opportunity to develop into a strong, self-confident, and creative worker. Nevertheless, she still believed supervision was important and necessary. Supervision could come in different formats. For example, she had a very bitter, but meaningful memory in learning how to write a case report. She recalled that she had spent much time in preparing a three-page referral case report. However, her supervisor threw a half page report sample on her table and said, "First paragraph is about background of the case, second is why needing referral, and third is what the client wants". Although participant P7 did not feel good about these comments because she felt her supervisor should have taught her how to write the report instead of handling the matter in such a rude manner, yet she valued this learning experience and took this as informal supervision. The supervisor did not change her style but what her comments became more concrete and valid. Today, participant P7 still appreciates this. She said

there are different ways in which to learn professional knowledge and skills. For example, her supervisor was accustomed to handling different issues over the phone. She found listening to her conversations was very useful. She regarded this as “live” supervision. Apart from this, she took part in some voluntary work which also gave her many learning opportunities as most people she worked with were very knowledgeable and experienced. As such, she picked up a lot of professional knowledge and skills. Thus, she felt that learning did not only come from one supervisor as they also had limitations.

Moreover, participant P7 expressed that her past learning experiences had greatly impacted on her current supervision values, styles and expectations. She took supervision seriously and formed her own structure. She would not postpone or cancel supervision without significant reason. Also, she would not only place emphasis on professional supervision as the service quality was governed by good management. Indeed, she viewed management supervision as more important because the impact was on the whole organization instead of one supervisee and one client.

Regarding supervisory working alliance relationships, she claimed that supervisees preferred to have supervision with professionally competence supervisors. Therefore, the first thing was that supervisors should have referent and expert powers. These are more powerful than legitimate, reward and coercive powers. Once you had the first two, you did not need to use the rest unless there were special circumstances, such as dealing with non-performing staff. Secondly, when conducting supervision, supervisors should try to understand supervisees’ personalities, values, learning styles, and needs. Frontline social workers are the best people to understand clients’ needs and their views on the cases should be listened

carefully. In addition, they could update supervisors' knowledge about what was happening in the work field. Without their contribution and collaboration, supervisors could not perform good supervision. With these two positive components, frontline social workers would feel at ease to approach supervisors for guidance and support. Finally, she shared that whether or not frontline social workers want supervision are their own choice. However, to secure service quality, organizations should include supervision as part of staff's job responsibilities. She concluded that supervision is not only developed our frontline social workers, the most important end-product is clients' welfare benefits. Therefore, to earn respect from supervisees, we should have passion for staff; have passion for clients; and have passion for our profession.

Taking account of participants' stories on their supervision experiences, which included the impact on supervision practice, supervisory working alliance relationships with frontline social workers, and learning wisdom on forming effective supervision, these accounts can provide social work professionals with insight as to best practice in their supervision work.

4.3.5 Supervisory Theory

Under this theme, three questions had been discussed including: (1) If alliance is proposed to be essential for supervisees' learning, what roles do attachment and relational-cultural theories play; (2) What aspects of working alliance theory can be translated; and (3) Would informants say they are satisfied with the current situation, with the way things are going? If so, what are they satisfied about? Why is that? (Or, "What's going well?").

From the discussion, all participants agreed that supervisory alliance working relationships are essential for enhancing frontline social workers learning. However, they did not explicitly use the terminology of attachment and relational-cultural theory or concepts to illustrate how supervisory relationships were established. Participants reported that whether or not the supervisor-supervisee dyad connected or disconnected with each other was very much dependent on their supervision experiences and the outcomes should be the responsibility of both parties.

As can be seen in Table 13 below, three themes were identified for sound supervisory alliance. They were positive supervision experiences, relational processes, and effective outcomes. Positive experiences were: those supervisors should be available when supervisees needed help; supervisees had a sense of security and trust to expose their inadequacies and incompetence and would not worry about negative outcomes; and obtained timely support when encountering stress and/or challenges from work or allegations. Relational processes were: how supervisors and supervisees related to each in order to come to a working agreement, structure, hopes and expectations of supervision, accountability, and professional boundaries. Effective outcomes were: advice and guidance being driven by theory or evidence, information and strategies were updated, adequate and applicable to what would solve frontline social workers' reported problems and/or requested help; and there was autonomy to allow for personal growth and development.

Table 13: Supervisory Alliance and Feelings towards Supervision Practice

1. Supervisory Alliance	a. Positive experiences b. Relational processes c. Effective outcomes
2. Feelings towards Supervision Practice	a. Unsatisfactory supervision practice b. should be addressed

One interesting phenomenon observed in the shared information was that relationships between supervisors and supervisees were not a matter of either connecting or disconnecting. Connection and disconnection can be in a back and forth pattern. For example, participant P7's reported she once disconnected with her supervisor as she did not provide regular supervision for her and made her feel miserable. Their relationship was re-connected when participant P7 got adequate advice from her supervisor whilst writing her referral case report. This indicates that if the disconnection can be addressed, stronger connections can result. Other examples were provided by participant frontline social workers in that they would disconnect with their supervisors when they found their supervisors' supervision competence did not progress or even deteriorated. Relationships – rather than authority, superiority, or dominance – appeared to be the core component to new forms of supervision.

To summarize, supervision was reported as important; supervisory alliance working relationships are one of the significant valuable components to effective supervision practice and analytical supervisors are perceived to be significantly more nurturing. Unsatisfactory supervision practice should be addressed as frontline social workers' learning and motivation to stay in the social work profession depends on the

quality of supervision and the interaction and relationship between supervisors and supervisees.

Although this is qualitative research and the obtained information could not generate a “norm” for use, the findings however, are very informative, valuable and encouraging as the reported information was from a pool of knowledgeable participants that covered frontline social workers and supervisors with varying years of working experiences (from one year to over twenty years) and from different sizes of organizations in terms of the number of social work units (from one single service unit in one catchment area to several units in different districts in Hong Kong i.e., eight social workers formed one school social work unit, twelve to fifteen social workers formed one integrated family service unit); and good social work trainers from four large universities in Hong Kong.

Little is known about the impact of supervision on supervision practice between supervisor-supervisee dyads and therapeutic clients. However, the accounts from the second phase interviews inform us about what actually happens between supervisors and supervisees in supervision practice. Their views and experience of supervision are genuine and vivid. These views will be reported in the following chapter.

4.4 Summary of the Chapter

Theme one provided a general perceptions and experiences of social work supervision practice, two sub-themes are significantly highlighted including the need and importance of supervision and crucial issues of social work supervision. To this point, all participants agreed that there was a need to provide supervision to social workers. Moreover, to bring the benefits of supervision to the fullest, they urged that

attention be paid to supervision qualities such as easy access, support, and supervisory relationships in order to motivate supervisees to seek help from supervisors.

Theme two was about components of effective social work supervision; two themes included practice characteristics and characteristic of competent professional supervisors. Basically, supervisors should have sufficient knowledge and use demonstrative supervision methods to carry out their supervision work. Thus, a balance between administrative and clinical supervision should be taken into consideration. To facilitate supervisors' work, supervisees' characters are one of the contributing factors. To connect supervisees in supervision work, supervisors need to have an updated mind-set and attitudes that cultivate an open communication culture, and grant autonomy to supervisees to co-construct ideas to do the work.

Theme three concerns the effects of powers covering legitimate, expert, coercive, reward, and referent; and supervision types such as active, intrusive, active reflective and passive avoidant. In line with the extant literature, participants explained that expert and referent powers were the most effective components for supervision. Regarding supervision types, active reflective would have better supervision results. However, whether these three supervision types have supplementary effects to one another under different work contexts and personalities of workers needs further study.

Theme four talked about nineteen individuals' most valuable personal social work supervision experience. Their shared experiences should have some impacts on our supervision practice. Their views were triangulated with phase two's findings.

Basically, supervisors used their selves as a working model to earn respect from supervisees. They listed “Dos” & “Don’ts” as wisdom for social work supervision practitioners. The supervisees’ feelings of “not being in control” and requests for “be my motivator” are good reminders for supervisors in supervision practice.

The last theme was related to supervisor theory. Overall, participants expressed that good supervision should have clear supervision goals, structure, and be co-constructed by supervisor and supervisee dyads. Social work supervision practice is in line with attachment and relational-cultural theories and is explicitly demonstrated in these research findings.

CHAPTER FIVE: RESEARCH FINDINGS (II)

5.1 Introduction

This chapter will outline the findings from phase two of the study. It illustrates ideas regarding the supervisor-supervisee dyads' values and attitudes towards their supervision experiences; how their supervisory relationships are constructed with reference to attachment and relational theories; and subsequent implications on supervisees' job satisfaction and performance. The major findings of phase two thus reveal six main themes derived from the views expressed by participants during the interviewing process: (1) Areas of concern in supervisory working alliance experiences that impact on supervision outcomes; (2) how the participants (supervisor-supervisee dyads) perceive their supervisory relationships, particularly in the Chinese cultural context and the ensuing influence; (3) interaction processes of different developmental stages and strategies have been employed to overcome differences if any; (4) the most important elements in building their supervisory working alliance relationships; (5) supervisory relationships' impact on supervisee's job performance and satisfaction; and (6) application of supervisory working alliance theories to supervision practice.

5.2 Background Information of participants

According to literature, Stoltenberg and Delworth's (1987) stage model of supervisor development states that supervisors go through three stages. In stage one (Beginner): supervisors have been described as either overly anxious or ignorant about the complexities inherent in their "new" roles as supervisors. This is understandable as they tend to be overly concerned with their performance as new supervisors. Supervisors in this stage often see themselves as therapy "experts" and tend to transmit their knowledge to supervisees in ways that can be theoretically

dogmatic. In stage two (Competent): supervisors go through a period of role confusion and conflict as they begin to realize the complexity of supervisory experiences and begin to face therapeutic dilemmas, which challenge previously held assumptions about supervision and psychotherapy. This description is accurate as supervisors' efforts in supervision fluctuate as they need to manage their own confusion and uncertainty. In stage three (Proficient): is characterized by a renewed interest and excitement in the supervisory process. Supervisors begin to become comfortable balancing supervisees' training needs with clients' clinical needs. They are also able to self-monitor their own supervisory processes, realistically evaluating their strengths and weaknesses. They work equally well with a variety of supervisees who have various levels of psychotherapy training. Supervisors relish the challenge of working with supervisees with different personalities, theoretical orientations, and approaches to supervision.

Thus, the participant dyads of phase two were divided into three groups according to their supervision experience in response to Stoltenberg and Delworth's model of classification. The supervisor-supervisee dyads with one to two years supervision experience were categorised as "beginner" supervisor-supervisee dyads; the supervisor-supervisee dyads with two to four supervision experience were categorised as "competent" supervisor-supervisee dyads; and the third supervisor-supervisee dyads with above four years supervision experience were categorised as "proficient".

The supervisor and supervisee in the first dyad were SD1 and FD1; the supervisor and supervisee in the second dyad were SD2 and FD2, the rest were SD3 and FD3, SD4 and FD4, SD5 and FD5 and SD6 and FD6, SD7 and FD7, SD8 and

FD8; and SD9 and FD9. It is also worth bearing in mind that all participants took part voluntarily, and all supervisees were invited by their supervisors to join the focus groups. The outcome effects of this purposefully selected sample will be discussed in chapter six.

Table 14: Participants' Background Information of Supervisor-Supervisee

Dyads

No.	Sex	Qualification	Nature of Service	No. of year(s) in professional supervision work
		- Master of Social Work (MSW)/ - Bachelor of Social Work (BSW)	- Integrated Family Service Centre (IFSC) - School Social Work (SSW) - Integrated Children & Youth Service Centre (ICYSC)	
Group one – Beginner Supervisor-supervisee Dyads				
SD1	F	Master of Art	IFSC	1 yr
FD1	M	BSW	IFSC	1yr
SD2	F	Master of Soc. Sc.	ICYSC	1 yr
FD2	F	BSW	ICYSC	1yr
SD3	M	BSW	SSW	2 yrs
FD3	F	MSW	SSW	2 yrs
Group two – Competent Supervisor-supervisee Dyads				
SD4	F	BSW	IFSC	3 yrs
FD4	F	BSW	IFSC	3 yrs

SD5	F	MSW	SSW	3 yrs
FD5	F	BSW	SSW	3 yrs
SD6	F	Master of Soc. Sc.	IFSC	3 yrs
FD6	F	BSW	IFSC	4 yrs
Group three – Proficient Supervisor-supervisee Dyads				
SD7	F	MSW	SSW	5 yrs
FD7	F	BSW	SSW	4 yrs
SD8	F	Master of Art	IFSC	6 yrs
FD8	F	BSW	IFSC	5 yrs
SD9	M	Master of Art	ICYSC	10 yrs
FD9	F	BSW	ICYSW	10 yrs

5.3 Findings from Phase Two of the Study

5.3.1 Crucial issues of supervisory working alliance experiences that impact on supervision

Most participant dyads shared that the supervisory working alliance was a two people collaborative process that needed to be handled with care. The important themes under this category were supervision functions, goals, structure, and support that are presented in Figure 6 below. These four themes determined positive or negative relationships between supervisors and supervisees. This was the platform where supervisors and frontline social workers explored presenting issues of the

client, therapy intervention approaches, and therapeutic outcomes. As evidenced in the literature review and phase one of this study, the key word for positive relationship building is “trust”. Trust is the innermost achievement of the relationship in supervision. Further illustration of this is as follows.

As can be seen in Figure 6 below, the vertical axis illustrates the level of clearance of supervision goals, functions, structure and support. The clearest and strongest of these four themes, is supervisory working alliance relationship development, is cultivated in the horizontal axis. However, this phenomenon is not fixed and it could regress if unclear supervision goals, functions, structure, and support occur between supervisors and supervisee in the work process. That is why the arrows of the two axis lines have two back and forth arrow heads. This description reminds us that the attachment between supervisors and supervisees can only be stable when the trust between these two people is internalized and strong even though unclear messages occurred.

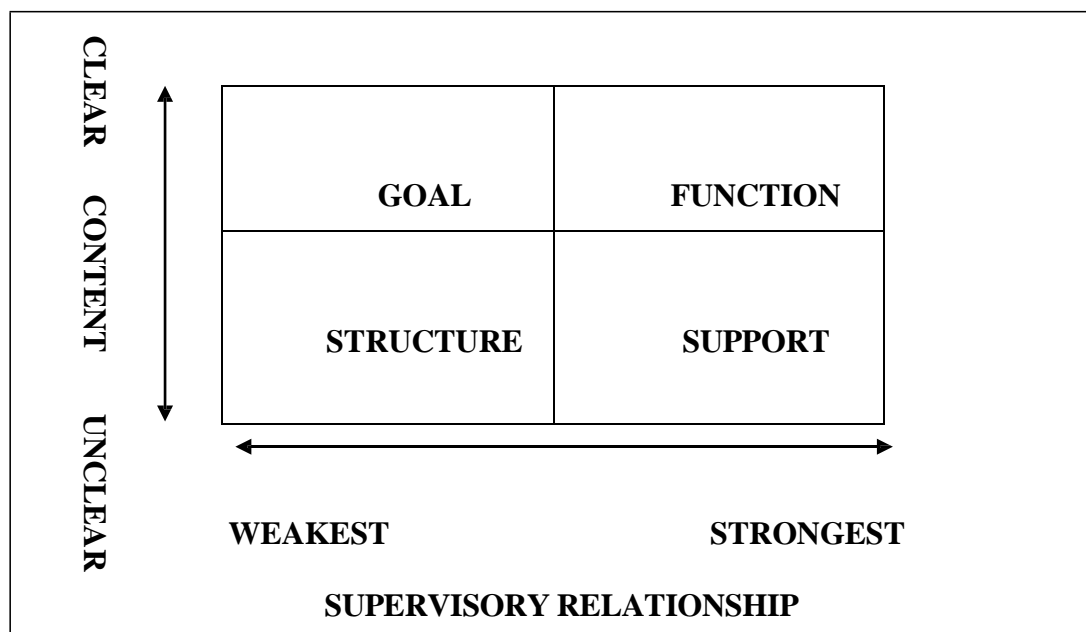


Figure 6: The Relationship between Content Clearance and Degree of Supervisory Relationship

Supervision Functions and Goals

Frontline social workers take supervision as a crucial element of learning, as it increases their professional awareness as well as helping them to develop awareness of, and ability to, work with their own feelings and reactions in dealing with their casework. According to the participant dyads, the common crucial issues in establishing their supervisory working alliance relationships were diversity and complexity of the nature of work; increasing demand on accountability for work and large numbers of frontline social workers needing to be supervised. Apart from these issues, many supervisors stated that they did not have adequate training in supervision. They merely used their experiences as supervisees as a basis for practicing as a supervisor, such as eliminating those supervision methods that they felt invited negative feelings and lowering frontline social workers' motivation to seek help; adopting those methods they perceived as providing high levels of empathy, warmth, acceptance, validation, genuineness, and concreteness that would encourage frontline social workers' willingness to learn. Fortunately, some of the job training in human management knowledge and skills has helped the supervisors to facilitate their supervision work. Some supervisors would also make reference to social work counselling knowledge and skills in order to handle their supervisory relationships. They were aware of frontline social workers' fears of exposure as incompetent professionals and this was one of the obstacles to successful supervision. This was because it might lead to defensive behaviour and decrease accuracy of frontline social workers' self-perception. Clearly, those supervisors such as SD3, SD5, and SD9 who had long term supervision experience had showed their competence in supervision, and felt there were no issues in establishing trust with their supervisees.

In general, the participant dyads had worked out their mutually acceptable supervision constructs. However, supervisors argued that supervision goals needed to be restated clearly. For example, supervisor SD8 reported that the difficulties her supervisees encountered were related to supervision goals being too task oriented, which placed little attention on human issues in team work. Therefore, she had to put a lot of effort into helping her supervisees reflect on issues for themselves, as very responsible staff. Some common features of the dyads' supervision practice are identified as follows:

- Scheduled regular supervision sessions but no formal supervision agenda.
- Arranged some non-stipulated four to five supervision steps including:(1) review issues of concern from the last supervision meeting or current work; (2) supervisees reported their handling methods on the assigned tasks; (3) supervisors' feedback on supervisees' handling methods; (4) discussion on intervention approaches, strategies, and resources in dealing with the matters; (5) schedule of next supervision meeting. Supervision usually lasted two to three hours
- Used reflective supervision to focus supervisees' practice with clients, their well-being and professional development. Supervisors commonly based this on self-knowledge and past experiences to guide supervisees. Only a few supervisors would demonstrate work skills to supervisees. Seldom followed up supervisees' work progress before the next supervision session unless there was a potential risk
- Tried some good practices i.e., some supervisees would draft issues of concern for supervisors' reference before supervision and some supervisors would write a supervision summary for supervisees as a reminder of follow up work after the supervision session.

Although the supervisors in the nine dyads had encountered some limitations and difficulties in carrying out their supervision work, they had shown good attitudes and effort in getting the job done including clear supervision goals, functions, structure and support. For example, supervisees stated that two essential and interrelated supervision goals were to develop professional competence and to ensure that the supervisors' integrity of professional service provided to the clients were achieved. However, when talking about areas for improvement, frontline social worker FD1 showed some emotion and commented that her supervisor did not have any training in supervision work. She did it by trial and error. He used "one way traffic" to describe his communication pattern with his supervisor. He gave a further example regarding their communication. He said "though her supervision looked good, he needed to reframe his conversation with his client in order to lead the client towards the expected goals. It is difficult to copy her ways of communicating on the one hand, and on the other hand he could not guarantee his client would respond as expected by his supervisor". He hoped his supervisor was not too directive and would give him space to try out things his way as he was the one directly working with the client.

Another suggestion was made by supervisee FD3 who said that it would be good if clinical supervision could be detached from the administrative appraisal system as she would be more comfortable to expose her inadequacies in supervision; her supervisor SD3 also made this suggestion. Regarding support from acting as the middle man of the organization, supervisors with less years of supervision experience seemed less proactive than those with more experience. For example, supervisee FD4 perceived that her supervisor SD4 did not speak up for her growth and development while supervisee FD9 felt very pleased to find that her supervisor

SD9 had selected her to be a part of the managerial team. Overall, participant dyads perceived that they co-constructed work strategies and this collaboration was satisfactory.

Apart from this interesting feedback, most participant dyads regarded supervision positively due to the support they received from their supervisors and the learning they gained. For example, supervisee FD9 said that her supervision had enhanced her professional competency, her confidence in delivering interventions, and subsequently led to better outcomes for her work. Her supervisor was her learning model. On the whole, the supervisor-supervisees' dyads have shown a positive and satisfied picture of their supervision.

5.3.2 Perceptions of Participants (supervisor-supervisee dyads) towards their Supervisory Relationship, Particularly in the Chinese Cultural Context and the Subsequent Influence

Figure 7 below shows that the supervisory relationship has been acknowledged by all participant dyads as an interactive process, which was greatly affected by the supervisory styles of supervisors and supervisees' level of trust. The more autonomy the supervisees obtained the higher level of trust. Overall, all supervisor-supervisee dyads were satisfied with their supervisory relationships, although most said they had an initial adjustment period. The supervisor-supervisee dyads strongly emphasized that during the supervision sessions whether they could get a satisfactory supervisory working alliance feeling depended on mutual trust and respect. This is known as the emotional bond in supervisory working alliance models (Bordin, 1983). However, supervisees also had high expectations of supervisors' professional knowledge and

personal experience for leading their work. All supervisors expressed that they had supervisory roles and professional boundaries with supervisees and preferred not to talk about personal matters in the supervision session or after work. Surprisingly, both junior and senior social workers were very aware of this distance when asked and they showed respect and acceptance of this hierarchical relationship. Indeed, they also liked to have personal privacy.

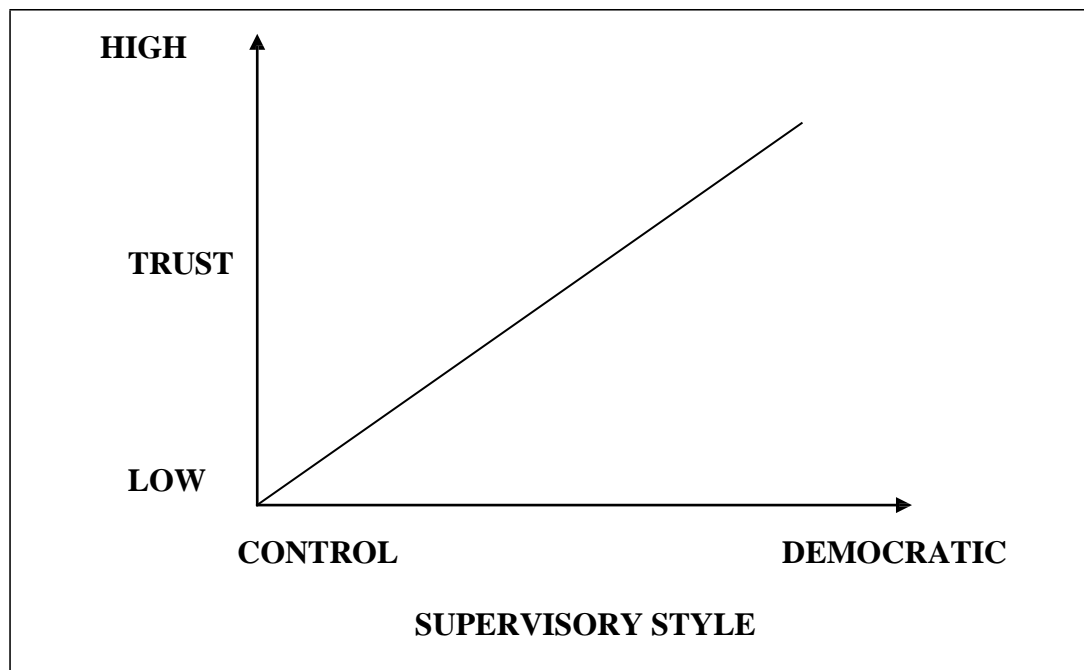


Figure 7: The Relationship between Level of Trust and Supervisory Style

Nearly all supervisees stated that their supervisors were very responsible whilst providing supervision. When things went wrong, instead of pushing the responsibilities on supervisees they would rather shoulder the consequences. This act really earned supervisees' respect. Supervisees expressed sincerely that they could learn a lot from their supervisors. When discussing supervision content, supervisees expected more focus on work and supervisors could demonstrate how they developed

their supervisees. One finding here that was different from the phase one focus groups and individual interviews was that all supervisees described their supervisors as respectful, trustworthy, reasonable, and thus had feeling of togetherness. The phrase they used to further explain their communication patterns was: “We have discussions, we have chats”. Most supervisees said that their supervisors would help them solve problems by giving advice. Thus, they took supervision as a platform where they could seek guidance and help. They claimed that their supervision was effective because they had trust, support, respect, reflection, acceptance, listening, modesty, cooperation, and exchange. The supervisor-supervisee dyads said they were well connected with each other. They had made supervision a safe platform where they could raise different views and opinions. All supervisees said that their supervisors were approachable.

Most supervisees acknowledged that their supervisors held hierarchical statuses, had legitimate power and authority when discussing participant dyads’ interactions in the Chinese cultural context and the subsequent influences, they would interact with supervisors in a professional but non-confrontational manner. This means they would not feel obliged to pay respect to their supervisors if they displayed inadequate power, poor methodology, and something unreasonable for the sake of maintaining harmony. Instead they would do what they felt appropriate. Overall, the supervisor-supervisee dyads claimed that they had formed good supervisory working alliance relationships. However, two supervisors said that if everyone was a responsible professional and worked towards their requirements and standards, the work outcomes would also be good even though they did not develop what we called “alliance relationships”. Overall, the interaction between supervisors and supervisees was still influenced by Chinese harmonious orientation grounded in professional competence. Boundaries

were clearly set and mutually accepted to maintain professional connections between supervisors and supervisees.

5.3.3 Interaction Processes between Supervisors and Supervisees in Different Developmental Stages

The important themes that participant dyads conveyed were that supervision was a two way effort, work style differences needed to be compromised, and relationships evolved over time. In Figure 8 below, it can be seen that supervision demand for supervisees would be more when they were in the beginning stage. This demand would be less when supervisees gained working experience and became independent in their proficient stage. Supervisors and supervisees dyads reported that they had an increased understanding, awareness, motivation, and participation in supervision. It was also apparent to have a change of emphasis within their supervision whereby the dyads' focused not only on the quality of their professional practice to clients, but also had more expectations in supervision practice quality themselves.

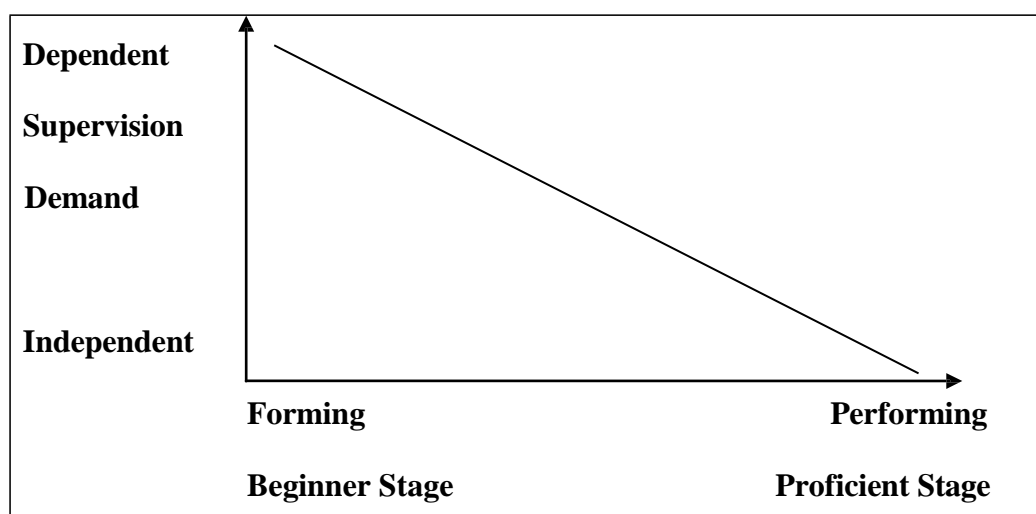


Figure 8: The Relationship between Supervision Demand and Supervision Effectiveness in Different Supervisory Developmental Stages

The supervisory relationship developmental process of the nine supervisor-supervisee dyads could be described by Tuckman's (1965) forming-storming-norming-performing model of group development, in which they had to get to know each other, exchange some personal information regarding work styles and professional competence, to adjust to differences in values, beliefs and work experiences, to tackle problems, to find solutions, to plan work, and to deliver expected work results. During the forming stage, both parties first met and learned about supervision functions, goals and expectations. They would handle each other's emotions and needs with care and tolerance of differences was significant. For example, both inexperienced and experienced supervisees reported that they would follow instructions. The formers' rationale was avoidance of making mistakes and not wanting to take risks while the latter's was prevention of conflict. Indeed, all knew that their supervisors had legitimate power to delegate and monitor their work performance.

All participants emphasized that without tolerance and patience the relationship would fail. As such, supervisors acted more directly in their guidance with decision-making and no storming stage was identified. Norming and performing stages came simultaneously after the forming stage. Five out of nine participant dyads expressed that they did encounter disagreement and personality clashes. Fortunately these could be solved when they shared a common goal and in a spirit of co-operation. Indeed, when the researcher asked if supervisors' professional competence in supervision was in doubt, most of junior supervisees would try to find reasons to justify their supervisors' actions. They accepted others as they were and made an effort to move on. With norms and roles established, supervisor-supervisee dyads focused on achieving common goals and supervisory working alliance

relationships were established. By this time, they felt more comfortable to exchange ideas, wishes and wants in supervision sessions. Dissent was expected and allowed as long as it was channelled through means acceptable to the other party.

5.3.4 The Most Important Elements in Building Supervisory Working Alliance Relationships

To understand how supervisors and supervisees can effectively develop their supervisory working alliance relationships, three themes are highlighted in this context including trust, control, and risk. Risk was the variable that connected trust and control in their social work practice as it might involve two dimensions of threat and life threatening issues when handling clients with problems, such as personality disorders, emotional stress, depression, divorce and family breakdown; and organization's reputation and business contracts. Thus, trust and control jointly determined supervisor's perceived total risk – rational risk and performance risk concerning working alliances. Rational risk is defined as the probability and consequences of not having satisfactory cooperation (Das and Teng, 1996).

Although all participant dyads were trained in Hong Kong, they might have their own individual work values, beliefs, working styles and interests that are not necessarily congruent with their working partners. Fortunately, the participant dyads emphasized that their work was guided by common benefits, i.e., working for the best interests of their clients rather than personal benefits. Therefore, rational risk was lower. Regarding performance risk, the supervisors of junior supervisees in the beginner supervisor-supervisee dyads were more controlling than with experienced supervisees in competent and proficient supervisor-supervisee dyads.

Three types of trust have been identified in professional relationships. This trust model advanced by Lewicki and Bunker (1995), along with the models of Boon and Holmes (1991) and Shapiro et al. (1992), is specific in reporting that trust differs at each stage of the relationship. The first one is named calculus-based trust that refers to the acceptance of a certain level of vulnerability based on the calculated costs of maintaining or severing a relationship (Williamson, 1993). Zeithaml (1998) identified four common uses of this term including value is price, value is the trade-off between costs and benefits, value is the trade-off between quality and price and value is an overall assessment of subjective worth. The second one is called knowledge-based trust is grounded in the other's predictability and relies on information received during the relationship, i.e. the more one knows about the other party, the more he can accurately predict what the other party will do. Lewicki & Bunker (1995) stressed that predictability enhances trust even if the other is predictably untrustworthy because it is possible to predict the way that the other will violate the trust. Knowledge-based trust is very much depends on the person's belief that most of his previous transactions with an exchange partner were successful. The third one is identification-based trust or good will trust. Jones and George (1998) stated that this kind of trust emerges when the partners move from a state of mere good will or willingness to exchange to a stage in which they identify with each other. Identification-based trust has also been termed as unconditional trust. Under this, people are more inclined to disclose information, since they feel more confident that others will not use that information to their own benefit, even when this knowledge is a source of power. These three kinds of professional relationship development were notable in the three groups' relationship building. Details are reported as follows:

5.3.4a Group One – Beginner Supervisor-Supervisee Dyads

Trust was reported by the junior group dyads as the most important element for building relationships. However, their supervisory working alliance relationships appeared quite unstable if not vulnerable as their trust was developed on calculus-based trust – fear of punishment for violating work requirements. In order to prevent risk, all their supervisors had closely monitored and followed through with their work. This can be illustrated by supervisees FD1 and FD3 who had recently joined the workforce for one to less than two years and FD9 who had over ten years working experience but changed to a new service unit. The stress that supervisors encountered could be further explained by supervisors SD1, SD3 and SD9. Supervisor SD1 shared that she had a team of eight supervisees and each of them had 50 active cases. As such, she had to ensure these several hundred cases were handled correctly. She needed to set up administrative procedures such as recording forms, reporting systems, checking systems, and risk assessment guidelines for them to follow – in order to monitor each step. This also applied to her supervisee FD1 as his performance competence was observed for quite a while before she felt she could relax. She said managing FD1's work was not easy as he had strong personal views. Supervisor SD3 needed to visit FD3 at her school more frequently than other supervisees as she had difficulties communicating with the school personnel. In order to achieve better role transition supervisor SD9 had to coach FD9 who was newly appointed as a team leader for a small group of teammates who were formerly her colleagues. Moreover, the supervisors stated that they had a clear set of rules, procedures, and policies to monitor supervisees' performance. Although control was often believed to be detrimental to trust because regulations implied a sense of mistrust, the supervisees did not have strong resistance to supervisors' control as they did not want to take risks in decision-making and hoped supervisors would share

some responsibilities. Nevertheless, they stated that their supervisors provided support, guidance, and acceptance. All supervisees followed rules and instructions. Their relationships were reported as teacher-student and master-apprentice rather than working alliance relationships.

