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The space between Black & White: Examining the lived experiences of African American supervisees in cross-racial supervisory relationships

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The Space Between Black & White: Examining the Lived Experiences of African

American Supervisees in Cross-Racial Supervisory Relationships

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Dedication Page

This work is dedicated to the remarkable Black women who inspired me to write. Without the women who come before me, none of this would have been possible. My mother and my first instructor, Teretha, who showed me the beauty in intelligence. Thank you for teaching me to be courageous, determined, to stand for what's right even if you have to stand alone, and to always be the best version of myself! Your inspiration, encouragement, and unconditional love is unmatched. I'm finally becoming the "teacher" you always believed I could be; I hope I can continue to make you proud. My "Grammar Grandma" (Shirley), who held me and all of her grandchildren to a standard of excellence that always challenges us to be successful! This accomplishment was not by accident; thank you for your prayers and words of encouragement throughout my life and this process. To my avid reader, Gran (Mildred), I wish you were here to read this book. I'm forever grateful you showed me how vital education, intellectual wealth, and knowledge can be for a young Black girl! To my great-grandmothers, Grammy (Hattie) and Mama (Hazel), thank you for passing along your spirit of determination and for epitomizing strong Black women. Lastly, to my "mini-me" sister, Taryn, I hope you continue to blaze your own trail and continue to wow me! I love you and thank you all for everything!

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Abstract

There is a growing trend in the counseling research that addresses the importance of multicultural counseling and specifically the need for effective work with African American clients (Chang, Hays, & Shoffner, 2004). More specifically, attention should be given to African American supervisees in cross-racial supervisory relationships who experience complex forms of discrimination due to the differing cultural identities within the supervisory relationship. While also meeting the needs of the African American clients, increased representation in the field could also be beneficial for the counseling profession and support the growth and development of same race clinicians. This influx of African American clinicians will also increase the population of supervisors. In fulfillment of dissertation research and to continue enhancing the research for cross-racial supervisory practices, this study aimed to investigate the lived experiences of seven African American supervisees in cross-racial supervisory relationships. Through a phenomenological study, twelve themes emerged from data collected via individual interviews. Implications of these findings for counseling supervision, including engaging in cultural discussions, are discussed.

Keywords: cross-racial supervision, African American, counselors, power dynamics, trust, clinical competence, cultural awareness, perceived competence

CHAPTER 1

Clinical supervision is a vital aspect of the counseling profession, especially for novice therapists early in their training or at an entry-level position in their professional development. The quality and content of the supervisee's supervision, as well as his/her own feelings about how successfully racial/ethnic/cultural issues are addressed in supervision, typically play an important role in how supervisees display their expertise. For example, power dynamics between supervisors and supervisees are inherent as a result of the hierarchical structure of supervision, and the need for sophistication in one's ability to manage those dynamics effectively is critical. Failure to adequately attend to issues of power in supervision can result in ineffective or even harmful supervision (Cook et al., 2018). This is especially true in cross-racial supervisory dyads, which can mirror the imbalance and lack of cultural competence that can occur in society. Therefore, many lessons can be gleaned from the exploration of mixed racial dyads and dynamics that occur within the supervisory relationship that can impact clinical supervision.

Background

Supervision in the counseling field is a distinct intervention. The central purposes of supervision are to foster the supervisee's professional development (a supportive and educational function) and to ensure client welfare. Bernard and Goodyear (2014) define supervision as:

An intervention provided by a more senior member of a profession to a more junior colleague or colleagues who typically (but not always) are members of that

same profession. This relationship is evaluative and hierarchical, extends over time, and has the simultaneous purposes of enhancing the professional functioning of the more junior person(s); monitoring the quality of professional services offered to the clients that she, he, or they see; and serving as a gatekeeper for the particular profession the supervisee seeks to enter. (p. 9)

Supervision is an approach that explicitly identifies the knowledge, skills, and values that create clinical competency and, in keeping with evidence-based practices and requirements of the clinical setting, also develops learning strategies and evaluation procedures to meet criterion-referenced competence standards. The supervisor plays a vital role in supporting supervisees as they enhance their professional functioning and assisting supervisees as they develop skills and competencies necessary for licensure or certifications (Bernard & Goodyear, 2014). Regular and ongoing clinical supervision can enhance the quality of services provided by the supervisee, which is also the responsibility of the supervisor. Supervisors and supervisees work together to identify a "person-specific" understanding of supervision and the parameters of supervision as a way to explore the supervisee's developmental level and the supervisor's tasks.

According to Barnett and Molzon (2014), effective clinical supervisors can model how to thoughtfully and sensitively address issues of diversity in how they attend to differences between the supervisor and supervisee (e.g., gender, gender identity, age, race, culture, ethnicity, language, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, disability). Researchers have also noted that supervisors need to have a clear understanding of their own personal awareness, knowledge, and skills concerning multiculturalism (Sangganjanavanich & Black, 2011).Therefore, it is imperative for supervisors to be

proficient in supervisory modalities, counseling theories, and effective therapeutic interventions and modalities as well as know how to instruct others on those skills. Thoughtful supervisors can also push supervisees to consider and address how these factors may be affecting the supervisees in their clinical work with clients (Barnett & Molzon, 2014).

Barnett and Molzon (2014) highlighted the following "essentials" for effective supervisor/supervisee relationships: (a) the existence of a formal supervision contract; (b) mutual acknowledgment of supervisor/supervisee competence; (c) an agreement that developing and consistently improving diversity/multicultural competence is essential to providing effective counseling services; (d) upholding a professional supervisor/supervisee relationship; (e) documentation of supervision sessions; (f) evaluation of progress; (g) self-care (for both supervisor and supervisee); (h) emergency coverage (a "fallback" supervisor when the primary is unavailable); and (i) mutually agreed-upon grounds for supervision termination.

The supervisory working alliance (SWA) is a core component of the supervision process. Bordin (1983) defined this as the degree to which the supervisor and trainee agree on (a) the goals of supervision; (b) what needs to be done to reach those goals (i.e., tasks); and (c) trust that the tasks will help the trainee reach their goals. This SWA is a vital aspect of supervision and can impact supervisees, whether or not the supervision is effective. According to O'Donovan et al. (2011), many argue that a strong supervisory alliance parallels, models, and promotes the crucial components of an effective therapeutic alliance between the supervisee and the client. Enlow et al. (2019) asserted that a strong supervisory working alliance promotes trainee self-efficacy, clinical care,

and increased trainee satisfaction with supervision. Being responsive to restorative and formative tasks in supervision can be crucial for the supervisee's growth. For example, facilitating the supervisee's emotional processing in supervision may assist the supervisee to overcome barriers to developing empathy with the client. Thus, Hook et al. (2013) theorized that developing a strong working alliance with diverse clients depends on one's willingness to cultivate openness to the other person by regulating one's natural tendency to view one's beliefs, values, and worldview as superior.

Several major aspects of clinical supervision can impact the supervisory working alliance: clinician's and supervisor's competence, including their cultural awareness; trust between supervisee and supervisor; and power dynamics within the supervisory relationship. Moreover, if the supervisor does not attend to the aforementioned issues, problems can occur not only in the supervisory relationship, but also potentially with the supervisee's clinical work with clients (Chang et al., 2004). Due to the intersection with the other various factors, cultural competence is particularly noteworthy. Cultural competence is the belief that people should not only appreciate and recognize other cultural groups but also refers to the ability of supervisors to work with clients or trainees from other cultures and races (Schroeder et al., 2009). With an increase in more current studies, the use of the word competence—which implies an end state that cannot realistically be attained—is shifting to orientation (Hook et al., 2013). Multicultural orientation is concerned with how the cultural worldviews, values, and beliefs of the client and the therapist interact and influence one another to co-create a relational experience that is in the spirit of healing (Davis et al., 2018).

Supervisors who supervise from a multicultural orientation tend to ground their work in cultural humility. This is the ability to maintain an interpersonal stance that is other-oriented (or open to the other) in relation to aspects of cultural identity that are most important to the supervisee (Hook et al., 2016). Culturally humble individuals tend to have an accurate view of the self and are generally aware of their limitations. This notion is relevant to the field of counseling, in that counseling supervision is not immune to the phenomenon of racism, despite the fact that most White supervisors would never think to act in a deliberately racist manner toward Black supervisees (Constantine & Sue, 2007). According to Falender et al. (2014), cultural humility involves a lifelong commitment to self-examination and the redress of power imbalances in the client-therapist-supervisor dynamic, hence the need to shift away from the use of cultural competence, which implies a fixed state.

Further, the Multicultural and Social Justice Counseling Competencies (MSJCC) asserted, based on previous research, that the intersections of racial, ethnic, gender, sexual, socioeconomic, age, religious, spiritual, and disability identities have important influences on mental health outcomes and health disparities (Ratts et al., 2015). Therefore, it is important to understand the underrepresentation of African Americans in mental health generally, in order to begin improving training models that begin to break the vicious cycle of lack of representation. Perhaps not surprisingly, there continues to be a lack of awareness and understanding for mental health care within the African American community and continued mental health disparities persist (Buser, 2011; Matthews et al., 2006). Creating a field of counselors and counselor educators that mirrors the demographics of the United States population is necessary to begin to address

these disparities (Haizlip, 2012). Until the field of counseling increases representation of

African Americans in the field, while also building cultural competence,

underrepresentation of clients and ineffective service is likely to continue.

Statement of Purpose

Many aspects of an individual's cultural identity contribute to their lived

experiences. All individuals see the world, and are seen through, lenses of ethnicity, race,

social class, gender, sexual orientation, religion, and ability status, to name a few. The

counseling and supervision relationships should depict these multiple aspects of identity

(McAuliffe, 2013). However, exploring cultural aspects, specifically cross-racial triads,

in supervisory settings has been a limitation of the counseling field, even though

researchers have acknowledged that supervisors who do not address cultural and racial

issues within supervision have difficulty in developing multicultural relationships

(Schroeder et al., 2009; Bhat & Davis, 2007). Further, there is a paucity of empirical

research that has explored how perceived competence is impacted by differing cultural

identities in clinical supervisory settings. This study was designed to explore the lived

experiences of African American supervisees being supervised by White supervisors.

Significance of the Study

The African American community has been underserved and underrepresented in

counseling for years. The counseling profession has an extensive history of

underrepresentation of ethnic minorities at the faculty, supervisory, and student levels

(Bradley & Holcomb-McCoy, 2004; Haskins et al., 2016; Holcomb-McCoy & Addison-

Bradley, 2005). There continues to be a lack of awareness and understanding of mental

health care within the African American community, and continued mental health

disparities persist (Buser, 2011; Matthews et al., 2006). Creating a field of counselors and counselor educators that reflects the demographics of the United States population is necessary to begin to address these disparities (Haizlip, 2012). Further, recognizing the importance of seeing African Americans in certain professions can give other African Americans a sense of hope, optimism and relatability.

As the population becomes more diverse, the supervisor-supervisee-client triad will become increasingly composed of individuals with complex racial and cultural characteristics hence, it becomes an ethical obligation for supervisors to address the impact that changing demographics have on counseling and supervisory processes and outcomes (Chang et al., 2004). Concerns with stigma, lack of culturally-competent providers, not receiving proper information about services, and lack of providers from diverse racial/ethnic backgrounds are known causes to hinder African Americans from accessing mental health services (Murray & Hairston, 2017). While also meeting the needs of African American clients, increased representation in the field could also be beneficial for the counseling profession and offer support for the growth and development of same race clinicians and supervisors. This influx of African American clinicians will also grow the population of supervisors working with clinicians. One way to do this is to explore the perceptions and experiences of African American supervisees.

Research Questions

The specific research questions pertaining to this study include the following:

Research Question 1. How do African American counseling supervisees experience their supervisory relationships with White supervisors?

Research Question 2. What are the African American counseling supervisees' experiences with specific dynamics such as supervisors' use of power, the establishment of trust, clinical competence, and general cultural competence or incompetence, including racism and discrimination, in supervision?

Research Question 3. How do African American supervisees' experiences and perceptions of the supervisory relationship affect their own sense of clinical competence?

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Definition of Terms

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The following section defines terms relevant to this study: *African American/Black, clinical supervision, cross-racial supervision, cultural humility, multicultural competence, perceived competence, race, supervisee, supervisor, supervisory relationship, supervisory style, supervisory working alliance and White.*

African American/Black are used interchangeably to define an individual living in the United States whose ancestry has its origins in Africa and who self-identifies with that racial/ethnic group.

Clinical Supervision is an evaluative and hierarchical intervention provided by a more senior member of a profession to a more junior colleague or colleagues who are members of that same profession. This relationship extends over time and has the simultaneous purposes of enhancing the professional functioning of the more junior person(s); monitoring the quality of professional services offered to the clients; and serving as a gatekeeper for the particular profession the supervisee seeks to enter (Bernard & Goodyear, 2014). For the purpose of this study counseling supervision, clinical supervision, and supervision are used interchangeably.

Cross-racial Supervision refers specifically to supervisory relationships in which the supervisor or student come from different racial or ethnic backgrounds (Schroeder et al., 2009).

Cultural Humility is the ability to maintain an interpersonal stance that is other-oriented (or open to the other) in relation to aspects of cultural identity that are most important to the client [or supervisee].

Multicultural/Diversity Competence is the counselors' cultural and diversity awareness and knowledge about self and others, and how this awareness and knowledge are applied effectively in practice with clients and client groups (ACA, 2014). Cultural competence and multicultural competence are also used interchangeably.

Perceived Competence is the extent to which a person feels he or she has the necessary attributes in order to succeed.

Race is defined by the U.S. Census (2017) as a person's self-identification with one or more social groups, including White; Black or African American; Asian; American Indian; Alaska Native; Native Hawaiian; and other Pacific Islander.

Supervisee for the purpose of this study refers to a professional counselor or counselor-in-training whose counseling work or clinical skill development is being overseen in a formal supervisory relationship by a qualified trained professional (ACA, 2014).

Supervisor for the purpose of this study refers to a licensed counseling professional who meets the minimum number of years of experience as stipulated by accreditation bodies and state licensing boards. These individuals are responsible for overseeing the work of counselors and counselor trainees and serve in the following

roles: teacher, counselor, consultant, and gatekeeper of the profession (Bernard & Goodyear, 2014). The term supervisor includes faculty, doctoral, and on-site supervisor, and are utilized when a distinction is necessary.

Supervisory Relationships are multilayered and complex and include the feelings and attitudes that participants have toward one another and the process, as well as the manner in which these feelings and attitudes are expressed (Bernard & Goodyear, 2014).

Supervisory Style refers to supervisors' methods of communicating their supervision to supervisees for the supervisees' professional development (Bernard & Goodyear, 2014; Friedlander & Ward, 1984; Hart & Nance, 2003).

Supervisory Working Alliance was a theory originally proposed by Edward Bordin as an application of working alliance theory to the supervision process in order to explore the nature of the therapeutic alliance in the counseling relationship (Bernard & Goodyear, 2014; Bordin, 1983).

White refers to an individual who is Caucasian and implies someone of European origin (Schroeder et al., 2009).

Chapter Summary

A growing trend in the counseling research addresses the importance of multicultural counseling and specifically the need for effective work with African American clients (Liu, 2019; Chang et al., 2004). However, there has been little research to examine promoting success among African American counselors. More specifically, attention should be given to African American supervisees in cross-racial supervisory relationships who experience complex forms of discrimination due to the differing

cultural identities within the supervisory relationship. The following chapter outlines

literature that has contributed to the field thus far and establishes the need for this study

in the field of counseling supervision. After a thorough review of the literature in Chapter

2, Chapter 3 includes the methodological approach of the study.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

In our society, racism continues to significantly affect most African Americans. Studies have shown that Whites exhibit negative, prejudicial responses to African Americans; that African Americans report higher race-related stress as compared to other ethnic groups; and that African Americans' experiences with racism are associated with physical and psychological distress (Kelly & Boyd-Franklin, 2005). Due to the impact of racism, it is unsurprising that African Americans experience harsher socioeconomic realities than their White counterparts and disproportionately experience adversity. However, as a result of this, African Americans place high regard on cultural strengths such as resiliency, spiritual/religious affiliation, racial identity, and socialization of racial and cultural values (Range et al., 2018). Issues of race and culture frequently arise in the daily professional and personal lives of African Americans, including in higher education settings. Predominantly White universities, in particular, offer a unique challenge to African American students (Haskins et al., 2016). At the same time, in light of rapid cultural diversification among universities, faculty should anticipate a more diverse student body. On one hand, this trend suggests that an increase in graduate students in particular who are minorities may begin to diversify the counseling field and perhaps create a workforce that is more likely to mirror client diversity (Schroeder et al., 2009). However, unspoken social processes—such as power differentials between supervisor and intern, supervisors who do not attend to racial dynamics and issues, and interns who feel a lack of trust and psychological safety—may all inhibit the development of the

counseling intern's professional voice, skills, and sense of competence (Proctor &

Rogers, 2013).

An understanding of the issues that can arise in the cross-cultural supervisory

relationship might help facilitate racial and cultural sensitivity and awareness within

supervisors and lead to more positive and effective supervisory relationships. This study

adds to the literature by exploring the lived experiences of African American supervisees

being supervised by White supervisors. The purpose of this literature review is to

synthesize the existing literature on counseling supervision, multicultural, and cross-

racial supervisory dyads. The literature review was conducted using the university's

library research and the following electronic research databases: PsychINFO,

EBSCOhost, PsychARTICLES, and SAGE Research Methods. The keywords used as

search criteria included: supervision, cross-racial, power, trust, cultural competence,

multicultural, supervisory working alliance, Black, African American, and supervisee.

Keywords were sometimes combined to narrow the search of relevant topics. For

example, "cross-racial" AND "supervision" AND "African American." This review is

not meant to be a thorough review of all literature, but the review of current literature that

is believed to be sufficient for this study.

Cross-Racial Supervision

Cross-cultural and cross-racial supervision refers specifically to supervisory

relationships in which the supervisor or student come from different racial or ethnic

backgrounds (Daniels et al., 1999). Several studies (Bhat & Davis 2011; Chang et al.,

2004; and Schroeder et al., 2009) support this notion that cross-cultural supervision exists

when individuals in the dyad are ethnically, racially or culturally-different from each

other. The process of effective clinical supervision requires a strong working alliance, so a focus on the dynamics of that alliance in cross-cultural dyads is relevant. There is no shortage of theoretical frameworks that shed light on the complexities involved in understanding and working with African Americans, however, it is important for supervisors to continue to consider the interaction between social/cultural differences and dynamics in supervision that can be unique to African American supervisees. The supervisory triad of the client, supervisee, and supervisor increasingly will reflect differences in race, ethnicity, and culture (Constantine & Sue, 2007; Halpert & Pfaller, 2001; Toporek, Ortega-Villalobos, & Pope-Davis, 2004). A lack of awareness of racial and cultural similarities and differences between the supervisor and supervisee, or a lack of attention to culturally relevant issues, will negatively impact the relationship and may hinder the supervisee's future success in multicultural counseling (Chang et al., 2004). While cross-racial supervision is a significant component of the counselor's learning process, little attention has been given to it in the supervision literature.

        Schroeder et al. (2009) conducted a review of literature on cross-racial supervision and found that most articles focused on (a) the perceptions of the supervisors' multicultural competence; (b) the effort of racial identity on working alliance and multicultural competence; and (c) the level of acculturation within the supervisory relationships. Several studies that focused on the perceptions of the supervisors' multicultural competence supported the findings that supervisors with a high degree of multicultural competence who work with students from different ethnic or racial groups, demonstrate an awareness of cultural and ethnic differences and promote an ethnic identity in those students.

Perceptions of the Supervisors' Multicultural Competence

In order to address the most current literature, previous research reviewed by Schroeder et al. (2009) is described here. Ladany et al. (1997) found that racial identity interactions and racial matching affected supervisee development of multicultural competence. The authors reported that racial/ethnic-minority supervisors were rated by students as more influential in the development of their multicultural competence than White supervisors regardless of the race of the student. They also found that conversations about culture encouraged rapport between the supervisor and supervisee, emphasized the significance of culture in the counseling and supervision processes, and facilitated supervisees' exploration of their cultural identities. It follows that when conversations about culture are an integral part of the supervision process, supervisees are able to better understand how culture influences their clinical practice, their perceptions of culturally different clients, and culturally different clients' perceptions of them.

In a more recent study conducted by Hird et al. (2004), White supervisors self-reported less multicultural supervision competence and spent less time in supervision discussing cultural issues. The authors posit White supervisors may feel less culturally competent and are less likely to engage in cultural conversations. They are less likely to engage because they may take an etic or universalistic approach, be concerned about self-serving motives for having cultural conversations, believe that cultural issues are unimportant, feel inadequately trained, or may be afraid to look imperfect or make mistakes in front of supervisees.

Burkard et al. (2006) investigated the effect on the supervisory relationship when

students perceived supervisors as either responsive or unresponsive to cultural issues (as

cited by Schroeder et al., 2009). When supervisors were willing to acknowledge the

existence of, show interest in, and be sensitive to cultural differences that existed for the

students and the clients, all students reported a positive relationship with their supervisor

prior to the event and increased satisfaction after the event. These aforementioned studies

examined relationship dynamics that occur when there are varying degrees of

multicultural competence displayed by the supervisor.

Level of Acculturation Within the Supervisory Relationships

Schroeder et al. (2009) reviewed literature that explored the level of acculturation

within the supervisory relationship. Nilsson and Anderson (2004) examined the

relationship between acculturation of international students, counseling, self-efficacy,

role ambiguity, and working alliance. The authors found that the lower the level of

acculturation reported by students, the poorer their perceptions of the supervisory

working alliance and their counseling self-efficacy (Schroeder et al., 2009). Nilsson and

Dodds (2006) investigated acculturation relative to the degree to which cultural issues

were discussed in supervision and the supervisor's race or ethnicity. Students who were

less acculturated and came from more dissimilar cultures spent more time discussing

cultural issues in supervision felt more culturally competent than their supervisors and

reported less satisfaction with supervision. Most of the studies reviewed by Schroeder et

al. (2009) posited that the level of discomfort experienced by international students tends

to be linked to the degree of dissimilarity between the students' native culture and the

host culture and how well they bridge the differences. In all, acculturation was found to

be a significant factor in how students felt about their counseling abilities and the

supervisory relationship, therefore, a positive working alliance between supervisor and

student may be more important to the supervisory relationship than acculturation

(Schroeder et al., 2009).

Effect of Racial Identity on Working Alliance and Multicultural Competence

The supervisory alliance has emerged in supervision research as an essential

component of effective supervision (e.g., Bernard & Goodyear, 2014; Falender &

Shafranske, 2004, 2007, 2014; Pearce et al., 2013); neglecting its importance would

ignore a vast literature base demonstrating its centrality to the practice of supervision

(Falender et al., 2014). The authors reported when supervisees perceive that the

supervisory relationship is strong, supervisees report stronger satisfaction with

supervision, improved cultural competence, and fewer nondisclosures and greater

disclosure in supervision. Diversity competence is essential to effective supervision;

therefore, insufficient attention to such issues is likely to result in ineffective supervision.

