
ABSTRACT

Effects of the therapist's practical experience on a mock session of a psycho-therapeutic interview

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This study examined the possible effects of a therapist's practical experience upon interview skills. Four groups of therapists with different duration of experience made a 30-minute interview simulating a session with a client. Undergraduate students took the role of the client. Sessions were videotaped and analyzed in terms of the verbal and nonverbal expressions made by therapist and client respectively. Also, the videotapes were reviewed by senior professional psychologists and were rated for therapists' skills. While the frequencies of appearance of pre-determined items showed no group differences, their temporal patterns disclosed meaningful characteristics. Whereas the sessions managed by experienced therapists showed well-structured patterns of progress, those by non-experienced ones were monotonous. Therapists with over 10 years of experience successfully managed sessions so that clients could explore their problems and keep up a high level of responses, which prompted them to get an insightful solution. Results of the assessment made by senior psychologists coincided basically with the results of our analyses. This study thus confirmed that therapists' management of sessions could be improved through career experience.

Key Words: counseling, video-analysis, verbal/non-verbal expression, career effect