5.3.4b Group Two – Competent Supervisor-Supervisee Dyads

The supervisory working alliance relationship was reported as stable and concrete by group two as supervisor-supervisee dyads had been going for a period of time and therefore trust was established. Trust was still claimed to be an important element in relationship building. It was reported that their trust had moved from calculus-based trust to one based on knowledge trust – occurring when an individual had enough information and understanding about another person, which developed from repeated interactions, and communication; and finally, on identification trust that was significantly acknowledged by supervisor-supervisee dyads who had internalized and harmonized each other's needs, preferences, desires and intentions. For example, supervisors SD4, SD5, SD6; and supervisees FD4, FD5, FD6; had shared similar experiences to what has been mentioned above. The supervisor-supervisee dyads were well connected and more promising in joint ventures. They felt their relationship comprised of many good elements as reported previously such as trust, support, respect, reflection, acceptance, listening, modesty, cooperation, and exchange.

5.3.4c Group Three – Proficient Supervisor-Supervisee Dyads

Trust was still perceived as the most important element in building supervisory working alliance relationships from proficient supervisor-supervisee dyads. Usually, the trust between supervisor and supervisee was goodwill trust – supervisors were

less concerned with the problem of cooperation. Goodwill trust was not likely to be related to perceived performance risk; it was only supervisors' intentions to make things work, rather than supervisees' ability to accomplish tasks. Control would not work with these supervisees. Instead, they would expect supervisors to show them respect and give them full autonomy whilst undertaking their work. The supervision sessions were usually initiated by supervisees rather than supervisors. The supervision would place emphasis on important decision making and/or professional growth and career advancement of supervisees. They explained this was the best way to maintain harmony and would address their relationship as working partners.

Overall, supervisory working alliance relationships were steadily established in nine supervisor-supervisee dyads. They started from calculus-based trust experiences, transformed to knowledge-based trust, and finally identification-based trust.

5.3.5 Supervisory Relationship's Impacts on Supervisee's Job Performance, Satisfaction and Application of Supervisory Working Alliance Theories on Supervision Practice

Most participant dyads agreed that using appropriate supervisory interventions in the workplace could enhance supervisory relationships, and eventually improve staff's working performance. The themes that supervisees' expressed were perceived as positive or negative supervisory relationships with supervisors. From supervisees' points of view, positive relationships came from competence, trust and support from supervisors, adequate expectations and clear delegation and instructions of work to supervisees; supervisees' acceptance of duties from supervisors; freedom to work on one's strength, recognition and involvement in decision making whenever appropriate; and negative relationships were merely the opposite. From supervisors' points of view,

positive relationships came from supervisees' work competence that could demonstrate productivity and quality performance, trustworthiness in terms of reliability and risk control, and keeping an open dialogue for better understanding of their concerns, being receptive to supervisors' advice, and respecting professional partnerships. Indeed, each supervisor-supervisee dyad had their story regarding supervision practice.

The following sections present these stories that demonstrate supervisors' wisdom in their nurturing supervisory working alliance relationships, and the enhancement of supervisees' work performance as well as achieving job satisfaction through supervision.

5.4 Story Themes of Supervisor-Supervisee Dyads

5.4.1 Dyad One – Master and Apprentice Relationships

a. Supervisor SD1 said that her supervisee FD1 was one of her newly recruited staff when she had initially embarked on the supervisor role. She acknowledged that D1 was a good worker in terms of devotion to his work. He liked performing counselling and family services. She chose FD1 to be her partner for the interview as she felt her relationship with him was good. She described her relationship with FD1 as master and apprentice. Her anxiety was high as the responsibility of a case worker was quite demanding. The first thing she thought she needed to manage was her own anxiety so as not to give FD1 the impression that she did not trust him. Then, she had scheduled regular supervision sessions with him. In the initial supervision sessions, she focused more on his good work based on facts, while giving him explicit recognition in order to build trust. For example, SD1 would highlight which parts of FD1's case recordings were well presented and why the

information was significant. SD1 felt that she had good understanding of his strengths and her appreciation to him came from the heart. Supervisor SD1 expressed that FD1 had learned a lot in the first year of supervision. He showed some differences compared with his initial performance. For example, he could now pay attention to detail, and his risk identification was better. She said supervisee FD1 had also acknowledged his satisfaction in his performance.

b. Supervisee FD1 shared that initially he had two sessions of supervision in a month in the first half of the year and this became more infrequent later. He stated that he wanted to do his work independently and applied the knowledge and skills he had learned to his casework. He wanted to conduct all his cases systematically and then report to his supervisor what he had accomplished, what risks were involved, and what he would continue to monitor and thus hoped to receive “OK” feedback. He did not want to seek help from his supervisor once he had encountered problems. However, he said his supervisor had her own way of working and he seldom had chance to discuss the conceptualization framework of the cases during supervision sessions.

FD1 reported that his relationship with his supervisor was a bit tense initially though his supervisor always showed her eagerness to advance his clinical knowledge and skills, providing due care and concern in view of the stress he encountered. For example, she was very aware that he worked until very late, missed lunch time; and returned to work on Saturday afternoons. Thus, he had accumulated much “over time” and those hours that exceeded the thirty hours’ rule of the agency had to be forfeited. He said that his supervisor recognized his tiredness and gave him leave to rest. Earnestly speaking, he said that he did not enjoy supervision. He would

say “No” if his supervisor gave him more supervision hours. He said his supervisor sensed his discomfort. However, he said he could not put all the blame on his supervisor as he also had the responsibility to provide explanations to her. He said the power difference in terms of their supervisor-subordinate relationship hindered his ability to speak frankly. He emphasised that communication was a two-way process but his supervisor’s way always took priority. He disliked the master-apprentice relationship as this hindered supervisee’s creativity and in particular his own style. Nevertheless, these self-reflective processes enforced his willingness to co-work with her, talk to her, and share his experiences with her.

FD1 reflected that he knew his belief system and counselling approach was different from that of his supervisor, however, one thing he respected her very much for was that she always made clients her priority, their welfare was of the utmost importance, and she wanted to do her best for clients. He felt that supervision should be a collaborative and co-constructive process in which they learned together. His self-perception and expectations of his job performance and satisfaction are reflected as follows:

FD1 advocated: “If supervision was conducted as a master-apprentice model, the apprentice seemed not to have existed as what he did was just copied from his master. If the supervisor and supervisee constructed the case together, the supervisee can establish his/her true-self”.

5.4.2 Dyad Two – Buddy and Professional Aspiration

a. Supervisor SD2 viewed supervision as formal communication between supervisors and supervisees, which assisted supervisees to learn from her experience

and developed their expertise, as well as to ensure quality of work for their clients. At the same time, she also expected social work supervisees to have a mission to serve people in need and always strive for professional self-achievement. In addition, supervisor SD2 claimed that she did not find it difficult to carry out supervision and the organization had a good recording system in which to monitor the work output of staff, including her supervisee FD2. She said she only supervised FD2's clinical work in terms of case reviews and analysis, assessment and conceptualization, identification of intervention methods, and preparation of work plans. She stressed that to achieve the expected work outcomes, they needed two-way communication for "brainstorming" ideas and to achieve consensus, as every professional had different ways of thinking about what worked and what did not. To facilitate her supervision as well as showing the supervisee that she took supervision seriously, she would schedule uninterrupted regular supervision sessions plus ad hoc consultation meetings. She would ensure catch-up sessions if supervision needed to be postponed, and she would also set agenda in terms of: checking supervisee's concerns; exchanging views on each other perspectives of the issues; discussing intervention approaches. She felt that respecting other's assessment and judgements was important and should be "equal". Equal in the sense that it would not create the inaccurate perception that the supervisor was imposing ideas on their supervisees.

SD2 stressed that she was born in the 1980s and her colleagues were born in the 1990s and thus there was a generation gap. As such their views could be very different. She would allow FD2 to proceed with her ideas if there was no risk involved. This allowed FD2 to develop self-discipline and let her have a chance to practice what she believed. Nevertheless, SD2 would feel comfortable to point out what she considered irrelevant or inappropriate for handling of the cases because

she wanted to establish open communication in supervision. However, this had to be done skillfully in order to convey trust. Usually, she would use the reflection method to help supervisees summarize what they had done and use self-discovery to develop their strengths and weaknesses. When FD2 felt frustrated and inexperienced in her work such as holding parenting groups, SD2 would demonstrate the necessary skills. In addition, to remind herself to be a competence supervisor, SD2 would undertake relevant training.

SD2 described herself as having a good emotional quotient, affinity for relating to people, and being a good listener. Regarding FD2's job performance, SD2 said FD2 appeared quite scared in mastering her work initially as she did not know the organizational culture and expectations. She had to give clear instructions to FD2 including dress code in the school setting. Clearly, supervisors were dominating figures in the supervision progress. As such, SD2 initially tried not to over-power her supervisees as she did not want them to feel scared of her on-site assessments of their work. In doing so, supervisees would talk more, question more, feel able to create new work plans independently, and eventually had the confidence to undertake parenting groups. SD2 felt happy to see FD2's job performance and FD2 also appreciated her supervisor's nurturing. As such, she did not intend to change employment, although she had to travel a long distance to work i.e., from the Western Island of Hong Kong to Yuen Long, New Territory. SD2 said, after years of supervision experience, FD2 had developed some skills and insight for example patience, acceptance, task-orientation, and professionally-based performance with suitable boundaries.

b. Supervisee FD2 agreed to be her supervisor's partner in the current interview not only because her supervisor requested her, but because it was a good learning opportunity and also because it contributed to research as she had received similar help when she was a college student. Similar to what was expressed by her supervisor, she felt she respected individual's uniqueness and work styles, and felt she had room to achieve self-actualisation. Her supervisor's supervision style entailed guidance, direction and experience sharing, instead of providing answers. FD2 valued this style as her supervisor would assist her to develop thinking skills and encourage her to ask questions when she required help. These comments match those of her supervisor.

With supervisor's mentoring, FD2 felt safe as well as a sense of belonging to the organization. Again, paying attention to work quality was another mutually agreed mission made by this supervisor-supervisee dyad. Another thing that motivated her was that SD2 cared about her personal development and workload. She explained that her supervisor would recommend resources for her in order to reduce her work stress. She would apologize if she called her outside of office hours in emergencies instead of using her legitimate power to give her work instructions. Her way of communicating became another motivation factor for FD2 to remain in the post as the long distance travelling to the office made her consider changing employment.

FD2 explained that her relationship with her supervisor was a work-based relationship, not friendship as they did not have contact outside of work. However, she said SD2 was a reasonable and approachable person and they shared similar work values and missions. FD2 trusted, respected and accepted her supervisor as a

role model because she had quite a number of good characteristics such as being optimistic, cheerful, organized, and systematic. Similarly, she described herself as a very cooperative and reliable staff member who met work requirements and deadlines. Thus, her supervisor also trusted and respected her. She recalled that her supervisor gave her an encouraging card and a small gift when she passed her probation period. This act made her feel very pleased and touched. Regarding her personal growth and development, she expressed that her current job provided a good training platform although she was still adjusting because a lot of her cases had special needs, which she had not previously handled. Fortunately, her supervisor could provide live demonstrations and reading materials to facilitate her learning and enhance her understanding. She also supported and encouraged her continued learning. For example, she had recently completed a Play Therapy and Parental Counselling Course.

Their organization had a system to record all completed work. Her supervisor would print out their shared information for her records and follow-up work. She said re-scheduled or postponed supervision would happen in terms of meeting the demand of urgent cases. However, they would catch up as soon as possible. There was also a similar supervision procedure here that other supervisor-supervisee dyads shared. In that process, her supervisor would encourage critical thinking and reflective practice especially from clients' perspectives in the counselling context. Moreover, her supervisor stressed that "work should have social work elements and not only happiness; think out of the box instead of coping with what had been passed on". Regarding her work performance, she was not only assessed by her immediate supervisor SD2, but SD2's supervisor would assess her work too. Regardless, she said her supervisor SD2 had praised her work performance as she had done more

than expected. FD2 was satisfied with her job and did not experience isolation. She also expressed that she had learned a lot about supervision through this interview process. Her desires for supervision are illustrated in the following:

FD2: "I did not think that supervision could be such a professional matter, because... um... I feel it is too exaggerated when I learned that Play Therapy in England requires life-long supervision. After the continued learning, I found supervision is really necessary. Firstly, it is good for me. Secondly, it is good for the client. This is our professionalism".

5.4.3 Dyad Three – Support and Retention

a. Supervisor SD3 reported that he had many good years of supervision experience and had a mission to help staff to advance their professional development, build their own brand name, and develop to the fullest. He selected supervisee FD3 to partner him in the current interview because she was recruited by him and worked with him for more than one year. He wanted to review his supervision practice with this newly nurtured staff member. He reflected that to lay good supervision foundations, two important tasks must be covered: creating a safe and nurturing working environment for his supervisee FD3 to do her work; and equipping her with the required clinical knowledge and skills to master her work. He perceived his relationship with FD3 as good because they could talk openly, share ideas and opinions with clear objectives, and had mutual understanding. Evidence that supported his claim was that FD3 had stayed in her current employment although she received a better offer in terms of position, title and higher salary from another organization. The reasons for her staying were her supervisor's positive work attitude and devotion to do good work; work progress in her serving school, such as relationship building with

students, parents and teacher; great supervisory attention and support that might not be accessible in other organizations, and professional growth and development in her current work.

SD3 continued to list many similarities he shared with supervisee FD3 such as devotion in her social work service, shared mission and vision, work style and social work approaches and beliefs. Differences between SD3 and his supervisee FD3 were identified as assertiveness, emotion management and stubborn personality, which could be seen as complementary to handling work. For example, FD3 felt uncomfortable to refuse the school's unreasonable demands and eventually worked out this through with her supervisor. This act made by SD3 was aimed at helping FD3 to learn how to "express oneself" and defend her "rights" as a social worker, as well as knowing the rights of the organization. Apart from encouraging FD3 to undertake an external counselling training course, he also emphasized theoretically-based supervision, which could strengthen her clinical practice.

Overall, SD3 praised FD3 as a high achiever with high potential, confidence, self-respect, and a positive attitude. Thus, he viewed supervision as an equal learning process because they were working partners. The following details his statement on supervision methods:

SD3: "I would talk to my colleague how I perceived the case initially, all the components including relationship building, case analysis, intervention approaches etc. First, I would talk about theory, building the foundation; second, I would illustrate examples, such as how to ask questions..."

b. Supervisee FD3 had just joined the organization and was supervised by SD3 for a year. However, she was the only participant from the nine supervisor-supervisee dyads who initiated talking about the current research on social work supervision and expressed interest to be involved further. She stated that she would expect her supervisor to provide clear instruction on her job role and responsibilities. Supervision to her was a platform to acquire information that could facilitate her work; to strengthen her social work knowledge and skills; to co-work with her supervisor for the welfare of the clients; and for achieving professional growth and development.

FD3 felt that trust, relationships, work missions and goals, and individual styles were important elements in facilitating supervision work. She recalled that her supervisor would attend the school for supervision sessions with her as she had to be stationed at the school every day. She credited her supervisor as an easy going, approachable and considerate person. He would show concern for her adjustment in a secondary work setting as she worked there alone without support and provided her with emotional support when necessary. She described this situation as, “social workers who worked in a secondary setting are like married daughters, who are considered out of their homes and should be independent”. However, her supervisor did not treat her like this. Although her supervisor needed to supervise many staff, he would spend much time with her on work discussions and planning. On top of this, she stated that her supervisor was knowledgeable, and would use method to help her identify alternatives and strategies for work completion and/or problem solving when she encountered difficulties. He even required her to explain which theories she used in case conceptualization and interventions. As such, it forced her to practice clinical knowledge and skills although she was very weak in theoretical practice. She felt her

work performance could meet the required standards as the school had renewed her work contract with her organization and her job satisfaction was significant. Supervisee FD3 stated that she was more confident in mastering her work and had a sense of achievement and similar appraisal was given by supervisor SD3. She had a strong “partner” relationship with her supervisor. The following reflect this:

FD3: “I would not have such a great reaction if there was no comparison. At least I felt that he would listen to my views and recognize what I have done. I felt all that were very important”

5.4.4 Dyad Four – Gate-Keeper and Articulation of Responsibility

a. Supervisor SD4 accepted the invitation to be a participant in this research out of kindness to help the researcher. Referring to the research project, she thought this invitation was timely as she currently had some spare time.

To supervisor SD4, supervision was a place where the experienced person had a formally appointed position with the organization and a legitimate role to help staff including FD4 to understand the organization’s basic values such as “humanistic”, “humble”, and “life”. In the social work context, staff should act as “servants!” Supervisor’s administrative duties were thus to enforce such practice values. For example, when a woman was pregnant and wanted an abortion, the worker needed to convey to her that pregnancy involved a life and there was already a life in existence. In addition, staff had to be oriented with the organization’s policies, service quality standards (SQS); work procedures such as when issues should be reported; what should be consulted; what things needed to be followed-up; and how action this. Therefore, close supervision was needed with every newly recruited staff member on

what information and knowledge they should promise to their clients, and what things they should keep confidential. Clearly, SD4 said providing support to staff was important as they might feel overwhelmed and drained as casework can be very stressful. However, she said it was not adequate to convey these by instruction. This could be done step-by-step through supportive action. Therefore scheduled supervision, once a month, was ideal.

SD4 felt that recognizing her supervisee in terms of what she had done; her level of competence; how much effort she had made; and what the work outcome could convey the message that, “I know you have worked very hard and I appreciate it!” This act was an effective motivator and enabled her to connect with her supervisees and build trusting relationships. SD4 said that she preferred to have a formal hierarchical supervisory relationship as her functional role was to ensure work accountability to the organization. Sometimes she needed to have authority to execute this. However, this did not mean she had to play an oppositional role with supervisees.

As a supervisor, she had to gain supervisee’s understanding of her role and responsibilities, gain their trust and respect. In return, she also needed to trust and respect her supervisees. Trust with supervisees was based on facts and she did not expect them to pay her respect. This trustful relationship was built on competence. She felt that she had some characteristics, such as professional competence to earn her supervisees’ respect and trust. Her competence came from years of working experience. To a certain extent she had developed promising professional knowledge and skills in family casework; had confidence in mastering the supervisory role; good decision making; patience, acceptance, “no blaming” nurturing attitude;

developed staff, and set working models for them. In addition, she felt that FD4 would feel comfortable to approach her.

She stated that she and FD4 shared similar personalities and work styles and these were advantages to their communication. They were very considerate of each other. They would take things steadily; pay attention to detail; make best efforts; and were reliable. For example, SD4 said she would not watch FD4 closely because she trusted her. If she could do this, she would. If not, she would have a work-related reason, which was definitely not related to laziness. They found talking easy, understood, and knew each other. This was what they meant by “trust”.

Regarding supervision practice, apart from urgent consultations from school social workers, she would try not to receive phone calls during supervision sessions to prevent disturbance. She said that FD4 was a very understanding person who knew that a call must be very urgent and important if she needed to answer it.

She praised FD4’s very good supervision practice. She would be well-prepared for supervision, such as she would write down what she wanted to ask; and intended strategies. Thus, the supervisor would have a better understanding of her strategies, effort, commitment, and concern. As a result, she could validate FD4’s performance and she also felt pleased to see her improve. She would say, “OK! I trust you. I know what’s going on with your cases and you can handle them. You can make it, and I trust you as you know the client better. I also know that you will give prompt advice if they are not OK”. She further illustrated that FD4 would know that she appreciated her through non-verbal communication feedback such as eye contacts. She acknowledged that she was well-connected with FD4.

Showing care and concern to FD4 was the best way to reduce gate-keeping tension. SD4 would be concerned about her supervisee's workload and the difficulties she encountered; would show interest in her new initiatives and creativeness; share her happiness and provide resources to support FD4. The supervisee was observed doing things out of passion and she was very aware of her ability and work performance. SD4 could talk to her directly about things that she needed to improve as she liked open communication. Indeed, FD4 was also a person who liked open communication and she would clarify things directly. Therefore, she would consider how to improve things instead of feeling bad. Her devotion to work was significant. As her supervisor, she placed much emphasis on her role performance. To this point, FD4 always strove for self-improvement. She treated her supervisor as her "good" mentor and was very willing to co-work and learn from her. For future supervision improvement, SD4 hoped she could co-work with FD4 to further identify ways in which to enhance their supervision practice.

b. Supervisee FD4 was the only one who felt that she did not have proper supervision until her current employment with supervisor SD4. Although she did not have any idea of what she could expect from her supervisor, she just hoped to have someone that could help her with work advancement. Thus, she valued her supervisor's professional competence in guiding her counselling work, which was quite demanding in terms of clinical knowledge and skills. For example, she felt that it was her responsibility to make best use of supervision time through advanced preparation of what she wanted to discuss with her supervisor. She stated that she encountered much suffering in her previous employment as there was no supervision for sharing ideas and work direction. As a new worker, she was very frustrated. With her supervisor's support, she felt very happy and as she knew where to obtain

resources. She would take her supervisor's advice as SD4 was trustworthy in light of her professional competence and experience in family services. As FD4 explained, her supervisor was very familiar with her work. She emphasized that she also believed that the wisdom of two people was better than one.

On the other hand, she felt that the most important thing was that her supervisor placed trust in her. Their supervisory relationship gradually developed and she felt that this facilitated their work. She recalled that although she was not smart, sometimes even quite subjective and biased, she nevertheless worked very hard and was responsible. Thus, her supervisor would show her understanding if she could not meet a deadline. She would give her extra time to catch up with her outstanding work. She would not place extra pressure on her when she could not meet work deadlines. She would allow her extra time as the supervisor was responsible for efficiency control as well as fairness. The supervisee reported that her personality was quite similar to her supervisors and both were very open and had direct communication. She disliked careless bosses and her supervisor matched her needs well.

When explaining how her supervisor took supervision seriously, supervisee FD4 described that she had been supervised by this supervisor for four years. Initially, she would help her understand the agency's administrative requirements; expectations from staff and work procedures. She would schedule her supervision on a regular base and would not simply cancel or reschedule, unnecessary disturbance was not allowed when she conducted supervision, and catch up sessions would be re-scheduled as soon as possible if the supervision session needed to be cancelled for emergency matter. For example, she would leave the supervisor's room if she needed to answer an emergency call during supervision. She understood that this was

unavoidable and stressed that it was very rare and would not affect their communication. The supervision process had several formal steps such as she would report what she had done, especially those important follow-up matters; recount issues that needed the supervisor's advice; supervisor's feedback; discussion of work direction and strategies, and schedule of the next meeting. Supervisor SD4 preferred to use reflective and questioning methods to help her formulate her cases. She would validate what she done well and comfort her when she was feeling low. She said her supervisor would not "add salt to her wounds", this made her feel relieved, appreciated and memorable. Moreover, her supervisor would also give her space to do her work but she would seek prompt advice when encountering cases with risks such as suicidal issues. She was willing to spend time on guiding her work. She also supported her with relevant professional training. Overall, she felt she had professional growth and development through supervision.

Regarding her supervisor's characteristics, she described that her supervisor was a harmonious and approachable person. She was responsible, had professional competence, was systematic, knew how to use her legitimate and authority powers, was alert and sensitive, had empathy, respect, and showed care and acceptance to others. What her supervisor had done for her had also impacted on her service with clients. One way in which FD4 was different from her supervisor was that she liked to relate to people and share personal life events, but her supervisor would "draw a boundary line" with working relationships. What they shared were job related tasks or issues. However, she nevertheless felt they had developed a reciprocal relationship. The following are her views which demonstrate her self-regulating behaviour concerning her performance:

FD4: “This is about relationships. I feel is relationship. All along, she conveyed her supportiveness. So, I will think why I do not support my boss...? Her congruence made me think about her as well. I will do the same for her”.

One surprise here was that FD4 had written some self-reflections on what had been shared during the interview with the researcher with regards to her being requested to verify the correctness of the interviewing content. Basically, she appreciated the interviewing experience as the interview had provided her with good reflection on her supervision experience. She acknowledged that she had better understanding of supervision functions and importance; what she had gained from supervision, and what she could look for from a supervisor.

5.4.5 Dyad Five – Regulator and Devotion Alignment

a. Supervisor SD5 viewed supervision as an important role and responsibility in the social work profession. Therefore, apart from helping this research, she hoped to take this opportunity to review her supervision effectiveness and to identify areas for improvement. Like most supervisors, she did not receive any training in supervision work. Therefore, she stated that she was very much aware of the attributes of her own views of her employment and role, objectives, strengths and weaknesses because these would affect her supervision practice. Thus, she would sustain her supervision status quo, especially to those very experienced social workers, by developing and demonstrating her expertise power to earn her subordinates’ recognition and acceptance. She expressed that it was really challenging to undertake supervision initially with supervisees but the situation was gradually improving through staff turnover. Apart from fulfilling administrative demands on service quality control and productivity, she perceived that three areas of

work needed to be fulfilled during the supervision process including monitoring supervisee's work progress; caring for supervisee's work life and emotional health instead of only focusing on work outcomes; and exploring supervisee's strengths and weaknesses through reflective exercises.

SD5 would place more emphasis on individual development in the supervision practice and cultivate sound relationships with supervisees. She said relationship building was important but not at the expense of service quality and outcomes. As such, she would "draw clear boundaries" between herself and teammates for easy execution of her legitimate role and authority on work expectations. She would maintain a very firm stand on work regulations. To be respectable, she needed to convey messages that she was fair, just, with her own standpoint, and was able to distinguish private matters from organizational.

Supervisor SD5 stated that her supervision for FD5 came with accountability. She summarized that her supervisee FD5 had three expectations from her supervision. Firstly, she needed supervisor's support; secondly, she expected the supervisor would guide her work through sharing and discussion. Thirdly, she wanted a two-way communication learning process. Initially, FD5 had difficulties in handling human dynamics and she was unhappy about this. She had tried her best to develop FD5's personal growth as well as discovering her strengths and weaknesses. For example, as FD5 had not previously handled any child abuse cases, she accompanied her to home visits and demonstrated how to conduct an interview; taught her how to write the case report; and guided her to prepare the multi-disciplinary child abuse meeting. She recalled that she spent much effort in nurturing FD5, from clinical work

to writing professional reports. As FD5's personality was rational, receptive and reflective, their supervisory relationship was gradually established.

She could conduct uninterrupted, regular two-hour supervision sessions with FD5, as she annually booked the supervision schedule and informed her clerical staff not to transfer calls to her while she was conducting supervision. She would have a supervision agenda, which covered work life such as encountered stress; progress of work such as school dynamics and problems with handling cases; administrative duties such as output requirements from funding and service agreements; and work directions. SD5 would prepare records concerning what had been discussed with FD5 in order to follow-up on issues. Both SD5 and FD5 would not simply miss a supervision session. Overall, they kept 90% of their supervision sessions. Indeed, she believed whether or not supervision sessions could be kept depended on the person's perception of supervision. SD5 re-stated that she had a mission to conduct good supervision sessions. However, there were many administrative responsibilities that hindered her opportunities to practice her clinical skills. To conduct clinical supervision, she knew that she needed to apply theory to case analysis and conceptualization. Therefore, she would find time to attend relevant training such as popular narrative therapy. Fortunately, narrative therapy was also FD5's favourite approach therefore they would share this working method also. However, she also had knowledge and skills limitations when expected to meet different types of work. To help FD5's work she would identify learning opportunities for FD5 to brush up on her clinical skills. For example, she would recommend FD5 be an observer in colleagues' work activities if their knowledge and skills were beneficial for her. SD5 expressed that she would co-work with FD5 sometimes and hoped to build a feeling of togetherness. Thus far, she found FD5 had enjoyed supervision.

As FD5 had worked as a school social worker for five to six years, SD5 was also concerned about her professional development and career path with regards to promotion. Therefore, she encouraged her to apply for a promotional post as she was seen as a suitable candidate. However, there was another potential competitor in the team who also wanted to apply for the post. This made SD5 reluctant to make recommendations for FD5 for the post and thus she did not take any action here. She could only remind her that it would be a fair competition and encourage her to try her best. Her actions caused some unhappiness for FD5. Luckily their performances in the interviews were both good and SD5 proposed to promote both candidates. Her proposal was accepted. The unhappiness came to an end but some of its impact was carried forward. Fortunately, SD5 was sensitive to FD5's disappointment of not getting a written recommendation from her. She had initiated an open discussion about this with FD5 to allow both parties to share their views and expectations, then position what they felt were difficulties and fairness, and emotional attachments. SD5 felt that FD5's reaction came from a lack of confidence and hoped to have her supervisor's recommendation as a kind of confirmation of her performance. This open discussion was useful for supervisor-supervisee reconnection.

Overall, SD5 described FD5 as a sincere person for whom she had high self-expectations, she was able to accept comments and challenges, and would make great effort to meet work requirements. She had matured in three years and her performance had improved. She felt FD5 was happier, and able to find fulfilment in her work. SD5 also shared the happiness in view of FD5's growth and development. Their supervision sessions helped FD5 confirm her ability and receive appreciation from her supervisor. Thus supervision was a mutual learning process, an interaction with trust, and enjoyment. Regarding their relationship, SD5 expressed that it was a

superior and subordinate relationship with mutual trust. SD5's feelings of satisfaction can be seen in the following:

SD5: "FD5 is more mature. I can see she is receptive and has made progress. This makes me feel my efforts made are worthy. I feel she has some visible achievement".

b. Supervisee FD5 was a teammate of SD5 before the latter was promoted as her supervisor. SD5 had to adjust from a peer relationship with her subordinate FD5 to become her superior. FD5 respected SD5's promotion as she had longer working experience than herself. Initially, FD5 was somewhat reluctant to share her needs and the communication between them was quite task-oriented. FD5 would feel uncomfortable to hear SD5's comments on her anxious behaviour. She recalled one unhappy incident where her supervisor withdrew some of her work, which made her feel mistrusted. However, more communication occurred when mutual trust increased. FD5 proposed ideas and/or talked instead of waiting for SD5's advice. FD5 said she had no reservations in being a participant in this research, although they had been warned that the interview would touch on their supervision experiences. She guessed she was invited to be a participant because her supervisor perceived her as a talkative person and SD5 also believed she would have something to share with the researcher. Therefore, it was interesting to read this supervisor-supervisee dyad's transitional feelings and experiences in developing their supervisory working alliance relationship.

To begin with, FD5 shared her perceptions and expectations of supervisors' roles and essential characteristics. She stated that supervisors should have clear

guidelines for supervision work; they needed to have rich frontline work experiences to adequately supervise their subordinates; they should be observant and understand supervisees' needs and provide them with appropriate guidance and suggestions; provide support such as mobilizing resources to facilitate supervisees' work when necessary; and provide learning opportunities such as creating a mutual learning culture among teammates as each person might have expertise that other colleagues could observe and learn from. She further perceived that "relationship" and "trust" between supervisors and supervisees were the two most important components that led to effective supervision. Without these two elements, it would be hard for supervisees to discuss their weaknesses and vulnerabilities with their supervisors as they might worry about poor ratings in their annual appraisals, which could eventually affect their job security.

To FD5, the ideal characteristics of a supervisor were: congruent behaviour for ease of communication; trusting supervisees' abilities and not making them feel inadequate; creative in terms of coming up with new ideas, have acceptance such as appreciating supervisees' courage in dealing with risks and challenges even though they might make mistakes; a caring attitude for promoting supervisees' well-being, as well as their professional growth and development; and being a team-player to cultivate a working atmosphere of togetherness. Referring to her supervisor's personal attributes, she described that she was nice in terms of being approachable, considerate, competent, and following-through with issues. For example, one time when FD5 encountered an unfair salary adjustment, she made great effort to fight on her behalf, although she knew she might not be able to control the outcome. This act made her feel good and supported by her supervisor and helped her to let go of any hard feelings she was harbouring.

Regarding supervision practice, FD5 said they had regular supervision but no formal supervision contract. However, due to work demands they often needed to reschedule. They would, nevertheless, have the inclination to reschedule the supervision session. Supervision with SD5 was very systematic and much better than that with her previous supervisor. They usually had an agenda, with discussion instead of only reporting, and would record sessions to aid follow-up on actions. She said she valued this supervision time and prepared well for her sessions. For example, she wrote down points and identified cases for discussion, and was ready to explore new ideas to master her work. Sessions usually lasted two hours and were occasionally disturbed by telephone calls. She did not feel confident enough to ask her supervisor to switch off the telephone, but instead to advantage of this to take a break. She felt it was not ideal being disturbed because sometimes she would find it difficult to recall what had been discussed prior to the telephone call.

When being reminded about something or having her work commented on, FD5 felt somewhat uncomfortable. However, this negative feeling dissipated after some reflection as she admitted her supervisor should have the say on service quality. One thing she felt good about was that both agreed to up-hold social work values for clients' best interests. For example, it was challenging dealing with human dynamics in the school. Sometimes, FD5 would feel that the school's actions were unjustified and unfair when they used underhand tactics to expel students. She felt obliged to protect these students and became quite emotional. Fortunately, her supervisor would calm her down and help her to understand that her actions could make the school feel that social workers only protect the students with no understanding of the school personnel's difficulties. Basically, she taught her how to handle these matters skillfully. SD5 would help FD5 to reflect on how to gain trust from the school so that

they more readily accepted her ideas in terms of social work values. Another memorable example, was how her supervisor aided her to help a mother's understanding of her delinquent adolescent, this in turn helped them to heal their broken relationship. Supervisee FD5 said the successful experience of using her supervisor's advice and work strategies to handle several crises, such as confidentiality, sexuality and complaints had increased her trust, respect, and confidence in the supervisor as she had developed experience in applying theory in practice.