Supervisor willingness to discuss cultural and diversity issues in supervision has been

associated with a stronger supervisory alliance. A supervisor's lack of awareness of

power, privilege, diversity issues, and multiple identities operating within the supervisory

dyad and the trainee-client dyad has a deleterious effect on supervision (Falender et al.,

2014a; Falender et al., 2014c). The authors identified specific knowledge, skills, and

attitudes that comprise competent supervision and effective supervision practices.

White-Davis et al. (2016) explored the perceptions and attitudes of People of

Color and White supervisors, and People of Color and White supervisees, regarding

cross-racial supervisory relationships within graduate medical and psychology programs,

focusing on barriers and facilitating factors needed for successful cross-racial supervisory relationships. Elements of successful supervision are multifaceted—the level of rapport in the supervisor-supervisee relationship could be a vital factor, and differences in racial consciousness between supervisor and supervisee can impact the way rapport is built, maintained and utilized. The findings revealed that participants endorsed a lack of comfort and lack of opportunity/time as significant barriers to discussing race within supervision. White-Davis et al. (2016) study revealed cross-racial dialogues about race are occurring frequently in supervisory relationships, however, Supervisees of Color reported benefiting from these dialogues in contrast to their White counterparts. Most Supervisors of Color actively initiated these conversations in supervision, while White supervisees endorsed the least benefit from these conversations. Therefore, this study suggested it is important for supervisors to create supervisory relationships with an emphasis on safety and comfort.

Multicultural supervision is attentive to power dynamics, empowerment of supervisees, clients, and communities, and entails an intentional, responsive, and effective application of supervision (Bernard & Goodyear, 2014). Butler and Byrd (2010) stress the importance of self-knowledge as critical to the wellbeing and competence of multicultural counselors. Self- knowledge includes understanding our historical and current cultural context and the many aspects of our identities, including social location, ethnicity, class, gender, and ability. Self- knowledge also includes awareness of the effects of one's behavior on others and changing behaviors that no longer serve healthy growth or relationships. Under multicultural supervision, an imperative aspect of self-knowledge is understanding one's racial identity development.

Racial identity development is an integral aspect of both the therapeutic and supervisory relationships that should be recognized and discussed in supervision. Recognizing and acknowledging the sense of the widespread impact of culture, ethnicity, and race on psychological experience is imperative for our profession. How each person in his/her individual way creates a social and internal reality, as a result, is the puzzle we can only address with a full multicultural perspective. We can only activate this perspective when we are willing to examine closely, fully, and painfully what this juncture or personal and cultural experience has created in each of us.

Supervision, given its focused and intimate nature, could be an ideal modality for this type of examination to occur. Owens-Patterson (2000) wrote about the phenomenon of mixed-race supervisor-supervisee dyads and explored some of the challenges associated with this encounter. According to Owens-Patterson (2000), it may be difficult for many senior clinicians to be objective about their difficulties in this area. Because of the difficulties associated with these explorations, there may be both conscious and unconscious motivation, between supervisors and supervisees (of the same race), to distance themselves from the kind of material necessary to develop greater insight in this area. Another problem is the paucity of formal didactic training in this area (Owens-Patterson, 2000). Where it exists, multicultural analyses are often relegated to one course in the curriculum, if covered at all. Minimal treatment of this material sends a message to trainees about the apparent unimportance of considering these matters.

Scenarios where the supervisor is White do not challenge the normative power relationship and the essential question of who is "in charge" (Owens-Patterson, 2000). When the supervisor is White, and the supervisee and client are both African American,

the White supervisor's belief in his/her own normalcy, superiority, or essential "rightness" is assumed, and with that assumption, the supervisee's and client's "difference" may be in fact confirmed. When the supervisee and client are African American, and the supervisor is White, the supervisee may experience her own racial/ethnic difference more profoundly because as a supervisee she is not, in this triad, the person with power. Owens-Patterson (2000) noted that using the paradigm of the African American supervisor, the White therapist/supervisee, and the African American client, has the potential for a particularly intense experience in the confrontation of the color difference (both in therapy and supervision) because of the powerful symbolic associations of African American-ness and Whiteness, and the powerful meaning and effect of race and racism in the United States.

Specific Dynamics Impacting the Supervisory Working Alliance

The counseling profession places high emphasis on racial inclusivity, cultural competence, and social justice; however, research regarding positive interracial relationships, specifically involving successful Black-White mentoring connections in the field has been scarce (Brown & Grothaus, 2019). Although students of color often desire mentoring from ethnic minority faculty, there is a need for cross-racial mentoring because of the lack of faculty of color. Therefore, Brown and Grothaus (2019) examined African American doctoral counselor education students' experiences of cross-racial trust with White mentors in the counseling profession. The researchers identified three superordinate themes from the data: reasons for trust, reasons for mistrust, and benefits of cross-racial mentoring. Brown and Grothaus' (2019) findings highlighted the collectivist sensibilities that influenced Black participants' decisions to trust White people. Despite

experiencing racism in their counseling programs, some participants engaged in trust by proxy, which itself is a collectivist practice, and co-created successful and beneficial cross-racial relationships. One significant hindrance to interracial mentoring relationships is cultural mistrust, which is a result of historical and present experiences of racism and marginalization. However, participants, having a general trusting nature and also prior positive experiences with White people, were able to engage in trusting relationships with White mentors (Brown & Grothaus, 2019). The themes of the necessity of White people and benefiting from networks of privilege captured participants' beliefs that cross-racial mentoring help Black students advance academically and professionally (Brown & Grothaus, 2019).

African American counseling supervisees often have many layers to navigate in their interactions within the professional space, including, but not limited to, their verbal and nonverbal communications with peers, clients, and supervisors (Upshaw et al., 2019). Consequently, when supervision lacks a safe, trusting, and culturally humble frame, these nuanced layers are effectively missed and can lead to harmful interactions that put African American supervisees at risk of burnout and unintended harm from professional interactions, particularly from individuals in a supervisory role. Upshaw et al. (2019) provided two illustrative examples of supervisory experiences of Black trainees during a time of heightened racial tensions in the United States, to highlight the impact of both a culturally unresponsive approach that evidenced unacknowledged cultural blind spots, as well as a culturally responsive and humble approach to supervision.

The researchers affirmed that the unique relationship of the supervisory dyad has an inherent power differential. When the power differential is not conceptualized within a

well-integrated cultural awareness framework, Black trainees are at risk of experiencing a

double-bind where either the trainees decide not to address their supervisors' lack of

cultural knowledge and awareness, or they choose to address their supervisors'

limitations and blind spots which in both cases the Black trainee may experience feelings

of hopelessness, resentment, or potentially face, intentional or unintentional, negative

consequences (Constantine & Sue, 2007). Another core element of effective supervision

underscored in this study is the supervisor's responsibility to establish and maintain a

safe and trusting relationship (Upshaw et al., 2019).

When working with African American supervisees, in particular, the literature

indicates that establishing a culturally responsive, supervisory relationship promotes

adequate physical and mental health, professional development, and a sense of safety and

trust within the relationship (Ancis & Ladany, 2010). Upshaw et al. (2019) provided

illustrations involving Black trainees with varied supervision experiences to contribute to

the conversation needed to improve the training experience of all persons within the

counseling profession. For improvement, Upshaw et al. (2019) recommended continuing

education, implementing a process-oriented model of supervision, engaging in open

dialogue, facilitating opportunities for mentorship, creating safe spaces, and carefully

considering the larger sociopolitical context.

Similarly, Jendrusina and Martinez (2019) shared their perspectives as two

graduate students from underrepresented backgrounds receiving supervision. Given that

White supervisors will likely work with supervisees of color, the authors posited an

integrated multiculturally informed approach to supervision or attending to and

addressing sociocultural contexts and identities related to the client, supervisor, and

supervisee would enhance their delivery of supervision (Jendrusina & Martinez, 2019). The authors reviewed three vignettes that they believed to be representative of the impact of supervisors either effectively or ineffectively approaching supervision using a multicultural framework. This study supports the notion that supervision experiences that are perceived as multiculturally responsive increase the supervisee's trust and satisfaction with their supervisor. Additionally, multiculturally responsive approaches also model and teach trainees how to engage in dialogue around identities and one's background and have been associated with the multicultural self-efficacy of supervisees (Jendrusina & Martinez, 2019). The authors shared concerns about not receiving multiculturally responsive training and supervision, feeling wary of discussing certain comments given the power differential between the White supervisor and being a trainee of color, feeling concerned for the supervision of care of clients from one or more marginalized identities, and frequently worrying about the ways their race would negatively impact their perceived competency in the therapy room. Across the three vignettes, Jendrusina and Martinez (2019) aimed to illuminate ways a supervisor's recognition of power, privilege, and identity impact the supervisory relationship and training.

A central component of feminist multicultural supervision is its focus on power and power dynamics between client and counselor, within the supervisory relationship, and in society as a whole, especially as societal values infringe on clients, supervisees, supervisors, and various aspects of the triad. Arczynski and Morrow (2017) examined how current feminist multicultural supervisors understand and implement their feminist multicultural principles into clinical supervision. The perspectives of fourteen participant supervisors were obtained by using semi-structured initial interviews, follow up

interviews, and feedback interviews and were investigated via a feminist constructivist

grounded theory design and analysis. A seven-category empirical framework emerged

that explained how the participants anticipated and managed power in supervision.

Arczynski and Morrow (2017) found the complexities of power in supervision to be the

core category that explained how participants conceptualized power in supervisory

relationships. The six remaining categories were *bringing history into the supervision*

room, creating trust through openness and honesty, using a collaborative process,

meeting shifting developmental (a)symmetries, cultivating critical reflexivity, *and looking*

at and counterbalancing the impact of context (Arczynski & Morrow, 2017).

      In support of the previous study, Hooley (2019) shared her personal experiences

with more than a dozen supervisors and wove in academic literature to highlight the

bearing that supervision can have on the development of professional identity. Hooley

stated her "experience of supervision mirrored what some scholars have asserted: Those

who abuse power move those without power into places of isolation and disconnection

and leave supervisees feeling manipulated, controlled, or insulted (Duffey, Haberstroh,

Ciepcielinksi, & Gonzales, 2016)" (2019, p. 213). Harmful supervision incites lasting

effects including symptoms of distress, loss of self-confidence, and impairment in a

supervisee's personal and professional life (Ellis et al., 2014; Hooley, 2019). Hooley

(2019) identified several complexities of the supervision process including professional

boundaries, the supervisory relationship, aspects of diversity within the supervision

setting, and how these may impact clinical work. Based on her varied supervision

relationships, Hooley (2019) suggested that an authentic supervisory relationship is key

to promoting clinical growth and recommended that supervisors examine and integrate

the components of relational-cultural theory, which provides supervisors with a model for supervisee growth and development.

Race-Related Issues in the Supervisory Relationship

Ladany et al. (1997) investigated how students' perceptions of racial identity related to their supervisory working alliance and their multicultural competence. The students' perception of similarity of racial identity between themselves and their supervisor was significantly related to a positive supervisory working alliance and their feelings of multicultural competence. According to Ladany et al. (1997) the weakest working alliance occurred when students perceived their supervisors as having a low racial identity. Similarly, Bhat and Davis (2007) examined the impact of racial identity on working alliances from the perspective of counseling supervisors. The working alliance was strongest when the supervisor had a high racial identity. In both studies, there was no difference in the perceived quality of the working alliance between racially different and racially similar dyads.

In an effort to examine the impact of perceived racial microaggressions by White supervisors on Black trainees and the supervisory relationship, Constantine and Sue (2007) conducted a qualitative study with ten Black doctoral supervisees in counseling and clinical psychology. Seven themes that emerged from Black supervisees' accounts of racial microaggressions were: (a) invalidating racial-cultural issues, (b) making stereotypic assumptions about Black clients, (c) making stereotypic assumptions about Black supervisees, (d) reluctance to give performance feedback for fear of being viewed as racist, (e) focusing primarily on clinical weaknesses, (f) blaming clients of color for problems stemming from oppression, and (g) offering culturally insensitive treatment

recommendations. The impact of these racial microaggressions was found to be

detrimental to Black trainees, the supervisory relationship, and indirectly, to clients of

color (Constantine & Sue, 2007). Trainees, regardless of their racial background, who

engage in culturally responsive cross-cultural supervision tend to feel supported and

report an increased sensitivity to cultural issues in therapy (Burkhard et al., 2006;

Constantine & Sue, 2007).

   In thinking about racial microaggressions as a subtle communication of

devaluation, perhaps the most destructive antecedent of racial trauma in the supervisory

experience is when the supervisor diminishes or dismisses race-related experiences and

dynamics (Pieterse, 2018). Pieterse (2018) provided an overview of racial traumatic

experiences as an outcome of racism and provided a set of guidelines that supervisors can

use in facilitating an effective clinical response to racial trauma. Race-based traumatic

stress is an emerging model within which to understand those racial experiences that rise

to the level of trauma. The author acknowledges the supervisor's responsibility to attend

to racial trauma and outlined ways to adhere to the 2016 multicultural and social justice

counseling competencies (Pieterse, 2018; Ratts et al., 2016). The most critical starting

point for clinical practice and supervision is the supervisor gauging their racial self-

awareness. The approach offered in this discussion prioritized a commitment to racial

self-awareness and an antiracism stance as pre-requisites for effective supervision dealing

with racial trauma (Pieterse, 2018). The author offered guided questions to engage in

thoughtful reflection and specific interventions for supervisors and clinicians attending to

racial trauma in clinical cases. He also acknowledged the importance for supervisors to

attend to racial trauma and power dynamics within the supervisory process. The need for

the supervisor to embody cultural sensitivity, to initiate dialogues on racial diversity, to maintain a commitment to ongoing racial self-awareness, to focus on racial awareness and to be attentive to dynamics of power and the potential for racial trauma should be viewed as central and core aspects of supervision (Pieterse, 2018).

Moody and Lewis (2019) explored the intersection of racism and sexism on the lives of African American women. According to their work, although a large body of literature has explored perceived racism and health outcomes for African Americans, these studies do not sufficiently incorporate the complex ways in which race or racism and sexism influence African American women's experiences of discrimination (Moody & Lewis, 2019). Moody and Lewis (2019) surveyed 226 Black women across the United States to investigate the relations between gendered racial microaggressions, gendered racial socialization, and traumatic stress symptoms. Results from a hierarchical multiple regression analysis indicated that a greater frequency of gendered racial microaggressions was significantly associated with greater traumatic stress symptoms; internalized gendered racial oppression moderated the relations between gendered racial microaggressions and traumatic symptoms (Moody & Lewis, 2019). The researchers found that the role of gendered racial socialization in moderating the relations between gendered racial microaggressions and traumatic stress symptoms was only partially supported. Their findings supported theoretical assertions by previous researchers who have indicated that Black women who experience internalized racism coupled with experiencing gendered racial microaggressions tend to report greater traumatic stress symptoms (Moody & Lewis, 2019). Therefore, the intersection of racial and gender socialization plays a complex role in the lives of Black women. The results of this study

can inform practitioners working with Black women about the ways racial socialization is generally a protective factor for African Americans, but gendered racial socialization may not always be a protective role for African American women.

According to Hird et al. (2004) racial and ethnic minority (REM) supervisors spent more time discussing cultural issues in same race supervision dyads than White supervisors, which suggests that race may be more of a cultural reality for REM supervisors and supervisees than it is for White supervisors and supervisees, who, as a result of White privilege, may be less aware of their cultural selves and subsequently less likely to discuss culture in supervision. Researchers have posited that some REM supervisors/trainees may be reluctant to introduce cultural issues in supervision for fear of being labeled a "troublemaker," placed in the role of a multicultural expert, or perceived as having a cultural agenda (Hird et al., 2004).

However, without these cultural dialogues in supervision, research has shown that White supervisees may not have a forum to understand the implications of their cultural identity (e.g., White power and privilege) to their professional practice, and if White supervisors are not providing the space or time for supervisees to process culture, then where and when will White supervisees receive the formalized training experiences to hone these counseling skills? Further, when and where will REM supervisees have the space to process their experience with racial/ethnic differences? Undoubtedly, the quality of professional services clients receive from these supervisees may be compromised, particularly given research that indicates supervisee multicultural counseling competence increases when multicultural supervision occurs (Hird et al., 2004). The research suggests that cultural conversations need to be more integrated into supervision, as both

supervisees and supervisors have reported that more time discussing cultural issues would enhance the supervision process.

Culturally aware supervision can enhance the therapeutic relationship and supervision (King & Jones, 2019). An understanding of the issues that can arise in the cross-cultural supervisory relationship might help facilitate racial and cultural sensitivity and awareness within supervisors and lead to more positive and effective supervisory relationships (Schroeder et al., 2009). The supervision encounter requires that the supervisor learns about the supervisee's cultural values, beliefs, and behavioral style. Culturally encapsulated supervisors assume that their supervision approaches can be culturally generalized. However, approaches developed for White, middle-class Americans are inadequate in the case of ethnic minority supervisees who may or may not share the same worldview (Chang et al., 2004).

Chang et al. (2004) provided a summary of the literature on cross-racial supervision that highlighted empirical studies (e.g., Cook & Helms, 1988; Gatmonet al., 2001; Hilton et al., 1995; Ladany et al., 1997a; Ladany et al., 1997b; Vander Kolk, 1974) and focused on the impact of racial identity development on the supervisory process. Chang et al. (2004) recognized the racial identity level of the supervisor will most likely determine the course and depth of discussions of racial issues, the formation of an authentic supervisory relationship and working alliance, and feelings of cultural trust and rapport. Assessing supervisor and supervisee racial identity level may provide information on how racial issues are addressed or avoided in supervision and their effects on the power differential (Chang et al., 2004). If racial identity development is not addressed within supervision, several consequences may result. Failure to address racial

issues and the racial identity development of the supervisor and the supervisee is a disservice to the supervisee's overall education and training experience and can impact relationship factors such as the working alliance, trust, genuineness, and the emotional bond (Chang et al., 2004). Chang et al. (2004) suggested that considering the racial identity development of the supervisor and the supervisee may assist in dealing with potential problems (e.g., unintentional racism, miscommunication, undiscussed racial and ethnic issues, overemphasis on cultural explanations for psychological difficulties, and overdependence on supervisor's knowledge) associated with approaches to cross-racial supervision. According to Chang et al. (2004) it is the supervisors' responsibility to address racial and cultural issues with their supervisees and they presented a developmental approach to cross-racial supervision that considers the importance of the racial identity development of the supervisor and the supervisee.

In attempting to maintain an awareness of racially motivated therapeutic behavior, supervisors and supervisees alike should systemically examine their own clinical interventions to assess them on several dimensions, such as effectiveness and counseling competence. Only with the supervisor's support, however, can the supervisee feel empowered to integrate her Black American culture with the dominant culture in treatment planning. Success is facilitated by the ongoing willingness of both the White supervisor and the ethnic minority supervisee to share their different views, beliefs, and meanings (Chang et al., 2004). This kind of open communication generally results in mutual respect, acceptance, and empathy.

Engaging in Cultural Discussions

The importance of cultural dialogues in cross-cultural supervision triads and dyads is noted by King and Jones (2019) who highlight broaching as a vital way to continue these conversations. Broaching involves direct acknowledgment of race, ethnicity, and other cultural factors, along with experiences of power and oppression systematically attached to these identities (Day-Vines et al., 2007). Absent broaching dialogues, marginalized clients may be compelled to default to dominant cultural norms, including the avoidance of racial topics. This supports the notion that when supervisors continue to dismiss the need to address cultural issues, the supervisee's perceived competence is impacted (King & Jones, 2019). In this current study, the authors used autoethnography to explore the broaching process, including supervisor hesitation, supervisee expectations for supervision, and the relational and educational functions of broaching in supervision. Many authors continue to acknowledge the necessity of acknowledging these differences (Haskins et al., 2013; Jones et al., 2019; King & Jones, 2019; Schroeder et al., 2009) recognize how this acknowledgment creates a safe and open supervisory relationship. Addressing race, in particular, is challenging amidst strong cultural norms prohibiting race talk, fear of clashing racial realities, and the deep personal investment required to develop a non-racist White identity and anti-racist stance in the world (Sue, 2015).

Two major challenges of broaching that were identified were due to members of dominant groups inability to realize: (1) the salience and significance of their dominant (White) identity; and (2) insufficient trust and comfort were present for the supervisees in marginalized identities (African American) which hindered dialogue (King & Jones,

2019). The researchers completed the co-constructed autoethnography and analysis after their supervisory relationship had ended. Several aspects of their narratives are relevant to broaching literature and the authors offered contributions to theory on the broaching approach, its relational and educational impact, and overcoming hesitation to begin racial dialogues.

First, the authors reiterate that the supervisor's timing and language are noteworthy. King and Jones (2019) showcased, through their autoethnography, the potential impact of broaching in terms of strengthening the supervisory relationship and providing rich educational opportunities. Supervisor broaching displayed additional counseling skills that the supervisee would go on to practice with clients, including immediacy and self-disclosure, which supports the importance of modeling (King & Jones, 2019). Finally, their narratives portrayed both the supervisor and supervisee hesitance to discuss race and racial differences. Therefore, King and Jones (2019) suggest supervisors can build rapport, as usual, allow room for the supervisee to describe important aspects of their identity, and then note specific areas of identity, difference, or marginality that might be salient to the supervisor.

Based on ethical requirements and training program requirements, Zimmerman et al. (2015) presented ways in which supervisors can keep these conversations central in supervision so that discussions of diversity and oppression remain vibrant, intentional and ever-present. To begin this dialogue, the supervisor-supervisee relationship must have an established safe space for the supervisory connection; a working alliance toward cultural knowledge and awareness; acknowledgment and management of privilege, power, and biases associated with all parties involved (supervisor, supervisee, and client); and a

desire to embrace their roles as change agents in the areas of social justice advocacy with

clients and the profession. Some factors can negatively affect the supervisory connection,

including gender bias, undiscussed racial/ethnic issues, and an overemphasis on

psychological problems within the context of culture (Zimmerman et al, 2015). However,

when supervisors are aware, open, and sincere, they are able to facilitate culturally

responsive supervision via attending to cultural and racial factors, providing guidance and

discussion of culturally specific issues, and creating multicultural activities as well as

being vulnerable about their own struggles (Zimmerman et al, 2015).

Impacts on Perceived Clinical Competence

Dialogues about racial and cultural context are important to consider when

exploring the relationship between supervisor and supervisee not only because they

influence the supervisee directly, but because they may have implications for the

supervisee's ultimate work with clients. Although several scholars and researchers have

addressed many contextual dimensions (i.e., race, gender, age), being an immigrant

therapist and this effect on the clinician's use of self in therapy has received little

empirical attention. Kissil et al. (2014) conducted a quantitative study to examine the

clinical experiences of practicing immigrant therapists. Based on previous studies,

foreign-born therapists reported that their cultural transitions to the United States changed

their sense of self and their interactions with the environment which suggests that

acculturation experiences influence how therapists perceive themselves and their

counseling abilities. Kissil et al. (2014) findings suggested that the more immigrant

therapists reported feeling connected to U.S. culture, the more they felt clinically self-

efficacious with their U.S. clients. The researchers' results suggested that for foreign-

born therapists who are currently practicing in the U.S., supervisors' multicultural competence is significantly and positively associated with therapists' self-reported clinical self-efficacy.

