

## Practice Research Networks: An antidote to empirical imperialism

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## Different road trips

- Relevance of research
  - Lack of external validity
  - Inattention to clinicians' concerns
- Engagement in research
  - Trauma from graduate school
  - Lack of collaborative opportunity

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## A way to get to Rome together

- Rejecting the "empirical Imperialism"
  - "I" know what is important to know
- Creating a collaborative infrastructure
  - Active and mutual engagement in the design, implementation, and dissemination of knowledge

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## PPA PRN

Phase I (Borkovec, Echemendia, Ragusea, & Ruiz, 2001)

- Goals:
  - - Create a state-wide infrastructure
  - - Obtain experience in the use of a core battery and in the conduct of collaborative research in the applied setting

Phase II

- Goals:
  - - Examine what do clients find helpful (and unhelpful) during a session?
  - - Investigate whether knowledge of client's perception of helpful (and hindering) events can improve the effectiveness of therapy.

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## Questions

- What events are found by clients to be most helpful and hindering during sessions conducted within the context of regular private practice?
- What events are found by therapists to be most helpful and hindering during the same sessions?
- What are some of the content of discussions addressed within these helpful and hindering events?

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## Method

### Design

- Within each of three age groups (child, adolescent, adult), clients were randomly assigned to experimental or control conditions
- Experimental condition: HAT filled out by both client and therapist after every session
- Control condition: HAT filled out by therapist only
- This presentation focus primarily on adolescents and adults clients (12 years old and older)

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## Method

### Participants

- 13 experienced therapists in private practice, all but one full-time clinicians
- 121 clients
- Clients per therapist, Mean of 9.31 (sd=7.33) ranging from 2 to 24.
- Number of sessions: Mean of 7.98 (sd=8.17), ranging from 1 to 36

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## Method

### Instruments

A. Helpful Aspects Therapy Questionnaire (HAT, Llewelyn, 1985)

- 1. Did anything particularly helpful happen during this session? Circle: Yes / No (If yes, please describe it briefly below and circle its helpfulness).
- 1-----2-----3-----4
- Slightly Moderately Greatly Extremely
- Helpful Helpful Helpful Helpful
- 2. Did anything happen during this session which might have been hindering? Circle: Yes / No (If yes, please describe it briefly below and circle its hindering).
- 1-----2-----3-----4
- Slightly Moderately Greatly Extremely
- Hindering Hindering Hindering Hindering

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## Method

### Procedures

- All new clients completed the TOP before first session.
- HAT cards were filled out after every session.
- Therapists read the HAT filled out by the client before the next session.
- All new clients were asked to fill out the TOP after the last session of their treatment.

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## Results

A) IMPACT – Client report

- 1) Self-awareness

B) IMPACT – Therapist report

- 1) Self-awareness
- 2) Alliance Strengthening

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## Therapists' experience

- 1. What have you found the most interesting and/or beneficial about your participation in the HAT study?
- 2. What have you found the most difficult and/or frustrating about your participation in the HAT study?
- 3. What, if anything, was beneficial and/or detrimental about this study to your patients?
- 4. What have been the most frequent and/or important obstacles in conducting the study?
- 5. If you were confronted with important obstacles when conducting the study, what, if anything, has helped you dealing with these obstacles?
- 6. What would you change and/or add in the preparation and implementation of a similar study in the future?

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## Benefits

- Participation fostered learning, empirical and clinical
- Clients may have gained therapeutically
- Therapists appreciate working with and learning from others (sense of community and mutual engagement toward shared goals)
- Participation provides opportunities for the establishment or strengthening of personal and professional relationship
- The development and implementation of a scientifically rigorous and clinically relevant study was experienced as a stimulating and gratifying process
- research participation was also intrinsically meaningful and rewarding for their clients
- Incentives (e.g., CE credits)

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## Difficulties

- Pragmatic obstacles
- Research tasks may have, at times, interfered with client's needs
- Some therapists had problems with instruments used

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## Recommendations

- Research questions should be clinically relevant and scope of the study should be manageable
- Measures should be useful and simple to administer
- Substantial time should be devoted to developed research design and study protocol
- Research procedures should as simple and clear as possible
- Frequent meetings should be held
- An atmosphere of support and validation in the group should be created and maintained

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## Recommendations

- Self-efficacy and motivation should be fostered
- Direct and easily accessible consultation should be made available
- Structured and continued supervision of the data collection should be planned and implemented
- help from their administrative staff should be encourage
- strategies aimed at increasing clients and therapists motivation

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### Phase III

- Keeping the good things
  - Focus on the process of change (client’s feedback) in order to “confound” research and clinical tasks
  - Focus on outcome (experimental design) as a strategy to address the ultimate goal of science
  - Active collaboration and full support in design and implementation

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### Phase III

- Avoiding the bad things
  - Making the protocol manageable
  - Exporting strategies from controlled research
    - Monitoring closely data collection
    - Financial support (APA, BHL)

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### PSU PRN Castonguay, et al. (2004)

Training Clinics: Confounding three tasks

#### Components

- Core outcome battery (TOP)
- Standardized assessment procedures
- Review committee
- IRB agreement

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### PSU PRN Examples of Studies

- Trajectories of change (Nordberg, Castonguay, Fisher, Boswell & Krauss, 2010)
- Negative impact of specific interventions, used by particular therapists, with particular clients (Boswell, Castonguay, Wasserman, in press)
- Predictors of Insight (McAleavy & Castonguay, in preparation)

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### PRN Infrastructures

Network of PRNs (Castonguay & Kraus)

Network of Training Clinics (Borkovec)

Network of Counseling Centers (Locke)

- Pilot study: 28, 000 clients (Locke, Hayes, Castonguay, 2010)

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