The supervisee appreciated her supervisor's efforts in nurturing her professional knowledge and skills. For example, she developed her initial careless work habits into relevant detail, learnt how to write precise and concise reports; moved from using case conceptualization to interventions; and a lack of uncertainty became confidence. Furthermore, she recalled that she had worked for the agency for over six years and SD5 also showed concerns for her career path. As such, she encouraged her to apply for a promotional post as a senior staff member was retiring. Nevertheless, she experienced unhappy feelings when SD5 did not write a recommendation for her. She felt that she had served the unit longer than the other candidate and priority should be hers. However, her supervisor informed her that she needed to perform independently of her to secure the promotion and her supervisor needed to maintain a neutral stance in the process. What she worried here was that she might have to leave if she did not secure the promotion. Her uncertainty here was great as she could not figure out her supervisor's plan because she thought she should recommend her for the promotional post if she felt that she was good enough. According to FD5, this should have been the way her supervisor recognised her work performance. However, at this time she could not convey her stress or talk to her

supervisor about this as she did not want to have a conflict with her. Fortunately, her supervisor could sense her unhappiness and opened the dialog with her.

During the process, FD5 told the supervisor that she would resign from her current post if she was not promoted and felt that she was playing a game in the process. Luckily, her supervisor was very receptive and patient, and discussed her stance on the selection process from different perspectives that made her feel more respected. She said SD5 took her supervision seriously and would not be party to a power struggle between them. Following this, FD5 felt their supervisory relationship became closer and there was a feeling of togetherness after three years of cooperation. Overall, FD5 was looking forward to professional advancement through interactive supervision. She said her supervisor could sense her needs. She said although they had a good relationship and after work activities, she did not share her personal matters, such as stress from her family with her supervisor. However, what she learned in supervision also impacted on her personal life. The following is her reflection on this type of supervisory relationship:

FD5: "I feel this is personality! I feel this is a kind of affinity power. What kind of training can train this kind of affinity power? You are a more considerate person and humanistic; I like this type as it gives me a comfortable feeling. I feel she has this kind of affinity power and she is very sensitive, I am also very humanistic; this makes our relationship work well".

5.4.6 Dyad Six – Nurturer and Self-Reframing

a. The intention of supervisor SD6 to take part in this study was to give assistance. Similar to other participants, she also believed that through her narration

process she would understand more of her supervision practice and this would benefit her. To SD6, supervision was a two way reciprocal conversation meeting with supervisees where she could understand their difficulties encountered during work; handle some administrative work with supervisees; share their personal needs but not by means of counselling or friendship. She reported that with years of working experiences, together with her continuation of learning, these should provide her with insight to carry out her role responsibly. She illustrated that she could master her supervision work confidently. However, she felt that she needed to develop trustful relationships with supervisees to motivate open communication. She felt that it was not acceptable for supervisors who did not have work experience in supervision to undertake this role; especially as it required specific clinical knowledge and skills. Unfortunately, when supervisors were appointed to this position, they were expected to carry out the role regardless. However, she stated that she would decline the post if she had been in this position because it would have had a negative impact on supervisees. SD6 stated that she had no hesitation or worries concerning her capability to supervise even though her supervisees had more years of frontline experience in the said unit.

Referring to supervision practice, SD6 said she set out a yearly supervision schedule every September before the school term began for individual and group supervision sessions. She had a supervision agenda and made supervision records that covered actions taken to ensure follow-ups where necessary. Supervisees were invited to put forward their concerns and items for discussion. She said she would convey a firm message – that supervision involved both parties' time and it was important to make it fruitful. This would prevent supervisees from treating supervision as a casual initiative. SD6 would show appreciation to FD6 if she had

performed well and accept her limitations when she could not accomplish work demands. She emphasized that whether or not a supervisee could do a good job was not confined to their professional skills; it was also related to their personal attributes. Therefore, a supervisor needed to be sensitive to supervisees' suitability to certain kinds of services. For example, school social work required a person who could deal with human dynamics, school cultures, and be creative in helping adolescents as their lifestyle and values might be very different from those in the adult world. Moreover, SD6 preferred not to solve problems on FD6's behalf. She would help her understand the work details such as human dynamics in the school, parents' expectation, working procedures and strategies relevant to the cases, and encourage her.

Overall, SD6 expressed that she did not think FD6 viewed her as an approachable person as she would display anxiety or reluctance when reporting her work progress and sought confirmation from her. When encountering problems, they would work together, but not in service development as FD6 had her own agenda. However, her motivation for receiving supervision dwindled. This might have been due to her familiarity with the service tasks and expectations. Indeed, she felt that her colleagues would only stay in the post for four or five years due to salary and benefit concerns. However, she still believed she was supportive with FD6.

SD6 did not specify what techniques she commonly used in supervision practice instead, she explained that she employed personal work experience to deal with the tasks. As such, they would discuss cases intervention methods not only in FD6's handling process but also reflections on the issues and implicit messages. She would also randomly select cases for discussion to prevent the overlooking of issues because her supervisee's enquiries lacked risk awareness. This could be due to the

supervisee's enquiries being operational; inexperience in speculating important matters or reported crisis matters; not feeling comfortable to seek direct clarification when in doubt; and time management issues. Initially, direct instruction and control would be used if it was important and involved risk as the service was accountable to parents and the school. However, she would not be too anxious if a similar situation happened now. She would wait until FD6 requested advice as she knew that she was competent to handle these situations. SD6 thought that FD6's final goal would concern her expertise development based on her current satisfaction level. The way she handled cases would reflect how she obtained satisfaction and continued her work. Apart from her supervisory effort, SD6 felt that the agency's support also impacted on her supervision work.

In terms of SD6's own personal growth and development, she described that with only four years of supervision practice experience, it was difficult to comment on whether she had made significant advancement. However, she would remind herself not to be so instructive. Supervision focused more on professional knowledge consolidation and broader views instead of micro skills such as administrative procedures and technical skills. She knew FD6 would conduct her work in a safe manner and any close monitoring would cause interference and affect her decision making processes. Another thing she needed to be aware of was controlling her expectations. She understood that FD6 would feel that she was too harsh if she was expected to provide a 100% quality service. For example, she would not expect her to focus on the details in a police investigation of child abuse when it was 3 or 4 o'clock in the morning. Instead, she would only ask her to return safely home. In addition, she also found some changes in her social relationships with her former teammates. For example, she did not know if her promotion had affected her after

work social activities, as whether intentional or not, these had ceased, especially with those under her supervision. SD6 re-emphasized that she viewed supervision work as a service quality enforcement measure, which should cover clients' interests and well-being. This task placed great pressure on supervisors who were responsible for their supervisees' good or poor performances. In Hong Kong, there was no official training for social work supervisors. Indeed, on the one hand she doubted trainers' competence in providing supervision training as those from institutes might be too theoretical and not practical enough; and on the other hand it would involve additional resources. SD6 anticipated that more and more experienced social work supervisors would retire in the near future. Thus, social work supervision might encounter a shortfall in manpower. Therefore, how to make best use of this pool of resources should be considered. Nevertheless, SD6 pointed out that supervisors must provide quality supervision to supervisees as they would not commit to supervision if they felt they could not learn from it. Therefore, she would share her experiences with other supervisors who had different working experiences and look for opportunities to practise frontline social work services alongside further study for professional growth and development. The following portrays feelings towards her supervision efforts and values:

SD6: "In supervision, I have the feeling of bringing up a child. However, sometimes this child in our relationship wants more autonomy".

b. Supervisee FD6 took part in this research because she was interested in the topic. She did not feel pressured to be interviewed as she knew that the information would be kept confidential. She recalled that before she joined this organization, she did not have adequate supervision as the supervisor had no school

social work experience. Eventually, she resigned from her post as she felt she could not learn anything there. However, she obtained regular supervision in her current organization. Case discussions were the major discussion items in supervision, followed by issues of human dynamics and the agency's administrative work. The objectives were perceived as job fulfilment and good case conceptualization in administrative and clinical duties. In general, FD6 felt that supervisors and supervisees needed to have a good relationship to instigate supervision effectiveness. She stressed that some of her friends had resigned from their posts due to supervision issues. According to them, the main reason for leaving their employment was that their concerns and work approaches were different from those of their supervisors. For example, the supervisor was more concerned with safety, while the supervisee felt that safety was not the client's main issue. Some felt stressed as they wanted to fulfil their supervisor's expectations. Not wanting to follow their supervisor's directions was one of the main reasons for their resignation.

Regarding supervisors' personal attributes, FD6 illustrated that understanding of their supervisees' strengths and limitations was very important. FD6 stated that some of their colleagues were good at administrative work, some might be good at casework, and some would be good at organizing activities. It would be difficult to have a person who was good in all work areas. FD6 was very animated in expressing her views that there were significant differences between herself and her colleagues. For example, some were very self-disciplined and her self-discipline ability was adequate. She said she valued a good work/life balance, tried, and often failed to maintain an eight working hour day but did not claim for over time regardless. There was nothing she could do if the work in hand was not completed within the eight hours. She did not mind being criticized but disliked being labelled as incompetent.

For example, she received comments such as: “Everybody can do it, why not you?”; “Your number of cases was not that high and your records were not so detailed, why can’t you submit the recordings on time?”; and “How can you manage the work that you are requested to do as many as other workers do when you work for another organization?”. She said she knew her supervisor’s comments were correct as she was not very good with self-management. She felt very upset about this as she was not told directly but heard the comments from other people. She said she knew her delays would affect others. She would accept the comments if she was told directly and she could apologize for her inadequacies. The second message FD6 wanted to convey was that her supervisor should have open communication with her. Thus, the third characteristics of a good supervisor were to ensure enough space for supervisees to develop their expertise and delegate duties according to supervisee’s abilities and interests to enhance their capabilities to the fullest.

When discussing SD6’s competence in supervision, FD6 strongly illustrated her appreciation for her supervisor’s administrative work abilities. Her supervisor SD6 was very organized, detailed, had good time management and explained issues supported with evidence. Her attitude towards supervision was very serious and well planned. She would not answer phone calls without good reason during supervision. She would follow-up issues after supervision. Her clinical knowledge and skills were good. For example, she explained how to deal with a suspected child abuse case especially focusing on the incident details, timeline, report writing, discussion procedures and even using self-experience to role-play the process with different parties to FD6. FD6 was anxious about her handling of this case as it involved risk. Initially FD6 did not feel it was easy to try her suggested ways and thought that she had inflated the scenario. However it was successful, after trial and error she realized

that she had under-estimated the risk. Initially, FD6 admitted that it was a chore for SD6 to have her as a supervisee as she was not responsible. She understood that SD6 suffered a lot whilst supervising her. She even enquired about her childhood to see if it had an impact on her current behaviour. She stated that her supervisor gradually understood her workstyle. Later, more acknowledgement, and appraisal were given to her for good work. She felt that her supervisor became more relaxed when she reported her work in a more systematic way.

Overall, FD6 felt that her work performance could meet the school's expectations and she had greatly improved. She recognized her supervisor's legitimate power and appreciated her determination to train her. Since then, her respect and trust in supervision has also increased. She now felt that the supervision process was smoother and more efficient. The most valuable exchange was they shared the same values to do a good job for the benefit of the clients and their families. She said she did not know how SD6 perceived their relationship however; she felt that their supervisory working alliance relationship was well established. The following presents FD6's valuable insight here:

FD6: "I want to share that she liked parenting me. I regard her as a very organized person, she does not understand what is happening to an unorganized person like me, but she still tried to understand me and tried to accept me. I understand supervision is a challenge for my supervisor because she had many things to manage. It is not easy to nurture staff".

5.4.7 Dyad Seven – Supporter and Creator of Togetherness

- a. Supervisor SD7, like other participant, wanted to review her supervision

practice through this research. She hoped to see whether any self-discovery in the process could be achieved. She expressed that she had no worries discussing her supervision experiences with her supervisees as she knew that the information would be kept confidential. She said using dyad samples was new to her and restated that she had chosen a cooperative supervisee for the interview and as such, this might present some bias. The current supervisee was an average performer. SD7 perceived that her supervision function to FD7 was to learn about the latter's personality and suitability for the job, develop her own professional values, identify correct working directions, and recommend or encourage profession training such as crisis management courses for her personal growth. The ultimate goal was to monitor the service quality for the benefit of the clients.

SD7 pointed out that her supervision style was more like that of a facilitator than a teacher. This would encourage supervisees to raise their views. She also invited FD7 to give feedback on her ideas. However, she usually did not receive any as FD7 might be afraid to provide it. Again, SD7 stated that developing a trusting relationship with the supervisee was important as it would encourage openness. Her colleagues commented that sometimes her supervision approach was not dissimilar to counselling. She would compare supervisee's family issues with her own, such as how her family had shaped her personality. She told FD7 that she found her personality was quite unique compared with her colleagues, or even the younger generation. SD7 felt that sharing knowledge and communication skills in this way could be transferred to FD7's work when dealing with clients' family relationship issues. In her mind, FD7 was smart, with a good personality and she received good comments from her former supervisor also. For example, FD7 was willing to share her work inadequacies with her as she knew that she was a client-centred person.

What she had done was for the welfare benefit of the clients. Thus, she believed that her comments on her work would not cause any uncomfortable feelings. This showed that she had trust in her supervisor. However, she re-stated that trust was only one of the contributing factors to effective supervision; her competence in social work services was also paramount. She believed that expert power would be the most convincing to obtain supervisees' trust, respect, and cooperation. As both supervisor and supervisee were social workers, they should be able to sense other people's sincerity, and work experience. A supervisor would invite the supervisee to raise their concerns; facilitate them to reflect their conceptualization and intervention strategies in dealing with cases; give feedback on completed work through family work theories, such as using family maps to illustrate family relationships and dynamics. Some concern about supervisee's health would also be taken into account to prevent "burn out". SD7 said FD7 was an easy going and accepting person. However, she was not assertive enough in dealing with demanding or unmotivated clients. Therefore, more encouragement and support was provided to FD7 to cultivate her assertive abilities. SD7 knew that she was a lenient person and very weak in using confrontation skills, especially during the first few years. However, she realized that some supervisees took advantage of her obliging personality and thus she had made some changes such as being more assertive.

SD7 said she took supervision seriously, as an important task and felt she made a good start with her supervisee by scheduling a fixed date for supervision. However, it became increasingly difficult to have a firm supervision schedule in place due to work demands. Instead, FD7 had frequent consultation sessions with her when she encountered difficult cases or scheduled supervision when she felt there was a need. This flexibility was a good alternative to scheduled dates as FD7 gained more

confidence and independence in her work. SD7 felt FD7 became a “self-starter” and would feel comfortable to make decisions and exchange work results with her supervisor. Her work was on the right track. She summarized that she liked supervision with FD7 as she believed supervision was a good platform for self-reflection that benefited them both. SD7 felt that if both parties had the same vision and took supervision as an inevitable issue, they would respect it. With regards to the supervision focus for FD7, she would place more emphasis on planning her professional development and advancement; and provide more direction. SD7’s feelings towards her supervision experience with FD7 are as follows:

SD7: “My supervision experience with her was smooth. She was good. Together, we have a resonance feeling. She made me have a satisfaction feeling. Thus, we can do more with less”.

b. Supervisee FD7 accepted the invitation to participate in this research due to her understanding of the difficulties in recruiting research participants. She had studied one subject related to social work management supervision. Similar questions were verified with FD7 regarding any worries discussing her experience with her supervisor SD7 and the answer was “not at all” as they had a good relationship. Their sharing was not confined to work, but also touched on FD7’s personal life issues.

According to FD7, supervision is: a service of quality control through providing instructions to supervisees for them to improve their work; a place to share experiences with supervisors concerning case handling procedures and strategies as supervisee’s working experiences were insufficient; a space to develop FD7’s confidence in professional knowledge and skills; a place in which to give her due

care and support in dealing with work stresses and work pressures; and a space where her supervisor shows appreciation and encouragement for her good work. She explained that this type of caring process made supervisees experience a very warm feeling. When SD7 was aware of training opportunities, she would enrol FD7 and encourage her to attend; and also looked for courses such as narrative training that FD7 had shown an interest in. However, she only had regular supervision once every three months when she joined the service unit. SD7 would monitor FD7's work and reminded her of what should be included in case reports. As time went on, they did not have regular scheduled supervision meetings as it was difficult to arrange. Their usual practice was that whenever they needed, they would get together to handle the issue. Her supervisor would not mind her "knocking for help" and they found this way was more practical and flexible in casework settings. This feedback was echoed in her supervisor's report. Indeed, she expressed that she was a very reliable and cooperative staff member. She worked hard and mostly completed tasks on time and SD7 praised FD7 in that she could set her mind at ease. So far, she felt that her work performance was satisfactory. Her supervisor appreciated her non-calculative attitude and she had good relationships with colleagues. She explained that relationships were important because they were cost effective with regards to work outcomes. For example, if supervisees had any hesitation in seeking help or doubts about risk prevention strategies. Indeed, poor relationships affected long term interactions between supervisors and supervisees. To this point, the second participant mentioned that the Chinese adage concerning affectionate affinity relationships – "*Qing & Yuan (情及緣)*". She had heard that the "Boss" should be respected even if they were incompetent. Moreover, she explained that she felt comfortable to ask for special consideration, help, and understanding of difficulties whilst her supervisor felt it was easy to remind her of her outstanding work, time-management issues but

nevertheless gave her no special allowances regarding rules and regulations. FD7 said her relationship with her supervisor was good in terms of responsibility, trust, interactive communication and a sense of togetherness.

FD7 described her supervisor as an open person, a good listener, easy going, not “bossy” and approachable. To be a good supervisor, she should have professional competence; and relevant working experience in supervision services. She believed her supervisor had such qualities, as well as rich working experience in theoretically based supervision. Indeed, besides supervision work, her supervisor still took up hard core cases. This was good as she had up-to-date frontline experience. It was only the time factor that hindered their will to arrange regular scheduled supervision. She said most of the high demanding technical skills that she required were learned from her supervisor. During the supervision process, they also had similar procedures to other supervisor-supervisee dyads such as open dialogue for readiness towards supervision; work progress, concerns and hindrances; reflecting on the handling of cases and identifying alternatives using circular question method to facilitate supervisee more aware the pros and cons of her ideas; re-affirming work achievements and providing encouragement; and discussion on work directions and strategies.

Overall, FD7 felt that supervision was important for frontline social workers. She said it would be possible to spare some time to carry out supervision if supervisors and supervisees really wanted to. Feeling overwhelmed with cases could lead to psychological problems. This point was also expressed by her supervisor. FD7’s feelings and insight concerning her experiences of supervision are below:

FD7: “Initially, she looked like a teacher to me. However, it was not only this feeling after our relationship had been established. She was a really good supervisor. I had one more friend. Our value code was very similar. We valued people, we viewed things positively. The supervision was very enjoyable. I thought there was a strong feeling of walking together. We were not fighting alone. She was behind me. My supervisor would back me up if I was in trouble”.

5.4.8 Dyad Eight – Yin and Yang Partners

a. Supervisor SD8 was the only participant from the supervisor-supervisee dyads that reflected on her subsequent self-awareness of her supervision practice following the interview. She expressed that she now had better understanding of her character and shortfalls in supervision work. She hoped that she could maintain her open attitude to evaluate her supervision methods. Indeed, this was the reason why she had accepted this research invitation.

To SD8, supervision constituted general leadership in which to monitor the supervision of clinical and administrative management of family services. She said the modelling method was very important in supervision work as she had gained techniques from her own supervisor’s practice, which she was able to model for her colleagues. Again, like other supervisors, she also did not have adequate training in supervision work. To format her current supervision, she had integrated what she had learned from her former supervisors and also from her peers’ feedback. Indeed, her current post was her first experience of supervision practice. Her core supervision work was supervising middle management staff who had over ten years of working experience and she was appointed to supervise a team of clinical and administrative staff to run the family services.

Frankly speaking, her supervisee FD8 was quite independent and seldom asked for supervision unless it involved a crisis or serious complaint. She invited her to be her partner in this interview as she had both clinical and administrative duties. As such, she found it interesting to supervise her, especially in constructing an understanding with a staff member who had longer working experience than herself. Initially, there was quite a distance between them as the supervisee might have felt that she knew more than her in managing the cases. However, in light of societal changes, more complex cases and higher demands on expectations, she eventually became aware that there were things she should get involved with and provide support earlier to the supervisee, regardless of her working experience. A middle management staff member like FD8 might feel uncomfortable accepting ideas and/or advice from her peer group but she may also experience loneliness if she could not collaborate with her supervisor. Therefore, SD8 felt that it would be easier for her to approach FD8 proactively. From this, FD8 became more active in reporting work to her. However, she did not request regular supervision with FD8; taking things at a slower pace in order to engage her. As a result, the interaction between them increased and she thought this might be due to her consideration.

In SD8's self-reflection script, she expressed that through this teaching and learning process she had learned a lot of valuable experience in supervision work. It had reminded her of the importance of distinguishing between the learning and monitoring processes in supervision. Therefore, she felt that it was not advisable to exercise high monitoring and control with experienced staff before trust had been established. Early intervention would only invite resistance as the staff member would interpret this as criticism, not support. She shared that developing understanding and cooperation in relationships were essential because the key

importance here was “heart related to heart”; this must be a focus for staff development. She said understanding was built on mutual collaboration and similar personalities were the most decisive factor.

She described FD8 as a very task-oriented person. She was good at task completion, reporting, evaluating, reviewing, and anticipating need. Her supervision with FD8 focused more on life-long learning and career development in view of her rich working experiences. However, this was another area that needed further exploration as FD8 might not realise that she needed a second career path in view of her age, years of work experience, and stable employment. To do this, it was necessary to discuss this issue with FD8 using the approach of mutual trust and mutual respect, as FD8 might interpret this as an attempt to get rid of her. Therefore, she reflected that she had always reminded herself to genuinely accept staff and develop their undiscovered potential with regards to their wishes.

SD8 said her supervisory role did not only render her legitimate power to do the supervision work, it also set a relationship boundary between her and her supervisees, disregarding whether they had different views. Therefore, she clearly conveyed her expectations to FD8 concerning her work at an early stage such as supervision agendas, scheduling of supervision sessions and keeping supervision records. SD8 expected FD8 to do the same with her supervisees. She felt that this demonstration could regulate supervision practice. She did not feel FD8 ignored her, however, the supervision was not proceeding as she expected. The way that FD8 communicated with SD8 was similar to a consultation, getting approval for decisions and discussions on alternatives, yet this was conducted in a humble manner. For example, FD8 recalled that one unhappy experience with FD8 was regarding her

work inadequacies concerning her non-provision of supervision with her staff for more than three months. When she enquired about this, she told SD8 directly, “I have no way to do it”. Her reply had made SD8 very angry and she had replied with the rude comment, “You have to do it”. This experience was not good and she had to remind herself to construct a positive supervision culture.

In addition, when dealing with differences between herself and FD8, SD8 would create doubt to facilitate and encourage FD8’s alternative thinking. This would not be directive. For example, they had different views about whether to report a child abuse case to the police. SD8 thought it should be reported while FD8 felt that it was unnecessary. Since FD8 insisted on getting her way, the case was initially not reported as she still wanted to convince her to change her decision. SD8 raised possible shortcomings and used her past experience to encourage her to re-think her decision but this was in vain. Eventually, she needed to use work guidelines to justify her views as it involved legal implications. She shared that it was fortunate she had worked in other organizations and brought different experiences to aid her work competence. She said her insistence was not only based on her past experiences nor was it a display of power; it was the right thing to do in the situation.

So far, she had worked with FD8 for five years and they had dealt with some extreme cases and difficult staff members and as such, FD8 had gradually gained trust in SD8 and mutual understanding was developed, especially in relation to both parties’ work styles. SD8 felt that maintaining satisfactory supervision practice would be a great challenge for her as it became routine. Moreover, she said she would keep a professional distance with FD8 as too many informal gatherings or being over friendly might affect her decisions when disciplining staff. She said this

was not too difficult because FD8 seldom talked about personal matters. SD8 perceived herself not as an authoritative person; she would validate FD8's good performance and tried to respect her. However, she knew that paying respect and showing sentiment were usual practices in Chinese culture, which might also be applied in FD8's case as she might experience feelings of losing respect when reminded to make improvements in her work. To this point, SD8 said FD8 was quite a reserved person. She did not need to be appraised but her work competence definitely needed to be validated. Actually, her work performance was very good. From SD8's point of view, giving respect was a reciprocal practice and not necessary from subordinates to superiors. Therefore, her supervision strategy with FD8 was to be patient as she was an experienced member of staff, and to have no direct confrontations. The following displays SD8's feelings towards her supervision with FD8:

SD8 commented: "I am a team player and want communication. She is a task-oriented person. Through continued communication, I can see I earn her respect. I have reflection from this interview. I have to improve myself first. If not, it would not be doing well".

b. Supervisee FD8 accepted the invitation to participate in the research because she just wanted to help. Regarding her expectations from supervision, she thought the supervisor's role represented the organization. In this capacity, she would help the supervisee identify "blind spots" in their work; or provide new insight concerning casework direction, as different personalities might have different views; and create a platform for the supervisee to learn from other's perspectives; when making difficult decisions, supervisors would play part in decision-making. She felt

that supervision was important as nobody was perfect and it would be good for professional growth. She said that her supervisor took supervision seriously and was attentive in the sessions. However, no regular supervision was organised as both parties were very busy. Too many tasks needed to be dealt with and they had to relinquish supervision sessions even though they viewed them as important. Their assumption was that they had established an informal communication pattern. She doubted whether they really took supervision seriously as they could only manage two hours for supervision every three months, a total of four times a year.

She said her supervisor's supervision style was non-directive. She would raise questions for her to think about and somehow she would make some contributions. She agreed that her supervision was not a top-down teaching process. It was a two way exploration through sharing. However, she said sometimes she could not grasp her supervisor's ideas as her thinking fluctuated. This time she viewed the matter this way; and the next time she would view it differently. This made her have doubts and question why this time was different from the last. She said although the situation was not desirable. She believed she could make it clearer by seeking clarification from her. Nevertheless, she said SD8 would respect her techniques for handling her cases and they would have discussions if there was any doubt. Their supervision would start casually for example, establishing the supervisee's current condition such as any work stress; inviting ideas on the supervision agenda; reporting work progress; exploring supervisee's work approach; giving advice and administrative information for supervisee's consideration and attention; validating supervisee's effort and comforting them if they had encountered difficulties at work; and planning work directions and strategies. Regarding supervision records and follow-up work, FD8 replied that they did not maintain supervision records as most of the discussion was

related to cases and it would be marked on the case files. Personal notes would be made as a reminder. Regardless, she felt her supervisor's attitude was positive. She would remind her supervisee of important issues but would not complain and no blame was experienced during the processes. When encountering differences, FD8 said her supervisor would listen to her ideas and was not dominating. However, she would also illustrate many options or used her own experiences to invite FD8 to consider them. She would take her supervisor's ideas seriously as she had practical wisdom. The supervisory relationship between SD8 and FD8 was an outcome of a give-and-take reciprocal process. As a result, the supervisee could work with her supervisor with mutual trust and respect:

FD8 reflected that: "Initially, I felt anxious to do supervision with SD8 as I did not know how to position myself as an experienced worker. Therefore, I would update all my case files before meeting my supervisor. Now, it was different, I like it because I can get some insight from my supervisor when I feel stuck. I get validation and encouragement from my supervisor. I feel I have gained new energy. I enjoy case discussion. I have built a supervisory relationship with my supervisor. We have discussions and work together. I would like to have regular supervision if I did not have so much work to do".

5.4.9 Dyad Nine – Commander and Troops

a. Supervisor SD9 was the ninth participant who said that the first thing that came into his mind when being invited to partake in this study was: "This is a good opportunity for me to review what my supervision process was about, and what my supervision strategies were?" He said about 70% to 80% of his work was managing the services and formal supervision occupied 20% to 25% of his time. He chose FD9

because she had met the set criteria - under his supervision over five years, and available to take part in the interview during the period. Again, SD9 said that he did not have a supervision contract with FD9. However, during the annual appraisal meeting, he would consult with his supervisee regarding what she wished to achieve from work or what professional development she aimed for in the following year. They would follow up this in the supervision sessions.

Supervision with SD9 was a professional dialectic experience. He argued that this method helped them understand the case and this understanding would affect their practice. He said supervisee FD9 always encountered difficulties in setting case counselling goals. As such, his supervision style would help FD9 learn how to set goals and reflect as to why not much progress had been made with clients. Through role-play, supervision mainly focused on FD9's personal characteristics and attributes and how these impacted on clients' cognitive functions and behaviour. When sharing ideas about the cause and effect of supervision, SD9 said that it was not the relationship that brought about work outcomes, the relationship was the end product. For example, he told his staff he did not think they viewed him as a kind person; he was more task-oriented.

To SD9, supervisees could do a good job if his work instructions and expectations were clear. He re-stated that in supervision, although the supervisor had several types of power such as legitimate power, reward and punishment powers he felt it was difficult to assert such power especially reward and punishment as dismissing staff was not easy even when their performance was poor. Therefore, he still hoped to use competent power to maintain an interactive and reciprocal effect in supervision. He expressed that he also learned something from FD9 during

supervision sessions. For example, FD9 had a spontaneous and sympathetic attitude with her clients, and he did not have such an endearing personality.

Also, debates on tasks occurred, and demands on theoretically-based practice resulted in different values, beliefs and attitudes. However, this might not necessarily affect personal relationships if they were working on the issue rather than pointing to faults in the other person. Therefore, he thought that the relationship was not the major factor that led to good work results. Moreover, he explained that he usually had a verbal contract with FD9 and set the base-line for work. He wanted FD9 to know that he was a supervisor who expected quality work. In addition, to earn FD9's trust and respect, he needed to demonstrate good knowledge and experiences; and be a good role model. Therefore, he would maintain frontline practice to prevent being challenged by staff.

Also, he would prepare well for supervision sessions. Equally, he also expected FD9 to develop her own expertise and not necessarily follows his working style, rather she needed to develop her own style and choices as long she met clients' needs. He felt encouraging FD9 to take up in-service training was also important. As a result, she could have confidence in direct practice. He said FD9 was familiar with this and this gave her satisfaction as her weaknesses could be improved under her supervisor's guidance. Compared to a few years ago, FD9 had gradually developed her own practice style and had mastered the required working skills. For example, she had won the trust of the school personnel, built up her "big sister" image among colleagues and had been promoted to team-leader.

Regarding his support with FD9, SD9 encouraged and inspired FD9 so that she

could work more efficiently. Then FD9 could have a sense of success. His strategies here were: to look for FD9's strong points; give honest feedback about her shortfalls; use confrontation as a way of inspiring choices as long as it did not involve life and death risks; making decisions at the right moment, and validate her achievements in a sincere way. Overall, he expressed that he would release her stress from the outside even though he would criticize her performance internally. The following reflects SD9's self-fulfilment:

SD9 explained: "I feel the supervisor should do direct practice. I do not understand why this was not set as a basic requirement. In fact, this is the lowest expectation. Supervision is a mutual learning experience; it is a mutual growth experience. I still feel that we are a colleague relationship. In this relationship, I have clear boundaries with my colleagues - colleague relationship. Frankly speaking, it is not only that she has changed; it can be because of my changes in the process too. This is what we called reciprocal."

b. Supervisee FD9 felt that supervision was very important; especially as she had also taken up supervision responsibility after being promoted as a team leader. Since then, she had realized that her supervision style was influenced by her current supervisor, SD9. She perceived supervision as a support system for staff and to guide their work direction in order to match the organization's development. She expressed that her supervisor SD9 was a very good supervisor. He was very knowledgeable, with a strong personality and confidence. The centre services were in good order and had experienced great expansion under his supervision. He was not afraid his staff would surpass him.

Supervisee FD9 admitted that she was not an ambitious person and also did not like to undertake administrative work. However, her supervisor always showed he cared about her career progression and explained to her the duties of senior staff were to assume more responsibility. She recalled when she was first under SD9's supervision, she did not trust him. Furthermore, she was a very obedient person and would do whatever her supervisor asked of her. She had one unhappy memory regarding a student whose sister had committed suicide. He urged her to call the student but she could not reach her. He said: "Keep looking for her, call until you reach her". She was very frustrated as she was running a day camp and had to deal with a pool of people. There was a lot going on at this time. She felt upset and her relationship with her supervisor was very poor. She had to follow instructions because he had the legitimate power over her. She would make a million enquiries and questions. The relationship was strained. Regarding the case, she eventually reached the client's family and offered help to family members. The lesson she learnt here was that client's may present resistance to answer phone calls when they were feeling emotionally disturbed and may not want to be contacted. However, her persistency eventually penetrated the resistance and the clients appreciated the help during the process. After years of cooperative supervision, FD9 witnessed her supervisor's work style, personality, and power such as being very well connected in the service area meant that people would pay him respect. Currently, she not only had trust in him in light of his mission "in action", her confidence in his work had also been strengthened. She had thus developed her own "self".

Supervisee FD9 described her supervisor's supervision style as very detailed and client focused. For example, a mother came to the office and looked for help as she could not master her computer. From her point of view, it was not their

responsibility to help her. However, he had spent an hour providing technical support to the mother. When she raised her query concerning this, he said, “she carried the computer all the way to come here for help, and how would she feel if you just sent her away. He would ask a lot of questions when she approached him for advice such as client’s emotional condition, what assessments had been done, what risks were involved, and what was the follow-up plan. Through these questions, she felt she became more alert in the handling procedures and learned the steps for crisis intervention.