As outlined by Kelly and Boyd-Franklin (2005) racial and ethnic background, gender, familial influences, and values significantly impact a clinician's training as a therapist or supervisor. Both authors are African American women in a supervisor-counselor relationship who described the complex and multilayered aspects of race, culture, and family backgrounds in treatment and supervision. Their similarities in race and gender positively impacted their therapy in aspects such as self-disclosure, joining (from a family systems approach), and parallel process. However, this relationship also highlighted differences such as the counselor's and client's increased differentiation of self, their power and strengths, and freedom within these relationships. Kelly and Boyd-Franklin (2005) proposed that the shared experience that some African American counseling supervisors have with their African American supervisees may facilitate a shared understanding that could enhance their relationship.

Kivilighan et al. (2019) investigated therapist effects in relation to the clients' race-ethnicity and gender. Previous analyses of therapists' cultural competence have yet to examine the effect of intersectionality on the processes and outcomes of psychotherapy. The researchers applied an intersectionality framework to test therapist effects due to clients' race-ethnicity and gender. 415 clients treated by 16 therapists participated in this study and results indicated that therapists who exhibit greater cultural humility and comfort, as well as seek cultural opportunities to explore clients' intersecting identities may prove more effective than therapists who lack these cultural

processes (Kivlighan et al., 2019). The researchers' findings suggested that the therapist's

cultural effectiveness with REM clients may be complex, and the intersectionality of

clients' race and gender matter. The findings were consistent with previous research and

confirmed that therapist effectiveness differed based on the client's race-ethnicity and

gender.

   Supervision that attends to power and diversity can provide a supportive

environment where the supervisor can model the importance of addressing these issues to

influence (a) positive clinical outcomes for clients because of isomorphism, (b)

satisfaction with supervision, and (c) enhanced learning outcomes for supervisees (Green

& Dekkers, 2010). The purpose of the study by Green and Dekkers (2010) was to explore

supervisee and supervisor perspectives on whether or not power and diversity are

attended to by clinical supervisors, the influence of attending to power and diversity in

clinical supervision on supervisee and supervisor satisfaction with supervision, and the

influence of attending to power and diversity in clinical supervision on supervisee

learning outcomes. Supervisors and supervisees specifically in Commission on

Accreditation for Marriage and Family Therapy Education-accredited programs

completed a 70-question online survey separately. Results indicated that from the

supervisees' perspective attending to power and diversity in supervision influenced

satisfaction with supervision and learning outcomes (Green & Dekkers, 2010). From the

supervisors' perspective there were no significant effects of attending to power and

diversity in clinical supervision on supervisor satisfaction with supervision or supervisee

learning outcomes. Therefore, the authors suggested that supervisors need to

acknowledge their power, use their power appropriately in clinical supervision, and

engage in diligent self-reflection and peer consultation to ascertain if they are actually

attending to power and diversity in their supervisory practices (Green & Dekkers, 2010).

Chapter Summary

As suggested by Owens-Patterson (2000) it is imperative to examine one's level

of personal involvement in the therapeutic process, one's ability to conceptualize what is

"normal" in another culture, and one's capacity to avoid pathologizing ethnic folkways.

There is also the need to recognize the strengths and the cultural lifestyles of others and

the ability to explore and distinguish (and help the client to do so) between racial issues

as a defense/resistance and racism and racial barriers as realistic obstacles (Owens-

Patterson, 2000). When supervisors and supervisees are successful, they can truly deliver

culturally sensitive service to clients and assist them in developing deeper, richer

understandings of themselves, their lives, their relationships, and their therapy.

Supervisors are expected by the nature of their professional responsibility to allow

clinical supervisees the opportunity to develop themselves and understand the "other".

Additional research that augments supervisors' cultural understanding of how to

approach supervision will create better contexts for supervisees to examine themselves as

cultural beings, and ultimately lead to the provision of more culturally competent services

to diverse clients (Hird et al., 2004).

It is imperative for supervisors to keep conversations about issues of power and

privilege at the forefront of the process and content of supervision in order to work with

supervisees and their clients in affirming and inclusive ways, therefore ignoring power

differentials contributes to ruptures in the supervisory working alliance and via parallel

process, the therapeutic alliance too (Zetzer, 2016). It is also necessary for supervisors to

be sensitive to oppression and privilege differences in the human experience when working with culturally diverse supervisees.

Researchers have investigated the extent to which multicultural issues have been addressed in supervision and the cultural alertness within racially and ethnically mixed clinical triads. The review of the literature supports the need for further exploration of cross-racial supervision with African American supervisees. Race and aspects of multicultural competence in clinical supervision have been consistently acknowledged in the literature, yet research on the impacts of unaddressed or poorly acknowledged racial and cultural identities and its influence on dynamics in clinical supervision has been scarce. Therefore, a phenomenological study is relevant to add to the collective understanding of the lived experiences of African American supervisees in cross-racial supervision and ultimately improving multicultural competence. The information provided by surveys, although useful and important, is general in nature. Quantitative information may identify cultural issues, but may not provide detailed, specific, and concrete examples of the supervisory dynamics involved in competent cross-racial supervision. Interviews are flexible, adaptable and can facilitate more free and in-depth responses which can provide more qualitative information about the issues that arise in cross-racial supervision dyads.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this chapter is to outline the methodology of this research study. This study aimed to investigate the lived experiences of African American supervisees in cross-racial supervisory relationships. To obtain a better understanding, research questions were developed that aligned with the purpose of this study and served to guide the study's methodology. This chapter describes the methodology of the study, including the purpose of the study, research questions, the role of the researcher, a description of participants, procedures, instruments, and data analysis. A detailed description of the limitations and validity is provided.

Purpose of the Study

Grbich (2013) believed qualitative research has certain underpinning ideology or belief systems. These beliefs include: (a) subjectivity, views by the participant and the researcher are respected and data are constructed by both; (b) validity, getting to the truth of the matter; (c) reliability, elements of trustworthiness and dependability; (d) power lies predominantly with the researched; (e) a holistic view is essential; and (f) every study conducted is time and context-bound. Qualitative research is widely encompassing and contains a variety of different features that each author or researcher believes are important. Through investigating a variety of qualitative methods and approaches, it was determined phenomenology was the best qualitative approach to answer the study's research questions.

Phenomenological research aims to determine what an experience means for the persons who have had the experience and can provide a comprehensive description of it

(Moustakas, 1994). An empirical phenomenological approach involves an examination of experience in order to obtain comprehensive descriptions that provide the basis for a reflective structural analysis to portray the essences of that experience. Phenomenology is defined as obtaining a holistic perspective of an individual or group of shared experiences through interviews (Creswell, 2013). For this study, the researcher found phenomenological methodology to be the most beneficial because it allows this study to illuminate rich descriptions and personal meanings of lived experiences related to African American supervisees.

While the overall purpose of qualitative research is to understand how people make sense of their lives and their experiences, other types of studies have dimensions that are not suitable for this study. The method of ethnography, for instance, is used to identify shared patterns of a cultural group but is not as appropriate for this study since culture is too vast a consideration for these particular participants. Grounded theory is intended to create a theory that emerges from, or is "grounded" in, the data. Rich description is not the primary focus of grounded theory and therefore this approach is not best suited to detail the experiences of these African American supervisees. A case study approach, which allows the development of detailed portrayal and case analysis of a single case or numerous cases, was considered but did not fully meet the requirements of focusing only on the experiences as lived by these participants. Narrative inquiry focuses on telling a story based on an individual's lived experience, however, this approach examines how the story is constructed, what linguistic tools are used, and other cultural contexts of the story, which is not the focus of this study. Therefore, phenomenology was chosen to help identify major themes relevant to the participants' experiences.

Transcendental Phenomenology

Moustakas (1994) asserted transcendental phenomenology occurs when research "emphasizes subjectivity and discovery of the essences of experiences and provides a systematic and disciplined methodology for the derivation of knowledge" (p.45). Utilizing a transcendental phenomenological approach allows the researcher to illuminate the lived experiences of African American supervisees in cross-racial supervisory relationships, in particular, with White supervisors. The researcher conducted seven research interviews and collected data on the lived experiences of African American counseling supervisees. The utilization of research interviews provided a way of learning about the nuances of cross-racial supervisory relationships and how aspects of the supervisory relationship were affected. Several aspects of clinical supervision can impact the supervisee's perceived competence and the overall supervisory relationship. To explore and represent the lived experiences of African American counseling supervisees, this study intended to investigate the specific dynamics that may be present in all supervisory relationships, such as the supervisors' use of power, the establishment of trust, clinical competence, and general cultural competence or incompetence.

Research Questions

The specific research questions pertaining to this study include the following:

Research Question 1. How do African American counseling supervisees experience their supervisory relationships with White supervisors?

Research Question 2. What are the African American counseling supervisees' experiences with specific dynamics such as supervisors' use of power, the establishment

of trust, clinical competence, and general cultural competence or incompetence, including

racism and discrimination, in supervision?

Research Question 3. How do African American supervisees' experiences and

perceptions of the supervisory relationship affect their own sense of clinical competence?

Phenomenologists are interested in our "lived experience" (Van Manen, 2014,

p.26); such a focus requires us to go directly to the phenomena themselves and study

people's conscious experience of their life-world (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016).

Transcendental phenomenology is described as interpretive, exploring the ways

knowledge comes into being based on insights rather than objective characteristics to

constitute the meaning of the phenomenon. This study relied on transcendental

phenomenological research design, adhering to four steps of Moustakas's (1994) research

process: (1) epoché, (2) phenomenological reduction, (3) imaginative variation, and (4)

synthesizing meaning and essence to develop a unified statement of the phenomenon as a

whole. These steps are used specifically for data analysis and are elements of a natural

process through which awareness, understanding, and knowledge are derived to obtain

the essence of the meaning of the phenomenon.

Epoché is bracketing the everyday judgments and ordinary way of perceiving

things. This act of refraining judgment and staying away from the regular way of

perceiving things that happen allows for a new way of looking at the phenomenon in an

objective sense. The transcendental-phenomenological reduction is describing the

phenomenon in its entirety and deriving a textural description of the meaning and essence

of this phenomenon (Moustakas, 1994). This is the process of looking at each experience

in its singularity. Moustakas (1994) posits each experience is perceived in its totality

through a description of the "variations of perceptions, thoughts, feelings, sounds, colors, and shapes" (p.34). Imaginative variation is presenting a picture of the conditions that make up an experience. From this process a structural description of the essences of the experience is derived and integrated with the textural essence of the phenomenological reduction to arrive at a textural-structural synthesis of meanings (Moustakas, 1994). To synthesize, the researcher combined textual and structural descriptions to form a textual-structural essence of the experience for each participant, and these descriptions are integrated into a universal description of group experience.

The rationale for utilizing this approach corresponds directly to the understanding of "what" African American supervisees' experience regarding cross-racial supervision and "how" they experience aspects that can impact the clinical supervisory relationship. Moustakas (1994) summarized transcendental phenomenology as:

> A scientific study of the appearance of things, of phenomena just as we see them and as they appear to us in consciousness. Any phenomenon represents a suitable starting point for phenomenological reflection. The very appearance of something makes it a phenomenon. The challenge is to explicate the phenomenon in terms of its constituents and possible meanings, thus designing the features of consciousness and arriving at an understanding of the essences of the experience. (p.49)

Since the researcher conducted all of the interviews and carried out the data analysis, she engaged in a bracketing exercise throughout the study to minimize the influence of her biases on her research. Bracketing is the process by which a researcher uses self-reflection and reflexivity to identify, explore, and set aside (i.e., bracket) any

presuppositions and connections about the phenomenon being studied so that the researcher maintains the focus of the study on the exploration of the subjective experience of the participants (Constantine & Sue, 2007).

To engage in bracketing of her own experiences, the researcher discussed with her dissertation committee her personal values and concerns regarding African Americans' experiences in supervision. In addition to discussions with her dissertation chair and a member of her committee, some of the bracketing exercises the researcher engaged in included keeping notes of the emotions, thoughts, and reactions she experienced in reviewing the transcripts and writing a series of narratives discussing how this study affected her personally. These notes were then shared and discussed with a member of her committee at various stages of data analysis to minimize her impact on the coding process.

Role of the Researcher

The role of the researcher was to serve as the instrument to conduct a study on the lived experiences of African American supervisees. Merriam and Tisdell (2016) acknowledge that a key characteristic of qualitative research is the researcher as the primary instrument for data collection and analysis. As the primary instrument for making sense of the phenomenon in this study, the researcher interpreted the data that was constructed. While conducting research, the researcher needs to constantly reflect before and during the research process to provide context and understanding for the reader. In this case, prior to data collection, the researcher noted her background, experiences, and biases regarding the study:

The researcher is a Black woman in a counseling and supervision doctoral program. As an African American woman, the researcher has experienced and overcome the barriers and stigma of counseling and mental health discussed in the literature, as well as engaged in cross-racial supervision throughout her academic career. The researcher has been exposed to racism and discrimination in the context of her personal and professional experiences. Yet, she has also had some positive cross-racial experiences in counseling supervision. The researcher became interested in this study to observe any similarities or differences with other African American supervisees in counseling supervision. Additionally, the researcher was interested in exploring any themes that may arise from interviewing other African American supervisees who may have experienced negative counseling supervision. Since the human instrument has shortcomings and biases that can impact the study, instead of trying to eliminate these biases or "subjectivities," it is important to identify them and monitor them in relation to the theoretical framework and make clear how they may be shaping the collection and interpretation of data (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016).

Before conducting the study, this researcher bracketed her thoughts by exploring underlying beliefs, theories, and ideas. This method helped to ensure that the researcher exhausted ideas and beliefs about counseling supervision at the beginning as well as throughout the study as more thoughts and judgments were triggered during the interviews. While conducting research, the researcher needs to constantly reflect before and during the research process to provide context and understanding for the reader.

When being reflexive, researchers should not try to simply ignore or avoid their own biases (as this would likely be impossible); instead, reflexivity requires

researchers to reflect upon and clearly articulate their position and subjectivities

(world view, perspectives, biases), so that readers can better understand the filters

through which questions were asked, data were gathered and analyzed, and

findings were reported. (Sutton & Austin, 2015, p. 226)

These unique characteristics have the potential to influence the collection and

interpretation of the data. Therefore, as a researcher, biases and characteristics play a role

in the research process and are analyzed in the concluding section. Recognizing these

factors in the researcher allowed for continual, deep self-reflection to avoid obstructing or

altering the research throughout the study. Reflexivity is an important source for self-

reflection and is addressed in this next section.

Reflexivity

Reflexivity provides the researcher with a personal self-awareness and an

awareness of the relationship between themselves and their research environment. The

researcher's experience is identified below:

During an internship experience as a clinical mental health counseling student, I

was placed in an elementary school setting. I grew up in the city of Syracuse,

attended Syracuse city schools, and worked with youth in the area in many other

capacities. The demographics of students that attend Syracuse city schools are

typically African American children of lower socioeconomic status in high crime

areas. The demographics of administration and teachers working in Syracuse city

schools are predominantly White individuals from the middle class who don't

reside in the same neighborhoods as their students. My supervisor was not an

exception. She was a school psychologist and a middle-aged White woman who

lived in a suburban area about 30 minutes away from the school district. She had

been practicing for approximately fifteen years and had spent the last five years at

this particular elementary school. My perception of my supervisor was that she

was overwhelmed by the demands of New York state requirements, the school's

(and principal's) expectations, and her caseload, therefore, supervising me was an

additional burden.

Our supervision meetings were scheduled during her lunch hour, and we would

often be interrupted by a phone call, unexpected parent-teacher conference, or

another school administrator popping in for a "quick" question. Not only was my

supervisor's time limited, but her perspective was jaded. She explicitly expressed

she believed most of the students I worked with had "behavior issues" and

"anger" or were "lazy" and just trying to "get out of class". Therefore, she often

warned me about being manipulated by the students. During my work with

particular students, I found myself often advocating for them and explaining

certain nuances of the Black experience to my supervisor. I did not trust my

supervisor, I did not feel supported, and I was very aware of the power dynamics

that were present. My supervisor lacked cultural awareness, did not demonstrate

competence from a cultural standpoint, and I often felt compelled to serve as the

spokesperson for the Black experience, constantly educating her on the culture in

this particular neighborhood. I had to initiate any conversations about culture, and

often "performed" in a way that could dispel any misconceptions she had about

Black people. Had my supervisor been African American or of another

marginalized race, I believe our supervision could have turned out differently and

I may have experienced less frustration. I believe the conversation about

race/ethnicity and culture should have been broached much earlier, at her

initiative. This could have introduced a basic understanding of privilege and

power within marginalized communities, how family systems are structured, and

how counseling is perceived within the African American community. During this

experience, I felt the need to supervise myself regarding critical aspects of my

work with students, overall resulting in an unsatisfactory supervision experience.

The nature of the researcher's experiences and personal connection to aspects of

the study made her at risk of decreasing the validity and credibility when conducting the

study because the researcher could contribute her personal bias which could impact the

outcome of the study. Concerning the researcher's biases, she believed that Black

supervisees would report varying levels of concern and distress associated with

experiencing negative counseling supervision with White supervisors. Conversely, the

researcher believed that Black supervisees would report satisfaction and varying levels of

comfort associated with positive experiences in counseling supervision with White

supervisors. Therefore, the researcher was interested in identifying which aspects of

counseling supervision contributed to these positive or negative experiences. However, to

increase the validity and credibility of the study and decrease researcher bias, the

researcher provided a detailed description of her plans throughout the study by utilizing

research memos, member checking, and consultation with her dissertation chair when

defining her role as the researcher. Merriam and Tisdell (2016) emphasize the importance

for researchers to deal with their own potential influences.

One way the researcher worked toward reducing her biases was by bracketing throughout the entire study, as mentioned above. The researcher remained as objective as possible by maintaining professionalism and in the role of the researcher while conducting the interviews. Rapport was established quickly within the interviews because of the connection of speaking with another Black counselor and counselor educator in training. Some of the participants viewed the researcher as other than simply a researcher due to our shared cultural experiences, the researcher's understanding of slang and terminology, and our similar backgrounds. To reduce researcher bias, the researcher recruited African American participants from diverse backgrounds and areas across the United States.

Another step to reduce researcher bias in reflexivity was creating a reflective journal to capture as many of my thoughts, perceptions, and ideas before and after each interview. By journaling throughout the study, the researcher was able to focus the attention on the lived experiences of the participants and lessen the likelihood that her judgment would interfere with the outcome of the study. Processing thoughts and feelings in a reflective journal allowed the researcher to describe when the participants shared thoughts or experiences in their supervision triggered thoughts or feelings that were difficult to analyze through the bracketing experience. The researcher upheld and maintained standards of producing work that does not reflect the researcher's own experiences by being attentive to subjectivity and reflexivity, while also seeking to only report the perspectives and shared experiences of the participants involved in this study. Utilizing Moustakas's (1994) approaches of reduction and epoché, the researcher was able to go beyond her worldview by setting biases aside to determine the lived

experiences from the individuals while remaining objective. Maintaining these methods of reflexivity to reduce the researcher's bias served as a system of accountability to protect the participants and increased credibility and trustworthiness throughout the study.

Participants

The researcher used a criterion sampling procedure to recruit participants. The inclusionary criteria to participate in this study were: (a) participants would be graduate students enrolled in a CACREP-accredited counseling program participating in a supervised internship experience or recently graduated from a CACREP-accredited program working in a clinical or educational setting, (b) will be at least 21 years of age, (c) must self-identify as African American which is defined as an individual living in the United States whose ancestry has its origins in Africa and who self-identifies with that racial/ethnic group, and (d) have received supervision from a White supervisor. Student participants were required to have taken counseling practicum or internship and to have developed a working alliance with their supervisors through at least five consecutive weeks of individual or group supervision sessions at the time of data collection, or to have met these criteria through their counseling practicum or internship within the last three years. Supervisors were required to be functioning as a site supervisor or serving as an academic supervisor who was either a professor or doctoral-level student at a CACREP-accredited counseling program.

For the purpose of this study, a range of 5 to 15 participants was identified as necessary for the transcendental phenomenological approach (Moustakas, 1994). Thirty participants initially volunteered to participate in the study, and two participants were

disqualified because they reported their supervisor was non-White. Seventeen

participants did not complete the demographic survey and provide contact information,

and four did not respond to the follow-up emails for an interview. Therefore, seven

African American counseling supervisees who were engaged in counseling supervision

with a White supervisor either during an advanced practicum or internship course or in

counseling practice in the United States participated in this study. The participants were

six females and one male supervisee and ranged in age from 23 to 35 years old. Three

participants self-identified as Black and four self-identified as African American. Five of

the supervisees reported that their supervisor was a White woman, and one indicated that

their supervisor was a White man. One counseling intern supervisee reported they had

two supervisors: a White woman and a White man. Five participants were clinical mental

health counseling master's students, one participant identified as a therapist, and one

participant was a counseling education and supervision doctoral student.

Data Collection Procedure

The principle researcher obtained Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval for

the study from James Madison University. After receiving IRB approval from the

university, the researcher recruited participants. All participants were asked to participate

in this study via email invitation (see Appendix A) through (a) specific professional

organization directories (CACREP, ACA, ACES, and AMCD) and (b) the listserv

CESNET. Volunteers who agreed to participate then received an e-mail containing the

introduction letter explaining the purpose of the study and providing the Qualtrics link

with the informed consent and demographic questionnaire (see Appendix B). Once the

demographic questionnaire (see Appendix C) was completed and contact information was

provided, the researcher coordinated a time for an interview with a follow-up email (see

Appendix D). To ensure confidentiality, pseudonyms were used during the research

process to protect the participants and conceal their identities. Anonymity was ensured by

storing the participants' responses to the questionnaire and their personal information

separately. Participants were notified that their personal information would be deleted

after the study was completed. These interviews were conducted through WebEx, a

privately secured format that has audio or video capabilities. The recorded interviews

were transcribed, and the memos were compiled to triangulate the data and document

individual differences.

Instrumentation

Demographic Questionnaire. Participants completed a survey including a

demographic questionnaire that asked them to specify their sex, age, race, clinical setting,

program concentration (community, counselor education and supervision, marital,

couples and family, mental health, school, and student affairs; CACREP, 2016), level of

training (practicum, internship, post-master internship to include doctoral practicum and

internships, clinical placement), cumulative hours of past individual supervision

experience, and amount of time in weekly supervision (minimum of one hour weekly).

The responses to the questions were analyzed through basic descriptive statistics.

Individual Interviews. This transcendental phenomenological approach is

designed to investigate the lived experiences of African American supervisees in clinical

settings. Individual interviews were the primary source of data in this study and were

conducted to gather data on the individuals' lived experiences (see Appendix E). Due to

the nature of qualitative research it is important to ensure that the researcher conducting

the study bears the burden of demonstrating the methods of data collection and analysis

involves rigor and skill. Phenomenological researchers create the context in which

participants are encouraged to reflect retrospectively on an experience they have already

lived through and describe this experience as much as possible to the interviewer.

Eliciting these experiences is not an easy task, as asking appropriate questions and

relying on participants to discuss the meaning of their experiences requires patience and

skill on the part of the researcher (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

The researcher administered the interview protocol with open-ended and

appropriate follow-up questions to allow for discussion and decrease the interviewer's

influence. Interviews were conducted via web conference and were recorded on a digital

voice recorder. All participants were given the option to opt-out of participation in the

interview at any point during the study. The interviews lasted from 20-30 minutes and at

the end of each interview the interviewer composed memos, which included her

observations related to vocal cues and personal reflections as an African American

woman in the counseling field. Each interview was transcribed from the digital recording.

At the end of each interview, participants were informed the transcripts would be sent to

them to be reviewed or member checked. Throughout the interview process—before,

during, and after—interactions between the interviewer and the participants were

designed to build trust. These interactions included a brief story about my interest in

cross-racial supervision, while also presenting the information in a warm and inviting

context. Although the interviews were semi-structured, the researcher assumed the role of

the learner, in that the participant is the one who has had the experience, and can share

with the researcher (deMarrais, 2004). This approach allowed for the participants to fully

express their rich experiences.

Data Analysis

Phenomenological reduction required the researcher to isolate the phenomenon to

comprehend its essence. This process allowed the researcher to perceive

straightforwardly and describe in textural language what she saw as the qualities of the

experience. Moustakas (1994) stated, "this whole process of reducing toward what is

texturally meaningful and essential in its phenomenal and experiential components

depends on competent and clear reflectiveness, on an ability to attend, recognize, and

describe with clarity" (p. 93). Through this attending, recognizing, and describing,

qualities were recognized and described, each one having its own value or horizonalizing.

The researcher applied three phenomenological reduction processes to identify thematic

content from the transcripts. The three steps were: (a) preliminary grouping through

horizonalization, (b) consensus coding, and (c) clustering and thematizing. This

horizonalizing resulted in horizons that could then be clustered and organized together

into themes. Grouping through horizonalization allows the researcher to list every

expression related to the participants' experiences with a corresponding code. To engage

in consensus coding the researcher then repeatedly reviewed with a peer reviewer the text

and codes to "look and notice and look again" and potentially recode to determine which

thematic content was a new horizon of this phenomenon (Moustakas, 1994, p.93). Then,

the researcher clustered thematic content into core themes regarding the participant

experiences and identified exemplifications that vividly illustrated these themes. Lastly,

the researcher used a peer reviewer to review the coded data and to control for researcher

bias, and to determine the consistency of codes and identified themes. The clustered themes and meanings are used to develop the textural descriptions of the experience. From the textural descriptions, structural descriptions and integration of textures and structures into the meanings and essences of the phenomenon are constructed (Moustakas, 1994).

Merriam and Tisdell (2016) stated imaginative variation involve viewing the data from various perspectives, "as if one were walking around a modern sculpture, seeing different things from different angles" (p.27). The task of imaginative variation was to seek possible meanings using imagination, varying frames of reference, and approaching the phenomenon from different perspectives, positions, roles, or functions. The researcher sought to answer the question: How did the experience of the phenomenon come to be what it is? "Imaginative variation enables the researcher to derive structural themes from the textural descriptions that have been obtained through phenomenological reduction" (Moustakas, 1994, p. 99). The last step was to put the textural and structural descriptions into a unified statement of the essence of the phenomenon as a whole. These essences were also never totally exhausted. Moustakas (1994) stated, "this fundamental textural-structural synthesis represents the essences at a particular time and place from the vantage point of an individual researcher following an exhaustive imaginative and reflective study of the phenomenon" (p. 100). Through this phenomenological model, a significant methodology was created to investigate human experiences and for gaining knowledge from a state of pure consciousness.

Limitations

Qualitative research provides the reader with rich accounts of experiences. The phenomenological approach is well suited to studying affective, emotional, and often intense human experiences (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). However, with all research some limitations impact the validity of the research being conducted. Researcher bias and the effect of the researcher on the study are identified as impacting the validity of qualitative research. The subjectivity the researcher brings to the study is referred to as bias which can limit the study. The researcher bias can extend into a variety of areas such as confirmation bias (Clark, 2017), leading questions (Malhotra et al., 2007), and question order bias (Lewis-Beck et al., 2004). The researcher recognized her confirmation bias and consistently worked to not search for, interpret, or recall information in a manner that confirmed my existing beliefs. This researcher also structured the interview questions as to not influence the participant's answers regarding leading questions bias or question order bias. To not provide information or context that affected the participants' responses and not to lead them to responses the researcher might have been seeking, neutral wording was used. Identifying and addressing each bias was imperative because each affected the conduct and the conclusions of the study.

Validity (Credibility and Trustworthiness)

To maintain credibility and trustworthiness, the researcher incorporated several standards described by Creswell and Poth (2018). The researcher utilized various aspects to assure validity such as bracketing, member checking, peer review, explanation of researcher bias, and an external audit. Bracketing is the practice of suspending your judgments to focus on the studied phenomenon (Peoples, 2020). Transcripts were

reviewed by participants who provided the information for accuracy which is member

checking (Peoples, 2020). Member checking occurred at three points over the course of

the study: during the interview, at the end of the interview, and after the interviews were

transcribed. Lincoln and Guba (1985) asserted that member checking is the formal and

informal process of participants in a study checking the data, analysis, interpretations and

conclusions to ensure the accuracy of the data collected, which is the most crucial

technique for establishing credibility within a study. The researcher provided the

participants with the opportunity to review their data to ensure accuracy and validity

throughout the study. This occurred at the completion of the interviews and data analysis.

The participants were informed they could review their transcripts to provide any

feedback, corrections, or revisions to the preliminary themes to ensure an accurate

depiction of their responses and participation in the study.

The researcher utilized a peer reviewer to assist in maintaining the credibility and

trustworthiness of the study. The researcher met with her colleague in the counseling and

supervision doctoral program at the same university. Her colleague asked questions about

the methods, results of the study, and the emerging conclusions in an effort to create

accountability and honesty. The peer reviewer served as a mock participant for the study

by completing a practice interview with the researcher by using the semi-structured

interview questions developed for the study before using the questions with the actual

participants. The explanation of the researcher's bias was addressed in a previous section.

An external audit occurs when a researcher who was not involved in the research process

assesses the data analysis procedure and the findings to determine whether the findings

accurately represent the data (Peoples, 2020). The external auditor was a colleague in the

counseling profession and faculty at a university in the Mid-Atlantic region. The

researcher met the external auditor through professional networking and discussion of

similar research interests.

Chapter Summary

This chapter highlighted the rationale for conducting qualitative research,

specifically utilizing the transcendental phenomenological approach. The role of the

researcher and reflexivity was explored. The design of the study was explicitly detailed

which included instrumentation, data analysis, study limitations and validity. The results

of this data were utilized to identify major themes representative of the experiences of

African American supervisees in the counseling supervisory relationship and improve

clinical supervision. The expected outcome of this study was to provide a detailed picture

of the African American experience in a supervisory working alliance, and therefore, to

clarify the need for specific multicultural training for clinical supervision. Chapter 4

presents the results of the data analysis and expands the participants' experiences and

perceptions.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

The purpose of this qualitative study was to investigate the lived experiences of African American supervisees in cross-racial supervision with White supervisors. As described in the literature review, African American supervisees experience unique challenges in cross-racial supervision with White supervisors. With these unique experiences in mind, the purpose of this transcendental phenomenological study was to understand the essence of their experiences in cross-racial supervision. Transcendental phenomenology was the most appropriate qualitative approach as it "emphasizes subjectivity and discovery of the essences of experiences and provides a systematic and disciplined methodology for the derivation of knowledge" (Moustakas, 1994, p. 45).

Semi-structured, in-depth, interviews were conducted with each participant. All interviews were conducted using audio recording and were scheduled to accommodate the demands of their schedules. The average length of the recorded interviews was around 30 minutes with time spent explaining the study and making the intent clear to each participant at the beginning of each interview. Likewise, the researcher attempted to build rapport and establish a relationship before utilizing the interview questions. After interviews were completed, participants were informed they would have the opportunity to view their transcripts and make any changes needed. Follow-up emails were also utilized to allow the participants an opportunity to share any new information or changes from the interview recording, transcriptions, themes and data found at the conclusion of the data analysis.

To report the findings of the study, this chapter is organized with a brief overview of each participant's demographics, professional/clinical experience, and their supervisory relationship. The participants were six females and one male, who all identified as Black or African American. Each participant was assigned a number, but this researcher asked each participant to identify a pseudonym they wanted to use, which was used to report the results of the study. The participants were: Missy (1), Dream J (2), Yung C (3), Naturally Psyched (4), Halo (5), Anne (6), and Monique (7). Next, findings from the interviews are reported. I utilized the approach of transcendental phenomenology (Moustakas, 1994) to analyze interview data. An overview of the emergent themes is presented. The final section provides a comprehensive description of the research findings on the participants' experience in cross-racial supervision.

Participant Demographics

All participants were asked to participate in this study via email invitation through (a) specific professional organization directories (CACREP, ACA, ACES, and AMCD) and (b) the listserv CESNET. Thirty volunteers who agreed to participate completed the demographic questionnaire. Of the thirty, eleven participants provided contact information and the researcher reached out via email to coordinate a time for an interview. In this study, seven participants coordinated with the researcher for an interview and completed the interview process. The participants of the study consisted of six self-identified females and one self-identified male. The participants ranged in age from 23 to 35 years old. Three participants self-identified as Black and four self-identified as African American. Five of the supervisees reported that their supervisor was a White woman, and one indicated that their supervisor was a White man. One

counseling intern supervisee reported they had two supervisors a White woman, and a

White man. Five participants were clinical mental health counseling master's students,

one participant was a therapist, and one participant was a counseling education and

supervision doctoral student. Each participant was assigned a number and the participants

were: Missy (1), Dream J (2), Yung C (3), Naturally Psyched (4), Halo (5), Anne (6), and

Monique (7). The following is a brief description of each participant, recorded at the time

of the semistructured interviews:

Missy (1) is a female in her 20's, who has been in practice for three years. She reported

she is a therapist and program coordinator at a community mental health agency in the

Northeast region. Missy reported she's engaged in 312 supervision sessions to date with a

licensed supervisor. She reported her supervisor is a White woman.

Dream J (2) is a female in her 20's, who is a clinical mental health counseling student.

The program is located in the Northeast region. She reported she has been in an

internship for 6 months and has engaged in 20 supervision sessions with a licensed

supervisor. She reported her supervisor is a White man.

Yung C (3) is a male in his 30's, who is a clinical mental health counseling student. The

program is located in the Southwest region. He reported he has been in an internship for 5

months and has engaged in 24 supervision sessions with a licensed supervisor. He

reported his supervisor is a White woman.

Naturally Psyched (4) is a female in her 20's, who is a clinical mental health counseling

student. The program is located in the South Atlantic region. She reported she has been in

an internship for 3 months and has engaged in 14 supervision sessions with a licensed

supervisor. She reported her supervisor is a White man.

Halo (5) is a female in her 20's, who is a clinical mental health counseling student. The program is located in the Southwest region. She reported she has been in an internship for 5 months and has engaged in 22 supervision sessions with a licensed supervisor. She reported her supervisor is a White woman.

Anne (6) is a female in her 20's, who is a clinical mental health counseling student. The program is located in the South Atlantic region. She reported she has been in an internship for 10 weeks and has engaged in 6 supervision sessions with a licensed supervisor. Anne spoke about two internship supervision experiences with White supervisors where one supervisor identified as a gay male and the present supervisor identified as a straight woman.

Monique (7) is a female in her 30's who is a licensed clinician and clinical supervisor. She reported she has been a clinical supervisor for 7 years. She has also begun a counselor education and supervision doctoral program. The program is located in the West North Central region. Monique has been in an internship for 3 weeks and has engaged in 4 supervision sessions with a licensed supervisor. Monique's internship placement is at a community mental health agency located in the Northwest region. During the interview, Monique spoke from an interesting perspective as a supervisor and supervisee. She reported her supervisor is a White woman.

Descriptions of the participants' demographic information include age, gender, profession and title, the program of study, regional location, length of practice or internship experience, and the number of clinical supervision sessions which can be found in Table 1.

Table 1

Demographic Information of Study Sample

Pseudonym	Age	Gender	Student or Professional Title	Program of Study	Regional Location	Length of Practice or Internship Experience	Number of Clinical Supervision Sessions
Missy	26	Female	Therapist	N/A	Northeast	3 years	312
Dream J	29	Female	Master's Student	CMHC	Northeast	6 months	20
Yung C	30	Male	Master's Student	CMHC	Southwest	5 months	24
Naturally Psyched	24	Female	Master's Student	CMHC	South Atlantic	3 months	14
Halo	25	Female	Master's Student	CMHC	Southwest	5 months	22
Anne	23	Female	Master's Student	CMHC	South Atlantic	10 weeks	6
Monique	35	Female	PhD Student/ Therapist & Supervisor	Counselor Education and Supervision	West North Central	3 weeks	4

Data Analysis

This researcher used a transcendental phenomenological approach, conducting audio-recorded interviews through WebEx with each participant. The data were gathered through semi-structured interviews that included a list of questions with modified phrasing, presentation, and follow-up for each participant. This interview style allowed for flexibility and provided a medium to thoroughly investigate unforeseen insights and ideas. Personal experiences with cross-racial supervision, specific dynamics that impact cross-racial supervision, and the supervisees' perceived clinical competence were covered in the interviews. Patton (2015) described phenomenological interviewing as aiming to "elicit a personal description of a lived experience so as to describe a phenomenon as much as possible in concrete and lived-through terms" (p. 432).

After the interviews were conducted, an external transcriptionist completed a verbatim transcription of each interview. After each audio-recorded interview was transcribed, each participant had an opportunity to review and edit their interviews as needed. The researcher checked each transcription for accuracy and read each multiple times to develop a comprehensive overview of each interview. Though individual interviews served as the primary data source, the researcher utilized a reflective journal to strengthen the findings of the audio interviews. Any observations of vocal cues, extended pauses, or feelings were recorded in the reflective journal.

The researcher's reflections on the interviews aided in the development of themes. The final transcript data were analyzed using Moustakas's (1994) transcendental phenomenological approach. This approach consisted of four highly detailed analysis steps, which were outlined in Chapter 3. A thematic analysis approach was used to

analyze, code, and interpret the data. Thematic analysis is described as "a method for identifying, analyzing, and reporting patterns (themes) within data" (Braun and Clarke, 2006, p. 79). From the verbatim transcribed transcripts, the process of clustering invariant meaning units or themes from the interviews took place. A theme is a "phrase or sentence that identifies what a unit of analysis is about and/or what it means" (Saldana, 2009, p. 139). From these themes, the individual textural descriptions reported the *what* of the phenomenon. Next, individual structural descriptions were created that reported the *how* of the phenomenon. The next section presents each participants' individual combined textural/structural description, followed up by the final group composite report. Each participant is listed in numerical order which was assigned to each participant randomly.

Reporting of the Findings Based on the Research Questions

The following research questions drove this study:

Research Question 1. How do African American counseling supervisees experience their supervisory relationships with White supervisors?

Research Question 2. What are the African American counseling supervisees' experiences with specific dynamics such as supervisors' use of power, the establishment of trust, clinical competence, and general cultural competence or incompetence, including racism and discrimination, in supervision?

Research Question 3. How do African American supervisees' experiences and perceptions of the supervisory relationship affect their own sense of clinical competence?

The following are the themes from interviews that depicted the essence of the phenomenon for the seven participants: *(1) Important Aspects of Clinical Supervision, (2) Meeting the Supervisees' Needs, (3) Support, Relatability, and Nurture, (4) Trust Builds*

Over Time, (5) Complexities of Power in Supervision, (6) Continued Education Informs

Clinical Competence, (7) Cultural Awareness Happens When We Engage in Cultural

Conversations, (8) Supervisory Working Alliance Impacts Perceived Clinical

Competence, (9) Personal Advocacy, (10) A Level of Comfort and Ease of Understanding

Race-Related Issues, (11) More Individualized Needs, and (12) Engage in Cultural

Conversations Early in the Relationship. Each research question is reported with the

theme(s) from the data and in support of the findings; participants' quotes purposely

reinforce the theme grounded in relevant research. The researcher begins with the first

research question, which centers on how African American supervisees experience their

clinical supervision with their White supervisor.

Research Question 1. How do African American counseling supervisees experience

their supervisory relationships with White supervisors?

African American supervisees communicated various experiences in cross-racial

supervision. To address this question, the first theme *important aspects of clinical*

supervision was present in all descriptions and was defined as core elements the African

American supervisees found to be important in their supervisory relationship. The theme

important aspects of clinical supervision is encompassing of the individuals' varied

experiences, as African American supervisees listed multiple components of supervision

that were important to them. Missy identified cultural humility and attentiveness as

important aspects.

> For me, because the clients that I work with are particularly inner city African-
>
> American families and Latino families, it's really important to me, and as an
>
> African American counselor, it's important to me that my supervisor understands

that impact and that it has—another level, another layer when we see things happen to our clients or the discrimination, things that. So, it's important that my supervisor comes from a culturally humble and attentive place. We talk about a lot of racial issues.

Dream J reported guidance, support, and feedback were important to her.

So, aspects that are important to me during supervision include: guidance for case formulation and checking in for understanding. I think that that's really important. And also checking in for self-care, since this is the first time that a lot of us are handling such heavy topics, and also, we have our own stuff that we have to deal with… It's nice to see if our supervisor actually cares about our development on multiple levels, and I think that definitely about writing. I think that that's also really important, since we do a lot of clinical writing. Getting real specific feedback and guidance on how to make things better.

Yung C listed four major qualities that were important for his supervision experience: empathy, compassion, genuineness, and competency.

Empathy is the biggest one. Compassion…honesty. So, feeling like the person is genuine. Like I think you have to be able to empathize and understand where I'm coming from. I think that's really important. And then being honest and genuine and having compassion also…Competency is something that is very important to me in my counseling supervision. I need to feel confident that my supervisor is secure in their counseling skills.

Naturally Psyched felt that constructive feedback was the most salient aspect of supervision.

> Definitely getting constructive feedback on application of techniques, being able
> to ask questions about things that you're unsure about whether it's clinical, the
> theoretical stuff.

Halo shared how important multicultural competency, communication and theoretical
orientation were to her supervision experience.

> One is to have an understanding of multiculturalism and diversity. That was
> another draw to me was that even though [my supervisor] is a white woman,
> she's pretty well versed in multicultural competencies, so that was one of the
> main things that I was looking for is a supervisor who would be able to help and
> guide me through that process and recognizing my own personal biases and
> being able to work through them and providing me a comfortable
> space…Another important factor was the supervisor's communication style, so
> knowing the supervisor and having some kind of constant supervision…And
> then another for me was the theory, her theoretical orientation…And so, I was
> excited to start working with somebody who had a different approach than
> person centered.

Anne expressed trust, friendliness and comfort as important aspects in supervision.

> I would say, feeling comfortable to ask questions is something that I've learned is
> very, very important because I am one to not ask many questions if I feel that the
> person is apprehensive or going to judge me. I would also say friendliness, which
> people take for granted, but to have a friendly supervisor kind of allows me to
> feel more comfortable in the environment that I'm in. And then the last thing I

would say is trust. I need a supervisor that can trust my ability and not question

every move that I make in counseling.

Monique identified the relationship and cultural awareness as major aspects of

supervision.

I try to instill that in just having a good relationship with the counselors that I

work with. Even when I think about my supervisors, either current or in the past,

it really has been about that relationship piece and the importance of us being able

to be on the same page about different things. So, yeah, relationship and having

an understanding or an awareness that I'm different, I have different experiences,

and being able to just appreciate and respect those differences have definitely

seemed to help when it comes to relationship and me wanting to stay where I'm

at.

In response to the first research question, the second theme *Meeting the*

Supervisees' Needs emerged to address how well they perceived their cross-racial

supervisory relationship based on the African American supervisees' needs for positive

supervision. The *Important Aspects of Clinical Supervision* theme was reinforced by the

Meeting the Supervisees' Needs theme. Overall, most of the participants felt their

supervision experience was going well. Two participants expressed dissatisfaction with

their supervision experience. These participants identified needs that weren't being met,

which led to their negative cross-racial supervision experience.

Missy shared due to her supervisor's interest in researching cultural considerations, she

was having a positive experience.

> I think that's going well. It's a lot of her research, so it was a good match. And a
> lot of her research is looking at African American, culturally sensitive strategies
> and models that we use. Yeah, so going into [supervision], I was in a different
> place with my own racial identity, so trying to—going to a very predominantly
> white university in higher education had a lot of its own issues, so I had a lot of
> experiences so I needed to get those out because they impact how I interact. So, it
> took me a little while to be comfortable enough to look at this white person and be
> like, 'hey, White people are frustrating today.' And to really feel comfortable
> talking about my experiences as a Black woman.

Yung C noted his cross-racial supervision experience was going well and felt all his
needs were met.

> I think it's going as well as I can ask for. I feel like she is genuine, compassionate
> and tries to empathize with my experience. So, I feel like I definitely felt like my
> guard was up a little bit. But she has been, you know, supportive and definitely
> went out of her way a lot of times to make sure that I was good and that I was
> getting my needs met.

Halo also expressed a similar satisfaction for her cross-racial supervision experience with
the added hope of being paired with a same-race supervisor.

> I think it's going pretty well, all things considering, I mean it was always my hope
> to be paired with a supervisor of color but being in the field and the space that
> we're in, I knew that that was going to be very difficult. And so, of my white
> supervisors that I've had because within my master's program, all of my
> supervisors have been white. She's been the one I've been most comfortable with.

>She's also been the one with the most understanding of multicultural and diversity
>
>concerns. So overall, I would say it's been a very positive experience, especially
>
>considering the experiences that I know some of my peers who are people of
>
>color, who are black and who have white supervisors.

Monique indicated her cross-racial supervision improved after a management level

training on multicultural and diversity concerns at her agency. She shared her need for

the cultural awareness of differences was met when her supervisor engaged her in

dialogue.

>So, I had just finished that training, and there was a piece in there about cultural
>
>competency, diversity in the workplace, kind of all of those things. On a break,
>
>my supervisor actually came to me to ask me about my experiences. So, for me,
>
>that was an eye-opener to say, 'okay. I mean, I think—honestly, I know that not
>
>everybody will be able to really get a glimpse into what it's like, kind of what the
>
>experience is being in a city that's not extremely diverse, and what that's like'. But
>
>I was appreciative, because she came to me and really wanted to know more
>
>about my experience and how it affects me and how it would also kind of affect
>
>the work that we do as counselors when I'm working with my team. I think when I
>
>spoke about like relationship and just getting an understanding, that was the first
>
>time that I've had a supervisor come to me and say, "Share with me about your
>
>experience. I want to know more. I want to understand." I thought that was pretty
>
>powerful and pretty... Just like for her to put herself out there to say I want to
>
>know more, and I think it helped us to connect on a different level, as well.

Anne shared about two cross-racial supervision experiences and the difference in how her

needs were met and unmet based on the aspects of clinical supervision she highlighted as

important.

> Well, my first one I would say was not good. In terms of the trust, that was there,
>
> but the friendliness and the ability to be able to ask questions, those two were
>
> lacking for me. So, I found that I did not enjoy that supervision style. However,
>
> my current internship, the ability for me to ask questions and the friendliness was
>
> there. However, the trust took a long time to build. So, it's been a very interesting
>
> change for me in both sceneries. But I tend to like the second style better.

The next two participants expressed dissatisfaction with their supervision because of the

focus on how time is spent. Naturally Psyched expressed the heavy focus on

administrative work doesn't allow time for the clinical aspects.