In formal supervision, he would reserve sufficient time for discussion i.e., at least two hours. Role-play was commonly used for demonstrating skills. He had clear supervision guidelines, which she dared not take lightly. Moreover, supervision usually covered three parts including work reports as the opening remarks; discussion and feedback on work strategies and outcomes; and personal growth and development. Initially, supervision was not structured and it had improved in recent years. They kept a supervision log on the computer, which facilitated the follow-up work. However, he had a temper and sometimes this fluctuation in temperament could be great. This might have been due to his large amount of work and great responsibilities. The supervisee felt that SD9’s emotional support was not quite up to her expectations. Indeed, FD9 encountered emotional stress following each supervision session. Although she had satisfactory feelings from her work, she felt disappointed that she rarely received this satisfactory feeling from her supervisor. She thought this might also be because male sensitivity to others’ emotional needs was weaker. He would scold her if he found she had made mistakes but he would also protect and support her when needed. She understood that what he was angry at was the issue and not the person. Overall, he was a person she could rely on and her

relationship with him was good. Nevertheless, she hoped that SD9 could be more sensitive to her emotional needs, show more appreciation, and confirm her good work. The following represent FD9's feelings regarding this:

FD9: "Supervision is very important. He "walks" together with me. The influential power of the supervisor is based on expertise. It means he has passion, and is able to influence me. My efficacy has increased, my efficiency is higher. Regarding partnership? It seems very close, it seems very close; but it looks like we need to have some distance. It may be because superior is a superior".

5.5 Summary of this Chapter

Supervision is integral to the delivery of effective services to clients. The supervisor-supervisee dyads in this study addressed their supervision practice well. Overall, their feedback concerning their conceptions and experience of supervision is summarized below.

5.5.1 Theme one

Supervision was necessary and would be handled with care as supervisor-supervisee dyads had a mutually endorsed supervision agenda and structure although these were not explicitly written down. Supervisors used their experience learned from being supervisees themselves as a basis for practicing as a supervisor such as adopting those strategies they perceived as providing high levels of empathy, warmth, acceptance, validation, and genuineness that would encourage frontline social workers' willingness to learn.

5.5.2 Theme two

Supervisors' expert power, together with their reflective supervision style and supportive action, had cultivated effective supervision that could facilitate supervisees' professional growth and development. Their working alliance relationships had trust, support, respect, reflection, acceptance, listening, modesty, cooperation, and exchange.

5.5.3 Theme three

Trust and respect would take time to construct in the supervisory relationship. The nature of interdependence between supervisor and supervisee can explain why they become committed to their relationship. However, working alliance relationships could be developed through reciprocal interactive processes that took account of their Chinese culture such as maintaining harmonious human relationships and "*qing, yuan, and face*" practices when communicating with their seniors in respect of their hierarchical status and authority.

5.5.4 Theme four

By only providing space and autonomy to supervisees, their professional knowledge and skills would sometimes be overlooked especially with new supervisors as they paid too much attention to risk prevention. As we know relationships have unique power in connecting and disconnecting people, adequately guidance and supported relationships with supervisees can convey a secure feeling and allows them to explore weakness that require knowledge and skills enhancement and ultimately improve work with their service users.

5.5.5 Theme five

Supervisory working alliance relationships were found to be different in “beginning”, “competent” and “proficient” supervisor-supervisee dyad groups. For example, supervisors in the “beginning” group appeared to be more alert to risk prevention, which might create tension for the supervisees; while supervisors in the proficient group would place more emphasis on supervisees’ growth and development.

5.5.6 Theme six

Supervisor-supervisee dyads had their unique ways to develop their supervisory working alliance relationships. We could share their strategies in supervision practice, although much constraint and limitations were encountered in their supervision work. For example, supervisors who acted as “Masters” were kind to their apprentices. However, their apprentices sought every opportunity to differentiate themselves from their master. Supervisors acting as supervisee’s buddies could encourage professional ambition; a supportive supervisor could invite supervisee’s loyalty to remain in the post. As such, supervision can be summarised as an interpersonal interaction and learning alliance empowerment process.

To conclude, supervision practice was perceived as satisfactory, supervisory relationship was allied, supervisors and supervisees have growth and development. All the nine supervisor-supervisee dyads expressed the involvement in this study was valuable and they found there were lot to be learned for obtaining effective supervision. This outcome is somewhat different from the negative impression of social work supervision practice portrayed in phase one of this study.

CHAPTER SIX: DISCUSSION ON “FRAMING” THE PICTURE OF RELATIONSHIP ALLIANCE PROCESS IN SUPERVISOR-SUPERVISEE DYADS IN HONG KONG

6.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the research questions that were proposed in chapter three. The major focus was the relationship alliance process in supervisor-supervisee dyads. The findings from chapters four and five are discussed regarding supervisor-supervisee working alliances in these areas: (1) concepts and application of the three supervision functions; (2) supervision constructs; (3) personal and interpersonal issues in supervision; (4) essential elements of supervisor-supervisee relationships; and (5) characteristics that facilitate or hinder the social work supervision process in integrated family services, school social work services, and integrated children and youth services in Hong Kong. Comparisons were also made with the research findings and the reviewed literature in chapter two regarding social work supervision. Implications and contributions of the findings to social work supervision practice will also be discussed.

The credibility of the findings deserves special attention in qualitative research due to the small number of participants involved. First was “source credibility of information”. Thus, recruitment of participants was conducted carefully, in light of participants’ academic qualifications, job positions, professional status’, supervision work experience in the social work sector, and their enthusiastic participation in the current study. By referring to participants’ profiles (Chapter three, Tables 3, 4, 5, and 6 and Chapter five, Table 14), all had good, relevant social work qualifications, were

respectable and had influential job positions such as senior social work supervisors, regional managers, and associate professors; they were well recognized and respected by leaders in the social work sector and officials of the Social Welfare Department; and most had over ten years supervisory practice or teaching experience, except Sfg4. As such, participants' feedback on social work supervision practice was significant and credible, concerning limitations and areas for improvement that needed to be further examined in terms of solutions for supervision practice. Apart from "source credibility of information" it was also necessary to consider "theme credibility". Thus, methodological triangulation was used for cross-checking information and conclusions through the use of multiple methods such as focus groups, individual interviews and supervisor-supervisee dyad interviews. For example, the topic of "social work supervision issues was neglected" was categorized as important enough to be discussed with participants in the focus group, individual interviews, and supervisor-supervisee dyads, who reported that they accepted the invitation to take part in this research because they felt that supervision practice had been neglected in the social work sector.

6.2 Overview of the Research Results

The current study was conducted according to three perspectives in the research framework: (1) conceptualization of supervision and its impact, that is, supervisors and supervisees' understandings and agreements of the supervision methods, supervision goals and tasks, clear supervision contracts, and supportive organization policies in supervision; (2) process of supervisory relationships, that is, how supervisory relationships were constructed in light of literature recommendations including: personal qualities, attachment styles and behaviour, and encountered experiences and dynamics in the supervision process; and (3) what and

how factors influence supervisory relationships and the effectiveness of supervision regarding supervisor's professional knowledge; supervisory attitudes; perceptual, conceptual and inter-personal skills, and cultural sensitivity in delivering guidance to supervisees (see Chapter 2: Table 1, and Figure 4). These findings can provide insight into supervisory alliances and their dynamics.

According to the literature review in Chapter two, effective supervision, work performance and job satisfaction are grounded in positive supervisory relationships. The relationship, as interpreted by participants, was developed from three bases (functional, relationship and interaction): (1) supervision constructs (functional-based), which refers to the balance among administrative, education, and supportive functions (Kadushin & Harkness, 2014; Kaiser, 1997; Munson, 2002; Shulman, 1991; Tsui, 1997a); (2) supervisory working alliance relationships (relationship-based) refers to Bordin's (1983) "building and repairing" dynamics of the supervisory alliance as both supervisor and supervisee would encounter positive and negative experiences that fluctuate throughout the learning process in supervision. If supervisors were unable to make this adjustment, the supervisor-supervisee alliance might prove to be problematic (Bernard & Goodyear, 2014; Golden & Robins, 1990; Horvath & Marx, 1990; and (3) attachment process (interaction-based), which refers to supervisor's competence for directing and/or helping their supervisees achieve work goals, particularly during times of stress, uncertainty, and fear; where supervisees achieve success in gaining proximity and support from their attachment figure, that is their supervisor, they have stronger attachment behaviour (Bowlby, 1980; Cassidy & Shaver, 2008; Mikulincer & Shaver, 2007, 2012). Therefore, positive and productive relationships are critical for effective supervision. Understanding how relationship variables affect the supervisory

relationship and having the skill to establish a productive supervisory relationship has been cited as requisites for preparation and practice in supervision (Kadushin, & Harkness, 2014; Morrison, 2005; Munson, 2002; Shulman, 2016). Two valuable studies were found to be good references for studying relationship issues between supervisors and supervisees in the same nature of work in the Chinese cultural context of Hong Kong. Lam (1997) studied the leadership behaviour of 30 family service caseworkers, which revealed that most subordinates rated their supervisors highly as being considerate but rated them low in structure initiation. Leung (2012) studied the use of power in social work supervisory relationships and found that respondents who considered supervision to be counterproductive or disempowering employed tactics to conceal their negative attitudes, and concealed important cases and project materials, which hindered the disclosure of mistakes.

Participants in this study reported that supervision provided important emotional support for social workers, although the quality was in doubt due to no mandatory policy on social work supervision practice, no formal standards on social work supervision practice, no qualification requirement for social work supervisors, and no stipulated supervision structure from the Social Workers Registration Board of Hong Kong, which was responsible for governing the quality of social work professionals' practice. Similarly, the Social Welfare Department of Hong Kong Special Administrative Region who acted as the key funders of social work services also did not place any special demands on practice qualifications. Indeed, getting a clinical supervisor's license before practice is a mandatory requirement in the United States and United Kingdom. Thus, most social work supervisors in Hong Kong do not have adequate training in supervision theories, supervision structure, and delivery methods. This might not only induce stress for supervisors and supervisees, but also

may have a harmful effect on our social work professionals and service users. In addition, supervisees in this current study explained that although there was assessment of their work performance, there was no quality control and formal evaluation of their supervisors' competence in supervision work. This is another area that needs further research in order to secure quality supervision practice.

Leung (2012) explored the interplay of power in supervisory dyads. Findings here provide insight into how supervisees view their supervisors' inappropriate use of power and how they react with different kinds of resistance. The micro-strategies that subordinates adopt in reaction to a perceived negative supervisory relationship include non-disclosure, a refusal to make decisions and holding the supervisor accountable for their own tasks. Social service quality is highly determined by the quality of the supervisory relationship, she recommended that supervisors cultivate literacy in micro-political interactions that enhance their ability to read their subordinates' interests, values and goals so as to reduce their resistance to supervision. It is argued here that her suggestions can be better reflected in the dyads in this study. The feedbacks from the nine supervisor-supervisee dyads are unique and valuable as they can provide a detailed picture of actual supervision practice, that is, regular, structured, one-to-one, face-to-face, one to two hours undisturbed supervision between supervisors and supervisees. Their shared meanings and experiences from supervision can define supervision practice in terms of conceptions of supervision, supervision theories, components of effective supervision, competence for supervision; the phenomena of the development of supervisory relationships in three developmental stages; limitations in balancing the three supervision function roles and responsibilities; and factors that facilitate or hinder social work supervision practice. Indeed, the most beneficial finding was that

supervision experience not only imparts knowledge and analytical competence in social work supervision, it also integrates relationship competence in supervision models, which lead to significantly higher values in the professional growth and development of supervisors and supervisees. These findings are reflected in the description of feelings from supervisors and supervisees (see Chapter 5).

The supervisory working alliance was frequently reported in the literature (Allyson & Beddoe, 2010; Bordin, 1983; Kadushin & Harkness, 2014; Kaiser, 1997; Tsui, 2001) as an important component in the change process of supervision, in which competence was enhanced and supervisee development was facilitated. The overall impression of supervision practice in the current research also supports this claim. For example, all supervisor-supervisee dyads worked well under working alliance based supervision, in which they had mutual agreements and understandings regarding intervention goals, intervention approaches, that is, tasks to be carried out; and obtained responsive feedbacks in dealing with clients' needs. The supervisor-supervisee dyads considered that they had good supervisory relationships that encompassed warmth, acceptance, respect, understanding, and trust.

This chapter analyses and discusses the experiences of nine supervisor-supervisee dyads concerning their supervision practice to illustrate the applicability of three bases in social work supervision practice. As such, the discussion will illustrate knowledge and practice gaps in the following six areas: (1) conceptions, perceptions and experience of supervision constructs and practice; (2) supervisory relationships of supervisor-supervisee dyads in the Chinese cultural context; (3) effects of powers and supervision types in Chinese cultural management; (4) good and poor interaction processes in different developmental stages of

supervision; (5) attachment styles and behaviour in dyads' supervision processes; and (6) supervisory relationships impact on supervisees' job performance and satisfaction.

6.2.1 Conceptions, Perceptions and Practice Experience of Supervision Constructs

The usual critical issues of supervision practice that have been reported in research are related to skill difficulties and deficits, multicultural awareness, negotiating role conflicts, working through counter-transference, managing sexual attraction, repairing gender-related misunderstandings, and addressing problematic attitudes and behaviours (Ladany et al., 2005). From this study, two common issues are identified that mirror these issues, which have not been previously dealt with by researchers in Hong Kong. These issues have been summarized into two constructs in response to participants' constructed categories: imbalanced supervisory roles and responsibilities, and supervisor competence.

6.2.1a Imbalanced Supervisory Roles and Responsibilities

In Hong Kong, both administrative and professional supervision are conducted by the same person in social service organizations. This designated staff provision was set by the Social Welfare Department. Certainly, determining the distinction between the roles of clinical and administrative supervision can be difficult because there are no uniform definitions of these functions. Kadushin & Harkness (2014) describe the administrative function as the practitioner and supervisor's accountability to the policies, protocols, ethics and standards, which are prescribed by organizations, legislation and regulatory bodies. The educational function addresses the ongoing development of professional skills and resources of the practitioner. The supportive

function attends to the more personal relationship between the practitioner and the work context.

In Hong Kong, administrative supervision in the three selected services is commonly used to help supervisees function effectively with an emphasis on organizational accountability, case records, case referrals, and job performance evaluations; educational supervision focuses on therapeutic relationships, assessments, interventions, and client welfare; supportive supervision places more emphasis on dealing with workers' incompetence, stress, frustration, and/or feelings of "burnout" in the work context. However, as reported by participants in this current study, our social work practitioners employ the idea that administrative checking and monitoring neglects the importance of service quality assurance responsibilities. They perceive administrative work care as bidding for projects and gain monetary resources, not for the benefit of their clients. They interpret the administrative effort as organizational benefits, not for the well-being of clients. Thus, social work practitioners' general impressions of professional supervision was that it is insufficient and/or inadequate, which affects staffs' working morale. For example, frontline social worker Ffg2 in the supervisees' focus group reported her frustration when she could not obtain her supervisor's prompt reply on her decision to get a Child Protection Order from the Social Welfare Department and this somehow affected the outcomes of the case (see Chapter 4). From Ffg2's supervision experience, she demonstrated the poor effects of supervision. Her supervisor's failure to provide timely feedback and inattention to her concerns and struggles caused her to distrust and disconnect from supervision in her work-life. Similarly, individual participant P3 also had the impression that supervision quality was taking a down turn. This impression was echoed by other participants in the supervisor focus group

in Phase one of this study, as they heard lots of negative comments about our social work supervision (see Chapter 4). Supervisee participants also reported that investment in supervision from their organizations was insufficient in terms of time and resources, there was little support for supervisees' clinical knowledge and skills, and an absence of confirmation of supervisees' strengths (Tsui, 2006).

Magnuson, Norem & Wilcoxon (2000, see Table 3: General Spheres of Lousy Supervision) reported six areas in which organizational-administrative competence was lacking in their qualitative study to the detriment of "lousy" supervision. Here, three incompetent areas were found to be different from participants' reflections in this current study. The three areas were: (1) failure to clarify expectations, (2) failure to provide standards for accountability, and (3) failure to assess the supervisee's needs. Indeed, our social work practitioners complained that our supervisors placed too much emphasis on these three areas which were set in the Funding Service Standards (FSA) required by the Social Welfare Department of Hong Kong SAR Government because they placed too much pressure on supervisors. When the administrative tasks of supervision are overwhelming, this would incur job stress, staff "burnout", and a high level of staff turnover.

Clearly, insufficient supervision is directed at supervisors' managerial incompetence in relation to placing too much emphasis on administrative or task-oriented supervision and, as a consequence, is argued to neglect professional supervision and supervisees' personal needs. When supervisees come to the conclusion that supervisors are usually unavailable or inaccessible, they gradually develop their own way of handling their work problems such as, seeking help from their university Professors or consulting external clinical supervisors to deal with

difficult tasks (see Chapter 4) or look for peer support (see Chapter 4) instead of relying on their supervisors.

Although all participants, including those in the supervisor-supervisee dyads, showed much concern about the functions of supervision and quality of professional practice, the supervisor-supervisee dyads did not have the same negative attitude when dealing with administrative work. On the contrary, they made every effort to develop a system to facilitate their supervisory work. For example, supervisor SD1 expressed that she had great anxiety in mastering her supervisory dual roles as she had less than two years supervision work experience. The first thing she thought she needed to manage was her own anxiety and so as not to give the wrong impression to her supervisee FD1 that she was not responsible and neglected his needs. Then, she scheduled regular supervision sessions with her supervisee. In the initial supervision session, she focused more on his good work and provided professional guidance and emotional support whenever necessary. She would give him explicit validation according to evidence. Indeed, all supervisors in the dyads made similar efforts. Similar examples are evidenced in Chapter five.

With reference to the literature review, this grievance seemed likely to continue. One argument here was whether or not clinical supervisors should also be administrative supervisors. Tsui (2001) indicated that this conflict was caused by different attitudes held by supervisors and supervisees. The attitude of the supervisor tends to be rational and professional while the attitude of the supervisee, in contrast, is more personal. What supervisees expect from their supervisors was more related to developing their professional competencies such as case conceptualizations in order to increase their level of confidence in mastering their work. Tromski (2007)

examined implications of dual roles in supervision and identified four problems. They were: (1) conflict of interest, (2) supervisor exploitation of the supervisee, (3) supervisor incompetence, and (4) supervisee nondisclosure. Surprisingly, there was no such complaint from the supervisor-supervisee dyads, although they did suggest that no dual roles should be taken by supervisors to prevent an imbalance of time spent between administrative and clinical supervision. However, most supervisor-supervisee dyads realized that a lack of organized preparation not only left them vulnerable, as messages were inconsistent, communication was erratic, and procedures were unclear. For example, one supervisor SD1 worked in a family service setting and shared that she had a team of eight supervisees and each of them had 50 active cases. As such, she had to ensure these four hundred cases ran smoothly. She needed to set up administrative procedures such as recording forms, reporting systems, checking systems, risk assessment guidelines for staff to follow – aiming to monitor each step (see Chapter 5). Indeed, supervisory functions cover several accountabilities: administrative accountability, professional accountability, financial accountability, political accountability, and personal accountability (Hawkins, & Shohet, 2006; Kadushin, & Harkness, 2014). In addition, our organizational environment has changed and the demands on supervisory functions are inextricably tied to managerial competence. This incorporates a change in management skills including: understanding the multiple governmental, community, and organizational contexts of practice; practice in racially and culturally diverse organizations and communities; use of client outcomes to monitor service delivery; and processes that promote effective inter-professional work. According to the Australia Association of Social Workers (AASW) of Australia (2013), administrative supervision is synonymous with management. It is the implementation of administrative methods that enable social workers to provide effective services to

clients. Administrative supervision is oriented towards agency policy or organizational demands and focuses on a supervisee's level of functioning on the job and work assignments. Therefore, if administrative supervision is viewed as building blocks for the essential work of supervision, it can tap into the potential energy for extra work goals, such as establishing a working relationship with a supervisee. This is a real advantage for the supervisor when clinical supervision is grounded in an efficient and effective organization. Tsui and Cheung (2004) remind us that human service organizations are based on values and principles that are fundamentally different to those of the managerial market. Tsui, therefore hopes that the importance of organizational competence can be further investigated.

6.2.1b Supervisor Competence

It is evident that supervision is a central element in effective social work practice (Bernard & Goodyear, 2014; Falender, Burnes, & Ellis, 2013; Reiser & Milne, 2012). Here, supervisors are responsible for ensuring competent practice in social work services. Supervisors who are able to demonstrate their knowledge and skills relevant to supervisee's present concerns seem particularly helpful. This kind of competence coincides with theoretical, empirical, and practical literature on supervisor self-disclosure (Ladany & Walker, 2003). Therefore, participants in this two-phase study believe that key to effective supervision is work conducted by trained supervisors. However, no supervisors in this study had formal structured training in supervision work. Our supervisors commonly use their past experiences as supervisees as a basis for practicing as a supervisor. They tend to eliminate those supervision methods that they feel would invite negative feelings and lower frontline social workers' motivation to seek help and adopt those they perceive as providing high levels of empathy, warmth, acceptance, validation, genuineness, and tangibility

to encourage frontline social workers' willingness to learn (see Chapter 5). Indeed, our supervisors should be equipped with the required characteristics that facilitate the supervision process including: good clinical skills and knowledge, an accepting supervisory climate, desire to train or invest in supervision, be able to match supervision with supervisee's development, provide constructive feedback, be empathic, flexible and available, possess good relationship skills and be an experienced clinician (Lowry, 2001).

Furthermore inadequate supervision was related to supervisors' clinical incompetence as many had either ceased clinical practice after becoming a supervisor or seldom had time to undertake clinical work training to maintain their professional knowledge. All these might affect their accuracy concerning clinical diagnosis and in turn, hinder frontline workers' progress. The ultimate outcome of supervision is to enhance supervisees' professional competence and beliefs in supervision functions for continued learning. When discussing "competence", it is most often referred to as methods or skills for delivering supervision. Methods and skills, therefore, must be effective to achieve a variety of supervision objectives.

Participants commented that the most inadequate supervision practice was having no supervision contract. A supervision contract is an agreement that lists the responsibilities of all parties for the purpose of increasing accountability for those concerned. Many researchers claim there are advantages to having a supervision contract. For example, Hewson (1999) states that contracts can have the positive effect of increasing the achievement of goals between supervisees and supervisors, and minimizing covert agendas. Munson (2002) recommends a supervision contract outline that places emphasis on agency structure and covers: (1) timing elements, (2)

learning structures, (3) supervision structures, (4) agency conformity, and (e) special conditions. Osborn and Davis (1996) and Luepker (2003) also developed contract guidelines, which focus more on supervisee's professional development, whilst still covering necessary structural elements. Here supervision content should cover: (1) purpose, goals, and objectives, (2) context of services, (3) method of evaluation, (4) duties and responsibilities of supervisors and supervisees, (5) procedural considerations, (6) supervisors' scope of practice.

Moreover, the Australian Association of Social Workers (2013) emphasizes that social workers should be provided with appropriate supervision, training, mentoring, guidance and support to ensure mutual understanding, agreement, and accountability of the supervision roles and responsibilities for both the supervisor and supervisee. Indeed, Tsui (2004) notes that an irregular schedule of supervision sessions and infrequent contact between supervisors and supervisees in Hong Kong are the major criticisms of supervisees. This loose structure comes from the perception of supervision as an informal opportunity for discussion, rather than a professional mechanism for monitoring service quality and enhancing development. According to the impressions formed, as reported by phase one participants and nine supervisor-supervisee dyads, the agreement upon supervision focus and structure was consensual rather than contractual. However, the recommendation to have supervision contracts in the literature (Hewson, 1999; Kadushin & Harkness, 2014; Luepker, 2003; Munson, 2002; Osborn & Davis, 1996) and ethical guidelines from the social work professional association (AASW, 2013) are still not practiced. As a consequence, supervision sessions in Hong Kong are too infrequent to fulfil the function of monitoring service outcomes and enhancing the professional development of social workers. To this aim, Tsui (2004) developed a supervision

model, which comprised several social work supervision constructs: (1) function - firstly refers to providing support to social workers; secondly, it refers to providing education in social work methods, and thirdly, monitoring organization policies, rules and regulations; and lastly, getting a consensus in terms of the purpose of supervision; (2) principles – these should be executed according to professional values of social work, organizational objectives, professional and personal practice in the cultural context, effective use of power and authority, accountability to agencies and stakeholders, interpersonal transactions and transformation leading to personal and organizational growth and development, and fulfilment of staff satisfaction with supervision, job accomplishment, and client outcomes; (3) structure – regular, safe environments, agreed supervision goals, methods, and evaluation; and (4) supervisory alliances – personal attributes and humanistic practice. Although participants could not systematically list what ideal supervision should be, their requests made in the interviews mirror Tsui's (2004) proposed supervision constructs (see Chapter 4; Tables 5 and 6).

One positive factor gained from this study regarding supervisors' clinical competence was that supervisees from the phase two dyads acknowledged their supervisors' efforts in providing good supervision in terms of Kaiser's (1997) reported skills for achieving competent services for clients. That is, the ability to observe what is happening with clients (perceptual skill), ability to interpret those observations which include knowledge and application of theoretical approaches, diagnosis and assessment, and identification of the subjective experiences of both clients and practitioners (conceptual skill), the ability to intervene effectively in the treatment, and the ability to develop increased self-awareness.

For example, supervisee FD6 shared that her supervisor's clinical knowledge and skills were good. The experience she recalled was at a time she needed to handle a child abuse case and encountered much anxiety. Her supervisor explained how to deal with a suspected child abuse case, especially focusing on the details of the incident, timelines, report writing, discussion procedures and using self-experience to role-play the processes executed with different parties. Overall, all the supervisor-supervisee dyads were satisfied with their supervision practice, nevertheless they still felt that formal and structural training is essential to reduce frustration in the trial and error process and prevent unnecessary risk conflicts between two parties, which can ultimately cause poor outcomes for clients.

Meanwhile, there is no formal accredited social work supervision training in Hong Kong. However, the Hong Kong Professional Counselling Association (HKPCA) has organized a voluntary scheme where social workers who have at least five years' experience, complete a post-graduate training course in supervision and pass an additional assessment to become a qualified supervisor. In May 2014, the Social Welfare Department of Hong Kong supported the Hong Kong Social Workers Association by securing funding from the Lotteries Fund to implement a supportive supervision scheme. The Scheme is a three year project, which started in May 2014 to April 2017 with the aim of building and strengthening a critical mass of one hundred competent and effective social work supervisors through a localized, evidence-based and validated professional development program for certification of supervisors. Qualified participants will be accredited as "Certified Social Work Supervisors" (CSWSs). After completion of the program, the CSWSs will be able to: give more effective and quality supervision to frontline social workers so as to (1) nurture independent practice; (2) serve as model practitioners in providing effective

clinical support to frontline social workers in their daily practice; (3) help promote the awareness of social workers of the need to foster their support in the application of supervised practice, which eventually will ensure the quality of professional services in the sector. This scheme is seen as significant in supporting social work supervision practice. However, these schemes are far removed from those training courses conducted by respectable training institutes in Western countries such as the United States and United Kingdom.

The idea of conducting similar formal supervision training courses in Hong Kong is not easy. Firstly, we needed to have a culturally sensitive training curriculum. For example, supervisors and supervisees were more concerned with emotional support and teamwork and the content of discussion in supervision sessions could relate to personal matters. This would be considered as crossing supervisory relationship boundaries in the North American professional literature (Davys & Beddoe, 2010; Dill & Bogo, 2009; Kadushin & Harkness, 2014; Ladany, Mori, & Mehr, 2013). In addition, there is no single model that adequately describes the entire supervision process. As such, developing a culturally sensitive supervision model for our professional practice is a demanding task. Secondly, application of supervision knowledge and skills requires work experience. Institution scholars might not be seen as adequate as they lack fieldwork experience, while social work practitioners are also seen as inappropriate due to a lack of theoretical knowledge. Therefore, organizing an effective training team is another hurdle.

Moreover, roles and responsibilities of supervisors are complex. Supervision is a psychologically and physically exhausting job as supervisors are not only liable to individual supervisees, but also to the profession, or field as a whole. The multiple

responsibilities of the supervisor require a focus on administrative and professional competence issues. Thus, these consistent findings indicate that both supervisors and supervisees desire comprehensive and responsive training and thus priority should be given to normalizing supervisors' training. The possibility of actualizing this meaningful mission is difficult, if not impossible. However, individual participant P3 expressed that it is possible if cooperation can be achieved between scholars and practitioners as there should be no problem in mobilizing these experts and she would be happy to take part in this project. Supervision practice knowledge gained from this research and available human resources that this study has connected are good reference points for carrying out this mission.

To summarize, imbalanced supervision roles and supervisors' incompetence in supervision can bring about ineffective supervision. Many researchers have attempted to identify terms to describe the situation, especially concerning elements that constitute a good supervisor (Carifo & Hess, 1987; Holloway & Neufeldt, 1995; Stoltenberg, McNeill, & Delworth, 1998). However, negative experiences were found to significantly determine the level of supervisory alliance and should therefore be prevented. To this point, Ramo-Sanchez et al., (2002) conducted research to investigate what would happen when there was a negative event in supervision. Would it cause irreparable harm to the supervisory relationship? Could factors such as developmental level and attachment style of the supervisee mediate the effects of a negative event? Evidence here suggests that those respondents who experienced negative events in supervision scored lower on: supervisory alliance, satisfaction with supervision, views of training, relationship with clients and career goals (Ramos-Sanchez et al., 2002, p. 199). One particular finding is related to supervisees' developmental level and supervisory alliance, which also happened in

this present study. However, the results were different. Ramos-Sanchez's results indicate that supervisees at the higher developmental level (Stoltenberg, 1981) are more likely to report a better working alliance with their supervisors than supervisees at the "beginning" of the developmental stage. The reason for this was that supervisees' skills, theoretical grounding, and case conceptualizations at the "higher" developmental level began to approximate those of supervisors. As a result, the supervisees and supervisors would be more likely to agree on tasks and goals for supervision, less conflict would occur, and this would produce a better working alliance in the supervisory relationship. Another possible reason was that with increased development the supervisor-supervisee relationship became less directive and more reciprocal. The change in the relationship allowed the focus of supervision to evolve from being centred on supervisees to broader aspects of supervision. Furthermore, supervisees exhibited less anxiety and developed a higher level of trust with supervisors. This provided greater opportunity for development of the supervisor-supervisee relationship.

There are three phases that constitute the supervisory relationship. In this study, supervisory relationships of the three supervisor-supervisee dyads at the "Beginning" developmental phase were reported as better than those supervisees at the "higher" developmental level. The reason for this was that supervision was found to be more nurturing and supportive. Supervision would focus on developing supervisees' professional knowledge and skills because the supervisees' skills, theoretical grounding, and case conceptualizations were weaker and supervisors would show empathy to supervisees when their work outcomes were unsatisfactory. In addition, supervisors were reported as providing more internal and external training opportunities for supervisees at the "beginning" developmental stage in the hope of

enhancing their professional knowledge and skills. Supervisors in phase one of this study reported that supervisees at the “higher” developmental stage had the attitude that they did not learn much from their supervisors, and some even felt supervision was a waste of their time. Thus, they would exhibit anxiety in supervision because they did not know what to do. Fortunately, the three supervisor-supervisee dyads, SD7, SD8 and SD9 at the “mature” developmental phase tended to have fewer directives and less need for direction from their supervisor. The focus of supervision also shifted from supervisees’ to service development or staff management issues. Clearly, trust and relationship bonding was well established. Similarly, Jacobsen & Tanggaard (2009) also investigated Danish “Beginning” supervisees’ experiences of good and poor supervisory events. Their findings indicate that “beginning” supervisees found supervisor guidance and support helpful.

Whereas, Ladany, Mori and Mehr (2013) reported that ineffective supervision depreciated supervision, caused ineffective client conceptualization and treatment, and weakened the supervisory relationship. Magnuson, Norem, & Wilcoxon, and (2000) describe six areas of organization-administrative incompetence as “lousy” supervision. Equally, Ellis (2001) also attempts to bring clarity to harmful supervision issues by offering a unified framework. Likewise, Wong conducted a survey on “My Perceptions of Supervision in Singapore” and presented the results at a seminar titled “Dilemmas in Social Work Supervision and the Way Forward” (Tsui, O’Donoghue, & Wong, 2016). The results show that 99.2% of respondents consider it as an important area of social work practice. This response is very similar to the research findings in this current study. However, when asked about whether they were satisfied with the supervision they received, 54.5% indicated that they were. With regards to the quality of supervision, only 16.3% of respondents indicated that

they were receiving quality supervision. The majority (95%-98%) of Wong's respondents felt that more could be done for social work supervision and that training would be useful. From the above studies, support for supervision improvement and/or advancement such as "better", "satisfactory", "quality" and "more" would not improve our supervision effectiveness. To improve or advance our social work supervision, focus should be placed on a detailed analysis of practitioners' ways of thinking, preferred positions, and applicability of work strategies. For example, the distinctive elements between the findings of Ramos-Sanchez et al., (2002) and this current research on supervisees' responses in different developmental stages. Overall, of most importance here is that we should not focus on questioning the negative issues in supervision. Instead, we need to focus on how to detect, solve, and prevent what appears to be a major problem in the field.

6.2.2 Supervisory Relationship of Supervisor-Supervisee Dyads in the Chinese Cultural Context

The quality of the relationship between supervisor and supervisee is crucial to effective outcomes in supervision and has been reported in Chapter two's literature review. To this point, many researchers investigated how this supervisory working alliance relationship is constructed in supervision sessions, especially in supervisor-supervisee dyads. Supervision involves lengthy and intensive interactions between two people, where positive or negative outcomes result. Throughout the interviews in this study, participants explicitly recounted the important themes that they affirmed as cultivating positive supervisor working alliance relationships. Specifically, it discusses how the unique characteristics of the supervisee require the supervisor to behave in certain ways for relationship alliance. Individual differences refer to those unique personal qualities that constitute one's personality. Cultural

differences will address the supervisory relationship alliance process in the traditional Chinese cultural context.

6.2.2a Essential Individual Personal Qualities in Supervisory Relationship Alliances

We all need relationships throughout our lifespan and it is through building good connections with others that we achieve a sense of well-being and safety. Relationships are built on mutual empowerment and mutual empathy. Supervisory working alliance is one type of human relationship. Conceptually, Kadushin (1968, 1992a, 1992b) has identified ideal supervision characteristics. Firstly, supervision should be conducted in a comfortable and pleasant physical environment, and follow a regular schedule that is planned well in advance. Secondly, supervisors should give clear, concrete, specific, and workable instructions to supervisees. Thirdly, supervisors must be capable of understanding and responding to the difficulties that supervisees encounter in direct practice. Finally, supervisors should demonstrate competence in direct social work practice, for the benefit of their supervisees. With regards to good supervisors, they should be supportive and noncritical (Kadushin & Harkness, 2014; Munson, 2002; Tsui, 2005; Tsui & Ho, 2003). Noncritical supervision is one type of feedbacks. Brannon (1985) illustrates some examples of how a variety of teaching techniques can be used to help supervisors communicate information and knowledge. They are: (1) “brainstorming” allows free and open exploration of novel ideas in a noncritical environment; (2) role play provides the participants with a number of therapeutic outcomes, such as trying new and different behaviours or finding new solutions to old problems; (3) modelling behaviour allow supervisors to specifically demonstrate certain behaviours to supervisees for later retrieval and performance; and (4) guided reflection is the process that involves a

re-creation, a return to the scene of interaction with the client, in order to facilitate examination of behaviour. This technique is particularly suited to the goal of facilitating self-learning in that the worker has their own memory database for examining specific instances of practice.

It was found that participants in this present study also used these four feedback types, which involved supervisees in a self-discovery type journey affording them less embarrassment and hard feelings. Cherniss and Egnatios (1977) also found that noncritical supervision such as moral, insight-oriented, and feeling-oriented styles were better received by supervisees than those authoritarian, confrontational, or laissez-faire styles. Perceptually, participants in this current study described that competent and good supervisors should be educated with: (1) a clear mind of their job and role, mission and vision of the organization that they served, and work objectives; (2) with good mental agility to grasp details of matters, problems, and come up with new responses to situations; (3) know how to channel messages to frontline social workers and also organizational personnel; (4) be able to balance both wishes and desires of organizations and frontline social workers; (5) have courage and be able to take responsibilities in a committed manner; and (6) all the above together with adequate management and professional knowledge and skills. These listed characteristics are well documented in extant research (Freeman, 1985)

According to the conceptual and perceptual characteristics of effective supervision and the characteristics of competent professional supervisors, our social work practitioners have a framework for understanding the “knowledge base” that are essential facilitative factors in relationship alliances and effective supervision. However, knowing about something theoretically is not necessary knowing how to

do it. They should acquire procedural knowledge i.e., knowing how to do something and strategic knowledge i.e., knowing when and why something is done. For enriching procedural and strategic knowledge, most supervisors in the dyads reported that they worked very closely with their supervisees for better understanding of their work. Some even co-worked with supervisees to demonstrate the necessary work skills. In addition, some supervisors still continued their clinical practice for maintaining their knowledge and skills. Their supervisory competence is supported by supervisee FD9's comments. She said that professional competency was enhanced through supervision. She had confidence in delivering intervention to clients, which subsequently led to better outcomes in her work. She viewed her supervisor as her learning model. This result is consistent with Kaiser (1997) who reported that supervisory competence should cover perceptual, conceptual and interventional skills to deliver effective supervision to supervisees.

Moreover, Borden's (1983) working alliance model and Bowlby's (1980) attachment theory were found applicable in illustrating the nine supervisor-supervisee dyads' relationship development. The urge to have a sense of security to make honest disclosures in supervision sessions has been repeatedly mentioned by participants throughout the focus groups and individual interviews. Disclosure is most likely to be related to their work struggles. However, building this sense of security is a lengthy process. Fortunately, the ability of supervisors in all the dyads to provide constructive feedback in a non-judgmental and unthreatening manner was found to be most effective in helping supervisees to disclose their needs. Falender and Shafranske (2012) named this process-oriented supervision. In the supervision process, both supervisor and supervisee had positive and negative

feelings and interpretations towards other people's behaviour, which resulted in connection or disconnection during supervision.

According to Bowlby's (1980) attachment theory, secure adults have a positive view of themselves and others. For example, frontline worker FD1 had very tense feeling in supervision sessions as his supervisor was very instructive this made FD1 feel he had lost his independence and true-self in a "master-apprentice" type relationship. He interpreted this as an obstacle for individuality and professional development. Initially, this made him resistant to supervision sessions. However, by experiencing his supervisor's more caring attitude, that is, when she recognised his client-focused working attitude, his delegation of work and "burnout" symptoms, he eventually felt that he had neglected his supervisor's dual role and responsibilities. SD1 as a supervisor had the responsibility to fulfil the agency's expectations for conducting quality services to clients. Thus, she needed to monitor new staff closely for risk prevention and ensure a quality service rather than giving priority to staff's own interests and development. FD1 also reflected that he had the responsibility to disclose or give indications of his wishes and desires to his supervisor. This reflection encouraged him to re-connect with supervision (see Chapter 5). Without this self-reflection and pro-active attitude, FD1 could not form an alliance with his supervisor. Being proactive ensured he obtained the preferable type of good quality supervision, which should also be supervisees' responsibility. Inskipp and Proctor (1993) have created a list of responsibilities for supervisees, which is beneficial for supervisees and supervisors' reference. The details include: identifying practice issues of needs from supervisors; becoming increasingly able to share freely; identifying what responses supervisees require; becoming more aware of the organizational contracts that affect supervisor, clients and supervisees; being open to

feedback; monitoring tendencies to justify, explain or defend; and developing the ability to distinguish what feedback is useful.

With reference to the above findings, there is evidence here that personal qualities are crucial to the supervisory working relationship alliance. For example, trust, honesty, positive attitudes, openness and listening are essential personal qualities that can lead to a more productive session and more honest and helpful feedback. This is similar to those reported in the literature, where positive aspects of supervisory relationships also describe good supervisory relationships (see Bordin, 1983; Ellis, 2001; Ladany et al., 2005).

Among all the personality attributes, that are, trust, honesty, positive attitudes, openness and listening, “trust” is the key construct of supervisory working alliance relationships because it results from a number of relational behaviours including reflection, acceptance, listening, modesty, cooperation, and mutual exchange. Long-term relationships depend on cooperation. To achieve this, individuals need to be able to substitute for each other, influence one another, and have a positive attitude towards one another. This interactive process has been clearly illustrated in Chapter two through application of Bowlby’s (1980) attachment theory to explain how two people connect or disconnect with others. Trust between the two parties in the nine supervisor-supervisee dyads progressively increased from the “beginner” supervisory developmental stage to the more proficient supervisory “developmental” stage during the interactive process in supervision sessions. As such, supervision is an intensive learning experience provided in an atmosphere of support and encouragement. It demands mutually developed and invested effort from both parties.

Significantly, mutual support and encouragement are the major connectors that encourage reciprocal relationships between supervisors and supervisees.

6.2.2b Supervisory Relationship Alliances and Reciprocal Relationships in the Chinese Cultural Context

It has been recognized that one of the most significant features of Chinese culture is its emphasis on a harmonious society and the appropriate arrangement of interpersonal relationships (Abbott, 1970; Ho, 1976; Tsui, 2003; Tsui, Ho, & Lam, 2005). Five features namely, *Ren qing* (人情 – primary and intimate relationships), *Yuan* (緣- relationships determined by God or by impression), *En* (恩- memory of favour), *Bao* (報- return of favour), and *Mianzi* (面子-face/status in the social network) are frequently used to illustrate much deeper understandings of Chinese social behaviour and relationships. These features are applied below to illustrate the process of supervisory interactions in the supervisor-supervisee dyads.

Supervisees' desire to learn and improve and being non-defensive and open to feedback are important characteristics that facilitate the supervision process. Overall, all supervisees in the supervisor-supervisee dyads acknowledged that learning from supervision was effective and valuable. In return, they had strong feelings of appreciation and would do whatever they could for the best work outcomes and were happy to undertake extra work if requested by their supervisors. For example, supervisor SD2 showed care and concern for FD2's personal development and workload. She would provide resources to assist her work to reduce stress and would not take her for granted requesting overtime. FD2 said she always remembered SD2's favours. As such FD2 remained in post without considering changing employment even though she had to travel more than one and half hours to the office.

Another example of this reciprocal relationship is provided by FD3 who described her supervisor SD3 as an easy going, approachable and considerate person. He showed concern for her adjustment, without support, in a secondary work setting. She described this situation as being similar to, “social workers working in a secondary setting were like those married daughters who were considered out of their home and should be independent without placing burdens on the maternal family”. However, her supervisor did not treat her this way. She stated that her supervisor was knowledgeable; would use a guided reflection method to help her identify alternatives and strategies to complete her work or solve the encountered difficulties. He even encouraged her to explain which theory she was using in case conceptualization and intervention. As such, this encouraged her to practice clinical knowledge and skills although she felt she was very weak in theoretical practice. Consequently, FD3 also remained in post rather than accepting a job offer with higher pay and better status. However, supervisor SD6 viewed things somewhat differently in that she felt her supervisee FD6 sometimes behaved like a child and came to her for comfort. Thus, she had the feeling of raising a child. In Chinese traditional culture, seniors tend to feel that they have obligations to nurture juniors. These examples have demonstrated how: “*Renging (人情)–primary and intimate relationships*” are worked in the early stages of supervisor-supervisee dyads. They are bound up with ideas of returning favour – “*Bao (報) - return of favour*” and *memory of favour* – “*En (恩) - memory of favour*” where supervisees emphasize their appreciation of supervisory relationships.

Other participants emphasized the value of maintaining harmony in hierarchically relationships and appropriate boundaries. Supervisor SD4 described supervision as a place where the experienced person, who had a formal appointment with the organization, had a legitimate requirement to help staff including FD4 to

understand the organization's basic values such as "humanistic", "humble", and "life". In the social work context, she needed to provide clear explanations to FD4 that her organization upholds religious values and expects staff to act as "servants" to Jesus Christ when serving clients. Her administrative duty was to enforce these values in practice. In addition, before FD4 began her work, she provided her with a thorough orientation on the organization's policies, service quality standards (SQS); work procedures such as when to report issues; what should be consulted with the supervisor; what things needed to be followed-up; and how to do. As such, supervisee FD4 expressed that she respected her supervisor's legitimate power and hierarchical status and looked forward to learning from her as supervision was not provided in her previous employment. By cherishing this relationship, she felt that it was her responsibility to best make use of supervision time by preparing what she wanted to discuss with her supervisor.

Another supervisor-supervisee dyads' supervisory experience here was that supervisee FD6's supervisor was very organized with very good time management. Her attitude towards supervision was very serious and well planned. In contrast, FD6 had poor management of her work. She became upset and disappointed upon discovering her supervisor was talking about her weaknesses behind her back. In light of giving her "*face and Mainz*-(面子-*Face/status in social network*)", she chose to remain quiet. Apart from receiving "*Face*" from supervisees, supervisors were also very concerned with their own "*Face*" as they could lose or gain "*Face*" as a result of their work performance with supervisees. Supervisor SD9 was well-known in his service. He also had status in the community network. Many community leaders would give him "*Face*". Thus, he was very concerned with staff's work performance. Therefore, he always reminded FD9 to surpass him and would scold her if he found

she had made mistakes. Basically, her poor work performance would make him suffer a loss of “*face*”. These examples have illustrated Chinese “*face and mianzi*” in supervisory relationships, similar communication patterns were also been found in Tsui’s (2003) study.

6.2.3 Supervision Types and Effects of Power and Authority – Chinese Management

Generally, participants recognized that they did not have knowledge about the academic terms regarding supervision powers and supervision types used in the literature. They could only describe what and how they used power and authority such as assigning work to their supervisees, monitoring their work progress and quality, providing guidance and support to facilitate their work, writing work performance appraisals, and enhancing their professional knowledge and skills through training. Appropriate terms concerning supervisory powers were shared by researcher with participants, which were helpful in filling their knowledge gap. Overall, supervisors were able to use their legitimate and expert powers adequately in different supervisory relationship developmental stages. However, they seldom used reward and punishment powers due to being afraid of accusations of favouritism to specific staff or being labelled as the “bad guy” from those they punished. This finding mirrors Tsui’s (2008) findings in that social workers respond accordingly to the Chinese teaching orientation of maintaining harmonious relationship.

To this point, Tsui (2006) illustrated three Chinese schools of philosophical thought regarding management. The most idealistic is the Taoist belief that staff members can function well without any supervision from superiors. He claimed this

as the ideal state – a “shared-vision” with a team of self-motivated staff members. The second school of thought follows the Confucian philosophy of management, which emphasizes mutual respect and adherence to social norms (Ko & Ng, 1993). Tsui (2006) interpreted this as the traditional view of “supervision”. Staff members contribute their efforts, and in turn receive esteem, respect, and vision. The most pragmatic school of thought reflects the Legalist philosophy, which emphasizes the establishment of fair policy, a clear reward and punishment system, and specific regulations for staff members. Tsui named this as “super-mission” since everyone follows the order from the top down.

Shing (1988) identified six important characteristics of Chinese management i.e., totality, reciprocity, harmony, unity, pragmatism, and clarity. Indeed, Tsui (2006) concluded in his study that the ideal supervision formulated by social workers was consistent with the philosophies of Chinese management. Whereas Tsui (2005), in his study regarding the use of supervisory authority in the Chinese cultural context, found that the supervisory relationship of social workers in Hong Kong is a complicated mix of hierarchical, collegial, and familial relationships. Supervisors view the supervisory relationship from an organizational perspective but supervisees view it from an emotional perspective.

In this current study, our supervisor-supervisee dyads were found to be more in line with the Taoist school, which emphasizes self-motivation and autonomy of supervisees. Supervisors tried their best to deliver a co-constructed supervision practice with supervisees. To achieve this goal, they would cultivate a comfortable working environment together with good interpersonal skills to gain frontline social workers cooperation and collaboration. Some suggestions made by supervisors in

practicing their supervision work were: (1) supervisors should promote a work-life balance to ensure frontline social workers having good mental and physical health; (2) supervisors should identify supervisees' strengths and provide them with a platform to perform and contribute; (3) supervisors should use adequate supervision methods to facilitate frontline social workers' learning; and (4) supervisors need to have a give and take attitude towards frontline social workers, trust them, and be open-minded.

However, supervisor and supervisee dyads (competent supervisory group) in the "forming" stage appeared to be more conscious about self-responsibility in supervision preparation and follow-up work. The supervisory working alliance relationship was reported as more stable after a period of time and trust evolved. The positive aspects of their relationship were consistent with literature on supervisory relationships as encompassing warmth, acceptance, respect, understanding, and trust (Bordin, 1983; Ellis, 2001; Ladany et al., 2005). The supervisor-supervisee dyads were well-connected and more promising in joint ventures. They would handle each other's emotions and needs with care and tolerance of differences was significantly found in some supervisor-supervisee dyads. For example, FD6 described her supervisor as having very good administrative work abilities such as being very organized, very detailed, with very good time management and good at explaining issues supported with evidence. However, she was just the opposite being unorganized, absent minded, with poor time management. She reflected that her supervisor SD6 did not use legitimate power to challenge her work style. Eventually, FD6 became more self-regulated through her supervisor's guided reflective practice. As such, supervisors in the "competent" stage appeared to be more confident in their leaderships. Their attention was more focus on helping supervisees to advance their

professional competence. For example, SD7 would encourage supervisee FD7 to learn special clinical techniques. Thus, their discussion shifted from supervisees' work performance in mastering their work to professional growth and development in supervision sessions. Regarding supervisees in the "proficiency" stage, supervisors treated their supervisees in a more collegial way, involving them in important decision-making and service development. Expert and referent powers were frequently used for connecting these experienced supervisees in supervision. Clearly, supervisors' leadership styles had also been transformed in the process. More description regarding this point is detailed in the following explanation.

Within traditional Chinese orientation, participants may learn about the idea of "*Self-cultivation (修身)*", which expects them to be a perfect person. This perfection has been identified in all supervisor-supervisee dyads in this current study. For example, supervisor, SD4 stated that she and her supervisee FD4 were very discipline. For example, FD4 said she would prepare the supervision agenda for her supervisor prior to supervision and would inform her supervisor about the work outcomes, if necessary, without being reminded by her supervisor. This was an advantage in their relationship building process in light of consideration of self-discipline: taking things slowly; paying attention to detail; and making best efforts in supervision practice. SD4 said she would not monitor FD4 closely because she trusted her. If she could do it, she would do. If not, she should have a work-related reason and definitely not because of laziness (see Chapter 5).

Among the nine supervisor-supervisee dyads, eight out of nine supervisees were younger than and had less working experience than their supervisors. When asked whether they had encountered any interpersonal communication problems in

the Chinese cultural context, they stated that they did not have any uncomfortable feelings in accepting advice from their supervisors. They would show respect or give “Face” to them. When they encountered differences in work values and or work approaches, they, especially the frontline workers in the “beginner” group usually took supervisors’ advice seriously. However, they emphasized that they would not blindly follow advice if they considered it as unbeneficial for clients or at the client’s expense. They would defend their actions in the best interest of their clients. In return, some supervisors would treat their supervisees as their younger brothers and sisters and felt obliged to display patience concerning their inadequacies; tackling issues not attacking the person, and protecting supervisees from danger was considered more appropriate in these circumstances. For example, SD9 said debate on a task might occur, and demands on theoretically-based practice might result in different values, beliefs, and attitudes, yet this might not necessarily affect personal relationships if they were collaboratively working on the issue rather than “pointing the finger” at the person. Overall, he felt that he should be their protector from “outside” stresses even though he would receive comments on their “internal” stresses (see Chapter 5).

However, supervisor SD8’s supervision work was found to be more demanding and required more wisdom to promote mutual empowerment and mutual empathy, as her supervisee FD8 had worked in the service unit much longer than herself. Clearly, SD8 observed that FD8 did not have regular contact with her. Although she still respected her as a supervisor and had consultations with her regarding important matters. Therefore, instead of requesting “*Mien-tze*” (面子) and hierarchical respect from FD8, she found ways to give her “*Mien-tze*” (面子) and respect. Giving “*Face and Autonomy*” are also interpersonal behavioural practices in supervision especially when dealing with older and more experienced frontline social workers. “*Face*”

threatening moves are a primary source of conflict among the Chinese. However, if these moves are immediately cued and skillfully transformed into “*Face*” enhancing skills, conflict is usually avoided and relational harmony is developed.

Regarding the supervisory approach, participants claimed expert and referent powers were the most effective components in supervision work. Regarding supervision types, active reflective had better supervision results. However, these three types of supervision did have supplementary effects on one another under different work contexts and personalities of workers.

In addition, a good supervisor has the responsibility to develop the supervisee. It is argue here that development of staff is another way of showing power and authority. For example, SD7 stated that the supervision focus for FD7 placed more emphasis on planning her professional development and advancement, and providing her with direction because she needed to have a goal (see Chapter 5). In response to SD7’s supervision, FD7 appreciated SD7’s efforts. Through supervision, she had developed confidence in her professional knowledge and skills; with her supervisor’s support she felt secure in dealing with work stresses and pressures; and her supervisor’s confirmation of her work performance was greatly appreciated. For example, when her supervisor became aware of training opportunities, she would enrol FD7 and encourage her to attend; and she also kept an eye out for courses such as narrative training that FD7 had showed an interest in.

Furthermore, pressure may be imposed on staff if supervisors exceeded their power. For example, supervisee FD9 admitted that she was not an ambitious person and also did not like to undertake administrative work. However, her supervisor

always displayed care concerning her career and explained to her the expectation placed on senior staff to take up more responsibility. However, this supervisee felt that SD9's emotional support during supervision was inadequate. Indeed, FD9 experienced strong negative emotions after each supervision session (see Chapter 5).

In general, supervisors use power and authority. Usually, authority is viewed in the context of demanding behaviour and degrees of responsiveness. For example, demanding but responsive supervisors are committed, structured and focused, empathic, and knowledgeable; and their supervisees appear to be confident, have clarity regarding their roles, feel secure, are engaged and possess problem-solving abilities. In contrast, undemanding and unresponsive supervisors are neglected, unavailable, uncaring, and have a limited knowledge base. Their supervisees appear to be anxious, isolated, unclear on their roles, they find it difficult to develop, are avoidant and have a lack of problem-solving abilities. Therefore, how much supervisors understand the outcomes caused by different authoritative practices should be an area for further study (Leung, 2012; Tsui, 2005; Tsui, Ho, & Lam, 2005).

To summarize, the nine supervisor-supervisee dyads felt that supervisory relationships were built on relational-attachments. In relation to the five features of Chinese culture "*renqing, yuan, bao, en, and face*", their interactions were based more on professional theories, facts, and clients' well-being. The use of expert power together with an active reflective supervision style and supportive action has cultivated effective supervision that can facilitate supervisees' professional growth and development. Furthermore, nine characteristic behaviours were identified from the supervisor-supervisee dyads in their working alliance relationships including:

trust, support, respect, reflection, acceptance, listening, modesty, cooperation, and exchanges were all good reference points for developing effective supervisory relationships. In addition, the supervisor-supervisee dyads also developed their own powers and supervision styles for promoting supervision outcomes. These are detailed below.

Every supervisor-supervisee dyad had their unique way of developing their supervisory working alliance relationship and different supervision results were cultivated. Collective wisdom was illustrated according to three supervisory developmental stages, “beginning”, “competent”, and “proficient”, as set out below.

Firstly, the supervisory strategies of the “beginning” developmental group were: (1) provided sufficient trust and autonomy to develop supervisees’ professional styles and images. Job satisfaction of professional selves could be obtained through; (2) demonstration of social work values to nurture supervisees’ work commitments and promote professional aspirations; and (3) ensured supervisees’ needs were met, their contributions were recognized, emotional stress was supported, and their welfare protected. All of which could increase supervisees’ loyalty, work commitment, and staff stability.

Secondly, supervisory strategies developed by the “competent” developmental group were: (1) solely using legitimate power and authority could not cultivate supervisees’ self-regulated behaviour. Being a good role model and illustration based on facts through supportive action could help develop supervisees’ responsible attitudes and behaviour; (2) creating a collaborative working culture could convey a fair, just, and organizational mission that conveys messages detailing clear

boundaries that illustrate the differences between friendships and supervisory relationships for ease of execution of work expectations and forming co-partnership working cultures; and (3) providing new challenges for supervisees' for the advancement of professional knowledge and skills to improve supervisees' operational working attitudes and behaviour; reframing their mind-sets and revitalising their energy to complete their work.

Thirdly, supervisory strategies of the “proficient” developmental group were: (1) supervisors need to be sensitive to prevent supervisees being manipulated by clients. Reflective supervision can develop supervisees' confidence and cognitive functions in handling manipulative clients; (2) some experienced supervisees would be resistant to supervision as they felt that they were capable of mastering their own work. Thus, supervisors could show respect and give them “*Face*” to foster reciprocal relationships to increase work assistance and support, and ultimately cultivate “*Yin & Yang*” complementary energies; and (3) supervisees could form an orderly team if work instruction is clear, and tasks are matched to supervisees' strength and interest. Indeed, the supervisor's ultimate objective is to deliver the best possible service to agency clients, both quantitatively and qualitatively, in accordance with agency policies and procedures.

6.2.4 Good and Poor Supervisory Interaction Processes in Different Supervisory Developmental Stages

Tsui (2004) stated that there is no such thing as “super-vision”, but only “shared vision”. Support is always the most important thing in supervision. If supervisors can share their values, knowledge and skills with supervisees through support, job satisfaction and professional competence of frontline workers will be

enhanced and the quality of services will be improved. Supervision should be a journey of “co-reflection” between the supervisor and supervisee. Tsui’s elaboration of social work supervision is further illustrated below.

Effective supervisory alliances are built on three components: (1) positive supervision experience, (2) relational processes, and (3) effective outcomes. Positive experience relates to supervisors: availability when supervisees need assistance; providing a sense of security and trustworthiness to expose supervisees’ inadequacies and incompetence and not worrying about negative outcomes; and providing timely support when supervisees encounter stress and/or challenges from work or allegations. Relational processes concern how supervisors and supervisees relate to each other in order to achieve a working agreement, structure, hopes and expectations of supervision, accountability, and professional boundaries. Effective means supervisors provide: theoretical or evidence based advice and guidance; information and strategies that are up-to-date, adequate and applicable to solve frontline social workers’ reported problems and or requests for help; autonomy to allow supervisees’ personal growth and development. One interesting phenomenon observed in this current research was that relationships between supervisors and supervisees were not a matter of being connected or disconnected. Connection and disconnection is recursive. This indicates that if the disconnection is addressed, stronger connections result.

Interestingly, effective supervision has been recognised as serving as a buffer against stressful work conditions, to provide protection from unreasonable job demands, to offer emotional and social support during difficulties times, and to guide

frontline workers in negotiating work challenges in the organizational context (Kadushin and Harkness, 2014; Mor Barak et al., 2001).

The developmental processes of the nine dyad supervisory relationships can be described using Tuckman's (1965) forming-storming-norming-performing model of group development. Within this model, supervisory dyads have to: get to know each other by exchanging some personal information regarding work styles and professional competence, adjust to differences in values, beliefs and work experiences, tackle problems, find solutions, plan work, and deliver expected work results. During the forming stage, both parties first met and learned about supervision functions, goals and expectations. They would handle each other's emotions and needs with care and tolerating differences was significant. How mutual trust was built depended on the quality of the emerging relationship with regards to working through the processes of the framework collaboratively.

There are three common supervision types (Wonnacott, 2003), active reflective, active intrusive and passive avoidant and these were discussed with participants. Supervisors used these supervision types to promote learning and guide interaction in supervision. Most supervisor-supervisee dyads expressed that they were unfamiliar with academic terminology concerning supervision processes. Nevertheless, they were more likely to use active reflective practices in supervision. The most important was "reflective", which has been confirmed as the most effective supervision method in Kolb's (1984) learning theory and by many other researchers (Davys & Beddoe, 2010; Morrison, 2005; Wonnacott, 2003). Reflection is occurring in all the dyads, which confirms that they are moving in the "right direction" for good supervision. Moreover, Rolfe et al., (2011) defines reflection as a process of thinking, feeling,

imagining, and learning by considering what has happened in the past. This process has been repeatedly illustrated by all the supervisor-supervisee dyads including: description of what happened; exploration of what has been done and encountered feelings; evaluation on what was good and bad about the experience; then analysis of the situation can be improved; identification of an action plan; and take necessary action. However, they need more in-depth learning of the model and operation processes.

Furthermore, supervisor Sfg5 expressed that active reflective supervision types would bring about better supervision results. However, supervisor Sfg2 asserted that the three supervision types were all useful in different contexts and with different personalities. Active reflection might be more frequently used however; passive avoidant supervision was also useful when supervisors preferred frontline social workers to proceed independently with their work as they were confident in their capabilities. This supervision type might also encourage frontline social workers' commitment in dealing their work. Supervisor Sfg1 explained that the active intrusive supervisor would take a directive approach to supervision. He gave an example to illustrate how active intrusive approaches worked. Here, supervisors resembled line managers in a factory; they would give directive instructions to the workers who would do whatever they were asked. As a consequence, frontline social workers might achieve one desired outcome: task completed, yet this did not necessarily enable a worker to develop their own skills and reflect upon how that outcome was achieved. The supervisor maintains control and the frontline social worker lacks autonomy. Regarding active reflective supervision, supervisor Sfg1 used the master-apprenticeship (in Chinese this was named as Chinese Kung Fu Master, Wong Fai Hung) as an example, the master not only taught his followers

self-defense skills, he also taught them how to be good people. Supervisors who used active reflective supervision should have an understanding of what frontline social workers are doing and what is happening with those with whom they are working. The supervision process is more collaborative and allows time for frontline social workers to present their strengths and outcomes regarding their work. Regarding the above, participants felt that no matter which type of supervisory approach they experienced, it should, nevertheless aim to develop a long lasting collaborative supervisory relationship.

All participants considered that “reflection” is their usual supervision method; this raises the question of how well this approach enhances frontline workers’ critical thinking and problem solving abilities. Particularly as it appears most participants are not fully aware of the two important types of reflection. For example, reflection refers to both reflection-in-action and reflection-on-action (Schon, 1983). Reflection-in-practice occurs while events are happening. This requires good observation, recognition, intervention and making adjustments to practice. Hence the frontline worker is able to respond to changes in a similar way to responding to a dilemma, drawing on theoretical and clinical knowledge to improve the situation. Reflection-on-practice occurs after the event and is retrospective (Driscoll, 2000). In this sense, reflection provides a “lens” to revisit frontline workers’ professional competence in terms of their diagnostic knowledge, skills, and intervention approaches and develop a deeper understanding in thought and action. Therefore, awareness of this reflective practice is very important as there might be little time to make alterations in life and death situations. The researcher explained the differences between reflection-in-action and reflection-on-action to participants, as well as social work supervisors who attended the researcher’s supportive supervision scheme

training course. Unhappy memories were triggered and with hindsight, supervisors felt they should have used reflection-in rather than reflection-on events. Nevertheless, Supervisors should use these reflective practices simultaneously to obtain better supervision outcomes. Of equal importance here is that supervisors need to learn that asking the right questions in reflective supervision processes can stimulate in-depth reflection. This approach demands deconstruction and reconstruction of knowledge and skills as reflection can only be achieved when frontline workers are able to deconstruct their experience and are able to see the various layers of the situation. These are not achieved naturally, but require adequate training and practice. Reflective practice in supervision thus allows frontline workers to create new openings for different ways of thinking outside of what is already known and practiced. It allows the supervisee to “step back” and “reconsider alternatives” so that change can take place in that situation and be generalised to other situations for prevention of similar mistakes.

6.2.5 Supervisory Relationships to Supervisees’ Job Performance and Satisfaction

Job satisfaction relates to a worker’s sense of achievement and success in their employment. Good working performances are one of the contributing factors to job satisfaction. Dissatisfied employees find no enjoyment in their work (Callaway, 2006). Many studies (Bordin, 1983; Kadushin & Harkness, 2014) also provide evidence for the claim that supervision outcomes are beneficial to organisations. Supervision focusing on task assistance for supervisees may improve performance, while supervision which provides social and emotional support may reduce staff turnover. The supervisor-supervisee dyads (e.g. SD1 and FD1; SD2 and FD2) in this study have demonstrated that staff retention is the outcome of effective supervision

and positive supervisory relationship alliances. The way that supervisors accept their supervisees and allow them to have a sense of safety and feel cared for was considered their success in allaying their supervisory relationships.

Moreover, all participants in this study emphasized that without tolerance and patience the relationship would fail. The participant dyads including FD1, FD6, FD7, FD8, and FD9, expressed that they encountered disagreement and personality clashes with their supervisors. For example, due to these clashes they experienced fear of evaluation, personal rigidity, individual differences, and work styles. However, supervisors' caring and productive supervision together with supervisees' self-reflective behaviour in solving their differences, this storming type stage ended quickly. Norming and performing stages came simultaneously after the forming stage and both supervisors and supervisees experienced growth and development in good supervisory relationships.

To understand how supervisors and supervisees can effectively develop their supervisory working alliance relationships that have produced good work performances and job satisfaction for supervisees, three themes are highlighted here including trust, control, and risk. Risk was the variable that connected trust and control in their social work practice as it might involve two dimensions of threat, life threatening issues in handling clients with problems such as personality disorders, emotional stress, depression, divorce and family breakdowns; and organizational reputations and business contracts. Thus, trust and control equally determines supervisor's perceived total risk – that is, rational risk and performance risk – in working alliances. Rational risk is defined as the probability and consequences of not having satisfactory cooperation (Das and Teng, 1996).

The findings concerning supervision effects on social workers' performance and job satisfaction vary. Participants in phase one reported more negative feedback concerning supervision practice while all supervisor-supervisee dyads in phase two of the study strongly acknowledged having good work performances and job satisfaction as a result of supervision. Examples of negative feedback were: participant P4 explained it was common for social work graduates to seek help from their university teachers and some were even willing to pay for supervision and requested referrals (see Chapter 4). Similarly, frontline social worker Ffg1 stated that she would rather look for external supervision if her supervisor did not meet her expectations instead of telling her supervisor about her dissatisfaction as this might affect their relationship (Chapter 4). Furthermore, frontline social workers stated that supervisors were hierarchically above them. They held a "license to kill" (生殺之權) on their staff, whether they had annual salary increments, or their employment contracts were renewed were all within their supervisors' power. Therefore, it was natural that frontline workers felt uncomfortable to disclose their limitations, for example if they knew their supervisors preferred certain ideas, they would not oppose these ideas (see Chapter 4). Supervisor Sfg4 stated that some experienced social workers appeared to work routinely and as such, had lost their social work mission and ideal as they did not experience many challenges or opportunity to develop their career (see Chapter 4). Thus, frontline social workers' negative comments concerning social work supervision could affect supervisors' professional image. More examples regarding supervisees' dissatisfaction towards their supervision experiences can be found in Chapter four.