> Oh, honestly not as well. Not good because… we don't get to the clinical piece
>
> most of the time—It's mostly just administrative stuff. So, it's kind of a back and
>
> forth of just more administrative stuff. Occasionally talking about a diagnosis of a
>
> client, but not really the clinical aspects.

Dream J shared similar sentiments with an emphasis on her recognition of how she may

be perceived based on her Black identity.

> I don't think that it's going all that well. I find myself struggling with, I guess,
>
> self-advocacy, trying to get them to do these things for me…I feel that sometimes
>
> I get gypped of time to talk. I am the only black person in my supervision class
>
> and in my program. So, it's just rough trying to navigate that space without

stereotype threats. Like if I speak up right now, am I going to be perceived as

angry or aggressive? But I do need to talk about this, you know?

Each participant conveyed a unique cross-racial supervision experience with their

White supervisors. The participants' experiences were also characterized by

commonalities with other participants, leading to emerging themes which captured the

richness of the African American supervisees' experiences in supervision. The last theme

related to the first research question is *Support, Relatability, and Nurture* which emerged

to highlight the qualities that the participants shared to describe their supervisory working

alliance.

Missy described her working alliance with her supervisor a very positive. Missy

appreciated the support personally and professionally because it aligned with the climate

of the agency.

> It's like mother daughter if that makes sense, so there's a level of care and
>
> affection and then actual, I feel like she cares about my personal growth as a
>
> human being, but also as a clinician. So, it's very positive, very supportive. She's
>
> particularly just a really great person and supervisor.

Yung C shared a similar appreciation of his supervisor's support personally and

professionally. He noted his relationship built as more time was spent together.

> I think it was really well. I think we had a really good working relationship. I felt
>
> comfortable talking to her about my clients and the issues I was having. I felt like
>
> especially as we got more time together, I felt like we were able to have a
>
> personal relationship too. Just being able to talk about stuff that's not specifically
>
> counseling. Because I worked full time as well, so I would talk to her sometimes

too just about things that were going on at work and she would also listen. So, I

feel like we had a really good relationship.

Anne acknowledged that her working alliance with her supervisor has grown with time.

At first—our relationship wasn't as strong due to me feeling that the trust level

was not there. However, I've been there since August, so I'm now more

comfortable with her. So, I do feel closer to tell her personal things that are going

on or just to stop by and have a normal conversation that doesn't really have to do

with counseling. So, I think it's grown.

Monique indicated her independence was important to her and so her supervisor provided

support when she needed it.

The working relationship, the alliance, kind of things like that has been allowing

me the freedom to do the work and being there to support me definitely when I

need them, but knowing that me as a person might sometimes take on too much,

and I'll find a way to get it done and I'll find a way to handle it. Then just being

able to realize, bringing in that support when needed. I think that's been helpful.

Like I said, I've been with my agency for seven years now, and I've had two,

three, maybe three or four different either supervisors or directors that I've worked

with directly. I want to say this supervisor that I have right now, and her

supervisor who is the director, I would say are the best that I've been able to work

with. They're definitely allowing me to grow and supporting me. Like I said, I'm

in school and working full time, so they're definitely supporting me through all of

that. There really haven't been any issues even though kind of that racial

difference is there, I think because we're community mental health, they're

community minded, they're open and willing to work with people, different

populations… it's just been a good fit.

Halo expressed she has a professional relationship with her supervisor, and the

boundaries are clear.

I would say that the working relationship is also pretty positive too…I feel like

she does a great job of managing boundaries and roles. But if we ever are, have a

client situation or something comes up, she's always available by phone and has

made that known to us. I would say our working relationship is very, it's very

professional but I'm also able to relate to her really well and I believe that she's

also able to relate to me.

The next two participants shared their working alliance lacked the three areas that are

representative in this theme. Their experiences highlight that they were looking for a

supportive and nurturing environment, but that was not provided. Dream J shared she

desired a relatable and supportive supervisory relationship. She narrated an occurrence

that showed why she felt the support from her supervisor is lacking for her.

Like I honestly don't feel like I can trust anyone here, because I feel like

sometimes when I'm being honest or trying to express my experience, sometimes

it gets used against me in evaluations. I don't really trust him. For example, I

scheduled a meeting to talk about my concern about not receiving enough hours,

because he gave me my client at the end of September, but I'm supposed to have

like say 50 hours by the end of the semester. Knowing how the semester works,

that doesn't give me enough time to reach that goal. So, as a student, I wanted to

be proactive and schedule a time to talk about my concerns. And when I sat down

with him, he was like, "Oh, don't worry about your hours." And I'm like, "No,

that's why I scheduled a time to talk to you." And then I found out from my

department chair that he gave me an incomplete because of my hours when I

scheduled a time to talk to him about it. He didn't tell me in that session. So that's

why I don't really know how our working alliance is. I do think that it's cordial.

He says that he supports me, but I don't feel that way. And maybe I'm expecting

too much. But I think, I don't know, it looks like, on the outside looking in, it

looks like he's supporting others differently than he supports me.

Naturally Psyched shared a similar lack of support.

It sucks, I mean, there's definitely a clash of how I learn versus the support that

they're giving.

Research Question 2. What are the African American counseling supervisees'

experiences with specific dynamics such as supervisors' use of power, the

establishment of trust, clinical competence, and general cultural competence or

incompetence, including racism and discrimination, in supervision?

In response to this question, four themes that emerged are described. The first

theme, *Trust Builds Over Time,* that emerged is African American supervisees shared

they felt trust was established over time. They also provided concrete ways their

supervisors established trust in their cross-supervisory relationships. Missy, for instance,

explained how her supervisor partnered with her from the beginning and advocated on

her behalf which contributed to her feeling like she could trust her supervisor as their

supervisory relationship progressed.

> From the very beginning, again, it took time, but she had said if I ever misstep or I
> say something, I hope that you feel open to let me know and to tell me and to
> know that I'm going to take it seriously. And so she put it out there and then there
> have been different instances where I've needed her to advocate, particularly
> because I felt like the situation that was transpiring was because I was a person of
> color, and she stepped in. And she constantly does that, when certain things arise
> and she's willing to take it and use her influence and use her privilege to assist.
> But she also asks, "Would you like to do it together or would you like me to do
> it?" And sometimes I'm like, "Let's do it together." Sometimes I'm like, "I can't do
> this today. Please do it. I don't have the effort. I don't have the energy. I can't deal
> with all that." So, I think giving me that choice that she doesn't feel like, so she's
> more of an ally rather than I'm going to save you because I'm white. I think she's
> done a really good job at trying to learn me and learn the boundaries.

Halo shared a similar perspective that her supervisor being able to hold her experiences
and not be a White savior showed her that trust could build in her supervisory
relationship.

> Definitely took some time, but I think trust had been established from me
> understanding that she was there to help me and her having to show me, not just
> tell me. There was one supervisory session where I finally explained how I feel
> about being a black woman in the program about how it was difficult for me to
> feel vulnerable and she didn't immediately try to rescue me and that was probably
> the biggest turning point for me was she just sat there with me and didn't try to
> rescue me, didn't try to make it better and even said to me like, 'I know that

> there's nothing that I can do in this moment that can take it away from [you]
>
> because it's systemic' which was very helpful. I don't, I never wanted to be
>
> rescued in it. I just wanted somebody to be able to sit there with me in it and
>
> especially for her to be a white supervisor to tell me like, 'no, I see. I see exactly
>
> what you're going through. I know why you are going through what you're going
>
> through and no, it isn't fair' is what meant more to me than her trying to rescue
>
> me and trying to make it better because she knew she couldn't and I knew she
>
> couldn't and her trying to make it better would have just further solidified why I
>
> didn't want to be vulnerable because I don't need her to try to rescue me. And so
>
> that was probably the biggest turning point when I finally was able to break to
>
> become more vulnerable and to let my guard down a little bit. And once I saw
>
> how she responded to it; I began to develop more trust in her.

Yung C perceived his supervisor to be supportive and compassionate which helped his

trust build over time. He described a moment his supervisor was supportive that solidified

his trust in her.

> I'm thinking, because you know there are those moments. I think I had a rough
>
> class period where I was in my internship class and I was doing the case
>
> conceptualization and I had to show 10 minutes of a session and I showed the
>
> session. And my classmates for some reason they were just, I don't know, giving
>
> me a lot of direction and a lot of advice and I feel like they were overstepping
>
> their bounds for whatever reason. And I processed that with my supervisor,
>
> and…I was surprised with the way that she took in and how quick she was to
>
> defend me and to be compassionate and empathize with me. But she was very

compassionate in that moment. And that's when, for me, I would say trust was

built.

Monique perceived herself as inherently trusting until someone proves to be

untrustworthy.

I almost want to say it's been like, it's just kind of happened more so because there

hasn't been a situation, at least with my current supervisor, where there's

something that's happened where trust has been broken. I know what her level is,

things like that, but there hasn't been anything to where I've questioned either

loyalty or trust. Growing up, it was like you respect those who are either older or

above you in something. Then when it comes to trust, my—I guess—thought

process would be that until you give me something to not trust you about, then it's

almost like a natural thing that happens. I guess I haven't really ever thought about

trust in this supervisory relationship, because I feel like I've been able to be open

and honest and have conversations without there appearing to be judgment.

Anne had two supervisory experiences where she reflected how trust was established

with each supervisor. With her first supervisor, she felt she had to prove she was capable

for trust to be established. On the other hand, with her second supervisor, the trust was

more easily established as she got to know her supervisor better.

I'm referring now to my first supervisor ever. The trust was very hard to build

because I was the only black intern. The other three counseling interns were all

white and he was white, my supervisor. So, it was very hard for me to build the

trust because I felt like I had to keep proving that I'm capable, which made that

experience not pleasant for me. However, now in my site, I'm still ... it's only two

of us. There are 12 interns and two of us are black. And though I still feel like I

have to prove myself, the trust and relationship was built easier because she seems

to be more open minded and nonjudgmental and she doesn't really force me to

prove myself. That's just me forcing myself to do it. So, for her, the trust was

really easy to build. It just took talking to her more and getting to know her.

Naturally Psyched revealed she has a harder time disclosing her personal business which

makes it harder for trust to be established.

I don't really feel like there is a trust. I personally have a harder time disclosing to

my supervisor. For an example, I had a medical situation going on and everybody

kind of in the office knew but my supervisor because I don't want him to be

prying into personal business.

Dream J disclosed she was currently struggling to trust her supervisor, which was

reflected in her perception of the supervisory working alliance, as well as in her sense

that she doesn't trust anyone at her placement site. However, she did state that trust

seemed to be emerging:

I guess the way that the trust is more... I guess I wanted to say consistency, but

that's not true. At least his philosophy and approach to life has been good and, I

guess, trustworthy, since he's also honest about his own experiences. And he's

funny. He tries to be funny. So, I think that that's his approach of building trust.

The second theme that emerged related to this research question was *Complexities*

of Power in Supervision, in which the African American supervisees shared that the

power dynamics were explicitly expressed in their supervision. Missy detailed how she

experienced the power dynamics in her supervisory relationship as well as the feeling that

they became less apparent as the relationship progressed.

> I think at first, it was there either that, because again, I wasn't sure. I think it's
>
> there, but it's not like she's like, "I'm your boss. Do what I say." I think that's just
>
> the general vibe here though. We don't really ... It depends. It's across supervisors,
>
> but for my supervisory staff, the power dynamic is there but it's not in the
>
> relationship. And I think because I'm a little bit branded as, probably it just
>
> happened that way, as a huge advocate for equity and getting people to see the
>
> importance of inclusion and the importance of the perspective of people of color,
>
> African American women, especially when we're working with our clients who
>
> are of color. It doesn't make sense to me that we are not, if we are not included in
>
> that conversation. So, because I'm a little extra, I think that changes the way that
>
> people interact with me, the way that my supervisors interact with me particularly
>
> around race.

Yung C acknowledged that power dynamics are present as well, but not specifically part

of the relationship.

> It's interesting, because I feel like since I work full time, my schedule is not as
>
> flexible as I would have liked for my internship. And there was this one time
>
> where I was left at the clinic. She was the last counselor there and then I called
>
> her, and I let her know that and she said, 'since you're a student you're not going
>
> to be able to be left at the clinic by yourself. So, I'm going to email some of the
>
> counselors and if none of them are willing to stay with you on that day, then
>
> you're going to have to change your schedule'. That is a directive. And her

> showing her—I consider that like a power thing because she has the authority to
>
> say that, but in that instance, I didn't feel like that was, even though it was very
>
> direct. I just feel like I understood that she was a supervisor, but I never felt
>
> intimidated or like, 'Oh, man, what she says goes' or 'man that's going to be…',
>
> 'Oh, I'm in trouble'. You know, I just feel like I have room to voice my opinion
>
> and my concerns.

Monique indicated power dynamics exist in her supervisory relationship, but

communication is also relatively collaborative.

> So there has been more of that stuff to where you just got to do it, but there's been
>
> times in my career that I've seen, like with past supervisors and past counselors
>
> that I've worked with, that power dynamic that it was almost like a parent and a
>
> child type relationship where the supervisor's yelling at the counselor, and it was
>
> not a good environment, whatsoever. Thankfully, I'm no longer working in that
>
> type of environment, but I want to say with the power dynamics right now, it's
>
> really on the more level of like respect and, again, these are the things that have to
>
> get done. 'How can I support you in getting them done?', but with the intention
>
> knowing that they're going to get done. So, I think it's just about how the message
>
> comes across.

Naturally Psyched reflected that her supervisory relationship does not reflect the support

and collaboration that was described by other respondents. She expressed the power

dynamics are present in a parent/child like way.

> Honestly, I feel like it's a parent and the child to the extent. I don't feel like this is
>
> an equal—we can have a conversation and it doesn't feel like parenting. 'Oh, did

you do your notes, did you...' versus 'what do you need? How can I support you

best?'

Dream J recognized that her supervisor was in an evaluative role, but she expressed how

she perceived the power dynamics to be present.

The power of the pen is very interesting. That's why I feel like I'm always kind of

walking on eggshells, because I don't want to do anything that would result in

them controlling that, like controlling my outcome. So, we have these evaluations,

and I think that that's where a lot of it comes in. It's like, are they prepared to

move forward? Since I read the manual and I tried to use that to protect myself, I

feel like there's a lot of things that's on the unwritten manual that pops up, where

it's like, 'Oh, so where is that written? Because...' So, those are the power

dynamics. And yeah, like one of my supervisors, when I was speaking with her,

called me 'colloquial'. And I was like, 'Are you calling me ghetto in a nice way?'

So, and trying to articulate that without being, quote unquote, "rude" is very hard.

Because this field is so small, I just feel like reputation is a big deal, and I don't

want that to be tainted in my other experiences here.

Anne had two supervision experiences she reflected on the power dynamics present in

them.

My main supervisor makes all of us feel like we are in equal grounds. So, she

constantly reminds us that, I have the same abilities that she has. So, she's very

clear on we're all at one level. However, my previous supervisor was very clear

on that, he is the supervisor and I'm just the intern and I shouldn't screw up

because it's on his license. So, he constantly reminded me of the differences

between us.

Halo described explicit conversations at the beginning of the supervision to address

power dynamics.

In the first supervision, my supervisor was like, 'okay, I'm very aware that I'm a

white woman and that you are—that I'm a white woman's supervising, you're a

black woman supervisee. I'm very aware. Right? That this, we know that there

could be—that there is a power differential and I just want to know how you're

feeling about it'. So, from the beginning it was addressed, and that kind of helped

with the comfort level also. But I think what's unique about my, about my

supervisor is that her dissertation chair and her supervisor is actually a black

woman. So, I think that that kind of helped with managing the power differential

because it's also like, well I know that the person above you is a black woman

who will, who understands my experiences. And so, I think that that also

somewhat helps with the power breakdown and the power differential.

The third theme, *Continued Education Informs Clinical Competence,* emphasizes

the African American supervisees' perceptions that their White supervisors' clinical

competence was based on how engaged the supervisors were with continuing education

and trainings to remain relevant on best practices. However, a few participants indicated

that their supervisors were competent in a particular area but could improve their clinical

competence in other areas. Missy described how her supervisor engaging on various

current research projects enhances her clinical competence.

> We have different projects, different things that reach out to different populations. And so, we have many different ... we're a research facility alongside a clinical facility so we're constantly going back and forth. So, for her, she's on both ends of that, really a proponent of making research a part of our clinical experience, really to know what we're doing. 'Is this actually effective? Are we reaching them as we want to?' So, she's really into that.

Dream J felt that her supervisor was competence in one theoretical orientation and could be receptive to others.

> I think I respect his knowledge. I think that he has a strong foundation in cognitive behavioral therapy, and that's where he's comfortable. And so, he says that he's welcoming, open to creativity, but... You know, I get it. It has to still be in the realm of cognitive behavioral therapy and what they understand it to be and also what their culture includes. So sometimes trying to bring in things that I see relate from like black culture [he] is just like, 'Huh?' And I'm like, 'I don't have time to explain all of this, so whatever.' But I think he's really smart, and I think that I like how he shares documents from his own private practice that would help us. And also, he does give me tips on how to self-supervise. So, I think that that's pretty good.

Yung C identified his supervisor's clinically competence was evidenced through processing case conceptualizations effectively.

> I thought she was very clinically competent and I could just tell that from the first couple of supervisions we had together and how she was just helping me to understand the dynamics of clients and the population that we work with and just

letting me know like her experience and explaining that to me, just so that I can

learn from her wisdom. So, I would say I was very impressed with her clinical

competence.

Naturally Psyched also felt her supervisor was clinically competent working with adults

as evidenced by attending trainings and could improve their clinical competence working

with children and adolescents.

Hmm, you know I don't think I've ever really thought about that before… I do feel

like they are clinically competent. They've been in the business for a while, they

do all their...constantly going to trainings and different things... with adults...

Children, I feel like they may not be keeping up with the current terms in the how

and what goes on in the children and adolescent realm.

Monique shared a similar perspective that her supervisor was clinically competent in her

work with adults and less competent in her work with children.

I feel like she's good with that. She does not see clients, so she technically is

like—her role in our agency is called a program administrator, because she's

directly below the director. Like I said, she's someone who gives trainings

throughout the agency on clinical practice, things like that. So, I will say kind of

with her, and she's been with the agency I want to say for maybe about 11 or 12

years or so now. Her clinical practice when it comes to working with adults, I feel

like it's spot on. She definitely knows resources and how to—when I don't know

what to do when it comes to working with adults, she's there to help give ideas

and practice different skills. When it comes to children, because she's worked

with adults, and my background focuses more on children, that clinical skill really

isn't there. It's been a discussion and she's aware of that. Oftentimes, I'm looked

upon to answer questions when it comes to the work with children. So, I think I

bring that skillset a little bit more than she does, which has worked out.

Sometimes I do still go to her about questions when it comes to kids, but with the

understanding that she might not have the answer to this, and I might have to look

elsewhere when it comes to that level of clinical practice just because that's not

what her background has been.

Halo trusted her supervisor's clinical competence because she does a lot of clinical work.

Oh, her clinical work, it's her thing, she's more… her biggest thing is, she said it

to us is definitely her clinical work. Like that's just what she's like amazing at and

that's what I see too, if that's what she puts her heart and soul in. There are some

doctoral students who they focus more on research, some focus more on teaching.

Like it's very evident that she loves clinical work and so I would say that that's

probably where she thrived the most is being able to, is being able to help us

through our clinical work, help us do client work because that's what she loves

and what she's great at.

Anne was being supervised by a White supervisor in a different mental health profession,

which she indicated limited her clinical competence in mental health counseling.

I would say that ... so my supervisor currently, she actually has her degree in

marriage and family therapy, which is different because I'm in counselor

education program. So, for me it's a big adjustment because what they teach is

obviously different from what I'm taught in my program. So, I think her

competent levels on ... of course, the theories are the theories, but in terms of my

style, it's not ... I wouldn't say her level of competency is as high, but she's really

high in the MFT arena. But she does allow time for me to share information with

her and her to share information with me.

The last theme that emerged was *Cultural Awareness Happens When We Engage in Cultural Conversations.* Of the participants that felt their White supervisors were culturally aware, they shared that their White supervisors continuously engaged in conversations about culture. The participants that did not feel their White supervisors were culturally aware described this lack of engaging in cultural conversations or a sense their White supervisor was dismissive of diverse perspectives. Missy highlighted her supervisor's dedication to the work enhanced her cultural awareness.

When it comes to culture, again like I said, that was her baby. She developed

cultural conversations here, which I have positive and negative feelings about,

where we together once a month, as people who would like to, and talk about

those sensitive issues, racial issues, cultural issues. We have a diversity committee

and she's on that as well. I think for her, she really tries to always be learning,

always be out there with the professional development activities. So, for her, I

think her competence is ... And she's always asking. She's always asking me,

'What do you think?' 'Am I doing this right?' 'Does this come across wrong if I

said this?' 'How would that be interpreted?' So, she's really good about that. I

think for her, she's explained to me her journey where she didn't really notice it a

lot growing up or as a young adult. It wasn't something that she even, because

most white people don't really turn their eye to it if they don't have to, because it's

not a part of their lived experience. So, I understand that. But then when she

started to see the differences and see the disparities, she didn't shy away from it.

She more embraced it and tried to change herself to be able to implement the right

strategies. I think that's where a lot of people get stuck is when they feel that

dissonance, they push it away versus embracing it and working on themselves.

And I think she's done a lot of work on herself and she's, at least with me and our

supervision, I know that she really tries to learn from me, and I really appreciate

that because I think that it's important. But she never is like, 'Well I know

everything because I worked with this one black person and now, I understand

how to work with all black people.' It's more like she understands that we're all

individuals and we all have our different histories. We all have our different,

we're all on our different journeys of our racial stuff. But she's just learning,

basically.

Yung C illustrated how he perceived his White supervisor's limited awareness and

cultural competence, but that she is respectful of differences.

Here's the thing, Oh man, here's the thing. Isn't there sometimes a white person

may say something and you're like, 'man, that person is woke' or 'they

understand'. But then another minute later they'll do something that's opposite and

you're like, 'man, I guess they're not'. You know, like there's this give and take

almost. So, I would say that's a little bit with my supervisor. However, I think she

showed more awareness than not in our relationship and understanding like the

dynamics of a being a black man and what that means when I'm sitting with my

clients or even me being a black man in this organization, that in my counseling

department I was definitely the only black person that was there. But with me

being the only black, definitely the only black male in that department. I think she

understood that. I think she was aware and that's at this point I'm starting to

understand—how do you say? Not expect too much. Right? And that's as much as

I was expecting, like 'just please be aware and understand that there are some

differences between us and just to respect that'.

Halo described her White supervisor as culturally humble and being involved in

multicultural engagement enhances her cultural awareness. She also highlighted the

benefit of exposure.

I think all things, considering her being a white woman, that she has put her heart

and soul and all of her efforts into being multicultural and being culturally

competent. She also has a great sense of cultural humility too and knowing that,

especially within our supervisory relationship, that there are going to be some

things about me that she's not going to be able to understand and that she doesn't

understand and that she's not going to pretend to understand. And again, she also

does a multicultural supervision for a grant that we have on campus. So, that

increases my confidence in that her supervisor, who is the black woman, is also

very much so invested in multiculturalism and diverse beings. So, I also am very

confident that she is giving, getting great supervision and counsel, which then will

then help her to be able to supervise me.

Anne described an instance she processed with her supervisor that revealed to her, that

her White supervisor was culturally aware.

So, before the past week I would say I was unsure, but however, this past week I

did have an experience with some racism from one of my patients and I was kind

of uncomfortable if I should talk to my supervisor about it, but I did. And she

really surprised me by her responses. She's very culturally aware. She even

wanted to bring in a black counselor that I could talk to because she was aware

that me talking to her would not fulfill the feelings that I was feeling and needed

to process. So, I thought that was very respectable of her to realize that.

Monique shared a similar perspective, suggesting her supervisor continues to engage in

cultural activities and discussions to increase her cultural awareness.

She doesn't appear to know everything that there is to know when working with

me. When it comes to my cultural background, she will ask questions. Like I said,

when we were at the training, it wasn't questions that I found offensive or

anything. It really was more like, 'Hey, I'm not aware of this. Are you able to just

share your experience?' She's definitely one who is willing to learn and pick up a

book. They have like a book club or something going on at work. She will head

that up and say, 'Who wants to be a part of it?' One of the books that was about

cultural identity, things like that, was discussed in our training. So, I do appreciate

that, because not everyone will do that. On my supervisory team, all the

supervisors that she's over, I am the only black girl—black person, I should say.

Again, I think that just speaks to where I live and the agency that I work for.

Overall, we're pretty diverse, but within my department, I am the only one, which

in some areas like I'm used to, just because I went to school out here and I know

kind of what to expect, but I do appreciate overall that it's not a 'we're going to

point you out because you're different'. It's very inclusive. I know that's not

everybody's story. Honestly, as I'm talking with you about it, I'm thinking about it

more and more like, 'okay, this isn't everybody's story, but this is how my

experience has been most recently', and it really has been more so of them trying

to figure out the awareness and being able to be open to different ideas and things.

The other two participants shared their White supervisors lacked cultural

awareness and recounted examples of clients' stories that was shared in supervision.

Dream J shared her perception that culture is valued in theory but not in practice. She

described certain cultures being romanticized over other cultures.

I don't know. This school that I'm at, they value culture and stuff and diversity,

but I don't really think that—it's like theory versus practice, and... Because I will

say for example, I'll bring up things. Like one of the girls in my cohort was

talking about, 'Oh this mother is so overwhelming with her son, because she

wants to wash his hair', and it's just like, 'that's like inappropriate, because he's 12

now'. And then of course I'm asking like, 'What type of hair does he have?

Because if he's getting cornrows, yeah, mom is about to put him over the sink and

wash his hair'. And so sometimes when I bring these things up, I don't know, they

will say, 'Oh, that's a good point.' But sometimes it's like, 'Ugh'. So, I think it all

depends on the culture. Like I think there's favoritism towards certain cultures

over others, and that's just the reality of it, I guess. Like I feel like Asian cultures

and Latin cultures... Spanish-speaking cultures are more preferred or more

favorite, I think, because of the cultural... I guess distinct cultural differences, like

the language and all that type of stuff.

Naturally Psyched did not perceive her White supervisor to be culturally aware because

of their inability to conceptualize cultural aspects in a client's presenting problem.

Honestly, I don't feel like they have any to an extent. Just because it's—we had a

client come in and they were talking just about, it was a Hispanic client, and they

were pretty much just describing their problems that they have been having with

being at home and body image and things like that. What they got from their

parents and it was just like 'no'. The way she was saying, it's like 'okay, so her

parents make sad remarks about how she looks' and their response was, 'oh, you

just need to speak to your parents'. I'm like, 'this is a cultural thing. Sometimes,

you know, that's just how their relationship is. If you can't—cutting them off is

not effective in having a conversation'.

Research Question 3. How do African American supervisees' experiences and

perceptions of the supervisory relationship affect their own sense of clinical

competence?

During the interview process, specific information related to this research

question was insufficiently pursued, and this question remains fully unanswered. The

themes from research question number one relate to this research question, but the

responses provide inadequate information. There is a need to assess the African

American supervisees' perceived clinical competence based on how well they perceive

their supervisory working alliance. Substantive responses related to this research question

are not present, but a follow-up email (see Appendix F) was sent to all participants to

further investigate their perceptions.

Of the seven participants, five replied to express how they felt their perceived

competence was impacted by the supervisory relationship. Therefore, the theme

Supervisory Working Alliance Impacts Perceived Clinical Competence emerged. Dream J

stated she feels her lack of exploration in supervision impacts her ability to work with clients.

> To answer your question, I do believe my supervisory relationship has impacted my ability to work with clients not because of anything that may have been said directly but because I do feel as though my supervisor does not invest time in making sure there is enough time for me to talk about my cases and him asking me questions to allow me to critically think about my cases. Instead of just telling me what to do; I know I am in a program that will result in my making decisions and using my clinical judgement. If I do not have guided practice during practicum, I am concerned that I will have a tendency to ask for directions from others instead of being a leader. I also think it makes me overthink my sessions since they are recorded. There are times my supervisor and I have good moments. I do think there is a cultural difference that sometimes gets overlooked but overall I've been learning how to develop my own style as a therapist and I try to remind myself that I am good enough and able to approach my cases critically even if I have less time to talk or ask questions during supervision.

Yung C shared that his positive supervisory relationship improved his confidence that he was providing sound clinical care to clients.

> My supervisory relationship/experience provided me confidence in my work with my clients. I believe my supervisor was competent, which gave me certainty I was serving my clients the best way I knew how.

Anne described a specific incident with her supervisor that she felt impacted her relationship with clients.

I can think of an incident particular to where we're supposed to be in favor of—

we're supposed to be an advocate for our clients at all times, and I remember a

time where my client had to actually meet with my supervisor due to some form I

needed. And my client was not a fan of my supervisor and was actually talking

bad about him to me, calling him racist and misogynistic, all different terms. And

it really put me in a weird spot because even if I agreed in my head, I obviously

could not express that to my client. So, it just put me personally in a weird

position. Because I was trying to advocate for my client's needs, but also walking

on eggshells with my supervisor, making sure he was aware I was not saying

those things about him. So, it made the counseling process for that [articular client

very challenging for me to maneuver.

Monique echoed she felt more confident in the care she was providing due to her positive

supervisory relationship.

To answer your question, the relationship I have with my supervisor has allowed

me to have an even better relationship with clients. I feel more confident in the

work I conduct with clients on a daily basis. What has helped me to become more

confident is the ability to staff cases and learn from the experiences of my

supervisor. When I am unsure of how to work with a client, I can speak with my

supervisor for direction. Also, now that I am a supervisor myself, I've watched

myself grow in a way that when my clinicians reach out to me, I am able to

confidently answer their questions, provide resources, and help support them in

developing their own clinical competence.

Halo expressed similar sentiments that her confidence in her clinical skills was a reflection of her positive supervision experience.

> I think it impacted my ability to work with others because I learned from example that you can do great work with others who are different from yourself, even if it is difficult. There were instances where I had to eat a huge slice of humble pie and my supervisor helped me through those moments. Once the relationship and trust were established between myself and my supervisor, my clinical skills began to soar, and I became more confident in myself.

Their responses begin to shed light on the impact of the supervisory relationship on the African American supervisees' perceived clinical competence. It is evident more research needs to be conducted and further implications for the field need to be provided.

Observations

In addition to the responses related specifically to this study's research questions, during the interview process participants offered additional observations and recommendations that are relevant for counseling programs and agencies in the United States. For instance, the participants were asked if they had experienced any racism or discrimination in their cross-racial supervision with their White supervisors. Only one participant shared an aspect of racism that occurred in her supervision, and a few participants shared their experiences with processing other forms of discrimination. Anne recalled a previous supervision experience where she experienced multiple microaggressions.

> So, at my site here, I have not [experienced racism]. My previous site, I experienced a lot of microaggressions, which was surprising because I feel that he

was educated enough to know what microaggressions were and how they're not

acceptable. But at my old site, he would constantly be like, "Oh, because you're a

minority." So, I was confused why he kept doing that. He also had a lot of just

other microaggressions about the kind of music he assumed I listened to like rap

music, the type of style of talking he assumed I would speak. So, I did experience

a lot of racism in that way.

Halo denied experiencing racism or discrimination in her supervision with her White

supervisor, but she has been able to process issues of racism in supervision.

No, not at all…with this supervisor I'm able to, there's been instances of it

happening, like of course outside of the supervision, I'm always able to bring it in,

but I haven't felt any racism or discrimination or anything like that with my

supervisor.

Naturally Psyched reported she didn't experience racism, but she experienced ageism in

her supervision.

I feel if I get anything, it's more of ageism. 'Oh, you're so young', more than

anything else. It's one of those things... 'Oh I've been in the field for so long. You

wouldn't know anything about this since you're just starting'.

Even with the absence of racism and discrimination, the aforementioned aspects that

impact cross-racial supervision with White supervisors were still prevalent. Therefore,

further research is warranted to explore from these cross-racial supervisory experiences.

Although race is a salient issue, these participants did not experience racism, yet there is

still a need to focus on the racial identity. The following information provided from the

responses are recommendations.

Participants also shared how important *Personal Advocacy* is for African American supervisees that have experienced racism or discrimination during clinical supervision with a White supervisor which is the next theme that emerged. Each participant shared specific ways African Americans can advocate for themselves and find support if they are engaging in a negative cross-racial supervisory relationship. Missy shared addressing the racism or discrimination in a respectful way early on, but she also recognized how challenging it can be to have this conversation due to the evaluative aspect of the relationship. Missy shared advice she received when dealing with a previous supervision experience.

> First of all, the work itself is difficult, especially if you're working with people and you're a therapist and you're working with all these—all of that stuff works on you. And so, then you have this added issue. I would call it out in a very respectful way, but I understand that that's hard because supervisors, they have control over you. That's a tricky question because it's trying to think about it in the context of my I work. Honestly, if they could, I would try to get a different supervisor because I don't know how you can be effective as a clinician if you can't have honest and open supervision. And I would say to monitor your own mental health. And if you're talking about discrimination, I mean that's pretty blatant. So, I feel like if they're being discriminatory, then that's a—then they should take action with that one. I mean that's not—it's not like, 'Oh, I'm just interpreting the situation as: they just don't get it; they're just not culturally competent,' but if they're experiencing discrimination, I would say don't be silent about that. That's huge. I would say find allies. This is all stuff that I've been told.

So, other people of color to stand by you…I think it's necessary for us to stand

with each other, so you have that connection, you have that you're getting fed in a

different way. Yeah and just assess if that organization is really for you and assess

if that [situation] can be mended. If it's a situation where it's like, well, this person

is just ignorant and if I tell them what they're doing and they can change it, or if

it's an organization that this is the structure it's built on and nobody is acting

accordingly, jet. Sometimes it's not worth all that. And just use that as a learning

opportunity of what you don't want in your next experience. Don't suffer in

silence. Don't keep that to yourself. You can connect with other clinicians and

ask. Find other people of color and be like, 'Hey, is this your experience because

it's mine?' and really trying to understand if this is a unique experience to you or

if this is an experience that other people have also had, not that it's not racial just

because you're experiencing it alone, but just to try to get a gist of what's going

on. Really consulting and trying to get to the bottom of that and like I said, just

don't suffer in silence. Talk to somebody about it. Talk to colleagues about it that

you trust. And like I said, take action if you can. If you can't because of whatever

reason, bounce. That's what I have done in the past.

Dream J shared ways African American supervisees can pursue outside support when
engaging in a negative cross-racial supervision experience.

That is loaded... So many things just came to mind. Definitely read the manual so

that you can advocate for yourself and back it up with logic. Also, finding a

support system outside of school so that all of the weight and value and desire to

be recognized isn't placed on this human being that is just like everybody else. I

think that that's important, to have outside support. And also, don't be afraid to

speak up even though it's uncomfortable.

Yung C echoed the need to find a different supervisor if necessary while also offering

ways to advocate for yourself.

I actually had a classmate that did experience this [racism/discrimination] and

from her experience, what I realize is we tend to beat ourselves up and think

'man, maybe I shouldn't have said nothing' or 'man, maybe if I just kept my

mouth shut and just rode it out, I would not have caused any waves'. What I

would say to other black supervisees is, man, you're trying to learn and you're

trying to become a better clinician. And if you're not comfortable with the person

that's supposed to be giving you guidance, then something needs to be said.

Regardless, don't feel like it's your fault. It's the supervisor's fault that you're not

feeling comfortable because you feel like it is based off racism. So that's my only

advice would be if you feel uncomfortable, trust your gut. If you're feeling

uncomfortable and you think is due to something that's outside of your control,

like your race then you may want to get a new supervisor. And if you think you

want to prevent another person that looks like you from suffering the same thing

then you may want to report this so that this supervisor can either go through

some type of training or just gain some awareness of how they're acting.

Naturally Psyched encouraged African American supervisees to engage in the difficult

conversation and address it with the school.

If possible, I definitely would suggest having that open conversation of—you feel

discriminated against or what's your perceiving is real for you. And also having

the open conversation with your school as well. Because you shouldn't have to be

at the site that you feel like is not giving you what you need and that you're

feeling stressed out or constantly just feeling you can't speak up or you're being

demeaned. So, addressing it with the supervisor first and then addressing it with

the school shouldn't stop them.

Halo recognized the power differential could hinder an African American supervisee

when speaking up for his or herself. Yet, she offers how necessary it is to bring it to the

White supervisor's awareness.

I have an idea of, I'm thinking like, oh man, I could imagine that power

differential being difficult. I would say to address it head on. And I think that

speaks more to how I deal with confrontation is I kind of tackle it head on. But I

would say to mention it head on just because, and I always have to give the

benefit of the doubt in that they may not be understanding that that's even what

they're doing. They may be unaware, as like painful and disheartening as that it is,

they may be truly unaware to what's going on and so bringing that to their

awareness is telling them, 'like what you're saying right now, I'm really thinking

about it and it's causing X, Y, Z reaction in me' and just being open and honest

about it because again, it may not even be something that they're aware of or that

they're doing intentionally, but bringing it to the forefront, maybe help raise their

awareness. Also, now if they're like talking to them about it and discussing it with

them and bringing it to their awareness and they're still refusing to accept

responsibility from what they're saying. I would believe it is probably time to

work with a different supervisor at that point. Especially after you've already

expressed how you felt and your being ignored and minimized and devalued and
yes, probably would be time to move on.

Monique echoed that it is necessary to advocate for oneself as well as consider finding a
different supervisor, if necessary.

Having the conversation as difficult as it may be like bringing it up. I say that,
knowing that I haven't necessarily had to have that conversation, because I feel
like even if I had to have that conversation, it would be difficult, and I don't know
how I would go about doing it. So sometimes it may be that you talk it out with
someone first before going directly to that person. No one will know our thoughts,
our feelings, what's going on with us, unless we tell them. It's also possible that
someone may say something and not realize that what they've said has triggered
you in some way, and so if we don't have the conversation, or if we don't get the
guts to say, 'Hey, this affected me in this way', then they won't know, and they
might continue to do that same—have that same conversation, say racially
motivated things that are not great, to you, to me, to anyone else unless someone
has called them on it. Now if they know what they're doing and it's affecting you
and it's triggering you, and you've had that conversation and they're still not going
to change, then it is definitely time to find another supervisor.

When given the opportunity to consider how their supervisory relationship would
be different if they were paired with an African American supervisor, participants shared
unique ways they felt their experience could have been different. Overall, participants
emphasized *A Level of Comfort and Ease of Understanding Race-Related Issues*.
Although Missy expressed satisfaction in her cross-racial supervisory relationship, she

also could not fathom the opportunity to have an African American supervisor due to lack

of representation in the field. Missy recognized there could be an ease of understanding

and less pressure of offending her White supervisor or the pressure of having to relive an

experience by explaining it too often.

> I never thought about that. It's because I don't think there's much opportunity. I
>
> think of the women that I have worked with, not just here my center because
>
> unfortunately that's just not common. I'm thinking about in my program when I
>
> was really struggling with a lot of things, I ended up reaching out or being put
>
> into contact with African American women. So, there was a much different
>
> dynamic. I think with that it was really not having to ... There wasn't that pressure,
>
> I think. The pressure to worry about if they're going to misstep or there are just
>
> certain things that you know they're going to understand like, 'You know, you
>
> know,' kind of an interaction. To explain it so much to where you're dredging up
>
> the emotion and hoping that they understand that. And also, there's not the fear of
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> are they going to think I'm talking about them? I'm not talking about you. I'm
>
> talking about a people or I'm talking about this situation or this particular person.
>
> My interaction, whether it be with a principal or a teacher of a kid that I'm
>
> working with has made some nasty comments of my African American client,
>
> things that. I don't want them to think, I think all of you are that, because that's not
>
> the case. So, I think it would be different in the sense that there wouldn't be the
>
> pressure of offending them and also the pressure of having to relive the
>
> experience by explaining it so much.

Dream J echoed she would feel less pressure and an ease of understanding in a same-race supervision experience. She also felt due to the similar background the supervisory relationship would be more supportive.

> I would like to believe so. Everybody has their different philosophies, but I would like to believe so. I think that more time would be spent based—and this is me like I guess mentalizing it too, but like the representation, I guess would help in both ways, in the sense that the supervisor, if they were African American, would think, 'Oh, I've been there, so I want to support you more'. That's what I would like to believe, that more time would be spent or invested in my growth. And also, I think that there would be—I wouldn't feel as much pressure to articulate myself perfectly. Like I feel like I'm always trying to censor my African American Vernacular English at times. When I'm overwhelmed, sometimes I can't find the right words to articulate. And sometimes I just want to express myself, but I don't, because I think that they're going to judge me for being incompetent or illiterate even though I'm in grad school.

Yung C expressed he would feel less restricted when discussing race related issues but felt his overall experience would've been the same, given his needs were being met in his cross-racial supervision.

> My initial answer was going to say no. But then the reason why I went back and forth is maybe I would have felt comfortable saying certain things if my supervisor was Black. But that does not mean that they were more appropriate or more necessary. The essential things that I was getting out of supervision, I do think they would have been the same regardless of the race of my supervisor. So,

there were times where some of my other clients who were not Black, maybe I

would have talked to a Black supervisor in a, I guess, less restricted way about

some of the cultural barriers that we were going through, knowing that they may

understand where I'm coming from rather than me having to over explain the

things that I'm saying and that I'm not trying to be offensive, but just saying, 'Hey

these are some of the roadblocks I think I'm encountering and I think it may be

based on race'. But for the most part I would say in this instance, no, I don't think

that if I had a Black supervisor or Non-White supervisor that my experience

would have been different.

Naturally Psyched echoed similar beliefs that there could have been an ease of

understanding race-related issues but based on her present site she didn't think it would

have been different.

Yes and no... So, for what the site is, I don't feel like it would be different on that

aspect, but just more of understanding me as a clinician, me coming from a PWI

and wanting to, the fact that I do engage and you know being in—well, I'm in

[South Atlantic location] so there's certain things that are coming up that I've—

how do I not self-disclose but still make them feel comfortable and so relatable in

the sense, and build that rapport without having to self-disclose. I think that would

definitely be talked about and breached if I was dealing with another African

American clinician.

Halo acknowledged she would feel less of a need for perfectionism and would feel more

comfortable in the same-race supervisory relationship.

Oh definitely, yes and like it's funny that you mentioned that because I actually went to an interview today, LPC intern position and a supervisor was a Black male and like it was just very different. Even just the interview process was a different experience, but I think it would be a lot different. So, it took me probably about three months before I finally started becoming vulnerable in a session. I had a very big guard up and I had to process that with her too. But there was always fear that if I appear that I'm messing up then—or that I'm not perfect—then I would be looked down on. And not necessarily just by her, but just in general. Because there's times when it just feels like especially as a Black woman, you have to work 10 times harder to get half of what White people get. And so that's what was coming up a lot was I did not want to be vulnerable in session. I did not want to show my worst sessions of the week for fear that I would be judged and ridiculed and told that I wasn't good enough. Or even if I wasn't told to my face, that's kind of what would've been insinuated. I've always felt the need to have to cross every T and dot every I and I believe that if I had a Black supervisor, I wouldn't have felt the need to be, I wouldn't have felt the need for perfectionism so strongly. And I believe that I would also been able to talk about race a little bit more and possibly to be a little bit more candid in supervision also.

Anne indicated she would feel the connection would be established quicker with an African American supervisor but that she is just assuming because they share the same race.

> For me, I'm not sure because sometimes I think that if I had a Black supervisor, it
> would have probably just ... the connection would have jumped off faster.
> However, that's me just assuming because we're the same race that we would
> automatically get along. So, I'm actually not sure like how the circumstance
> would be if I did have a Black supervisor.

Monique recognized on some level the experiences and conversations would be different
and the connection would be easier.

> I think on some level, yes. How that would look, I don't really know. Yeah, I feel
> like it would, but I'm not sure kind of... I think experiences would be different,
> conversations might be different, like I said, depending on... Within my
> department, it's not like we're going around talking about what's going on in the
> country, things like that. I have a pretty diverse team that I supervise, and I've
> worked in other departments in the past where that was definitely the topic of
> conversation for the day. So, I do feel like, because there are other supervisors
> within the agency, either Black or other ethnicities, so, yeah, I do feel like that
> would be different. I say that because I recently had a conversation with one of
> our directors who's Black in our agency, and we were talking about what's been
> going on; we were talking about our training that we went through and how
> normally I hadn't had experiences with others within the department, like this
> other Black director, but we were able to have a connection in that moment at that
> training when normally we wouldn't ever see each other because our agency is so
> big. So, yeah, I would say I would expect it to be that relationship, that
> supervision piece, to be different, but I haven't yet experienced that for myself.

Based on their experiences, it is interesting that none of the participants had experienced a same-race supervisory relationship. The participants could not really fathom what that relationship would look like. Although the African American supervisees have not identified they would rather have a same-race supervisor, it is evident that problematic behaviors continue to happen and need to be addressed. Based on their experiences, the participants were also asked to consider how their cross-racial supervision experience could be different. Each participant shared the theme of *More Individualized Needs* which highlighted each participants' particular need they may not have felt was met during this cross-racial supervision. Missy identified she wanted to continue to work on being able to have difficult conversations with her supervisor, but she recognized this is a personal goal for herself and not necessarily reflective of her supervisor or the cross-racial supervision.

> I think right now it's ... I think that's more on me, I think to just continue for
> myself to grow separately as well so that I can continue to just say the hard things
> and not worry about how it falls. So, I think maybe that's what I would change or
> work on, but that's more on me than it is on ... Or maybe just having a
> conversation with her about that would be maybe cool to revisit that I think
> because it comes back around every now and then, especially when things
> become more—new things come up and new issues arise. Not particularly with
> her, but with other things, whether it be in our center or just in society as a whole.

Dream J would have wanted her cross-racial supervision to be more supportive, more structured, and more consistent. She shared experiences she had been having that contribute to why she would want it to be different.