Effectiveness of supervision has been recognised as buffer against stressful work conditions, providing protection from unreasonable job demands, offering

emotional and social support during difficult times, and guiding workers in negotiating the challenges of the job and the organizational context (Kadushin and Harkness, 2014; Mor Barak et al., 2001). To this point, supervisors can offer valuable educational, administrative, and social support. This support can contribute to worker effectiveness and can translate into quality service delivery (Kadushin and Harkness, 2014). In response to illustrations of supervisors' behaviour and supervisees' positive work outcomes, the research findings from this current study have also demonstrated similar results. Examples shared by supervisors in the focus group concerning how they exercise their supervisory roles and responsibilities are listed as supportive evidence. They are as follows:

6.2.5a Supervisors who can conduct live supervision to facilitate supervisee's learning

Live supervision is a term describing the processes by which someone guides the therapist while he works. The person supervising watches the session, usually behind a one-way mirror, and intervenes to guide the therapist's behaviour at the moment the action is happening. Goals and methods of this process are described by Montalvo (1973). The advantage of live supervision for the therapist is that it permits access to meta-perspectives on the family/therapist interaction that is occurring in the treatment room. Indeed, live supervision is popular in family therapy work as clinicians can observe how supervisors handle human dynamics and conflicts (Minuchin, 1974; Whitaker & Keith, 1981). Participant FD2 expressed her appreciation of her supervisor's live demonstration on parenting work skills.

6.2.5b Supervisee created her own support group and had courage to seek help from her supervisor

Throughout the literature review and this study, effective supervision has been recognized as having many advantages for organizations such as preventing workers' "burnout" and decreasing staff turnover, improving and/or enhancing frontline workers' competence and increasing their job satisfaction; and improving clients' outcomes. However, there are also many reported difficulties in providing effective and timely supervision to frontline workers. For example, supervisors are not trained; imbalances and/or confusion between administrative and clinical supervision; and inadequate funding to improve supervisor-supervisee staff provision ratio. Recently, O'Donoghue (2015) reported that there have been recent calls within the literature to explore the diversity and plurality of supervision practices including group, external and peer supervision. Indeed, these supervisory practice methods were operational over twenty years ago. For example, participant P3 reported that they did not rely on supervisors' guidance and support as there was little if no supervision available twenty years ago. They identified alternatives such as using external supervisors, creating mentorship systems between senior/experienced colleagues; or forming peer support groups for mutual learning. From P3's experience, more thought should be put into these methods as they involve potential risks, such as confidentiality, professional indemnity, and legal liability.

6.2.5c Supervisor offers guidance and education on work-related problems in an encouraging manner

Schroffel (1999) examined 84 professionally trained workers in order to better understand the supervision of workers who serve seriously mentally ill clients and their job satisfaction. The results demonstrate that workers are satisfied with the

quality and style of supervision. Young's (2009) study pointed out that supervisory behaviour has become the impeding scourge in the development and success of organizations (both public and private). Similarly, research conducted by Adebayo & Ogunsina (2011) has also examined the influence that supervisory behaviour and job-induced stress might have on job satisfaction and turnover intention of police personnel in the Ekiti State of Nigeria. The results here reveal that supervisory behaviour a significantly effects job satisfaction. These research results provide evidence for the assertion that regardless of the field, social work sector, business, or disciplinary work, supervision effectiveness impacts on staff's job satisfaction and retention.

From the above illustrations, the dimensions and characteristics of supervision have been sketched. As social work is known as a demanding profession, it seems vital that job satisfaction is taken seriously. Quality of supervision, perceived efficacy and job autonomy are all contributing factors, which increase job satisfaction of social workers.

6.3 Summary of this Chapter

This research explored social work supervision practice in relation to how supervisory relationships in the Chinese cultural context contribute to the supervision process within supervisor-supervisee dyads in three service settings requiring professional supervision. This research also explored the benefits and consequences of supervision with regards to work performance and job satisfaction. The key concepts of supervisory relationship alliances are constructed here and the discussion of this chapter is summarised in Figure 9 below.

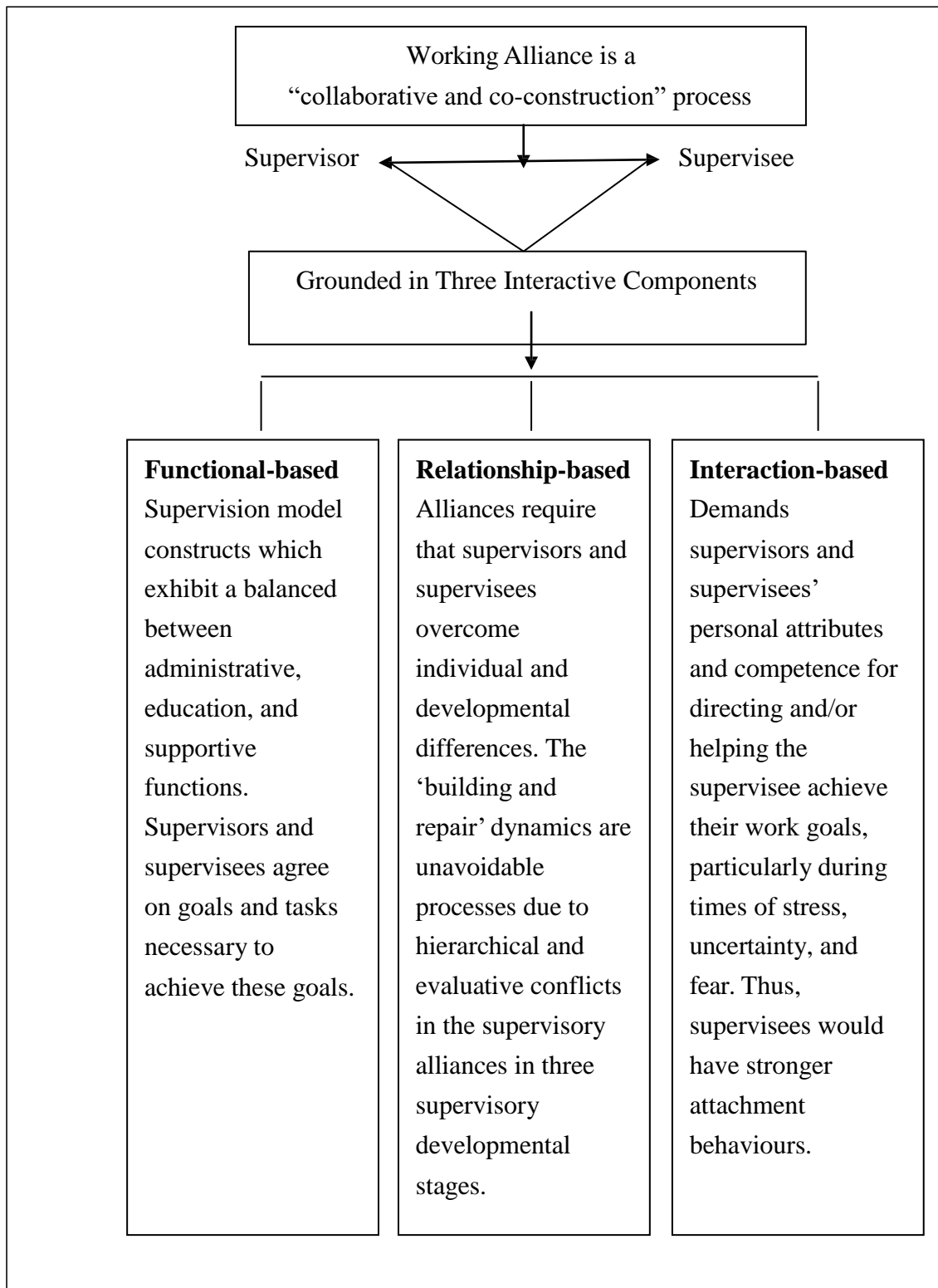


Figure 9: Relationship Alliance Processes in Supervisor-Supervisee Dyads

Supervisor-supervisee dyads confirmed that supervision is a core competency area in the social work profession as it carries important tasks of enhancing social

worker's skills, knowledge, and attitudes in order to achieve competency in delivering quality services to clients. Different supervision styles in the dyads culminated in the construction of nine strategies for promoting good supervision practice in social work. Although supervisor-supervisee dyads were conscious of practicing certain behaviours such as respecting authority, giving "*Face*" to seniors, and maintaining harmony in their supervisory relationships to maintain the traditional Chinese culture, they did not do so blindly. Clients' welfare still remained their priority. The supervisory relationship progressed healthily and developed throughout the forming, storming, norming, and performing stages. At the forming stage, it is supervisor driven and supervisee looks for concrete work direction and instruction. Later at the norming stage, supervisee tries to perform and wants more autonomy from supervisor and it moves to supervisee driven. The last stage is performing stage where both supervisor and supervisee can be the initiator. Mutually trust and respect are urged and they work for organizational and professional growth and development.

Indeed, personal attributes were important factors in developing good or poor supervisory relationships. Supervisor factors were directly related to attractive and interpersonally sensitive supervision styles; adequate use of expert and referent powers; encouraging disclosure through use of self-experience; forming healthy attachments with supervisees; and observing ethical standards. Supervisee factors covered their feelings in forming secure attachments with their supervisors. The secure feeling was based on trust in their supervisor; being respected by their supervisor; and job satisfaction. Basically, both supervisor and supervisee need to be sensitive to other party's thoughts, beliefs, and behaviours; have effective communication skills and attentive to what is going on in the supervision session;

and provide open and balance feedbacks for encouragement of reciprocal behaviours. Though giving “*Face* and autonomy” are interpersonal behavioural practice in supervision, balanced between “*Qing*” and “*Accountability*” deserves special attention.

Apart from these personal factors, supervision goals and operational processes were also significant in determining the outcome of the supervisory working alliances. Kaiser’s supervision model, Bodin’s supervisory working alliance relationship theory; and Bowlby’s attachment theory were identified as applicable to supervisor-supervisee working alliance relationship growth and development. The supervision theories including functional, relational, and interactional should be taken in an integrated developmental context for promoting supervisory relationship as each of them can be the positive or negative driving force of the other two. An integrated developmental supervisory relationship alliance constructs is formed in the following:

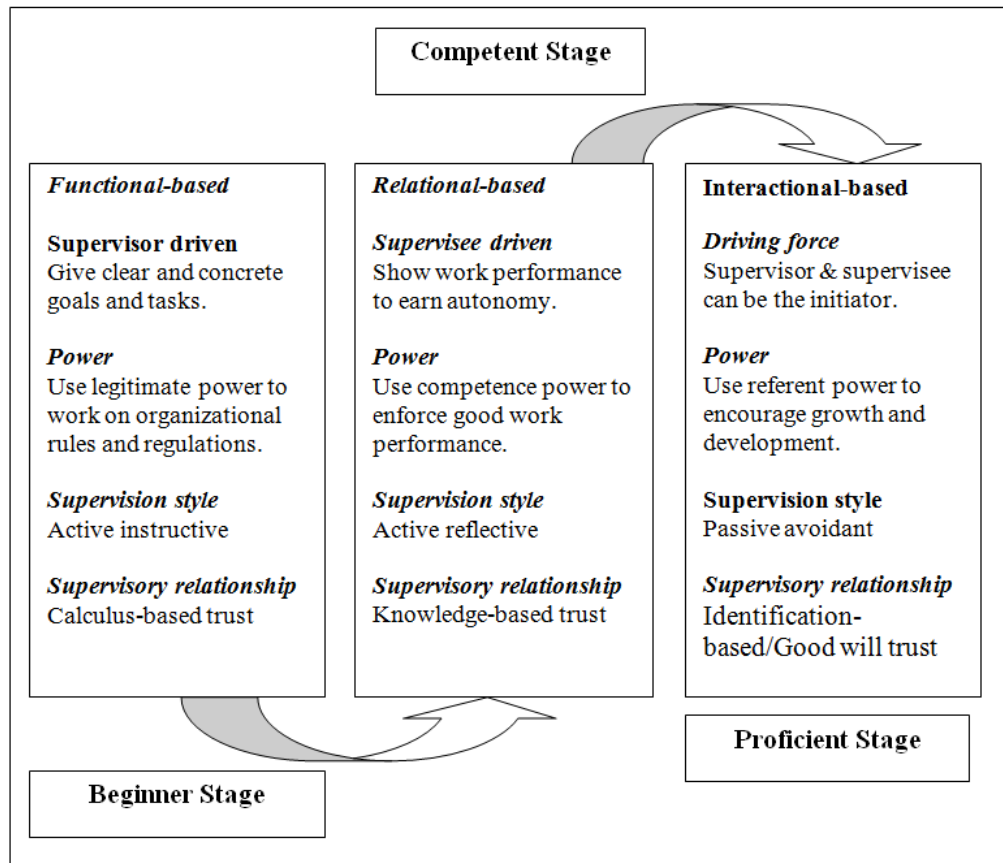


Figure 10: An Integrated Developmental Supervisory Relationship Alliance Constructs

The importance of identifying ineffective supervision elements was advocated by participants as prevention was always better than cure. Therefore, providing adequate training to supervisors was strongly requested by participants. Apart from training, the Government, social service organizations and social work practitioners should work together to legitimize social work supervision positions.

Conducting this study using supervisor-supervisee dyads to explore the role and importance of supervisory working alliance relationships in supervision practice provides a good start and valuable findings in this field. Particularly with its focus on supervisory dyads to examine supervisor- perceptions, conceptions and experiences of their actual supervision practice. A better understanding of supervision processes

or outcomes could inform strategies to optimise practitioners' work performances and job satisfaction. Moreover, this study fills knowledge, theory, and practice gaps in our social work supervision. Further research is recommended regarding the influences and impact on supervisory working alliance relationships and service outcomes in the forthcoming Chapter seven.

CHAPTER SEVEN: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1 Summary of the Study

This was an exploratory study on “professional supervisory dyad working alliances in children and family integrated services in Hong Kong”. Supervisory working alliance relationships have been increasingly reported by researchers as having a great impact on supervision effectiveness (Allyson & Beddoe, 2010; Bernard and Goodyear, 2014; Bordin, 1983; Kadushin & Harkness, 2014; Kaiser, 1997; Tsui, 2001). The results of this current qualitative study could help stakeholders such as funders of social work services, service quality gate keepers of social work services, leaders of social work service organizations, social work professionals, and frontline social workers, to have updated information on the progress of the practice of social work supervision and how supervisors and supervisees co-construct supervision to sustain the social work service’s mission and vision of helping clients in Hong Kong.

The findings from this study came from four main sources. The first source was social work educators who have remarkable training experiences spanning eight to twenty-five years. Many social work workers in Hong Kong were their students. The second source was supervision providers who have a good reputation in terms of competence in the social work sector. The third source was supervision receivers, frontline social workers, who were willing to share their supervision experiences in the hope of providing enlightenment of what good and poor social work supervision practice entailed, as well areas for improvement. The last source was supervisor-supervisee dyads, who were working in integrated family services, children and youth services and school social work services. It was intended that the

information gathered from these multiple sources would increase the credibility of this research and also stimulate enough interest to prompt social work professionals and related stakeholders to re-examine supervision practice for future development and to enhance its quality.

As social workers, we spend about one-third of our waking hours in work with colleagues, specifically supervisors. Supervisors are the significant others who exert a powerful impact on frontline social workers' psychological and physical health. Their cognitive and affective experiences are fundamentally interpersonal. Thus, the formal and informal interaction between supervisors and supervisees in the work context of values, dispositions, and behavioural tendencies are shaped by their relations with other parties. The nine supervisor-supervisee dyads of phase two of this study have presented a clear picture of the supervisory relationship alliance process. To this point, they have engaged in a number of behaviours that assist them to sustain their ongoing relationships. Their complementary manner is considerate of how supervisors affect supervisees' well-being, how much power they each have over the other, and the things that they seek from their interaction with regards to harmony or conflict. The dyads have showed commitment and displayed trust in their reciprocal relationships. For example, FD1's willingness to place himself in the position of a supervisor shows an emerging sense of trust: "She has the responsibility to safeguard the service and my interest cannot and should not override the benefit of the agency and clients". Furthermore, the images of the dyads' supervisory relationships cover four essential areas. The first area covers: (1) supervisor-supervisee dyad's mutually agreed conceptions, perceptions and experiences of supervision constructs and practices, (2) issues should be addressed to achieve effective supervision, and ways to balance professional requirements such as

accountable supervision functions, boundaries, and ethical compliance, as well as Chinese culture such as the execution of authority, power and reciprocity dilemmas in the dynamics of the Chinese characteristics “*Qing* – 情”, “*Yuan* – 緣”, “*En* – 恩”, “*Bao* – 報”, “*Mainzin* – 面子”, which place demands in different supervisory developmental stages. The second area covers: (1) supervisors’ personal qualities and (2) supervision competence in the Chinese management context and its impact on supervisory relationship establishment. The third area covers: (1) attachment styles and (2) behaviours of supervisor-supervisee dyads in the supervision process concerning connection or disconnection in supervisory relationships. The fourth area covers positive or negative supervisory relationship’s impact on supervisees’ job performance and satisfaction.

In addition, this study was situated within a constructivist paradigm. As such, the framework of this study was based on three components that are viewed in the literature as important for securing effective social work service outcomes. These are: (1) function-based (Kaiser, 1997), (2) relationship-based (Bordin, 1983), (3) interaction-based (Bowlby, 1980) and perceived as embedded in an ecological system (Kadushin and Harkness, 2014). The antecedents and consequences of positive or negative supervisory alliances determine positive or negative outcomes of supervisory working relationships (See Chapter Two, Table 1 and Figure 4). The findings of this study have provided evidence in support of a connection between supervisory relationship and supervision effectiveness in the Chinese cultural context. However, it is not only the results of the aforementioned three components’ positive development and responsiveness with one another in the supportive social work supervision system, Chinese culture orientation also places emphasis on its characteristics playing a significant role in promoting alliance relationships between

supervisors and supervisees. When conflict occurred in the supervision process, supervisees were more likely to consider the importance of “respect and harmony” concerning seniors and authority. This consideration would provide supervisors and supervisees time to rethink matters and discover alternatives to solve human conflicts or differences with supervisors. Whether this relationship alliance in the Chinese cultural context can be continued depends on the attitudes and values of social workers, especially the younger generation, towards the importance of practising traditional Chinese culture. The overall feedbacks towards social work supervision in Hong Kong are: supervision is insufficient and quality is in doubts; supervision is important but its practice requirements, structures, formats, and styles are unclear; immediate action should be taken to improve the situation for ensuring the supervision functions and effectiveness; and the social work professionals are working hard and committed on this matter and tried to do a good job. The following highlights are presented to conclude this study.

7.1.1 Values and shortfalls in social work supervision practice

The results showed that the participants in this study generally perceived that there is a strong need for supervision in social work practice. The main shortfall in current supervision practice was that it does not focus on developing supervisees’ professional knowledge and skills but places too much emphasis on administrative management of supervision. As such, participants perceived social work supervision as an on-going challenge with regards to the development of formal and planned social work supervision. Nevertheless, they also emphasize that formal and structured supervision should not be just like current practice, simply talking about finding time to help frontline social workers to solve their encountered problems or giving advice to carry out their work, it should convince supervisors and supervisees

that supervision can offer significant benefits to their professional growth and development. To actualize this mission and vision of developing effective supervision practice, competent supervisors cannot be achieved by individual effort because social work supervision is embedded in an ecological system (Kadushin & Harkness, 2014). Unfortunately, there is currently no multiple-disciplinary collaboration between the Government, social service organizations, social work training institutes, and related service stakeholders to promote supervision practice. In the meantime, supervision quality depends on supervisors' self-determined motivation to develop their supervision knowledge and skills and supervisees resort to external supervision support if they cannot access adequate supervision from their immediate supervisors. Social work services have been established in Hong Kong for more than half a decade however, not much attention has been paid to supervision in social work and thus supervision practice has not been adequately regulated.

7.1.2 Enforcement of Supervision Concepts and Constructs

There is no strong argument for supporting supervision practice in the social work sector. Participants from two focus groups, individual interviews, and supervisor-supervisee dyads have all expressed what supervision practice does well for supervisees. However, supervisory theories, goals and functions, structure and methods, and components of effective supervision may not be fully known and/or understood by professionals in social work. Furthermore, participants in this study reported that supervision takes second place when both supervisors and supervisees are occupied with work. Therefore, it is necessary to educate supervisors and supervisees' with regards to the concepts of supervision values and functions. According to participants' reports, another concerning issue was that supervision usually focused on tasks which placed emphasis on problem solving. Indeed,

supervisees and supervisors have different needs in different developmental stages (Stoltenberg & Delworth, 1987). Thus, the supervision focus needs to be changed according to supervisees' needs. For example, supervisor SD1 claimed she learnt how to be a supervisor during the supervision process. Her supervision focus was on risk prevention as she had just transited from social work practitioner to supervisor. Moreover, confidence and developing trust are initially important for both supervisors and supervisees whilst building their supervisory relationship alliance. After a period of time, supervisor SD1 felt she had established her confidence and thus her energies shifted from being task focused to being more sensitive to her supervisee's professional and developmental needs. This transformation provides valuable information that supervisors and supervisees need to be aware of during supervision sessions.

If we believe supervision has its value, effort needs to be invested to make it function effectively. Participants in this study have already mentioned that there are no specified supervision policies, no supervision contracts or guidelines in supervision practice in most social work organizations and no evaluation is undertaken concerning supervisors' performance. However, these are all important in social work supervision practice (American Board of Examiners in Clinical Social Work, 2004; National Association of Social Workers, 2013; Hong Kong Social Workers Registration Board, 2009). Another complaint from supervisees was that currently there is no evaluation of supervisors' supervision performance and thus its quality cannot be secured. As such they felt it was a waste of their time and that abusive supervision was not exposed because supervisees were too scared to disclose. This complaint might not seem fair to responsible supervisors, like those supervisors in this study. However, it is argued here that an evaluation of supervisors'

competence can increase the effectiveness, efficacy, and credibility of supervision. Thus, to encourage confidence in supervision values and functions, it is necessary to demonstrate supervision effect on supervisees, such as job performance and satisfaction and their work outcomes concerning service users. Indeed, supervisees in the dyads were motivated to receive supervision due to the benefits they felt gained.

7.1.3 Supervisory working alliance relationships in the Chinese management context

Supervisor-supervisee relationships are interactive and reciprocal (Bordin, 1983; Bowlby, 1980). Thus, supportive attitudes and rational behaviour of both supervisors and supervisees has initiated a pattern of exchange between them. However, it can also be seen here that supervisor-supervisee dyads are torn between Western and Chinese cultures. The core supervision practice of the former places emphasis on professional accountability, ethical values, and human rights (Beddoe, & Maidment, 2015; Davys & Beddoe, 2010; Kadushin & Harkness, 2014) while the latter focuses on people's manners such as showing respect to seniors, maintaining harmony, and being conscious of the reciprocal dynamic in the Chinese characteristics (Ho, 1976; 1991; 1993; 1995; 1988; Ng, 1975; Tsui, 2003; Tsui, Ho, & Lam, 2005).

In addition, social workers have a responsibility to set and enforce explicit and appropriate professional boundaries. "Professional boundaries" are emphasized in social work training, especially concerning boundaries with clients (Chu & Tsui, 2008; O'Leary, Tsui, & Ruch, 2013). It is argued here that boundaries should also be applied to supervisor-supervisee relationships, although the desire to do this is not as strong as it is for "worker-client" relationships. To this point, Turney (2010) asserts

that supervisors and supervisees must limit personal disclosure and have some terminal point to their engagement. Similarly, supervisors SD4, SD6 and SD9 in this study also stated that they preferred to have clear “professional boundaries” with supervisees to avoid expectations on unclear reciprocal relationships. Therefore, when considering connection or disconnection, the complexities of supervisory relationships’ approach to professional boundaries cannot be underestimated. The other concern regarding supervision effectiveness is that supervisors’ inadequate use of their power and authority has been seen as poor supervision and as having a negative effect on supervisees’ job performance and satisfaction (Leung, 2012). Hofstede (1980) and Martinsons (1996) both claim that Hong Kong is still regarded as a high powered country, which is strongly influenced by Confucianism. They report that Chinese leadership styles may be more autocratic than those found in the West. Supervisors expect their subordinates to show respect and obedience to them, and thus apply tighter controls. Under these circumstances, subordinates are not expected to confront their supervisors. Indeed, this situation was identified in some supervisor-supervisee dyads. As a consequence, supervisees were found to be more accepting of supervisors’ power and authority and accepted it as part of the Chinese management style. If the Chinese management style is seen as more autocratic, it needs to be modified to meet supervisees’ requests. This is because supervisees in this study have clearly stated that competent supervisors: (1) are available and responsive, (2) are knowledgeable about tasks and skills and can relate them to theory, (3) have practice expectations about service delivery similar to their supervisees, (4) provide support and encouragement for supervisees’ professional growth and development, (5) trust and allow supervisees to try new initiatives, (6) are demonstrative of professional role models, and (7) interact with supervisees in a mutually respectful style. Indeed, “trust” is the key construct of supervisory working

alliance relationships, which results from a number of relational behaviours including reflection, acceptance, listening, modesty, cooperation, and mutual exchange.

7.1.4 Improvement and/or Advancement of Social Work Supervision Practice

According to the findings in this study as reported in Chapters four and five, as well as past research regarding supervision practice in Hong Kong (Tsui, 2004), supervision has been perceived as having a very loose agenda, contracts, structure, and follow-up action plans were seldom used or not explicitly prepared. In addition, participants could distinguish the models, principles and methods they were applying in supervision. Arguably, being aware of these is very important for conducting good supervision. Moreover, supervisors need to be aware that different supervision models have different work focuses and fulfilments. For example, structural-functional models focus on objectives, functions, and authority structures of supervision (Kadushin & Harkness, 2014; Munson, 2002; Tsui, 2005); interactional process models focus on the interactions between supervisors and supervisees (Shulman, 1993; Stoltenberg, 1981); and agency models emphasize administrative accountability and professional autonomy within the agency (Kadushin, 1992a; Ko, 1987). Apart from these models, supervision principles and methods also affect supervisory relationships and outcomes. For example, Tsui (2001; 2005) has identified seven principles in supervision. These are: (1) interpersonal interaction –supervision is an interpersonal transaction between two or more people. Here, a competent supervisor is expected to help the in-experienced supervisee to do their job in order to ensure the quality of services, (2) agency objectives – the supervisor is responsible for assisting the supervisee to learn about the agency’s mission, vision and objectives, (3) flows of authority, information, and feelings – are related to the use of authority in the supervision process, exchange of information

and ideas, and emotional support, (4) professional values – reflect the professional values of social work, (5) job performance – supervisors are expected to monitor supervisee’s job quality and outcomes, convey professional values, knowledge, and skills, and provide emotional support to supervisees, (6) evaluation criteria – the criteria for evaluating supervisory effectiveness includes staff satisfaction with supervision, job accomplishment, and client outcomes, and (7) participating parties – indicates that supervision involves four parties, that is the agency, the supervisor, the supervisee, and the client. Supervisors’ in this ecological system (Kadushin & Harkness, 2014) should endeavour to acquire the necessary knowledge, skills, and cultural sensitivity needed to support their supervisees in completing their roles and responsibilities during supervision sessions.

7.1.5 Future Research into Supervision Practice

Social workers in Hong Kong have reported encountering great stress, frustration, and poor job satisfaction from work due to downsizing, salary cuts, and increased pressures on work output and outcomes (Leung, 2003; Leung 2012; Ng, 2011). It is optimistic to consider that effective supervision may improve the said situation. Nevertheless, previous studies (Ellie, 2001; Magnuson, Norem and Wilcoxon, 2000; Perlman and Hartman, 1982; Tromski, 2007) have indicated that supervisory behaviour is one of the factors contributing to deleterious effects on subordinates. Useless and abusive supervision may cause negative outcomes not only for subordinates, in the form of depression, frustration, and poor psychological health, but also for the organization, in the form of lowered commitment and work performance. However, focusing on the negative aspects is not desirable. Instead, it is better to identify the good aspects and publicly share these within the setting to obtain a modelling effect. To this point, supervisors in the dyads in this study have

devised strategies to meet supervisees' needs in different supervisory developmental stages. For example, providing sufficient trust and autonomy are strategies that supervisors in the "beginning" supervisory developmental group used to develop supervisees' professional styles and images, and supervisors in the "competent" supervisory developmental stage advised that sole use of legitimate power and authority cannot cultivate supervisees' self-regulated behaviour. This good supervision practice is worthy of further exploration.

In addition, Tsui (2005) noted that there is a strong need for researchers to conduct qualitative studies that explore the functions of social work supervision in various cultural contexts. Unfortunately, this study did not explore in any depth culturally specific issues such as knowledge, beliefs, morals, and customs in the supervisor-supervisee dyads. In light of social workers in Hong Kong being born into and educated in two cultures, what is recommended here is a study that gains better understanding of cultural competence, especially ideal supervision and its application in blended Western and Chinese cultures, in terms of growth-producing supervisory relationships in supervisor-supervisee dyads.

7.2 Unique Contribution of this Research

Tsui (2001) advocated that if the consent of the supervisor, the supervisee and the organization is forthcoming, a study of the supervisory dyad would be an extremely interesting and useful source of information on supervisory practice at the micro-practice level. As a consequence, both the supervisor and supervisee would receive useful feedback. Thus, the primary strength of this current study is that it has been explored the supervisory relationship alliance in promotion of effective supervision practice of supervisor-supervisee dyads in integrated family services,

integrated children and youth services, and school social work service settings. The overall contributions of this study can be summarised as the followings:

7.2.1 Demonstration of Supervisory Theories Interaction

The supervisor-supervisee dyads have demonstrated how the functional, relational, and interaction theories interact in the supervision process. This has significant reference value in improving our social work supervision practice in Hong Kong. This research has aroused a group of social work professionals' learning interest in this matter. The educators have agreed to help in training work and the practitioners also showed their commitment in providing good supervision to staff. Some of them have been recruited as consultants and trainers for the supportive supervision

7.2.2 Development of an Integrated Supervisory Constructs

- At the beginner stage, it is more functional-based that supervisor uses active instructive supervision style to set clear goals and concrete tasks to supervisee by using legitimate power according agency rules and regulations. Their relationship is more on calculus-based trust.
- At the competent stage, it is more relational-based where supervisor uses active reflective supervision style to provide autonomy to supervisee by competent power in joint ventures working mode. Their relationship is knowledge-based trust.
- At the proficient stage, it is more interactional-based where supervisor uses passive avoidant supervision style and referent power to convey

mutual respect and interactive communication with supervisee that encourage growth and development. Their relationship is a kind of identification/good will trust.

To make supervision effective, it does not only rely on a list of agreed rules; trust, respect, and good will between both parties are the best connectors throughout the work-lifespan and should be enforced in supervision practice.

7.2.3 Enhancement of Professionals' Awareness in Supervision Practice

Although the importance of supervision is recognized and demonstrated in the literature, this is the first attempt to assemble research accumulated in this area over the past decade and to assess its combined contribution to the knowledge and practice base in Hong Kong. Higher degree of complementary interaction in the high-alliance dyad can be only happened in humanistic supervision that demands social work services stakeholders' attention and improvement effort. Details are as the followings:

The Supervisees

Arguably, supervisees benefit the most from this study. This is because it has uncovered what has been neglected in supervision practice in social work. Participants, especially supervisees, clearly requested that more attention is paid to their professional growth and development such as theoretically-based assessments, intervention goals and planning identification, and professional ethics issues rather than being task focused. As such, supervisors should be more careful to provide a balance in their administrative and professional supervision. In doing so, supervision sessions will enable supervisees to: (1) disclose their weaknesses and vulnerabilities,

(2) be more open in releasing information about clients' situations, (3) learn to be more reflective concerning their success and mistakes , (4) become motivated and empowered, (5) feel supported and encouraged, (6) and develop self-awareness such as strengths, personal style preferences, and (7) confidence. As a result, supportive supervision could enhance supervisees' job performance, increase job satisfaction, and develop a sense of belonging and loyalty to the organization.

The Supervisors

The importance of supervision in social work has been demonstrated and the demands for policy development to enforce regular supervision can no longer be delayed. Also, the allocation of resources for training, evaluation, and promotion of effective supervision practice should, at the very least, be given some priority. As a result, this could provide supervisors with adequate training opportunities that allow them to: (1) gain an overview of effective supervision components, (2) develop personal attributes and enhance professional competence to carry out the supervision, and (3) know what is expected of them and understand their accountability. Eventually, they can design a growth oriented, technically sound and theoretically grounded supervision for their supervisees.

The Organizations

Supervision has been established as part of the system in an organization. The complexity of effective supervision is a vital aspect of service delivery in social service organizations. As such, this current study may be able to convey the message to the top management of social work organizations that they have a role to play in sustaining and promoting supervision and their responsibilities for securing supervision quality is unavoidable. With the organization's support, this can increase

staff morale, work performance, job satisfaction, prevent staff “burnout” and turnover. Eventually, clients of social work services can also be benefit.

The Clients

The ultimate beneficiary of supervision is the service user. Indeed, research indicates that a positive client outcome is associated with supervisors’ behaviour becoming increasing similar to that of a therapist with in relation to both affiliation and dominance (Tracey, Bludworth, & Glidden, 2012). The findings here have also demonstrated the values and shortfalls of supervision in social work. Thus, it is argued here that there is no reason for social work service providers not to take any action to improve supervision practice for ensuring service performance.

The Service Quality of Gate-Keepers

The provision of supervision for supervisees and quality assurance responsibilities are delegated by social service organizations and their staff. However, from this current study, it is clear that the Social Welfare Department of Hong Kong as a service funder, the Social Workers Registration Board as a professional registrant, and the training institutes as professional social work educators should be more alert to supervision practice quality as frontline social workers’ work directly affects many people’s psychological and social health.

The Social Work Researchers

Research work in social work supervision practice is extremely insufficient. It is hoped that the current study can stimulate researchers’ interest to conduct more theory-based outcome research in supervision practice by continuing to explore supervision dyads or even triads.

7.3 Limitations of the Research and Future Research Possibilities

7.3.1 Lack of research in the Hong Kong context

It was difficult to have references for guiding or supporting this study as no similar research had been done in Hong Kong. There is good reason to conduct more research in this regards. For example, a mixed method research to get some quantitative data for construction of a representative profile of the current state of social work supervision practice in together with qualitative in-depth live stories of supervision practice.

7.3.2 Narrow research coverage

The current study only covers children and family integrated services. In fact, there are so many services types, especially those situated in multi-disciplinary groups. It is hoped that future research can have wider coverage. In addition, as all the informants have high motivation to participate this research and the dyads are also favourable to each other, areas such as the possibility of overpassed original task objectives when both supervisor and supervisee want to maintain a supervision relationship; how to ensure the work tasks can be accomplished without creating a matter of “face” problem or even lead to broken relationship when both parties are having high conflict regarding works deserve further exploration.

7.3.3 Imbalanced informant groups

Similar to past researchers’ comments, it is not easy to invite participants to take part in this type of research as it involves supervisor and supervisees’ perceptions, experiences, and comments of each other’s work performances. Gender and race diversity are issues of concern. The reason is imbalanced sex ratio of

informants could miss one part of information. Further exploration of this matter has been recommended.

7.3.4 The Use of Obtained Information

The obtained findings are unique to certain informant(s). When discussing each phenomenon or issues throughout the analysis and discussion, the researcher was only able to refer to specific informant(s) or dyad(s).

7.4 Recommendations

7.4.1 For Supervisors

Supervisors are recommended to: 1) re-examine their conceptual social work supervision practice grounded in functional-based, relationship-based, and interactional-based frameworks, (2) identify areas for improvement and or enhancement in supervision practice with an emphasis on supervisory alliance relationships within the Chinese cultural and management contexts, (3) obtain formal and/or informal learning opportunities to update their supervision knowledge and skills, (4) assist “top” management in developing supervision policies, contracts, structure, and evaluation methods on supervision, and (5) collaborate with supervisees to prepare mutually agreed supervision contracts, as these contracts can serve as templates for supervision.

7.4.2 For Supervisees

When supervisees’ assert their right to receive effective supervision, they also need to consider fulfilling their roles and responsibilities in supervision. Similar to the aforementioned recommendations for supervisors, supervisees therefore need to:

(2) re-examine their concepts and beliefs concerning supervision, (2) identify areas for improvement and/or advancement in supervision practice, (3) be prepared to take part in supervision with positive attitudes and open communication, (4) collaborate with supervisors to devise mutually agreed supervision contracts, (5) prepare and follow-up on issues that have been discussed with supervisors in supervision sessions, and (6) observe supervisory relationship alliances and boundaries.

7.4.3 For Organizations

To enforce good supervision practice, the first priority is to ensure organizations' cooperation in setting supervision policies and evaluation systems on what constitutes effective supervision. The second priority is for organizations to invest in resources for the implementation of supervision practice. Particularly in light of participants' feedback that their supervisors were usually burdened with heavy workloads, this resulted in placing supervision tasks as lower priorities. In addition, the adequacy of supervisor to supervise ratios need to be re-examined. To achieve this goal, the components that influence supervision practice in the ecological system should be reviewed. The most direct and immediate impact was from change of funding mode and quality assurance demands, that is, the lump sum grant and the funding and service agreement stipulated by the Social Welfare Department of Hong Kong in 2000. As a consequence, this resulted in a chain reaction that included an imbalance between administrative and professional supervision and no standardization of supervisor to supervisee ratios as the most damaging. Therefore, it is recommended here to have: (1) appropriate and systematic supervision protocol and policies, (2) structure and guidelines for social work supervision practice, (3) provision of resources for staff training to acquire adequate supervision knowledge and skills, (4) an evaluation system for supervision

effectiveness to enforce supervision practice, (5) acknowledgement of supervisees' rights during supervision, and (6) collaboration with supervisees to design a growth oriented, technically sound and theoretically grounded supervision plan for sustaining the quality of supervision.

Hawkins & Shohet (2006) outline five typical cultures that “top” management can borrow to enhance the alliance of supervisory relationships, as well as strengthen social work supervision practice. They are: 1) personal pathology culture – viewing problems as emanating from within the individual, (2) bureaucratic culture – high on task and low on personal relatedness, (3) “watch your back” culture – highly competitive, where internal politics are rife and individuals are easily sacrificed, (4) reactive/crisis-driven culture – lives and breathes through the creation of on-going crisis situations, and (5) learning/development culture – creates an environment suitable for learning and growing. Apart from developing an organizational culture in supervision practice, top level management also need to have very clear guidelines on supervision practice. The guidelines should be “contractual agreements” for supervisors and supervisees to follow and safeguard the interests of their clients, supervisors, supervisees, and the organization. The supervisory contract should be a mutually agreed document among supervisees, supervisors, and the management. Indeed, supervisors have a major role to play in helping organization to understand the supervisory process and how this impacts on the organization.

The need for strengthening supervision practice in social work should not continue with a “wait and see” attitude and action needs to be taken for making supervision a regular, if not mandatory, practice for all social work practitioners. To speed up this process, it is suggested here to publish articles in relation to effective

supervision and hold seminars for social work professionals and stakeholders to further discuss supervision practice in Hong Kong. Other possible actions could be to encourage the Hong Kong Social Workers Association to request that the Social Welfare Department continues the provision of resources for further enhancement and implementation of the supportive supervision scheme as this project will end in April 2017. Yet, this project can only benefit one hundred social work supervisors and thus should be expanded to benefit more. Apart from formal resources, we can collaborate with all the certified social work supervisors from the supportive supervision scheme who have received some basic training on supervision theories and skills to form a supportive team that comprises multiple-disciplinary parties to promote supervision practice. For example, the Government plays the role of resource provider for supervision development; experienced social work supervisors are responsible for sharing supervision practice knowledge and skills, social work educators are responsible for the theoretical formation concerning the supervision training curriculum; training duty could be shared by social work academies and practitioners. The three-year experimental project titled “supportive supervision scheme” that was introduced in Chapter six is a good example of joint effort in the promotion of effective supervision practice in the social welfare sector.

7.4.4 For Social Work Educators

Professional training that enhances supervisors’ competence is one way of helping supervisors to acquire or update their knowledge in supervision practice (Falender, Cornish, & Goodyear, 2004). However, there are two aspects that educators need to bear in mind when conducting training for supervisors. First is the training content and methods needed to ensure it is culturally-based, that is, in the Chinese context as well as taking into consideration adult learning styles. Second is

the training time needed for flexibility. For example, training could be organized as a series of modules, which supervisors can access at times and in modes convenient to them. This will allow supervisors, at different stages in their careers, to access development programmes that best meet their individual needs. Regardless, no matter which path supervisors take, the important outcome from such a programme would be the development of adaptable, flexible supervisory practice to meet supervisors' busy work life schedules. As such, training could be held in social work training institutes as they have theoretical knowledge in supervision practice and also have experience in curriculum design and performance assessment tools. However, the training institutes would need to cooperate with social work practitioners to access "real" life working experiences.

7.4.5 For Researchers

This research has made an effort to better understand the connection between supervisory relationships and supervision effectiveness in the Chinese cultural context. The interaction between supervisors and supervisees is to some extent influenced by "*Renqing*", "*Yuan*", "*Bao*", "*En*", and "*Mainzi*" cultural orientations to maintain harmonious relationships. Participants' feedback has mapped out the social work supervision practice phenomena in Integrated Family Services, Integrated Children and Youth Services, and School Social Work Services. The descriptions here have covered: (1) the value of supervision; (2) supervision functions; (3) supervision structure such as regularity, practice-based, and action-oriented supervision with clear agendas, (4) supervisory methods such as the guided-reflective method and styles such as active instructive types; and (5) facilitating factors such as power and use of authority for effective supervision. For example, the related influencing factors in supervisory relationship development and

effective supervision were examined including supervision models and supervision theories. Attachment theory, when applied to the supervisory relationship, encourages supervisees' professional development and also shows how supervisors can provide a safe environment for critiquing and supporting supervisees' work. In addition, details shared by the nine supervisor-supervisee dyads have revealed how supervisory relationships are allied. To this point, the dyad interviews are, arguably, the most valuable part of this study as they not only explored information but allow us insight into the journeys of supervisors, which has enlightened us with knowledge of social work professional experiences as they occur in practice. This has allowed us to see that all supervisors, at some point in the supervision process, find themselves in a place of helplessness due to huge responsibilities from agencies, supervisees, clients, and themselves as professionals. Throughout the interviews, all supervisors showed passion for supervision and this provides hope for our social work profession. It is also good that the achievements of supervisor-supervisee dyads and their supervisory relationship alliance processes, as illustrated in Chapter five, are worthy of sharing with our social work professionals and related service stakeholders.

In light of the above findings from this study, five research areas are recommended. Firstly, for better understanding of the connection between supervisory relationship alliances and supervision effectiveness, further studies may seek to utilize a mixed methods approach to re-examine the findings of this study, especially the areas of gender and power in supervisory dyads. Secondly, to validate the credibility of supervision, there is also a need to conduct in-depth research concerning supervision outcomes for supervisees, especially in light of the corresponding effect on service users' outcomes. Thirdly, research on evaluation mechanisms of organizational competence in promoting supervision practice and

supervisors' competence and responsiveness in supervision practice should be in urgent priority. Fourthly, in view of resource constraints and implications of one-to-one, face-to-face supervision sessions, it may be good to conduct research that explores alternatives such as external supervision, as there are potential resources available in the form of retired social work professionals, peers and group supervision, and mentoring schemes. Fifthly, research regarding the possibility of positive attachment characteristic within a Chinese reciprocally supervisory dyads relationship overpassed original task objectives.

7.5 Supervision – The Way Ahead

I would like to borrow ideas from Tsui's (2004) article titled "Hopes and dreams: Ideal supervision for social workers in Hong Kong" to express my inner feelings towards my wishes and desires for social work supervision. Tsui's (2006) findings illustrated that supervisors and supervisees were working together however, they had different dreams and appeared not to understand each other's hopes; their differences resulted from their expectations of what supervision should focus on and how it should be conducted. Yet, they were united in their ultimate goal that work should be in the best interest of clients. These dreams and hopes are explicitly and repeatedly expressed by all participants in this current study. Their passion in providing responsive services for their clients is revealed in their shared dreams and hopes. The relationship between supervisory alliances and effective supervision has been clearly demonstrated in this research. However, there still appears to be much undiscovered knowledge in supervision practice. For example, when we search for "effective/ideal supervision", what do we really look for and what should "effective/ideal supervision" look like? I believe there is no single answer to this question. The only thing that we can do is continue updating our knowledge in

response to the ever changing organizational environment and clients' needs through collaboration in supervisory dyads. I sincerely hope that all the recommendations listed above can get prompt attention, as well as actions from all related parties. I hope this is not a dream but reality.

7.6 Self-reflection

7.6.3 Philosophical Reflection

My 25 years supervision practice allows me exploring, experiencing and enhancing my supervision competence (3Es). Many people including my family members, friends and colleagues asked me why I was conducting this tedious research when I could retire and have a relaxing life. Now, I can answer this for myself, supervision practice is a passion in my social work career. My social work career is a lifelong calling. When I sit in the room and listen to clients' stories, they present problems, feelings and worries. The more they are willing to tell, the more painful the feelings, the more they feel helpless and hopeless. What I found here was that I could help them not through knowledge and skills, but through the feeling that they could relate to me. It is not for me to fix their problems, it is the feeling of being listened to, and the emotional support that re-kindles their passion. The counselling process helps them to understand that life is full of unbearable stress and suffering, and provides understanding that they cannot change the past but they can help prevent stress and suffering in the future. "Passion" is not a feeling; it is a force capable of deeply affecting others in a subtle and profound way. Any action, any thought or feeling when fed by passion has a hugely transformative power. Passion is not about talking; it is about being gentle and patient but also with determination. When clients experience passion, they start to deal with their problems. However, I wonder the

credibility of today's urge for doing more with less and use business model to run social work service.

7.6.2 Professional Reflection

This journey offered me an opportunity to conduct research in an area that has been my passion and curiosity for twenty years, exploring supervision theories; contributing factors to effective social work supervision practice; as well as the phenomena of our supervision practice in Hong Kong. During this period, I was not only conducting this research, I was also appointed to be the project director to develop and conduct a supportive supervision scheme that was reported in Chapter six. Although taking up this task affected the progress in this current study, it was found to be valuable as I could share what I learned from this study with many supervisors and promote the importance of "passion in supervision". The curriculum of the supportive supervision scheme training course was designed based on the key concepts and components of effective supervision researched in the literature review on social work supervision theories, together with my twenty years supervision experience. Therefore, what I achieved from this exploratory journey was far more than information.

Loganbill et al. (1982) and Stoltenberg and Delworth (1987) found that the parallel process in the supervisory relationship was a process in which one ascertains in supervision certain vestiges of the relationship between the supervisee and their client. Therefore, it is important for both supervisors and supervisees to recognize and attend to the parallel process as an effective and dynamic type of intervention in supervision. Supervisors' nurturing their supervisees to have passion for their work also becomes an important responsibility. It is clear from this study that we, as social

work supervisors, are not working alone. There is a strong professional drive to accomplish this nurturing role and responsibility. I do believe most of our social workers have passion in doing their work.

7.6.3 Personal Reflection

So far, I have experience of four supervisory relationship journeys. The first supervisory relationship reflected my belief in human capability, my behaviour in performing my work, and the results in relation to others. During this reflection, I recalled one of my supervision experiences, which happened when I was a newly appointed supervisor and was to become very influential in the rest of my supervision practice. As this was my first experience as a supervisor I was very anxious and felt that I had to assist my supervisee to complete their work. Naturally, I provided as much advice as I could. However, I found my supervisee became quiet in supervision sessions. When I asked her why her answer was shocking; she said: “No matter what strategies that I use, your proposed ones seem better. I must wait for your ideas”. Therefore, this experience reminded me not to suppress supervisees’ motivation and self-confidence for trying out their own ideas in the supervision process. The second supervisory experience concerned my relationship with my supervisor. Similar to Kaiser’s (1992) experience, I experienced very strong feelings of being bullied if not abused. My supervisor continually reminded me that I did not come from a prestigious university and my competence was definitely not good and I needed to be retrained through her supervision. This kind of feeling created strong resistance. Luckily, this was eventually redressed by her supervisor and I regained confidence in my social work ability. This relationship became the driving force of my promise to myself to be a good supervisor. The third supervisory relationship was the cornerstone of my supervision life. In this experience, I developed a real passion in action. The fourth

supervisory relationship I experienced was during my PhD study; my supervisor is a very famous scholar and has many publications regarding social work supervision. He is a very organized person, very efficient, very caring for students. Nevertheless, I always felt inferior and sometimes even fearful of him. These feeling can be explained using our Chinese culture: “*Qing* – 情”, “*Yuan* – 緣”, “*En* – 恩”, “*Bao* – 報”, and “*Mainzin* – 面子”. I became his student because of “*Yuen* – 緣” as I was involved in his study exploring social work supervision in 2006. His guidance in my study has created strong feelings of “*Qing* – 情”, and “*En* – 恩”. Wanting to conduct a good piece of research not only actualized my determination, but was a kind of “*Bao* – 報” and “*Mainzin* – 面子” to my supervisor. Thus, there are four feelings in this journey: sweet, sour, bitter, and hot. This supervisory relationship is very memorable. I came the long way but I make it happen and my mission has accomplished.

References

- Abbot, K. A. (1970). *Harmony and individualism*. Taipei: Orient Cultural Service.
- Abernethy, C., & Cook, K. (2011). Resistance or disconnection? A relational-cultural approach to supervisee anxiety and nondisclosure. *Journal of Creativity in Mental Health, 6*, 2-14.
- Adebayo, S. O. & Ogunsina, S. O. (2011). Influence of supervisory behavior and job stress on job satisfaction and turnover intention of police personnel in Ekiti state. *Journal of Management and Strategy, 2* (3), 13-20.
- Ainsworth, M. D. S. (1989). Attachment beyond infancy. *American Psychologist, 44*, 709-716.
- Ainsworth, M. D. S., Blehar, M. C., Waters, E., & Wall, S. (1978). *Patterns of attachment: A psychological study of the strange situation*, Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum.
- Akmajian, A., Demers, R. A., Farmer, A. K., Harnish, R. M. (1990). *Linguistics: An introduction to language and communication* (3rd ed.), Cambridge, MA: MIT press.
- Allen, G. J., Szollos, S. J., & Williams, B. E. (1986). Doctoral students' comparative evaluations of best and worst psychotherapy supervision. *Professional Psychology: Research and Practice, 17*(2), 91-100.
- American Board of Examiners in Clinical Social Work (2004). A position statement on clinical supervision: A practice specialty of clinical social work. Retrieved from May 26, 2016 <https://www.abecsw.org/pub-postion-papers>.
- Applegate, J., & Shapiro, J. (2006). *Neurobiology for clinical social work: Theory and practice*. New York: Norton and Co.
- Argyle, M. (1987). *The psychology of happiness*. London: Methuen.
- Aron, L. (1996). *A meeting of the minds: Mutuality in psychoanalysis*. Hillsdale, NJ: The Analytic Press.
- Aron, L., & Harris, A. (2005). Introduction. In L., Aron & Harris, A. (Eds.), *Relational psychoanalysis Vol. 2* (pp. xii-xxi). Hillsdale, NJ: The Analytic Press.
- Austin, M. & Hopkins, K. (2004). *Supervision as collaboration in the human services: Building a learning culture*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

- Australian Association of Social Workers (AASW) (2013). *Best practice standards in social work supervision*. Australia: AASW.
- Bachman, J. G., Smith, C. G., Slesinger, J. A. (1966). Control, performance, and satisfaction: An analysis of structural and individual effects. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 4, 127-136.
- Barbour R. S. (2001). Checklists for improving rigour in qualitative research: A case of the tail wagging the dog? *British Medical Journal*. 322, 115–117.
- Barnett, J. E., Cornish, E. J. A., Goodyear, R. K. & Lichtenberg, J. W. (2007). Commentaries on the Ethical and Effective Practice of Clinical Supervision. *Professional Psychology: Research and Training*, 38, 268-275.
- Bartholomew, K. (1990). Avoidance of intimacy: An Attachment Perspective. *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships*, 7, 147-178.
- Bartholomew, K., & Horowitz, L. M. (1991). Attachment Styles among Young Adults: A Test of a Four-category Model. *Social Psychology* 61, 226-44.
- Bass, B. M. (1990). From Transactional to Transformational Leadership: Learning to Share the Vision. *Organizational Dynamic*, 18(3), 19-31.
- Beddoe, L., & Maidment, J., (2015). *Supervision in social work: Contemporary issues*. London: Routledge.
- Beddoe, L., Davys, A. M., & Adamson, C. (2014). Never Trust Anybody Who Says “I Don’t Need Supervision”: *Practitioners’ beliefs about social worker resilience Practice*, 26(2), 113-130.
- Begdan, R. C. & Biklen, S. K. (2003). *Qualitative research for education: An introduction to theories and methods* (4th ed.). New York: Pearson Education Group.
- Beinart, H., & Clohessy, S. (2009). Clinical supervision. In: Beinart, H., Kennedy, P. & Llewelyn, S. (Eds) *Clinicap Psychology in practice*. Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell.
- Bennett, P., Evans, R. and Tattersall, A. (1993). Stress and coping in social workers: A preliminary investigation, *British Journal of Social Work*, 23, 31-44.
- Bennett, S. (2008). The interface of attachment, transference, and countertransference: Implications for the clinical supervisory relationship. *Smith College Studies in Social Work*, 78(2/3), 301-320.

- Bennett, S., & Deal, K. (2008). Beginnings and endings in social work supervision: The interaction between attachment and developmental processes. *Journal of Teaching in Social Work, 28*(3/4).
- Bennett, S., & Saks, L. (2006). A conceptual application of attachment theory and research to the social work student-field instructor supervisory relationship. *Journal of Social Work Education, 42*(3), 157-169.
- Bernard, H. R. (2006). *Research methods in anthropology: Qualitative and quantitative methods*. (3rd ed.) Walnut Creek, CA: Alta Mira Press.
- Bernard, J. M. & Goodyear R. K. (2014). *Fundamentals of clinical supervision* (5th ed.) Pearson.
- Bernard, J. M. (2005). Tracing the development of clinical supervision. *The Clinical Supervisor 24*(1), 3-21.
- Berscheid, E. (1999). The greening of relationship science. *American Psychologist, 54*, 260-266.
- Berscheid, E., & Peplau, L. A. (1983). The Emerging Science of relationships. In H. Kelley, E. Berscheid, A. Christensen, J. H., Harvey, T. L., Huston, G., Levinger, E. McClintock, L. A. Peplau, & D. R. Peterson (Eds.), *Close Relationships* (pp.1-19). New York: W. H. Freeman.
- Berscheid, E., & Reis, H. T. (1998). Attraction and close relationships. In D. T. Gilbert, S. T. Fiske, & G. Lindzey (Eds.), *Handbook of social psychology* (4th ed.; Vol. 2, pp. 193-281). New York: McGraw-Hill.
- Bishop, V. (2007). *Clinical supervision in practice: Some questions, answers and guidelines for professionals in health and social care*. New York: Palgrave, Macmillan.
- Bond, M. H. (2014) How I am constructing culture-inclusive theories of social-psychological process in our age of globalization. *Journal for the Therapy of Social Behaviour 45*(1), 20-85.
- Bordin, E. S. (1983). A working alliance based model of supervision. *The Counseling Psychologist, 11*(1), 35-42.
- Bordin, E. S. (1994). Theory and research on the therapeutic working alliance: New directions. In A. O. Hovarth & L. S. Greenberg (Eds.), *The working alliance theory, research, and practice* (pp. 13-37). Oxford, UK: John Wiley & Sons.
- Boszormenyi-Nagy, I., & Krasner, B. R. (1986). *Between give and take: A clinical guide to contextual therapy*. New York: Brunner/Mazel.

- Boszormenyi-Nagy, I., & Spark, G. (1984). *Invisible loyalties: Reciprocity in intergenerational family therapy*. New York: Harper & Row (2nd ed.). New York: Brunner/Mazel)
- Bowlby, J. (1969). *Attachment and loss: Vol 1, Attachment*. New York: Basic Books.
- Bowlby, J. (1973). *Attachment and loss: Vol 2, Separation*. New York: Basic Books.
- Bowlby, J. (1980). *Attachment and loss: Vol 3, Loss Sadness and depression*. New York: Basic Books.
- Bowlby, J. (1982). Attachment and loss: Retrospect and prospect, *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry*, 52(4), 664-678.
- Bowlby, J. (1988). *A secure base*. New York: Basic Books.
- Boyatzis, R. E. (1998). *Transforming qualitative information: thematic analysis and code development*. Sage.
- Brackett, J. R. (1904). *Supervision and education in charity*. New York: Macmillan.
- Brannon, D. (1985). Adult learning principles and methods for enhancing the training role of supervisors. *The Clinical Supervisor*, 3, 27-41.
- Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 3:77-101.
- Bretherton, I., & Munholland, K. (1999). Internal working models in attachment relationships: A construct revisited. In: J. Cassidy & P. Shaver (Eds.), *Handbook of attachment: Theory, research, and clinical application* (pp. 89-111). New York: Guilford.
- Bruner, J. (1986). *Actual minds, possible worlds*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Buber, M. (2010). *I and thou: Practicing living dialogue*. New York: Scribner.
- Bunker, D. R., & Wijnberg, M. (1985). The Supervisor as a mediator of organizational climate in public social service organizations. *Administration in Social Work*, 9(2), 59-72.
- Burns, J. M. (1978). *Leadership*. New York. Harper & Row.
- Buss, D. M., & Kenrick, D. T. (1998). Evolutionary social psychology. In D. T. Gilbert, S. T. Fiske, & G. Lindzey (Eds.), *Handbook of social psychology* (4th ed.); Vol. 2, pp.982-1026). Boston: McGraw Hill.
- Callaway P.2006. *Relationship between organizational trust and job satisfaction*. Capella University. United States.

- Carifo, M. S., & Hess, A. K. (1987). Who is the ideal supervisor? *Professional psychology: Research and Practice*, 3, 244–250.
- Carlson, L., Rapp, C. A., & Eichler, M. S. (2012). The experts rate: Supervisory behaviors that impact the implementation of evidence-based practices. *Community Mental Health Journal*, 48, 179-186.
- Carney, C. G., & Kahn, K. B. (1984). Building competence for effective cross-cultural counseling: A developmental view. *The Counseling Psychologist*, 12, 111-119.
- Carpenter, J., Webb, C. M., Bostock, L., & Coomber, C. (2012). *Effective supervision in social work and social care*. Research Briefing 43. London: Social Care Institute for Excellence.
- Cassidy, J., & Shaver, P. R. (2008). *Handbook of attachment: Theory, research, and clinical applications* (2nd ed.). New York: The Guilford Press.
- Chan, D. (1998). Functional relations among constructs in the same content domain at different levels of analysis: A typology of composition models. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 83(2), 234-246.
- Chen, E. C., & Bernstein, B. L. (2000). Relations of complementarity and supervisory issues to supervisory working alliance: A comparative analysis of two cases. *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, 47, 485-497.
- Chen, G. M. (2001). Toward transcultural understanding: A harmony theory of Chinese communication. In *Transcultural realities: Interdisciplinary perspectives on cross-cultural relations* (pp.55-70). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Chen, G. M., & Ringo, M. A. (2002). *Chinese conflict management and resolution: Advances in communication and culture*. Westport: Ablex Pub.
- Cheng, H. & Holt, R. (1994). A Chinese perspective on face as inter-relational concern. In S. Ting-Toomey (Ed.), *The challenge of facework* (pp.95-132) Albany: State University of New York Press.
- Cheon, H., Blumer, M. L. C., Shih, A., Murphy, M. J., & Sato, M. (2009). The influence of supervisor and supervisee matching, role conflict, and supervisory relationship on supervisee satisfaction. *Contemporary Family Therapy*, 31,52-67.
- Chernis, C., & Egnatios, E. (1977). Styles of clinical supervision in community mental health programs. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology*, 45, 1195-1196.

- Christensen, A., & Heavey, C. L. (1993). Gender differences in marital conflict: The demand/withdraw interaction pattern. In S. Oskamp & M. Costanzo (Eds.), *Gender issues in contemporary society* (pp. 113-141). Newbury Park, CA: Sage.
- Chu, C. K. & Tsui, M. S. (2008). The nature of practice wisdom in social work revisited. *International Social Work, 51*(1), 47-54.
- Cogan, M. (1953). Toward a definition of profession. *Harvard Educational Review, 23*(1), 33-50.
- Collings, J. and Murray, P. (1996). Predictors of stress amongst social worker: An empirical study. *British Journal of Social Work, 26* (3), 375-87.
- Cook, D. A. & Helms, J.E. (1988). Visible racial/ethnic group supervisees' satisfaction with cross-cultural supervision as predicted by relationship characteristics. *Journal of Counselling Psychology, 35*, 268-274.
- Cooper, M. L. (2002). Personality and close relationships: Embedding people in important social context. *Journal of Personality, 70*, 757-782.
- Cozzarelli, C., Hoekstra, S., & Bylsma, W. (2000). General versus specific mental models of attachment: Are they associated with different outcomes? *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin, 26*, 605-618.
- Cresswell, J. W. & Clark, V.L. (2011). *Designing and conducting mixed research*, (2nd ed.), Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publication.
- Curtis, E. & Redmond, R. (2007). Focus groups in nursing research. *Nurse Researcher, 14*, 25-37.
- Darwin, G. (1959). *On the origin of species by means of natural selection*. London: Murray.
- Das, T. K. & Teng, B. S. (1996). Risk types and inter-firm alliance structures. *Journal of Management Studies, 33*, 827-843.
- Davys, A. M., & Beddoe, E. (2010). *Best practice in professional supervision: A guide for the helping professions*. London: Jessica Kingsley.
- Denzin, N. K. (2009). *The research act: A theoretical introduction to sociological methods*. Aldine Transaction Publishers, Rutgers.
- DeYoung, P. (2003). *Relational psychotherapy: A Primer*. New York: Brunner-Routledge.
- Dill, K., & Bogo, M. (2009). Moving beyond the administrative: supervisors' perspectives on clinical supervision in child welfare. *Journal of Public Child Welfare 3*(1), 87-105.

- Doehrman, M. J. (1976). Parallel processes in supervision and psychotherapy. *Bulletin of the Menninger Clinic*, 40(1), 3-104.
- Dolgoff, R. (2005). *Introduction to supervisory practice in human services*. University of Maryland, Baltimore.
- Driscoll, M. (2000). *Psychology of learning for instruction*. Needham Heights, MA: Allyn & Bacon.
- Efstation, J. F., Patton, M. J., & Kardash, C. M. (1990). Measuring the working alliance in counselor supervision. *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, 37(3), 322-329.
- Ekstein, R., & Wallerstein, R. (1958). *The teaching and learning of psychotherapy*. New York: International Universities Press, Inc.
- Ekstein, R., & Wallerstein, R. (1972). *The teaching and learning of psychotherapy*. (2nd ed.) New York: International Universities Press, Inc.
- Ellis, M. V. (2001). Harmful supervision, a cause for alarm: Comment on Gray et al. (2001) and Nelson and Friedlander (2001). *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, 48(4), 401-406.
- Ellis, M. V. (2010). Bridging the science and practice of clinical supervision: Some discoveries, some misconceptions. *The Clinical Supervisor*, 29 (1), 95-116.
- Evetts, J. (2009). New professionalism and new public management: Changes, continuities and consequences. *Comparative Sociology* 8, 247-266.
- Falender, C. A., & Shafranske, E. P. (2004). *Clinical supervision: A competency-based approach*. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association (APA).
- Falender, C. A., & Shafranske, E. P. (2012). The importance of competency based clinical supervision and training in the 21st century: Why bother? *Journal of Contemporary Psychotherapy*, 42(3), 129-137.
- Falender, C. A., Burnes, T. R., & Ellis, M. V. (2013). Multicultural clinical supervision and benchmarks: Empirical support informing practice and supervisor training. *The Counseling Psychologist*, 41, 8-27.
- Falender, C. A., Cornish, J. A. E., Goodyear, R., Hatcher, R., Kaslow, N. J., Leventhal, G., et al. (2004). Defining competencies in psychology supervision: A consensus statement. *Journal of Clinical Psychology*, 60 (7), 771-785
- Fall, M., & Sutton, J. M. (2004). *Clinical supervision, a handbook for practitioners*. New York: Guilford Press.

- Fincham, F. D., & Beach, S. R. (2002). Forgiveness in marriage: Implications for psychological aggression and constructive communication. *Personal Relationships, 9*, 239-251.
- Fonagy, P. (2001). *Attachment theory and psychopathology*. New York: Other Press.
- Fortune, A., & Abramson, J. (1993). Predictors of satisfaction with field practicum among social work students. *The Clinical Supervisor, 11*(1), 95-109.
- Fosnot, C. T. (1996) (Ed.). *Constructivism: Theory, perspectives, and practice*. New York: Teachers College Press.
- Foucault, M. (1980a). *The eye of power*. In Gordon, C. (Ed.), Michel Foucault: Power/Knowledge, Harvester, Hemel Hempstead.
- Foucault, M. (1980b). *Power and strategies*. In Gordon, C. (Ed.), Michel Foucault: Power/Knowledge, Harvester, Hemel Hempstead.
- Foucault, M. (1982). *The subject and power*. In Michel Foucault: Beyond Structuralism and Hermeneutics. P. Rabinow and H. Dreyfus (eds.). Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Fowler, J., & Cherannes, M. (1998). Evaluating the efficacy of reflective practice within the context of clinical supervision. *Journal of Advanced Nursing, 27*(2), 379-382.
- Fox, R. (1983). Contracting in supervision: A goal oriented process, *The Clinical Supervisor, 1*, Spring, 37-49.
- Freeman, E. (1985). The importance of feedback in clinical supervision: Implications for direct practice. *The Clinical Supervisor, 3*(1), 5-26.
- French, J., & Raven, B. (1959). The bases of social power. In D. Cartwright (Ed.), *studies in social power* (pp. 150-167). Ann Arbor, MI: Institute for Social Research.
- Fu, K. (1999). *Supervisory practice in medical social service setting of scheduled II hospital in Hong Kong*. MA in Social Work Dissertation, Department of Applied Social Studies, The Hong Kong Polytechnic University.
- Garman, N. B. (1986). Reflection, the heart of clinical supervision: A modern rationale for professional practice. *Journal of Curriculum and Supervision, 2*(1), 1-24.
- Garman, N. B. (1990). Theories embedded in the events of clinical supervision: A hermeneutic approach. *Journal of Curriculum and Supervision, 5*(3), 201-213.