It's interesting. So, I think that that's what would be cool, more individualized, more feeling like I am being treated as an individual and that they actually care about my progress, so... And figuring out the best ways to support me through that. Like you see my strengths, you see my weaknesses, and I want to help you with that. I think that that would be helpful. Maybe even more structure, and also just more structure in the sense that it's like, y'all know what this program entails. You know what's coming up next. I should be super-duper ready for clinical placement by January. And what I'm concerned is that, I feel that maybe these things are happening, but I'm not included in those conversations somehow. I don't understand how everybody else feels so comfortable doing these things. And I'm like, 'I was at every single class. When did this happen?' So, I think that some type of consistency would be helpful and focus on our actual development as clinicians and not just like, 'Well, the client first, the client first.' Like I remember...I was sick, and I know I need to get these hours, and they keep telling me like, 'Don't worry about your hours, but you need to get these hours, but don't worry about your hours, but you need these hours'. So, I'm like, 'Okay, well I'm going to stick it out, thug it out and get this session done', and I had stomach virus type symptoms. I don't even know where they came from, but I handled it. And they were like, 'Well, were you thinking about your client in this?' And I'm like, 'You're not about to ask me how I'm feeling?' So, it's very strange, just very strange.

Yung C disclosed he would not have wanted his cross-racial supervision experience to be different. He shared he had a good experience with his White supervisor, and

acknowledged his male status affords him a different privilege that he feels was

accounted for in his supervision.

> I don't think I would want it to be different. I think I was really blessed with, you
>
> know, but I understand, I also know that my supervision experience is different
>
> because I'm a Black male. If that makes sense. I think if maybe I was a Black
>
> female it could have been different. But as a Black male, I do understand that
>
> privilege that I do hold, too. So, but I think I wouldn't change my experience.

Naturally Psyched would have wanted her supervision to focus more on practicing

clinical skills and establishing a more trusting and comfortable supervisory relationship.

> I think I would like to get past all of the logistic side of it and more focused on
>
> gaining clinical skills, more focused on maybe in practicing clinical skills. I
>
> would like to be able to... I would like that trust...to be able to self-disclose and
>
> things like that and feel comfortable.

Halo compared her current supervision experience to a previous experience where she

had more individualized time in supervision and expressed she would want her supervisor

to share a similar theoretical orientation.

> One thing that I would like to be different is that my supervisor come from the
>
> same theoretical orientation that I come from just because when conceptualizing
>
> clients and talking through clients, I believe that it's very helpful for somebody
>
> else to have a similar, not that it's important, but for me at least it will be helpful
>
> for them to have a similar theoretical orientation. So that would probably be one
>
> of the main things I would change. Another is being able to have individual
>
> supervision. So during the summer we had more time to do just one-on-one

supervision, and then this semester we've been doing, the fall semester, we've

been doing triadic and I noticed that whenever I do get to do one-on-one

supervisions, I really miss it and I miss the opportunity to be able to just have to

be able to just talk straight about what I'm going through and not have to kind of

be mindful and split my time.

Anne echoed she would not have wanted her present cross-racial supervision experience

to be different, but she recalled with her Gay, White supervisor she did not want to

experience the microaggressive comments he would say and compare their struggles.

Well, I would say, thinking about the present, how I'm supervised, I really enjoy

the process of how it's going. One thing I might change is just the frequent times I

have supervision, though I understand once I'm actually counseling, I'm not able

to meet with the supervisor every single day, but I do feel that since I'm still in the

learning process and in school, it would just be more beneficial to meet more than

once a week for an hour. [In my previous experience] probably the lack of micro-

aggressive comments. Just the lack of comparing struggles like my race to your

sexual orientation. I think just the lack of certain comments. If that would have

been removed, I think I would have enjoyed the aspect of the supervision.

Monique expressed she wanted to engage in more cultural discussions in her cross-racial

supervision.

I think, even speaking culturally and what that looks like, maybe having more

discussions around that. Because, like I said, the question came about in our

training after we had talked about cultural competency and what that looks like.

Prior to that, there had been minimal conversations in our larger management

group, and that was more so about counselors coming in, and it wasn't toward

Black counselors or anything like that, but counselors coming in with their nails,

with all kinds of colors, the hair, all kinds of ways, things like that, in a

professional environment. I was able to say, 'yeah, my mom is a hairstylist, and

she has been for so many years, and every couple of months my hair is going to

change. That's a part of my identity.' What are we saying to our counselors if

we're saying you have to be this cookie cutter-type person? They weren't

necessarily saying that, but there was conversation about what's appropriate and

what's not in the workplace. That was in the larger group. When it comes to more

intimate conversation directly with my supervisor, there hasn't really been much

of that within the supervisory sessions. So, I think if I could change something,

that probably would be it, to have more of those discussions. Because like I said,

even my team is diverse, so it would be nice to have that conversation of what

experiences are and are not.

An emphasis on cultural discussions in cross-racial supervision was a shared

sentiment with all the participants. When asked how they might address issues of cultural

differences in clinical supervision, the participants expressed specific ways, if and when

they become supervisors, how they would *Engage in Cultural Conversations Early in the*

Relationship which was the final theme that emerged from the data. Missy felt disclosing

about her own process would be beneficial for the supervisee and creating a safe space to

engage in cultural conversations.

I feel I would let them know that—I think I would maybe disclose my own

process of where I've come from and where my mindset is. Just let them know

and that I understand that is difficult. But letting them know that it is a safe place

to talk about those things and if that's all we talk about, then that's all we talk

about kind of thing. I think it's huge, if not the most important issue. So, I would

address it and let them know that I think it's a big thing and I don't want them to

shy away from having those conversations with me. I don't know, just continue to

be an example, I guess. Be mindful of how I'm coming across and to make sure

I'm living what I'm giving.

Dream J shared she would provide more individualized attention to the supervisee

regarding engaging in cultural discussions and finding the best way to support the

supervisee.

I think, I guess, of course educating myself, but also always asking the individual,

like checking in on them and their experience as it relates to culture. I think that

that's what is important, because it would be horrible for me to just assume I

know everything about every culture and the degree to which the person identifies

with their culture. But I do think that I would gauge the situation... At least with

like say the clinical knowledge that I have so far, I know that there's tools that

help that, like Socratic questioning, and not in the sense of Socratic questioning to

the point that now I'm putting you up against the wall, but just more so figuring

out the best ways to support that person. Doing individual check-ins without

everybody else in the room, just because I think that sometimes when it's a setting

like that, everybody just wants to put on and present their best selves, and it's not

always that. So, I think that that... I would like for that, because I know that's what

I would like to feel supported and really feel like, okay, don't just give me points

in the margin of my document and then be like, 'Just do better'. 'Can we follow

up and have a discussion on the comments you made? Because I'm ruminating on,

maybe is it my sentence structure? I need some more guidance'. So, I think that

that would be helpful.

Yung C shared a previous cross-racial supervision experience that demonstrated to him

how to build rapport to cultivate the cultural conversations with supervisees.

When I was in counseling my first year in my grad program, my counselor was a

White female and during our first session, she brought up how we were different.

How she was a White woman and I was a Black male. And maybe sometimes she

may not understand some of the cultural things that I'm going through, but

basically, she just broached it right off the bat. And I appreciate that because I'm

like, 'okay, well you're aware' and I wanted to do the same thing with my clients.

But then I see different experiences. I realized how that could also be taken the

wrong way. Like, 'okay, you're only seeing me as my race right now', you know?

So as a supervisor, I don't think I would initially draw awareness to it, but I do

think it's important for me to always take the opportunity when the chance is

given to discuss race or discuss cultural differences so that my supervisees can

understand that I'm aware of just a different culture or differences that we may

have. And to just cultivate a comfortable environment for both of us. So basically,

I wouldn't try to shy away from any differences. Take the opportunity when they

arise to, to talk about.

Naturally Psyched indicated having cultural conversations at the beginning and

continuously checking in with supervisee is imperative.

> I think just being transparent in an upfront setting of just... being aware of your
>
> own biases and getting that kind of talks about within the first supervision and
>
> then having check ins on 'okay, this is what possible nuances could be involved
>
> with you seeing certain clients' and things like that.

Halo shared similarities in how she broaches with clients she could utilize this skill with supervisees, as well.

> I think I would approach it as similarly to how I do with my clients now, so I
>
> broach race very early on in the relationship and so that's something that I believe
>
> I do even with my clients who do identify as Black. I still broach race early on
>
> just because the experiences are different. Even though we are two Black people,
>
> we see the world and experience the world very differently and so I think that
>
> going into it and supervising in the future, that's something that I would want to
>
> continue doing is broaching race early on and then bringing up race and diversity,
>
> multicultural concerns, bringing it up in every like there's no matter what you're
>
> talking about, what you discussing, and with clients, there is always some
>
> component in there that deals with multicultural diversity concerns, marginalized
>
> populations, minority groups, underserved groups. I feel like no matter who
>
> you're working with, what client you're working with, there's always going to be
>
> something in there that you can tie back to cultural competency. So, that's
>
> something that I would want to do in each session is that thinking like, 'you know
>
> from your racial background, how are you viewing this client from your racial
>
> background?', 'how is your racial background, your ethnic background, your
>
> cultural background impacting your work with this client?', whether that's

positive or negative and then allowing space for it to be negative 'cause there's—

'cause it is not going to always be great. There are going to be times when the

cultures clash and I've had that happen to me before and so just being able to

work through that, manage that, manage the cultural difference and help me and

help my supervisees do that.

Anne echoed engaging in cultural discussion at the beginning of the supervisory

relationship would be beneficial.

For me, I feel like just if I was a supervisor, I would just ask my supervisees

different cultural questions, or just where they stand on the spectrum and what

they're looking for. Because I noticed with me, no one really took the time to ask

my cultural views or if I identify as Black or African American. And I just feel

like that's important for supervisees, just to first establish, 'what do you identify

as?' and then talk about moral views and stuff like that would just be helpful to

kind of be on the same page so you're not stepping on toes without knowing.

Monique shared what she does with her clinicians, and how she has had the cultural

conversations with her supervisees as concerns come up in the supervisory relationship.

More so just having the conversation. Sometimes it's usually as things come up,

not necessarily like being proactive and doing it ahead of time. Sometimes that

does happen, but usually it's more so about as concerns come up within the

counseling relationship. I've had counselors where there will be concerns about,

so say for instance, we might have a teenager who comes in who is transgender,

goes by a different name, all of that, and the counselor is struggling with, 'well

this is the name that we have in their file, but they want to be called this name.

What do I do? I think I'm just going to call them by the name that's in their file'.

Then we have the conversation of 'how is that being respectful of client choice

and their overall wellbeing and mental health?' Having a conversation of, 'you

may not agree, we may not agree about lifestyle choice or anything like that when

it comes to our clients, but we're really here to support them, to help them through

their mental health journey'. If that means that we have to put aside our own

personal beliefs in order to work with this client, especially in community mental

health, because oftentimes in community mental health, you're not really going to

have a choice about the clients that come in. That's just going to have to be

something that we do. If it seems like it's more of a struggle, then we can talk

about whether or not it's more beneficial to transfer that client to someone else. I

want to say for the most part, after having conversations like that, my counselors

have been able to put aside their beliefs and still be able to work with the client.

That's not telling anyone to dismiss what they believe in, because I wouldn't

dismiss what I believe in, but I do know that this is a person and I may not agree

with their lifestyle, but I'm here to do a job and to be authentic to the client,

authentic to myself. Sometimes that'll mean putting my stuff to the side while I

work with this person.

The participants highlighted areas of importance to them in their cross-racial

supervisory relationships and addressed certain concerns that should be addressed in the

counseling field. Several of the ideas shared by the participants are valued in our

profession, but implementation clearly varies across departments and programs.

Therefore, in order to best support African American supervisees in training programs

and to increase representation in the profession, many lessons can be gleaned from these African American participants' experiences.

Chapter Summary

This chapter discussed the lived experiences of seven African American supervisees in cross-racial supervision. The following research questions drove this study: (1) How do African American counseling supervisees experience their supervisory relationships with White supervisors? (2) What are the African American counseling supervisees' experiences with specific dynamics such as supervisors' use of power, the establishment of trust, clinical competence, and general cultural competence or incompetence, including racism and discrimination, in supervision? And (3) How do African American supervisees' experiences and perceptions of the supervisory relationship affect their own sense of clinical competence?

The responses from the participant interviews provided data that was collected and analyzed which emerged into several themes. The researcher was able to synthesize all the responses into twelve themes to address each research question. The first theme was the important aspects of clinical supervision. The second theme was meeting the supervisees' needs. The third was support, relatability, and nurture. The fourth was trust builds over time. The fifth theme encompassed the complexities of power in supervision. The sixth theme was continued education informs clinical competence. The seventh theme was cultural awareness happens when we engage in cultural conversations. The eighth was the supervisory working alliance impacts perceived clinical competence. The ninth was personal advocacy. The tenth was a level of comfort and ease of understanding

race-related issues. The eleventh theme was more individualized needs. The final theme was to engage in cultural conversations early in the relationship.

The participants' honest and detailed account of their lived experiences highlighted important concerns for cross-racial supervisory relationships. In the next chapter, the researcher provides more discussion on the concepts and themes that emerged from the data collected in this study. The researcher describes findings from the study that relate to the literature as well as future implications and recommendations for insight about the lived experiences shared by the participants in this study.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION

This study sought to address the aspects of cross-racial supervision that impact how African American supervisees experience their supervisory relationships, by specifically focusing on understanding the essence of cross-racial supervision. Experiences from seven participants were examined to assess how African American counseling supervisees experience their supervisory relationships with White supervisors; to highlight what the African American counseling supervisees' experiences were with specific dynamics such as the supervisors' use of power, the establishment of trust, clinical competence, and general cultural competence or incompetence, including racism and discrimination, in supervision; and to assess how African American supervisees' experiences and perceptions of the supervisory relationship affect their own sense of clinical competence. This chapter builds on the findings and results presented in the previous chapter by briefly recapping the findings and discussing the implications in alignment with relevant research. From the findings, limitations of the study are reviewed, and recommendations are offered.

Implications of the Findings

The findings of this study captured information through the lens of the African American supervisee. These unique narratives introduce new perspectives to the field of counseling, counselor education, and supervision. Several of the major themes that emerged in this research are consistent with the previous research literature on cross-racial and multicultural supervision, and the stories shared by the participants closely resemble many concerns addressed in the literature review. Analysis of the collected

qualitative data revealed that the African American supervisees' experiences in their cross-racial supervision were generally positive, yet the supervisees expressed specific needs that were not being addressed. The complexity of these needs warrants a vital discussion of how to improve cross-racial supervision for African American supervisees.

Overall, five of the participants shared perceptions of their positive supervision experience with their White supervisor. Several of the participants who expressed satisfaction with their cross-racial supervisory relationship noted their supervisors addressed aspects of cultural difference and important concerns for the supervision experience throughout the supervision experience. This responsiveness supports the notion that when supervisors are willing to acknowledge the existence of, show interest in, and be sensitive to cultural differences that exist for the students and the clients, students report a positive relationship, as reported in Burkhard et al. (2006) findings. For the two participants who identified aspects of their cross-racial supervision that were less than desirable, they reported their White supervisor may have been unresponsive to aspects of establishing trust, power dynamics, and cultural awareness. These occurrences in the participants' supervisions align with previous research that highlights a supervisor's lack of awareness of power, privilege, diversity issues, and multiple identities operating within the supervisory dyad and within the trainee-client dyad as having a deleterious effect on supervision (e.g., Constantine & Sue, 2007; Falender et al., 2014a; Falender et al., 2014b).

A few of the Black women, Dream J, Anne, and Halo shared that they were often second-guessing how they were perceived in supervision by their White supervisor or White counterparts and continuously checked how they articulated themselves and

interacted with them. Dream J shared she feared if she advocated for herself or clients, that she would be perceived as "angry or aggressive." These perspectives provide insight into the daily challenges for Black women. Hall (2018) examined transference enactments in cross-cultural supervision involving Black, female supervisors, and White supervisees. Although this is another dimension of cross-racial supervision, the findings supported the various and sometimes negative representations of African American women (e.g., aggressive, immoral, loud, angry, promiscuous) (Harris-Perry, 2011) and how transference enactments play out in cross-cultural supervision (Hall, 2018). The data in Hall's study revealed four major themes, with subcategories that highlighted stereotypical transference enactments. The findings indicated that participants experienced some traditional and negative stereotypes of African American women. The participants in Hall's (2018) study highlighted communication and/or behavior they believed was grounded in sexist and racist biases, as well as the fact that they thought that their encounters with the White supervisees were unlike those experienced by White supervisors who supervised White and/or non-White supervisees. The findings underscore the need to initiate multicultural awareness, knowledge, and skills to enhance clinical skills (Hall, 2018).

A supervisor's failure to recognize specific aspects of counseling supervision has likely played a significant role in creating dissatisfaction and mistrust in African American supervisees engaging in cross-racial supervision. In many cases, supervisors have failed to address imperative aspects of the supervisory working alliance, including: the establishment of trust, acknowledgment of power dynamics, cultural awareness, and demonstration of well-rounded clinical competence. This sense of dissatisfaction and

mistrust can then hinder the counselor's work with clients from differing perspectives. Similarly, this subpar supervision experience continues to perpetuate the production of supervisors who are inexperienced in engaging in cultural discussions and who need training that highlights feminist multicultural supervision practices and how that perspective influences the supervisory working alliance. Porter and Vasquez (1997) defined feminist multicultural supervision as collaborative, mutual, and reflective with attention to contextual and sociocultural processes. This particular supervision model includes a focus on boundaries, hierarchies, gender, race, and diversity of all kinds.

Arczynski and Morrow (2017) accentuated that conceptual feminist multicultural supervision models emphasized developing supervisor contexts that enable trainees to feel safe to grapple with uncomfortable topics related to privilege, power, and oppression and model equity and respect. Given the focus of this approach to supervision and the alignment with the professional competencies, feminism and multiculturalism should be more than just add-ons but integrated into supervision coursework and counseling training programs. Several participants shared how they desired their supervisor was understanding of their worldviews and cultural differences, as well as, supervised from a similar theoretical lens. Arczynski and Morrow (2017) emphasize that including feminist and multicultural approaches in supervision may be particularly appealing to trainees with marginalized identities and experiences, worldviews, and preferences that align with qualities distinct to feminist multicultural supervision frameworks.

Of those participants that shared the desire to have trust established in their cross-racial supervisory relationships, Arczynski and Morrow (2017) also supported the importance of establishing trust and highlighted how to create trust through openness and

honesty. The authors outline three ways to ameliorate supervisees' fear of the unknown

and to model transparency for supervisees to apply to their clinical work. First, lay things

out on the table, by being forthcoming about the influences of their power, histories, and

identities early in the supervisory relationship. Second, supervisors should talk about

expectations with the supervisee. Lastly, the supervisor should demonstrate vulnerability

and forthrightness toward supervisory relationships by openly sharing their thoughts,

reactions, and struggles with their supervisees (Arczynski & Morrow, 2017).

Several studies from previous research (e.g., Chang et al., 2004; Haskins et al.,

2013; Hird et al., 2004; Jones et al., 2019; King & Jones, 2019) emphasize the

importance of cultural conversations, which aligns with the suggestions provided by the

participants in this study. Chang et al. (2004) suggested engaging the supervisee in a

dialogue regarding racial issues in a safe and supportive environment can allow the

supervisor to address the racial identity status of the supervisee based on comments the

supervisee makes during those discussions. The following recommendations from

participants were to broach aspects of race, ethnicity, and culture in supervision at the

onset and continuously as opportunities present themselves; have supervisors engage in

respectful cultural conversations by exuding a culturally humble stance; and engage in

training to improve their cultural awareness. By practicing these strategies, a supervisor

can create a safe, open, and trusting supervisory relationship. The following section

provides practical application of the aforementioned suggestions for supervisors that are

grounded in research.

Broaching

Day-Vines et al. (2007) coined the term broaching to refer to the counselor's deliberate and intentional efforts to discuss those racial, ethnic, and cultural concerns that may impact the client's presenting concerns. In addition to initiating or responding to racial, ethnic, and cultural stimuli that emerge during treatment, counselors who engage in effective broaching behavior translate their understanding of the client's sociocultural and sociopolitical realities into meaningful counseling practice. This practice facilitates improved decision-making, stimulates more effective coping mechanisms, alleviates psychological distress, promotes client empowerment, enhances problem-solving, and fosters resilience (Day-Vines et al., 2018).

A counselor who broaches cultural identities is demonstrating behavior and utilizing a strategy that supports multicultural counseling. Yung C and Halo explicitly noted the importance of broaching, and several other participants identified qualities that align with broaching that impacted their supervisory working alliance. Broaching in the counseling relationship has been linked with many positive outcomes, such as enhancing counselor credibility, increasing client satisfaction in the counseling relationship, deepening client disclosure in sessions, and increasing clients' willingness to return for future sessions. Day-Vines et al. (2018) introduced the Multidimensional Model of Broaching Behavior (MMBB), a conceptual tool for considering specific broaching contexts, which aligns with the Multicultural and Social Justice Counseling Competencies (MSJCC; Ratts et al., 2015) provides a foundation for implementing broaching in the counseling relationship. The MMBB includes humanistic skills that allow counselors to broach clients' racial, ethnic, and cultural (REC) concerns across

these four dimensions: intracounseling, intraindividual, intra-REC, and inter-REC to develop strong therapeutic alliances and alleviate distress.

Day-Vines et al. (2018) study focused on improving clients' daily functioning and satisfaction with counseling. This same strategy can be applied to the supervisory relationship, as the supervisor can utilize broaching to acknowledge cultural factors between the supervisee and supervisor, examine the impact of culture in the counseling relationship, and determine how cultural discussions can be a source of growth throughout supervision (Jones et al., 2019). Sample prompts to initiate broaching at the beginning and throughout the supervisory relationship were provided by Jones et al. (2019). Broaching invites the supervisee to share, which allows the supervisor to "validate and affirm" the supervisee's "sociocultural and sociopolitical realities" (Day-Vines & Holcomb-McCoy, 2013, p. 153). Jones et al. (2019) emphasize that even supervisors who do not consider themselves to be multicultural experts can use broaching to deepen and enhance intercultural supervisory relationships. Broaching aids in creating a stronger supervisory relationship that allows for open, genuine intercultural dialogue, and it aids in meeting the ethical duty of supervisors to address diversity and multiculturalism in the supervisory relationship (Borders et al., 2011; Borders et al., 2014; Jones et al., 2019; King & Borders, 2018; King & Jones, 2019). Lastly, King and Jones (2019) assert broaching within supervision can also facilitate supervisor and supervisee development in culturally responsive and open communication, as well as improve attention to culture and model the use of broaching interventions for the supervisee's counseling work.

Cultural Humility

Cultural humility is defined as the "ability to maintain an interpersonal stance that is other-oriented (or open to the other) in relation to aspects of cultural identity that are most important to the client [or supervisee]" (Hook et al., 2013, p. 354). Missy and Halo specifically identified cultural humility as important aspects in their cross-supervisory relationship. In addition, based on this definition, several other participants shared sentiments that their supervisor engaged with them from a culturally humble stance. Hook et al. (2016) propose that for supervisors to be effective and to build strong relationships with culturally diverse supervisees, supervisors must (a) overcome the tendency to view their beliefs, values, and worldview as superior, and be open to the beliefs, values, and worldview of their supervisees, and (b) strive to cultivate an awareness that they are limited in their knowledge and understanding of supervisees' cultural backgrounds and develop the motivation to attune themselves to their supervisees to understand the impact of cultural background and experience. Some of the supervisors described in this study did exhibit aspects of these behaviors.

Supervisors can communicate cultural humility in supervision by being honest about their continuing journey toward cultural humility and admitting personal limitations when not understanding certain issues that arise (Hook et al., 2016). Openness, honesty, and transparency would be the catchphrases that ideally permeate every aspect of the supervisor's behavior operating from a culturally humble stance. The supervisor's humility is also a critical variable in making rupture repair increasingly likely in the supervisory alliance. Watkins et al. (2016) support the notion that openness, honesty, and transparency are the most important aspects in repairing any ruptures. The

authors posit that being other-oriented, humble supervisors preeminently prize the

supervision relationship and remain forever attuned to and privilege supervisees'

experience of that relationship. Watkins et al. (2016) emphasize that openness, accurate

self-assessment, recognizing one's own limitations and mistakes, and being other-

oriented have vast implications for supervision and how that specifically relates to

alliance rupture repair.

Patallo (2019) explored the application and implications of the APA multicultural

guidelines, in particular the concept of cultural humility concerning specific supervisory

interactions and training standards dealing with race, culture, and identity from a

supervisee's perspective. Patallo (2019) provided specific suggestions for implementing a

cultural humility perspective into clinical supervision and practice. The four suggested

examples of an approach integrating cultural humility were: (a) ask "are there any aspects

of your personal identity or cultural background that might be important for me to know

about?"; (b) provide a humble self-assessment of one's familiarity with the identities

mentioned and ask if supervisees would tell the supervisor more about what those

identities mean to them; (c) acknowledge any discomfort and thank supervisees for

helping the supervisor to understand their personal experience; and (d) ask the

supervisees to please make the supervisor aware if they ever make any inappropriate

statements or assumptions about the supervisee's experience or identity (Patallo, 2019).

Whether a supervisee identifies any relevant identities/experiences or not, a culturally

humble attitude sets a frame of appreciation and respect toward those sensitive topics,

providing the supervisee with an individualized supervision experience.

Although humility may foster supervision best practices in countless ways (e.g., by opposing harmful supervision), Watkins et al. (2019) describe humility as being particularly valuable with regard to the following: (a) enhancing supervisor multicultural competence; (b) fortifying the supervisory relationship; (c) rendering receptivity to supervisee feedback more likely; and (d) fostering engagement in peer consultation. The supervisor's willingness to discuss cultural and diversity issues in supervision, as well as, operating from a culturally humble framework has been associated with a stronger supervisory alliance.

Cultural Training

Several participants hypothesized if their supervisors could attend more training it would enhance their cultural awareness, clinical supervision, and essentially improve the supervisory working alliance. A challenge is that many supervisors have received minimal education, training, and supervision in the provision of supervision, and there is high variability among the training offered to those advancing towards professional practice (Falender & Shafranske, 2014). The research asserts there is a lack of training and supervision in supervision, even though it is required, and oftentimes mandated, for other clinical competencies (Falender et al., 2014). The authors provided a tool for a supervisor self-assessment based on competency-based supervision that supervisors may utilize to determine what areas of competency-based supervision they practice and those in development. The supervisor could assess their competence in practice in the following components: supervisory alliance/relationship competencies, multicultural/diversity competencies, legal/ethical competencies, evaluation and feedback, and whether the feedback is provided. This reflective practice that emerges

from the self-assessment on the competency benchmarks can inform the supervisor on

which areas they may need to participate in training.

While training may not be readily available for supervisors, there are ways to

improve the supervision provided to diverse supervisees and hence to enhance the overall

the supervisory relationship. Upshaw et al. (2019) suggested in addition to training or

seminars, supervisors could also engage in experiential learning or immersion into

cultures other than their own which could also facilitate growth and understanding.

However, Reiser and Milne (2017) acknowledge "clinical supervision systems often lack

the essential checks and balances that might be provided by objective oversight,

standardized training, and quality assurance processes" (p. 105). The African American

participants in this study shared suggestions for other supervisees who experience racism

or discrimination in supervision to advocate for themselves and to assess if they need to

get a different supervisor or placement site. Reiser and Milne (2017) supported these

recommendations and asserted that training programs and agency administrators are

urged to take the supervisees' reports seriously, seek confirming and disconfirming

evidence of the supervisor's unethical and harmful behavior, investigate the situation

systemically, and, as necessary, take appropriate action to remedy the situation.

McNamara et al. (2017) supported this recommendation and suggested training

programs and agencies consider developing their own policies and procedures to address

issues between supervisors and supervisees in such a way that supervisees are not

expected to navigate any issues alone. Training programs and agencies are also urged to

empower supervisees and provide them with options, such as being reassigned,

supervisors being removed from their supervisory role, and, if necessary, formal

complaints can be filed, if the harmful situation isn't resolved quickly.

      Therefore, McNamara et al. (2017) provided practical recommendations to

minimize the occurrence of harmful supervision. The authors suggested utilizing session-

by-session rating measures of the therapy or supervision, collected by someone beyond

the clinical supervisor (e.g., program or agency training director) could provide some

oversight. This feedback from supervisees about their experiences with their supervisors

and training sites could help ensure that supervision and training practices are

appropriate. The authors also strongly endorsed that clinical supervisors should be

explicitly educated about minimally adequate, inadequate, and harmful supervisory

practices (e.g., Ellis et al., 2014), especially in the context of a competency-based

approach to clinical supervision. McNamara et al. (2017) suggest supervisor training

includes practice in implementing strategies to avoid and minimize the potential for

harmful supervision.

Suggestions for Cross-Racial Supervision

      The following suggestions are based on participants' responses of what they

perceived to be important in improving their cross-racial supervision experience.

Counselor educators and supervisors may use the Multicultural and Social Justice

Counseling Competencies (MSJCC) as a framework for providing multicultural and

social justice competent counselor training and supervision, with a heightened focus on

supervision practice that encourages counselors-in-training to establish a safe, supportive

and affirming counseling relationship with culturally diverse clients and communities.

(Ratts et al., 2015). Enlow et al. (2019) recognized the importance of the supervisory

working alliance due to the influential nature the alliance can have on the supervision process and the supervisee's growth. The authors provided practical recommendations for supervisors and supervisees to prevent problems in their working alliance and maintain good practices. Some of the practical guidelines provided by Enlow et al. (2019) was to utilize an "ask vs. tell" approach to strengthen the SWA, to address contextual factors that affect trainee performance, and collaborate with the trainee to improve areas of weakness.

Nilsson and Duan's (2007) research further supported previous research (Nilsson & Anderson, 2004) examining the relationship between the levels of acculturation, their perceptions of the supervisory working alliance, and the counselor's self-efficacy. Nilsson and Duan's (2007) findings emphasized that when supervisees feel more certain about supervisory expectations, they experience higher levels of efficacy for working with clients. The authors highlighted the need for supervisors to validate and respect experiences of prejudice of U.S. racial and ethnic minority supervisees and the influence such experiences may have on supervisees' behaviors in supervision. Supervisors must take caution to refrain from harming supervisees by fostering, intentionally or unintentionally, a supervisory relationship that perpetuates racism. To understand how prejudice and racial dynamics may enter the supervisory relationship, Nilsson and Duan (2007) suggest supervisors learn about cultural mistrust, White privilege, and color-blind racial attitudes. Such knowledge will inevitably further understanding and improve supervision for racial and ethnic minority supervisees while enhancing the supervisor's knowledge, skills and attitudes in cross-cultural supervision.

Watson (2016) shared eight specific ways to establish an authentic relationship with cross-racial and same-racial supervisees from the perspective of a Black woman supervisor. Throughout supervision, the author shared she normalizes race by holding the supervisee accountable for their racial perceptions and for exploring race as a critical dimension of therapy. Another suggestion is to acknowledge whiteness since most White people don't think about race, whiteness usually is neither acknowledged nor examined in the discourse on race. This inclusion into the discussion about race can help White supervisees develop self-knowledge and build authentic relationships with self and others. Watson (2016) emphasizes the importance of validating people of color's experience of race, because the validation can diminish POC's avoidance to share out of fear of marginalization or dismissal. Engaging in sustained self-examination about how one's identity affects them is a way to invest in self since the self is the instrument of the therapist. Watson (2016) also suggested that supervisors should be prepared for fractures in the cross-racial relationship because of historical racism; prepared to advocate for racial justice; and aware of the importance of trust. Specifically, by holding oneself accountable for their privileged social locations, one can create a trusting environment that allows supervisors to stand in solidarity in cross-racial relationships. Lastly, supervisors can embrace truth by facing the myths of White superiority and Black inferiority. Overall, Watson (2016) stated, supervisors should "commit to making a difference in cross-racial relationships by doing [their] own work" (p.49).

Limitations of the Study

This research study attempted to address a gap in cross-racial supervision research that previously focused on the perceptions of the supervisor or the client. Yet, important

limitations remain, including the diversity of the sample of African American

supervisees, the response rate for interview follow-up, and the need to substantially

address the impact the cross-racial supervision experience on the African American

supervisees perceived competence. These limitations should be considered in interpreting

the results of the present study.

The researcher hoped for a sample of African American supervisees that included

gender diversity. Although the general population of counselors, counselor educators, and

counseling supervisees is predominantly female, the population of males is presumably

higher than the sole male representation in this study's sample. Thus, there was an

inadequate representation of male supervisees, therefore further research to ascertain the

perceptions of male supervisees and their experiences in cross-racial supervision is

necessary.

Secondly, the response rate for interview follow-up brings into question the

motivation and views of the participants. For this study, seven participants were

sufficient, yet four participants who provided contact information for an interview did not

respond to several emails requesting an appointment for the interview. The four

participants who were not interviewed may have provided different views than those who

chose to participate. Yet, this begs the question of what may have been the reasons or

motivation for engaging or not engaging in this type of research to better account for the

findings.

Third, the specific information related to the third research question was

insufficiently pursued and this question remains unanswered. A few participants were

able to share their perspectives, however, a need to assess African American supervisees'

perceived clinical competence based on how well they perceive their supervisory working alliance remains. The responses from this study's respondents begin to shed light on the impact of the supervisory relationship on the African American supervisees' perceived clinical competence. It is evident more research needs to be conducted and further implications for the field are warranted.

Nevertheless, the results of this study provided the insights into perceptual and relational aspects that impact the cross-racial supervisory relationship for African American supervisees. These results provide meaningful recommendations for future research in examining factors that continue to influence the cross-supervisory relationship.

Recommendations for Future Research

This dissertation research is a catalyst for an ongoing investigative agenda that concerns specific dynamics that impact the cross-racial supervision experience. This study addressed trust, power, clinical competence, and cultural awareness within the context of cross-racial supervisory relationships. In order to broaden our understanding of the perceptions of the African American supervisees' experiences, it is necessary to further explore additional factors.

One direction for future research is to conduct this study with more emphasis on the supervisee's perceived clinical competence. Supervision is a dynamic intervention, and theory suggests that supervisor modeling facilitates supervisee development and competence (Inman & Kreider, 2013). With a particular focus on multicultural competence, supervisors who are intentional in their practice of multiculturally competent supervision can form strong working relationships that facilitate supervisee

growth and clinical competence (Burhard et al., 2006; Ladany et al., 1997), whereas

supervisors who lack of multicultural awareness and competence can limit supervisees'

development and self-efficacy within the supervisory and counseling relationship (Inman

& Krieder, 2013). Zetzer (2016) asserts that parallel process dynamics of the supervisory

relationship can affect the therapeutic relationship. Therefore, it is imperative to continue

to investigate how the supervisory relationship impacts the African American

supervisees' perceived competence when working with clients.

Although the African American supervisees in this study have not identified they

would want a same-race supervisory relationship, some of the issues addressed, such as

power dynamics and establishment of trust, in this study imply that further research needs

to continue to address these concerns. One way to possibly explore how these issues are

still occurring could be to investigate the racial identity development of the supervisor

and supervisee and explore relationships between racial identity and the cross-racial

supervisory relationships. Critical Race Theory would be an approach most suitable for

addressing the racial identity development of the supervisee and supervisor. Another

possible way to explore this concept would be to examine what other factors could be

contributing to African American supervisees' satisfaction or dissatisfaction with their

cross-racial supervisory relationships.

Another direction for future research would be to explore the perspectives of both

the supervisor and the supervisee regarding the important aspects of supervision that can

strengthen the cross-racial supervisory working alliance, as well as to replicate this study

with a sample that is representative of the counseling profession. Since Black and Brown

supervisees are largely supervised by White supervisors, the results of this particular

research are imperative. Exploring a more representative sample with respect to race and gender would help researchers gain a better understanding of how racial and gender identity impact the cross-racial supervisory relationships.

Lastly, future research could investigate specific ways to increase the representation of African Americans in the counseling field. Since there is previous research that acknowledges the African American community has been underserved and underrepresented in counseling for years at the faculty, supervisory, and student levels (Bradley & Holcomb-McCoy, 2004; Haskins et al., 2016; Holcomb-McCoy & Addison-Bradley, 2005), future research is warranted to ascertain methods for the counseling profession to offer support for the growth and development of same race clinicians and supervisors. It is imperative to create a field of counselors and counselor educators that reflects the demographics of the United States population, in part to address the mental health care disparities in the African American community (Haizlip, 2012). Further, recognizing the importance of seeing African Americans in certain professions can give other African Americans a sense of hope, optimism and relatability.

Summary

This study addressed specific dynamics that can impact the experience of African American supervisees in cross-racial supervisory relationships. Using transcendental phenomenology, this study provided some insight into the shared lived experiences of what some African American supervisees have experienced in supervision. The themes that emerged from this research highlighted the positive and negative interactions that influenced their supervisory relationships, and also offered suggestions from the participants, based on their own experiences. The findings revealed that there is still

additional work to be done to understand and improve cross-racial supervisory relationships.

Although the limitations of the present study may be considerable, relevant implications for the counseling profession and supervisors engaging in cross-racial supervision have been identified. The results of this research offer much-needed insight into the experience of African American supervisees in cross-racial supervisory relationships. This researcher hopes that this research will evoke dialogue and further research on this topic.

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Appendix A: Recruitment Email

Email Invitation to Participate

Dear Colleague,

My name is Brittany Williams and I am a doctoral candidate in the Counseling and Supervision program at James Madison University. As part of my dissertation, I am seeking participants for my study examining the lived experiences of African American supervisees in cross-racial supervisory relationships. This research study has been approved by the IRB, protocol # 19-1015 and is under the supervision of Dr. A. Renee Staton, dissertation chair (statonar@jmu.edu).

If you are currently enrolled in a counseling internship experience or working in a clinical setting, self-identify as Black or African American, and are receiving supervision from a White supervisor, I welcome your participation! The purpose of this study is to 1) explore the experiences of African American supervisees in cross-racial supervision dyads and 2) assess supervisees' perceptions of the relationship between supervision and their own clinical work with clients from diverse backgrounds.

This study will contribute to the researchers' efforts to provide suggestions for more intentional support of underrepresented counselors and counseling students. This study consists of an online survey that will be administered to individual participants through Qualtrics (an online survey tool) and will require up to 10 minutes of your time. You will be asked to provide answers to a series of questions related to your experiences in supervision and an opportunity for a follow up interview. The follow up interviews will last up to 60 minutes.

Your participation is entirely voluntary. You are free to choose not to participate. Should you choose to participate, you can withdraw at any time without consequences of any kind. For those that participate in an interview as compensation for your time, you will be entered into a drawing to win one of four $25 Amazon gift cards. After the drawing, you will receive an email informing you that you've been selected.

Please use the link below to access the informed consent and online survey: https://jmu.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_aaWeaQB7dNEKJyR

If you have questions, please contact Brittany A. Williams at Willi5ba@jmu.edu.

Appendix B: Informed Consent

Welcome to the Research Study!

If you are currently enrolled in a counseling internship experience or working in a clinical setting, self-identify as Black or African American, and are receiving supervision from a White supervisor, I welcome your participation in a research study being conducted by Brittany A. Williams, Doctoral Candidate at James Madison University.

The purpose of this study is to 1) explore the experiences of African American supervisees in cross-racial supervision dyads and 2) assess supervisees' perceptions of the relationship between supervision and their own clinical work with clients from diverse backgrounds.

This study will contribute to the researchers' efforts to provide suggestions for more intentional support of underrepresented counselors and counseling students.

Research Procedures

This study consists of an online survey that will be administered to individual participants through online using Qualtrics (an online survey tool). You will be asked to provide answers to a series of questions related to your experiences in supervision and an opportunity for a follow up interview.

Time Required

Participation in this survey will require up to 10 minutes of your time. The follow up interviews will last up to 60 minutes.

Risks

The investigator does not perceive more than minimal risks from your involvement in this study (that is, no risks beyond the risks associated with everyday life).

Benefits

Potential benefits from participation in this study include informing the counseling field by providing descriptions of African American supervisees in cross-racial dyads and provide perspectives of African American supervisees' sense of the impact of supervision on their work with their own clients.

Confidentiality

The results of this research will be presented at conferences and may be published in professional journals. While individual responses are anonymously obtained and recorded online through the Qualtrics software, data is kept in the strictest confidence. No

identifiable information will be collected from the participant and no identifiable responses will be presented in the final form of this study. All data will be stored in a secure location, only accessible to the researcher, for no longer than 2 years. The researcher retains the right to use and publish non-identifiable data. After 2 years, all records will be destroyed. Final aggregate results will be made available to participants upon request.

Participation & Withdrawal

Your participation is entirely voluntary. You are free to choose not to participate. Should you choose to participate, you can withdraw at any time without consequences of any kind. However, once your responses have been submitted and anonymously recorded you will not be able to withdraw from the study.

Compensation

For those that participate in an interview, as compensation for your time, you will be entered into a drawing to win one of four $25 Amazon gift cards. After the drawing, you will receive an email informing you that you've been selected.

Questions about the Study

If you have questions or concerns during the time of your participation in this study, or after its completion or you would like to receive a copy of the final aggregate results of this study, please contact:

Brittany A. Williams
Graduate Psychology
James Madison University
Willi5ba@dukes.jmu.edu

Dissertation Chair: Renee Staton
Graduate Psychology
James Madison University
statonar@jmu.edu

Questions about Your Rights as a Research Subject

Dr. Tami Castle
Chair, Institutional Review Board
James Madison University
(540) 568-5929
castletl@jmu.edu

This study has been approved by the IRB, protocol # 19-1015.

By clicking the button below, you acknowledge that your participation in the study is voluntary, you are 18 years of age, and that you are aware that you may choose to terminate your participation in the study at any time and for any reason.

Please note that this survey will be best displayed on a laptop or desktop computer. Some features may be less compatible for use on a mobile device.

Appendix C: Demographic Questionnaire

1. For the purpose of this study, African American is defined as an individual living in the United States whose ancestry has its origins in Africa and who self-identifies with that racial/ethnic group. Please specify your ethnicity.
   - Black
   - African American
   - Caribbean American
   - African
   - Afro-Latino
   - Other:
2. Please specify your gender.
   - Male
   - Female
   - Non-binary
   - Prefer to self-describe:
   - Prefer not to say
3. Please indicate your age.
4. Please indicate the race/ethnicity of your supervisor.
   - White
   - Black or African American
   - American Indian or Alaska Native
   - Asian
   - Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander
   - Other:
5. Are you currently a student?
   - Yes
   - No
6. What is your program of study?
   - Addiction Counseling
   - Career Counseling
   - Clinical Mental Health Counseling
   - Clinical Rehabilitation Counseling
   - College Counseling and Student Affairs
   - Counselor Education and Supervision
   - Marriage, Couples, and Family Counseling
   - School Counseling
7. In what state, federal district, or territory is your program located?
8. How long have you been in internship? (e.g., 3 weeks)
9. How many clinical supervision sessions have you had to date?
10. Is your supervisor licensed?
    - Yes
    - No
    - I'm not sure
11. Are you currently in supervised practice?
    - Yes

- No
12. What is your professional title?
13. In what state, federal district or territory do you practice?
14. How long have you been practicing? (e.g., 1 year)
15. How many clinical supervision sessions have you had to date?
16. Is your supervisor licensed?
    - Yes
    - No
    - I'm not sure
17. I'm interested in hearing more about your experiences in cross-racial supervision. If you are interested in talking on the phone or through a web connection audio only, please provide your preferred name, the best contact number and an email address to schedule an appointment for follow up. I will contact you within 48 hours of receiving your reply to arrange a time most convenient for you.
    - Pseudonym:
    - Contact Number:
    - Email:

Appendix D: Interview Email

Hello,

Thank you for your participation in the survey and providing your contact information for further contact. I'm looking forward to talking with you and hearing about your experiences in cross-racial supervision. Based on your affirmative response in our survey, I am contacting you to participate in an interview about the experiences of Black/African American supervisees.

Participation would include involvement in an online 60-75-minute interview and review of transcripts following my transcription. The researcher will ask you to review the transcripts to ensure that the content reflects your experiences and descriptions. With the interview and review of transcripts, participation is anticipated to involve no more than 1.5 hours of your time.

For those that participate in an interview as compensation for your time, you will be entered into a drawing to win one of four $25 Amazon gift cards. After the drawing, you will receive an email informing you that you've been selected. You may withdraw or decline at any time without penalty.

Please provide your five (5) preferred days and times for a phone interview.

This research has been approved by the Institutional Review Board IRB# protocol 19-1015 at James Madison University. If you have any questions regarding this study, please contact the primary investigator, Brittany A. Williams at willi5ba@jmu.edu or 315-373-1281.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

Brittany A. Williams, M.S., NCC
Doctoral Candidate: Counseling and Supervision
James Madison University

Appendix E: Interview Questions

Interview Questions

- Please describe how you were matched with your clinical supervisor.
- Describe aspects of counseling supervision, generally, that are important to you.
- With that in mind, how well do you think your clinical supervision experience is going with your White supervisor?
- Describe a typical clinical supervision session with this supervisor (how is time spent, do you review recordings, do you discuss theory)?
- Please describe your working alliance/relationship.
- Do you think the supervision relationship would be different if you would have been paired with an African American/Black supervisor? How so?
- How has trust been established within the supervisory relationship with your White supervisor?
- Describe how you experience the power dynamics present in your supervisory relationship.
- Tell me about your sense of your supervisor's clinical competence.
- Tell me about your sense of your supervisor's cultural awareness.
- Have you experienced incidents of racism or discrimination within clinical supervision with this supervisor? (Describe the context, your thoughts and behaviors in the moment, was the issue(s) addressed or discussed thoroughly in clinical supervision?)
- Describe how the attention (or lack of) to the previously described incidents may have impacted your relationship with clients? (Could it have impacted your relationship with clients from different cultural backgrounds?)
- How would you want your clinical supervision experience to be different, if at all?
- If and when you are a supervisor, how might you address issues of cultural differences in clinical supervision?
- What suggestions do you have for African American supervisees who experience racism or discrimination during clinical supervision with a White supervisor?

Appendix F: Follow Up Email

Hello,

I hope this email finds you well. I really appreciate your participation thus far in my research study. In going through the transcriptions, I recognize I didn't fully get to hear about your perceived competence. So, I have one final question if you could please respond directly to this email with your answer by Friday, March 27th, I'd greatly appreciate it!

The question is: When thinking about your supervisory relationship, how do you feel this impacted your own sense of clinical competence/ ability to work with clients?

Thank you,

Brittany A. Williams, M.S., NCC
Doctoral Candidate: Counseling and Supervision
James Madison University