- Gnilka, P. B., Chang, C. Y., & Dew, B. J. (2012). The relationship between supervisee stress, coping resources, the working alliance, and the supervisory working alliance. *Journal of Counseling and Development, 90*, 63-70.
- Golden, B. R., & Robbins, S. B. (1990). The working alliance within time-limited therapy: A case analysis. *Professional Psychology: Research and Practice, 21*, 476-481.
- Goldfarb, N. (1978). Effects of supervisory style on counselor effectiveness and facilitation responding. *Journal of Counseling Psychology, 25*(5), 454-460.
- Goodyear, R. K. & Bernard, J. M. (1998). Clinical supervision: Lessons from the literature. *Counselor Education and Supervision, 38*(1), 6-22.
- Gottman, J. M. (1994). *What predicts divorce?: The relationship between marital processes and marital outcomes*. Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum.
- Grey, A. L., & Fiscalini, J. (1987). Parallel process as transference countertransference interaction. *Psychoanalytic Psychology, 4*, 131-144.
- Gronkjaer, M.; Curtis, T.; de Crespigny, C.; Delmar, C. (2011). Analysing group interaction in focus group research: Impact on content and the role of the moderator. *Qualitative Studies, 2*(1):16-30
- Guerin, S., Devitt, C., & Redmond, B. (2010). Experiences of early-career social workers in Ireland, *British Journal of Social Work, 40*(8), 2467-2484.
- Hadley, M. (2008). Relational theory. In J. Berzoff, L., Melano-Flanagan, & P. Hertz (Eds.). *Inside out and outside in* (2nd ed., pp. 205-228). New York: Jason Aronson.
- Hair, H. J., & O'Donoghue, K. (2009). Culturally relevant, socially just social work supervision: Becoming visible through a social constructionist lens. *Journal of Ethnic and Cultural Diversity in Social Work, 18*(1), 70-88.
- Harkness, D. (1995). The art of helping in supervised practice: Skills, relationships, and outcomes. *The Clinical Supervisor, 13*(1), 63-76.
- Harkness, D. (1997). Testing interactional social work. *The Clinical Supervisor, 15*, 33-50.
- Hawkins, P. & Shohet, R. (2006). *Supervision in the helping professions* (3rd ed.) England: Open University Press.
- Hawkins, P. (1995). Supervision. In M. Jacobs (Ed.) *The care guide*. London: Mowbrays.

- Hayes, N. (1997). Theory-led thematic analysis: social identification in small companies. In Hayes, N., editor, *Doing qualitative analysis in psychology*. Psychology Press.
- Henson, R. H. (1997). Analysis of the concept of mutuality. *Image: Journal of Nursing Scholarship*, 29(1), 77-81.
- Heppner, P. P., & Nandley, P. G. (1981). The relationship between supervisory behaviors and perceived supervision expertness, attractiveness, and trustworthiness. *Counselor Education and Supervision*, 21(1), 37-46.
- Hernandez, P., & McDowell, T. (2010). Intersectionality, power, and relational safety in context: Key concepts in clinical supervision. *Training and Education in Professional Psychology*, 4(1), 29-35.
- Hess, A. K. (1986). Growth in Supervision: Stages of Supervisee and Supervisor Development. *The Clinical Supervisor*, 4(1-2), 51-67.
- Hewson, D. (2002). Supervision of psychologist: A supervision triangle. In M. McMahon & W. Patton (Eds.), *Supervision in the helping professions: A practical approach* (pp. 197-210). Frenchs Forest, NSW, Australia: Prentice Hall.
- Hewson, J. (1999). Training supervisors to contract in supervision. In E. Holloway & M. Carroll (Eds.), *Training counselling supervisors* (pp. 67-91). London: Sage Publications.
- Himle, D. P., Jayaratne, S., & Thyness, P. A. (1989). The buffering effects of four types of supervisory support on work stress. *Administration in Social Work*, 13(1), 19-34.
- Ho, D. Y. F. (1976). *On the concept of face*. *American Journal of Sociologist*, 81, 867-884.
- Ho, D. Y. F. (1988). Interpersonal relationships and relationship dominance: An analysis based on methodological relationalism. *Asia Journal of Social Psychology*, 1(1), 1-16.
- Ho, D. Y. F. (1991). Relational orientation and methodological relationalism. *Bulletin of the Hong Kong Psychological Society*, 26-27, 81-95.
- Ho, D. Y. F. (1993). Relational orientation in Asian social psychology. In U. Kim & J. W. Berry, *indigenous psychologies: Research and experience in cultural context*. (pp.240-259). Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

- Ho, D. Y. F. (1995). Selfhood an identity in Confucianism, Taoism, Buddhism, and Hinduism: Contrasts with the West. *Journal for the Theory of Social Behaviour*, 25(2), 115-139.
- Hofstede, G. (1980). *Culture's consequences*. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage Publications.
- Holloway, E. (1999). A framework for supervision training. In E. Holloway & M. Carol (1999). *Training counselling supervisors: Strategies, methods and techniques*. London: Sage Publication.
- Holloway, E. L. & Neufeldt, S. A. (1995). Supervision: Its contributions to treatment efficacy. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology*, 63(2), 207-213.
- Holloway, E. L., & Wolleat, P. L. (1994). Supervision: The pragmatics of empowerment. *Journal of Educational and Psychological Consultation*, 5(1), 23-43.
- Holloway, S. & Brager, G. (1989). *Supervising in the human services: The politics of practice*. New York: Free Press.
- Hong Kong Social Workers Registration Board (HKSWRB) (2009). *Code of practice for social workers*. Hong Kong: HKSWRE.
- Horvath, A. O., & Marx, R.W. (1990). The development and decay of the working alliance during time-limited counseling. *Canadian Journal of Counseling*, 24, 240-260.
- Huang, L. (2006). *Interpersonal harmony and conflict: Indigenous theories and research*. Taipei: Yangzhi wenhua.
- Huseman, R. C., Hatfield, J. D., Boulton, W., & Gatewood, R. (1980). Development of a conceptual framework analyzing the communication-performance relationship. *Proceedings of the Academy of Management*, 178-182.
- Hwang, K. K. (1988). Jen Qing and face: The power game of Chinese people. In K. K. Hwang (Ed.). *The power game of Chinese people* (pp. 7-56). Taipei: Great Trend Publishing Company. (In Chinese).
- Inskipp, F. and Proctor, B. (1993). *Making the most of supervision: A professional development resource for counsellors, supervisors and trainees*. Twickenham: Cascade.
- Jacobsen, C. H., & Tanggaard, L. (2009). Beginning therapists experiences of what constitutes good and bad psychotherapy supervision: With a special focus on individual differences. *Nordic Psychology*, 61, 59-84

- Jahoda, G. (2012). Critical reflections on some recent definitions of culture. *Culture and Psychology, 18*, 289-303.
- Jenkin, A., Breen, R., Lindsay, R., & Brew, A. (2003). *Re-shaping higher education: Linking teaching and research*. London. Routledge Falmer.
- Jonassen, D. H. (1994). Toward a constructivist design model. *Educational Technology, 34*(4), 34-37.
- Jordan, J. (2001). A relational-cultural model: Healing through mutual empathy. *Bulletin of the Menninger Clinic, 65*, 92-103.
- Jordan, J. V. (2004). In J. V. Jordan, L. Hartling, & M. Walker (Eds.). The complexity of connection: Writings from the stone center's Jean Baker Miller Training Institute (pp. 28-46). New York, NY: Guilford.
- Kadushin, A. & Harkness, D. (2014). *Supervision in social work* (5th ed.). New York: Columbia University Press.
- Kadushin, A. (1968). Games people play in supervision. *Social Work, 13*, 23-32.
- Kadushin, A. (1976). *Supervision in social work*. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Kadushin, A. (1992a). *Supervision in social work* (3rd ed.). New York: Columbia University Press.
- Kadushin, A. (1992b). What's wrong, what's right with social work supervision. *The Clinical Supervisor, 10*(1), 3-19.
- Kaiser, T. L. (1992). The supervisory relationship: An identification of the primary elements in the relationship and an application of two theories of ethical relationships. *Journal of Marital and Family Therapy, 18*(3), 283-296.
- Kaiser, T. L. (1997). *Supervisory relationships: Exploring the human element*. Pacific Grove, CA: Brooks Cole.
- Katz, D. & Kahn, R. L. (1978). *The social psychology of organizations*. New York: Wiley.
- Kavanagh, D. J., Spence, S., Sturk, H., Strong, J., Wilson, J., Worrall, L., & Skerrett, R. (2008). Outcomes of training in supervision: Randomised controlled trial. *Australian Psychologist, 43*, 96-104.
- Kelly, H. H. (1979). *Personal relationships: Their structures and processes*. Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum.
- Kelly, H. H., & Thibaut, J. W. (1978). *Interpersonal relations: A theory of interdependence*. New York: Wiley.

- Kelly, H. H., Berscheid, E., Christensen, A., Harvey, J. H., Huston, T. L., Levinger, G., McClintock, E., Peplau, L. A., & Peterson, D. R. (Eds.) (1983). *Close relationships*. New York: W. H. Freeman.
- Kim, H., & Lee, S. Y. (2009). Supervisory communication, burnout, and turnover intention among social workers in health care setting. *Social Work in Health Care, 48*(4), 364-385.
- King, A. Y. C. (1994). Kuan-his and network building: A Sociological Interpretation. In W. M. Tu (Ed.) *The living tree: The Changing Meaning of Being Chinese Today* (pp. 109-126). Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.
- King, A. Y. C. (1990). An analysis of "Jen Qin" in interpersonal relationship. In K. S. Yang (Ed.). *The Psychology of Chinese* (pp.75-104). Taipei: Gui Guan Publishing Company. (*In Chinese*).
- Kitson, G. C., Schickmanter, K., & Steinberger, J. L. (1982). Sampling issues in family research. *Journal of Marriage and the Family, 44*, 965-981.
- Kitzinger, J. (1995). *Qualitative research: Introducing focus groups*. BMJ, 311, 299-302.
- Klohnen, E., Weller, J., Luo, S., & Choe, M. (2005). Organization and predictive power of general and relationship-specific attachment models: One of all, and all for one? *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin, 31*, 1665-1682.
- Ko, G. P. (1987). Casework Supervision in Voluntarily Family Services Agencies in Hong Kong. *International Social Work, 30*, 171-184.
- Ko, S. Y., & Ng, S. H. (1993). Culture and organisational management in the East and the West: an initial exploration and queries. In F. T. Fok (Ed.), *Culture and modern management in the East and the West* (pp. 25-38). Hong Kong: Buddhist Press.
- Kolb, D. A. (1984). *Experiential learning*. Englewood Cliffs. NJ: Prentice Hall Inc.
- Krueger, R. A. (1998). *Moderating focus groups*. Sage Publications, Inc.
- Ladany, N., Brittan-Powell, C. S. & Pannu, R. K. (1997). The influence of supervisory racial identity interaction and racial matching on the supervisory working alliance and supervisee multicultural competence. *Counselor Education and Supervision, 36*(4), 284-304.
- Ladany, N., Ellis, M. V. & Friedlander, M. L. (1999). The supervisory working alliance, trainee self-efficacy, and satisfaction. *Journal of Counselling and Development 77*(4), 447-455.

- Ladany, N., Friedlander, M. L., & Nelson, M. L. (2005). *Critical events in psychotherapy supervision: An interpersonal approach*. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.
- Ladany, N., Mori, Y., & Mehr, K. E. (2013). Effective and ineffective supervision. *The Counseling Psychologist, 41*, 28-47.
- Lam, Y. L. (1997). *Leadership behavior: supervisors and subordinates communication pattern in family service*, MA in Social Work Dissertation, Department of Applied Social Studies, The Hong Kong Polytechnic University.
- Lau, D. C. (1979) (trans.). *Confucius: The analects*. Harmondsworth: Penguin.
- Leiter, M. P. & Harvie, P. (1996). Burnout among mental health workers: A review and research agenda. *International Journal of Social Psychiatry, 2*, 90-101.
- Leithwood, K. (1992) 'The move toward transformational leadership', *Educational Leadership 49*(5), 8-12
- Lenz, A. S. (2014). Integrating relational-cultural theory concepts into supervision. *Journal of Creativity in Mental Health, 9*(1), 3-18.
- Leong, F. T. L., & Wagner, N. A. (1994). Cross-cultural counseling supervision: What do we know? What do we need to know? *Counselor Education and Supervision, 34*, 117-131.
- Leung, C. K. David (2003). *A study of abusive supervision: Its impact on Hong Kong subordinates' attitudes and behaviors*. Thesis: Doctor of Business Administration, The Hong Kong Polytechnic University.
- Leung, K. K. (2012). An exploration of the use of power in social work supervisory relationships in Hong Kong. *Journal of Social Work Practice, 26*(2), 151-162.
- Levy, C. S. (1973). The ethics of supervision. *Social Work, 18*, 14-21.
- Lizzio, A., Wilson, K., & Que, J. (2009). Relationship dimensions in the professional supervision of psychology graduates: supervisee perceptions of processes and outcome. *Studies in Continuing Education, 31*, 127-140.
- Lloyd, C., King, R. and Chenoweth, L. (2002). Social work stress and burnout: A review, *Journal of Mental Health, 11*(3), 255-65.
- Loganbill, C., Hardy, E. & Delworth, U. (1982). Supervision: A conceptual model. *Counseling Psychologist, 10*(1), 3-41.
- Lowry, J. L. (2001). Successful supervision: Supervisor and supervisee characteristics. In J. E. Barnett (Ed.), *the secrets of successful supervision*.

Symposium conducted at the meeting of the American Psychological Association, San Francisco CA.

- Luepker, E. T. (2003). *Record keeping in psychotherapy and counselling protecting confidentiality and the professional relationship*. East Sussex, UK: Brunner-Routledge.
- Magnuson, S., Norem, K., & Wilcoxon, A. (2000). Clinical supervision of relicensed counselors: recommendations for consideration and practice. *Journal of Mental Health Counseling*, 22(2), 176-188.
- Maidment, J., & Beddoe, L. (2012). Is social work supervision in “Good Heart”? A critical commentary. *Australian Social Work*, 65(2), 163-170.
- Martin, D. J., Garske, J. P., & Davis, M. K. (2000). Relation of the therapeutic alliance with outcome and other variables: a meta-analytic review, *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology*, 68(3), 438-450.
- Martinsons, M. G. (1996). Michael Hammer Meets Confucius: Re-Engineering Chinese business processes. *The Managers*, (May-June), 6-17.
- Mattinson, J. (1975). *The reflection process in casework supervision*. Washington, D.C.: NASW Press.
- Mays N, & Pope C.(1995). Qualitative research: rigour and qualitative research, King's Fund Institute, London. 311, 109–112.
- McCracken, G. (1988). *The long interview*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publication.
- McMahon, M. L. & Patton, W. A. (2002). Supervision: Life long learning for career counsellors. In M. L. McMahon & W. A. Patton (Eds.) *Supervision in the helping professions: A practical approach*. Frenchs Forest, N.S.W: Pearson Education, pp. 234-248.
- Mikulincer, M., & Shaver, P. R. (2007). *Attachment in adulthood: Structure, dynamics, and change*. New York: Guilford Press.
- Mikulincer, M., & Shaver, P. R. (2012). Adult attachment and caregiving: Individual differences in providing a safe haven and secure base to others. In S. L. Brown, R. M. Brown, & A. L. Penner (Eds.). *Moving beyond self-interest: Perspectives from evolutionary biology, neuroscience, and the social sciences* (pp. 39-52). New York: Oxford University Press.
- Miles, M. B., & Huberman, M. (1994). *Qualitative data analysis: an expanded sourcebook* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

- Miles, M. B., Huberman, M., & Saldana, J. (2014). *Qualitative data analysis: A methods sourcebook and the coding manual for qualitative researchers*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Mills, J. E., Francis, K. L., & Bonner, A. (2005). Mentoring, clinical supervision and preceptoring: Clarifying the conceptual definitions for Australian rural nurses. A review of the literature. *Rural and Remote Health*, 5(3), 410.
- Milne, D. L. (2010). Can we enhance the training of clinical supervisors? A national pilot study of an evidence-based approach. *Clinical Psychology and Psychotherapy*, 17(4), 321-328.
- Milne, D. L., (2007). An empirical definition of clinical supervision. *British Journal of Clinical Psychology*, 46, 437-447.
- Minuchin, S. (1974). *Families and family therapy*, Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press.
- Montalvo, B. (1973). Aspects of Live Supervision. *Family Process*, 12, 343-359.
- Mor Barak, M. E., Nissly, J. A., & Levin, A. (2001). Antecedents to retention and turnover among child welfare, social work, and other human service employees: What can we learn from past research? A review and metanalysis. *Social Service Review*, 75 (4), 625-661.
- Mor Barak, M. E., Travis, D. J., Pyun, H. and Xie, B. (2009). The impact of supervision on worker outcomes: A meta-analysis. *Social Services Review*, 83(1), 3-22.
- Morrison, T. (2005). *Staff supervision in social care: Making a real difference for staff and service consumers*. Brighton, England: Pavilion Publishing Ltd.
- Morrissey, J. & Tribe, R. (2001). Parallel process in supervision. *Counselling Psychology Quarterly*, 14 (2), 103-110.
- Munson, C. E. (1981). *Supervision for Clinical Practice*. Paper presented at Fifth Annual State Convention, National Association of Social Workers. El Paso TX, October 21-23, 1-16.
- Munson, C. E. (1983). *An introduction to clinical social work supervision*. NY: The Haworth Press.
- Munson, C. E. (2002). *Handbook of clinical social work supervision (3rd ed.)*. New York: The Haworth Social Work Practice Press.
- Nelson, G. L., (1978). Psychotherapy supervision from the trainee's point of view: A survey of preferences. *Professional Psychology*, 9(4), 539-550.

- Newsome, M. Jr., & Pillari, V. (1991). Job satisfaction and the worker-supervisor relationship. *The Clinical Supervisor*, 9(2), 119-129.
- Ng, K. T. (2011). *A pilot study of clinical supervision practice in Hong Kong: Reality vs expected standards*. Unpublished research paper. Hong Kong: The Hong Kong Polytechnic University.
- Ng, S. (1975). "Qing" and Chinese culture. In "Tao" in the Universe, Society of Chinese culture, New Asia College. The Chinese University (Ed.), (pp. 87-95). (*In Chinese*).
- Noddings, N. (1984). *Caring: A feminine approach to ethics and moral education*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.
- O'Donoghue, K. (1998). *Supervising social workers: A practical handbook*. Massey University.
- O'Donoghue, K. (2002). Global-vision, local-vision, person-vision and social work supervision. *Social Work Review*, XIV (4), 20-25.
- O'Donoghue, K. (2012). Windows on the supervisee experience: An exploration of supervisees' supervision history. *Australian Social Work*, 65(2), 214-231.
- O'Donoghue, K. (2015). Issues and challenges facing social work supervision in the twenty-first century. *China Journal of Social Work*. 8(2), 136-149.
- O'Donoghue, K., & Tsui, M.S. (2013). Social work supervision research (1970-2010): The way we were and the way ahead. *British Journal of Social Work*, 45, 616-633
- O'Leary, P., Tsui, M.S., & Ruch, G. (2013). The boundaries of the social work relationship revisited: Towards a connected, inclusive and dynamic conceptualization. *British Journal of Social Work*. 43,135-153.
- Olusegun, B. S. (2015). Constructivism learning theory: A paradigm for teaching and learning. *IOSR Journal of Research & Method in Education*. 5 (6), 66-70.
- Orlinsky, D. E., & Rønnestad, M. H. (2005). *How psychotherapists develop: A study of therapeutic work and professional growth*. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.
- Osborn, C. J. & Davis, T. E. (1996). The supervision contract: Making it Perfectly Clear. *The Clinical Supervisor*, 14(2), 121-134.
- Owen-Pugh, V., & Symons, C. (2012). Roth and Pilling's competence framework for clinical supervision: How generalisable is it? *Counseling and Psychotherapy Research: Linking Research with Practice*, 13, 126-135.

- Parsons, M. B., & Reid, D. H. (1995). Training residential supervisors to provide feedback for maintaining staff teaching skills with people who have severe disabilities. *Journal of Applied Behaviour Analysis, 28*(3), 317-322.
- Patton, M. J., & Kivlighan, D. M. (1997). Relevance of the supervisory alliance to the counseling alliance and to treatment adherence in counselor training. *Journal of Counseling Psychology, 44*(1), 108–115
- Patton, M. Q. (1980). *Qualitative evaluation method*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Patton, M. Q. (2002). *Qualitative research and evaluation methods*. Thousand Oaks, Calif: Sage Publications.
- Patton, M. Q. (2014). *Qualitative research & evaluation methods: Integrating theory and practice*. Thousand Oaks, California: SAGE Publications.
- Perlman, B., & Hartman, E. A. (1982). Burnout: summary and future research. *Human Relations, 35*(4), 283-305.
- Piaget, J. (1970). *Structuralism*. New York: Basic Books.
- Piaget, J. (1977). *The development of thought: Equilibration of cognitive structures*. New York: Viking.
- Pistole, M. C. & Watkins, C. E. Jr. (1995). Attachment theory, counseling process, and supervision. *The Counseling Psychologist, 23*(3), 457-478.
- Proctor, B. (2001). Training for the supervision alliance, attitude, skills and intention. In J. Cutcliffe, T. Butterworth, & B. Proctor. (Ed.). *Fundamental Themes in Clinical Supervision*, (pp. 25-46). London: Routledge.
- Ramos-Sanchez, L., Esnil, E., Goodwin, A., Riggs, S., Touster, L., Wright, L. K., & Rodolfa, E. (2002). Negative supervisory events: Effects on supervision and supervisory alliance. *Professional Psychology: Research and Practice, 33*, 197-202.
- Rauktis, M. E., & Koeske, G. F. (1994). Maintaining social worker morale: when supportive supervision is not enough. *Administration in Social Work, 18*(1), 39-60.
- Reddy, M.J. (1979). The conduit metaphor -- a case of frame conflict in our language about language. In A. Ortony (Ed.), *Metaphor and thought* (pp. 284-297). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Redmond, R. & Curtis, E. (2009). Focus groups: principles and process. *Nurse Researcher, 16*, 57-69.

- Reiser, R. P., & Miline, D. (2012). Supervising cognitive-behavioral psychotherapy: Pressing needs, impressing possibilities. *Journal of Contemporary Psychotherapy, 42*, 161-171.
- Reynolds, B. C. (1942). *Learning and teaching in the practice of social work*. New York: J. J. Little & Ives.
- Rholes, S., & Simpson, J. (Eds.) (2004). *Adult attachment: Theory, research and clinical implications*. New York: Guilford Press.
- Richmond, M. (1897). *The need for a training school in applied philanthropy*. Paper presented in the National Conference of Social Welfare.
- Robertson, D. L. (1996). Facilitating transformative learning: Attending to the dynamics of the educational helping relationship. *Adult Education Quarterly, 47*, 41-53.
- Rønnestad, M.H. & Orlinsky, D.E. (2005). Clinical implications: Training, supervision and practice. In: D.E. Orlinsky & M. H. Rønnestad. *How psychotherapists develop. A study of therapeutic work and professional growth*, (pp. 181-201). Washington: American Psychological Ass.
- Rubin, A., & Babbie, E. R. (2013). *Research methods for social work*. Books/Cole Cengage Learning.
- Rusbult, C. E., & Van Lange, P. A. M. (2003). Interdependence, interaction, and relationships. *Annual Review of Psychology, 54*, 351-375.
- Schober, M. F. (1998). Different Kinds of Conversational Perspective-Taking. In S. R. Fussell & R. J. Krenz (Eds.). *Social and cognitive approaches to interpersonal communication*. (pp. 145-174). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Schon, D. (1983). *The reflective practitioner*. London: Temple Smith.
- Schore, A. N. (2000). Attachment and the regulation of the right brain. *Attachment & Human Development, 2*(1), 23-47.
- Schroffel, A. (1999). How does clinical supervision affect job satisfaction? *The Clinical Supervisor, 18*(2), 91-105.
- Schwartz, R.C., Liddle, H. A., & Breunlin, D. C., (1988). Muddles in Live Supervision. In Liddle, H. A., Breunlin, D. C., & Schwartz, R. C. (Eds.) *Handbook of Family Therapy Training and Supervision* (183-193). New York: Guildford Press.

- Searles, H. F. (1955). The informational value supervisor's emotional experiences. *Psychiatry*, 18(2), 135-146.
- Shing, C. Y. (1988). Building up Chinese management philosophy. In K. S. Yang & S. K. Tsang (Eds.), *Management thinking of Chinese people*. Taipei: Kwai Koon Publications Ltd. (In Chinese)
- Shulman, L. (1982). *The skills of helping individuals and groups*. Itasca, IL: Peacock.
- Shulman, L. (1991). *Interactional social work practice: Toward an empirical theory*. Itasca IL: F.E. Peacock.
- Shulman, L. (1993). *Interactional supervision*. Washington, DC: NASW Press.
- Shulman, L. (2004). Truth and consequences: Inquiry and policy in research on teaching education. *Journal of Teacher Education*, 53(3), 248-253.
- Shulman, L. (2005). The clinical supervisor-practitioner working alliance: A parallel process. *The clinical Supervisor*, 24, 23-47.
- Shulman, L. (2016). *Interactional supervision (3rd ed.)*. Washington, DC:NASW Press.
- Smith, D. E. (1987). *The everyday world as problematic: A feminist sociology*. Boston: Northeastern University Press.
- Social Welfare Department of Hong Kong (2001). Service Quality Standards (SQSs) and Criteria. Retrieved from 26 May 2016, [http://www.swd.gov.hk/doc/ngo/_SQSs%20and%20Criteria%20\(Dec%202001\)\(Eng\).pdf](http://www.swd.gov.hk/doc/ngo/_SQSs%20and%20Criteria%20(Dec%202001)(Eng).pdf)
- Social Welfare Department of Hong Kong (2016). *Statistics on child abuse, spouse/cohabitant battering and sexual violence cases*. Retrieved from 26 May 2016, <http://www.swd.gov.hk/vs/english/stat.html>
- Social Workers Registration Board (2006). Study on the current state of supervision for social workers in Hong Kong. Retrieved from 26 May 2016 <http://swrb.org.hk/Documents/research2006.pdf>
- Social Workers Registration Board (2009). Guidelines for Social Work Supervision. Retrieved from 26 May 2016. http://www.swrb.org.hk/engasp/supervision_c.asp
- Social Workers Registration Board (2016). *The statistics on complaints cases*. Retrieved from 26 May 2016.http://www.swrb.org.hk/EngASP/statistic_com_c.asp
- Spradley, J. (1979). *The ethnographic interview*. New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston.

- Stein, D. M. & Lambert, M. J. (1995). Graduate training in psychotherapy: Are therapy outcomes enhanced? *Journal of Consulting & Clinical Psychology*, 63(2), 182-196.
- Stoltenberg, C. (1981). Approaching supervision from a developmental perspective: The counselor-complexity model. *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, 28, 59–65.
- Stoltenberg, C. D. and Delworth, U. (1987). *Supervising counselors and therapists: A developmental approach*. San Francisco: Jossey Bass.
- Sue, D.W. & Sue, S. (2012). *Counseling the culturally diverse: Theory and practice*. Hoboken, NJ: Wiley.
- Taber, K. S. (2011). Constructivism as educational theory: contingency in learning, and optimally guided instruction. In J. Hassaskhah (Ed.), *Education Theory* pp.39-61). New York: Nova.
- Tam, S. K. & Mong, P. K. (2005). Job stress, perceived inequity and burnout among school social workers in Hong Kong, *International Social Work*, 48(4), 467-483.
- The Hong Kong Council of Social Service (2009). Statistics of social services. Retrieved from 26 May 2016 <http://www.hkcss.org.hk>
- The Hong Kong Council of Social Service (2010). Survey on turnover and wastage of social work personnel. Advisory Committee on Social Work Training and Manpower Planning. Retrieved from 26 May 2016 <http://www.hkcss.org.hk>
- Tromski, D. K. (2007). Should the clinical supervisor be the administrative supervisor. *The Clinical Supervisor*, 25(1-2), 53-67.
- Tsui, M. & Cheung, F. (2004). Gone with the wind: the impacts of managerialism on human services, *British Journal of Social Work*, 34, 437-442.
- Tsui, M. S. (1997a). The root of social work supervision: An historical review. *The Clinical Supervisor*, 15(2), 191-198.
- Tsui, M. S. (1997b). Empirical research on social work supervision: The state of the art (1970-1995). *Journal of Social Service Research*, 23(2), 39-54.
- Tsui, M. S. (2001). *Towards a culturally sensitive model of social work supervision in Hong Kong*. Unpublished doctoral Thesis. Toronto: University of Toronto.
- Tsui, M. S. (2003). The supervisory relationship of Chinese social workers in Hong Kong. *The Clinical Supervisor*, 22(2),99-120.
- Tsui, M. S. (2004). Supervision model in social work: From nature to culture. *Asian Journal of Counseling*, 11(1&2), 7-55.

- Tsui, M. S. (2005). *Social work supervision: Content and concepts*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Tsui, M. S. (2006). Hopes and dreams: Ideal supervision for social workers in Hong Kong. *Asia Pacific Journal of Social Work and Development*, 16(1), 34-42.
- Tsui, M. S. (2008). Adventures in re-researching the features of social work supervision in Hong Kong. *Qualitative Social Work*, 7(3), 349-362.
- Tsui, M. S., & Ho, W. S. (2003). *Social work supervision: Theories, practice and reflections*. Hong Kong: Hong Kong Christian Service Centre (*In Chinese*).
- Tsui, M. S., Ho, W. S., & Lam, C. M. (2005). The use of supervisory authority in Chinese cultural context. *Administration in Social Work*, 29(4), 51-68.
- Tsui, M. S., O'Donoghue, K. B., & Wong, P. Y. J. (2016). *Dialogue on dilemmas in social work supervision and the way forward*. In Social Work Supervision: Challenges and Advances Seminar 2015, Organized by the Social Work Accreditation and Advisory Board (SWAAB), Singapore.
- Tsui, M.S., O'Donoghue, K. B. & Ng, K. T. (2014). Culturally competent and diversity-sensitive clinical supervision: An international perspective, In Watkins, C. E.Jr. & Milne, D. L. *The Wiley international handbook of clinical supervision*. 238-254. John Wiley & Son, Ltd.
- Tuckman, B. (1965). Developmental sequence in small groups. *Psychological Bulletin*, 63(6), 384-99.
- Turney, D. (2010). Sustaining relationships: Working with strong feelings. III. Love and positive feelings, In G. Ruch, D. Turney and A. Ward (Eds), *Relationship-based Practice: Getting to the heart of social work*, London: Jessica Kingsley.
- Tutty, L. M., Rothevy, M. L., & Grinnell, R. M. Jr. (1996) (Eds.). *Qualitative research for social workers: Phases, steps, and tasks*. Boston: Allyn & Bacon.
- Van Mannen, J. (1983a). *Qualitative methodology*. London: Sage Publications.
- Van Mannen, J. (1983b) Reclaiming qualitative methods for organisational research. In J. Van Manen (Ed) *Qualitative methodology*. London: Sage Publications.
- Van Ooijen, E. G. (2003). *Clinical supervision made easy. The 3 step method*. (Churchill Livingstone / Elsevier), Edinburgh.
- Virginia, R. (1936). *Supervision in Social Work*. Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press.

- Virginia, R. (1949). *The dynamics of supervision under functional controls, a professional process in social casework*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.
- Von Glasersfeld, E. (1992). Constructivism Reconstructed: A Reply to Suchting. *Science & Education 1*, 279-384.
- Vondracek, F.W., & Corneal, S. (1995). *Strategies for resolving individual and family problems*. Pacific Grove, CA:Brooks/Cole Publishing Company.
- Watkins, C. E., Jr. (1997). *Handbook of psychotherapy supervision*. New York: Wiley.
- Watkins, C. E., Jr. (2011). Does psychotherapy supervision contribute to patient outcomes? Considering thirty years of research. *The Clinical Supervisor, 30*(2), 235-256.
- Watkins, C. E., Jr. (2012). On demoralization, therapist identity development, and persuasion and healing in psychotherapy supervision. *Journal of Psychotherapy Integration, 2*, 187-205.
- Wei, X. & Li, Q (2013). The Confucian value of harmony and its influence on Chinese social interaction. *Cross-Cultural Communication, 9*(1), 60-66.
- Wheeler, S. & Richards, K. (2007). The impact of clinical supervision on counselors and therapists, their practice, and their clients. *Counselling and Psychotherapy Research, 7*, 54-65.
- Whitaker, C. and Keith, D. (1981). Symbolic-experiential family therapy, in Gurman & D. Kniskern (Eds.), *Handbook of family therapy*, New York: Brunner/Mazel.
- White, V., & Queener, J. (2003). Supervisor and supervisee attachments and social provisions related to the supervisory working alliance. *Counselor Education & Supervision, 42*, 203-218.
- Wong, M. F. (2002). *The impact of Lump Sum Grant funding policy on the human resources management of non-government organisation in Hong Kong*. Master of Public Administration Dissertation. The University of Hong Kong.
- Wonnacott, J. (2003) *The impact of supervision on child protection practice- a study of process and outcome*. University of Sussex, M Phil unpublished
- Worthen, V., & McNeill, B. W. (1996). A Phenomenological investigation of “Good” supervision events. *Journal of Counseling Psychology, 43*(1), 25-34.

- Worthington, E. L., & Roehlke, H. J. (1979). Effective supervision as perceived by beginning counselors in training. *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, 26(1), 64-73.
- Yang, K. S. (1992). *Do traditional and modern values coexist in a modern Chinese society?* In Proceedings of the conference on Chinese perspectives on values (pp. 117-158). Taipei: Center for Sinological Studies.
- Yang, K. S., & Ho, D. Y. F. (1988). The role of yuan in Chinese social life: A conceptual and empirical analysis. In A. C. Paranjpe, D. Y. F. Ho, & R. W. Rieber (Eds.), *Asian contributions to psychology* (pp. 263-281). New York: Praeger.
- Yegdich, T., & Cushing, A. (1998). An historical perspective on clinical supervision in nursing. *The Australian and New Zealand Journal of Mental Health Nursing*, 7(1), 3-24.
- Young, Y.A. (2009). *Police in the eye of the storm*. A quarterly publication of police community relations committee (P.C.R.C), 14-19.
- Zhu, Bo (2008). *Chinese cultural values and Chinese language pedagogy* (M.A.). Ohio State University and Ohio LINK. Retrieved from 26 May 2016 <http://etd.ohiolink.edu/view.cgi/Zhu>.
- Zvi, D. G. (2001). Social work perceptions of transformational and transactional leadership in health care. *Social Work Research*, 25(1), 17-25.